

SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2025 - JUNE 30, 2026

 **CareerForce**



WWW.SWMNPIC.ORG

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE, CREATING OPPORTUNITY

A Message from the Executive Director



Change has become a constant in workforce development. Employers are navigating a competitive labor market, technology is reshaping work, communities are responding to demographic shifts, and funding and public policy continue to evolve. Throughout this year, Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council chose not simply to respond to change, but to lead through it while creating new opportunities for the people, employers, and communities we serve.

We continued strengthening one of southwest Minnesota's most important long-term workforce strategies: connecting young people to careers in their own communities. Through our Youth Career Connector initiative, more than 5,700 students across 27 school districts engage annually in career exploration, employer presentations, industry tours, job shadows, internships, and other work-based learning experiences, supported by more than 200 business partners. We also expanded opportunities for adults seeking a better job, new career or advancement opportunity. Our new Agricultural Career Pathways initiative brings workforce development, employers, and education partners together to prepare individuals for careers in one of southwest Minnesota's most important industries. In December 2025, PIC also became an Employment Network through the American Dream Employment Network, allowing us to provide Ticket to Work services that help Social Security disability beneficiaries pursue employment and greater economic self-sufficiency. Alongside our other initiatives, these investments connect people to employment and training aligned with regional workforce demand.

Our work with employers also became more intentional. Manufacturing listening sessions and sector partnerships are helping businesses identify shared workforce challenges, shape training solutions, and strengthen connections among employers, education, and workforce development. Partnership remains one of our greatest strengths. Our collaboration with the Lower Sioux Community demonstrates what is possible when workforce development begins by listening to a community's vision and bringing resources and partners alongside it. Across the region, we work closely with the state, counties, Tribal Nations, colleges, Adult Basic Education, school districts, the service cooperative, employers, economic development organizations, chambers, foundations, and community partners. We also continued developing strategies around career pathways, work-based learning, employer engagement, and workforce training. At the same time, we remained focused on strong stewardship. Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council manages nearly 40 funding streams with strong fiscal oversight and accountability, while maintaining an administrative rate of just 11%. Every dollar entrusted to our organization carries a responsibility to produce meaningful results. And behind every program and statistic are people:

- A young person discovering a career they never knew existed.
- An adult earning a credential and moving into a family-sustaining career.
- An employer finding the talent needed to grow.
- A community building its own workforce for the future.

Those are the opportunities we exist to create. After more than four decades of serving southwest Minnesota, our mission remains consistent even as the world around us changes. What must continue evolving is how we accomplish that mission. We cannot assume yesterday's workforce strategies will solve tomorrow's workforce challenges. We must continue listening, innovating, strengthening partnerships and being willing to change course when needed. That is what it means to Lead Through Change and Create Opportunity.

I am grateful to our staff, our three boards, employers, educators, elected officials, partners, and communities for the role each plays in this work. I am excited about what we will accomplish together in the year ahead.

Carrie Bendix
Executive Director
Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council

NEW PROGRAMS LAUNCHED

In 2025 - 2026, PIC launched two new programs that create more opportunities for individuals with disabilities. From career exploration and training to employment retention. We are with them every step of the way.



EMPLOYMENT TRANSITION MODEL (ETM)

Helping rural youth with disabilities, ages 14-24, transition to employment, education, or career training.

A 5-year US Department of Labor grant that provides person-centered services, coordinated partnerships, and long-term support.

IMPACT TO DATE

50

TOTAL ENROLLMENTS



34

WORK EXPERIENCES



12

ENROLLMENTS IN OCCUPATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING



7

EXITS TO POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION OR UNSUBSIDIZED EMPLOYMENT



TICKET TO WORK (TTW)

Helping Social Security disability beneficiaries achieve their employment goals.

PIC became an Employment Network through the American Dream Employment Network in December 2025.

SERVICES INCLUDE



Job search assistance



Benefits analysis



Disability disclosure guidance



Work incentive advisement



Job retention support

4

TICKETS ASSIGNED

BY JULY 2026



Ticket to Work is an outcome-based, fee-for-service program paid for by the Social Security Administration. As our program grows, the income it generates will help sustain PIC's commitment to serving job seekers with disabilities.



A new Agricultural Career Pathways initiative launched to prepare workers for high-demand careers in agriculture.

Training areas including CDL, equipment operators, mechanics, welding, and more. Participants will have opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials while gaining hands-on experience with area employers. By connecting training directly to occupations employers need, the initiative will help build a stronger, more skilled agricultural workforce.





PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

1,130
TOTAL CLIENTS

Our Public Assistance Programs provide assistance such as cash grants, food support, and job counseling services to help secure and sustain employment for families working toward self-sufficiency.

