

ADDRESSING DIVERSITY

Making a Difference in Our Communities

Center for Rural Policy and Development



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As with most projects, this one would never have gotten off the ground if not for the assistance, support and hard work of many individuals and organizations. In that regard, we cannot say enough about the hard work of Erica Crone, a master's student in the urban and regional studies program at Minnesota State University, Mankato. Erica invested a year of her master's program in this project; and while it would have exhausted most of us, I believe it simply affirmed for her a desire to work with city governments and local groups when she graduates. By the end of the year, Erica had visited dozens of communities throughout the state, interviewed hundreds of individuals and proved her value as a member of the research team.

We also must thank the League of Minnesota Cities and particularly recognize Eric Willette and Mary Margaret Zindren. From the very beginning it was clear that the League hoped for a "companion document" to their recently released, *Building Inclusive Communities*, that local governments could use in designing their diversity activities. Eric, always the researcher, helped us hone our initial and secondary interview schedules and provided valuable insight and support. Mary Margaret worked with graphic designer Kristin Hankwitz to ensure that the two documents would be seen as companions. A special thanks to Kristin for her fine work designing the cover. Needless to say, our partnership with the League has been great.

We also would like to recognize those foundations that saw value in the project and provided the resources to get the job done. These include the Otto Bremer Foundation of St. Paul, the Southwest Minnesota Foundation of Hutchinson, and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation of Eagan. While we know that grant making is a routine activity for these organizations, we also recognized a special excitement they had for this effort. Thanks again.

Special thanks also go to the board of directors of the Center for Rural Policy and Development, whose 19 members are spread across the state, from Thief River Falls to Fairmont; and Duluth to Houston. It was the board who quickly recognized how significant these demographic changes were and how they are impacting Minnesota and its future. Without their go-ahead, this project never would have taken its first step.

And lastly, we wanted to save our final acknowledgement to all of the city managers, city clerks, human resource directors, school administrators and others who responded to our many requests. Whether it was a phone interview, a site visit, or our endless follow-up questions to clarify a point, their willingness to share with us was greatly appreciated.

Foreword

The Center for Rural Policy and Development was established in 1997, dedicated to the study of the economic, social and cultural forces that impact Minnesota's rural communities and residents. Shortly after the center's establishment, it became clear that the significant and sometimes extraordinary increases in immigration throughout Minnesota were an issue worthy of our attention. Today, quite a number of communities throughout the state that were once culturally homogeneous are now truly diverse communities. And as Martha McMurray's analysis of the 2000 census data suggests, of equal importance is the speed in which this transformation has occurred.

In April 2000, working with the Region Nine Development Commission, the Center released its first diversity report, an examination of the economic impact of the Latino workforce in a nine-county region in southern Minnesota. Using data from the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, we discovered that approximately one-third of the workforce in the agricultural processing plants in the study area were Latino and generated over \$400 million in economic value. More importantly, we calculated that this workforce generated approximately \$45 million in state and local taxes. It was a study that made us want to learn more about this phenomenon.

Approximately one year later, in December 2001, collaborating with the Minneapolis-based Hispanic Advocacy and Community Empowerment through Research (HACER) and the Minnesota Chicano Latino Affairs Council, we released our second diversity report, entitled, "The Viability of Latino Communities in Rural Minnesota." It was a report that documented the concerns and issues of Latino residents in seven rural Minnesota communities.

After the release of the report in December 2001 we had a real desire to provide some tangible assistance to communities that were experiencing this rapid demographic transformation. We found that, as with most things, some communities were very active in their diversity efforts while other communities were not. But what could we do? While we were learning more and more about these issues, we were far from being the experts on diversity issues. Then it became clear that we should do what we do best: research. Accordingly, we began to compile a list of programs that various communities were currently engaged in. To help communities looking for good ideas about diversity programs and to avoid "reinventing the wheel," we have compiled these programs into a user-friendly format for all to see and learn from. But there were several steps involved in the completion of this document.

The first step of course, was to identify those Minnesota communities that have experienced rapid demographic change due to increased immigration. To do this we went to the 2000 Census and identified those communities with a population of more than 1,000 and either experienced at least a 100-percent increase in their minority residents since 1990, or whose minority population now comprised at least 10 percent of the total population. To our great surprise, more than 80 Minnesota communities made it through these two screens. Equally surprising was that approximately one-third of the communities were located in the Twin Cities metro area;

one-third were located in rural Minnesota; and one-third were suburban communities. Clearly, this was an issue that impacts all of Minnesota.

Table 1: Growth in Populations of Color 1990-2000.

Source: Census 2000 Summary File 1

<u>Metro Communities</u>	<u>%Change</u>		<u>% Change</u>
Brooklyn Center	206.5%	Champlin	194.3%
Crystal	132.5%	Dayton	138.0%
Edina	99.7%	Excelsior	148.6%
Hopkins	278.8%	Maple Grove	118.6%
New Hope	138.2%	Richfield	190.4%
Robbinsdale	170.9%	Little Canada	196.3%
Mounds View	166.9%	New Brighton	137.5%
North St. Paul	93.1%	Roseville	105.0%
St. Paul Park	129.7%	Vadnais Heights	144.4%
West St. Paul	152%	White Bear Lake	133.6%
 <u>Suburban Communities</u>			
Anoka	162.6%	Blaine	142.6%
Columbia Heights	175.9%	Fridley	144.8%
Hilltop	185.5%	Lexington	122.1%
Lino Lakes	301.0%	Chaska	537.2%
Chanhassen	298.2%	Shakopee	496.6%
Rush City	1,070.0%	Apple Valley	200.2%
Inver Grove Heights	215.3%	Lakeville	268.3%
Rosemount	282.6%	South St. Paul	168.5%
Jordan	541.5%	Prior Lake	142.7%
Savage	412.5%	Cottage Grove	137.4%
Oakdale	235.8%	Woodbury	292.3%
 <u>Rural Communities</u>			
Mankato	117.3%	Austin	327.3%
Sleepy Eye	318.9%	St. Peter	135.1%
Dilworth	126.7%	Worthington	375.0%
Mountain Lake	282.2%	Fairfax	1,816.7%
Renville	150.9%	Albert Lea	104.7%
Northfield	177.9%	Red Wing	134.1%
Willmar	137.7%	Le Center	1,014.3%
Le Sueur	1,070.3%	Montgomery	778.4%
Marshall	314.0%	Tracy	747.1%
Litchfield	101.0%	Arlington	711.8%
Gaylord	692.9%	Winthrop	171.4%
Owatonna	268.2%	Long Prairie	1,035.7%
Winona	114.0%	Granite Falls	311.9%

After identifying the communities of interest, we began contacting the city manager or city clerk of each community to learn whether there were any programmatic efforts under way to address this increasing diversity in their town. While we understood that the city manager (or any single point of contact for that matter) would not be able to provide specific details about programs in their community, we believed

that they would likely know if such a program existed, and more importantly, give us the name of a local contact who could give us the detailed information we wanted. This type of interviewing is called “snowballing” by some, where one interviewee provides the name of other potential interviewees, until the detailed information is provided.

It is important to recognize that there are many diversity activities under way in communities across Minnesota that are not recognized in this document. There are many reasons for this, the least of which is that they are happening in communities that did not pass our screens when we analyzed the Census data. But instead of trying to identify every program, we worked to find definable programmatic efforts, ones that are replicable and sustainable in another community. In many communities we found wonderful diversity activities that were very short-term, such as festivals and one-time community get-togethers, or those that depended upon the hard work of one or two caring volunteers. While we applaud these efforts, we wanted to document activities that were more structured and programmatic. And lastly, we found many communities that were either currently planning new diversity activities, or just recently started. Consequently, there was not yet enough information about these activities to warrant their documentation.

Through this process we developed a list of community-based activities and then tried to select those that were the most programmatic, had been in operation for at least a year and were replicable. Needless to say, that greatly reduced the list further. And our final step was to visit these programs to learn about them from those who operate them.

Note that in the document we have attempted to cluster the programs into substantive groups or chapters. This of course was done to help the reader find programs in their areas of interest. But in some ways these chapters were created in a somewhat arbitrary fashion. For what we found was that many of these programs are multi-functional, serving their community and the immigrant population in a variety of ways. As such, I hope that you do not find these chapters somewhat limiting.

If there is one insight that we have learned from this yearlong process, it is that Minnesota is just beginning its transformational journey from being a culturally homogeneous state to a truly diverse one. Change takes time; and Minnesota is clearly changing. We heard the many voices of impatience with this slowness of change, especially among those actively engaged in community-based diversity activities. But at the same time, in so many communities across Minnesota we learned of events, programs and activities being planned and the recognition by community leaders that more needs to be done. Consequently, we believe that while we need the voices of impatience to push us all further and faster, we should not lose sight of the hard work that many have already done and are currently engaged in.

My hope is that that this volume does justice to all those who are striving to help their community become a more inclusive place. And my other hope is that the many programs that are being planned are implemented quickly, so that within a short period of time this volume will be thoroughly out of date.

Jack Geller, President
Center for Rural Policy and Development

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Chapter One: Making a Welcoming Place

Minnesota is a state rich in the cultural heritage of immigrants past and present. From our Norwegian, Swedish, German, Czech and Irish pioneers, to the Latino, Southeast Asian and African immigrants of today, people from across the globe continue to arrive each day for jobs, education, safety and a better way of life. However, we need to recognize that such transitions are never easy, not then and not now.

As noted in this volume's foreword, dozens and dozens of cities and towns across Minnesota have experienced a virtual explosion of color, language and culture. Immigration has impacted communities in our central cities, our growing suburbs and our small rural communities. For some cities these new Minnesotans serve to strengthen and bolster an already existing minority community; while in other towns, immigration is literally transforming once small, culturally homogeneous communities into truly diverse ones. However, it is important to realize that regardless of the situation, immigrating to a new community, learning a new language and deciphering a new culture is never easy.

This is especially true for newcomers who are often low income, seeking work, looking for affordable housing, have significant language barriers and who don't fully understand our American/Midwestern culture. However, more and more communities across Minnesota are recognizing this reality and are establishing community structures and programs to aid immigrants with this adjustment. Some have established welcome centers, newcomer centers or refugee assistance programs, one-stop locations where new residents, especially those with cultural or language difficulties can receive hands-on information and referral services. Such hands-on assistance is greatly appreciated by those who are uncertain or confused about where services, housing or community assistance can be obtained. Other communities are printing municipal documents in multiple languages, establishing cultural diversity councils and hiring cultural diversity liaisons to assist both immigrants and the majority community members in this transition.

In addition to such programs, many Minnesota communities have established Human Rights Commissions. Aided by the Minnesota League of Human Rights Commissions, well over 50 city governments have now established a Human Rights Commission and in doing so, are making a clear statement in their community that there is a structure within city government to address the needs and concerns of all community members.

In this chapter, "Making a Welcoming Place," we have highlighted a variety of community-based initiatives designed to aid immigrants in their transition to their new community. Some of these programs are city-sponsored; others are initiated by non-profit community groups; and many are funded through the collaborative efforts of both public and private organizations.

Action Theatre

Program Mission:

To use theater to help people identify and understand the difficult issues that arise in a community of growing diversity, creating a more accepting and inclusive population.

The Community:

The historical river town of Winona sits on the banks of the Mississippi River in southeast Minnesota and is one of the oldest cities in Minnesota. The city had a population of 27,069 in 2000 with a minority population of 6.3%. During the 1990s, the total population increased 6.3%. The white population rose 6.6%, while the non-white population increased by 124%. The largest minority group in 2000 were Asians at 2.7% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 1.3% and Black and African-Americans at 1.1%. In the Winona Area Public Schools, non-white students make up 8.9% of total enrollment. Non-white enrollment by grade varied from 12.5% in the kindergarten class to 5.1% in the 12th-grade class in 2002-03.

Winona has more than 100 manufacturing firms. The largest, TRW Automotive Electronics and Fastenal employ over 900 workers each. Winona Health (hospital) and Winona State University are two other large employers.

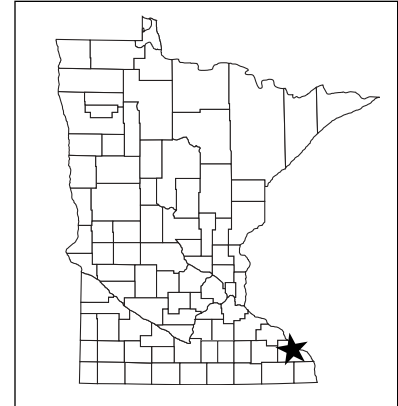
History:

In 1999 several Winona residents attended a performance by the “Theatre of the Oppressed,” an interactive and improvisational theater company created by Brazilian director and social activist Augusto Boal. Seeing a need for a similar form of communication in Winona, these community members started Action Theatre with the mission of promoting dialogue about issues such as race, class, gender, sexual orientation, age and disability. The goal of the theater’s organizers is to produce interactive performances customized for their audience that help people, especially the participants, improve their ability to name, address and better understand these issues. Their chief audiences are educational institutions, businesses, and non-profit organizations. Action Theatre added a youth theater group in the spring of 2003.

Program Description:

Action Theatre develops programs for school groups and organizations customized for their audience with the goal of helping them realize things they have in common with one another. Action Theatre has held performances at the Catholic Worker Roundtable, Exchange Club of Winona, Holmen High School, Rochester Open Door Conference, St. Charles High School, La Crescent High School, St. Mary’s University, Winona High School, Winona Human Right’s Commission, Winona Occupational Rehabilitation Center, Winona SEED, Winona State University, WSU’s Residential College, and Women’s Resource Center.

The theater group’s newest endeavor is Youth Action Theatre, made up of students from the local Youth Leadership for Vital Communities and Prism, the high



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school diversity club. Youth Action Theatre has performed at local high schools and elementary schools, working to increase the student's cross-cultural skills, helping both the participants and audience better understand that even though there are people different from themselves, they all have a lot in common.

The theater group uses a method called "forum theater," which brings audience members on stage to participate in a brief scene portraying a situation. In the scene itself, the problem is left unsolved, then the audience is invited to suggest or act out solutions. The scenes stimulate debate, helping the audience generate alternate ways of dealing with the tough scenes of everyday life. This type of theater becomes a medium in which to explore solutions to larger social problems.

Funding:

Action Theatre is made up of volunteers and is supported by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, local Winona charities and private donations. The Adult Action Theatre charges a fee of \$400 per performance; the details of the Youth Action Theatre are still in the development stages.

Centro Campesino

Program Mission:

The mission of Centro Campesino is to serve as a community resource and advocate for Latino farm workers and rural residents in south central Minnesota.

The Community:

The city of Owatonna, one of Minnesota's larger rural cities, is located in the southeastern part of the state, on I-35 south of the Twin Cities. The city is surrounded by rich agricultural land, but the area has also developed a diversified economy with a variety of firms from the manufacturing, retail, and service sectors.

The population of Owatonna in 2000 was 22,434, with minorities comprising 8.2% of the population. Between 1990 and 2000, Owatonna's population increased 15.7%, but unlike many rural communities, the city's white population actually increased, growing by 9.1%. During the same time, the number of non-white residents increased by 268%. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 4.3% of the total population, followed by Black/African-Americans at 1.6%. Non-white students made up 14% of total enrollment in Owatonna public schools during the 2002-03 school year. Non-white enrollment by grade was at a fairly consistent 13% to 18%, except in the 12th grade, which was 9.3%.

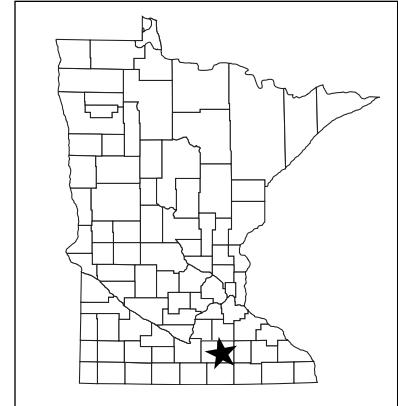
The largest employers in Owatonna are Federated Insurance Inc. and Viracon/Curvlite Inc., a glass manufacturing firm employing over 1,600 workers. Other major employers include the school district and the hospital, retail outlets, including large ones like Cabela's, numerous smaller manufacturing firms, and Lakeside Foods, a produce processing firm.

History:

In 1997 the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, in collaboration with the Extension Service, conducted a survey of migrant workers in south central Minnesota. The initial purpose of the study was to initiate curriculum reform at the University of Minnesota regarding issues associated with farm workers. Early into the study Kathryn Gilje, a graduate student at the time, met Victor Contreras who was already working at Chiquita Processed Foods, a local canning plant in Owatonna. Soon they were organizing meetings with local farm workers and creating committees at the three housing camps owned and operated by Chiquita Processed Foods.

From these weekly meetings Centro Campesino was established to serve as an organization advocating the needs and rights of workers in the camps. The organization at times took on a watchdog-type role and organized around a union-like structure, with members paying annual dues of \$10. In 2000 the organization held its first election for its board of directors and in 2001 began receiving financial support from the Minneapolis Foundation.

Today Centro Campesino is co-directed by Victor Contreras and Kathryn Gilje.



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Victor Contreras or
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The organization serves as the voice of hundreds of Latinos, both farm workers and non-farm workers. While the organization still maintains its roots in farm worker issues and its advocacy role, it has evolved into an organization that maintains a core of programs and services under the direction of its board of directors. In addition to its core programs, it is important to recognize the information and referral role the organization plays for Latino farm workers and families in south central Minnesota.

Program Description:

Some of the services provided by Centro Campesino include:

Day care – One of the first areas of need identified by the workers was in the area of child care. Such concerns are central to all families, but are of particular importance to shift workers who start their work day at unusual hours. In this case there was great need to provide care between 5 a.m., when workers began their day, and 8 a.m., when children go to school or to other programs. Centro Campesino negotiated with the employer to utilize one housing unit in each of the camps for such a purpose.

Housing – Housing is one of the most common areas of need for immigrants throughout Minnesota. Centro Campesino provides housing referral services, landlord remediation, and translation services on behalf of the Latino residents. Working with the University of Minnesota, Centro Campesino recently conducted a survey of housing needs in the area. From this study the organization determined that affordable housing for farm workers in the Montgomery area was in very short supply. Consequently, the organization now has an option on eight acres in Montgomery and has applied through the USDA Farm Labor Housing Program to build five triplexes and seven duplexes on the site. In total the development will have 29 housing units, with roughly half (15) being rental units for farm worker families.

Youth Enrichment/Leadership - Club Latino is an after-school enrichment and leadership development program for Latino youth in both the Owatonna and Waseca public schools. Centro Campesino coordinates the program in collaboration with the area's U of M Extension Educator and the public schools. Currently 48 Latino children from the Owatonna public schools and 40 Latino children from the Waseca public schools are participating.

Community Health Workers – Building bridges between the Latino community and local health providers is an important role of Centro Campesino, as many immigrant families simply do not access healthcare. The organization operates a Community Health Worker program, where local Latino residents serve as health workers to assist Spanish-speaking residents in accessing healthcare services. Such services include providing information about preventive healthcare and other services, serving as medical interpreters and ensuring transportation to and from healthcare visits.

Program Outcomes:

Since its formal organization in 2000, Centro Campesino has established itself as a non-profit corporation serving as one of the primary voices of farm workers in south central Minnesota and the state as a whole. The organization continues to

grow and explore new areas of advocacy and services. Included are the possibilities of further affordable housing developments for farm workers, as well as the facilitation of a charter school for Latino students in the area.

Funding:

Centro Campesino currently has six full-time employees and two part-time employees. Funding for Centro Campesino programs come from a variety of sources, including membership dues and program fees. However, the majority of funding comes from grants from both government and foundation sources. Centro Campesino's budget for 2003 is approximately \$340,000.

Worthington Citizen's Academy

Program Mission:

The Worthington Citizen's Academy was initiated to improve communication and build better relationships between the Worthington Police Department and local residents, especially immigrants.

The Community

The city of Worthington is situated in the southwest corner of Minnesota on I-90, 30 miles from Sioux Falls, S.D. Worthington is the county seat of Nobles County and serves as a regional economic hub for the area.

The city had a 2000 population of 11,283, with minorities accounting for 29.7%. From 1990 to 2000, the city's total population increased by 13.1%, but the city saw one of the steepest drops in white population among the case study cities. During the 1990s, the number of white residents decreased 14.4%, while its minority population increased by 375%. Latinos make up the largest minority group, at 19% of total population, followed by Asians, at 7%. Minority students make up 38% of the total enrollment of 2,300 students in Worthington's schools. In the lower grades, minority students make up more than half the student population, but in the upper grades they account for less than one-fourth.

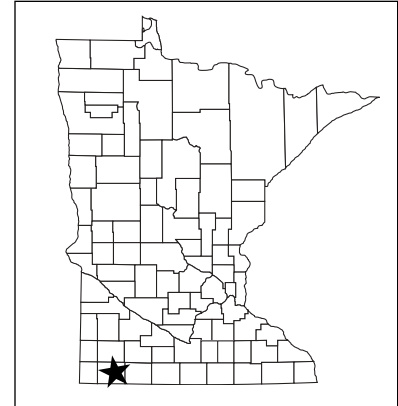
The largest employer in Worthington is Swift & Co., a meat processing firm employing 1,500 workers, followed by the Worthington School District and the Worthington Regional Hospital. There are also numerous medium and small manufacturing firms in the area, plus several large retail outlets.

History:

In the spring of 2000 the Worthington Police Department initiated the Worthington Citizen's Academy as a way to improve communication and relations between the department and the community residents. Modeling the program after similar programs in Marshall and Alexandria, Minn., the Academy was designed to address several perceived issues. First, there was the perception among many community members that criminal activity was much higher in Worthington than in neighboring and similar communities. Second, realizing that the immigrant community was growing quite rapidly and had many members who did not understand and feared public safety officers, it would be wise to increase the communication with such residents.

Starting with a class of 12 Worthington residents in 2000, the police department crafted a curriculum to help citizens see their community from the perspective of the police officer. Placing them in the officers' shoes once a week for a few hours gave these residents a better understanding and insight into police activity. In addition, participants had an opportunity to review police data that clearly documented that criminal activity in Worthington was not higher than similar communities, but in fact slightly lower.

Today, the Citizen's Academy is a very popular program in the community



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that brings together 20 local residents for an eight-week course on police activity. Attendance is high and the popularity of the program continues to grow; especially among immigrant community members.

Program Description:

Each winter the since 2000 the Worthington Police Department has contacted local community organizations representing both immigrant and non-immigrant residents recruiting residents to the annual Citizen’s Academy. Participants are selected on a “first come, first served” basis, but clearly there is a desire to select a group that truly represents the diversity of the community of Worthington. For example, in 2002, over 70 percent of the participants were Latino, with the remainder being of African or Caucasian descent. There are no costs incurred by the participants of the Citizen’s Academy.

Participants meet each Sunday afternoon for two hours. During that time residents receive information about the role of the police department; procedures that officers must follow; how officers investigate crime scenes; traffic patrol procedures and stops; significant problems the police are encountering in the community (e.g., drugs and alcohol use among youth); and use of force (including deadly force) by officers. Some of the learning is designed to be passive, through oral presentations; and some of the learning is designed to be active, through computer simulations and hands on participation. Included in the active learning segment is a visit to the police firing range and a “ride-along”, where program participants go on patrol for two to three hours with police officers and experience their community from a different point of view.

