

## **Building Trades Training P2P Synopsis**

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI), a private, non-profit 501(c) 3 organization dedicated to developing and advancing the workforce of Southeastern Minnesota, recently was awarded a Minnesota Pathways to Prosperity Competitive Grant. The goal of this grant is to recruit people with barriers to employment, especially minorities, women, the previously incarcerated, unemployed, and underemployed persons and provide them with a short-term Essential Skills and Trades-focused training. Once students have successfully completed the training, graduates will have access to apprenticeships and full-time employment in careers within the trades that start at \$15 - \$18 an hour and offer benefits, pensions, and career growth opportunities.

The unemployment rate in Southeast MN, as of August, 2018 is 2.4 percent. As a result, contractors have shared that the tried and true methods for hiring skilled employees is no longer resulting in the quality or quantity of workers needed. The short-term trainings WDI is offering, in partnership with different unions, provides a new and innovative strategy to recruit, train, and employ women and minorities into the various trade fields. Construction employees are in high demand throughout Rochester and the surrounding communities now that Destination Medical Center (DMC) has transitioned into its implementation stage. Over the next 20 years, an additional 30,000 jobs are anticipated to be created in and around Rochester. Construction is exploding in our region and we want that building to be done by the graduates of these various short-term, trades training programs!

One benefit of these trainings is that they illustrate the strength of Southeast Minnesota's partnerships, experience, and commitment to successful career pathways. The major partners include WDI, numerous union partners, Construction Partnership, Inc., a number of trades contractors, the Diversity Council, Hawthorne Adult Basic Education, various community-based organizations, and Dodge, Fillmore, Olmsted County Community Corrections. These partners have created a robust training framework that leads to a career pathway paying a family-sustaining wage.