



2025 Annual Report

Minneapolis Employment and Training

Minneapolis Employment and Training is a division of the City of Minneapolis
Community Planning and Economic Development



www.minneapoliismn.gov

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Message from the Board Chair and Director

On behalf of the Minneapolis Workforce Development Board (MWDB), I am pleased to introduce the 2025 Annual Report for Minneapolis Employment and Training (MET). This report reflects the progress made through strong collaboration between our board, city leadership, employers, and community partners who work every day to strengthen workforce opportunities across Minneapolis. Together, we remain focused on building pathways to employment, supporting local businesses, and ensuring that residents have access to training and career opportunities that lead to family-sustaining wages.

In 2025, MET and its partners served more than 15,000 residents through career counseling, job training, youth employment programs, and employer partnerships. These efforts continue to build a stronger workforce pipeline while helping businesses attract and retain skilled talent. Programs such as Step Up, Career Pathways, and apprenticeship initiatives are creating meaningful opportunities for youth and adults to gain skills and connect to quality jobs.



Dr. Tara Watson, chair
Minneapolis Workforce Development Board

As chair, and as a business owner deeply connected to the north Minneapolis community, I remain committed to advancing workforce strategies that expand economic mobility and address long-standing disparities in employment. By centering equity, strengthening partnerships, and listening to community voices, we are helping ensure that Minneapolis' workforce system works for all residents and supports a thriving local economy.

As director of MET, I am proud of the work our staff, service providers, and partners carried out in 2025. This report shows strong results and highlights the value of aligned efforts across our system. It reflects a connected workforce system that brings together the workforce development board, employers, education and training providers, community-based organizations, and other public partners. Through coordinated services and shared strategies, we help residents find the support they need to move into good jobs.

Over the past year, we improved coordination across programs and partners. We



Deb Bahr-Helgen, director
City of Minneapolis Employment and Training

adapted services to meet changing job market needs. We focused on equity and on helping people move along clear career paths. Youth gained early work experience and explored career options. Adults built skills and moved into in-demand jobs. These efforts show what is possible when systems align around a common goal. Looking ahead, we will continue to strengthen coordination and test new approaches. We will prepare for emerging workforce needs and support a changing economy. In Minneapolis, we will connect more residents to quality jobs that offer stability and growth.

Minneapolis Workforce Development Board

Board members

Business Representatives

- Dr. Tara Watson, chair
- Hilary Marden-Resnik, vice chair
- Rosemary Ugboajah
- Jenna Gilbert
- Jamie Mailer
- Ken McCraley
- Jonathan Jankowski
- Danny Hernandez
- Ryan Berreth
- Kyle Puntun
- Ravie Singh

Workforce Representatives

- Aaron Hill
- Dan McConnell
- Doug Flateau
- Marcus Pope

Voc Rehab / Wagner-Peyser

- Thant Pearson
- Leona Martin

Education

- Sharon Pierce, Ph.D.
- Cavan Gahagan

Economic Development

- Clarence Hightower, Ph.D.

Transportation, Housing, or Public Assistance Rep

- Rich Melzer

Minneapolis Employment and Training

[Minneapolis Employment and Training](#) (MET) provides staff support to the MWDB and administers a variety of employment and training programs under the direction of the mayor, city council, and MWDB. MET leverages federal, state, and local dollars to fund skills training and career services to residents through a network of community-based nonprofit and government partners.

MET highlights

- Served over 15,000 individuals with approximately 72% being low-income and black, indigenous, or a person of color
- Selected for a national [Results for America](#) implementation project focused on job quality in the healthcare industry
- Supported the implementation of [Skills-based Hiring Accelerator Workshops](#) around the metro area to help employers attract, hire, and retain quality talent
- Completed a comprehensive review and redesign of the Step Up youth summer internship program strengthening experiences for youth and building strong talent pipelines
- Celebrated a successful first year of the Minneapolis Apprenticeship Outreach Office and co-leading the statewide community of practice on apprenticeship



Visit our website

Minneapolis Employment and Training, a division of Community Planning and Economic Development



MET staff, board members, and nonprofit partners gather to celebrate as City Council recognizes the strength of a coordinated workforce development system.