Program Outcomes:

After each academy class is completed participants are asked to evaluate the experience and how to make it better for future participants. And while local residents give high marks to the Citizen’s Academy, the real value according to police administrators is the improvement in the relations with immigrant groups throughout the community. In fact, the police believe that not only are relationships better as a result of the Academy, but the police department has gained some strong advocates in the immigrant community as a result. In fact, when asked about the potential for pending cuts to his department as a result of reduced Local Government Aid to many cities, Public Safety Director Michael J. Cumiskey noted that in spite of the cuts, he has no plans to scale back the Academy.

Funding:

The entire cost of the Citizen’s Academy is part of the Worthington Police Department’s budget. However, one real benefit to the department is its relatively low cost. In fact, aside from a few hundred dollars in material costs (paper reproduction costs, etc.), the majority of the expense is associated with overtime paid to the detectives and officers who teach at the Academy. And while detailed expense records have not been specifically compiled, the total cost estimate is a modest \$2,000 to \$2,500 per year.

Community Assistance for Refugees

Program Mission:

Community Assistance for Refugees' mission is to serve as a liaison, helping refugees connect to the larger community and overcome barriers to self-sufficiency.

The Community

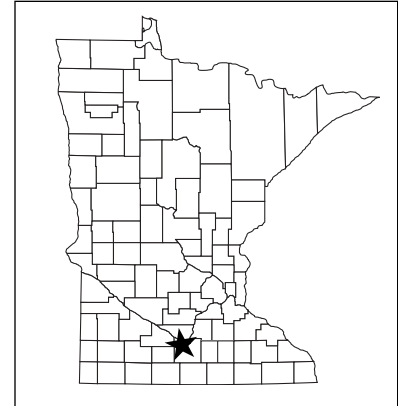
Located 90 southwest of the Twin Cities, Mankato is developing into a commercial and industrial hub in southern Minnesota. Home to a state university campus, the city is also the county seat of Blue Earth County and has a large medical complex. Together, the cities of Mankato and North Mankato (just across the river in Nicollet County), also have numerous large, medium and small-scale manufacturing firms, including one of the largest manufacturers in the region, Taylor Corp. The 2000 Census reported a population 32,427 for Mankato and a combined population for the two cities of 44,225.

The city of Mankato saw a 3% increase in its population during the 1990s, but like many rural cities and towns, its white population decreased (by 1.5%), while its non-white population more than doubled (105.6%). The largest ethnic group is Asians (2.8% of the population), followed by Latinos (2.2%) and Black and African-Americans (1.9%). In the Mankato area school district, non-white students made up 10.6% of enrollment in the 2002-03 school year.

History:

In the mid 1980s, the steeples of Mankato's skyline guided Vietnamese refugees to congregations willing to help them with their basic needs. As the news spread of these congregations' efforts, the number of refugees seeking assistance grew, and the churches found it necessary to come together to discuss their common concerns. From these discussions the church leaders quickly realized that they were not effectively meeting the needs of their new parishioners. About this same time a member of the First Presbyterian Church volunteered to track these needs and began to implement ways of meeting them. This volunteer's efforts evolved into an informal program to help refugees, and soon other churches were referring refugees to First Presbyterian and providing financial support.

By 1992 this program had become Community Assistance for Refugees and was designated a private non-profit organization. Since then, Community Assistance for Refugees has developed a partnership with organizations in the community that are affected by the arrival of refugees such as the Mankato Area School District, local government, the local health care centers, Lutheran Social Services, various state agencies, Partners for Affordable Housing, the Salvation Army, United Way and many local service organizations. Today Community Assistance for Refugees operates out of the First Presbyterian Church with four full-time staff, interns, and volunteers.



Contact:

Kent Cordova, Director
(507) 345-8585

Program Description:

When the number of refugees arriving in Mankato was at its highest, in 1992, many families needed assistance in the form of resettlement services. Families having lived in a refugee camp for the last several years would need help adjusting to life in an apartment or house. In the early days of Community Assistance for Refugees, staff found housing, arranged doctor appointments and provided other services relating to the families' need to resettle.

Today the flow of refugees from outside the country has slowed, but the trend has now turned more to one of families moving around within the country and state. As a result Community Assistance for Refugees has focused its programming on transportation, education and training. Transportation includes offering families a way to get to their doctor appointments, local programs and activities, and round-trip transportation to ethnic markets in the Twin Cities. Training and education helps refugees become self-sufficient by developing basic skills regarding job searches, accessing health care, and everyday problem solving, such as how to use a phone book, understanding various types of correspondence, making appointments, applying for citizenship, etc. Community Assistance for Refugees also provides interpreters to the community. Interpreters contract out to the Mankato Clinic, the county courthouse, schools, and other organizations.

Recently the program has been working on assisting minorities in learning how to start and operate a business. An intern from the social work program at Minnesota State University and a community volunteer have also developed a renter's education program, instructing participants on being good tenants and neighbors, budgeting skills, basic maintenance and maintaining good credit.

Program Outcomes:

Community Assistance for Refugees is currently in the process of surveying the changing needs of the refugee community. The number of refugees coming to Mankato peaked in 1992, when workers averaged five families a week (approximately 30 people). After September 11, 2001, the number of refugees from outside the United States has slowed down considerably — today Community Assistance for Refugees assists one or two families per week — but refugees are now migrating internally throughout the state.

Community Assistance for Refugees has found that collaboration with local agencies impacted by the presence of refugees has been key to effectively serving the refugee community. County, city, private, and non-profit groups meet regularly to share their points of view on how to address common issues.

Funding:

The original funding from the churches is not enough to support the program's annual budget of approximately \$200,000. Community Assistance lost sixty percent of its government funding a year ago. As a result Community Assistance for Refugees began to diversify their income by requesting support from community groups and grants. Service fees also support the budget.

Transportation is covered by a grant that allows Community Assistance for Refugees to provide basic transportation at no cost, but there is a fee for transportation to and around the Twin Cities. Interpreters are contracted out to the community, paying for itself. Those who establish a business through the business development program give a percentage of the income to the program.

Community Connectors

Program Mission:

The Community Connectors program provides a vital link between the immigrant/minority community and a variety of governmental and service providers in the Worthington and Nobles County area. The connectors are bi-lingual assistants who help families and individuals find and obtain the services they need.

The Community

The city of Worthington is situated in the southwest corner of Minnesota on I-90, 30 miles from Sioux Falls, S.D. Worthington is the county seat of Nobles County and serves as a regional economic hub for the area.

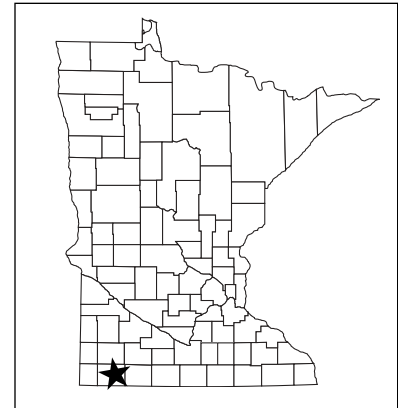
The city had a 2000 population of 11,283, with minorities accounting for 29.7%. From 1990 to 2000, the city's total population increased by 13.1%, but the city saw one of the steepest drops in white population among the case study cities. During the 1990s, the number of white residents decreased 14.4%, while the minority population increased by 375%. Latinos make up the largest minority group, at 19% of total population, followed by Asians, at 7%. Minority students make up 38% of the total enrollment of 2,300 students in Worthington's schools. In the lower grades, minority students make up more than half the student population, but in the upper grades they account for less than one-fourth.

The largest employer in Worthington is Swift & Co., a meat processing firm employing 1,500 workers, followed by the Worthington School District and the Worthington Regional Hospital. There are also numerous medium and small manufacturing firms in the area, plus several large retail outlets.

History:

Beginning in the early 1990s it became apparent that due to the increasing number of jobs associated with the animal processing facilities in the area, Worthington's immigrant community was growing and would continue to grow at a rapid pace. Through an initial \$11,000 inter-agency planning grant from Minnesota Planning, the Community Education Program of School District 518 initiated a peer outreach program for new immigrants to their community. Hiring three part-time employees from the Latino and Lao communities, these individuals were called "Community Helpers." Working under the umbrella of Worthington's Cultural Diversity Coalition, these helpers provided information and referral services to the increasing number of immigrants new to the community.

The interagency grant expired in 1994, but the program was able to continue under the auspices of the U of M Extension Service. Through the Extension Service the Worthington program, along with similar programs in Marshall and St. James, received grant funding through the University to develop a regional network. Headquartered out of the Brown County Extension Office, the Community Helpers were renamed "Community Connectors."



Contact:

Jerry Fiola, Community
Education Director
(507) 376-6105
Nelson Bonilla,
Community Connectors
Coordinator
(507) 372-4664

Today, the Community Connectors program is once again funded through local efforts. The Nobles County Family Services Collaborative has been the primary funding source for the Community Connectors program since 1997. Significant efforts have been made to provide stability to the program by hiring a full-time coordinator and increasing the pay scale for the Connectors to its current \$11 per hour.

Program Description:

The primary role of the community connectors is to serve as a one-stop information and referral service to the area's immigrant/minority community. Three connectors are currently employed: one Latino, one Lao and one East African. Through the connectors, immigrant workers and their families can receive information about community resources and services in their own language and on their own terms.

Working out of the District 518 Prairie Lakes Center in Worthington, newcomers in the community can drop in or call to find out how they can connect to the services they need. These services can range from assistance with obtaining green cards to locating a job at the workforce center, obtaining local social services, assistance in finding housing, scheduling medical appointments, finding ESL classes, or simply receiving assistance in filling out a form.

However, it is hard not to walk away from a visit with the Community Connectors staff without realizing the great amount of "crisis management" they orchestrate. Drop-ins and telephone calls are common and quite frequent with requests for assistance with routine car repairs or other everyday events that may appear to be a simple nuisance to residents who are more settled and established in the community. But such occurrences are anything but routine for low-income newcomers, whose everyday lives are significantly impacted by such events.

Consequently, the Connectors view their role as very flexible and they work tirelessly to help their clients. Often working outside the office and using cell phones to communicate, the Connectors are very responsive in meeting the needs of their clients. However, they are quick to point out that while they may at times provide a direct service to newcomers, more often than not their role is to help the newcomers make connections with those individuals and community agencies that provide direct service.

The other role of the Community Connectors is to maintain contact with the network of community services and agencies to ensure that their knowledge regarding the immigrant community is accurate and up to date. As such, the connectors provide valuable information to county social service agencies, local landlords, and many governmental and non-profit groups. Such interventions keep the local network of service providers current on situations occurring in the immigrant communities.

Program Outcomes:

In 2001 the Community Connectors program made 2,156 initial contacts with immigrant families in the Worthington area. Approximately 40% of the contacts were handled on the telephone; 43% of the contacts were made in the office; and the remaining 17% were made through home visits. Approximately half of the contacts resulted in making a referral to the appropriate community agency; however, almost all of those contacts resulted in an additional follow-up contact with the family.

Areas of concern addressed by the Community Connectors were quite varied, with almost half addressing health and medical problems, concerns about immigra-

tion status, and issues revolving around their children's education. Other areas that are frequently addressed include housing; government benefits; legal and human rights; obtaining a driver's license and ESL and citizenship education.

In 2002, the Community Connectors made 1,848 contacts with immigrants and their families. While the total number of contacts was down by 14 percent in 2002, the distribution of activities and areas of concern were quite similar to 2001.

Funding:

Funding for the Community Connectors program has shifted significantly over the years. For 2003, the total program budget is \$71,825. As noted above, the funding is once again provided locally through a variety of sources, but the largest funding source is the Nobles County Family Services Collaborative (approximately 80% of the budget). Other funding sources include the local United Way (7%) and the County Public Health Department (13%). While the funding sources appear at this time to be relatively stable, the program is currently making a concerted effort to further diversify the funding base, specifically reaching out to the large agri-business employers, whose employees make up approximately 50% of the clients.

Not surprisingly, 89% of the budget goes to salaries for the program coordinator and the community connectors, with minor amounts expended on equipment, supplies, travel and overhead.

Mower County Interpreter

Program Mission:

The mission of the county interpreter's position is to overcome language barriers that are blocking communication between many of the county's non-English speaking residents and the city and county personnel who administer the services they need.

The Community:

Located in southeastern Minnesota, Austin has been home to international food giant Hormel Foods for over 100 years. Like many cities in rural Minnesota, Austin saw modest population growth (6.4%) between 1990 and 2000, but also like many rural cities, Austin's white population declined 1.8% during those years, while the non-white population more than tripled, increasing 342%, accounting for 9.9% of the city's total population in 2000. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 6.1% of the population, followed by Asians, at 2.2%. In the schools, minority students make up 16.7% of enrollment, but as in many districts, the lower grades have much higher enrollments. In Austin, minorities made up 26% of the first-grade class in 2002-03.

Hormel is the largest employer in Austin, with 1,335 workers, while Quality Pork Processors also employs approximately 725 people. Numerous manufacturing firms also provide employment in the area.

History:

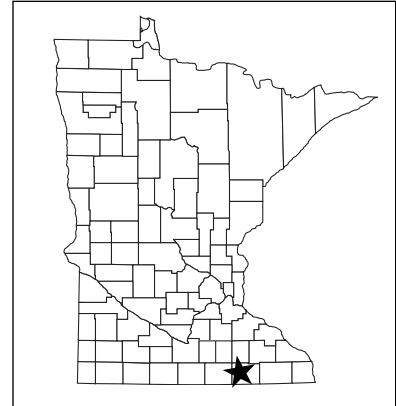
The first of its kind in the county, the county interpreter position was created within the past few years to meet the county's growing need for interpreter services. The county interpreter is fluent in Spanish and is under the supervision of Mower County's cultural diversity programming coordinator and court interpreter. The position began as part time, but with the increased need, the position became full time.

Program Description:

The interpreter's responsibilities consist of performing interpreting duties at the Department of Human Services and at the courthouse. Human Services involves interpreting for social services, financial services, WIC, nursing and other areas of the department. Caseworkers arrange for their clients to meet with the interpreter for assistance in translating and completing forms, and the interpreter may also accompany a staff person on a home visit with a client.

Interpreter services at the courthouse also mean helping at the police department. The interpreter assists the police with questioning people and may join a detective on a home visit or to the county jail to help in an investigation.

Other duties include interpreting at the Workforce Center and the driver's license bureau, assisting non-English speakers with obtaining a driver's license and learning the obligations that having a license and a car entail.

**Contact:**

Linda Solis,
County Interpreter
(507) 434-2650
Nitaya Jandragholica,
Cultural Diversity
Programming Coordinator
(507) 437-9494

Funding:

The county interpreter is a county employee and is funded from the county's annual budget.

Cultural Diversity Network of Steele County

Program Mission:

The mission of the Cultural Diversity Network is to promote understanding and respect, keeping Steele County peaceful, trusting, and respectful in a time of rapid social change and an increasingly diverse population.

The Community:

The city of Owatonna, one of Minnesota's larger rural cities, is located in the southeastern part of the state, on I-35 south of the Twin Cities. The city is surrounded by rich agricultural land, but the area has also developed a diversified economy with a variety of firms from the manufacturing, retail, and service sectors.

The population of Owatonna in 2000 was 22,434, with minorities comprising 8.2% of the population. Between 1990 and 2000, Owatonna's population increased 15.7%, but unlike many rural communities, the city's white population actually increased, growing by 9.1%. During the same time, the number of non-white residents increased by 268%. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 4.3% of the total population, followed by Black/-African-Americans at 1.6%. Non-white students made up 14% of total enrollment in Owatonna public schools during the 2002-03 school year. Non-white enrollment by grade was at a fairly consistent 13% to 18%, except in the 12th grade, which was 9.3%.

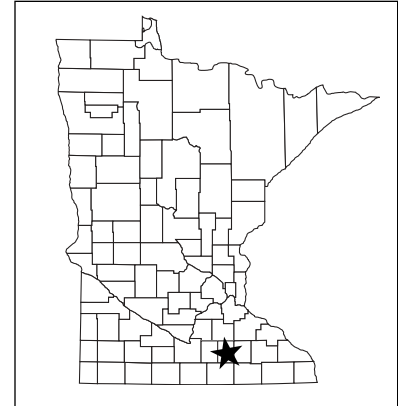
The largest employers in Owatonna are Federated Insurance Inc. and Viracon/Curvlite Inc., a glass manufacturing firm employing over 1,600 workers. Other major employers include the school district and the hospital, retail outlets, including large ones like Cabela's, numerous smaller manufacturing firms, and Lakeside Foods, a produce processing firm.

History:

In 1996 CDN was established by a group of citizens in response to the influx of Somali refugees into the area. Two years later CDN was established as a 501(c)3 with a board of active citizens. CDN began by assisting the new immigrants with finding housing and supplying furniture needs. After realizing the time and space constraints connected with providing furniture, CDN began referring individuals to agencies that also offer this resource. Today the focus of CDN is on educating and celebrating while serving the community.

Program Description:

CDN works to enrich the community's cultural understanding through educational opportunities. The program is administered and managed by a part-time director, an office clerk, and an active board of directors. CDN has also applied for an AmeriCorp volunteer. CDN serves the community by providing resources and referrals to meet the basic needs of newcomers, collaborating with other agencies to make Steele County a welcoming community.



Contact:

Christine M. Baidoo,
Executive Director
(507) 451-0838
www.hickorytech.net/~cdn

CDN's many educational opportunities are targeted to all ages in formal and informal ways. For instance, when ELL students in the high school were feeling left out and unheard, CDN worked to have volunteers available in the classroom to provide individual attention and help.

Community Intersections is an informal meeting for all ages held at the library to discuss topics surrounding diversity. These meetings are held on a monthly basis during the school year and have occasional guest speakers. Topics have included: presentations by Centro Campesino on working with migrant workers, stories of immigrants and refugees, community diversity and peacemaking in Steele County, a welcome neighborhood, and crime and diversity: facts and fiction. Diversity Diner is a similar meeting where anyone in the community can come together to talk about a particular area of diversity over lunch at a local ethnic restaurant.

Presentations to business groups encourage supervisors and employees to be inclusive and sensitive to the cultural differences of people. Area businesses can request CDN to facilitate diversity trainings as a part of their employee training. CDN has become a resource for many business Human Relation Departments in their efforts to improve communication with their employees.

Reading parties are informal gatherings that take place in ethnic neighborhoods one evening a week in the summer months. At the reading parties adult volunteers read to children and take part in games, food, and activities. This event partners with the book mobile to promote literacy.

CulturFest is a major annual celebration held in September that provides an opportunity for area residents to meet one another and to appreciate the art, food, music and crafts of other cultures. During the festival, children receive "passports" to encourage them to visit booths of different countries and participate in activities there.

R*E*S*P*E*C*T is an "essay celebration" open to people high school age and older, inviting them to write about their understanding of the word "respect." The contest has generated conversations in the high school among students discussing what to write about and gives students the opportunity to showcase their essays in the community.

Program Outcomes:

Over the years CulturFest has become a well-known event and has grown to include more activities and events to meet demand. The high school ELL teacher praises CDN for the organization's efforts to improve relations inside and outside school walls by promoting the need for tutoring volunteers, organizing Community Intersections and the R*E*S*P*E*C*T essay contest. In a recent hate mail incident, CDN was contacted on how to address this matter and to educate the community.

Program Finances:

Financial supporters of CDN are the United Way of Steele County, CDN board members, individual contributors, corporations and businesses. The CulturFest is sponsored by a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board and local businesses.

Cultural Diversity Task Force

Program Mission:

The mission of the Cultural Diversity Task Force of Winona is to educate the community by bringing together leaders and services from across all sectors of the community to act as catalysts to increase understanding of cultural diversity issues.

The Community:

The historical river town of Winona sits on the banks of the Mississippi River in southeast Minnesota and is one of the oldest cities in Minnesota. The city had a population of 27,069 in 2000 with a minority population of 6.3%. During the 1990s, the total population increased 6.3%. The white population rose 6.6%, while the non-white population increased by 124%. The largest minority group in 2000 were Asians at 2.7% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 1.3% and Black and African-Americans at 1.1%. In the Winona Area Public Schools, non-white students make up 8.9% of total enrollment. Non-white enrollment by grade varied from 12.5% in the kindergarten class to 5.1% in the 12th-grade class in 2002-03.

Winona has more than 100 manufacturing firms. The largest, TRW Automotive Electronics and Fastenal employ over 900 workers each. Winona Health (hospital) and Winona State University are two other large employers.

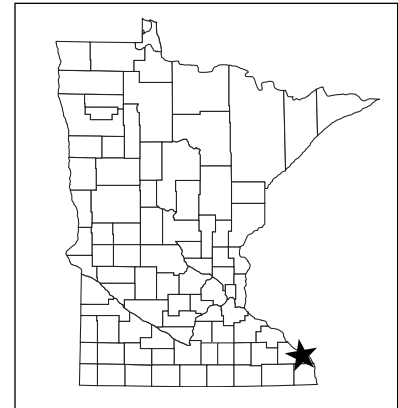
History:

The Cultural Diversity Task Force was established in 1991 to address two serious issues that were coinciding with the growth of the ethnic population: hate crimes in the community and the fear of increased crime and drugs. In 1989, a cultural diversity survey identified issues needing attention in the community. The city of Winona and Winona State University began to brainstorm strategies to better integrate the burgeoning ethnic groups into the community. The city at this point was beginning to think in terms of not only developing proactive measures to address the conflicts, but to go beyond that, to develop long-term plans for a community that promised economic survival for all its citizens. The goal was not only to achieve a mutual understanding and appreciation among the different groups, but to help ethnic groups connect with and participate in the economy and social structure of Winona.

With this attitude, the city and university partnership began to take form. The president of the university sought out two African-Americans holding administrative/faculty ranks at Winona State University to head and steer the task force.

Program Description:

For its first two years, the task force developed and presented workshops for city and university staff, faculty, students and community members. The workshops, designed to inspire discussion and critical thinking, had titles such as “Valuing and Managing Diversity in the Workplace: A Competitive Edge” and “Transforming the



Contact:

Dr. Maudie Williams
Kel Winbush
(507) 457-5000

American Mind.” The Task Force also provided trainings for local businesses to encourage partnership between the business and ethnic populations in the community to continue developing a diverse workforce in Winona. In 1995 the Task Force brought together 150 local and state representatives of law enforcement, criminal justice, courts and corrections to address issues based on race, color, and national origin. The goal was to defuse conflicts that could result in economic disruption, litigation and violence.

The Task Force also hosts community forums. One example is of a forum held following the September 11th attacks, addressing cultural and global conflicts that affect the welfare of the community. Prior to the attacks the university held a year-long Lyceum Series on “An Inclusive Society,” coincided with the university’s theme of “A Community of Learners Dedicated to Improving Our World.”

Program Outcomes:

The Cultural Diversity Task Force has been in operation now for more than ten years. Since its start in 1991, the Cultural Diversity Task Force strived to make itself a major catalyst in several ways: by connecting with underrepresented groups in the community, helping them voice their needs related to health, economic survival, and educational development; providing businesses with strategies to recruit, employ, and retain a diverse workforce; and enhancing the community’s awareness of diverse cultures, thus creating opportunities for their successful integration into the mainstream of community life.

Cultural Diversity Coordinator

Program Mission:

The city's goal in establishing a cultural diversity coordinator was to provide a city employee who has the language skills to work with Hispanics, the city's fastest growing and largest minority group, bridging the gap between the minority community and city services.

The Community:

Located in the rolling countryside of southeast Minnesota between Faribault and the Twin Cities, Northfield is home to two prominent private colleges, St. Olaf and Carleton.

