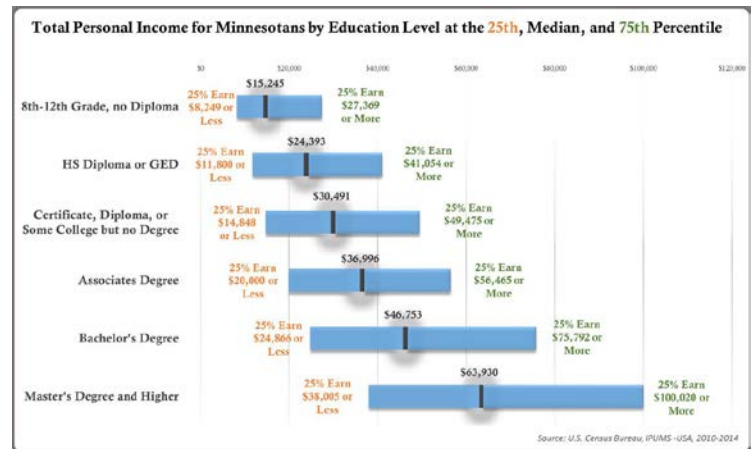
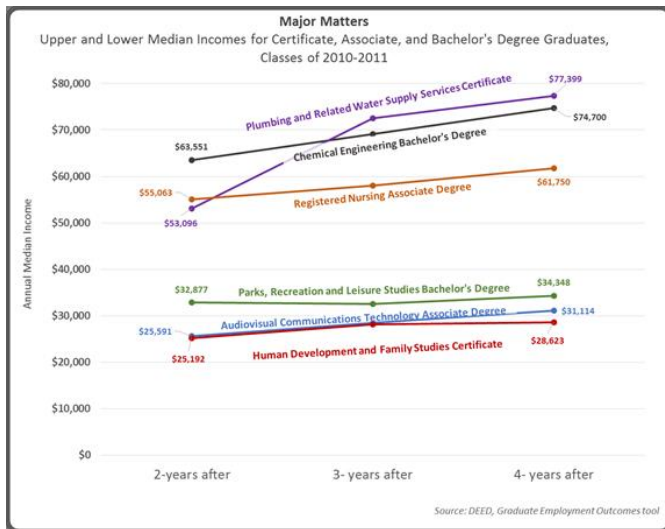


## Program/Initiative Title: Know Before You Go Campaign - WIOA Region 5

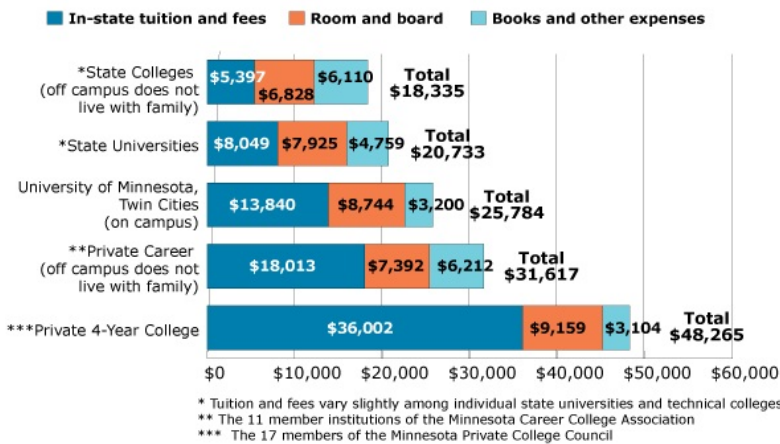
### (WDA 6 - Southwest MN PIC and WDA 7 - South Central MN)

#### Overview describing the innovative practice

Over the last year, the region has been conducting an asset mapping gap analysis of workforce development services with a focus on career counseling in high schools. In addition to noting the significant skilled labor shortage in the region, one of the striking needs was the need to provide current labor market information to students and their parents. Career counselors knew where to get the information but didn't have the time to research it and package it in a way that was easy for students to understand. Additionally, many career counselors and school administrators had no idea that there are so many great job opportunities for students that did not require a four year degree. To address this, Labor Market Infographics and the "Know Before You Go" campaign was developed. The Infographics were designed with the high school student in mind but are applicable to all job seekers. It was also important to create something that would be quick to read and understand and would be a way to educate parents as well. Parents are the number one influencer in a student's career decision and they tend to think that the only way to career success is with a four-year degree. The Infographics can be easily shared on social media such as Twitter, Facebook and on school websites, emails, newsletters, and other marketing tools. Schools, Chambers, EDA, ABE and others can access the Infographics free of charge on our websites. Two of the Infographics are below (reduced to fit on the page) demonstrating that approximately a third of the graduates with an Associate degree make more than half of those with a Bachelor degree. Other Infographics include the costs of education by degree type and college and current occupations in demand by degree. The Infographics have been very well received by the secondary schools and other partners. One school blew them up to make posters to hang in their hallways and another put them on the flyers they hand out during a sports game. It apparently created a buzz amongst parents in the stands.



