



Minnesota Workforce Council Association

The Minnesota Workforce Council Association is a statewide member-based coalition representing the 16 Workforce Service Area (WSA) organizations operating under the federal Workforce Investment Act.

Membership:

Each WSA has three voting members:

- Chief Local Elected Official
- Workforce Investment Board Chair
- WSA Director

Functions:

- Represent the interests of local employment and training partners throughout the state
- Provide a forum to discuss common interests
- Develop policy consensus and share information with elected officials
- Share and communicate successful strategies among partners
- Provide training on emerging issues within the workforce system
- Encourage the development of members and boards
- Serve as a liaison to state and federal entities

Mission:

It is the mission of the Minnesota Workforce Council Association to provide Minnesota with a skilled and competitive workforce through engaged and proactive local elected officials, workforce investment boards, and staff.

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Staff

MWCA has one full time Director, and contracts for office space and administrative support through the Association of Minnesota Counties. An organizational chart can be found at the end of this document.

Committees

MWCA has three standing committees, and several Ad-Hoc committees. These are staffed by the MWCA Director.

Standing Committees

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee consists of the Chair, Vice Chair, Operations Chair, Treasurer and four at-large members. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Association must be a WIB Chair or LEO.

Legislative Committee

The Legislative Committee is responsible for spearheading the ratification of the state and federal legislative platforms.

Operations Committee

The Operations Committee is made up of the sixteen Workforce Service Area Directors, and meets monthly.

Ad Hoc Committees

Meet as necessary and include staff from state level agencies and partner organizations. Current and previous committees include:

- Minnesota Family Investment Program (TANF)
- Adult/Dislocated Worker
- Youth
- Funding/Sustainability
- Business Services/Economic Development
- WIB Development
- “Gang of Eight” (policy implementation)

MWCA Annual Meetings

The full Association meets twice per year.

Summer Meeting

The MWCA Summer Meeting is typically held the second week of August. MWCA members, local staff, WIB members, and key staff from our partnering Administrative Departments are invited.

For the past several years, this event has been held in conjunction with our state-wide WIB, the Minnesota Governor’s Workforce Development Council (GWDC). The GWDC typically meets on the afternoon of the second Tuesday in August; a joint reception sponsored by the GWDC and MWCA is held Tuesday evening. Local legislative leaders and previous MWCA members have enjoyed joining in this portion of the event.

On Wednesday, the morning agenda usually features a keynote speaker, co-sponsored by the GWDC. A WIB/LEO Lunch is held Wednesday afternoon while the Operations Committee meets, with partner reports following. A social event is held Wednesday evening, and internal MWCA business is done on Thursday morning.

The Summer Meeting also features Promising Practices, more information on program can be found on our website: http://www.mwca-mn.org/workforce_system.htm

Winter Meeting

The MWCA Winter Meeting is typically a one-day meeting. While topics vary, this event tends to focus at least in part on preparing for the Legislative Session; MWCA elections are also held at this meeting.

Handouts and agendas from the MWCA's Summer and Winter meetings can be found on our website: www.mwca-mn.org/meetings.htm

Special Projects

MWCA staffs many state-wide projects on behalf of members.

Mystery Shopper Program

The Mystery Shopper Program is a bi-annual "secret shopper" initiative designed to evaluate customer service within the WorkForce Center System. The purpose of the program is to gather consistent information about the quality of service provided by all of the WorkForce Centers (Minnesota's One-Stops) throughout the state. This information is obtained by WorkForce Center staff members who visit each other's centers as "clients", to observe and record measureable examples of good service as well as aspects that needed improvement. Results can be found here: <http://www.mwca-mn.org/reports.htm>

Return on Investment

For several years, the MWCA has calculated a Return on Investment for the programs delivered by the WIA Title IB partners in the WorkForce Centers. The formula was derived with help from volunteers from one of Minnesota's premier businesses, IBM, based in Southeast Minnesota. The ROI data is used internally for year-to-year management by Directors and WIBs, and is also shared with legislators.

Promising Practices

Each year, MWCA encourages each WSA to submit Promising Practices from their area. The submissions are then reviewed by staff of the Governor's Workforce Development Council, the Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Minnesota FastTRAC staff, and the National Association of Workforce Boards and the staff of DOL Region 5. Awards are given based on pre-determined criteria. Each area also has the opportunity to "showcase" a promising practice at the MWCA Summer Meeting.

Local Orientation Guide

MWCA partnered with the GWDC to create a template for local areas to use as an Orientation Guide for their members. Information that is consistent regardless of which WIB a member serves on is included, along with pages that can be customized at the local level. The Orientation Guide can be found on the MWCA website: www.mwca-mn.org

Strategic Planning

MWCA frequently leads strategic planning processes, both internally and with partner organizations across the state.

Advocacy Activities

Platform Development

Each year, MWCA creates a Federal and State platform, outlining priorities for the year. Additional information including white papers, policy background information, and our 2010 Legislative Wrap Up can be found on the MWCA website: www.mwca-mn.org/legislative.

White Papers

MWCA creates white papers on topics of interest to brief members and legislators about how policy decisions may impact the local workforce system.

Congressional Meetings/Congressional Reception

In conjunction with the National Association of Workforce Boards Conference, MWCA staff organizes meetings with the Minnesota Congressional Delegation for those who wish to participate. In addition, MWCA and the Wisconsin Workforce Development Association co-sponsor a Congressional Reception on the Hill for Congressional Members, Legislative Staff, and other Minnesotans who have been transplanted to the D.C. area.

Day at the (State) Capitol

Each year, MWCA sponsors a Day at the Capitol. Legislators from key committees are invited to a morning breakfast meeting with MWCA members from across the state, at which they are briefed on priorities of those from their home districts. MWCA staffs a room which members can use as a “home base” as they visit their legislators or attend hearings throughout the rest of the day.

Youth Rally Day at the Capitol

In addition to federal Youth money, the Minnesota Legislature invests in a Summer Youth employment program.

MWCA is a member of the Youth Policy Alliance, a coalition of state-wide youth serving organizations, associations and alliances working together to ensure sound youth policy decisions in Minnesota. The YPA has come together to create a framework of support that ensures all children and youth move into adulthood ready for life.

The Rally for Youth Day at the Capitol was created so that hundreds of participants from dozens of organizations throughout Minnesota could come together to rally behind common issues.

Trainings

MWCA provides, and partners with other groups to provide, training on a variety of topics throughout the year through webinars, seminars, speakers, and special events.

MWCA is also a cosponsor of the state-wide Development Conference, along with DEED, the University of Minnesota, the State Colleges and Universities, the Economic Development Association of Minnesota and the Department of Education.

Participation in State and National Groups

MWCA strongly encourages members to take part in state and national organizations, to ensure that the voice of the locally-driven Workforce Development System is heard. In addition to participating in many national and state-wide initiatives, MWCA currently has representation in the following groups:

- National Association of Counties
- US Conference of Mayors
- National Association of Workforce Boards
- National Workforce Association
- National Skills Coalition
- Great Lakes Employment and Training Association
- Governor's Workforce Development Council (State WIB)
- Minnesota FastTRAC (Training Resources And Credentialing for Pathways to Sustainable Employment)
- Association of Minnesota Counties Board