



CENTRAL MINNESOTA
Jobs & Training Services

2024-2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Where Workforce Skills Meet Opportunity!

Our Mission:

Strengthen our communities by providing workforce development services that enhance skills, increase employability, and meet the needs of local employers for a thriving job market.

Counties We Serve:

- | | | |
|-------------|--------------|-------------|
| ■ Chisago | ■ McLeod | ■ Renville |
| ■ Isanti | ■ Meeker | ■ Sherburne |
| ■ Kanabec | ■ Mille Lacs | ■ Wright |
| ■ Kandiyohi | ■ Pine | |

Workforce Development Board



Rob Stark | Chair
CMJTS Workforce Development Board

Financial Advisor, Edward Jones Investments

Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Community Members,

As we reflect on the challenges and successes of the past year, I'm both honored and energized to continue leading CMJTS at a time when workforce development is not just a buzzword—but a regional imperative. Across Central Minnesota, businesses are asking urgent questions: Where is the next generation of talent? How do we train for tomorrow's jobs today? How can we build a

workforce that's inclusive, resilient, and future-ready?

At CMJTS, we believe the answer lies in connection. We connect people to opportunity, employers to talent, and communities to stronger economic outcomes. Last year, we recommitted ourselves to helping individuals overcome barriers to employment—through access to skills training, career navigation, wrap-around support, and, just as critically, hope. Our programs worked. We celebrated numerous success stories—from adults reentering the workforce, to youth discovering career paths, to public assistance recipients reestablishing their independence.

But the future demands more.

Here's what we're focusing on in the year ahead:

- **Workforce Agility:** With industries rapidly evolving, our programs are embedding adaptability. From healthcare and manufacturing to IT and construction, we're aligning training with real-time employer needs—so that every skill learned is a skill applied.
- **Inclusive Talent Pipelines:** We're committed to helping businesses and job seekers connect in ways that open doors for everyone. By fostering welcoming environments and building pathways that tap into the full range of skills and experiences in our community, we create stronger, more resilient talent pipelines that benefit both employers and individuals seeking support.
- **Technology & Transformation:** CMJTS is investing in digital tools to better track outcomes, engage jobseekers, and forecast labor market shifts. We're using data not just to report impact—but to guide it.
- **Partnership-Driven Solutions:** We know we can't do this alone. CMJTS is deepening our collaboration with local schools, colleges, chambers, and employers to create scalable, sustainable workforce pipelines. If you're not already part of this movement—we invite you in.

The road ahead will have its challenges: demographic shifts, automation, and a tight labor market all press us to think differently. But we view this not with apprehension—but anticipation. At CMJTS, we're not just reacting to change—we're shaping it.

Thank you for your trust, your partnership, and your belief in a Central Minnesota where everyone has the opportunity to thrive through work.

In service,

Rob Stark

Workforce Development Board



Dina Wuornos | Executive Director
CMJTS Workforce Development Board

Executive Director

Dear Friends, Partners, and Community Members,

As we reflect on Program Year 2024, we celebrate both the remarkable progress made and the challenges that lie ahead. This past year, Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc. (CMJTS) proudly marked its 40th anniversary—four decades of empowering jobseekers, supporting employers, and strengthening our communities. It was a joyful milestone, marked by gratitude for the thousands of lives positively impacted through our programs.

Yet, we must also be candid about the realities before us. CMJTS is experiencing funding reductions across the majority of its programs, including services to our communities' youth, adults, dislocated workers, and employers. Without additional investment, our ability to provide in-person support—an essential service for many in our rural areas—will be significantly compromised. Every day, our CareerForce centers welcome individuals facing various barriers, from stressed jobseekers to customers with limited digital skills. What they need most is a calm, knowledgeable, and human connection—something no website or hotline can replace.

These challenges fuel our determination to grow stronger and more innovative. In March, CMJTS leadership, staff, and our Joint Powers Board and Workforce Development Board gathered for a strategic planning retreat that set the stage for our future. From that work, four key priorities emerged: increasing brand recognition, strengthening youth recruitment, deepening community partnerships, and diversifying funding sources. For too long, CMJTS has referred to itself as the "best kept secret." We are determined to change that. Our focus on visibility and impact ensures that more individuals, families, and employers know who we are and how we can support them. At the same time, we remain committed to building greater financial independence while staying true to our mission of serving the communities that depend on us.

We also proudly adopted updated mission and vision statements, which reflect both who we are today and where we are heading:

- **Mission:** To strengthen our communities by providing workforce development services that enhance skills, increase employability, and meet the needs of local employers for a thriving job market.
- **Vision:** To ensure a prosperous and inclusive Central Minnesota, where strong local economies and vibrant communities provide opportunities for everyone to thrive.