**Figure 3: Average Annual Cost of Higher Education, Resident Undergraduate Attending a Minnesota College Full-Time, 2015-2016**



\* Tuition and fees vary slightly among individual state universities and technical colleges  
 \*\* The 11 member institutions of the Minnesota Career College Association  
 \*\*\* The 17 members of the Minnesota Private College Council

Source: U.S. Department of Education, IPEDS Institutional Characteristics Survey

Jobs in Demand In South Central Minnesota	
Credential, Certificate or Associate's Degree	Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Nursing Assistants \$25,136/yr	Sales Managers \$95,718/yr
Heavy & Tractor-Trailer Truck Drivers \$37,196/yr	Accountants and Auditors \$60,471/yr
Registered Nurses \$55,837/yr	Industrial Engineers \$72,620/yr
Welders, Cutters, Solderers, and Brazers \$37,964/yr	School Teachers, Except Special Ed \$54,061/yr
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational Nurses \$41,577/yr	Network & Computer Systems Administrators \$62,057/yr
Automotive Service Technicians & Mechanics \$37,407/yr	Financial Managers \$95,820/yr
Computer User Support Specialists \$42,052/yr	Physician Assistants \$102,714/yr
Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters \$56,983	Child, Family, & School Social Workers \$51,702/yr
Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics \$47,356/yr	Industrial Production Managers \$78,204/yr
Police & Sheriff's Patrol Officers \$49,054/yr	Clinical, Counseling & School Psychologists \$59,020/yr
Medical Secretaries \$34,559/yr	Construction Managers \$73,888/yr
Industrial Machinery Mechanics \$46,190/yr	Human Resources Managers \$81,050/yr

Positions are listed in order of demand with median wages.  
 Source: MN DEED Occupations in Demand, June 2016 <https://mn.deed.state.mn.us/ocd/infocenter/>  
 Prepared by the South Central Workforce Council

**Jobseeker impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for jobseekers)**



Current and future job seekers are able to use these Infographics to make more informed decisions about their career path and the educational investment that is right for them. With an estimated 26% of community college students and 49% of university students expected to complete within the measured timeframe (MN Office of Higher Education) and with the median debt for a 4-year degree being over \$30,000 per student, the long-term financial implications are significant. That is why we are promoting the “Know Before You Go” campaign symbolized by the lightbulb image. Many students pick their college before they pick their degree. We are encouraging students to first pick their degree with an understanding of the job market and then pick the school. Additionally, there is thinking among students and parents that a four-year degree, any type of degree, is the ticket to a great job and success. The truth is that most students don’t graduate with a marketable degree. For those that do graduate with a 4-year degree, many are under-employed and strapped with significant school debt. Couple that with the fact that in our region 64% of the students are planning to attend a 4-year college, but only 23% of jobs in the region require a 4-year degree. This “Know Before You Go” campaign and Infographics provides essential information to our current and future job seekers.

**Employer/Community impact (ie: benefits, outcomes for non-jobseekers)**

Manufacturers in our region have the work but are struggling to grow because they can’t find the skilled staff. A long-term care facility closed and others are struggling because of a shortage of nursing staff. Promoting in-demand positions and educating the current and futures job seekers about the excellent jobs that exist that don’t require a 4-year degree, will increase the number of job seekers who pursue those careers. This creates a larger pool of candidates for manufacturers and health care institutions to fulfill their labor needs, increasing not only the growth of those companies but the overall economy as well. With more hires, households end up with higher incomes. This in turn increases local spending and the local tax base that properly managed will improve the overall quality of life for all residents.

**Identification of those involved, including collaborators**

The workforce development staff from both local areas worked with DEED Labor Market Analyst Luke Greiner to create the Infographics. Once the Infographics were drafted, they were shown to both the South Central and Southwest Youth Council members and key stakeholders including secondary career counselors, workforce development staff, service collaboratives, employers, local economic development staff, ABE, community based organizations and others for input. The Infographics were then revised, finalized and distributed to all the superintendents, principals, and career counselors of secondary schools in the region. They were also sent to all workforce development board members, staff and partners.

**Leveraging/alignment of outside resources**

This initiative is truly a team effort with DEED's Labor Market staff, the workforce partners and school districts across the region. It is in the joint sharing and promoting of these Infographics that we will be impactful in increasing the number of job seekers who pursue the excellent, in-demand jobs in the region that do not require a 4-year degree. As a result of the campaign, there have been a greater number of invitations to speak to large groups of future job seekers and educators.

### **Ideas for replication/lessons learned**

The Infographics are available for free to anyone and can be found on both the South Central Workforce Center and Southwest Minnesota Private Industry Council's websites. Four of the five Infographics represent state data and can be used in all regions. The fifth Infographic stating the Occupations In Demand within a specific region can be easily replicated. In fact, other workforce development regions have already used the Infographics in a similar way.