Outcomes

MET addresses local workforce needs. We support both job seekers and businesses in our community. We:

- Strive to increase economic inclusion
- Partner with community-based nonprofits
- Work to prepare job seekers for secure, meaningful employment
- Design and run programs for youth and adult job seekers
- Fund skills training and career services to residents

In 2025, we:



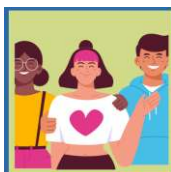
Served **15,227** individuals



Served **400** employers



Held **45** hiring fairs and networking events held in the community which served **1,750** community members



Served over **3,600** youth in summer or year-round programming



Placed over **1,800** residents in new jobs or paid internships



Placed **45** people into apprenticeships



Helped adults gain jobs at an average wage of **\$25.66/hour**

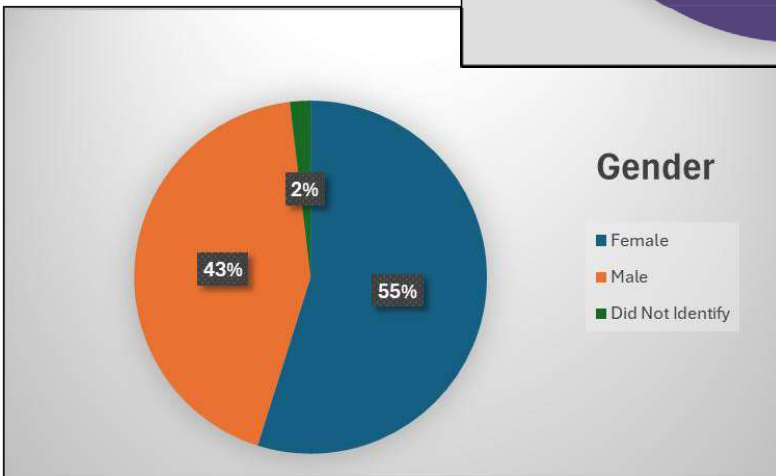
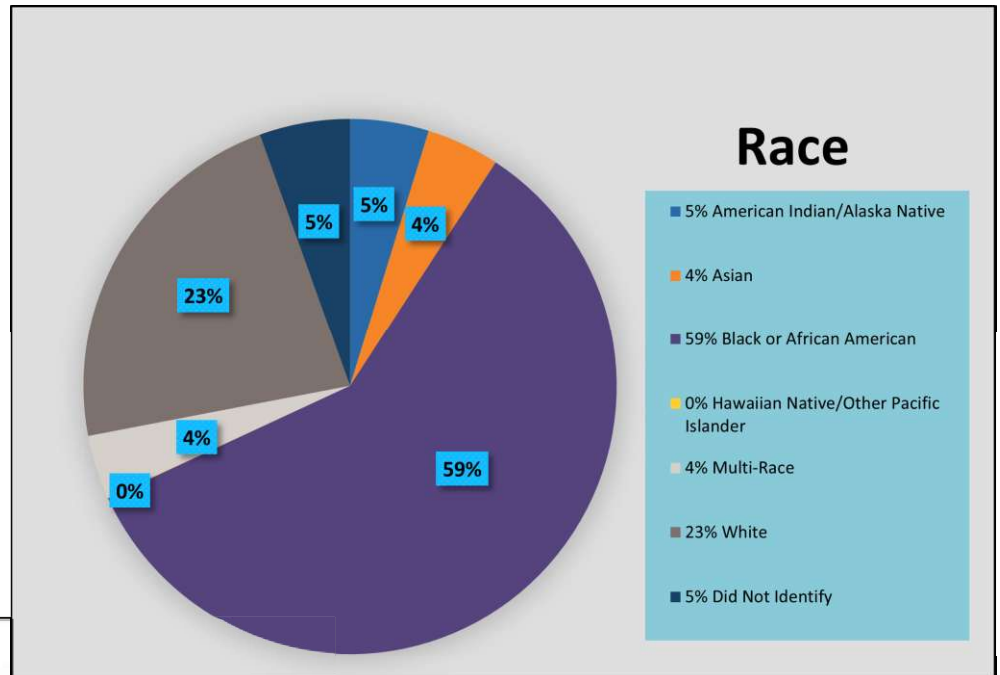
Helped youth gain jobs at an average wage of **\$17.42/hour**



