



*Minnesota's Career Resource*



## 2023 CAREERFORCE ANNUAL REPORT

**CAREERFORCE DIVISION OF THE MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT  
OF EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

HELPING MINNESOTANS PREPARE FOR AND FIND FULFILLING EMPLOYMENT.

HELPING MINNESOTA EMPLOYERS FIND THE WORKERS THEY NEED TO GROW AND THRIVE.

JULY 1, 2022-JUNE 30, 2023



This report documents the work of the CareerForce Division of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), which includes staff from DEED Job Service and Veterans Employment Services. It covers the state fiscal year (SFY) from July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

## **DEED'S MISSION: To empower the growth of the Minnesota economy, for everyone.**

### **DEED'S 2023-2024 OBJECTIVES:**

- » Objective: Empower Minnesota to create an economy rooted in equity - across every race, identity and ability
- » Objective: Drive growth that puts Minnesota at the forefront of innovation in technology, high-tech manufacturing, and health & wellness
- » Objective: Meet the moment for Minnesota's historic workforce shortages, with collaborative efforts towards high-wage jobs with strong growth potential

### **OUR KEY STRATEGIES:**

- » Proactive outreach to our potential customers who need to find new employment
- » Prioritizing outreach to potential customers who need us most
- » Meeting the customer where they are at with personalized sessions, on the phone or in-person
- » Building strong self-service digital tools to help our customers



## Serving Those Who Need Us Most

Some populations of Minnesotans have long faced systemic barriers to employment success. Black Minnesotans, New Americans, people with disabilities, older workers, workers who are involved with the justice system and workers with lower educational attainment frequently experience higher unemployment and more tenuous connections to employment.

Our efforts over the past several years have focused on reaching out in new ways to serve Minnesotans who need us most. The pandemic accelerated these efforts, due to labor market changes, societal shifts and ongoing demographic transformations.



### Working Together to Make the Immigrant and Refugee Job and Resource Fair a Success

More than 100 people looking for work came to the CareerForce Immigrant and Refugee Job and Resource Fair at CareerForce in St. Paul in November 2022. The fair featured 16 employers who welcome New Americans, have language supports for those who speak languages other than English and are located on public transit lines. Nine community resource organizations also participated. Countries of origin of job seekers who participated in the fair included Afghanistan, Somalia, Ukraine and many

others. The success of the CareerForce Immigrant and Refugee Job and Resource Fair was due to the hard work and collaboration of community partners, including the Minnesota Council of Churches, which provided interpretation services in nearly a dozen languages, and the Karen Organization of Minnesota, plus Leading CareerForce Partners Ramsey County Workforce Solutions and Minneapolis Employment and Training. Participating employers made connections with many job seekers at the fair – and several people were hired.



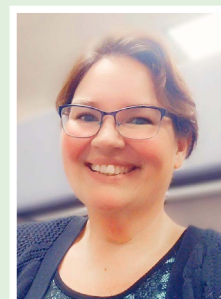
*“I’m a seasoned/experienced (older) professional that lost my job in January 2023. One of my CareerForce coaches was Gina Meixner at CareerForce in Bloomington...She helped me tremendously with my LinkedIn page. She also was supportive and told me to keep trying. Her one quote was, “Don’t settle, the right position will come.” I also want to thank all of the other CareerForce folks who held seminars; they are also special people. So, five months to the day after I was laid off, I landed a position as a shipping supervisor in Shakopee. Thanks to the entire CareerForce staff for believing in me and supporting me.” – Bruce*

### CareerForce Staff Spotlight: Amber Kropp

We always strive to provide person-centered services to help people identify their career goals, prepare for good employment and engage in a successful job search. CareerForce asks all customers to share their feedback – so we can make improvements where needed and double down on what is working well. We receive many of customer comments each year – and we like to share some of the most inspirational ones. This year Amber Kropp from CareerForce in Brainerd is in the spotlight for her outstanding support to people she serves. Here’s what two customers had to say Amber:

*“She went above and beyond helping me with what I needed...she was available any time on the phone when I had questions and spent time to see me in person. She is an excellent employee and you are very lucky to have her, she deserves a raise!!! (And no, she is not a relative ☺) Everyone there in the Brainerd office was great, good job all around!!!!”*