In 2000 the city had a population of 17,147, with the non-white population making up 10.6% of the total. Between 1990 and 2000, the city's population increased 16.8%; white population rose by 9.2% while the non-white population increased by 178%. Non-white students comprise 8.6% of the enrollment in Northfield schools. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 5.7% of the total population, followed by Asians at 2.4%.

Northfield offers a ready supply of manufacturing and service sector jobs. The leading employers in Northfield are the two colleges, Malt-O-Meal, Sheldahl Inc. (an electronics component plant), and Northfield public schools. Jobs are also provided by a number of manufacturing firms and retail outlets. Northfield is located close enough to the Twin Cities area to give residents easy access to the metro area's jobs.

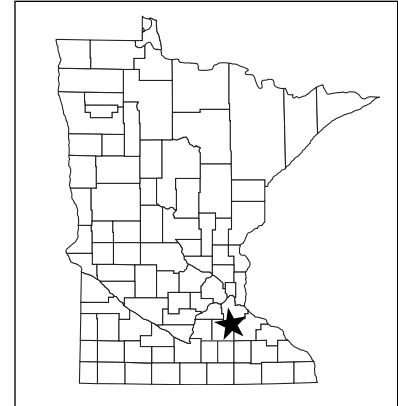
History:

The League of Women Voters held a series of Community Circles in Northfield and other cities in the late 1990s to discuss issues surrounding immigration. After discussions with Northfield's Human Rights Council, the city council approved the cultural diversity coordinator position in December of 1999. The full-time position reports to the director of Human Resources.

Program Description:

The coordinator's job is to bridge the gap between residents with low English skills and various city departments. The day-to-day work of the position largely involves translating correspondence and assisting people in finding resources or making referrals. The coordinator also teaches Spanish to front-line employees, such as police officers, who deal directly with the public.

The coordinator also works in a collaborative effort with local organizations in coordinating cultural celebrations throughout the year. Clients mostly hear of the service through word of mouth, but letters are also sent out periodically to neighborhoods with large Hispanic populations informing them of the services the cultural diversity coordinator offers.



Contact:

Marj Evans-DeCarpo,
Diversity Coordinator
(507) 537-6767

Program Outcomes:

The program started in August of 2000. Approximately 318 people were served in 2001, and 545 in 2002.

Funding:

The position is in the city's regular annual budget.

Diversity Council

Program Mission:

The mission of the Diversity Council is to develop programs that build community through understanding and mutual respect among residents, especially in areas of race and ethnicity.

The Community

With a 2000 population of 85,806, Rochester is one of Minnesota's largest cities and an economic hub in southeastern Minnesota. It is a thriving and world-famous center for medical treatment and research and also a high-tech center based on the presence of a large IBM facility.

During the 1990s, the city's population increased 21.3%. The white population saw an increase of 11.4%, while the non-white population rose 163% to comprise 14.2% of the total population in 2000. In the Rochester Public Schools, minority enrollment in 2002-03 ranged from 28% in first grade to 17% in 12th grade.

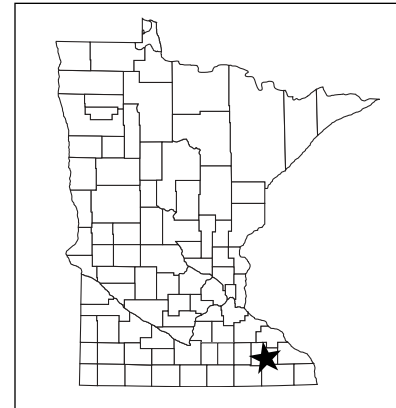
Rochester's medical service industry dominates the city's economy. By far the largest employer is the Mayo Medical Center, with 19,485 employees. The second largest employer is IBM, with 6,000 workers. These two employers give Rochester a higher than average number of workers in highly specialized jobs, including a disproportionately large number of doctors, many of whom are originally from other countries. On the other hand, the presence of a world-famous medical center has spun off a large service industry in the city in the form of hotels, restaurants and personal services, plus transportation services via its airport and I-90. Rochester is also located in a rich farming area and is home to a number of dairy, meat and vegetable processing facilities.

History:

In 1989, in reaction to violent incidents in the schools against Southeast Asians, Rochester School District 535 organized Building Equality Together to combat racism and discrimination in both the schools and the community. By 1994, Building Equality Together had evolved into the Diversity Council and now includes not only the schools but businesses, churches and interested citizens. The Diversity Council moved from working only with students to working with adults, and expanded beyond racism to other issues of intolerance, including ethnicity, age, religion and physical and mental disabilities.

Program Description:

The Diversity Council has developed a number of workshops and seminars to address issues of diversity and discrimination. The main program of the Diversity Council is the Prejudice Reduction Workshop. The overall objective of the workshop is to reduce prejudice and discrimination among students by helping them understand and accept the differences and similarities among people. The Prejudice Reduction Workshops began in 1995 with middle school students; today workshops are presented in grades K-12 in every classroom of every school. In 2002 575 work-



Contact:

George Thompson,
Executive Director
Kristen Mannix,
Associate Director
Rochester Diversity Council
(507) 282-9951

shops were presented to approximately 6,300 elementary students, 4,700 middle school students, and 3,000 high school students.

The objectives of the workshops are to help students gain knowledge and develop empathy, thinking skills and improved self-esteem. The workshop facilitator engages the students in dialogue with the aid of stories, videos, and hands-on activities. For example, in one classroom students were split into teams of two and given a tube of toothpaste. The first student was given one minute to squeeze all of the toothpaste out of the tube. The other student had three minutes to put the toothpaste back into the tube, the lesson being that the things we say cannot be taken back easily, just like the toothpaste cannot be put back into the tube.

The people facilitating these workshops are members of the community trained in a 20-hour workshop. Over 50% of Prejudice Reduction Workshop facilitators identify themselves as part of a minority community in areas such as race, ethnicity, nationality, religion, physical ability, original spoken language, or socio-economic status. The Diversity Council pays the facilitators, and area businesses donate their employees' time to be facilitators.

The Diversity Council's seminars for adults are based on the work of futurist and Rochester native Joel Baker. Baker explains the changing demographics of Rochester and assists employers in creating innovative ways to maximize the potential of their increasingly diverse workforce. Diversity Council corporate members are provided complimentary tickets, while non-members are charged a modest fee.

Common Beginnings is a separate workshop for employers that provides cultural information to help them understand the needs of employees from diverse backgrounds. The workshop is a 12-week intensive program that begins with four sessions on diversity awareness training, followed by eight sessions customized to the organization's unique needs.

The Diversity Council also holds communitywide forums three times a year on specific issues. In 2002 the topics were "Census 2000: Balance and Boundaries," "Beyond Profiling: Disparity in Justice and Social Service Systems" and "The State of Poverty in Olmsted County." Diversity Council staff members are also available for a small contribution to give separate presentations on issues of diversity.

Rochester in Support of Everyone (RISE) is a two-part project designed to familiarize the community with the origins of immigrants moving into the area. The first phase, *Reflections Magazine*, presents information on the backgrounds and cultures of eight ethnic groups. RISE's second phase involves creating a community resource guide published in eight different languages. These "yellow pages" were distributed to county, city, and non-profit agencies that interact with non-English speaking community members.

The core of the Diversity Council is community involvement. Each year the council presents "Champions of Diversity" to recognize the efforts of those who are committed to diversity through their initiative and contributions. The local daily newspaper, the *Rochester Post Bulletin*, has joined the effort by offering free full-page color spreads five times per year to help the council promote its efforts.

Program Outcomes:

The Diversity Council keeps ample records of program outcomes since evaluations are a requirement for receiving funds from the Mayo Foundation. At the end of each workshop the teacher and facilitator complete an evaluation, while the Diversity Council and teachers regularly evaluate the facilitator. Since the workshop evaluations started, principals and teachers have reported changes in student behav-

ior that have resulted in a safer, more welcoming school. In 2002 the workshop facilitator development program was expanded, resulting in 19 new facilitators. Besides students, the Diversity Council presented workshops to more than 1,400 people in 2002, including such groups as the League of Minnesota Cities, the Workforce Literacy and Culturalization Conference, the Zumbrota-Mazeppa School District, Voices for Southern Minnesota Forum, Olmsted County Social Workers, Workforce Development Center, and the Rochester Community and Technical College staff training day.

Funding:

Total support and revenue in 2002 equaled \$259,330, while total annual expenses were \$220,625. The Diversity Council receives a small amount of funding as a United Way agency, but the bulk of funding (\$100,000 last year) comes from the school district, city and county. The program also receives funding from foundation grants and individual memberships. Contributed goods and services raised over \$30,000 in donations. Corporate support for the program comes in the form of “corporate memberships,” which local businesses can subscribe to at varying levels. These members receive personalized training and complimentary tickets to workshops among other benefits based on their level of support. Corporate memberships accounted for \$23,375 last year.

FamiLink

Program Mission:

FamiLink uses the combined resources of the many organizations in the Hennepin South Services Collaboration to operate a resource connecting clients to the many services available to them in the area.

The Community:

Bloomington, Eden Prairie and Richfield make up the service area of the Hennepin South Services Collaboration. These three cities range from densely populated apartment complexes in first-ring suburb Richfield to affluent neighborhoods in Eden Prairie. The three cities have a combined population of 174,512, with a non-white population of 24,149, making up 13.8% of the total population. Richfield, the smallest of the three, with a population of 34,439, has the highest concentration of minorities, at 21.2% of its total population. Located immediately south of Minneapolis, Richfield contains an abundance of small, post-war housing.

The three cities have a strong base of manufacturing, retail and service jobs, especially along the I-494 freeway with its many stores, hotels and restaurants. These cities, however, are also very convenient to the concentration of jobs the metro area offers.

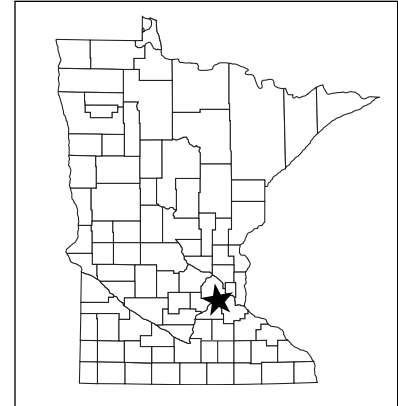
Program History:

Hennepin South Services Collaborative, serving the cities of Bloomington, Eden Prairie and Richfield, is an organization that uses research and planning methods to identify emerging needs and gaps in human services and to develop the means of filling those gaps. HSSC started the FamiLink program in 1997 with a center in each city, but by 2001 the collaborative had begun exploring the idea of combining them into one central location. In March of 2001 FamiLink opened in a central location in Bloomington to serve all three cities.

Program Description:

FamiLink serves as a bridge that connects people to resources, information and support in the south Hennepin region. Many clients first approach the FamiLink resource center for help with emergency financial assistance, finding affordable housing, looking for food resources, and other services. The staff follows up with clients to see that the needs have been met. FamiLink's headquarters are centrally located in Bloomington to serve as the resource hub for the three participating communities. The resource center's staff is composed of social workers, city employees, teachers, nurses, human service workers, counselors, and volunteers contributed by participating members of Hennepin South Services Collaborative. All the resource center staff attend basic training and participates in ongoing training opportunities.

Each community has a community resource coordinator who provides walk-in outreach hours. For example the Richfield Community Resource Coordinator has set



Contact:

Sally Booher, Richfield
Community Resources
Coordinator
(952) 922-5999
www.fami-link.org

hours each week at the Augsburg Library and the Latino Resource Center. The coordinators commonly refer clients to agencies such as Hennepin County Economic Assistance, Housing Link, Accountability Minnesota, Minnesota Workforce Center, Housing Link Vacancy List, Family and Children Services, and Senior Outreach.

Program Outcomes:

The entire FamiLink program service area served a total of 23,630 since the resource center was established in 1997. In 2002 the entire FamiLink program served 3,595 clients.

Funding:

FamiLink is supported through a variety of grants, including Local Time Study Funds distributed by each city's community council.

Family Resource Center

Program Mission:

Offering a convenient, safe place for neighbors to come together, interact and access needed services and educational opportunities.

The Community:

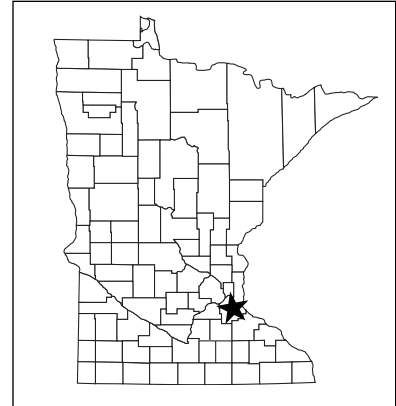
Like other Twin Cities suburbs, Rosemount has probably not attracted immigrants for jobs within its city but rather its proximity to the entire metro area and its lower housing costs. Located 25 miles south-east of Minneapolis and 10 miles from St. Paul, Rosemount's 2000 population was 14,619, of which minorities make up 8.1%. During the 1990s, the city's population increased 69.9%. The white population rose 61.6%, while the non-white population increased 282.6%. Asians make up the largest minority group at 5.6% of the total population in 2000, followed by Black/African-Americans at 3.6% and Latinos at 3.0%. Rosemount is part of the Rosemount-Apple Valley-Eagan school district. For 2002-03, minorities made up 13.6% of the total district enrollment. Minority enrollment by grade varied from 15.6% in the first grade to 11.5% in 11th grade. In 2002, 56 different languages were represented in the school district, the second highest number in the state.

Rosemount has few specific employers that would attract a large immigrant labor force. By far the largest employer is the school district, followed by Flint Hills, a manufacturing firm employing 850. However, the city is convenient to the whole Twin Cities metro area.

Program History:

The Family Resource Center began as a partnership between the city of Rosemount and the area Community Action Council, a decentralized service non-profit that works in communities throughout Dakota and Scott counties. The original initiative for the center came from concerned parents themselves. In 1993, a few parents living in a high-density, low-income neighborhood came to the city and the Community Action Council with concerns about their children's unsafe playing area, which amounted mostly to a parking lot.

The discussion eventually evolved into ways to improve the neighborhood, out of which came the Family Resource Center in its original location, one of the apartment buildings. Soon, though, the city approached a developer to swap land that was near the apartment buildings to build a park and park building. In 1999, the Community Action Council moved the Family Service Center to the park building, a location that offered a non-threatening and more central location than the original setup in the apartment building. The partnership with the city allowed for the swap of land and the construction of the park (by the city's parks and rec department), while the partnership with Community Action Council gives the Family Resource Center access to grants it wouldn't be eligible for if it were an agency of the city.



Contact:

Doreen Ulrich, Director
(651) 322-5113
Mary Ajax, President/CEO
(952) 985-4001

Program Description:

The Family Resource Center serves as a neighborhood gathering place for family nights, after-school tutoring, and a meeting space. Family night out is held once a month at the center to provide a time for neighbors to get to know each other over dinner and activities. Local Girl Scout troops meet at the center, making it easier for neighborhood girls to join, while businesses hold meetings at the center for employees that live in the area. The non-threatening location of the center also creates an environment for the development of informal support groups.

The center is strategically located within easy access of the apartment buildings and is run by a part-time staff. The center has a kitchen, meeting/activity room and office space. Computers line a wall of the activity room for students to use during their after-school tutoring time with volunteers.

The residents are active in the upkeep of the city park through the Adopt-a-Park program, responsibilities that help neighbors develop peacemaking skills and other neighbor and parent responsibilities.

Program Outcomes:

The Family Resource Center has a primary audience of about 500 residents in the nearby rental housing. The ethnic backgrounds of this group are mostly Latino, Sudanese, and Russian. Ten to 25 people attend the family nights, while 25 to 30 people use the Community Action Council's food shelf; 20 students attend the after school program.

Program Finances:

The annual operating budget is \$112,000, while the total cost of the capital campaign project (building the park, playground and building) was \$352,173. Contributions came from a Youth Initiative Grant from the Department of Children, Families and Learning, the McKnight Foundation, USPCI/Rosemount Community Trust Fund, NSP Trust Fund, The First State Bank of Rosemount, Rosemount Jaycees, State Farm Insurance (Rosemount), and Woman's Touch Furniture Restoration (Rosemount). The Fingerhut Foundation and the United Way Twin Cities provided funding for staff that serve low-income minority and immigrant families.

Multi-Cultural Committee

Program Mission:

The Multi-Cultural Committee works in a very informal and loosely organized manner, but its goals are many: to raise awareness of different cultures, provide services for immigrant and refugees, and help them become full members of the community.

The Community:

Pelican Rapids is a small city of 2,374 in Otter Tail County in northwestern Minnesota. Between the 1990 and 2000 Census, the city's population saw boom in its Latino population. During that decade, the white population decreased 3.3%, but the non-white population increased 630%, from 87 individuals (4.6% of the total population) to 635 people, making up 26.7% of the total population. Latinos account for nearly 20% of the total population. Minority students make up over 22% of student enrollment in the Pelican Rapids school district. Pelican Rapids' largest employer is West Central Turkeys, with 750 workers.

History:

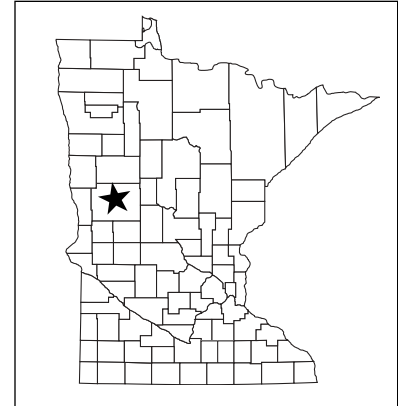
The Multi-Cultural Committee began in 1993 in response to concerns over several events in the community, including incidents like racially motivated fights on the playground and community members asking where the newcomers were coming from. The committee began with small projects such as hosting ethnic events that encouraged awareness, placing a Mexican flag with the Canadian flag on Main Street, and inviting Mixed Blood Theatre Company to provide awareness education.

Program Description:

The committee is involved wherever the need in the community exists. The committee is very informal and loosely organized, run by volunteers who meet on a monthly basis. Ten to twelve people attend the meetings on a regular basis, but they have a large network of support in the community. The meetings are open to everyone and held in convenient places. Meetings have been held around the kitchen table at a community member's home or at the turkey plant to encourage minorities to attend the meetings. The committee serves as an outlet and resource for community members, but also as a place for community members to vent their frustrations, fears and anger.

The committee's major ongoing project is the annual International Friendship Festival, in its sixth year this year. The festival started out being called the world's longest coffee break — it takes place on June 21, the longest day of the year — when community members came together to sip free coffee and eat goodies. Over the years this event became the International Friendship Festival and added ethnic food, dance, and celebration.

The yearly overall theme is "Many Cultures, One Community," with this year's theme being "The Faces of Diversity." This theme coincides with "Faces of Change," a traveling exhibit at the Library's Multicultural Education Center consist-



Contact:

Johanna Christensen,
Committee Organizer
(218) 863-8452
Pelican Rapids Chamber
of Commerce
(218) 863-1221

ing of photographs and stories of newcomers that provide an opportunity for the local community to learn the stories of their most recent residents. “Journeys through Pelican Rapids” is another educational opportunity for residents. For the past two years the committee has provided a platform for immigrants, refugees and minorities to share their journeys in a public setting.

The Multi-Cultural Committee also strives to meet the needs of newcomers. At one point in time the Pelican Rapids was experiencing a large influx of Bosnian refugees looking for employment. “Befrienders” was a committee program developed to connect refugee families to established families to assist them in the transition to Pelican Rapids. The committee also addressed needs for the newcomers such as providing furniture for a new home. A local Hispanic woman has kept her unused garage available for this project for years.

The committee also strives to understand what affects newcomers. A recent endeavor of the committee is that of organizing focus groups. In these focus groups, representative of each ethnic community attend and discuss what their needs are and what would they like to see happen in Pelican Rapids. The committee also submits articles to the Pelican Press on newcomers’ journeys to Pelican Rapids and enters culturally diverse floats in the parade.

Lutheran Social Services has been an excellent resource for the committee to work in partnership in referring people and using its services. In the past the county provided a volunteer coordinator and interpreters; when this county office was closed, Lutheran Social Services stepped in to help.

Funding:

The Cultural Diversity Committee requires little funding. At the Friendship Festival, organizers aim to cover the cost of entertainment with food sales. Each year they hope to break even. Businesses support the festival by donating supplies.

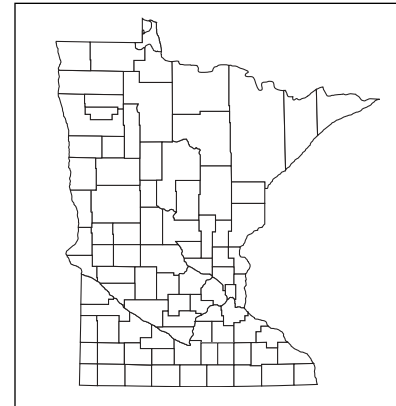
Municipal Human Rights Commissions

Program Mission:

The mission of a city or county human rights commission is to ensure that all residents of a community are provided equal opportunity and treatment. As such, most commissions take a proactive approach by engaging their local residents in a variety of dialogues and events that address issues of prejudice, social justice and equal opportunity.

The Community:

The decision to establish a municipal human rights commission has been made in over 50 Minnesota communities. It is by far the most common community-based program to ensure equal treatment for all. To date, human rights commissions have been established in Albert Lea; Austin; Bloomington; Brooklyn Center; Brooklyn Park; Chaska; Columbia Heights; Coon Rapids; Cottage Grove; Crow Wing County; Crystal; Duluth; Eden Prairie; Edina; Fairmont; Falcon Heights; Faribault; Fergus Falls; Forest Lake; Fridley; Golden Valley; Hibbing; Hopkins; Isanti County; Jackson; Lake Elmo; Mankato; Marshall; Moorhead; Morris; New Brighton; New Hope; New Ulm; Nobles County; Northfield; Olmsted County; Owatonna; Paynesville; Plymouth; Red Wing; Richfield; Robbinsdale; Roseville; St. Cloud; St. Louis Park; St. Paul; St. Peter; Shoreview; South St. Paul; Stillwater; Virginia; Waseca; White Bear Lake; Willmar and Winona.



Contact:

Mort Ryweck,
Project Coordinator
League of Minnesota
Human Rights
Commissions
(612) 376-0525

History:

The history of human rights commissions in Minnesota goes back well over 30 years. The League of Minnesota Human Rights Commissions, a coalition of human rights commissions, was founded in 1971 and reorganized in 1987. The League provides training assistance to local commissions and assists communities that wish to start a new commission. Lastly, each fall the League hosts an annual conference that provides shared learning opportunities for all of the commissions.

Program Description:

Human Rights Commissions are primarily (but not exclusively) part of the municipal structure, with members appointed by the mayor and city council. Commissions work on a variety of issues that can range from disability awareness to racial profiling to addressing hate crimes. Most are structured to meet monthly and maintain contact with the city council through a council liaison on the commission.

With over 50 commissions statewide, councils are involved in a broad range of activities and interests, but many engage in proactive community education to address diversity and discrimination issues. Many work in collaboration with school districts to provide human rights education to students (e.g., the Shoreview Commission published a manual that was disseminated statewide). Others provide local responses to address bias and hate crimes (which have accelerated since September 11, 2001). But cultural events and various activities that celebrate the assets of living in a diverse community are at the heart of most of the commissions.

Commissions also play a vital role in the message that City Hall sends to its residents of color. Essentially, the commission is often a designated structure in city government that residents can go to when they believe they have been discriminated against. While commissions have no legal authority to investigate or punish those who engage in discriminatory practices, they do have the capacity to mediate the various cross-cultural misunderstandings that happen.

