



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

Fact Sheet: Workforce Development Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

The system: The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities have a host of tools to strengthen the economy:

- **Graduates:** About 34,000 students per year are graduated well-prepared to work, and more than 80 percent of them stay in Minnesota to work or continue their education.
- **Workforce:** The system contributes to Minnesota communities by educating:
 - 89 percent of new graduates in construction trades;
 - 92 percent of new mechanics graduates; and,
 - 41 percent of new business graduates, among many others.
- **Training resources:** About 6,000 employers across Minnesota use our customized training programs to increase workplace productivity, cut costs and grow their business.

Customized training programs: Across the system, the state colleges and universities offer customized training in specific areas of expertise for business, health care and safety, computer and information technology, trades and industry, and transportation. A number of colleges and universities have made an especially strong commitment to manufacturing, offering advanced technical training, lean manufacturing, management supervision, safety business processes, and communication skills.

Credit-based technical programs: Almost 20 of the system's institutions offer programs in fields such as industrial production technology, machine tool technology, and tool and die careers.

Occupational demand projections: The system works closely with the Department of Employment and Economic Development to make solid projections about occupational demand in the years ahead. We know taxpayers and business leaders expect a substantial return on the investment in higher education.

Return on investment: For every \$1 of net state appropriation to our system, our state colleges and universities return \$10.87 to the state's economy in increased spending and productivity.

System governance: The system's 15-member Board of Trustees includes many who are business people or are employed in related fields – including DEED Commissioner Dan McElroy. They understand the importance of growing business for the state's economy.

Strategic plan: All of our work is guided by the strategic plan adopted by the Board of Trustees last year. It outlines four strategic directions: increasing access to higher education, promoting affordable and high-quality academic programs, keeping our economy and communities strong, and innovating for the future.



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The plan for this year: Three major initiatives address business and industry.

- We want to recruit and retain more students from low-income families, students of color, first-generation college-goers and students from immigrant families.
- We want to increase the number of students in the “STEM” disciplines – science, technology, engineering and math. It’s important that more students take college-level STEM courses, even if they don’t major in those subjects.
- Our college and university presidents and I will be conducting at least 300 “CEO to CEO” visits to businesses to glean insights into economic and workforce conditions.

Centers of excellence: Three years ago, we established four Centers of Excellence in health care, manufacturing and engineering, and information technology and security.

- Four state universities lead the centers in partnership with 18 community and technical colleges and business and industry.
- The centers offer state-of-the-art educational programs, conduct applied research and connect with K-12 schools and business and industry to help the economy thrive.
- Employers cite specific benefits from involvement with the centers including access to resources (grants for training, new equipment, use of facilities); increased awareness of their business or industry; and networking with others in education or industry.

Reaching out to business: Our Workforce of the Future initiative is an example of how we want to reach out to business and industry, both to listen to what they say about us and to inform them about services we offer.

- We rely heavily on our customized training faculty to be our business outreach specialists.
- Customized training representatives call on local companies to determine their training needs, and they develop partnerships with the businesses that provide the knowledge we need to develop new curriculum and programs.
- The knowledge gained from working directly with businesses becomes the foundation for many of our future academic programs.
- We also have expanded our vision of how customized training serves employers:
 - The M-Powered program at Hennepin Technical College trains new and incumbent workers in manufacturing to move into more highly skilled positions. The college looks to expand this statewide.
 - The Manufacturing Skills Standards Council curriculum has been developed by Northland Community and Technical College, Alexandria Technical College and Hennepin Technical College. This program is now being offered to colleges statewide.



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Minnesota job skills partnership grants: Typically, our colleges are awarded 85 to 90 percent of the grant funds awarded annually through DEED. The majority of these training opportunities are in the manufacturing and engineering area.

About Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (www.mnscu.edu) comprises 32 state universities and community and technical colleges on 53 campuses serving the higher education needs of Minnesota. The system serves about 242,000 students per year in credit-based courses and an additional 140,000 students in non-credit courses.

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