

South Central Career Pathways

July 12, 2024

Those Present: Karen Wolters, Heather Gleason, Sue Vogelsang, Nate Warden, Mary Shumski, Jed Highum, Caleb Watson, Renae Wolf, Sonja Bowan, Jen Groebner, Elizabeth Thomspen, Emily Roiger, Samantha Schmid, Sara Carrigan, Kim Mueller, Marcia Highum, and Mary Kate Lewis-Piroso.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Karen Wolters called the meeting to order.

II. Industry Updates

Renae Wolf with Mayo Health Systems commented that they have seen a steady applicant pool. She noted that hiring for Patient Care Assistant's (PCA) is continuous and the applicant pool is robust. She mentioned that PCA's tend to resign to advance in their career or relocate. Renae stated that Medical Assistant and Licensed Professional Nurse positions are more challenging to fill due to low applicants. Mayo has trained PCA's to perform duties of Patient Care Specialists, including rooming patients and checking vitals. Mayo has a Pipeline Grant for surgical technicians and LPN's. Renae mentioned challenges in recruiting staff at critical access sites in rural areas. The bed tower recently opened at Mayo.

Jen Groebner with Mankato Clinic indicated a steady flow of applicants for their administrative and billing positions. Jen echoed that LPN and Certified Medical Assistant positions are harder to fill due to a limited candidate pool. Mankato Clinic continues to hire and train staff through the Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA) program and will begin their third cohort soon. The CMAA program is a 12 week online program with one day of clinical per week. Staff that participate have a two year commitment to the Mankato Clinic. Mankato Clinic has a Pipeline Grant focusing on LPN's.

Kim Mueller shared that core high school teachers are participating in a 16-hour teacher externship this summer to learn how core subjects are utilized in a variety of career pathways. The teacher externships are located at Crystal Valley, MN Pollution Control, and Precision Press. This allows the teachers to provide real life examples on how math, English and other subjects are important in the workforce.

III. Quarterly and Expenditure Reports

Heather Gleason shared quarterly reports for On-Ramp, Bridge, and Individualized Training Pathways (ITP). The quarterly reports reflect the first quarter of the grant, which contains data through June 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 23 individuals are being served in the On-Ramp grant and the goal is to serve 68 participants for the region. Individuals are working towards obtaining On-Ramp and work readiness certificates.

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 96 individuals in the region and 42 individuals have been served.

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 11 are currently active in the ITP program.

Heather Gleason shared expenditures through May 31, 2024, for the On-Ramp, Bridge, and ITP grants.

IV. South Central Career Pathway Updates

On-Ramp: Jed Highum shared there are 12 students active in the On-Ramp program through Adult Basic Education. Jed reported that the Leadership Exploration and Development (LEAD) Certification class has started. LEAD is a partnership with Taylor Corporation to upscale current workers into line leaders. The goal is for entry level workers to build confidence in taking on a leadership role. Participants in the LEAD program will work on NorthStar Digital Literacy and leadership curriculum designed by Taylor Corporation. Jed is also looking at the possibility of offering a food handler course at the Blue Earth County jail.

Bridge: Jed reported that SCC Connects information sessions for Bridge courses are happening with the Bridge class starting later this month. There has been more interest in healthcare pathway versus manufacturing/construction/transportation. Sonja Bowan recommended that recruitment for the SCC Connects program start early since many of the college programs are full before the information sessions are held.

Individualized Training Pathways (ITP): Emily Roiger reported that there are currently five participants in the ITP grant from South Central with two pursuing CDL, two in the power lineman program, and one is studying to be an electrician. Emily shared about the Women Economic Security Act (WESA) grant which supports women pursuing non-traditional careers. If you know of any women pursuing non-traditional careers, please reach out to Emily.

Adult Basic Education (ABE): Karen Wolters shared that the Statewide ABE will be offering a CDL prep class, Personal Care Attendant, Microsoft Office Specialist, and Paraprofessional courses in the upcoming school year.

South Central College (SCC): Elizabeth Thompson shared an update about the new Surgical Technology program being offered this fall. The first cohort will be eight students, and they have received 16 applications so far. SCC hopes to increase the cohort size once their accreditation is completed during the first year of the program. Elizabeth provided additional updates on allied health programs. Bonding for an expansion of the dental assistant lab did not

pass and the lab portion of the program will continue to be held at the MSU campus. The paramedic program had a scholarship opportunity which allowed SCC to triple their enrollment from six students to twenty students. The Health Unit Coordinator program start date will only be in the fall and Phlebotomy will only be offered in the spring at the Faribault Campus. SCC is working with Mayo to start a Respiratory Therapy program and is hopeful to launch it in Fall 2026. SCC also indicated that their enrollment is up 8%.

V. Next Meeting:

October 11, 2024, 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.