Director Deb Bahr-Helgen addresses audience at a conference

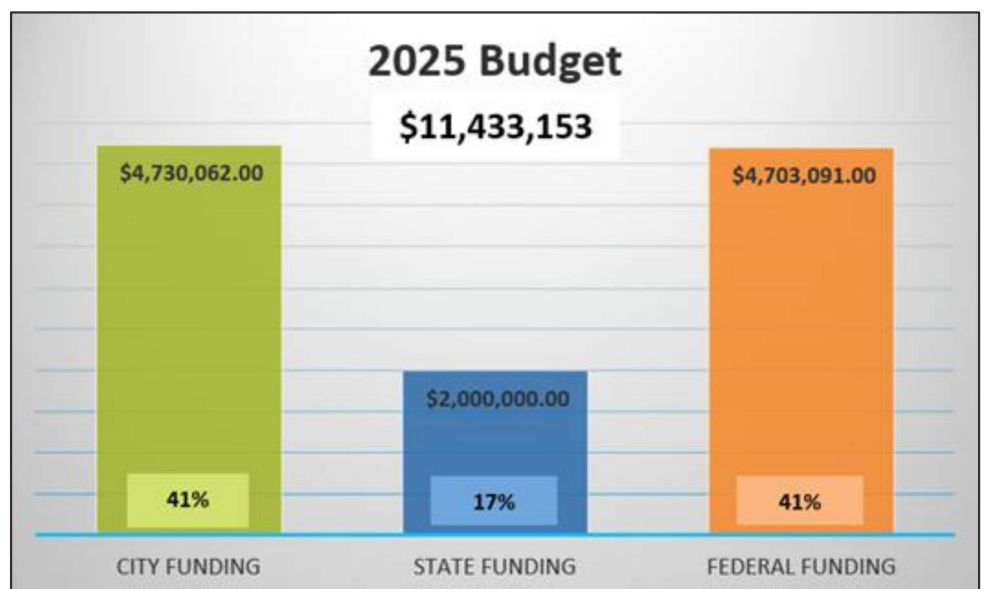
Who we serve

Equity is an emphasis in the programs and services MET provides. About 72% of the people served in 2025 were Black, Indigenous, or people of color. About 14% are people who identify as Hispanic or Latino. Approximately 55% of the total served were female.



Funding

MET braids together funding from federal, state, and city sources to provide workforce development programs and services to job seekers and businesses. Total budget for 2025 was \$11,433,153. The largest share of funding was nearly evenly split between city and federal funding. A smaller percentage (17.5%) came from the state. Slightly over half the funds (52%) were allocated to adult workforce programming.



Job Seeker services

Across programs, MET provides essential career services and skills training through a network of community-based nonprofit and government partners. Services include:

- Career counseling and assessment
- Job readiness training
- Resume building, cover letter writing, and interview practice
- Job search assistance
- Assistance connecting to and funding short-term education and job skill training
- Support services (financial assistance/referrals for: food, transportation, childcare, rent, utilities, etc.)

Adult programs

Career Pathways

No cost, short-term training and support services that lead to industry-recognized credentials and prepare job seekers for entry-level roles in manufacturing, healthcare and other high demand industries.

Career Works

Individualized career counseling services for adults seeking employment or looking to improve, update, or gain new employment skills.

Community Works

Individualized job search and job placement services for job-ready adults, ages 18 and older, who live in the City of Minneapolis.