Equally important, commissions advise city councils on how local policies and ordinances can augment the Minnesota Human Rights Act. Commissions assist city council members in ensuring that acts of discrimination in housing, employment, education and public service are not tolerated in the local community and are addressed as they occur.

Program Outcomes:

The outcomes of municipal and county human rights commissions are as varied and unique as the communities themselves. Many hold several community education activities annually. Others focus on a few annual events.

Recently, commissions around the state have been hosting community dialogues in the aftermath of September 11. These dialogues are often viewed as community conversations and meetings of cross-cultural understandings to fight bigotry and hate crimes that have been increasing recently.

But for many cities throughout Minnesota, the establishment of a human rights commission makes a statement to minority members of the community that there is a place in City Hall they can turn to in the event that they believe they have experienced any discrimination.

Funding:

The activities of each human rights commission are financed through the local governmental structure, i.e., the city or the county. Human rights commissioners are volunteers and generally do not get paid (although at times their expenses may be reimbursed). Some commissions have pre-defined budgets within City Hall; however many do not have defined budgets and simply request operational and travel funds through the city as needed. For the most part, commissions expend less than \$5,000 annually.

Newcomer Project

Program Mission:

The mission of the Newcomer Project in Northfield is to connect newcomers to the community, initially through services, but later through events, helping them become full members and leaders in the community.

The Community:

Located in the rolling countryside of southeast Minnesota between Faribault and the Twin Cities, Northfield is home to two prominent private colleges, St. Olaf and Carleton.

In 2000 the city had a population of 17,147, with the non-white population making up 10.6% of the total. Between 1990 and 2000, the city's population increased 16.8%; white population rose by 9.2% while the non-white population increased by 178%. Non-white students comprise 8.6% of the enrollment in Northfield schools. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 5.7% of the total population, followed by Asians at 2.4%.

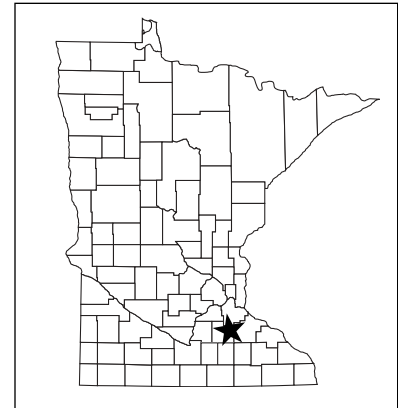
Northfield offers a ready supply of manufacturing and service sector jobs. The leading employers in Northfield are the two colleges, Malt-O-Meal, Sheldahl Inc. (an electronics component plant), and Northfield public schools. Jobs are also provided by a number of manufacturing firms and retail outlets. Northfield is also located close enough to the Twin Cities area to give residents easy access to the metro area's jobs.

Program History:

The Northfield Community Action Council, the brainchild of a group of community leaders, offers several programs to assist low-income people in the Northfield area. In 2002 the Community Action Council established the Newcomer Project, a program with the aim of helping newcomers transition into their community and develop leadership skills. The Newcomer Project is administered by the Newcomer Project Organizer, a position initially made possible by a donation from a local Mexican family. The Community Action Center is the point of entry for newcomers into the community, and from here they are connected to the Newcomer Project Organizer.

Program Description:

The Newcomer Project's goal is to inspire leadership among community members and to enhance and build relationships with those who build the community, including in schools, city government, and surrounding agencies. The project organizer connects families and individuals to resources in the community. The Newcomer Project provides ESL and educational videos to help newcomers with things like city services and the Community Action Council. Clients of the Newcomer Project are also directed to Centro Campensino for the services they offer regarding health and health education.



Contact:

Jamie Lizaola, Newcomer Project Organizer
Community Action Center
(507) 664-3566

The project is designed to encourage minorities to give back to the community, especially through leadership projects such as in organizing youth events like soccer tournaments.

Funding:

A local Mexican family donated the initial money to create the position of Newcomer Project Organizer. The budget is augmented by funding from the Community Action Council.

Project FINE

Program Mission:

Project FINE (Focus on Integrating Newcomers through Education) works to create and foster educational opportunities within institutions, businesses, organizations, and families to build the community through mutual awareness, appreciation, and positive integration of ethnically diverse populations.

The Community:

The historic river town of Winona sits on the banks of the Mississippi River in southeast Minnesota and is one of the oldest cities in Minnesota. The city had a population of 27,069 in 2000 with a minority population of 6.3%. During the 1990s, the total population increased 6.3%. The white population rose 6.6%, while the non-white population increased by 124%. The largest minority group in 2000 were Asians at 2.7% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 1.3% and Black and African-Americans at 1.1%. In the Winona Area Public Schools, non-white students make up 8.9% of total enrollment. Non-white enrollment by grade varied from 12.5% in the kindergarten class to 5.1% in the 12th-grade class in 2002-03.

Winona has more than 100 manufacturing firms. The largest, TRW Automotive Electronics and Fastenal employ over 900 workers each. Winona Health (hospital) and Winona State University are two other large employers.

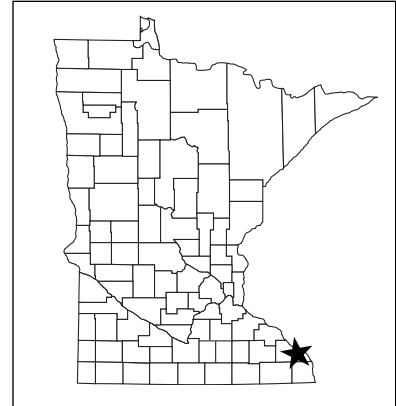
History:

Project FINE began as a project of the University of Minnesota Extension Service in the early 1990s. Winona, which until that time had had little experience with minorities, began to see the arrival of Hmong residents into the community. These new residents came with new needs and concerns. To help them adjust to the community and access services, Project FINE was established to provide interpreters for adults and children needing health care. In 1998 Project FINE became a private non-profit organization. Since then, it has created an Interpreter Network and assists in the integration of newcomers by listening to their concerns and guiding them through the community systems.

Over the years the Hmong community has become well established. Many are homeowners and have found full-time, permanent employment. Today, Project FINE is working with a new group of immigrants, the Latino population, who are now experiencing the same difficulties the Hmong had years earlier.

Program Description:

Project FINE's programs and services include the Interpreter Network, cultural diversity trainings, Voices in Harmony, and Collaborations. Currently there is a part-time interim supervisor, a full-time lead interpreter coordinator, and a part-time receptionist. There will be a VISTA volunteer that will work with the Latino Voices in Harmony groups.



Contact:

Thai Vang,
Lead Interpreter
(507) 454-4100

Two years ago the Interpreter Network was established to provide interpreter assistance to people with limited English-speaking skills. Assistance is provided for a fee in situations such as job interviews, medical appointments, and legal consultations. Interpreters are available for Spanish, Hmong, Bosnian, Vietnamese, Thai, Russian, Mandarin, Arabic, and Cantonese. The interpreters are trained and oriented according to federal standards of ethics and confidentiality prior to service. Many of the interpreters are international students at Winona State University.

A program that was available in the past was cultural diversity training, a program for businesses, agencies and other groups that could be tailored to the specific needs of the organization. This was a strong program and Project FINE intends to reinstate it.

Voices in Harmony is a support system for newcomers that explains procedures in the community and assists them in navigating through them. In the program, immigrants can express their concerns about such things as law enforcement and health care. Project FINE listens to their concerns and responds in the form of coaching, modeling, self-help activities, and civic action. The discussions take place through regularly scheduled meetings with key members of the various cultural groups. Larger gatherings provide opportunities for educational, informational, and social activities.

Members of Project FINE also work with other organizations and agencies that offer services to immigrants and minorities in the Winona area. For example, Project FINE works with high school and post-secondary school officials to provide information and coaching for students and parents. Project FINE also works with health and law enforcement agencies to develop ways to help emergency personnel handle crises involving minorities more effectively.

Program Outcomes:

Project FINE has developed a collaboration network in the Winona area, cooperating with many agencies that also have contact with newcomers and developing programs that can be used in the schools, law enforcement and health care. Project FINE is currently working on a method of evaluation.

Funding:

Project FINE has an annual budget of \$81,000, and like many similar organizations, it is dependent on grants and donations. However, income has dropped significantly over the past two years. As a result, the program ran short of grant money at the beginning of 2003 and has been unable to fill a director's position.

The program receives support from the United Way of Greater Winona and does derive some revenue from fees, which are charged at an hourly rate for interpreting services that include translating written material, business situations and health care situations inside and outside of Winona County. Fees for medical services are reimbursed for clients who carry Blue Plus and UCare Minnesota coverage through Winona County Community Health Services. Medical Assistance also provides funds for Medical Assistance clients.

Racial Harmony

Program Mission:

The mission of Racial Harmony is to create in the community a welcoming, non-discriminatory environment with respect for everyone. This goal is achieved by bringing together as many community leaders as possible to work together.

The Community:

St. Cloud, a city of 59,107 in 2000, is located on I-94 approximately 65 northwest of the Twin Cities in central Minnesota. This regional hub is the fastest growing area in the state and is home to St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud Technical College, the state prison, St. Cloud hospital and many large employers in the manufacturing, service and retail sectors.

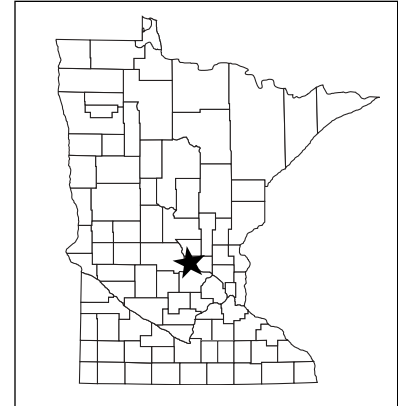
Between 1990 and 2000, St. Cloud's population rose 21.1%. While the white population increased by 14.3%, the non-white population rose 207%, from 3.5% of the total population to 8.9%. Asians are the largest minority group at 3.1% of the population, followed by the Black/African-American group at 2.4% and Hispanics at 1.3%. Minority students made up 13.2% of the enrollment in 2002-03. By grade, minority enrollment ranged from 18.2% in first grade to 8.4% in 12th grade.

St. Cloud is a fast-growing area in Minnesota with a diversified area economy. Development in the St. Cloud area is spreading quickly to the southeast, where it is merging with expansion from the Twin Cities. Within St. Cloud itself the largest employer is St. Cloud Hospital, with 2,900 employees. The hospital, along with the VA Medical Center, and the state, may all offer service sector jobs that would interest immigrants. There are also several manufacturing and printing facilities in the city, Fingerhut Corp., a mail-order company that employs over 1,000 workers, and several retail outlets.

History:

Racial Harmony began as an initiative proposed by then-mayor Larry Meyer in 1997 that involves community leaders in developing and implementing a coordinated response to the increasingly diverse population in St. Cloud and surrounding cities. The statement of purpose for the Racial Harmony Team is to develop an effective social change management model that can guide the community through this transition time.

Racial Harmony is one of three major projects of the St. Cloud Human Rights Commission that use collaboration among community groups to bring awareness to diversity and how it is affecting the community. The commission began in 1973; at the same time the city council adopted a human rights ordinance and created the Human Rights Division to work closely with individuals, business, governmental agencies and private organizations to promote fair and respectable treatment. The role of the commission is to provide information, referral, and advocacy to individuals who may have a complaint.



Contact:

Paula Van Avery,
St. Cloud Human Rights
Division Director
(320) 650-3133

Program Description:

The objectives of Racial Harmony are to focus the community's attention on diversity, eliminate suspicions and fear resulting from negative stereotypes and promote positive inter-racial awareness. Racial Harmony draws on people from distinct groups within the participating communities; each group has a well-defined set of goals, action steps and measurable outcomes that promote diversity. For example the Education committee will develop a questionnaire for the schools to determine how diversity is promoted. The Housing committee mailed property owners fair housing information and notify of a free fair housing training.

For example, the government committee has goals to bridge gaps between racial groups and local units of government; build accessible relationships between the same; reduce and eliminate housing discrimination; and create a strategic operational and organizational plan for regional human rights departments. Ongoing actions include regular attendance by members at cultural diversity community meetings; translating employment opportunities; distributing welcome packets; develop a translator/interpreter list for distribution; convene meetings with area prosecutors to develop a process for reporting, investigating and prosecuting criminal housing violations. Measures of effectiveness indicate success when government committee members, their colleagues and other members of the leadership team report regular attendance at culturally diverse meetings and events; culturally diverse community individuals and groups begin to report feelings of inclusiveness within government systems; and culturally diverse community individuals and groups become involved in governmental areas of employment, boards and commissions.

Committees made up of members of human services, faith communities, business and education have similar goals and outcomes.

Welcome Center

Program Mission:

The mission of the center is to help newcomers become part of the community by connecting them to resources and information, providing programs and services that promote self-sufficiency and multicultural understanding.

The Community:

Located in southeastern Minnesota, Austin (23,314 in 2000) has been home to international food giant Hormel Foods for over 100 years. Like many cities in rural Minnesota, Austin saw modest population growth (6.4%) between 1990 and 2000, but also like many rural cities, Austin's white population declined 1.8% during those years. At the same time, the non-white population more than tripled, increasing 342%, and accounted for 9.9% of the city's total population in 2000. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 6.1% of the population, followed by Asians, at 2.2%. In the schools, minority students make up 16.7% of enrollment, but as in many districts, the lower grades have much higher enrollments. In Austin, minorities made up 26% of the first-grade class in 2002-03.

Hormel is the largest employer in Austin, with 1,335 workers, along with Quality Pork Processors, which employs approximately 725 people. Numerous manufacturing firms also provide employment in the area.

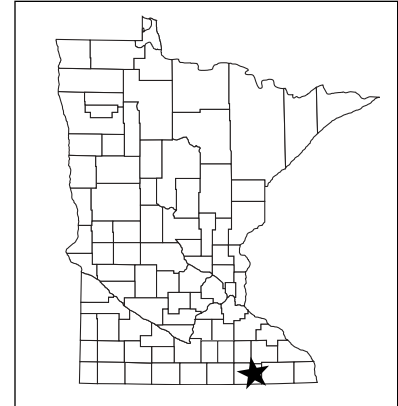
History:

The Welcome Center originated from discussions in the late 1990s on what Austin could do to welcome newcomers, help them find services, and generally help them adjust to their new home. In 1999, with a sizable contribution from the Hormel Foundation, community leaders formed Apex Austin to address these and other issues connected to the changing demographics of the city. One of the first programs established by Apex was the Welcome Center, which opened in October 2000.

Program Description:

The Welcome Center has three objectives: to provide a place that welcomes new residents, to offer them guidance and services that will assist them in their transition into the community, and to collaborate with agencies and organizations in the search for a better way to address multicultural issues. The Center offers a range of services, including job search help and housing lists. The staff assist clients with basic tasks such as filling out forms, job and insurance applications, money orders, and immigration forms. The staff also offers interpreting between clients and the government, police and businesses. The three full-time and two part-time staff members work with clients on a one-on-one basis, identifying individual needs and connecting individuals to appropriate agencies.

In a one-time homeownership program, the Center partnered with a local real estate agency to assist first-time Latino homebuyers in purchasing their own homes, a strategy they hoped would help stabilize the population while at the same time



Contact:

Liliana Silverstry-Nilon,
Director
(507) 434-2863

open up rental units. Real estate agents, bankers and Center staff worked together to identify those who would qualify, then developed classes, held at the Welcome Center, to educate those interested on the various aspects of home buying and ownership. The program assisted 45 families in buying homes.

The Welcome Center also offers Young Minds in Education, an after-school program targeting students at risk of failing classes. The mission of YME is to empower and increase the opportunities for participants by improving their academic, social and leadership skills.

Some of the cultural activities organized by the Welcome Center include the annual Ethnic Festival, featuring ethnic foods and dance, and a Hispanic program on KSMQ-TV (PBS) that airs twice a month called “Hablando de Todo un Poco” (“A Little Bit of Everything”). The program educates and informs the community by featuring local community leaders each month to highlight a range of topics, from citizenship classes, to health issues and winter safety.

Program Outcomes:

The Welcome Center serves an average of 235 people a month, and served more than 2,000 people last year. Of those, 80% were Hispanic; some of the other groups using the services were Vietnamese, Bosnian, and Sudanese.

The Welcome Center is working with the Wilder Foundation to develop a strategic plan and tools of measurement. The first year of operations focused on implementing programs, while the second year was spent working on plans to assess the success of the center.

Funding:

The Center’s annual budget is \$250,000. The Center’s primary sources of funding are corporate and government: the Hormel Foundation gave \$100,000 in matching funds for startup money for the Center and will donate additional funds (gradually decreasing each year) for the following five years, while the city and county have each contributed \$25,000. Young Minds in Education is funded by a grant, El Fondo de Muestra Comunidad, from the St. Paul Foundation Community Endowment Funds, while other sources include fund-raising events, individual donations and program fees.

Youth First Neighborhood Center

Program Mission:

The mission of the Neighborhood Center is to work with adults proactively, involving them in creating an environment where their children can thrive.

Community:

The city of Anoka was first settled in the 1840s. It's location at the confluence of the Rum and Mississippi rivers made it a center first for the lumber milling industry, then flour milling. Today, the city sits at the northwestern reaches of the Twin Cities suburban area, on Highway 10 between Minneapolis and St. Cloud.

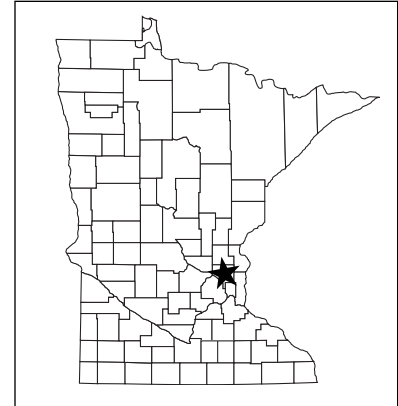
The 2000 Census showed Anoka with a population of 18,076, of which 8.0% are minorities. The city saw a 5.1% increase in its population between 1990 and 2000, but while the white population remained steady (-0.1%), the minority population increased 162.6%. The largest minority group is Black/African-Americans at 2.5%, while Latinos make up 1.9%, American Indians make up 1.1% and Asians make up less than 1%. Areawise, Anoka is very small and makes up only a fraction of the area of the Anoka-Hennepin school district. Within Anoka, school minorities made up 9.2% of the enrollment in 2002-03, about the same as the district as a whole (10%). Among the individual schools in Anoka, however, minority enrollment ranges from 4.1% to 26.3%. In 2002, Anoka-Hennepin also had the third highest number of languages represented in the district, 53.

Anoka has a handful of large manufacturing plants, plus a number of medium and small plants. The largest, Federal Cartridge and Hoffman Engineering, both employ more than 1,000 workers. However, Anoka's proximity to the Twin Cities and its on average older, lower-priced housing stock may have made it attractive to immigrants for its housing more than its jobs.

History:

Youth First was one of the first organizations to be formed based on research in the early 1990s by Search Institute, a non-profit research organization that developed a list of "assets," positive experiences, relationships, opportunities, and personal qualities that they determined young people need to grow up healthy and responsible. Established as a partnership of between the cities of Anoka, Ramsey, and Andover eight years ago, Youth First is dedicated to promoting these positive assets in youth in the three cities. Some of the many projects Youth First has engaged in are a youth skate park, the "Youth First on Cable" television program, the annual Mayors' Prayer Breakfast, youth centers, a youth advisory board, teen dances, sport competitions, and a golf tournament.

Working with the Northwest Anoka County Community Consortium, a collaboration of the cities, school district, churches, businesses and other organizations, Youth First introduced Neighbors Helping Neighbors, a program that would give residents opportunities to build relationships, share skills, and model non-violent



Contact:

Traci Warnberg-Lemm,
Program Manager
Paula Schroeder,
Site Coordinator
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behaviors for the youth in the neighborhood. Today it is commonly known as the Neighborhood Center.

Program Description:

The Neighborhood Center in the Verndale neighborhood of Anoka was established in April of 2000 out of a need to improve an area that suffered from high crime rates, had high service needs and a high number of food shelf recipients. Originally the program operated out of a one-bedroom apartment, but today it is housed in a strip mall with other community programs on the edge of the neighborhood.

The goal of the Youth First Neighborhood Center is to create a community where adults and children thrive. The center serves 160 families in the seven-block area of the Verndale neighborhood. In the first three months of 2003, the center served 42 youth and 47 adults, nearly half of whom were minorities. The center supports relationship building among the residents by getting them involved in crime reduction, recreational, and educational activities. A program manager and site coordinator operate the center, while programs are implemented with the assistance of volunteers. In the first three months of 2003, volunteers had accrued 508 hours and neighborhood residents volunteered 32.5 hours.

The Neighborhood Center offers a safe place for kids to hang out with friends and have fun. Elementary and middle school students have separate “hang times,” during which they can use the computer, make crafts, and play games. The center has also offered field trips to places like the Minneapolis Planetarium, the Minnesota Zoo, Como Zoo, the Holidazzle parade, and Bunker Hills Wave Pool.

The center offers a homework club two afternoons a week. Teachers from the local schools inform center staff and volunteers about the needs of each child. Adults can sign up for a free English as a Second Language class offered once a week in the evening. Volunteers teach the ESL class and high school Spanish students assist the Spanish-speaking students. Computer, cooking, job search, renters education classes and other education opportunities are also offered to youth and adult residents.

One of the center’s most successful projects has been in the area of crime reduction. A Crime Watch committee meets monthly with community members to discuss various strategies. Residents took an active part in the investigation and arrest of a neighborhood drug dealer. An important part of the Crime Watch program is the consistent presence of an Anoka police officer who has worked hard to build a positive relationship between residents and the police. In addition to working with the neighborhood crime watch committee, this officer is also assigned to the DARE program at the elementary school, acts as a liaison at the middle school and as a liaison between renters and landlords.

Residents of the Verndale neighborhood were also active in raising money to build a playground for their children. The city’s parks and recreation department manages the playground, with the residents taking an active role in the general cleanup and monitoring of the park. Community involvement has also come in the form of a high school acting group, “Together 2 Act,” that mentors children at the center by helping them put on monthly plays based on children’s books for the Head Start program next door.

Program Outcomes:

In 2001 the National Association of Counties presented the Neighborhood

Center with an Achievement Award for their efforts in helping neighbors build healthy communities. Fifteen months after the center opened the number of police calls went down 50%, and the number of calls continue to drop each month.

The center's grant funding requires an annual formal evaluation process. The center administers its own surveys every six months to learn more about the relationships and interaction among residents and strengthen the programming at the Neighborhood Center. These surveys are conducted by the neighborhood residents themselves. Besides monitoring the progress of the neighborhood, the surveys have become a form of leadership development among residents. Those conducting the surveys and participating also earn incentives such as gift certificates that help them with birthday and Christmas shopping.

Through the surveys and periodic focus groups, people in the Verndale neighborhood have expressed a great deal of pride and satisfaction in their neighborhood's accomplishments through the Neighborhood Center. They have said that through the Neighborhood Center they have been able to be part of something, have gotten to know others, they accomplish things, have access to needed services, have greater self-esteem and are able to communicate that to others through respect and kindness. They know where their kids are. One resident said, "I know my neighbors' names now."

Funding:

The annual program-operating budget is \$120,000. The Minnesota Department of Drug Policy and Violence Prevention gave a one-time grant for a two-year time period, while a second two-year grant came from the McKnight Foundation. The Northwest Anoka County Community Consortium also provided \$10,000 in financial support. Anoka County manages the center's accounting, while the city of Anoka donates time as the fiscal agent and pays for the center's electricity.