PROGRAMS



Diversitory Work Program **152 clients**
ended 3.1.2026



Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) **781 clients**



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Employment & Training (SNAP E&T) **142 clients**



Refugee Employment Services **55 clients**

With the support of his employment counselor and the PIC, Allan earned his GED and enrolled in CDL training at Minnesota West. He completed both the classroom and driving portions of the program and earned his CDL.

Allan and Jessica's journey shows how determination, combined with employment and training support, can help families overcome unexpected challenges, gain new skills, and build a stronger future.



"The assistance with the MFIP program/ EBT and guidance from my career specialist helped reduce the stress of balancing school, family, and finances. Their kindness, encouragement, and regular check-ins made me feel supported every step of the way and allowed me to stay focused on my education and my children." - Lillian



OUR PARTNERS

Big Stone County, Chippewa County, Des Moines Valley Health and Human Services (Cottonwood & Jackson Counties), Jac qui Parle County, Nobles County, Southwest Health and Human Services (Lincoln, Lyon, Murray, Pipestone, Redwood, Rock Counties), Swift County, and Yellow Medicine County

CAREER PATHWAYS TRAINING - ADULT



SWMNPIC

Career Pathways provides structured, short-term education and training programs tied to in-demand industries (e.g. welding, CNA, CDL), combined with support services, to help participants move into stable employment or advance within their careers.



"I am especially grateful for the workforce center," Alejandro shared. "They gave me the tools I needed to accomplish my dream."

150

RECEIVED
SERVICES

71

EXITS

53

SUCCESSFUL
EXITS

75%

% SUCCESS

PROGRAM PARTNERS



CareerForce

Due to grant start dates, these numbers are from 6 months, not a full year.

Kiley turned her passion for welding into a successful career, graduating from Minnesota West with High Honors and a 3.77 GPA. After graduation, she secured full-time employment as a welder earning \$24.47 per hour and quickly received a raise after demonstrating her skills on the job.



CREDENTIALS THAT CREATE OPPORTUNITY

Through our adult training programs, participants earned a variety of credentials. These achievements helped participants gain skills and education for in-demand careers while strengthening Southwest Minnesota's workforce.

120

TOTAL CREDENTIALS EARNED

83

OCCUPATIONAL /
TECHNICAL SKILLS
CERTIFICATES



35

ASSOCIATES (AA/AS)
DEGREES



2

BACHELORS (BA/BS)
DEGREES



Credentials by Industry



Skilled Trades /
Manufacturing /
Energy

49



Healthcare

47



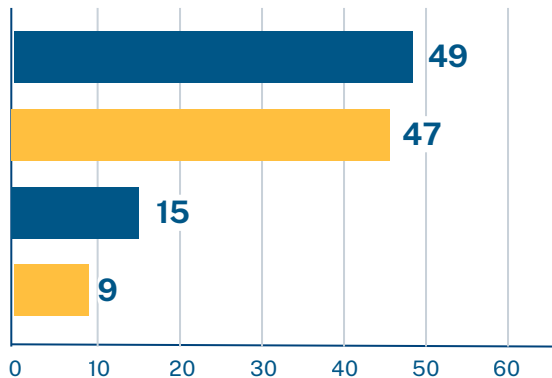
Transportation /
CDL

15



Other

9



TOP CREDENTIAL AREAS



27

CNA



15

CDL



25

Electrician



12

Powerline
Technician



SWMN PIC



7

LPN

ADULT SPECIAL GRANTS

We were proud to receive support from the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), Long-Term Care, Meat Processors, and Cargill and Wilson Foundation grants to strengthen and expand our adult programming.

Here are the outcomes and impact made possible through these investments in our community.

 SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA
PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

60

RECEIVED
SERVICES

35

EXITS

28

SUCCESSFUL
EXITS

80%

% SUCCESS



SWMNPIC

DISLOCATED WORKER & WIOA ADULT PROGRAMS

These programs offer eligible adults, including those laid off or underemployed, access to career counseling, skills assessments, training, and job placement support. Priority is given to low-income individuals, recipients of public assistance, and those lacking basic skills.