Dislocated Worker program

Comprehensive career counseling services and training support for adults who have been laid off through no fault of their own and are unlikely to return to their previous occupation.

Ruling in her favor: A story of success

Jan enrolled in the Dislocated Worker program in April. She had been laid off due to government changes with USAID. While she had project management experience, Jan had been working in the international development sector for her entire 15-year career. Working with her counselor, she explored a Project Management Certificate program at the University of Minnesota. She attended and completed the 9-course program. With this training and her new credential, Jan was able to leverage her transferable skills to land a role within judicial advocacy. In late July, she began a full-time position. She now works as a Court Watch Program Manager and earns \$85,000 with full benefits.



Job seekers get help reviewing resumes, exploring career options, and learning new skills.

stepup

Step Up is more than a program. It's a way forward for hundreds of Minneapolis youth each year, offering more than 35,000 internships since 2003. Over 3,000 youth applied in 2025. Over 90% of applicants (2,802) were eligible and invited to training.

Of the 1,874 youth who completed spring work readiness training, 73% were matched with a paid career experience. This year, 659 youth were matched with a summer internship experience and 917 youth were offered the Career Exploration Program.

The online Career Exploration Program is offered during a 5-week window in the summer during which youth can work on 5-course modules at their own pace when their time allows. Youth can earn a total stipend of \$599 for the course – \$100 for each module completed with a \$99 bonus for completing all five.

Youth programs

Journey Forward

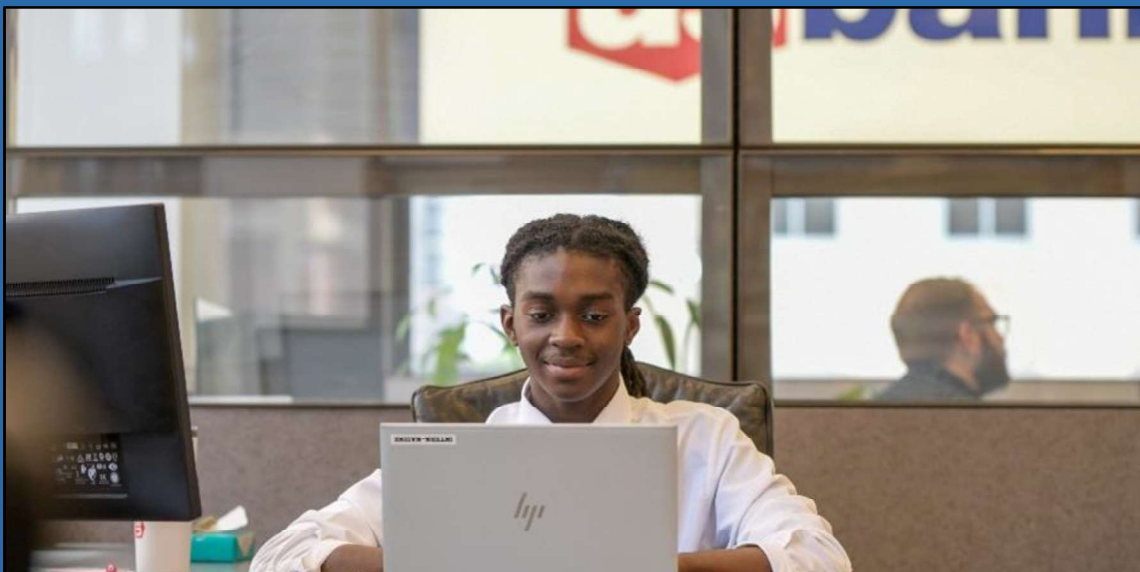
Wraparound support services to help justice-involved youth overcome barriers to completing education or getting and keeping a job.

Step Up

Preparing today's Minneapolis youth for tomorrow's careers through work readiness training, career exploration, and paid summer internships. Internships are with metro area public, private, and nonprofit organizations.

