



Community Planning and Economic Development Department

News Release

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Minneapolis City Goals: A Safe Place to Call Home ▫ *Jobs & Economic Vitality* ▫ *Eco-Focused* ▫
Livable Communities, Healthy Lives ▫ *Many People, One Minneapolis* ▫ *A City That Works*

Minneapolis RENEW Workforce Training Program Receives International Economic Development Council's Silver Award in Excellence in Economic Development

October 9, 2013 (Minneapolis) – On Tuesday, October 9 during the 2013 International Economic Development Council (IEDC) Annual Award Conference in Philadelphia, PA, the City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) received a 2013 IEDC *Excellence in Economic Development* silver award for its sustainable workforce development program RENEW.

“The Excellence in Economic Development Awards recognize the City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development as being one of the leading organizations in the industry for innovation, creativity and successful strategies,” said **IEDC chair, Paul Krutko**. “These awards are meant to honor the organizations and individuals who are dedicated to making a positive change in their communities. This organization uses creative solutions and inventive ideas, and offers other regions a wonderful example to learn and benefit from. The award represents an acknowledgment and appreciation for the City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development’s dedication to continuous growth within itself, as well as improving the industry overall.”

RENEW began in 2010 with a four million dollar US Department of Labor employment and training grant to assist Minneapolis and St. Paul residents to access credentialed skills training and job placement support leading to high quality, living wage jobs with a focus on a “green skill set.” By collaborating with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions, Minneapolis Employment and Training created a dynamic system of job training that leveraged the strengths and talents of community-based employment service organizations, workforce investment boards, both public and private training partners, and businesses that, despite the recession, were recruiting talent to stay competitive in the market place.

RENEW’s goal was to create opportunities for disadvantaged community members living in Minneapolis and St. Paul including military veterans, the unemployed or underemployed, individuals with disabilities, ex-offenders, high school dropouts, or individuals over the age of 55. The program design builds upon the skills of incoming jobseekers by delivering industry-identified training and credentials, resulting in a win-win for both participants and the business community. This system ultimately delivered value to businesses by supplying an in-demand candidate pool equipped with high-value skills that were ready to contribute “day one” on the job.

By September 2012, 586 residents of Minneapolis and St. Paul were trained for careers in construction/deconstruction, manufacturing, building systems management, and renewable energy with a focus on solar power. Of these, 487 residents earned industry recognized credentials and 420 trainees were placed in unsubsidized employment. Of those placed, 80% secured jobs in training-related employment.

Applied Energy Innovations (AEI), a small Minneapolis-based mechanical, plumbing, and general contracting company specializing in renewable and energy efficient building integration saw RENEW as an opportunity build new public/private partnerships to grow the regional market for solar energy solutions. **AEI President Dustin Denison** said, "AEI identified a particular need in our industry to grow our market share through solar sales, design, and estimating. RENEW provided the program infrastructure and necessary tools to partner with local colleges and graduate students licensed and accredited for our particular trade. We were grateful for the opportunity to hire such high-caliber graduates." To date, AEI has hired five RENEW graduates, nearly doubling its workforce through the RENEW program.

RENEW gained traction closing the workforce skills gap and increasing industry wide credentialing standards during the recovery, proving its value to Minneapolis business owners, job seekers, and the City. To learn more about RENEW or other Minneapolis Employment and Training workforce development solutions visit the [City of Minneapolis RENEW webpage](#) or call Marie Larson at 612.673.5292.

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About the International Economic Development Council

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,000 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC's members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial and federal governments, public private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. When we succeed, our members create high-quality jobs, develop vibrant communities, and improve the quality of life in their regions. For more information on the IEDC visit www.iedconline.org.