*“I took Amber Kropp’s Resume writing class last year. I finally got a job offer and had to have an update on my resume that I totally didn’t know how to do, and she nailed it! I was under pressure to get my updated resume submitted ASAP and Amber made my issue her priority. I appreciate her rapid response and swift action. Forever grateful!”*



# Serving Special Populations

## VETERANS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

Veterans coming back from deployment or after retirement from full-time military service can have a difficult time transitioning to civilian careers. Veterans and eligible spouses receive priority of service through CareerForce. Job seekers are asked if they are current or former members of the U.S. military when they contact CareerForce and are connected with services that meet their needs. Veterans Employment Services staff also provide specialized outreach to certain populations of veterans, including people involved in the justice system, women, People of Color and Indigenous people, and veterans with disabilities.

### Veteran Job Seekers Served

#### SFY 2023:

- » **4,170** veterans were served through CareerForce locations
- » **503** veterans received case-managed services
- » **80%** of veterans receiving case-managed services successfully exited the program
  - Average wage at exit: **\$27.56/hour**

#### SFY 2022:

- » **4,843** veterans were served through CareerForce locations
- » **510** veterans received case-managed services
- » **84%** of veterans receiving case-managed services successfully exited the program
  - Average wage at exit: **\$26.87/hour**

## SERVICES FOR JUSTICE-SYSTEM-INVOLVED INDIVIDUALS

CareerForce serves people who have been involved with the criminal justice system through personalized 1:1 sessions, specialized resources and New Leaf workshops. These workshops are designed specifically for job seekers who must address a criminal record in their job search process and are having a difficult time finding employment.

### New Leaf Participants Served

- » **SFY 2023:** 112 total; 11 veterans
- » **SFY 2022:** 113 total; 13 veterans

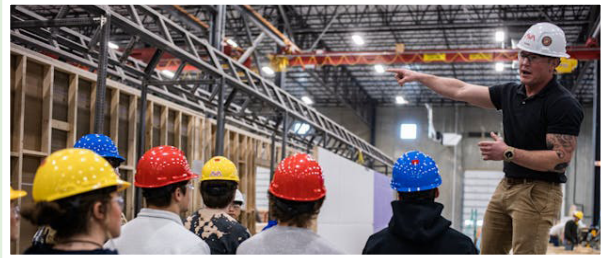


Photo Courtesy Star Tribune

### Shane finds employment at Minnesota company, works to recruit fellow veterans to join him

Shane went to the 2022 Veterans Career Fair looking for work; he attended the 2023 Veterans Career Fair as an employer recruiter. Shane was hired by AVA, a prefabricated building manufacturer based in Albertville, in May 2022. After several years as a military recruiter and two tours as a U.S. Marine in Iraq, he wanted to find civilian employment in a place that valued his experience and welcomed him as a military veteran. He found just that at AVA, with 21 veterans among its 100 employees. Now Shane is working to recruit more veterans to AVA, serving as a company representative at the 2023 Veterans Career Fair, which drew more than 350 current and former members of the military to meet Minnesota employers hiring now.



## Federal Bonding

In 2023, the Federal Bonding program in the state of Minnesota continued to play a pivotal role in promoting workforce inclusivity and strengthening employer-employee relationships. This program provides vital support to job seekers facing barriers to employment, such as those with past criminal records or limited work experience. By offering fidelity bonds that pledge employee honesty and reliability and provide insurance against losses due to the employee, the program not only instills confidence in employers to hire individuals who might otherwise be overlooked, but also empowers individuals to rebuild their lives and contribute meaningfully to the workforce.

## MIGRANT AND SEASONAL FARMWORKER SERVICES

Every year, migrant and seasonal farmworkers travel to Minnesota to work with crops and in food processing plants where those crops are packaged. All such farmworkers are American citizens who migrate internally within the United States for work.

CareerForce Agriculture Outreach Representatives based at the Faribault, Mankato, Rochester, and Willmar CareerForce locations work face-to-face with farmworkers to provide services. Services include help finding work, connections with community resources, assistance with employer disputes and more.