Youth Works

Year-round employment assistance for in-school and out-of-school youth including assistance with education completion, training, and employment support.

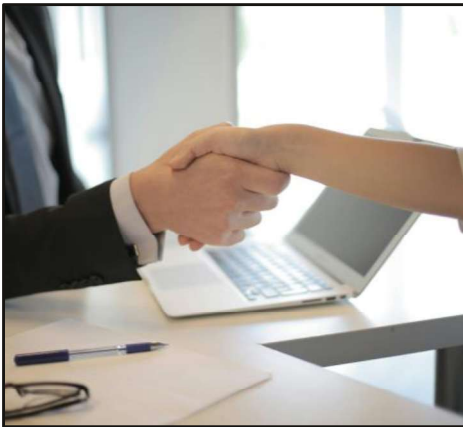


Step Up interns learn valuable skills in paid internships across a variety of industries.

Industry relations

Workforce consultation

MET staff actively engages with local businesses to identify current gaps and assist navigating the Minneapolis workforce landscape. Needs-based solutions range from general recruiting assistance, labor market information, and hiring fairs to connections to employment and training programs, workshops, events, and special initiatives. Two themed weeks brought special attention to strengthen and support Black and Latino-owned businesses.



Skills-based Hiring Accelerator

A half-day workshop reviewing best practices in talent acquisition and development, suitable for a novice or talent acquisition professional. The workshop reviews job descriptions, interviewing, and training practices geared to improve an organization's ability to access candidate knowledge and skills and improve retention. These tips and tools help build a more diverse and talented workforce. Workshop completers are also invited to join a community of practice.

Talent Development Program

A business-driven resource to help qualifying employers fund skill training for their full-time, permanent employees. Training could be in technical or business skills that help employers improve their processes and competitiveness and/or avert a layoff.



We have seen so much growth within our leadership team and are starting to see the effects trickle down to the rest of the team. The training I received alongside of my entire leadership team has helped me see my role as CEO in a different light and move into more of a coaching role. This has allowed my focus to remain on the bigger picture... We have never been such a smooth, effective, efficient, HAPPY team, and I know a lot of it has to do with the energy we have put in to finding the right fits, creating pathways for growth and development, and improved wages and benefits.

*Owner of a local bakery and
Talent Development Program participant*

Location-based services & initiatives



Apprenticeship Outreach Office

The Minneapolis Apprenticeship Outreach Office (AOO) is an information and navigation hub for people interested in registered apprenticeships. Registered apprenticeships provide a pathway into careers in many industries. Construction trades professionals, auto mechanics, teachers and community health workers are examples of rewarding careers available through registered apprenticeship. The AOO provides residents with an apprenticeship navigator, a valuable resource for anyone looking to start their career and earn while they learn.

Located in the CareerForce Minneapolis North location, the AOO is a partnership of the City of Minneapolis, the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry. Find more information at [Apprenticeship Outreach Office - City of Minneapolis](#).

Cedar Riverside Opportunity Center

Cedar Riverside Opportunity Center (CROC) is located in the heart of the Cedar Riverside neighborhood. It is a collaborative alliance between the City of Minneapolis, EMERGE Community Development, and the Hennepin County Library. CROC is committed to making a tangible difference in the lives of local residents.

Core to the mission

- Opportunity
- Empowerment

Services provided

- Skill training (CDL, nursing assistant, manufacturing, phlebotomy)
- Comprehensive job fairs
- Events (immigration and immigrant services, entrepreneurial services, financial literacy workshops, health and wellness programs)



MET is a proud partner of the American Job Center Network

CareerForce Minneapolis locations

CareerForce Minneapolis North
800 W. Broadway Ave.
Minneapolis, MN 55411

CareerForce Minneapolis South
777 E. Lake St.
Minneapolis, MN 55407

Acknowledgements

Many people work together to provide career-related programs and services to the residents of our city. We would like to acknowledge and thank them for their leadership and assistance including our network of community-based nonprofit and government partners, members of the MWDB, our elected officials, and the MET staff.

