

South Central Career Pathways
October 11, 2024

Those Present: Karen Wolters, Heather Gleason, Nate Warden, Mary Shumski, Jed Highum, Sonja Bowan, Jen Groebner, LeRoy Kiecker, Sara Carrigan, Marcia Highum, and Mary Kate Lewis-Piroso.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Karen Wolters called the meeting to order.

II. Industry Updates

Jen Groebner with Mankato Clinic reported that they will be posting the opportunity for the next Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA) cohort training later this month. The next CMAA cohort will start in January 2025. Jen indicated that nursing positions tend to be a little harder to fill compared to their administrative assistant positions. Mankato Clinic has a Pipeline Grant focusing on LPN's and CMAA.

III. Quarterly and Expenditure Reports

Heather Gleason shared quarterly reports for On-Ramp, Bridge, and Individualized Training Pathways (ITP). The quarterly reports reflect a snapshot of where we are in the grant, through September 30, 2024.

On-Ramp: Services in the On-Ramp grant include work readiness training, On-Ramp training, Adult Basic Education (ABE), and Navigator services with the goal of assisting students with gaining or increasing their employment or moving on to the Bridge program. Participants will obtain On-Ramp and work readiness certificates. A total of 41 individuals are being served in the On-Ramp grant and the goal is to serve 68 participants for the region. South Central has served 25 On-Ramp participants. In South Central, all twenty five participants are or have been in training to gain On-Ramp and work readiness certificates. Twenty On-Ramp certifications have been obtained. Five On-Ramp participants have moved into Bridge programming.

Bridge: The Bridge grant provides the opportunity for individuals to learn about career pathways in healthcare, manufacturing, transportation or construction while working on their academic and employability skills through contextualized learning. The goal is for participants to earn an industry specific credential and move into employment or advance training. The goal is to serve 96 individuals in the region. Regionally 84 participants have been served which includes 27 participants are from South Central. Nine south central participants have exited the program successfully and eight of the exits moved on to receive additional services in other programs.

Individualized Training Pathways (ITP): ITP assists individuals that are college ready to start a program in healthcare, skilled trades, information technology, or advance manufacturing. Services include post-secondary training, experiential learning, and navigator services. The goal is to serve 76 individuals in the region and 46 are currently active in the ITP program. Of the 46 participants, 22 are from South Central and all are currently attending training.

Heather Gleason shared expenditures through August 31, 2024, for the On-Ramp, Bridge, and ITP grants. Heather noted that training expenditures do not reflect fall tuition payments at this time.

Women Economic Security Act (WESA): The WESA grant is an additional grant that can support our local career pathways programming. This grant is a regional grant with the goal of serving 38 participants and there are currently 4 participants enrolled. WESA supports women pursuing non-traditional careers. If you know any women pursuing non-traditional careers, please reach out to Emily Roiger or your local CareerForce location.

Drive for Five: The Drive for Five grant recently began and has an end date of June 30, 2025. The grant mirrors services provided in the ITP program with specific careers that can be supported. Heather will share a handout to the group on which programs are supported. The main objective of the Drive for Five grant is placing individuals in careers that pay \$25 or more an hour. Drive for Five participants cannot be enrolled in other employment and training programs. The goal for the region is to serve 70.

Transformative Pathway Grant: Heather shared that a regional grant will be submitted next week which would support programming similar to the bridge grant.

New Americans in Long Term Care Workforce Grant: This is a grant opportunity to support new Americans in Long Term Care and would be a partnership with Blue Earth County Employment Services, MN Council of Churches, ABE and the South Central WorkForce Council. The grant would include curriculum for long term training including pre-nursing assistant and career exploration with online and virtual reality components. Curriculum would be available in Spanish and Somali languages. If awarded, the grant would mirror On-Ramp programming and include a MN Council of Churches navigator.

IV. South Central Career Pathway Updates

On-Ramp: Jed Highum shared there are thirteen participants in the Food Handler course. Jed is working with Sodexo for potential placements of six participants. Jed has connected with the Blue Earth County jail regarding participants for the next Food Handler course. Red Cross classes and child development courses will be offered through the On-Ramp programming in the upcoming months.

Bridge: Jed reported that SCC Connects information session had 7-8 interested participants, with 3 interested in healthcare and the remaining participants interested in Manufacturing. The next information session will be held on October 22nd. There was a discussion to have marketing materials for the May Bridge sessions available by January 1, 2025. A Community Interpreter course is being planned with a Bridge class starting in April followed by the Community Interpreter training the week of June 9th

Individualized Training Pathways (ITP): An update was given indicating that the ITP grant has just started, and referrals are beginning to come in.

South Central College (SCC): Sonja Bowan will look into any updates regarding the TESA test requirement for SCC's nursing programs. Sonja shared Dr. Parker announced her upcoming retirement and invited attendees to attend the SCC community forum at 1 pm and 2pm today regarding the next SCC president. SCC advising and registration session for new students will be offered in group sessions again. SCC will be adding a Respiratory Therapy program in 2026.

V. Next Meeting:

January 10, 2025, 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.