

# **Training Works and Universal Application**

## **Anoka County Job Training Center**

### **WDA #12**

#### **Overview describing the innovative practice**

Anoka County Job Training Center (ACJTC) has developed a single application and entry point for customers to apply for services. These services are for employment and training opportunities with a variety of programs including the standard programs of Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), WIOA ISY, WIOA OSY, WIOA Adult, State and WIOA Dislocated Worker Programs but also the constantly changing grant opportunities including Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Low Income Worker Grant (MJSP), Disability Employment Initiative (DEI), Pathways to Prosperities (P2P), Adult WorkForce Development, TANF Innovations, Youth at Work, Pre-ETS, and Special Allocations. Business has changed for ACJTC as we receive smaller allocations for our programs than previous years and apply for more competitive funding with grant opportunities. This required our agency to change and streamline the application and intake process to assist customers with what funding is available to assist with their employment and training goals without completing multiple applications. It also allows for additional braiding of funding and co-enrollments to assist more people to be successful with their goals.

Anoka County Job Training Center has one application for all the programs listed above, in 2016 the intake team reviewed the multiple applications and developed the universal application which requires all program data fields to screen for basic eligibility of all programs. The intake team then reviews the application and notes all programs the customer is eligible. ACJTC has established a priority list for program referrals based on budgets and current grant opportunities.

The intake team also created a Training Works Orientation. It is offered twice a month and more often if necessary. It is an overview of all the programs and services (excluding Dislocated Workers as they have their own orientation). Along with the PowerPoint of services customers also complete the TABE Math and Reading Assessments, ask questions, complete the application and paperwork and schedule an appointment the next week with a counselor.

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

Anoka County Job Training Center has seen an increase in the number of customers receiving services. These process improvements have direct customer impact:

- Customers do not need to complete multiple applications
- Customers are referred to the correct program and counselor
- Customers access more services to be successful
- Offers streamlined program access and uncomplicates the enrollment process

Here are a few examples: A Dislocated Worker customer that wanted to utilize a P2P Career Pathway program did not need to complete another application as the Universal Application for the Dislocated Worker Program already verified eligibility.

Creating a single entry point for job seekers makes it easier for the job seeker to start a life changing commitment. Job seekers are not always sure what to do next especially when they have been unemployed or feeling stuck in a low paying job. The Training Works Orientation, Universal Application and knowledgeable intake team effectively identifies an appropriate program/counselor to provide assessments and resources to assist with a career pathway. Individuals that receive the support to complete training and begin working in an industry that matches their interest have reported greater job satisfaction which increases productivity and job retention.

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

Through the streamlined process the Job Training Center provides more access to employment and training services for jobseekers to obtain employment in the community. By helping individuals improve their foundation skills and earn a credential, we ensure that individuals have the skills to qualify for and keep good jobs and close the skills gap for employers by providing skilled workers.

### **Identification of those involved, including collaborators**

The universal application was developed by multiple inter-agency program staff. The idea stemmed from the work with FastTRAC in 2012 when Adult Basic Education (ABE) and The Job Training Center combined the application to avoid duplication. This was a best practice and the Job Training Center moved forward to implement it in all programs with eligibility to avoid duplication. It not only avoided duplication but created an easy opportunity to identify additional funding streams. Programs that partner with ABE still share applications to avoid duplication for customers.

### **Leveraging/alignment of outside resources**

This project is aligning and leveraging resources through one entry point and co-enrollments. Current funding includes: Minnesota Youth Program (MYP), WIOA ISY, WIOA OSY, WIOA Adult, State and WIOA Dislocated Worker Programs, Minnesota Job Skills Partnership Low Income Worker Grant (MJSP), Disability Employment Initiative (DEI), TAA, SP-NEG, TANF Innovations, Youth at Work, Pre-ETS, and Special Allocations.

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

Over the last year the ACJTC application has been shared with the other WDA to replicate. It is also available online and the Job Training Center continues to work with DEED on accepting electronic signatures. Each area may need to modify the application to meet the needs of their funding programs and the local area requirements.