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PROJECT/REQUEST

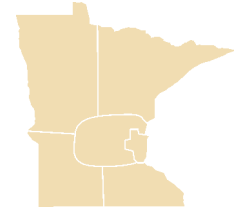
LOCATION

**Northeast Higher  
Education District**

TechNorth Prep  
Center Network

Northeast Minnesota  
Region

\$500,000



**Project at a Glance**

- Serve small business development and learning needs through the TechNorth Prep Center Network through five state community and technical colleges in northeast Minnesota
- Strengthen alliances with economic development agencies in the region to promote visibility, viability and growth

**Project Description**

The Northeast Higher Education District strives to continue the pioneering work of the TechNorth Prep Center Network in northeast Minnesota rural communities served by the district's five member institutions: Hibbing Community College, Itasca Community College, Mesabi Range Community and Technical College, Rainy River Community College and Vermilion Community College.

The project was launched successfully in 2003 as an education, training and workforce response to the exponential growth of the information technology marketplace worldwide. Participants in regional planning meetings included the Northeast Higher Education District, communities, businesses, economic development



*Education and training services are provided by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to rural Minnesota companies like this recreational vehicle manufacturer.*

officers, project managers, local workforce investment boards, students, and incumbent and transitional workers. The primary goal was to engage these participants in a regional information technology jobs and skills framework through the local TechNorth Prep Center Network sites. From these meetings, each of the sites evolved differently.

Phase II continues with numerous project partners joining with the Northeast Higher Education District including the Northland McKnight and Blandin foundations, Range Area Municipalities and Schools, and state-of-the-art information technology resources from around the country. A strong ally is Iron Range Resources, which

provided the essential fiber connectivity linking the sites through a regional initiative called Do I.T. (Information Technology).

Phase II includes implementation of five individual site plans and an aggressive information technology skills accelerator program to serve the students and workers, area businesses and the K-12 districts in rural

northeast Minnesota communities. These initiatives will include “main street” customized information technology assistance, training and placement. In addition, area business clients will be provided with an outsourcing alternative for some technical applications.

**Performance Measures:**

- Increase the number of information technology workers and skill levels across the region’s K-12 districts, member colleges, businesses and industries, and others
- Increase local responsiveness and workforce development capacity of the TechNorth Prep Centers to better meet the information technology needs of communities and high-tech businesses

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**Participating Institution:**

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Hibbing Community College  
Hibbing  
www.hcc.mnscu.edu

Itasca Community College  
Grand Rapids  
www.itascacc.edu

Mesabi Range Community & Technical College  
Eveleth and Virginia  
www.mr.mnscu.edu

Rainy River Community College  
International Falls  
www.rrcc.mnscu.edu

Vermilion Community College  
Ely  
www.vcc.edu



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