



Meet Marleen Lundberg
Area Manager, SE Minnesota
Job Service/Department of Employment and Economic
Development
Rochester, Minnesota

*SE MN Workforce Development Board (WDB) Member
since 2018*



Why did you decide on a career in the Services Sector, and what brought you to this line of work?

It was actually a long, twisty path. My undergraduate degree was in chemistry, and I started my career in a small, environmental analytical lab. What I found was that there was not enough human interaction in that field to satisfy my need to be around people. I spent several years in the manufacturing sector working in the printing and coating industries. I worked with the processes developing formulas, raw material testing, manufacturing engineering, and a lot of trouble shooting of systems. When the recession hit, I lost my job. Jobs were difficult to find at that time, so I substitute taught and found that I loved teaching. Also along the way, I completed a MBA, which gave me a different perspective, complementing my science background. During the summer of 2012 after almost 1-1/2 years of being unemployed, I interviewed for a temporary State of Minnesota position in the WorkForce Centers. I was offered the opportunity to join the Services Sector.

Tell me about your role as the SE Minnesota Job Service Area Manager and what is the primary purpose of the Minnesota Job Service?

The Job Service (Job Seeker Services) mission statement is, “To inform, educate, and connect job seekers, career changers, and employers through innovative, effective, and customer-friendly services.” I think this mission statement sums up the purpose for our team. My role, as the Area Manager, is to oversee staff at three locations, Faribault, Rochester, and Winona. As well, I work with our partner (WDI) area managers to communicate and collaborate, ensuring that career seekers’ and employers’ needs are met.

How are your services delivered to job seekers and businesses?

We offer services to both job seekers and businesses in many ways; individually, through group workshops and virtually, by email or phone. As technology changes, so will our service delivery models to make sure we are reaching all who need our service. The state of the economy also has impacted and will continue to impact how we work with job seekers and businesses.

How many Job Service locations are there in SE Minnesota and where are they located?

There are six CareerForce offices (formerly WorkForce Centers) throughout SE Minnesota; Albert Lea, Austin, Faribault, Red Wing, Rochester, and Winona. We service them all in different capacities. There are Job Service staff located in three CareerForce offices; Faribault, Rochester and Winona. These staff travel throughout the SE, providing services to the locations where Job Service staff are not located.

What are some of the major services that Minnesota Job Service provides to job seekers?

Job Seekers come to us with varying job search skills, some have never put together a resume or have never interviewed for a job, others are familiar with job search but need help making themselves stand out to employers. We offer help with job search skills, but more importantly, we are here to give hope to those who are in a tough situation. We offer workshops, resume reviews, interview practice, career counseling, and referrals to resources that can help them in other areas of their life. Basically, we help them get what they need to move forward to find the employment that is a good fit.

What are some ways SE Minnesota Job Service has worked with Workforce Development, Inc.?

Throughout the SE, we work with our partners to meet the needs of career seekers and employers through job and career fairs, referrals, and communication. Our staff work together to help CareerForce operate smoothly.

How does the Minnesota Job Service interact with businesses in SE Minnesota communities?

Job Service regularly partners with employers and other organizations to hold job and career fairs and employer hiring events; help businesses post jobs on minnesotaworks.net; screen applicants and take applications for companies; and connect businesses with resources that can help them recruit and retain talent. We also have a person who works with employers to help them develop long-term strategies to improve retention.

What is the most rewarding part of your work?

The most rewarding part of my work is when I hear career seeker success stories. We do not hear a lot of them because people move on and do not always let us know how or what they are doing. However, when I do hear about a success, it is incredibly rewarding.