

Project Work

1. Central MN Manufacturers Association: Workforce Development Initiatives

- Continued promotion and development of the Youth Apprenticeship Toolkit and the “K-12 Navigator” workforce development tools. Improving utilization and functionality with mobile and social media platforms.
 - Seeking grant funding to upgrade to phone app for k12 Navigator. Applied for a 10k grant from United Way, announcement date is 1/19/26.
 - <https://cmmaworks.org/k12-navigator>
 - <https://cmmaworks.org/youth-appren>
 - Expanding the workforce development committee to include more education representatives.
 - Completed successful annual “Tour of Manufacturing” events throughout CMMA region.
 - Considering the creation of a CMMA “Dream Team” to do school/student outreach. The CMMA Manufacturing Career Dream Team would put the spotlight on talented young manufacturing employees from the CMMA region. These employees serve as ambassadors for manufacturing, representing the industry, promoting careers, and providing information on education options and skills needed to be successful in manufacturing. The Dream Team will be available for virtual or in-person student presentations.
 - [TSMA Manufacturing Career Dream Team - Midwest Manufacturers' Association](#)
 - Assist with newsletter and website content
 - Assist with program committee planning/Upcoming schedule:
 - October 23: Speaker: Michael Blume on R&D Tax Credit. Tour: Two Rivers Enterprises
 - November 20: CTE Jamboree at Big Lake with tour of LISI. Speakers Luke Greiner, DEED, and Jason Bruns (Engineering Center of Excellence)
 - December 9: Holiday Party at Partner’s Pub
 - Zipoy re-elected to CMMA Board of Directors and workforce committee chair.
 - Annual strategic planning retreat on 1/7/26
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2. Central MN HR Cooperative: meets monthly, second Thursday, 8:00 – 10:00. Group meeting is hybrid model. In person attendance is increasing. MN Paid Leave Act is an issue of ongoing concern yet most are making progress and preparation for this law change. Hiring as slowed/leveled off for some while employee retention remains a challenge for others.

3. Wright County Economic Development Partnership: <https://www.wrightpartnership.org/>

- Continued development and promotion of web-based career exploration data tool, *WorkForce Pathways*. This site assists Wright County businesses with their Workforce needs to create a long-term vibrant community through education, training, marketing and collaboration. This project is ongoing with new committee members needing continued outreach to schools.
- [Workforce Pathways - Wright County Economic Development Partnership](#)
- 2025 Annual meeting is on 1/16/2026 at 7:30 AM at Wright Co. Gov. Ctr

4. Work Based Learning Coordination:

Promotion and development of OJT and Incumbent Worker services and training. Providing CMJTS and CFC resources and services info to area businesses through outreach and response to incoming inquiries. Continued interest in Incumbent Worker/Talent Development services from business partners. Interest in leadership supervision training from manufacturers in central area. Extensive Business Services team collaboration to deliver these services in Wright and Sherburne counties.

5. Create and broadcast a weekly (Monday) workforce/employment/training program entitled *Work Wright Radio* on KRWC, [Work Wright Radio | KRWC 1360 AM](#) featuring Wright County employers, careers, CFC services, events and resources. Sharing info on CMJTS, UI, CFC, Partners, and more. Highlight business sectors and employment opportunities along transportation corridors in the county helping listeners to understand local labor market and in demand occupations to slow labor exportation from the county and to increase local skill base.
6. Providing job search assistance to active CMJTS job seekers as referred from our Career Navigators in PA, Adult/DW and Youth programs. Assisting with job matching, job leads, employer connections and on the job training opportunities.
7. Re-launched the CMJTS and Monticello CFC Job Seeker Professional Development and Networking Group. Session occurs on Tuesday's 10:00 – 12:00 via Teams. Discussion topics include: job search strategy, finance in career transition, advanced Linked In strategies and self- branding/promotion and networking. Sessions in collaboration with and promoted by DEED. Average of 25 people per session. Many dislocated workers with workplace maturity attending from I.T., Finance and other technical backgrounds. Most attendees from metro area. *Much thanks to Joe Sharpe for his leadership and execution of this meaningful and impactful wide reaching and unique CMJTS service.*
8. Serving walk in job seekers at CFC, offering local labor market info, job leads, contacts and connections to CMJTS and CFC partner services.
9. Attending Business Retention and Expansion visits with Sherburne and Wright county Economic Development partners. Providing information on CMJTS and CFC business services.
10. Facilitated on site hiring event/job fair in collaboration with DEED and CFC partners on Nov.19 with 8 employers and 16 job seekers in attendance. Employers were satisfied with prospects and job seekers reported success as they left the event.
11. Member of Maple Lake Industrial Development committee. Created and presented at an “Automation and Funding” event on Oct. 29 with DEED, CMJTS and Ridgewater College. 7 companies attended and CMJTS gained interest and exposure.
12. Presented CMJTS training services on DEED “Workforce Wednesday” session on Oct.1
13. ISD 728 CTE newsletter: [December CTE Newsletter](#)