We provide programming and services to our residents through a network of community partners. In 2025, we had active funding agreements with seventeen organizations:

Apprenticeship Outreach Office

Building Strong Communities – Ward 5

Career Pathways

- AccessAbility, Inc. – Ward 1
- Asian Media Access – Ward 5
- Avivo – Ward 3, 5, 6
- CAPI USA – Ward 9
- EMERGE – Ward 2, 5
- Goodwill-Easter Seals of MN – Ward 8, 9, 11
- Hired – Ward 3
- Jewish Family & Children’s Service of MN – Ward 3
- Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota – Ward 6
- Pillsbury United Communities – Ward 5, 6, 9
- Project for Pride in Living – Ward 6
- Summit Academy OIC – Ward 5
- Tree Trust – Ward*
- Twin Cities RISE – Ward 5
- YWCA of Minneapolis – Ward 9

Career Works

- Avivo – Ward 3, 5, 6
- Project for Pride in Living – Ward 6

CareerForce Minneapolis North & South

- MN DEED – Ward 5, 9

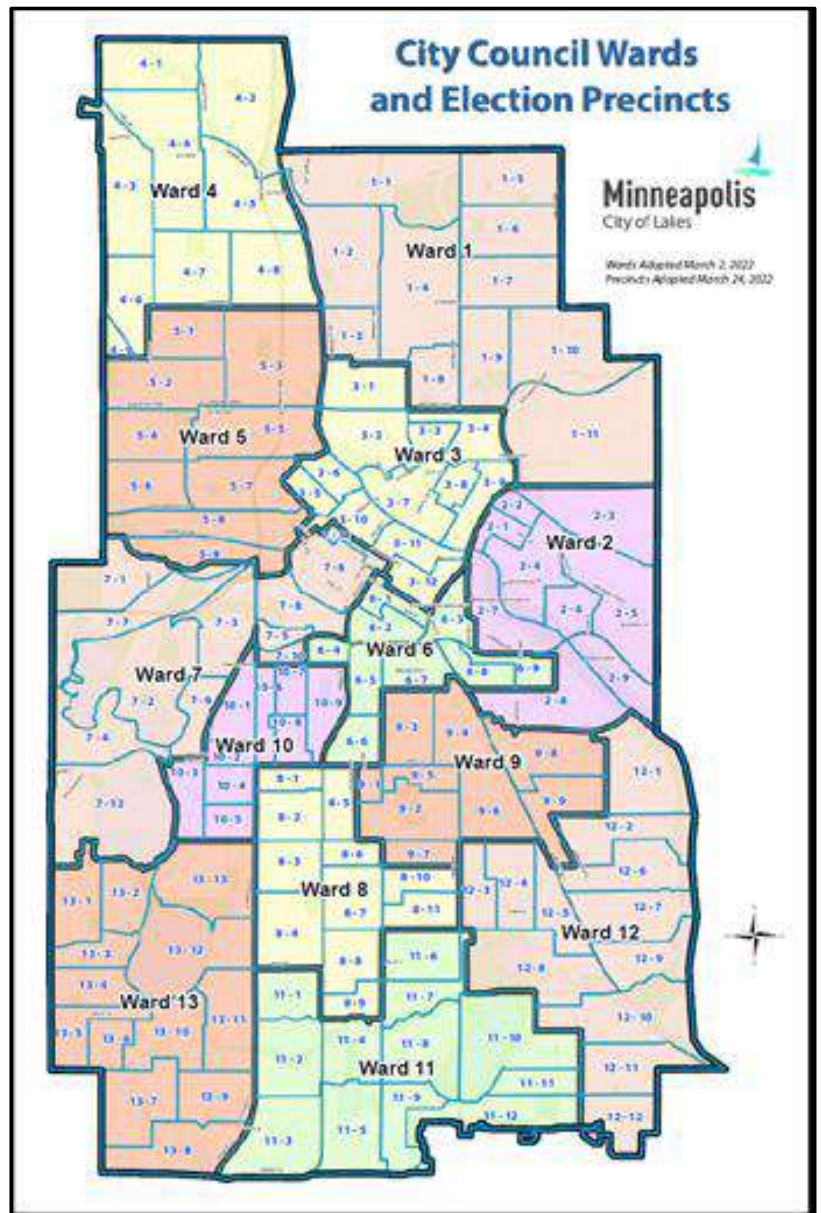
Cedar Riverside Opportunity Center

- EMERGE – Ward 2, 5

Community Works

- American Indian OIC – Ward 6
- CAPI USA – Ward 9
- EMERGE – Ward 2, 5
- Goodwill-Easter Seals of MN – Ward 8, 9, 11
- Minnesota Training Partnership – Ward*

*No brick-and-mortar service location in the City of Minneapolis



Dislocated Worker

- Hired – Ward 3
- MN DEED – Ward 5, 9

Step Up

- Achieve Twin Cities – Ward 7
- MN DEED – Ward 5, 9
- Project for Pride in Living – Ward 6

Youth Works / Journey Forward

- American Indian OIC – Ward 6
- Avivo – Ward 3, 5, 6
- Hired – Ward 3
- Pillsbury United Communities – Ward 5, 6, 9
- Project for Pride in Living – Ward 6

Minneapolis Workforce Development Board



Elected officials (as of Dec 2025)

Mayor

Jacob Frey, mayor

Business, Housing, & Zoning Committee

Jamal Osman, chair

City Council members

Elliott Payne, president,
Ward 1

Robin Wonsley, Ward 2

Michael Rainville, Ward 3

LaTrisha Vetaw, Ward 4

Jeremiah Ellison, Ward 5

Jamal Osman, Ward 6

Katie Cashman, Ward 7

Andrea Jenkins, Ward 8

Jason Chavez, Ward 9

Aisha Chughtai, vice
president, Ward 10

Emily Koski, Ward 11

Aurin Chawdhury, Ward 12

Linea Palmisano, Ward 13

Key staff

Deb Bahr-Helgen, director

Mark Brinda, manager

Felisha Burns,
administration

Matthew Courtney,
administration