### Migrant and Seasonal Farmworkers Served

- » SFY 2023: 401
- » SFY 2022: 360

## MNDOT/DEED HIGHWAY HEAVY CONSTRUCTION TRAINING PROGRAM (HHCTP)

DEED and the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) provide job training opportunities for women, People of Color and Indigenous community members who are underrepresented in highway heavy construction employment. This no-cost program administered by CareerForce staff provides training, work boots, personal protective equipment and tools to eligible individuals. Highway heavy construction jobs pay well and are in high demand.

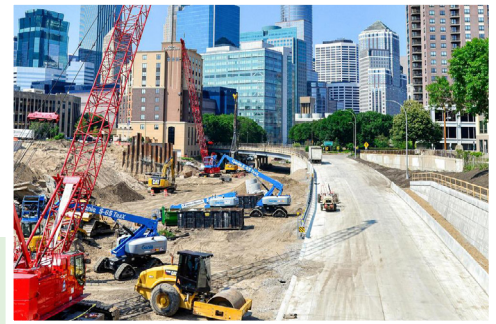
### HHCTP Participants Served

#### SFY 2023:

- » 16 completed Cement Masons Training; 14 found employment by June 30, 2023
- » No Heavy Equipment Operators Training offered in 2023

#### SFY 2022:

- » 12 completed Cement Masons Training; all 12 found employment by June 30, 2022
- » 12 completed Heavy Equipment Operators Training; 5 found employment by June 30, 2022



### Lizzy finds promising career path thanks to MnDOT/DEED Highway Heavy Construction Training Program

Lizzy had really never considered a career in construction before, but when she got an email about the MNDOT/DEED Highway Heavy Construction Training Program in late 2022, she was intrigued. She was in her mid-20s, working part time at a gym and not really sure what she wanted to do with her life. The good pay and promising career path of construction seemed like just what she was looking for.

So Lizzy applied for the program, was accepted and graduated from the Cement Masons Training course the spring of 2023. She was hired right away by Lunda construction – and she couldn't be happier with her new career direction.

"I really enjoy the physical aspect of it – when you get to the end of the day and know you put in a hard day's work," said Lizzy, who added that being on an in-demand career path also makes her feel good. "I want to work my way up to Journeyman and build my skills and be able to confidently say 'I work in construction'," said Lizzy. "I am really thankful for this program – it really did help!"



# Proactive Outreach to Those Who Need Us Most

DEED's CareerForce Division has dramatically changed our service model. We are focusing more than ever on proactive outreach and meeting people in places that make sense for them. In many cases this means meeting people out in the community at places like libraries, community centers and other places they already visit.

## CAREERFORCE CORNER

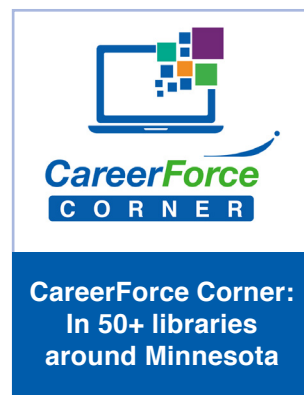
CareerForce is partnering with the Minnesota Department of Education to provide resources in Minnesota libraries through the CareerForce Corner initiative. So far, CareerForce has established a presence in more than 50 libraries around the state.

Many people who are looking for work rely on their local library for career exploration and job search resources. The CareerForce Corner initiative provides library staff with resources to help them further assist job seekers who come to the library for help. CareerForce Corner resources also help library staff connect job seekers who need additional programs and services with CareerForce staff or partners who can help them. CareerForce staff provide training to library staff on CareerForce programs and services as part of this partnership.

The CareerForce Corner initiative, including brochures, flyers and other resources shared with participating libraries, is funded in part by an interagency agreement with the Minnesota Department of Education through a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Here's how one CareerForce staff person describes the value of this growing partnership:

*"CareerForce Corners provide an opportunity to meet people where they are – in neighborhood libraries that serve as community centers. For example, the twice-a-week meeting at Hosmer Library in Minneapolis, has grown to 10 people each time. Resumé review, job application help, LinkedIn guidance, and general career direction are all services requested during CareerForce Corner hours at the libraries." – Sandra Brick, CareerForce in Minneapolis*



### Winona CareerForce Corner partnership serves the community better together

Another example of a strong CareerForce Corner partnership is in Winona, where the public library and CareerForce staff team up to offer regular service hours and annual job fairs. The first such cooperative job fair, held outdoors in August 2022,

brought together 32 local employers and more than 40 job seekers. Employer participants had nothing but good things to say and they felt it was helpful in making connections with potential employees. Job seekers said they felt more comfortable in the informal outdoor job fair format.



## COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATION COLLABORATION

CareerForce has a collaborative relationship with nearly 160 local housing agencies, shelters, food shelves, adult education locations, schools and other community-based organizations around the state – and we’re planning to grow our reach in the years to come.

### Staff at CareerForce in Bloomington build strong relationship with local Adult Basic Education partners

Partnerships with community-based organizations are essential in reaching people who may need the most assistance in preparing for and finding employment. New Americans, including immigrants and refugees, and people with lower educational attainment, including people who may not have finished high school, often face significant barriers to employment. Adult Basic Education programs throughout the state offer

English language learner classes and courses that prepare people for a GED or high school diploma equivalent, along with other offerings. CareerForce works with Adult Basic Education programs in many communities. One example is the very strong partnership CareerForce in Bloomington staff have built with Metro South Adult Basic Education and Hopkins Community Education. This partnership grew stronger and more comprehensive during SFY 2023, thanks to the work of Robin Johnson, development specialist at CareerForce Bloomington, working with Paulina Kohan at Metro South Adult Basic Education and Michele Smaby at Hopkins Community Education.

“Paulina and Michele have both jumped in with all feet promoting us and explaining what we do and who we are,” said Robin about their awareness raising about CareerForce services. “They fundamentally understand that many of their students come from situations that foster distrust of official entities and so they work hard and long to break down the barriers of anxiety and doubt.”

Robin teaches in-person career exploration and job search classes, conducts mock job interviews with students and does individual resume reviews for students at both Adult Basic Education locations. Robin continued her praise of Paulina and Michele: “They have shown the ideal characteristics of community partners: enthusiasm, true belief in what we are all trying to do, endless commitment to their clients and appreciation for DEED’s contributions at the table.”



### Services provided with community partners help meet local residents’ needs

DEED CareerForce Division staff in Minneapolis and our Leading CareerForce Partner Minneapolis Employment and Training regularly team up with community partners to hold job and community resource fairs. CareerForce in Minneapolis North shares the building at 800 West Broadway with NorthPoint Health & Wellness and Minneapolis Public Schools Adult Basic Education – North Campus. NorthPoint provides free blood pressure screenings and dental checks during community resource fairs. Minneapolis Public Schools Adult Basic Education and CareerForce regularly work together to help people grow the skills they need for employment. CareerForce staff also work with the Sanctuary Covenant Church and Resource Center, next door to 800 West Broadway, to help connect people with employment and training opportunities.

## SFY 2023 JOB SEEKERS SERVED

(unique individuals for each category)

- 1:1 sessions: 20,400
- Workshop attendees: 5,079
- MinnesotaWorks.net users: 56,261

