



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: City programs generate \$1 million into Duluth economy

BY: Pakou Ly

City Programs generate \$1 Million into Duluth economy

The City of Duluth Workforce Development office reports that during the period of July 2009 to July 2010, its employment programs generated over \$1 million to boost the Duluth economy and helped over 400 people gain critical skills to move towards permanent employment. The Workforce Development office provides employment and training opportunities to individuals age 16 and higher. Participants receive assistance with writing resumes, computer training, pursuing educational goals, developing interview skills, obtaining hands on experience, and developing a strong work ethic. Participation requirements vary by program. Some programs also provide wage subsidies to employers in order for workers to gain experience and build up their work history. Federal and state funds support Workforce Development programs.

“Our goal is improving lives and helping to sustain the prosperity of Duluth residents through education and training, on the job training, and technical assistance. We provide more than just the basic skills so people can become marketable as workforce needs evolve,” says Don Hoag, Duluth’s Workforce Development Manager.

One such program, Youth Employment Services (YES), helped over 300 youth gain critical skills for employment by placing them in summer jobs or connecting them with education and training programs. Kevin, a young man with cerebral palsy, faced significant challenges to finding employment. Through the YES program and with assistance from the Vocational Rehabilitation Services, Kevin acquired new equipment to help him stand up from his wheel chair to reach and clean shelves for his summer placement at Super One. He impressed the manager so much; he was offered a regular part time job. The YES program also helped Tyler, a young man who had a difficult childhood, finish his GED and enroll at Lake Superior College. Tyler has become a role model and is now working with an after school program at Valley Youth Center.

The Senior Employment Services program helped close to 100 seniors, including Leora, a retired LPN and veteran. Leora gained the skills, education and confidence needed to get back into the healthcare industry with Workforce Development and the Veteran's Administration helping to pay for classes and hands on training. The Veteran's Administration hospital offered Leora a job well-suited to her medical training and veteran experience.

“We have a talented workforce waiting to be tapped. Through Workforce programs, we can help workers of all generations gain confidence and develop skills they need to seek employment and become sustainable. Helping people gain permanent employment not only benefits the individual but also contributes to long term community viability,” says Mayor Don Ness.

Anyone with questions about these programs can contact the Workforce Development office at (218) 730-5770.

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