



## **Minnesota FastTRAC Adult Career Pathways Grant Program SFY 2014**

### **Background**

The Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development is committed to increasing skills development, and improving access to new employment opportunities for low-wage, low-skill adults throughout Minnesota.

During the 2012 session, legislators authorized \$1,500,000 each year from the Workforce Development fund for the Minnesota FastTRAC Adult Career Pathway program. Additionally, \$125,000 in Minnesota Department of Human Services TANF Innovation funds are combined and allocated for targeted participation in selected programs. The department developed and implemented a competitive RFP process to allocate these funds for partnerships delivering MN FastTRAC Adult Career Pathway programs.

The Minnesota FastTRAC Adult Career Pathway model has three core components: a contextualized bridge program building foundational skills within an occupational sector, an integrated instruction component whereby Adult Basic Education delivers “just in time” academic support during Minnesota State Colleges and Universities courses, and workforce development navigation services – those financial and personal supports that allow an adult to successfully complete career pathway education and enter career pathway employment.

The program will serve nearly 1,000 Minnesotans with barriers to employment and provide new opportunities to low-skill adults to access better employment in health care, manufacturing, construction, and transportation occupations across the state.

### **Summary of Funding Requested and Awarded**

- 27 full proposals were submitted with a total funding request of \$3,202,670.
- Of the 27 proposals received, 17 were selected to receive funding totaling \$1,475,000. These 17 programs will serve nearly 1,000 low-wage, low-skill adults in adult career pathway programs throughout Minnesota.

### **Timeline**

- Release of the request for proposals: July 10, 2013
- Informational webinar: July 19, 2013
- Full proposals due: August 16, 2013, 4:30 p.m.
- Review and selection period: August 19 – August 30, 2013
- Notification to applicants: September 9, 2013

### **Synopsis of Evaluation Process**

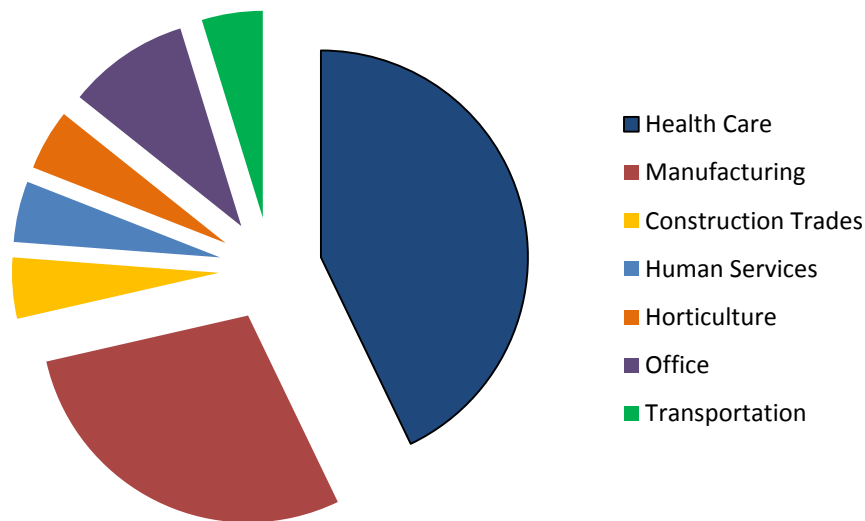
The Minnesota FastTRAC Executive Team provided the following priority areas for consideration during proposal review:

- Expand service – location
- Increase number of participants
- Ensure ability to scale
- Increase variety of pathways
  - Short term certificates
  - Gatekeeper courses
  - Occupational sector
- Demonstrate navigation through pathway
  - Explicit career guidance



The proposal review team consisted of two representatives from each of these state agencies: Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Department of Human Services, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, and the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development.

#### Industry Sectors Represented in Selected Programs:



#### Connection to *Alliance for Quality Career Pathways*

Minnesota FastTRAC partners form a professional learning community, building the capacity of educators and workforce development providers across the state to align service and deliver effective programming for high barrier populations. Additionally, Minnesota practitioners are part of a national movement. The *Alliance for Quality Career Pathways (AQCP)* Initiative consists of 10 states, facilitated by the Center for Law and Social Policy, working to create a national beta-framework for quality career pathways. Each local Minnesota FastTRAC Adult Career Pathway partnership will participate in the field testing the AQCP self-evaluation tool as part of their collaborative continuous improvement efforts.

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