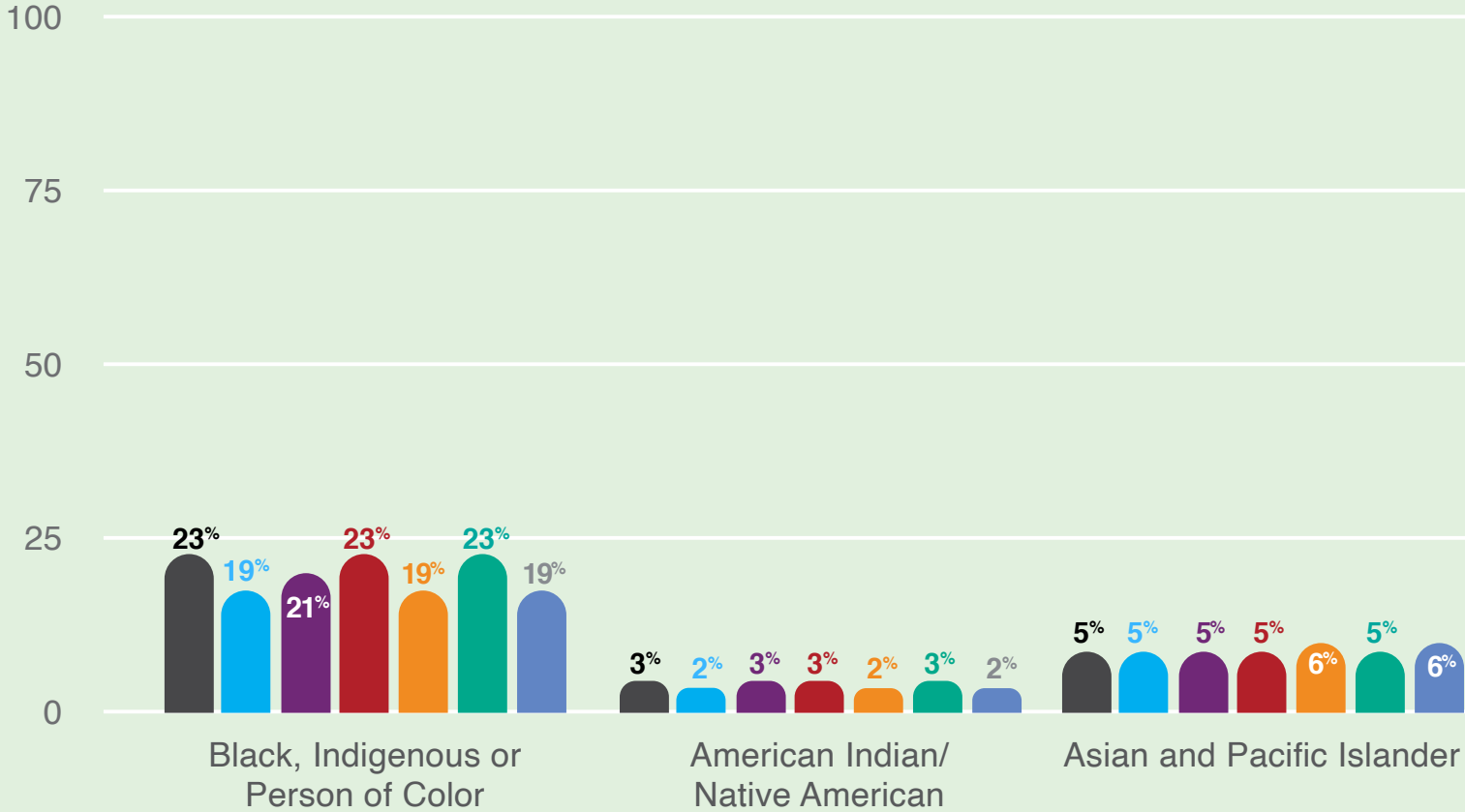
## SFY 2022 JOB SEEKERS SERVED

(unique individuals for each category)

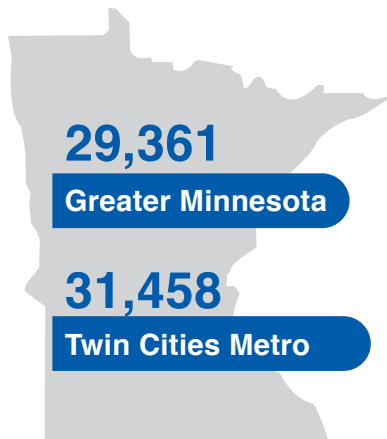
- 1:1 sessions: 18,041
- Workshop attendees: 7,235
- MinnesotaWorks.net users: 42,899

## SFY 2022 & 2023

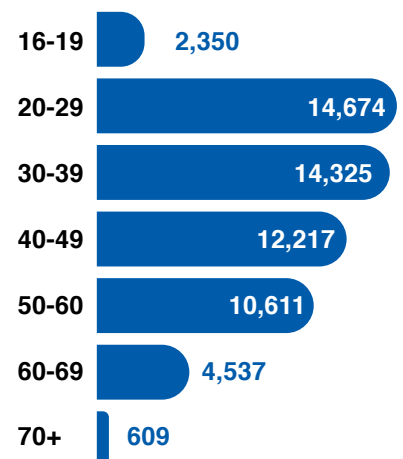
### Percent of Minnesota Job Seekers Served and Total Labor Force