Chapter Two: It Starts with the Children

To say that children represent our future is both a cliché as well as the truth. Regardless, one cannot escape the fact that activities to improve the educational attainment, cultural adjustment and economic life chances of our immigrant and minority youth will yield benefits many times over for both our young people and our communities throughout Minnesota.

Today a disproportionate number of immigrant and minority youth are not realizing their educational potential. Yet it is these very young people who will comprise an increasingly significant segment of our workforce in the not too distant future. In an economy that values a young, well-educated and talented workforce, we cannot afford to fail our children; the consequences for our state, our communities and our youth are too great. It is for that very reason that programs at both the state and local level have been initiated to better help our immigrant and minority children achieve the success they deserve.

At the state level, the Minnesota State Legislature passed a desegregation statute in 1999 to identify racially segregated school districts and create “Integration Collaboratives” that include both these isolated districts and their adjacent districts. These collaborative district structures work together to improve the academic achievement of students; create a multicultural learning environment; and increase cultural awareness for all students. Racially isolated districts are identified by examining the districtwide enrollment of minority students and comparing it with similar enrollment figures for adjacent districts. When the minority enrollment percentages differ across districts by more than 20 percent, the district is deemed a racially isolated district.

As of January 2002 there were over 80 Minnesota school districts involved in approximately two dozen multi-district integration collaboratives. To assist these collaboratives in their multicultural programming, the Minnesota Department of Education (formerly the Department of Children, Families and Learning) provides augmented funding in addition to their basic formula funding. These collaborative structures are greatly improving the opportunities and achievement of our minority students statewide. To learn more about the Minnesota Desegregation law and the many integration collaboratives statewide, contact the Minnesota Department of Education.

However, in addition to these statewide efforts, local school districts and communities alike are taking up this challenge as well. From school diversity coordinators to organizing culturally appropriate youth recreation programs to ensuring the safety of the very young by creating a 24-hour multicultural, multi-lingual childcare center, communities are seeking to address these needs.

The programs highlighted in this chapter consist primarily of community-based activities to improve the lives and opportunities of immigrant and minority youth and the families that love them.

Catherwood House

Program Mission:

Providing affordable, culturally appropriate childcare services to immigrant employees, especially those working non-traditional shift hours.

The Community:

Located in southeastern Minnesota, Austin (23,314 in 2000) has been home to international food giant Hormel Foods for over 100 years. Like many cities in rural Minnesota, Austin saw modest population growth (6.4%) between 1990 and 2000, but also like many rural cities, Austin's white population declined 1.8% during those years. At the same time, the non-white population more than tripled, increasing 342%, and accounted for 9.9% of the city's total population in 2000. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 6.1% of the population, followed by Asians, at 2.2%. In the schools, minority students make up 16.7% of enrollment, but as in many districts, the lower grades have much higher enrollments. In Austin, minorities made up 26% of the first-grade class in 2002-03.

Hormel is the largest employer in Austin, with 1,335 workers, along with Quality Pork Processors, which employs approximately 725 people. Numerous manufacturing firms also provide employment in the area.

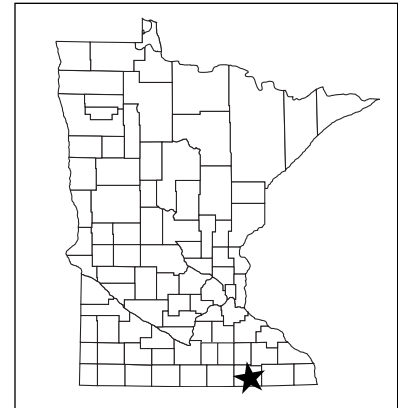
History:

In 1999 managers at the Quality Pork Processing plant approached the city leaders and the non-profit community about the childcare needs of their employees. Many of their plant employees were reluctant to enroll their children in traditional childcare services, which were both culturally inappropriate and expensive. Further, there were no childcare options available to employees who worked second or third shifts (shifts that often begin at 10 p.m. or later). The consequence was too often children at home by themselves, or older children caring for younger children.

The first option explored was an on-site childcare facility for plant employees, but that was ruled out due to space and safety concerns. Quality Pork Processing then provided \$10,000 to the Parenting Resource Center, a non-profit organization in Austin to conduct an in-depth study and to develop a business plan for such a facility. The end result was The Catherwood House, named after Judge S.D. Catherwood, a friend of George Hormel, (founder of Hormel Foods), whose home was selected to house the childcare center. Through the APEX Austin organization, the Hormel Foundation awarded a grant to purchase the house outright. In March of 2000 this historic residence officially became home to the Catherwood House Childcare Center.

Program Description:

Catherwood House is a 24-hour childcare facility open to all members of the public; a certain number of childcare slots are reserved for employers that have a direct service contract with the Parenting Resource Center (the facility's fiscal agent). Catherwood House currently has 18 employees, nine of which are bi-lingual



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Kathleen Stutzman,
Parenting Resource Center
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or multi-lingual. Catherwood is licensed by the state to care for 14 children “per shift” and serves three shifts per day. Managers also requested and received from the state a regulatory variance that allows them to care for up to 28 children during times when shifts overlap.

The facility provides infant care and also has separate quarters for sick children and a crisis nursery. Catherwood House maintains a bi-lingual childcare worker that stays up all night to supervise the childcare and in some cases, keeps infants and pre-school children awake, so their sleeping patterns can match those of their parents working third shift hours. Such a service is congruent with the “family care philosophy” of the facility.

The Catherwood House also provides workforce development training for bi-lingual childcare workers. Many of the Catherwood House’s employees have learned their childcare skills at the employment site and have subsequently left to take higher paying jobs in the community, which, of course, has both positive and negative consequences.

Program Outcomes:

The establishment of the Catherwood House is clearly a response to an identified community need and the consequence of a collaborative effort by the community, the non-profit sector and local employers. The vision of providing a childcare center that has multi-lingual employees and a culturally appropriate “home-like” atmosphere was successful. Equally important and innovative is that the facility provides care 24-hours a day for the children of employees who work second and third shift hours. The Center runs at near capacity for all but the overnight shift.

It is also important to note that the establishment of the Catherwood House is clearly a source of community pride and a testament to community collaboration. Students at Riverland Community College helped remodel the house after its purchase as part of a class project. Local high school art students helped decorate and paint the facility. Through exchanges such as these, local citizens elevated their knowledge and understanding of the importance of childcare and the concerns and customs of the newcomers to their community.

In 2001 the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, conducted a survey of the families that utilized the Catherwood House. The results showed a high rate of satisfaction among families, especially in areas of flexibility with scheduling, respecting the family’s culture and exposing the children to new cultures, and speaking with families in their native languages.

Program Finances:

Childcare services at the Catherwood House are provided at a subsidized rate of \$3.65 per hour. The revenue generated from the families using the service only covers about 68% of Catherwood’s \$300,000 annual budget. In fact, program expenses exceeded program revenue in 2001 by approximately \$103,000. However, The Catherwood House also received grant support from the Hormel Foundation and Quality Pork Processing sufficient to make up the difference. It also should be noted that the Catherwood House is debt-free, since the funds to purchase the facility itself were donated.

Managers at the Catherwood House clearly understand the financial implications and are working to diversify and stabilize their funding streams to allow the facility to “break even.” This is important as the business plan has the community grant awards decreasing in size over time. Therefore, alternative revenue sources must be identified and developed.

Nobles County Collaborative Scholarship Fund

Program Mission:

The mission of the Nobles County Collaborative Scholarship Fund is to provide financial support to local high school students to attend an institution of higher education, as a long-term strategy to recruit minority/culturally competent teachers and professionals to the Worthington-Nobles County Area.

The Community:

The city of Worthington is situated in the southwest corner of Minnesota on I-90, 30 miles from Sioux Falls, S.D. Worthington is the county seat of Nobles County and serves as a regional economic hub for the area.

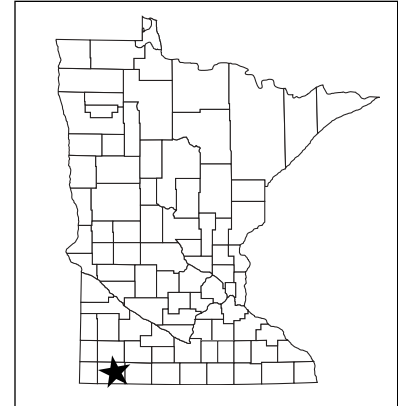
The city had a 2000 population of 11,283, with minorities accounting for 29.7%. From 1990 to 2000, the city's total population increased by 13.1%, but the city saw one of the steepest drops in white population among the case study cities. During the 1990s, the number of white residents decreased 14.4%, while the minority population increased by 375%. Latinos make up the largest minority group, at 19% of total population, followed by Asians, at 7%. Minority students make up 38% of the total enrollment of 2,300 students in Worthington's schools. In the lower grades, minority students make up more than half the student population, but in the upper grades they account for less than one-fourth.

The largest employer in Worthington is Swift & Co., a meat processing firm employing 1,500 workers, followed by the Worthington School District and the Worthington Regional Hospital. There are also numerous medium and small manufacturing firms in the area, plus several large retail outlets.

Program History:

The Nobles County Integration Collaborative was organized in 2002 in response to the state's desegregation law. Administered through the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning, funds are designated for those school districts that have a disproportionately large number of minority students relative to the adjacent school districts. Along with the Worthington Public Schools, others in the collaborative include the Adrian Public Schools, Ellsworth Public Schools, Fulda Public Schools and Round Lake/Brewster Public Schools. The collaborative school districts work together on a variety of projects to enhance cultural understanding and improve student outcomes.

Due to the large influx of ethnic minority students during the 1990s, school districts in the region, like many others districts, have been trying to recruit minority teachers for some time. However, through the Integration Collaborative the participating districts decided to take a different approach to encourage and support local students in their effort to become teachers. The philosophy is expressed in a scholarship program where the local school districts support local graduates and in turn, these graduates support the school districts.



Contact:

Leann Enninga, Director
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Program Description:

The initial plans for the scholarship fund focused on graduating high school students who planned to attend Minnesota West Community & Technical College, the local two-year MnSCU institution in Worthington. That focus soon shifted, however, allowing students to attend any accredited college campus of their choice.

Each year, all graduating seniors in all of the participating districts are informed about the scholarship program. Students interested in applying for the scholarship are required to complete a scholarship application and return it to the Collaborative Office. The scholarships are awarded based upon both financial need and academic performance.

Scholarship amounts range from \$4,000 per year to \$8,000 per year, depending upon class status (i.e., juniors receive more financial aid than freshman). Up to ten scholarships are awarded each year. Students are not required to be members of the minority community to be eligible for the scholarship, but all eight students currently receiving the scholarship are. In addition, all students who are selected to receive the scholarship are required to provide a minimum of 50 hours of service to the Collaborative each year. Through this service obligation, students maintain contact with their local district, improving the probability that they will in fact return to their home area.

Program Outcome:

Currently eight graduating students are under scholarship from the Collaborative. These students are enrolled at the University of Minnesota, Minnesota West Community & Technical College and Southwest State University. The first college graduate from the program (a Latina) graduated from the University of Minnesota in May 2003 with a degree in education. She has already completed her student teaching internship in the Worthington Public Schools, and staff and members of the Collaborative are very hopeful that their first program graduate will find employment in the southwest Minnesota area.

Program Funding:

Program funding for the collaborative scholarship program is budgeted at \$67,500 per year. Funds are provided through the special desegregation funds administered through the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. The budgeted funds for the scholarship do not include administrative costs, which are absorbed by the collaborative.

Family Literacy Program

Program Mission:

The Family Literacy Program was established to encourage success in school for children who are learning English as a second language, and to assist their parents in learning English as well.

The Community:

Located 90 southwest of the Twin Cities, Mankato is developing into a commercial and industrial hub in southern Minnesota. Home to a state university campus, the city is also the county seat of Blue Earth County and has large medical complex. Together, the cities of Mankato and North Mankato (just across the river in Nicollet County), also have numerous large, medium and small-scale manufacturing firms. The 2000 Census reported a population 32,427 for Mankato and a combined population for the two cities of 44,225.

The city of Mankato saw a 3% increase in its population during the 1990s, but like many rural cities and towns, its white population decreased (by 1.5%), while its non-white population more than doubled (105.6%). The largest ethnic group is Asians (2.8% of the population), followed by Latinos (2.2%) and Black and African-Americans (1.9%). In the Mankato school district, non-white students made up 10.6% of enrollment in the 2002-03 school year.

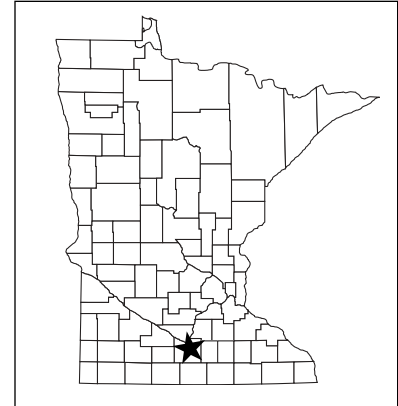
History:

In 1999 a small number of immigrant parents approached the Mankato Public Schools' Community Services for assistance with their children's education. Many of the immigrant families were from war-torn countries in East Africa, where they had fled their homes. As a result, children arrived in the U.S. with large lapses in their education. When the families arrived in the United States, children were placed in age-appropriate grades, but they were soon struggling because of problems caused by their broken education. Organizers started the Family Literacy Program as a summer project to give these students extra help; the program eventually became year-round.

Program Description:

The Family Literacy Program caters to both children and adults. The goal of the program is to help families improve their English proficiency and understand school and community processes, thereby helping them participate in the community and fulfill their personal goals. An average of eighty students attend these tutoring sessions. The program consists of 90% East Africans, along with a few Hispanic students. The program is housed in the Lincoln Community Center, a former neighborhood school that is now home to an alternative high school, community theater, and the Community Services Department of the District 77.

Parents attend ESL classes taught by an adult ESL teacher and volunteers four mornings each week. The children and parents then attend the program together two evenings a week. Children are divided into classrooms by age and there work with



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Clarice Esslinger,
ESL Family Literacy
Coordinator
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tutors on their homework assignments. Each room has a paid head teacher and is staffed with volunteers. Volunteers are mainly teacher trainees from the education department at Minnesota State University, Mankato.

Students are referred to the program by their teachers or through the community coordinator for additional tutoring support. The program coordinator and each student's teacher work together to identify the student's individual needs and the kind of homework the students will need help with. This kind of communication between the program coordinators and the schools helps them track the student's progress and also helps the student develop accountability, since both parties know what the student should be working on.

Families can also be introduced to the program through the local Somali Community Connector. This person assists families in many ways to understand the new culture they are living in, including helping out with parent-teacher conferences and community functions.

In the adult class, participants are encouraged to take the lead in deciding what they will discuss. The program coordinator, who instructs the class, then teaches English in preparation for the specific topic. The class often hosts guest speakers, and sometimes guests become the audience. The mayor of Mankato and several city council members attended a class recently where they learned about the journeys of Mankato's newest residents. Police officers have visited to discuss topics like winter safety, using 911, and to answer questions. Other speakers have discussed issues concerning tenants' rights and homeownership.

The group has also become something of an informal support group, where members can talk about cultural differences they are experiencing and work on common challenges. For example in East Africa many parents are not involved in the student-teacher relationship, while in America parental involvement is expected.

Program Outcomes:

The outcomes of the program are measured by the students' academic success and their attitude towards school. In the parent component of the program, parents are taking the initiative to decide what they need to learn about. For example, parents requested a class on job preparation for their high school students. Success is also measured by the parent participation in school and community activities.

Funding:

The Family Literacy Program has an annual budget of \$51,000. Staff costs are kept to a minimum through the many volunteers. The Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning provided a grant for the first year. Currently the Department of Human Services supports the program with a two-year grant of \$102,000. The program also receives some support through a federal grant.

Sleepy Eye’s High School Programs

Program Mission:

The mission of these school-based programs is to work with the community to increase the graduation rate of migrant and immigrant students.

The Community:

Sleepy Eye, a city of 3,515 in southwestern Minnesota, is located in the middle of Minnesota’s rich agricultural area. During the 1990s the city lost 4.8% of its population, including 11.5% of its white population. The minority population, on the other hand, increased 319%, from 74 people in 1990 to 310 in 2000. The largest minority group by far is Hispanic, who make up 7.8% of the community’s population. Minority students made up 26.5% of enrollment in the Sleepy Eye school district in 2002-03. Minority enrollments by grade vary from 48.8% of kindergarteners to 6.6% of 12th graders. These numbers may be skewed somewhat by the presence of a large private Catholic school with an enrollment almost as large as the school district’s (543 compared to the public school’s 660).

The largest employer in Sleepy Eye is Norwood Promotional Products, a printing facility employing 556, and Christensen Farms, a hog processor. Other employers include a construction firm and Del Monte, a vegetable processor, and a number of service and retail outlets.

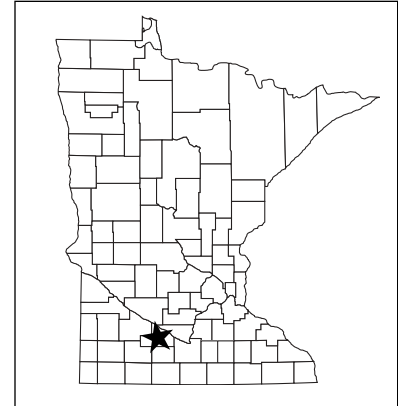
History:

The schools are often the first place the community at large encounters the issues that can accompany a large increase in the non-white population. The Sleepy Eye district has an enrollment of 25.4% of students that identify themselves as Asian, Chicano/Latino, or Black/African-American. During the spring, summer and fall months the enrollment of these students increases to 32%. The principal of Sleepy Eye High School, Elia Bruggeman, was the driving force behind the development of programs to help migrant and minority students and has been a role model in the district.

Program Description

A number of programs for minority students operate out of Sleepy Eye High School. To address the needs of their migrant students, the school hired a **migrant outreach worker**. The migrant outreach worker acts as the liaison between the school and migrant families, and a majority of her time is spent in the community, interacting with parents and keeping track of children. If a student has missed several days, the outreach worker will find out the cause of the student’s absence. At school, the migrant outreach worker translates at parent teacher conferences; she may also translate at parents’ doctor appointments, which helps keep students in class since they won’t be called out to serve as interpreters for their parents.

The summer of 2000 was the first year for Sleepy Eye’s Head Start Program for children of migrant workers. The **summer migrant program** runs for seven weeks



Contact:

Elia Bruggeman,
Principal
Sleepy Eye High School
(507) 794-7905

for students K-12 that live in the district. A migrant child is defined as a child between the ages of 3 and 21 who has moved to a different county, state or school district within the last 36 months seeking agricultural or fishing work. The curriculum focuses on closing the achievement gap by giving migrant students year-round assistance with their education. The curriculum focuses on math, reading, art, music, and computer courses. Physical education and nutrition are also part of the curriculum. A dentist and doctor from the community also provide students with routine check-ups.

Cultural awareness is encouraged in the community through the **Cottonwood River Integration Collaborative**. The overall goal of the collaborative is to improve student achievement and create cultural awareness opportunities for the community. The Cottonwood River Integration Collaborative includes the Sleepy Eye, Cedar Mountain, New Ulm, Springfield and St. James school districts. Sleepy Eye and St. James are defined as “radically isolated school districts” because 25% of the students are identified as minorities, while surrounding districts are much less diversified. The collaborative helps bring cultural awareness to the communities through activities and events.

The collaborative’s first project was the **Cultural Center** in Sleepy Eye. The center opened in the fall of 2002 on Main Street in Sleepy Eye with elementary students performing a traditional Mexican dance. The center is open to all members of the collaborative’s communities to use as a gathering place and take part in events. The center has a reading area, a stage, computer lab and arcade. The center is used for community classes, children, youth and adult activities, focus groups, birthday parties and after-school homework assistance. It is open Monday through Friday, mornings, afternoons and evenings, and Saturday’s from 7-11 p.m. After school hours the outreach worker from the high school supervises and assists limited English-speaking students with their homework assignments. The storefront windows serve as a creative learning tool for the high school social studies students, who decorate the windows with cultural displays.

Funding:

Funding to support the English language learner students comes from county grants, the state Department of Education’s English Language Learner program, Title I, Migrant Education, Integration and Immigrant funding. Summer funding is from Minnesota Valley Action Council, Title I, Migrant Education, and Targeted Services. The migrant worker grant is through the Minnesota Department of Children and Families and must be reapplied for each year.

The budget for the Cultural Center is \$23,500 for rent, utilities, supervision, and art activities. The budget is supported by funds from the Integration Collaborative and donations from Lutheran Brotherhood and St. Mary’s Federal Credit Union. Additional amenities were obtained from excess items that were on sale at the public school.

Spanish/English Language Camps

Program Mission:

The mission of the West Central Minnesota Integration Collaborative is to provide students in the Willmar, Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City, and New London-Spicer school districts learning opportunities that are multi-cultural and racially integrated. The Spanish/English Language Camp was developed as a way to increase the awareness of students in the elementary grades through multi-cultural activities in a recreational environment.

The Community:

The city of Willmar in west central Minnesota has a long history as an agricultural and transportation center and is now home to a large poultry processing industry. Willmar had 18,351 residents in 2000, 18.3% of whom were non-white. During the 1990s, Willmar's population rose 4.7%, but while the white population decreased 7.0%, the non-white population increased 137.7%. The largest minority group are Latinos, at 16% of the total population. Minority students make up nearly 28% of enrollment in Willmar's public schools. Minority enrollment by grade in 2002-03 ranged from almost 40% percent in the lower grades to 12% in 12th grade.

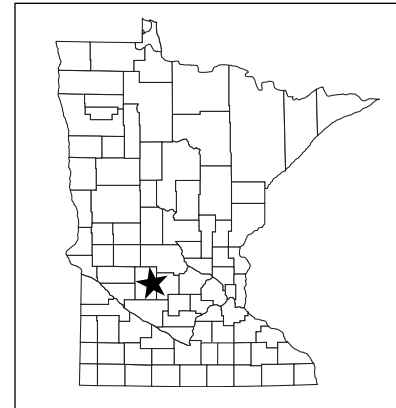
Willmar's largest employer is Jennie-O/Turkey Store, with 1,328 employees. Another smaller poultry facility, Willmar Poultry, employs 225 workers. The Willmar Regional Treatment Center is another large employer (530) that offers many service-sector jobs.

Program History:

The West Central Minnesota Integration Collaborative was established in 2002 in response to the Minnesota School Desegregation Law (*Minnesota Rules 3535.0100 to 3535.0180*). The law seeks to identify not only school districts with sizeable minority populations, but adjacent school districts whose minority enrollments are at least 20 percentage points lower than the district of interest. When such disparities are identified, the state encourages the districts to create an integration collaborative that seeks to increase cultural diversity programming throughout all of the collaborating districts. To assist in these efforts, the state provides the districts with more than \$90 per student in additional funding.

The West Central Collaborative is headquartered in Willmar and includes the adjacent districts of Atwater-Cosmos-Grove City and New London-Spicer. As an integration collaborative, the districts work together to provide multi-cultural and racially integrated programming for students across all of the districts. Like many of Minnesota's other integration collaborative councils, the West Central group is engaged in a variety of programmatic efforts designed to both improve student retention and performance, as well as to increase students' cultural awareness.

