



SUBMISSION FORM

LWDA: #6 Southwest Minnesota

Submitted by: Eriann Faris

**Attach a description (no more than three pages) describing the innovative practice. Please address the following points. See the following page for an outline.**

- Overview describing the innovative practice
- Jobseeker impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)
- Employer/Community impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)
- Identification of those involved, including collaborators
- Leveraging/alignment of outside resources
- **NEW This Year** – Ability to replicate by others: Include guidance or a template which provides a roadmap for other local areas to replicate this practice. This could be a step-by-step list, a diagram, an outline, a series of questions, etc.

Information can be emailed to:  
Becky Accettura, [baccettura@mncounties.org](mailto:baccettura@mncounties.org)

***DUE ON: Friday, July 9, 2021 at 5:00 PM CST***

<b>Scoring Criteria for Selection of Outstanding Practices</b>	<b>Maximum Points</b>
Overview describing the innovative best practice	20
Jobseeker impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)	20
Employer/Community impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)	20
Identification of those involved, including collaborators	15
Leveraging/alignment of outside resources	10
Ability for use or replication by others	15
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>

**Program/Initiative Title: Construction Trades Cankuya Program at the Lower Sioux Indian Community**

**LWDA Name: Southwest Minnesota Workforce Development Area**

**Overview describing the innovative practice**

The goal of this project is to implement customized career pathway approaches to invest in our indigenous persons, in this instance specifically our native nation the Lower Sioux Indian Community (LSIC) youth, young adults and adults to acquire career specific skills, master work readiness and connect to long term career opportunities in our local communities. Leaders of the LSIC identified several needs for their community. These included a lack of career skills for young adult community members who were not in school as well as deteriorating infrastructure within the Community. Leaders partnered with the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) and Minnesota West Community and Technical College to provide an opportunity for their members to gain career skills and industry recognized credentials. The Cankuya (Pathways) Program was developed. In partnership, the programs were designed in cooperation with LSIC rather than for their members. Construction projects within the community were selected to master the curriculum and support the improvement of the Community including sheds and patios for their elders. The LSIC has been awarded a HUD grant in which the goal is to build 10 green homes in the Community. Beginning in October of 2020, 9 students fully participated in the education program at the Lower Sioux Community and successfully received a Carpentry Certificate (19 college credits) from Minnesota West Community and Technical College. This project went so well, a Plumbing program will be offered beginning July 12<sup>th</sup>, 2021. We are expecting 8 individuals to participate this summer/fall in the Plumbing Cankuya Program. Pioneer Public TV is preparing a video about the project. Here is a link to a draft of it - <https://youtu.be/PDg1h21jkWQ>.

**Jobseeker impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)**

The objective is to advance the careers and wages of the targeted population through offering participants a continuum of integrated opportunities to obtain academic credit, college credit/diploma/degree, industry recognized credentials, marketable skills, related OJT/WE, and employment in a high growth, high-demand occupations, providing participants with opportunities to apply what they are learning and build their skills and knowledge in which can be contributed to needs of their community.

**Employer/Community impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)**

There is a major housing shortage at Lower Sioux, and they are also facing the opportunity of having a significantly growing population of young people who are going to need even more housing. There is great opportunity for the community to put resources into developing housing that develops jobs and ultimately housing innovations. Every year Lower Sioux community conducts an Annual Community Survey. Questions are asked to identify the community's priorities. In 2016, 9 strategic goals were identified, including a focus on education. Since then, the tribal council has refined how they should focus educational training opportunities based on additional community surveys and feedback matched with economic, income and employment data from the community. This data has been used to design and develop education pathways programs such as the Cankuya for Construction Trades program. The idea emerged from the community to create education and training pathways that are in demand which will be useful to both individual and useful to the community as a whole. For this particular collaboration, the needs identified by the community were to create community-based employees for community-based employers. There is a community need for employment, skilled workers and for their community to have their own local businesses for its development of community, economy, and employment. Minnesota West Community and Technical College are currently working through the process to officially establish Lower Sioux as an official Minnesota West Center. This will provide the students the same perks as all Minnesota West students. On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8 students graduated with the Carpentry Certificate from Minnesota West Community and Technical College. Of those 8 students, 3 have applied for carpentry work and 2 are furthering their education in the Cankuya Plumbing Program.

### **Identification of those involved, including collaborators**

The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) is working closely with the Lower Sioux Indian Community. The LSIC is committed to outreach and recruitment, engagement of local contractors for training and employment opportunities, provides space, staff, and sufficient, meaningful work in the *Construction Industry*, which was an indicated high interest area for the community members at LSIC. Paid work experiences are integrated internships in their completion of a Carpentry Certificate from Minnesota West Community and Technical College. Additional key partners that support career pathways are workforce development providers, employers, educational cooperatives, and community-based organizations. The overall roles and responsibilities of the workforce development providers are to be the facilitator/fiscal agent, provide coordination of all partners, and hire/train staff who recruits/enrolls/supports participants, provide wrap around supports, develop training plans, collect data, teach employability and essential skills, engage employers, establish career exploration activities and OJT/WE contracts. Employers provided curriculum input, assistance in teaching employability skills, soft skills, and career-specific skills training, and provided paid work experience or internships with workplace mentoring, OJT/WE opportunities, supervision/mentorship, and long-term career opportunities. Engaging employers helps ensure our career pathways system aligns with their needs. Employers are part of regular meetings for ongoing communication, program improvement and curriculum alignment for lab purposes. Support and training for the employer is provided by the workforce development provider, through ongoing contact and training for worksite supervisors as mentors. On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021, PIC coordinated an employer panel with local carpenter and housing development companies. The employer panel provided students the opportunity to ask hiring managers questions about the hiring process and potential job openings, learn about local business and industries, and lastly a chance to introduce themselves to people hiring right now in their local community. Prior to the panel, students discussed seven workplace skills that are the building blocks of employer expectations. Students select three workplace skills to focus on, developed a seven second resume which they shared with the employers on the panel ending with one question for the panel to answer. This framework has been successful because it allows immediate contact and engagement for both employers and job seekers.

### **Leveraging/alignment of outside resources**

Leveraging resources and braiding funding with our partners is customary and embedded in the way the Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council do business allowing our projects to be both wide and deep. Lower Sioux has received \$1.45M from the HUD Indian Development Block Grant and \$500,000 from FHLB Des Moines to build 10 new green homes and the tribe is integrating work experience for the construction trades apprentices into these new construction projects. Additionally, WIOA Region 5 was awarded a Career Pathway Pilot Project dollars to support a new Career Pathway initiative and due to the nearly two decades of successful career pathway approaches in southwest Minnesota, the PIC was lucky enough to have Pathways to Prosperity and Youth Support Services dollars to provide these opportunities for adults too.

### **Attach guidance and/or template which provides a roadmap for other areas to replicate the practice.**

The roadmap for the program really starts with an assessment of community needs and bringing partners together to see what can be done. The Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council (PIC) had partnered with the Lower Sioux Community in other programs prior to this project so when the community identified their strategic goals, the PIC was contacted along with other partners to see if we could be of assistance. When the funding opportunity for local workforce boards was presented, the PIC advocated to propose a project with the Lower Sioux Community in partnership with Minnesota West Community and Technical College. We worked through the details of grant requirements and expectations and decided to fund both a PIC counselor to fulfill the functions of the WIOA grant (e.g. write IEPs, casenotes, employer relations, etc) and for the Lower Sioux Community's Education Coordinator to assist with culturally and community responsive programming. A large portion of the grant also paid for the training. It worked great with each partner shining in their expertise.