## SFY 2023 Job Seekers Served

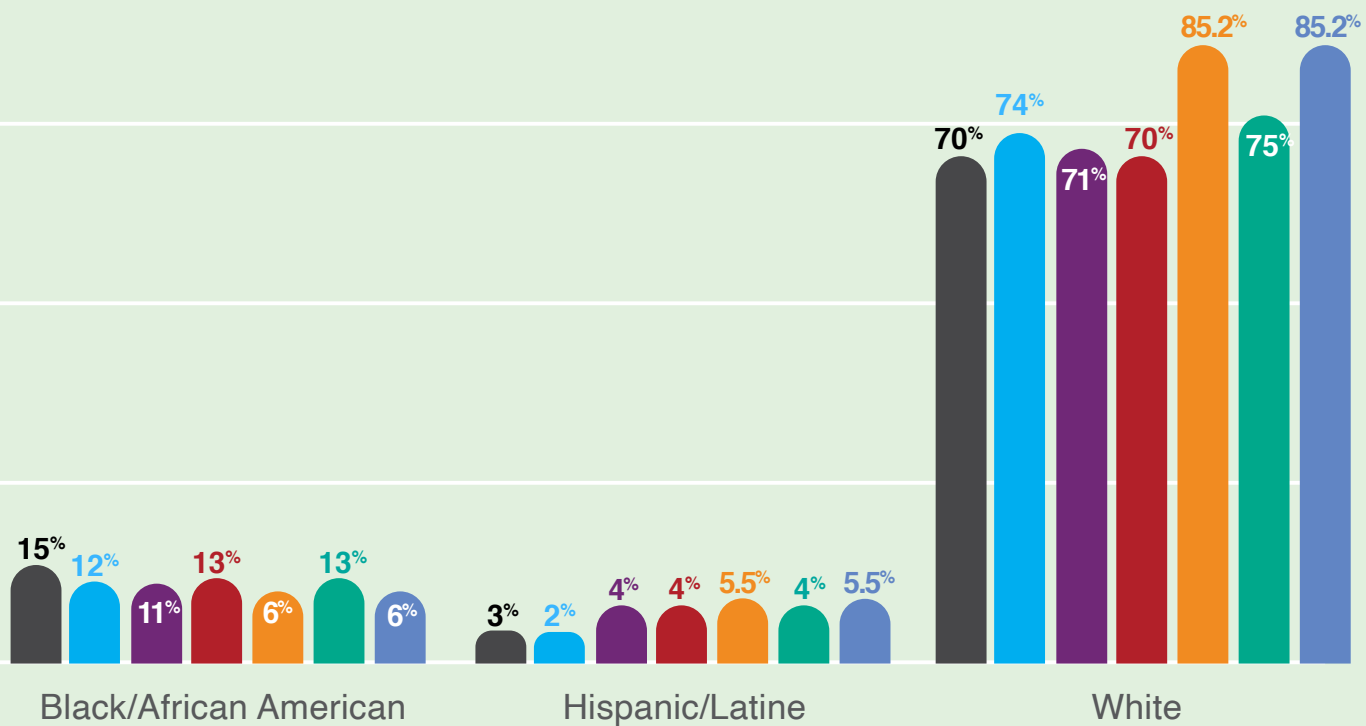


## SFY 2023 Job Seekers Served by Age Group



Numbers don't always match totals when adding categories of race/ethnicity, age or geographic area because not all job seekers indicated information for all demographic categories.





### CAREERFORCE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE LINE

The CareerForce Information and Assistance team supports customers during business hours on the phone or by email. Customers can get help with job search assistance, support for MinnesotaWorks.net and CareerForceMN.com, getting connected with CareerForce staff in their area and more.

#### SFY2023:

- » Total number of phone calls: 13,654
- » Total number of email inquiries: 7,339

# How We Serve Employers



CareerForce is reaching more job seekers who need us most – and we are helping Minnesota employers connect with often overlooked labor pools. This is more important than ever during our tight labor market. With access to Minnesota’s largest database of active job seekers through MinnesotaWorks.net and connections to candidates with experience from entry level to management, CareerForce can help Minnesota employers find the talent they need for their business to grow and thrive.