The Minneapolis Workforce Development Board (MWDB) is a leader in CareerForce, Minnesota’s unified workforce system. MWDB is one Minnesota’s 16 local workforce boards, designated under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The MWDB is comprised of 21 members from business, workforce, education and training, government, and economic development stakeholders. It is private sector lead with over half of the members representing businesses both large and small. Members are appointed by the mayor and confirmed by City Council to three-year terms. The Business, Housing, & Zoning Committee of City Council oversees matters relating to economic development, such as employment and training.

MWDB’s [local and regional plans](#) guide the design of local workforce development programs and services in Minneapolis. This includes operations for CareerForce locations in north and south Minneapolis and the Cedar Riverside Opportunity Center. As a leading CareerForce partner, we are a key part of the programs and services delivered to career seekers and employers in our state. MWDB’s priorities include:

- Design career pathway programs and create partnerships that work to eliminate race-based and gender-based employment disparities.
- Foster access to quality community-based and culturally competent employment programming and resources, with a strategic focus on BIPOC communities.
- Be innovative and use community knowledge, business guidance, and community feedback to continually adjust our programming to meet the dynamics of the labor market.

Engagement opportunities

The MWDB encourages members to engage more deeply in workforce topics through activities and events. Examples of special events in 2025 included:

- Board member, Rosemary Ugboajah, testified before the MN Senate Jobs Committee.
- An educational event explored pathways into registered apprenticeship.
- Minnesota Skills-based Hiring Accelerator workshops coached employers on talent acquisition and development strategies.
- An expert panel discussed talent challenges and potential solutions for tomorrow’s tech sector.



Rosemary Ugboajah testifies before the Minnesota Senate Jobs Committee



A panel of experts discuss talent challenges and solutions at a MWDB-sponsored event