MN DEED Labor Market Info

The unemployment rate increased to 3.6% in Minnesota in August, on a seasonally adjusted basis. The state's labor force grew to 3,156,875 workers, and the labor force participation rate held at 68.1%. The number of unemployed workers increased to 113,563 people and the number of employed decreased to 3,043,312 workers.

The U.S. unemployment rate rose to 4.3% in August, on a seasonally adjusted basis. The labor force participation rate increased to 62.3%.

Unemployment Rates			
	August 2025	July 2025	August 2024
Minnesota			
Seasonally Adjusted	3.6%	3.5%	3.2%
Not Seasonally Adjusted	4.2%	3.9%	3.3%
United States			
Seasonally Adjusted	4.3%	4.2%	4.2%
Not Seasonally Adjusted	4.5%	4.6%	4.4%

Wright County Unemployment Rate for August 2025 is 3.9%
Sherburne County Unemployment Rate for August 2025 is 4.1%

Business Trends/Updates/Events

- Chisago County Childcare Coalition is hosting a Child Care Champions Training Day on January 31, 2026. This educational resource event is open to all childcare providers across the region regardless of their location.
- Construct Tomorrow Hinckley is scheduled for Wednesday, January 28 at Grand Casino Event Center. If you would like to visit this event, please connect with Rebecca.
- Tentative date for East Central MN Career Fair in Pine City – April 14, 2026.
- Carla Vita is now the Director of the MN DEED Office of Childcare Community Services as well as the Director of Energy Transition.
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- Attended, assisted with promotion and day of tasks for E3 Summit in St. Cloud hosted by CMJTS and Career Solutions.
- Attended Indigenous Energy Career Pathways collaborative event hosted by DEED and Great River Energy at Grand Casino Mille Lacs in Onamia. Will participate on workforce opportunities committee. Next meeting in January 2026.
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Incumbent Worker Projects

New

- Rocky Mountain Construction, 1 trainee

On-going

- CDI Curb, Sherburne County, 16 trainees
- City of Mora, 1 trainee
- Karlsburger Foods, Inc., Wright County, 12 trainees





Enrollments collected and processed for new projects. On-going file management, close out of projects, and follow up for IW files in WF1.

Business Assistance – job postings and talent development conversations with several employers. Creating career roadmaps for several employers.


Job Seeker Assistance – resume development and revision assistance for universal customer. Potential OJT referral for youth program from employer.

Unemployment Rate Data and Information - Data has not been updated since August due to federal government shutdown.






Local Unemployment Statistics for August 2025

More Info	Area - click name for historical data	Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment	Employment to Population Ratio	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
	U.S.	171,035,000	62.4%	163,288,000	59.6%	7,747,000	4.5%
	Minnesota	3,174,821	68.5%	3,043,052	65.6%	131,769	4.2%
	U.S. Seasonally Adjusted	170,778,000	62.3%	163,394,000	59.6%	7,384,000	4.3%
	Minnesota Seasonally Adjusted	3,156,875	68.1%	3,043,312	65.6%	113,563	3.6%

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	EDR 7E- East Central	91,622	NA	87,045	NA	4,577	5%