Finally, I would like to thank our staff, board members, and partners for their unwavering commitment. Your energy, creativity, and passion inspire me every day. Together, we will continue to evolve, meet challenges head-on, and expand opportunities for the individuals, families, employers, and communities we serve.

With gratitude,

Dina Wuornos
Executive Director, Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc.

Adult Programs

An individualized approach to serving jobseekers and career-changers.

Fear and uncertainty are major obstacles to career change, especially after job loss when many don't know where to begin.

This is where CMJTS can help.

Services are tailored to the unique needs of the individual and include assessment of current skills and interests, help in determining choices in career options, access to earn while you learn training opportunities, and tuition assistance for career navigator-approved classroom training that supports the career goal.

Kody's Journey

WIOA Adult Program

Setting a solid foundation for a bright future!

When Kody first came to CMJTS, he was living with his mom and working toward gaining full-time employment to become financially independent and secure housing of his own. Kody was very interested in entering a construction trade—particularly carpentry and bricklaying—and loved the idea of working outdoors, even imagining a future where he could do work maintaining and building in the state parks.

Kody enrolled in SNAP Employment & Training and was also co-enrolled in the Power Up Program to explore careers in the construction trades. Through Power Up, he earned his OSHA 10 certification, completed workforce readiness training, and sharpened his résumé writing and interview skills through mock interviews and career exploration activities.

After successfully completing Power Up, Kody advanced to the Building Strong Communities apprenticeship training program through North Hennepin Community College, with continued support from his CMJTS Career Navigators and Business Service Coordinators. He successfully graduated from the program in Spring of 2025 and continues to meet weekly with instructors as he works toward securing a union apprenticeship and earning his union card.

Kody recently secured full-time employment in a pre-apprenticeship construction job and has proudly moved into his own apartment. His commitment to completing his program goals helped him maintain his SNAP benefits which supported his journey toward long-term stability and employment. Kody's hard work has paid off – he has since been able to close his SNAP case and the skills he learned have set a solid foundation for a bright future!



Adult Programs

Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA) Adult Program

70

Total Number
Served

94%

Credential
Attainment

63.3%

Entered
Employment

\$25.89

Average
Wage

WIOA Dislocated Worker Program

51

Total Number
Served

84%

Credential
Attainment

81.6%

Entered
Employment

\$33.36

Average
Wage

Minnesota Dislocated Worker Program

283

Total Number
Served

87%

Credential
Attainment

88.8%

Entered
Employment

\$31.85

Average
Wage

“

"Thank you, and it has been great working with you! I'm on my way to a successful career!"

– Toni P., Adult Program

Public Assistance Programs

A proven approach effectively increases income and reduces poverty while promoting self-esteem and independence.

CMJTS offers employment services to individuals eligible for county assistance through Diversionary Work Program (DWP), Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training. Participants are referred to CMJTS by their county of residence. Our professional staff deliver comprehensive, work-focused services designed to foster job skill development, work experience, and successful employment. We provide a range of supports to help participants enter the workforce and enjoy its benefits.

Danielle's Story

MFIP Participant

No one is too small to make a dream come true!

I am a proud recipient of the MFIP program. I am successfully and voluntarily closing off MFIP next month with support and assistance from Kanabec County as well as CMJTS Employment Specialist, Monica.

At the beginning of receiving MFIP, I was unemployed, behind on my bills, and struggling with my mental health. Thanks to the support and accountability that I have received while on MFIP from my employment specialist, I was able to obtain therapy for my mental health. I have my vehicle repaired, and follow through with career goals and personal goals. The communication, support, and goal-setting skills I have received during my time working with Monica have led me in the right direction. I have gained financial stability for my son and I through the motivation and encouragement.

I am working 30 plus hours a week, can count on my employment specialist to be there for me and believe in me when I felt no one else was, and definitely helped me overcome the obstacles and barriers to get me where I am today—a better, financially stable life for my son and me. I will continue working my dream job and gaining more education in this early child education field. Most importantly, I will continue to be a role model to teach the children I work with that no one is too small to make a dream come true. I will provide positive interactions and have positive impacts on the children I work with every day just as my employment specialist Monica has had on my son and our life.

Danielle W.



Public Assistance Programs

Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)

533

Total Number
Served

339

Total Exited in
Program Year

\$19.46

Average
Wage

Supplemental Nutrition And Assistance Program (SNAP)

53

Total Number
Served

35

Total Exited in
Program Year

\$20.99

Average
Wage

Diversionary Work Program (DWP)

167

Total Number
Served

141

Total Exited in
Program Year

\$20.26

Average
Wage

“

"This journey has not been easy but knowing there were people and programs willing to lend a helping hand gave me the strength to push forward."