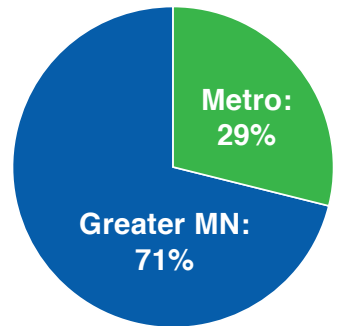
## Employers Served

### SFY 2023:

- » **New employer accounts on MinnesotaWorks.net:** 1,556
- » **Jobs posted by employers on MinnesotaWorks.net:** 787,173

### SFY 2022:

- » **New employer accounts on MinnesotaWorks.net:** 1,881
- » **Jobs posted by employers on MinnesotaWorks.net:** 924,978



**Employers Served by Location**

## WORK OPPORTUNITY TAX CREDIT (WOTC)

This tax credit allows for-profit employers of any size to reduce their federal tax liability by up to \$9,600 per new hire by hiring people who have consistently faced significant barriers to employment. 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations who hire veterans are also eligible for WOTC. Any type of job can be eligible for WOTC, including temporary, seasonal, part-time or full-time work. CareerForce administers this federal program in Minnesota and can help Minnesota employers who have questions about this tax credit.

### Number of WOTC hires submitted by Minnesota Employers

- » **SFY 2023:** 68,906
- » **SFY 2022:** 88,884

## FOREIGN LABOR CERTIFICATIONS

The Foreign Labor Certification Program allows employers to hire foreign workers when there are insufficient numbers of qualified U.S. workers available and willing to perform the work at wages that meet or exceed the prevailing wage paid for that occupation in the area of intended employment. These foreign workers may have highly specialized knowledge or skills (H-1B), be seasonal agricultural workers (H-2A) or seasonal or temporary nonagricultural workers (H-2B). CareerForce works with the U.S. Department of Labor on Foreign Labor Certification and can assist employers who have questions about hiring foreign workers.

### Number of Foreign Labor Certifications (one per worker) granted to Minnesota Employers

- » **SFY 2023:** H-2A - 3600 / H-2B - 2700
- » **SFY 2022:** H-2A - 3440 / H-2B - 2500

## VETERANS EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

CareerForce Veterans Employment Representatives can help Minnesota employers recruit and hire current and former members of the U.S. military, including National Guard members and reservists. Veterans are a highly skilled talent pool who bring strong leadership and established teamwork to the workplace.

### Minnesota Employers Served

#### SFY 2023:

- » 609 employer visits
- » 2,580 employer follow-ups
- » 392 veterans referred to jobs
- » 160 veterans interviewed
- » 32 veterans hired

#### SFY 2022:

- » 676 employer visits
- » 2,078 employer follow-ups
- » 384 veterans referred to jobs
- » 137 veterans interviewed
- » 32 veterans hired



## Follow Your Heart to a Caring Career



Find your fit in health care employment that makes a real difference in the lives of others

#CaringCareerMN

**CareerForce**<sup>™</sup>  
Minnesota's Career Resource

## Follow Your Heart to a Caring Career Campaign

DEED, the Minnesota Department of Human Services, workforce development partners around the state and industry association representatives are working together to raise awareness about the many employment opportunities now in home-, community- and facility-based care. The Follow Your Heart to a Caring Career campaign (Caring Career campaign for short) launched on June 1, 2023 to encourage anyone who wants to make a difference in the lives of others fill a critical need for caring professionals. CareerForce coordinated and/or promoted more than 100 career exploration and hiring events around the state during the summer of 2023 as part of this campaign. Staff also shared Caring Career resources with job seekers and connected them directly with local Caring Career employers.





**CareerForceMN.com**

**651-259-7500 • CareerForce@state.mn.us**

**CareerForce Workforce Development Partners**

The DEED CareerForce Division is part of the larger CareerForce system, which is a collaborative partnership between DEED, the Minnesota Association of Workforce Boards (MAWB), which represents the cooperative efforts of 16 Local Area Workforce Development Boards across the state whose programs are tailored to meet the specific needs of their communities, and the Governor's Workforce Development Board (GWDB).



Upon request, this information can be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities by calling: 651-259-7500. CareerForce is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. CareerForce is a proud partner of the American Job Center network.