In 2002 the Collaborative Council began the job of designing a project that would target students in the elementary grades (grades 1-6), providing them with multi-cultural opportunities and basic Spanish and English language skills in a



Contact:

Charly Leuze,
Program Coordinator
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recreational environment. The collaborative decided to use a model similar to a “day camp,” where kids from all three districts can get together in a structured but recreational environment.

Program Description:

Notices about the camp are sent out to parents throughout the districts informing them about the camp, which are held in the school building over three consecutive Saturdays. They have a four-part curriculum that includes:

- Movement (e.g., culturally appropriate dance)
- Language (taught by certified language instructors)
- Crafts (which include both crafts and games)
- Ethnic foods

The fee for the three-weekend camp is \$5. All teachers in the camp are FLES (Foreign Language Education in Schools) certified.

Program Outcomes:

In January, 90 elementary students participated in the first camp held in Willmar. Subsequent camps were held in Atwater in March and in May in New London.

Funding:

Funding for the Spanish/English Language Camp is provided by the West Central Collaborative. Some revenue is received through program fees; scholarships are also available for all students to ensure that the cost is not a barrier to participation. Total costs are budgeted at approximately \$27,600 per year.

Newcomer Center

Program Mission:

The Newcomer Center in Rochester was established to help refugee and immigrant students transition into the American educational system and get the most out of their classroom experience.

The Community:

With a 2000 population of 85,806, Rochester is one of Minnesota's largest cities and an economic hub in southeastern Minnesota. It is a thriving and world-famous center for medical treatment and research and also a high-tech center based on the presence of a large IBM facility.

During the 1990s, the city's population increased 21.3%. The white population saw an increase of 11.4%, while the non-white population rose 163% to comprise 14.2% of the total population in 2000. In the Rochester Public Schools, minority enrollment in 2002-03 ranged from 28% in first grade to 17% in 12th grade.

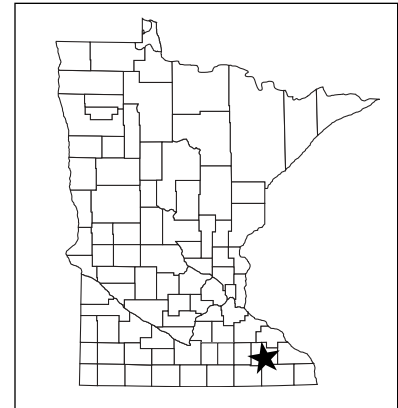
Rochester's medical service industry dominates the city's economy. By far the largest employer is the Mayo Medical Center, with 19,485 employees. The second largest employer is IBM, with 6,000 workers. These two employers give Rochester a higher than average number of workers in highly specialized jobs, including a disproportionately large number of doctors, many of whom are originally from other countries. On the other hand, the presence of a world-famous medical center has spun off a large service industry in the city in the form of hotels, restaurants and personal services, plus transportation services via its airport and I-90. Rochester is also located in a rich farming area and is home to a number of dairy, meat and vegetable processing facilities.

History:

Rochester's ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) program was established in the 1970s in direct response to the influx of refugees after the Vietnam War. At first tutors were hired to assist students, and later a classroom was established where one teacher taught all ages at seven to eight different levels of need. In the early 1980s, this classroom setting was transformed into the Newcomer Center. Many refugee and immigrant students come to America with broken or non-existent educational experience; the goal of the Newcomer Center is to assist these students in adjusting to the school environment, especially in the area of language skills. Today there are 58 languages spoken in Rochester schools, and the many dialects equal many political and religious challenges.

Program Description:

The Newcomer Center is one of four language assistance programs in the Rochester Public Schools. The district has six Newcomer Centers to help students adjust to the American school system: three in the elementary schools, one in the middle school, and two in the high school.



Contact:

Judy Auger,
Coordinator for Limited
English Proficiency
(507) 285-8052

Students first enrolling in the school district are routinely screened to determine if their home language is English and/or whether they are fluent in English. If the student is not fluent in English, he or she is then assessed to determine which language assistance program he or she should be assigned to. Students with the lowest levels of English skills are assigned to the Newcomer Center.

The Newcomer Center is an all-day intensive English program that uses other subjects — art, music, physical education, and math — that don't necessarily require a grasp of English in the beginning. Students attend the Newcomer Center until they reach a level where they can start attending mainstream classes. Since the centers are located in the school buildings, transportation is provided by the school district.

One of the first things a student does upon entering the Newcomer Center is to learn about the educational system. To help students adjust to the new school setting, they attend physical education, music and art classes. Soon students begin studying in core academic classes, while still receiving homework help at the Center. Students stay with the Newcomer Center for a few weeks or longer depending on the student's ability to adjust. When a student has reached the goals set in the guidelines, he or she is ready to go to the neighborhood school. The student then may receive additional assistance there. Students can leave the Newcomer Center in as early as six weeks, but the maximum term is a year and half. If a student is in the center for this length of time, it may indicate some type of learning disability.

The Newcomer Center uses a set of guidelines to determine a student's readiness for the mainstream classroom. Younger children (grades 1-5) are measured for reading, writing, math and oral competency, while older students (grades 6-12) are checked for comprehension, oral presentation, reading readiness, writing, cultural information, orientation to school site, and math competencies.

Students attending the Newcomer Center come in with widely varying levels of academic skills. One example is a child of a Mayo Clinic or IBM employee. The student may be excellent in math and even exceed his or her grade level but has little or no English skills. The Newcomer Center helps the student develop English skills while allowing them to continue to succeed in math as they did in their native country.

The number of students per classroom is never limited; however, the ideal classroom size is 15 students per teacher for elementary schools and 20 students per teacher at the middle and high school level. Paraprofessionals and volunteers help out in each classroom as well, allowing for more small-group involvement and personal interaction.

Program Outcomes:

The student is required to meet the criteria of the checklist in order to move to the neighborhood school. The Center's guidelines provide concrete, tangible outcomes and expectations for teachers, students and parents. In evaluations, families using the program have been very positive about it, although some parents expressed concern about their child not being in a grade level appropriate for his or her age or that they were being segregated.

Funding:

The Newcomer Center is funded as a part of the larger ESOL budget, but funding from the state to support ESOL programs is not adequate to cover that extra cost the Newcomer Center creates. The school district, however, has decided that the

Newcomer Center is a necessity and therefore has committed to making the program succeed by switching the funding among various pots over the years. For the 2002-2003 school year, \$682,000 in state school district integration funds were used to support the Newcomer Center, while additional ELP funds form the majority of financial support.

Neighborhood partnerships in Richfield

Program Mission:

The Richfield Parks and Recreation Department has joined with Richfield’s Assumption Church and other organizations to create programs that bring together Richfield’s minority community in a fun and educational environment.

The Community:

Richfield is a well-established first ring suburb immediately south of Minneapolis containing an abundance of small, post-war housing. The city is situated on major highways, giving residents easy access to all parts of the Twin Cities area.

The population of Richfield in 2000 was 34,439. During the 1990s, the city lost 3.6% of its population, and but while the white population decreased 18.3%, the non-white population rose 190.4%, from 7.1% of the total population to 21.2%. In the 2002-03 school year, non-white students made up 41% of enrollment. Minority enrollment varies from about 40% to 50% in the lower grades to 30% to 40% in the upper grades. The largest group is Black/African-Americans at 6.6% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 6.3% and Asians at 5.3%.

The largest employers in the city are the Richfield Public Schools and the City of Richfield, and beyond that, numerous retail outlets, hotels, and restaurants. Richfield, however, is in the heart of the Twin Cities, giving residents access to the full selection of jobs the metro area offers.

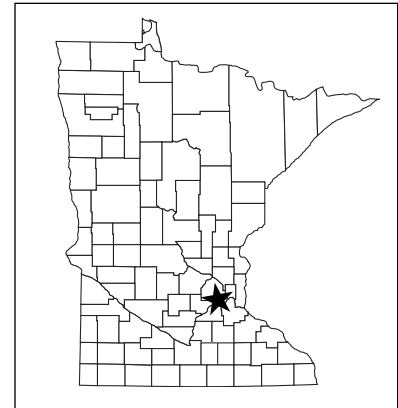
History:

About three years ago the Archdiocese of Minneapolis chose Assumption Church to celebrate a Spanish-language Mass to reach out to the community’s growing Hispanic population. Shortly afterward, Assumption Church began partnering with many city and non-profit organizations to develop programs for the Hispanic community. As a part of this partnership, the city of Richfield’s parks and recreation department developed a number of programs, including adult and youth soccer leagues, a summer playground group and Family Fun Night.

Program Description:

The adult soccer league sponsored by the city’s Parks and Recreation department has grown into a social event with 500 in attendance at any given game. A children’s soccer league has also developed as an offshoot. For the past two years, Parks and Recreation also partnered with Assumption to hold Family Fun Night at the church once a week.

This summer Parks and Recreation is again working with Assumption Church to offer programs for the entire family. A variety of sports will be offered in the church gym, while cooking classes, sponsored by Hennepin County Extension Service, will teach people about healthy eating.



Contact:

Frank White,
Parks and Recreation
Program Manager
(612) 861-9396

Another partnership, this time between the city and the school district, has made possible the summer playground program, a federal program that runs for seven weeks. Open to children in the district's summer enrichment program, children ages 12 and under receive lunch through an extension of the federal free and reduced lunch program, then are bused to area playgrounds for an afternoon of supervised play. There are six playground sites, two of which have programs for teens. Playgrounds located near Hispanic neighborhoods are staffed with bilingual supervisors.

Program Funding:

Support for the various programs comes from different sources. Family Fun Night is operated by parks and recreation department staff as part of their regular jobs. The nutrition classes are sponsored by the Department of Children, Families and Learning, and space is supplied by the church. Funds to staff the playground program come from a grant from the American Heart Association. The meals are part of the free and reduced lunch program, while the school district supplies the enrichment programs.

Prism

Program Mission:

Prism brings students together to educate themselves and each other on different cultures and issues of diversity.

The Community:

The historic river town of Winona sits on the banks of the Mississippi River in southeast Minnesota and is one of the oldest cities in Minnesota. The city had a population of 27,069 in 2000 with a minority population of 6.3%. During the 1990s, the total population increased 6.3%. The white population rose 6.6%, while the non-white population increased by 124%. The largest minority group in 2000 were Asians at 2.7% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 1.3% and Black and African-Americans at 1.1%. In the Winona Area Public Schools, non-white students make up 8.9% of total enrollment. Non-white enrollment by grade varied from 12.5% in the kindergarten class to 5.1% in the 12th-grade class in 2002-03.

Winona has more than 100 manufacturing firms. The largest, TRW Automotive Electronics and Fastenal employ over 900 workers each. Winona Health (hospital) and Winona State University are two other large employers.

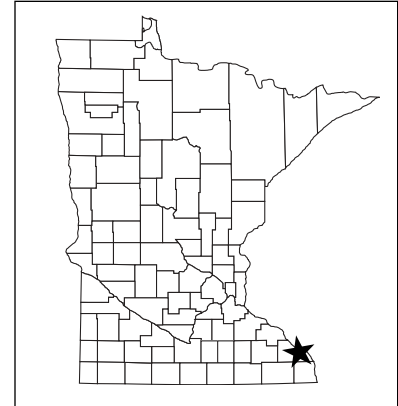
History:

Prism is a student leadership group at Winona High School that started originally as a multi-culture club focusing on connecting exchange students to the school. The highlights of the club early on were presentations made by the exchange students on their culture in after-school programs. Over the years the focus of Prism evolved into a concern for the understanding of other cultures.

Program Description:

Today members of Prism take a more active approach to their mission. The Prism group meets twice a month; it has a dozen consistent members with an e-mail list of another fifty students. Prism has three main events each year with a few smaller events in between. For a door-decorating contest in December, students are assigned a cross-cultural holiday. The students decorate the classroom doors and provide information on the holiday they are showcasing. Community members judge the doors on artistic and educational value.

Diversity week is growing in popularity each year. Each day of the week has a different theme, styled after Homecoming and Winter week, with a talent show on the last day. Student committees and subcommittees organize the week with the assistance of advisors. The club has also organized a field trip to St. Paul to attend the Festival of Nations and has an end-of-the-year party. The advisors organized a half-day leadership retreat off campus for any interested students. During the retreat students listen to speakers and get the opportunity to experience what it feels like not to know the rules through a culture simulation game. Students who attend this program are invited to attend a follow-up session three months after the retreat. This part of the program may not continue, however, due to lack of funds.



Contact:

Scott Lowry,
Faculty Coordinator
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Faculty Coordinator
(507) 454-9507

School First Neighborhood House

Program Mission:

The mission of the School First program is to improve school attendance and the academic performance of minority students through truancy prevention and family intervention.

The Community:

The capital city of Minnesota, St. Paul has a long tradition of becoming home to countless ethnic groups from all over the world. Minorities made up 36% of the city's population in 2000, while the St. Paul schools had the largest variety of languages spoken at home (60) of any district in the state in 2002.

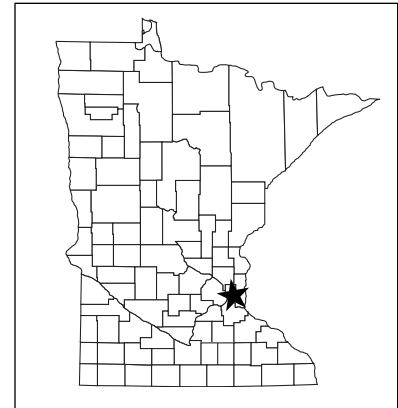
During the 1990s, St. Paul's population grew 5.5%, to 287,151. The white population decreased by 16%, while the non-white population grew by 93%. Ten years ago, the black population was the largest minority group in St. Paul, but today it is the Asians, at 12.4% of the total population. Blacks/African-Americans are second at 11.7%, followed by Latinos at 7.9%. In St. Paul's public schools, minorities make up 69% of student enrollment. Minority enrollment by grade ranges from approximately 71% in the primary grades to 66% of 11th- and 12th-graders.

Unlike small rural cities with large non-white populations, St. Paul has a large number of employers in the city and in the surrounding metro area to attract workers, including manufacturing, machine shops, printing facilities and service and retail jobs.

Program History:

In 1998 Ramsey County initiated a pilot program to keep at-risk children out of the child protection and corrections system. The primary focus of the program was to intervene with young children in kindergarten through sixth grade. Many of these at-risk students were from immigrant families who were somewhat wary of school or government officials. Consequently, chronic truancy was a good indicator that some type of intervention was needed to prevent these kids from ending up in the county's child protection or corrections system. The County believed that initiating some type of intervention would save money in the long run by keeping just a small percentage of these kids out of the system.

County officials then met with the staff at Neighborhood House and with local school principals to create a program. For over 105 years Neighborhood House has served the changing and diverse needs of residents of the West Side of St. Paul. Beginning with the immigration of Eastern and Northern Europeans at the turn of the 20th century, to the Latinos, Southeast Asians and African immigrants of today, Neighborhood House has served as a safe place to meet the essential needs and facilitate civic engagement in community affairs. From those meetings, along with funding from both the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning and Ramsey County, the School First program began.



Contact:

Renee Oswald-Anderson
(651) 227-9291

Program Description:

At-risk children are referred to the School First program by school officials and social workers. Once a referral is made, the parents of the child are contacted to learn about the program and seek their participation. While the School First program is strictly voluntary, approximately 95 percent of parents contacted choose to enroll in the program.

Once enrolled, the family is assigned a School First family worker. All family workers are multi-lingual and are trained into their position by Neighborhood House staff. Entering family workers learn basic interviewing skills, documentation skills, relevant child welfare laws, planning and goal-setting skills, and they must apprentice for three months with an existing Family Worker. It is also important to recognize that School First is a home-based program; little if any intervention occurs at the school.

Working with the parents, Family Workers conduct regular weekly visits to create an individualized plan to increase family stability. School First staff understand that children need to be in school to learn, make friends and reduce their sense of isolation. Consequently, School First's primary objective is to ensure that the child goes to school every day. Family Workers have learned that while the primary intervention is with the parents, the outcomes are expressed through the children. Accordingly, Family Workers routinely help parents to figure out ways to purchase school supplies, find adequate housing and employment, provide resources related to family violence and find connections with groups that provide additional parental support. As families find stability, children increasingly find themselves in school. In most cases the family workers assist parents for approximately six months.

Program Funding:

Staffing of the School First program consists of 2.5 family workers. All of the family workers have college degrees, but not necessarily as licensed social workers. In addition to the family workers, the program has contracted to have a part-time program evaluator and a clinical supervisor.

The total annual budget of the School First program is approximately \$200,000. The majority of the funding comes from a contract with Ramsey County, along with funding from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families and Learning. In addition, local funding comes from the United Way and other local charities.

Outcomes:

In 2002 the School First program assisted a total of 250 children and adults. The program is the only one of its kind on St. Paul's West Side, and there is demand by neighboring areas to expand the program.

Of those families enrolled in the School First program only 4% became involved in the County's child protection system.

62% of the parents enrolled began regularly attending the school's parent/teacher conferences.

SEED

Program Mission:

Minnesota SEED uses a top-down approach to train teachers in the issues of diversity in education.

The Community:

The historic river town of Winona sits on the banks of the Mississippi River in southeast Minnesota and is one of the oldest cities in Minnesota. The city had a population of 27,069 in 2000 with a minority population of 6.3%. During the 1990s, the total population increased 6.3%. The white population rose 6.6%, while the non-white population increased by 124%. The largest minority group in 2000 were Asians at 2.7% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 1.3% and Black and African-Americans at 1.1%. In the Winona Area Public Schools, non-white students make up 8.9% of total enrollment. Non-white enrollment by grade varied from 12.5% in the kindergarten class to 5.1% in the 12th-grade class in 2002-03.

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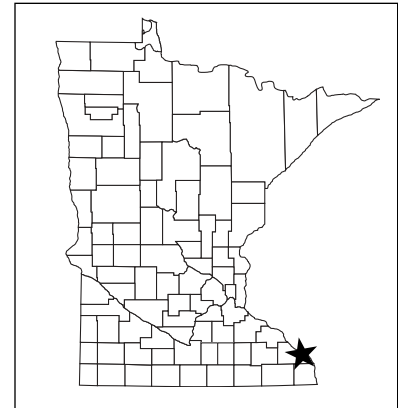
History:

Seeking Education Equity and Diversity began as a national program in the early 1990s, and in 1992 Minnesota was the first state to branch off into its own program. In 2003 SEED held its twelfth statewide leaders workshop. There are now a number of local programs established in school districts around the state. Winona is just one example.

Program Description:

SEED is a training program for teachers on areas of diversity sponsored by the Minnesota Inclusive Project; along with New Jersey's, it is one of the strongest programs in the country. Under the Minnesota Inclusive Program, SEED works directly with teachers, administrators, parents and community members in providing trainings customized for each group. The program includes a summer workshop, a mid-year conference, and a summit for teachers. The administrators' SEED Institute assists administrators in developing leadership strategies for inclusive education. Community leaders and parents receive diversity training through the Parents and Community Leaders Inclusiveness Project.

The Winona district has participated for the past six years. Generally one teacher is sent to the ten-day training in the Twin Cities where participants discuss issues and brainstorm solutions to common challenges. This teacher returns to lead fellow teachers in a monthly seminar on multicultural education. These groups are split into first year, second year and continuing teachers. The seminars are designed to encourage educators to create, develop, and implement strategies and curricula that foster respect for all people. During the seminar participants engage in reading,



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Deb Patti
Winona SEED
Coordinator
(507) 457-2793
Minnesota Inclusiveness
Program
(952) 892-3522

journaling, and conversations with one another about ways to change education, beginning with each teacher.

Program Outcomes:

During the 2000-2001 school year the Minnesota SEED Project prepared 40 educators to lead monthly seminars in their home schools; 105 new and continuing SEED leaders in 84 communities facilitated 101 seminars involving 1,570 participants statewide.

Funding:

The initial training at the state level is supported by fees (\$1,000 per leader attending). There is little to no cost at the local level.

Summer Migrant Program

Program Mission:

St. James' summer migrant program provides academic and social enrichment activities for children of migrant workers.

The Community:

St. James, in south central Minnesota, has been home to a well-established Latino community for many years. In 1990, Latinos already made up a comparatively large percentage of the city's total population, at 8.3%. By 2000, the city's population had grown 7.6% to 4,695, and the minority population had become 25% of that total. As with many rural cities during the 1990s, the white population decreased, in this case by 12%. The minority population, on the other hand, increased by 224%. Latinos are still by far the largest minority group, representing 23.8% of the population. Minority students represent 32% of total enrollment in St. James public schools. Minority enrollment by grade ranges from 47% of kindergartners to 8.8% of 12th graders.

The largest employer in St. James is meat processor Swift-Eckrich with 550 jobs. Another meat processor, Tony Downs Foods, employs 55. There are also several smaller manufacturing firms in the area.

History:

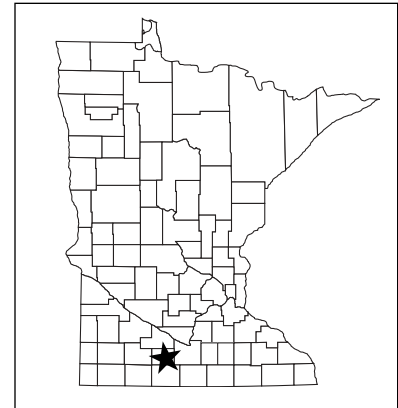
The traditional summer school in St. James program has been offered to Anglo students for many years, but with the increase in migrant workers in the community, the need for a summer program for the children of migrant workers became apparent as well. A few key teachers from St. James went to Sleepy Eye to learn about their summer migrant program. The visit gave them direction on how to implement a similar summer migrant program in their own school district. St. James offered a summer migrant program for the first time in 2001. That first five-week program was attended by 82 students in grades K-12.

Program Description:

To participate in the program, the student must be the child of a migrant worker. "Migrant worker" is defined as a family that has not stayed in the same area for more than three years and works in the agriculture industry. The program is for students in grades K-12 that live in the school district.

Seven out of the fifteen staff members are licensed teachers. One staff member serves as an outreach worker year-round, acting as a liaison between the migrant workers and the school. Building a relationship with the student and the student's family outside of the school environment makes up a majority of the outreach worker's job. The outreach worker seeks out the migrant families and is the first to know when a migrant family moves into town.

The academics portion of the program covers math, reading, writing and art classes. The migrant summer program runs simultaneously with but independent of



Contact:

Pat Bradley
Summer Migrant
Program Coordinator
(507) 375-3321

the traditional summer program, but the students of both programs share the lunchroom and computer room throughout the summer.

Besides core academic classes, students are offered swimming lessons, soccer, volleyball and dancing. The program also includes lunch for the students. The staff learned to be prepared for anything. For example, many students had not gone swimming before, so the staff quickly learned to have extra swimming suits available. Field trips are also part of the program. Destinations have included the Old Log Theatre, Como Park, the Science Museum, and Minnesota State University, Mankato.

As part of the program, the school nurse goes through student files to identify students needing updated vision and hearing tests. The nurse also lines up any immunizations that the student may need and refers students for dental care. Last year, the University of Minnesota Extension Service conducted classes on germs and the importance of hand washing.

On parents night, which serves as an orientation, parents are given opportunities to volunteer to assist with field trips, the lunch program, swimming lessons and in the classroom. The program concludes with an open house where the summer's accomplishments are displayed. Last year the students presented an ethnic dance at the open house wearing costumes made by volunteer mothers.

Funding:

The summer migrant program is funded by a Migrant Education summer grant from the Department of Children, Families and Learning. The total cost to run the five-week program is \$46,303. The coordinator tries to buy supplies for the program in the community, giving an economic incentive for the community to support the program.