Local Unemployment Statistics for August 2025

More Info	Area - click name for historical data	Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment	Employment to Population Ratio	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
	Chisago County	31,878	NA	30,528	NA	1,350	4.2%
	Isanti County	23,458	NA	22,268	NA	1,190	5.1%
	Kanabec County	8,449	NA	7,951	NA	498	5.9%
	Mille Lacs County	14,491	NA	13,746	NA	745	5.1%
	Pine County	13,346	NA	12,552	NA	794	5.9%

Operation Community Connect – Resource Fair



Chisago County Health and Human Services hosted the 7th annual Operation Community Connect (OCC) event on Thursday, October 16, 2025. The event was a collaborative effort across multiple departments and community partners.

OCC provides an opportunity for organizations to share information about their services and for community members to learn about the many resources available to them in the county. This year, 144 attendees connected with 47 vendors offering a wide range of support and information.

Resources represented included mental health services, housing and food support, chemical health, early childhood and family programs, public safety, and other local services. Attendees also had access to several free services, such as haircuts, flu shots, lead screenings, and hearing screenings.

This year's event included new or gently used winter items that were generously donated by the community as well as free hygiene supplies, including toilet paper, soap, shampoo, deodorant, and feminine products.

OCC is an important event that brings people and organizations together in one place, making it easier for community members to learn about resources, participate in services, and take home items they need.

This event would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors – Medica, Blue Plus, and HealthPartners – as well as North Branch Area Public Schools and their staff, Deutschland Meats, Chisago County, and the many organizations, businesses, and community members who contributed food, raffle prizes, and time. Thank you to everyone who made this year's event a success, we look forward to seeing you next year!

By the Numbers

2025 – 144 attendees, household reach of 213
2024 – 155 attendees, household reach of 220
2023 – Household reach of 309



Operation Community Connect – Resource Fair

Vendors

A Place For You
Arrowhead Transit
Baby Blanket and Beyond
Bethel Student Nurses
Books for Better MN
Blue Plus
Canvas Health
CC Behavioral Health
Central Minnesota Jobs & Training
Chisago County Sheriff's Office
CTC/FAP/Lead Screening
Child Care Aware/Pine Tech
DPC/Emergency Preparedness
East Central Energy
East Central Regional Library
East Central Regional Suicide Prevention
Fastracker
Family Home Visiting
Fentanyl Free Communities
Haircuts
Health Partners
Help Me Grow/SCRED
Know the Truth

Lakes and Pines CAC
Lakes Center for Youth and Families
Local Advisory Council on Mental Health
Medica
Mental Health Drop-in center
M Health Fairview
New Pathways
North Branch Community Ed/ECC
North Branch Police
North Branch Lions Club
Nystrom & Associates
Opioid Action Council
PSOP
Public Health
Recovering Hope Treatment Center
Region 7E AMHI
Rise Inc
Second Harvest Heartland
Steve Rummier Hope Network
Therapeutic Services Agency
Towards Zero Death
UCare
Volunteers of America
WIC



REGISTER NOW CHILD CARE CHAMPIONS TRAINING DAY

Attention
child care
providers!

Saturday, January 31, 2026

8am - 3:30pm (doors open at 7:30am)

North Branch Area High School

Early bird registration ends 12/31/25 - \$50

Registration after 12/31/25 - \$60

Register at nbaceonline.org or 651-674-1025

Calling all child care providers! Join us for a full-day event dedicated to advancing your skills, connecting with peers, and having fun!

Why Attend?

- **Professional Development:** Earn six hours of Develop-approved training by attending three engaging sessions, with nine topics to choose from.
- **Networking & Resources:** Connect with other providers and explore vendor booths and on-site resources designed to support you.
- **Perks & Prizes:** Enjoy tasty snacks, and a delicious lunch. Have a professional photo taken. Plus, you'll have the chance to win exciting door prizes!