– Ashley S., Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP)

Youth Programs

Youth programs provide leadership in building a skilled workforce—workers who can do the jobs of today and learn the jobs of tomorrow.

Through career counseling, job training, and strong business relationships, CMJTS helps prepare young adults for career pathways and the world of work that leads to meaningful employment.

Through an individualized approach, CMJTS' goal is to assist youth in overcoming barriers to employment and economic disparities that make them self-sufficient.

Porter's Story

Youth Program Participant

My name is Porter Carlson, and I recently graduated from Annandale High School. As a hands-on learner, classroom work was challenging, and college didn't seem like an option. But after working with my career navigator Jodi from CMJTS, I applied to college, was accepted into the Electrical Line Worker Program at MN State Wadena, and started courses this fall. Jodi also introduced me to the Heavy Equipment Operator Program at Wright Technical Center, where I earned my OSHA 10 certification.

Attending Operation Exploration Trades Camp last summer exposed me to welding, vehicle maintenance, heavy equipment operation, and business tours that broadened my career interests. Making friends at camp was an added benefit.

My high school work experience coordinator and Jodi have been really helpful with ideas that match my interests and supporting me to do new things. CMJTS recently helped get my CDL needed for my Electrical Lineman schooling.

I would definitely recommend summer career camp and working with a CMJTS Career Navigator like Jodi to other students.



Youth Programs

WIOA Youth Program

89

Total Number
Served

64

Youth with
Disabilities

7

Youth
Offenders

67

Basic Skills
Deficient

16

Received
Work
Experience

Minnesota Youth Program

417

Total Number
Served

298

Youth
with
Disabilities

21

Youth
Offenders

306

Basic Skills
Deficient
Training

184

Economically
Disadvantaged

84

Received
Work
Experience

Youth Program Enrollment

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families	10
Youthbuild	32
WIOA Youth	89
Pre-Employment Transition Services	84
Youth at Work	170
Minnesota Youth Program	417
Outreach to Schools	7,773

“

“I appreciated how personal the support felt. It wasn't just about checking boxes; they actually cared about helping me move forward. That kind of support isn't easy to find, and it made a big difference.” Youth Participant

Business Services

CMJTS Business Services: Your Workforce Partner

Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services (CMJTS) is committed to strengthening the local workforce by partnering with area employers. Our team conducts thorough consultations to identify workforce needs, ensuring tailored and effective support. We connect employers with qualified jobseekers through targeted hiring events and job fairs, fostering long-term employment relationships.

In addition to recruitment, we offer customized training solutions that help employees develop essential skills and boost productivity. Our experts provide access to current labor market data, enabling informed hiring and retention strategies, and we assist employers in securing grants for workforce development.

CMJTS also facilitates Human Resources networking groups to share best practices and innovative ideas, promoting ongoing improvement. Our mission is to empower both employers and jobseekers, contributing to a thriving local economy.

On-The-Job-Training

Clean Chickens and Co., LLC

A shining example of our impact is Clean Chickens and Co., LLC, a proud Halal processing company in Willmar, which has thrived thanks to its partnership with CMJTS. By leveraging our resources, Clean Chickens has successfully recruited a diverse skilled workforce that reflects the community it serves. The company's commitment to diversity and inclusion not only enriches its operations but also strengthens its ties to the local community.

With four on-the-job training contracts facilitated by CMJTS, they have received reimbursement for 50% of wages paid to employees during training, effectively bridging the skills gap for new hires. This collaboration exemplifies a true win-win situation—addressing community needs while actively hiring local talent.



Business Services

Businesses Served

482

Business Visits

13

Inclusive
Workforce
Employer Consults

361

Businesses
Participating in
Hiring Events

\$2.24/hr

Average Wage Increase
for Incumbent Worker
Trainees

Participants Served

114

Incumbent
Worker Training
Participants

5

On-the-Job
Training
Contracts Written

\$20.40

On-the-Job
Training
Average Wage

67

Work Experience
Opportunities
Provided

Dear Valued Donors,

As we reflect on another successful year at Central Minnesota Jobs and Training Services, Inc., we want to extend our heartfelt gratitude for the unwavering support of our donors. Your generous contributions have played a pivotal role in our mission to enhance workforce skills and create meaningful opportunities within our community.

As part of our ongoing efforts to expand our impact, we have also started an account to serve as a source for reimbursable grants that further the mission of CMJTS. We truly appreciate your support and look forward to continuing our mission with your help.

Together, we are making a difference.

Leslie Wojtowicz, Development Manager





CENTRAL MINNESOTA
Jobs & Training Services

406 E. 7th Street
Monticello, MN 55362

763.271.3700
info@cmjts.org

cmjts.org

An equal opportunity employer/service provider

A proud partner of the  american **Job Center**® network |  **CareerForce**®