Youth Leadership for Vital Communities

Program Mission:

The mission of YLVC is to engage youth in creating inclusive, vital communities.

The Community:

The historic river town of Winona sits on the banks of the Mississippi River in southeast Minnesota and is one of the oldest cities in Minnesota. The city had a population of 27,069 in 2000 with a minority population of 6.3%. During the 1990s, the total population increased 6.3%. The white population rose 6.6%, while the non-white population increased by 124%. The largest minority group in 2000 were Asians at 2.7% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 1.3% and Black and African-Americans at 1.1%. In the Winona Area Public Schools, non-white students make up 8.9% of total enrollment. Non-white enrollment by grade varied from 12.5% in the kindergarten class to 5.1% in the 12th-grade class in 2002-03.

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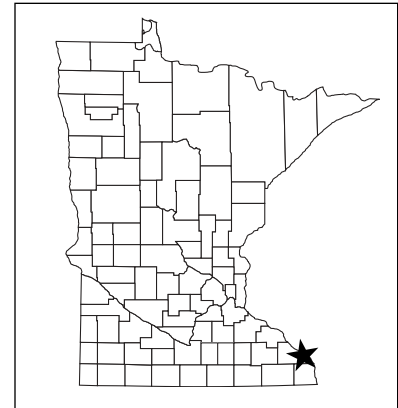
History:

Youth Leadership for Vital Communities (YLVC) began in 2001 by developing a new model that engages youth and adults in building inclusive, vital communities. YLVC was created through partnerships with the University of Minnesota's Center for 4-H Youth Development, the National Youth Leadership Council and the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation.

Program Description:

YLVC's work focuses on two related and real themes critical in the 21st century: thriving with diversity while building economically viable communities. The heart of YLVC's efforts is local projects, which are based on local needs and designed at the local level. In the first phase of the YLVC Initiative, four communities (three rural, one urban) were selected to work with a statewide team to develop and demonstrate the YLVC model. Each community forms a team of 10 adults and 15 youth in grades 9-11 to work with a part-time YLVC Community Coordinator to build a local network of support involving people from businesses, schools, and community-based organizations. Winona, Worthington, Grand Rapids and the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul were selected as the first group, and Waseca was added in 2002.

Current YLVC activities in Winona include the Youth Action Theatre (also profiled in this book), Video Projects, and Community Service and Diversity Awareness projects. The video project, "Emerging Voices," involves middle and high school students exploring and sharing their different backgrounds by writing their life stories. These stories are turned into scripts and are made into a professional video that



Contact:

Jodi Dansingburg,
Winona Coordinator
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www.ylvc.org

is aired on the local television channel. Winona Parks and Recreation provides the space to meet, while Winona State University supplies the equipment and training to create a video. The YLVC team also works on a variety of community service and diversity awareness projects with seniors, children, youth and other public and non-profit organizations in the Winona area. Some of Winona YLVC's sponsors are Winona Area Public Schools Community Education, Winona County Extension and Winona Area Chamber of Commerce.

YLVC tries to incorporate certain practices into its youth involvement: youth/adult partnerships where young people and adult leaders work as equals; training based on experience and service learning; involving the participants in building the model and in designing the local projects; and using a toolkit of exercises and resources, rather than a prescribed curriculum.

Evaluation:

YLVC is evaluated annually by the Wilder Research Center. The complete report for 2002 will be available soon. Highlights of the evaluation show an improvement in leadership skills among participants, positive relationships of youth-adult partnerships, and a strong value placed on diversity. Among the youth participants, 43% said that through their YLVC participation, their comfort level in spending time with people from other racial or ethnic groups increased "a lot," and another 43% said it has increased "a little." The predominant reason was the opportunity to spend time with people from other groups and being able to ask questions about cultural issues, even very hard sensitive questions.

Funding:

YLVC is supported in large part by a grant from the Blandin Foundation.

Chapter Three:

Community Engagement through Skill-Building

Obtaining employment, finding suitable housing and enrolling children in school are the first priorities for all newcomers of any race or ethnicity. However, there is a difference between living in a community and being a part of the community. Community engagement is a function of community ownership and attachment. People engage in communities where they feel a sense of ownership. This sense of community attachment is elusive for many immigrant residents as the process of immigration itself is the process of uprooting and disengaging. Feelings of community attachment take time; and equally important, one must learn the necessary cultural and logistical skills to succeed.

For some, the success of obtaining a drivers license, car ownership and the independence it brings is a step in this direction. For others who have the entrepreneurial spirit, learning and succeeding in opening a local business helps cement community attachment, ownership and pride. And finally, creating the community you want through leadership development and civic engagement is the act of making a community a home.

The transition from being a resident in a community to making the community your own is often achieved in small but important steps with help along the way. It is for that reason that many cities and community organizations understand the need to provide skill-building opportunities for these new residents. These can be as simple as culturally appropriate drivers' education and adult ESL classes, or as elaborate as full-scale leadership development and partnering programs. Most interesting in furthering this transition from community resident to community ownership is the spirit of self-help and mentoring strategies of those immigrants who have made that transition and their willingness to pass those strategies on to those who are just new to the community.

In the end we must realize that it takes time for newcomers to feel at home in their new communities. Often, such a disproportionate amount of time is consumed with securing basic needs such as housing, food and employment that there is little time to think of anything else. In addition, trying to learn a new language and understand a new culture can make a person apprehensive about participating in community events or even engaging in a conversation. However, over time and with some key skill-building opportunities, newcomers begin to successfully make that transition from living in a community to being part of a community.

In this chapter we highlight programs that assist newcomers with this transition.

Adult and Family Literacy Program

Program Mission:

The mission of the Adult and Family Literacy program is to help adults acquire and improve essential skills, especially literacy skills, allowing them to become self-sufficient and contributing members of the community.

The Community:

With a 2000 population of 85,806, Rochester is one of Minnesota's largest cities and an economic hub in southeastern Minnesota. It is a thriving and world-famous center for medical treatment and research and also a high-tech center based on the presence of a large IBM facility.

During the 1990s, the city's population increased 21.3%. The white population saw an increase of 11.4%, while the non-white population rose 163% to comprise 14.2% of the total population in 2000. In the Rochester Public Schools, minority enrollment in 2002-03 ranged from 28% in first grade to 17% in 12th grade.

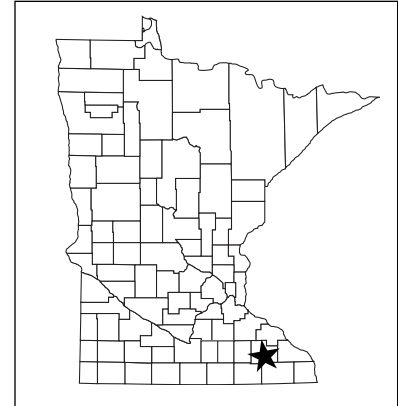
Rochester's medical service industry dominates the city's economy. By far the largest employer is the Mayo Medical Center, with 19,485 employees. The second largest employer is IBM, with 6,000 workers. These two employers give Rochester a higher than average number of workers in highly specialized jobs, including a disproportionately large number of doctors, many of whom are originally from other countries. On the other hand, the presence of a world-famous medical center has spun off a large service industry in the city in the form of hotels, restaurants and personal services, plus transportation services via its airport and I-90. Rochester is also located in a rich farming area and is home to a number of dairy, meat and vegetable processing facilities.

History:

Up until the fall of 2002, Rochester's Adult and Family Literacy program rented space for ten years. In 2002, the school district added a new elementary school and remodeled the old one, making space available. Adult and Family Literacy moved into the old elementary school, renamed the Hawthorn Education Center.

Program Description:

The Adult and Family Literacy program offers a variety of programs to anyone age 16 or older. Non-English speaking students make up 85% of the Adult and Family Literacy program. The classes cover a variety of subjects for improving education and literacy skills, including GED and high school completion courses, English speaking and literacy courses, citizenship classes and workplace literacy. College prep classes help non-native speakers prepare for attending a college or university in the U.S. Courses emphasize everyday applications and personalized teaching. Through these courses, students improve their basic skills in areas such as read-



Contact:

Julie Nigon
Program Manager
(507) 287-1963

ing, writing, math and spelling, preparing them for GED tests and citizenship tests, and earning credits for completing high school.

The ten-week English as a Second Language course is offered to adult non-native speakers at various times to accommodate busy work and school schedules. Any student may enter the class at anytime, and the class is free to permanent U.S. residents. Emphasis is given to small groups activities, giving learners ample opportunity to practice. The Hawthorn Education Center offers a language lab where students work independently to improve reading skills, develop vocabulary, and practice pronunciation.

With approximately thirty countries represented in its student population, the Adult and Family Literacy program also provides opportunities for students to learn from each other about the rest of the world. In addition to traditional classroom instruction, students periodically receive “hands-on” experience through short-term specialized programming, including activities such as learning how to use a fire extinguisher in a fire safety course offered by the Rochester Fire Department.

Another program offered is Hand In Hand, a family literacy program funded by an Even Start grant that integrates parent education, adult literacy, and early childhood education into one comprehensive program.

One innovative program offered at the center is Workplace Literacy, which assists local businesses in addressing their workplace literacy needs. Shortcomings in English and other academic skills can have a negative impact on businesses in the form of on-the-job safety, productivity, employee training, employee morale, and retention of skilled employees. Employees may be referred to the ongoing ESL classes, have on-site instruction targeting the specific skills, or training for English-speaking supervisors and employees who interact with co-workers and customers who are non-native speakers of English.

Besides regular educational programs, the Hawthorn Education Center is open to the community with no formal admittance or check in. Community members are free to use the phones, playground, and restrooms in the building. The neighborhood association rents office space at the center.

Program Outcomes:

The hundreds of people attending graduations show the community’s strong support of the Hawthorn Center and the Adult and Family Literacy programs. At the spring 2003 graduation, 94 students graduated with their GEDs, 44 with high school diplomas, and 21 as new citizens. For the year running May 1, 2002, to April 30, 2003, the Center served 2,500 students. Out of the 2,500, 1,600 stayed with the program. Staff members have contributed to the community in others ways, including organizing a food drive for a local food shelf and collecting money to assist a neighbor whose house was lost in a fire.

Funding:

The program is funded through Community Education, state Adult Basic Education, federal Adult Basic Education, the federal Even Start program for family literacy, grants from Olmsted County, and other federal and state grants . While the program is free to permanent residents in the Rochester area, the many visitors to the area (many of whom come because of some connection to the Mayo Clinic or IBM) pay tuition. Businesses requesting on-site training for their employees also pay a fee. Over the last year the number of students increased 35%, and another 17% increase is expected for the upcoming year, but with less money available.

Austin/Mower County Homeownership Fund

Program Mission:

The Homeownership Fund of Austin and Mower County was established to help increase homeownership in the community, helping to make residents feel more a part of their community and to aid in opening up rental units.

The Community:

Located in southeastern Minnesota, Austin has been home to international food giant Hormel Foods for over 100 years. Like many cities in rural Minnesota, Austin saw modest population growth (6.4%) between 1990 and 2000, but also like many rural cities, Austin’s white population declined 1.8% during those years, while the non-white population more than tripled, increasing 342%, accounting for 9.9% of the city’s total population in 2000. Latinos make up the largest minority group at 6.1% of the population, followed by Asians, at 2.2%. In the schools, minority students make up 16.7% of enrollment, but as in many districts, the lower grades have much higher enrollments. In Austin, minorities made up 26% of the first-grade class in 2002-03.

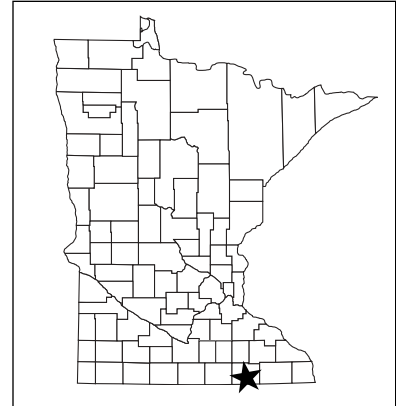
Hormel is the largest employer in Austin, with 1,335 workers, while Quality Pork Processors employs approximately 725 people. Numerous manufacturing firms also provide employment in the area.

History:

The Austin/Mower County Homeownership Fund, established in 1997 through a joint powers agreement between the city and county, was created to be a flexible source of secondary funds to families and individuals who needed down payment and closing cost assistance to qualify for a mortgage. Funds from the program may also be used for rehabilitating a property in order to meet code or mortgage requirements.

Program Description:

The program provides qualified applicants with a loan of 2% of the mortgage up to \$4,000 to help cover down-payment and closing costs. The loan has a fixed interest rate of not more than 1.5% above the prime rate, for a minimum term of 15 years. The adjusted household income of those who qualify should not exceed \$45,000 per year and the maximum house price is \$85,000. Individuals applying for the loan are encouraged to attend the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Home Stretch Homebuyer training program and receive a certificate of completion. Payments are taken directly out of the individual’s account each month using an automatic withdrawal system.



Contact:

Tom Dankert
Director of
Administrative Services
(507) 437-9959

Program Outcomes:

The program has issued a total of 245 loans equaling \$701,000, 170 of which are active and only ten have been delinquent. Non-white community members hold 15% of the loans.

Funding:

The fund is a revolving loan fund, where interest collected from outstanding loans returns to the fund for future loans. It has current assets of \$228,410. Other sources of funding have been the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, the city of Austin, Mower County, The Southern Minnesota Initiative Fund, the Development Corporation of Austin, Family Connections and the Hormel Foundation.

Building minority leaders in rural Minnesota

The Blandin Partners-in-Leadership Program

Program Mission:

The Partners-in-Leadership program provides leadership training for current and emerging leaders in communities of color and new immigrant communities. It assumes that the participants bring a rich tradition of leadership from their own experience and backgrounds but may need assistance in translating that tradition into civic involvement in rural Minnesota.

The Community:

The Blandin Partners-in-Leadership program is available to a variety of rural communities who have existing Blandin Community Leadership alumni, as well as a desire to foster community leadership skills among minority/immigrant community residents. To date the program has been conducted in Austin, Willmar and Worthington and is currently being conducted in the Owatonna/Waseca area.

History:

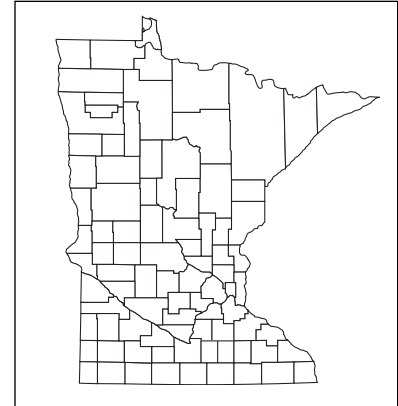
Few programs among foundation and non-profit organizations can truly be called “signature programs.” One exception however is the Blandin Foundation’s “Blandin Community Leadership Program (BCLP).” Since 1986 the Blandin Foundation has been conducting leadership training and honing the skills of the next generation of community leaders throughout rural Minnesota. To date, the BCLP has more than 3,800 alumni spread throughout almost 250 rural Minnesota communities.

However, in the late 1990s it became obvious to the BCLP staff that many Minnesota communities were undergoing rapid demographic changes. With the significant increases in communities of color, their leadership training program needed to be expanded to engage these new residents. Therefore in 2000 the Partners-in-Leadership program was launched under the BCLP umbrella.

Program Description:

The Partners-in-Leadership Program builds upon the BCLP program and its network of alumni partnering emerging leaders from communities of color with established alumni from BCLP. Such a cross-cultural partnership allows each to culturally interpret for the other in activities of civic engagement. The partnerships build understanding of each other’s culture; broaden the circle of community contacts; introduce respective partners to community organizations they may be unaware of; and increase overall community engagement. During the early part of the program, the partnership teams develop a plan for how they will work and learn together in the community. This may include attending community meetings together or establishing social ties outside of the program.

Communities make the request to the Blandin Foundation to launch a program in their town; once the decision is made to do so, a culturally diverse steering committee is established to ground the project in the community and to assist in the recruitment and selection process for community participants. Each emerging leader



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James F. Krile, Director
Blandin Community
Leadership Program
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selected for participation from the minority population is then partnered with a BLCP alum selected from the same community. The teams of partners then go through the leadership training program together.

The program itself consists of four components:

- A two-day opening retreat which helps establish the cross-cultural connections between community leaders; discusses the importance of leadership in community development; and teaches about leadership styles and the challenges of leadership.
- A one-day workshop that focuses on communications in a multi-cultural environment; learning effective presentation/public speaking skills; and leading in multi-cultural communities.
- A one-day workshop that focuses on furthering public presentation skills; learning key community leadership skills; leadership planning. The program ends with a graduation ceremony.
- A three-hour follow-up and reunion highlighting leadership opportunities; learning and reflection; and next steps.

Funding:

The Partners-in-Leadership program is fully funded through the Blandin Foundation at no cost to the community participants. Participants must, however, invest the time and energy in building a better community through effective leadership.

Driver's Education through Adult Basic Education

Program Mission:

The Driver's Education course is an expansion of Marshall's Adult Basic Education program; its goal is to help the incoming Somali population meet its transportation needs and smooth their transition into the community by offering them the opportunity to learn driving in an organized manner.

The Community:

Marshall is the county seat of Lyon County and a regional hub in the southwest corner of Minnesota. Along with Southwest Minnesota State University and Archer Daniels Midland, the city is also the headquarters of food processor and distributor Schwan's Foods.

With a 2000 population of 12,735, Marshall was one of the few cities in the area to gain population during the 1990s, growing by 5.9%. Again, though, the white population decreased by 3.3% while the non-white population increased by 314%. Minorities now make up 11.3% of the population in the city, while in the schools, 16.8% of students are minorities. In the lower grades, minority students make up more than 20% of enrollment. Latinos are the largest minority group at 5.9% of the total population, followed by Black/African-Americans at 2.8% and Asians at 1.5%.

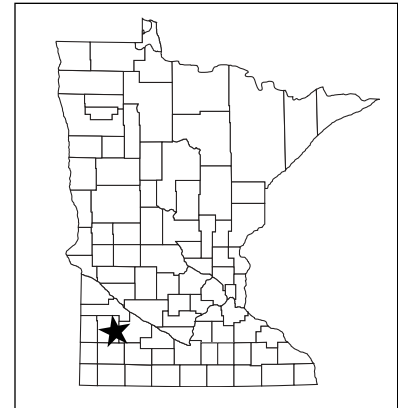
Food processing is at the center of employment in Marshall, where Schwan's employs 2,500 workers and Archer Daniels Midland another 300. Southwest State University, a hospital, hotels and retail centers also offer numerous service and retail jobs.

History:

In most American communities, a person learns to drive as a teenager, either through drivers training in high school, through a private company or from an experienced friend or relative. The common factor is that the person has learned to drive in the environment in which they will be driving.

Many immigrants, however, have come to Minnesota from places where they did not have the opportunity to learn to drive or they may have learned in a haphazard or self-taught manner. The result is that an adult who has little or no experience driving in a place with strict road rules like the U.S. may find themselves with no opportunity to learn. They are then caught in a catch 22 of either not being able to drive or not being able to drive safely but having no place to learn.

Marshall's driver's education classes for the Somali community developed out of a daylong conference in 2001 discussing the needs of immigrants in Marshall. Adult Basic Education works closely with the Minnesota Workforce Center and First Call for Help and through these organizations was hearing comments about the need for drivers training for Somalis, either for their transportation to work or because of the number of accidents occurring. A driving program seemed a natural fit for the Adult Basic Education program since over half their students are Somali.



Contact:

Leanne Carmany
Driver and Traffic Safety
Instructor
Pat Thomas
Community Education
Coordinator
(507) 537-7046

As a result, English for Adult Driver Education and the drivers training became a unique component of ABE.

Program Description:

The English for Adult Driver’s Education prepares learners to take their Minnesota driver’s test. The goal of the program is to teach the students the “language of driving,” while helping them develop the physical and mental driving skills necessary to be safe and responsible drivers. To participate in the program, the student must be enrolled in an ESL class and attend regularly. The student must also have enough knowledge of the English language to participate in the classroom discussion. A valid driver’s permit isn’t required at the beginning of the class, but is necessary to continue with the simulation portion of the course.

The small class size allows the instructor to interact with the students in small groups or one on one. In the class, students start at the very beginning, learning the basics of operating a car and routine maintenance, the rules of the road, and what to do in case of an accident. They study the Minnesota Driver’s Manual and learn what they need to know and do to acquire a driver’s license. Students are assessed in their knowledge of the car and understanding concepts like the rules and obligations of having a driver’s license, right of way, alcohol laws and cooperating with other users. When the student has passed the classroom portion they move on to the simulation portion of the class. Afterward, behind-the-wheel training is offered for a fee.

Program Finances:

The development of the driver’s education program and curriculum were funded by an Innovative Grant, but the program itself is funded by the district’s Adult Basic Education budget. The expenses vary from year to year depending on the number of students. A partnership between the program and the local high school has been mutually beneficial for both parties, since the program uses the school’s driving simulators and the simulators were paid for with grant funds.

Enterprise Facilitator

Program Mission:

The Enterprise Facilitator helps clients by acting as a liaison between entrepreneurs and City Hall, assisting clients with the ins and outs of starting a business, including business plan development, finding low cost financing for business expansion or business start-ups, industry and market research, networking with technical experts and other business resources, business feasibility studies, location research and immigration issues.

The Community:

Richfield is a well-established first ring suburb immediately south of Minneapolis containing an abundance of small, post-war housing. The city is situated on major highways, giving residents easy access to all parts of the Twin Cities area.

The population of Richfield in 2000 was 34,439. During the 1990s, the city lost 3.6% of its population, and but while the white population decreased 18.3%, the non-white population rose 190.4%, from 7.1% of the total population to 21.2%. During the 2002-03 school year, non-white students made up 41% of enrollment. Minority enrollment varies from about 40% to 50% in the lower grades to 30% to 40% in the upper grades. The largest group is Black/African-Americans at 6.6% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 6.3% and Asians at 5.3%.

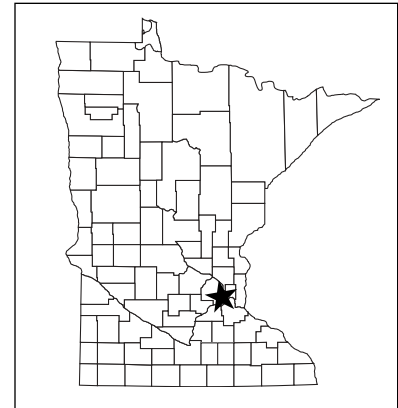
The largest employers in the city are the Richfield Public Schools and the City of Richfield, but beyond that there are numerous retail outlets. Richfield, however, is in the heart of the Twin Cities, giving residents access to the full selection of jobs the metro area offers.

History:

The city of Richfield created the position of enterprise facilitator in 1998 to help entrepreneurs achieve their dreams of owning a business. The city takes the view that business ownership promotes community commitment and stability, and therefore helping people make a good start with their businesses is good for the community. The position provides free, confidential, one-on-one assistance for area residents. The enterprise facilitator's client base ranges from home-based entrepreneurs to laid-off computer consultants to immigrant families wanting to buy convenience stores.

Program Description:

The enterprise facilitator helps budding entrepreneurs realistically consider all the steps that go into starting and maintaining a business. The program has five core services: providing general business information, emotional support, referrals to community resources, business plan development, and referrals to professionals. The enterprise facilitator meets with clients initially to discuss the person's business idea, the issues involved in developing a business, and whether the client has an



Contact:

Rob Smolund,
Enterprise Facilitator
(612) 861-5795

understanding of what he or she is getting into. The enterprise facilitator assesses the client's skills and risk tolerance.