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	EDR 7E- East Central	91,622	NA	87,045	NA	4,577	5%

Local Unemployment Statistics for August 2025

More Info	Area - click name for historical data	Labor Force	Labor Force Participation Rate	Employment	Employment to Population Ratio	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
	Chisago County	31,878	NA	30,528	NA	1,350	4.2%
	Isanti County	23,458	NA	22,268	NA	1,190	5.1%
	Kanabec County	8,449	NA	7,951	NA	498	5.9%
	Mille Lacs County	14,491	NA	13,746	NA	745	5.1%
	Pine County	13,346	NA	12,552	NA	794	5.9%

Operation Community Connect – Resource Fair



Chisago County Health and Human Services hosted the 7th annual Operation Community Connect (OCC) event on Thursday, October 16, 2025. The event was a collaborative effort across multiple departments and community partners.

OCC provides an opportunity for organizations to share information about their services and for community members to learn about the many resources available to them in the county. This year, 144 attendees connected with 47 vendors offering a wide range of support and information.

Resources represented included mental health services, housing and food support, chemical health, early childhood and family programs, public safety, and other local services. Attendees also had access to several free services, such as haircuts, flu shots, lead screenings, and hearing screenings.

This year's event included new or gently used winter items that were generously donated by the community as well as free hygiene supplies, including toilet paper, soap, shampoo, deodorant, and feminine products.

OCC is an important event that brings people and organizations together in one place, making it easier for community members to learn about resources, participate in services, and take home items they need.

This event would not have been possible without the generous support of our sponsors – Medica, Blue Plus, and HealthPartners – as well as North Branch Area Public Schools and their staff, Deutschland Meats, Chisago County, and the many organizations, businesses, and community members who contributed food, raffle prizes, and time. Thank you to everyone who made this year's event a success, we look forward to seeing you next year!

By the Numbers

2025 – 144 attendees, household reach of 213
2024 – 155 attendees, household reach of 220
2023 – Household reach of 309

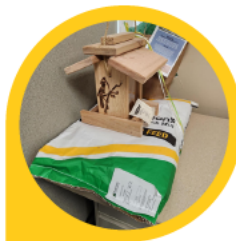


Operation Community Connect – Resource Fair

Vendors

A Place For You
Arrowhead Transit
Baby Blanket and Beyond
Bethel Student Nurses
Books for Better MN
Blue Plus
Canvas Health
CC Behavioral Health
Central Minnesota Jobs & Training
Chisago County Sheriff's Office
CTC/FAP/Lead Screening
Child Care Aware/Pine Tech
DPC/Emergency Preparedness
East Central Energy
East Central Regional Library
East Central Regional Suicide Prevention
Fastracker
Family Home Visiting
Fentanyl Free Communities
Haircuts
Health Partners
Help Me Grow/SCRED
Know the Truth

Lakes and Pines CAC
Lakes Center for Youth and Families
Local Advisory Council on Mental Health
Medica
Mental Health Drop-in center
M Health Fairview
New Pathways
North Branch Community Ed/ECC
North Branch Police
North Branch Lions Club
Nystrom & Associates
Opioid Action Council
PSOP
Public Health
Recovering Hope Treatment Center
Region 7E AMHI
Rise Inc
Second Harvest Heartland
Steve Rummier Hope Network
Therapeutic Services Agency
Towards Zero Death
UCare
Volunteers of America
WIC



REGISTER NOW CHILD CARE CHAMPIONS TRAINING DAY

Attention
child care
providers!

Saturday, January 31, 2026

8am - 3:30pm (doors open at 7:30am)

North Branch Area High School

Early bird registration ends 12/31/25 - \$50

Registration after 12/31/25 - \$60

Register at nbaceonline.org or 651-674-1025

Calling all child care providers! Join us for a full-day event dedicated to advancing your skills, connecting with peers, and having fun!

Why Attend?

- **Professional Development:** Earn six hours of Develop-approved training by attending three engaging sessions, with nine topics to choose from.
- **Networking & Resources:** Connect with other providers and explore vendor booths and on-site resources designed to support you.
- **Perks & Prizes:** Enjoy tasty snacks, and a delicious lunch. Have a professional photo taken. Plus, you'll have the chance to win exciting door prizes!