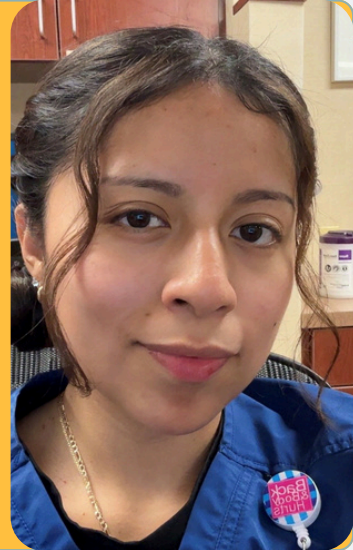
DISLOCATED WORKER

77 SERVED

80%
SUCCESSFUL
EXITS

\$26.62
AVERAGE WAGE

With support through the WIOA Adult Program and PIC scholarship assistance, Beatriz overcame the challenges of being a first-generation college student to earn her Bachelor of Science in Nursing with a 4.00 GPA. She returned home to Worthington and now serves her community as a Registered Nurse at Sanford Worthington Medical Center.



*"Knowing I had your support gave me the confidence to push forward and strive for my goals."
– Sawstephen*

WIOA ADULT

33

SERVED

86%

SUCCESSFUL
EXITS

\$20.92

AVERAGE WAGE



SOUTHWEST MINNESOTA
PRIVATE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

CareerForce

YOUTH & YOUNG ADULT SERVICES



The Youth Program supports young people ages 14–24 in gaining the education, skills, and experience needed for employment, post-secondary education, and long-term career success, with a focus on those facing barriers.

175

YOUTH
RECEIVED
SERVICES

78

EXITS

59

SUCCESSFUL
EXITS

76%

% SUCCESS

KEY SERVICES

- Paid Work Experiences
- Occupational Skills Training
- Job Readiness and Workforce Training
- Career Assessments and Advising
- Leadership Development
- Supportive Services
- Adult Mentoring
- Financial Literacy Education
- Preparing for Postsecondary Education



At just 16, Jasmin is already building her future in healthcare. With support from the PIC, she completed CNA training, earned an industry-recognized credential, and secured part-time employment as a Certified Nursing Assistant at Maple Lawn in Fulda.



With the right support, Jonah overcame barriers, completed welding training, secured employment, and took important steps toward greater independence.



www.swmnpic.org

YOUTH CAREER CONNECTORS



5729

STUDENTS
RECEIVED
SERVICES

27

SCHOOL
DISTRICTS
SERVED

2603

CAREER
FAIR
PARTICIPANTS

193

PAID WORK
EXPERIENCES

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Career Fairs



Mock Interviews



Job Shadows



Life Skills Day



Internships/
Apprenticeships



Know Before You
Go Campaign



Career Roadmaps



Business Tour Days



"This internship has taught me so much about connection, patience, and the importance of making everyone feel valued."



BUSINESS PARTNERS

211

We also partner with local schools, and community sponsors to train and educate the future workforce and fill in-demand positions.

Use the QR code to the right to see our full
Youth Career Connector Report



SCAN HERE





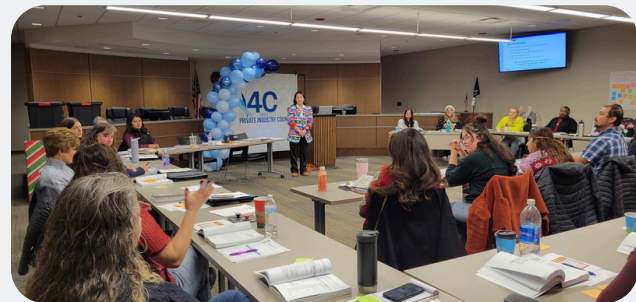
FISCAL OVERVIEW

\$4,172,418
TOTAL REVENUE

\$4,157,953
TOTAL EXPENDITURES

Revenue - Federal & State Grants	\$2,787,451
Revenue - County Contracts	\$1,181,346
Revenue - Other	\$181,210
Revenue Interest	\$22,411

Total Revenue **\$4,172,418**



PROGRAM AND SERVICES
ARE 89% OF
TOTAL EXPENDITURES

Direct Client Expenditures

Tuition Asst, Materials, Fees	\$894,382
OJT and Paid Work Experience	\$323,182
Client Support (Transportation, Work Clothing, etc.)	\$133,895
Subcontracted Services	\$321,515

Total Expenditures **\$1,672,974**



**These financial summaries are management-prepared and unaudited. Our independent audit for FY2025-2026 is in process; final statements will be available when completed.

WEBSITE

www.swmnpic.org

SOCIAL MEDIA



LOCATIONS

Marshall CareerForce

Lyon County Government Center
607 West Main Street, Marshall, MN 56258
Phone: 507-476-4040 or 1-800-818-9295

Montevideo CareerForce

202 North 1st Street, Suite 100
Montevideo, MN 56265
Phone: 320-269-5561 or 1-800-422-1346

Worthington CareerForce

Nobles County Government Center
318 9th Street, P.O. Box 816
Worthington, MN 56187
Phone: 507-295-5020