Later, the enterprise facilitator will help clients work with other professionals involved in the process, such as lenders and lawyers, and will continue working with the client as an advisor until the goal is achieved. A typical day for the enterprise facilitator includes talking with potential clients, following up with existing clients on unresolved issues, updating and maintaining the database, conducting research for clients and networking.

People may be referred to the program in a number of ways: by word of mouth, through city employees, through business bankers and lawyers, and through small business resource listings. The enterprise facilitator reports directly to Richfield's Community Development Director and also meets ten times a year with the Advisory Board of Directors, which oversees the program, to brainstorm ideas on how to assist particular clients. In 2000, the enterprise facilitator helped 100 people establish businesses. Of this 100, 30% were minorities.

Program Outcomes:

A 2000 evaluation of the program by Management Assistance for Nonprofits shows that since June of 1998 the program provided free confidential service to over 150 clients to help them explore the startup and growth of their businesses. The findings indicated that the program has had a significant, positive financial impact on those clients.

Funding:

The city of Richfield Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Hennepin County, Wells Fargo Foundation, McKnight Foundation, Richfield Bloomington Credit Union, People's Bank, TCF Bank, and the Wal-Mart Foundation all fund the program. The city of Richfield is currently acting as the program's fiscal agent.

The enterprise facilitator manages operations and is the only staff. Until recently, the city of Richfield paid half of the salary, with the other half matched by other sources. Now the Enterprise Facilitator is looking for grants and other funds to supplement the budget. Office space and office supplies are donated by Wells Fargo.

Housing Loan Program for Residential Homes

Program Mission:

Madelia's Housing Loan Program is designed to encourage home ownership and upkeep of homes, creating pride and stability in the community.

The Community:

Madelia, located in northwestern Watonwan County, saw a 5% population growth during the 1990s, but while the white population dropped by more than 10%, the non-white population rose by 142%. Of the total population of 2,340 in 2000, 22.6% are non-white, the overwhelming majority of them Latino (21% of the total population). In the schools, non-white students make up 28.6% of enrollment, but numbers in the lower grades range from 40% to 52%. The largest employers in Madelia are Tony Downs Foods, with 300 workers, House of Paint, Luther Memorial Home and Madelia Community Hospital.

History:

In 1991 the city of Madelia received a grant from the Department of Trade and Economic Development in the amount of \$500,000, to create a revolving loan fund for housing rehabilitation. The fund was expanded to include down payment assistance for houses and mobile homes.

Program Description:

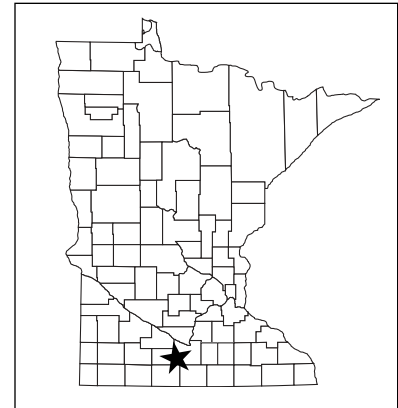
Madelia's housing loan program offers three kinds of help: down-payment assistance for the purchase or construction of a home; down-payment assistance for the purchase of a mobile home; and assistance for emergency home repairs. The assistance comes from two revolving loan funds, one for the purchase or construction of a home or the purchase of a mobile home, and the other for emergency home repairs. The city monitors and administers the program. The recaptured funds from repaid loans are used to fund the revolving loan fund.

To be eligible for down-payment assistance, certain requirements must be met:

- The home must be within the city limits.
- The prospective homebuyer must have \$1,000 of their own money to put toward the purchase of the home, closing or legal costs.
- The purchase price must not exceed 115% of the current year's assessed market value or appraised value.
- A newly constructed house must be occupied by the owner.

To be eligible for the emergency home repair assistance, individuals must be creditworthy and use the home as their homestead.

The loan program is a collaborative project involving two local banks which provide the primary mortgage; the city, which provides the down payment loan of up to \$9,000 with a 1% interest rate and also \$10,000 at a 0% deferred rate; and



Contact:

Joe McCabe
Madelia City
Administrator
(507) 642-3245

Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, which provides a \$5,000 forgivable loan if the home is lived in for five years.

Program Outcomes:

Since the loan program was started in 1991, 62 loans have been issued to people buying houses and nine for the purchase of mobile homes. Of those receiving loans, 26% are held by Hispanic residents.

Funding:

The revolving loan fund that supports the city's down-payment loan program is generated by the proceeds of repaid loans. Additional support is received from the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency.

Mujeres Hispanas en Acción **Neighborhood House**

Program Mission:

The mission of *Mujeres Hispanas en Acción* (Hispanic Women in Action) is to increase civic engagement and community leadership among Latino women through the development of a local support network.

Community:

The capital city of Minnesota, St. Paul has a long tradition of becoming home to countless ethnic groups from all over the world. Minorities made up 36% of the city's population in 2000, while the St. Paul schools had the largest variety of languages spoken at home (60) of any district in the state in 2002.

During the 1990s, St. Paul's population grew 5.5%, to 287,151. The white population decreased by 16%, while the non-white population grew by 93%. Ten years ago, the black population was the largest minority group in St. Paul, but today it is the Asians, at 12.4% of the total population. Blacks/African-Americans are second at 11.7%, followed by Latinos at 7.9%. In St. Paul's public schools, minorities make up 69% of student enrollment. Minority enrollment by grade ranges from approximately 71% in the primary grades to 66% of 11th- and 12th-graders.

Unlike small rural cities with large non-white populations, St. Paul has a large number of employers in the city and in the surrounding metro area to attract workers, including manufacturing, machine shops, printing facilities and service and retail jobs.

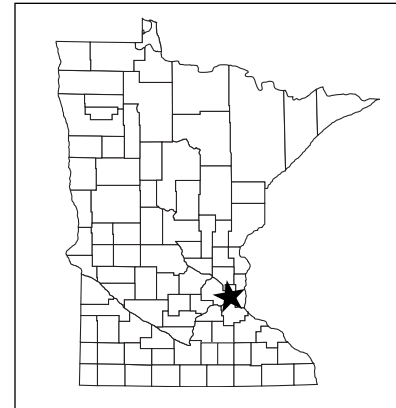
Program History:

In 1989 a group of Hispanic women all participating in English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at Neighborhood House struck up a friendship. As their friendship grew, the group of women began to share their personal experiences with each other. Observing this emerging support group, the ESL tutor, along with a local social worker, asked the women if they were interested in meeting outside of the ESL class on a regular basis simply for the purpose of mutual support and friendship. The women agreed, and *Mujeres Hispanas en Acción* was born.

Over time, others came to understand that many Hispanic women, especially those who were newcomers and did not speak English, experienced significant feelings of isolation; some were also experiencing family violence. Through their regular meetings, the women developed a strong social support network and a way to share their problems, learn about community resources, develop problem-solving skills, become engaged in their community and develop a stronger feeling of self.

Program Description:

With the goal of breaking the isolation that many Hispanic women face, *Mujeres Hispanas en Acción* meets regularly as a group each Wednesday evening at



Contact:

Renee Oswald-Anderson
(651) 227-9291

Neighborhood House on the St. Paul's West Side. Since 1897 Neighborhood House has been a refuge for immigrant families in the area. Created by the women of Mount Zion Temple to serve Russian and other Eastern European Jewish immigrants, today Neighborhood House serves the Latinos, Southeast Asians and African immigrants in those same neighborhoods.

Participation in the *Mujeres Hispanas en Acción* group is strictly voluntary and information about the group is spread through word of mouth. Now over 10 years old, *Mujeres Hispanas en Acción* is viewed as a vehicle for self improvement and leadership development among Hispanic women.

Using a group mentoring model, meetings are facilitated by one of the more senior members of the group and can revolve around an educational event or a social event. The provision of daycare for young children by the staff at Neighborhood House is a must during these meetings to allow for uninterrupted learning and discussion. For educational events, speakers are brought in to inform the women about a large variety of issues, including life survival skills; the banking and credit system; family nutrition; parenting skills and more. When the evening turns social, craft activities like quilting, talking and sharing is quite common. However, beneath this social activity are the forces of social empowerment and self-development. Over time, women of the group develop confidence and become mentors to the newer members.

Program Outcomes:

Trying to evaluate the impact and outcome of such empowerment programs is always difficult. However, there are some indicators. First and foremost, for over 10 years *Mujeres Hispanas en Acción* has been meeting every Wednesday, continually recruiting new members just arriving to the community with limited English skills. Such continuation of the activity suggests that Hispanic women are finding value in the group.

Second, in 2002, in part to help and inspire new Hispanic women immigrating to Minnesota, the women of *Mujeres Hispanas en Acción* published a book telling their individual life stories. Titled *Searching for a New Horizon*, the book is designed to inspire hope for a better life for Hispanic women just arriving, as well as those still trapped in isolation. However, this book would never have been published if not for the partnerships developed to help lay out, design and provide financial support for this venture. These partners included: The St. Paul and Bush Foundations; the College of St. Catherine, Compass; Metro State University and the College of Visual Arts. Putting one's life story in print to serve as a role model clearly speaks to the leadership capacity these women have gained.

Program Funding:

Mujeres Hispanas en Acción is a voluntary organization that does not maintain a formal budget. The women of the group provide their own agenda, leadership and direction. Childcare for the women is provided by Neighborhood House while the women are meeting, but in general, there is little need for a formal budget or funding.

Multi-Ethnic Leadership Program Cultural Diversity Services

Program Mission:

Cultural Diversity Services is a multi-city/multi-county-funded initiative to build more inclusive communities in the Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan area. The Multi-Ethnic Leadership program is designed to provide skills and knowledge to immigrants, leading to greater civic and community engagement.

The Community:

Clay County in Minnesota and Cass County in North Dakota form the Fargo-Moorhead Metropolitan Statistical Area and are a regional economic center for northwestern Minnesota and northeastern North Dakota with a 2000 population of 174,367. Minorities make up 6.2% of the counties' population, but in the individual cities, minorities account for 9.9% of Moorhead's population and 6.6% of Fargo's population.

During the 1990s, the total population of Fargo rose by 22.2% while the population of Moorhead stayed steady. The white population declined nearly 5% in Moorhead but rose 18% in Fargo. The minority population, on the other hand, rose 72% in Moorhead and 137% in Fargo during that time. The largest minority group in the two counties are Latinos, followed closely by American Indians and Asians.

Program History:

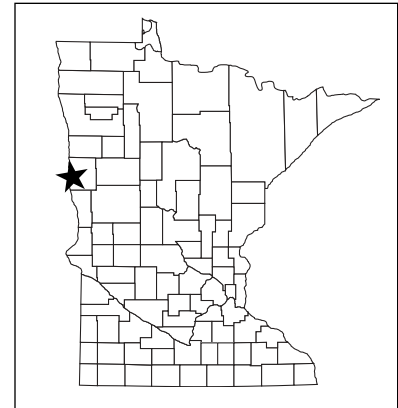
Cultural Diversity Services is a non-profit organization created in 1994 as an initiative of the counties of Cass (N.D.) and Clay (Minn.), as well as the cities of Fargo, West Fargo, Moorhead and Dilworth, to address the emerging diversity issues in the region as a result of the arrival of many new immigrant groups. During the 1990s the area experienced a significant increase in Latino residents (primarily in Moorhead) and a large influx of refugees facilitated by Lutheran Social Services. The program was initiated through a \$400,000 Pew Foundation grant, matched with approximately \$100,000 from local units of government, industries and philanthropies.

The Multi-Ethnic Leadership program began in 1996 as a way to provide local immigrants an opportunity to become better acquainted with their new community, network with established leaders and improve their public presentation skills.

Program Description:

Each year since 1996 Cultural Diversity Services has worked through local advocacy groups and non-profits to recruit up to 25 immigrants for the Multi-Ethnic Leadership program. The program is designed to include several unique and modular opportunities to increase participants' knowledge and opportunities for development. These modules include:

A month-long series of once-a-week seminars on leadership and topics chosen by the students themselves. This gives the students the opportunity to augment their



Contact:

Yoke-Sim Gunaratne
Executive Director
(701) 526-3000

knowledge in specific areas of interest to them.

Skill-building in interviewing techniques. Combined with outings to community-based organizations and civic structures, these activities give immigrants personal exposure to people such as the mayor and city council; chamber of commerce leadership; and other major employers.

An eight-week (once-per-week) skill-building session with the local Toastmasters organization, designed to improve public speaking and presentation skills.

Individualized mentorship with established community leaders (if requested).

Technical assistance to emerging community-based immigrant groups addressing the process of incorporation and non-profit management.

Through this leadership development program, students have the opportunity to improve their knowledge of the community; build their skills in public speaking and “presentation of self”; gain added exposure to individuals and organizations currently in leadership positions; and learn from established leaders.

In addition to the leadership program, Cultural Diversity Services also provides individualized information and referral resources to immigrants in the community and diversity training to organizations and employers in the community.

Program Outcomes:

Program advocates are quick to point out that the first Latina School Board member elected in Moorhead, Minn., is an alumna of the leadership program. In fact, through the program, civic engagement among immigrants in the area has greatly improved, as local officials often solicit names from the CDS staff for municipal or regional board and committee appointments.

Program Funding:

Cultural Diversity Services operates on an annual budget of approximately \$200,000. Approximately one-half of the funding comes from annual contributions by the cities of Dilworth, Moorhead, Fargo and West Fargo; Cass County North Dakota and Clay County, Minnesota, as well as the United Way; the F-M Community Foundation; American Crystal Sugar and other locally based businesses. The remainder of the revenues are derived from organizational grants and contracts, as well as program fees.

Neighborhood Development Center Inc.

Program Mission:

The mission of the Neighborhood Development Center is to revitalize lower-income, inner-city neighborhoods through entrepreneurship training and business assistance. The NDC believes that all the necessary resources to revitalize neighborhoods already exist within those neighborhoods.

The Community:

The capital city of Minnesota, St. Paul has a long tradition of becoming home to countless ethnic groups from all over the world. Minorities made up 36% of the city's population in 2000, while the St. Paul schools had the largest variety of languages spoken at home (60) of any district in the state in 2002.

During the 1990s, St. Paul's population grew 5.5%, to 287,151. The white population decreased by 16%, while the non-white population grew by 93%. Ten years ago, the black population was the largest minority group in St. Paul, but today it is the Asians, at 12.4% of the total population. Blacks/African-Americans are second at 11.7%, followed by Latinos at 7.9%. In St. Paul's public schools, minorities make up 69% of student enrollment. Minority enrollment by grade ranges from approximately 71% in the primary grades to 66% of 11th- and 12th-graders.

Unlike small rural cities with large non-white populations, St. Paul has a large number of employers in the city and in the surrounding metro area to attract workers, including manufacturing, machine shops, printing facilities and service and retail jobs.

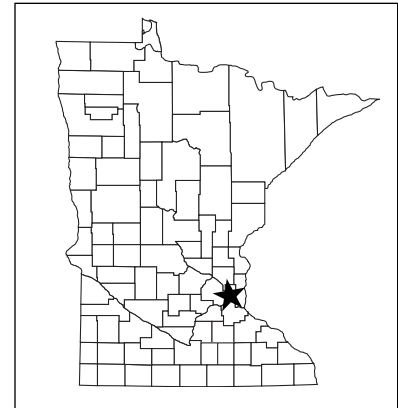
History:

In 1990 Western Bank, a community-based bank headquartered in a low-income St. Paul neighborhood established Western Initiatives for Neighborhood Development, or "WIND." WIND works in partnership with neighborhood organizations to strengthen local economies through micro-enterprise loans, commercial real estate development and commercial revitalization. In 1993 the Neighborhood Development Center was established as a WIND "spin-off" to augment WIND activities through entrepreneurship training and enterprise facilitation.

NDC works in collaboration with local development groups to provide the necessary assessment, training, and technical assistance to emerging entrepreneurs with a desire to start a business. Now, in its tenth year, NDC has approximately 300 graduates in business throughout the Twin Cities metro area.

Program Description:

The primary role of Neighborhood Development Center is to provide entrepreneurship training, consultation and technical assistance to emerging entrepreneurs in low-income neighborhoods. The NDC model of assistance is provided in partnership with the local development organizations in the neighborhood or community.



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NDC signs an agreement with the local development organization, which then becomes the visible “front” for NDC. For example, while all written documents were actually developed by NDC, they are printed with the local organization’s name and logo to enhance this collaborative effort. The local organization is responsible for recruiting and selecting potential entrepreneurs from the neighborhood and arranging for local training space and facilities. Such efforts ensure that regardless of how many neighborhoods NDC works in, all activities are neighborhood-based.

The NDC model of entrepreneurship development has four defined phases. They are:

The Training Phase: NDC conducts a 16-week training program that includes 16 hours of classroom sessions and 12 hours of one-on-one tutoring. All students in the program must already have a business idea and by the end of the training phase have a business plan developed for their idea. In addition to training on issues of business development, the 16-week course includes personal assessments to help student fully prepare for the role of business owner. Cost of the 16-week program is \$75.

The Business Opening Phase (BOP): In this phase, students who complete the training phase receive one-on-one assistance in the start-up phase of their business. This includes making business projections; registering the business; site location; licensing issues, etc.

The Financing Phase: In this phase NDC helps the entrepreneur by taking the completed business plan to local lenders and finding a suitable financing package. NDC also has a small loan pool (up to \$10,000) that it can use for its graduates. And NDC is a U.S. Small Business Administration intermediary, so they can pre-approve SBA loans as well.

Ongoing Support Phase: Once the business is established NDC provides ongoing technical assistance and staff consulting as the need arises. NDC has also been helpful in arranging for its graduates to receive consulting services (often pro bono) for legal, licensing and regulatory issues.

Program Outcomes:

Since its inception the Neighborhood Development Center has provided entrepreneurship training in 15 different neighborhoods to over 2,000 potential entrepreneurs. Of that group 79 percent were ethnic minorities living in lower-income neighborhoods and over 300 subsequently opened businesses. Among the graduate business owners, 24% were white, while 76% were from communities of color.

Two of the most notable ventures for NDC have been the facilitation of the Mercado Central in Minneapolis and the Plaza Latina in St. Paul. The Mercado Central now has more than 40 Latino-owned businesses within its cooperative structure, while the Plaza Latina currently has 10 Latino-owned businesses.

As a lender, NDC has provided approximately \$3.2 million in loans to its graduates over the years, with 89% of the loans going to minority-owned businesses. NDC has even established an Islamic-acceptable financing program to assist Muslim entrepreneurs (approximately 8.4% of the loan portfolio).

Funding:

With revenues of approximately \$2 million annually, NDC receives funding from a variety of sources both public and private. Approximately 75% of its funding comes from private foundation and corporate giving. Only 16% of its funds come from public/government sources, with the remainder coming from earned income and other miscellaneous sources.

Regarding its expenditures, 30% is spent on training, 44% on providing technical assistance, 19% on lending and 7% on administration.

Renters' Education Program

Program Mission:

The goal of the Renter's Education Program is to create an understanding between residents and building managers, thereby reducing conflict and reducing family transience, which in turn helps to stabilize families.

The Community:

Richfield is a well-established first ring suburb immediately south of Minneapolis containing an abundance of small, post-war housing. The city is situated on major highways, giving residents easy access to all parts of the Twin Cities area.

The population of Richfield in 2000 was 34,439. During the 1990s, the city lost 3.6% of its population, and but while the white population decreased 18.3%, the non-white population rose 190.4%, from 7.1% of the total population to 21.2%. In the 2002-03 school year, non-white students made up 41% of enrollment. Minority enrollment varies from about 40% to 50% in the lower grades to 30% to 40% in the upper grades. The largest group is Black/African-Americans at 6.6% of the total population, followed by Latinos at 6.3% and Asians at 5.3%.

The largest employers in the city are the Richfield Public Schools and the City of Richfield, and beyond that, numerous retail outlets, hotels, and restaurants. Richfield, however, is in the heart of the Twin Cities, giving residents access to the full selection of jobs the metro area offers.

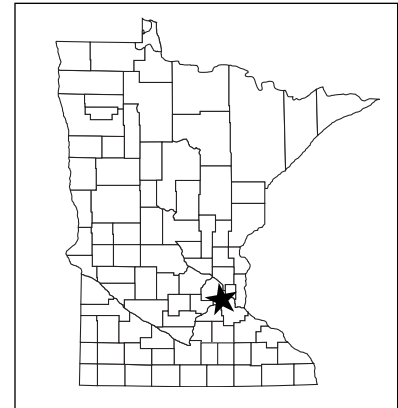
History:

The City of Richfield has 5,500 large rental complexes and the number continues to grow. While the city at one time hired a consultant to act as a liaison between the city and the owners and managers of these buildings, the decision was later made to add this responsibility to the Leased Housing Specialist. This position acts as a direct connection between city officials and the owners and managers.

Out of this relationship came the Renter's Education Program, designed to help new residents understand what building owners look for and expect in their tenants. Immigrants may be coming to Richfield from communities and countries with very different rules and expectations concerning rental property. The goal of the Renter's Education Program is to help newcomers understand what is expected in Richfield, thereby reducing conflict with building owners and reducing family transience, which in turn helps to stabilize families.

Program Description:

The Renter's Education Program was developed by the city's Leased Housing Specialist and the Richfield Apartment Managers Association (RAMA), an organization of owners and managers that meet to share information, discuss rental housing issues, and respond to them in a positive, proactive manner. The association pro-



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vides an opportunity for all owners and managers to share expertise and work on issues together.

The Renter's Education program works in five ways: developing and distributing health and cleaning tip sheets; offering a renter's education program to high school students as part of their life training skills class; offering a renter's education program in apartment complexes and to Richfield HRA's Section 8 clients; offering health and cleaning training classes in apartment complexes and to Richfield HRA's Section 8 clients; and surveying Fall 2002 renter education participants as a means of evaluating the program. The Leased Housing Specialist instructs the renter's education classes, while the health and cleaning curriculum was developed and taught by the University of Minnesota Extension Service.

The overall goal of the program is to focus on those renters, especially new immigrants, who can benefit from some training and guidance in learning what actions and behaviors are expected by property owners. This kind of education helps landlords and managers by developing better tenants and neighbors, and helps the tenants themselves by cutting down on evictions and transience, a disrupting factor in families' well-being.

Some of the lessons participants learn in the classes and from tip sheets may involve basic cultural differences. For example, roasting a pepper over the flame on the stove can cause oils from the pepper to run down the oven pipes and ruin the oven. Another example is that of smoking in the hallways. In many countries it is acceptable to smoke indoors, but apartment managers and owners communicate in the cleaning tips that smoking is only permitted outdoors.

Apartment managers advertise the Rental Education Program and refer individuals to the classes, while health and cleaning tips are given out in the tenants' welcome packets.

Program Outcomes:

Attendance of individuals at the classes is expected to be 100 plus, and 500 plus residents will receive the tip sheets.

Funding:

The total cost to run the Renter's Education program is \$1,975. A substantial amount, \$1,600, is paid for through Local Collaborative Time Study funds (a federal program) through the Richfield Community Council. The remaining \$375 comes from other sources, including donations from area stores. This total amount covers the cost of three to four sessions of health and cleaning classes, which include cleaning supplies for attendees, notebooks, teaching materials, and refreshments. Also covered are the costs of producing and distributing the health and cleaning tip sheets and the evaluation survey sent to past participants.