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STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

INSTITUTION

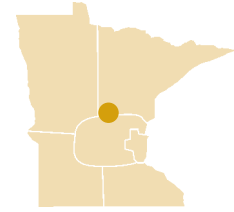
PROJECT/REQUEST

LOCATION

**Central Lakes
College**
Staples

Heavy Equipment
Operations and
Maintenance

\$950,000



Project at a Glance

- Meet the projected workforce demand for highly trained heavy equipment construction workers
- Provide quality education using the most recent technology options available in order for the region to maintain a healthy infrastructure of first-class roads
- Increase training flexibility, efficiency and safety while reducing fuel costs, stabilizing maintenance overhead and reducing down time for equipment repair



Central Lakes College needs new simulators and equipment to support its heavy equipment training programs and meet regional needs.

Project Description

The heavy equipment operations and maintenance program at Central Lakes College has been training heavy equipment operators since 1962 and has had waiting lists of students since its inception. Students learn to operate heavy equipment on a 470-acre site at Staples that is dedicated to the program.

The International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49 estimates that the average age of the 13,000 equipment operators in Local 49 is 50 years old. At this time, only 130 active apprentices are preparing to move into the many construction jobs that

will open within the next five years as today’s operators retire. A shortage of almost 5,000 operators is predicted by the year 2013.

Central Lakes College graduates 40-plus students annually with placement rates at virtually 100 percent. In 2005, the college received state capital funding of \$4.8 million to build a new campus addition to house more high-bay work space for the heavy equipment operators program. Short-term plans are to increase the number of graduates by one-third even before the expansion is completed. However, even

this increase in graduates is not expected to meet the region’s need for new well-trained equipment operators.

Project goals include graduating at least 60 students annually. An important measure that allows a technical program to continue attracting students is the quality of the equipment on which students are able to train. New simulators will allow Central Lakes College to train students safely and with less equipment down time, while increasing the number of well-trained graduates ready for jobs in the construction industry.

Satisfied industry partners will have access to qualified construction workers.

It is essential for Central Lakes College to develop a new coalition to help support the high equipment costs of the program. In order for this region to maintain a healthy infrastructure of first-class roads, the graduates of the heavy equipment operations and maintenance program must continue receiving quality education using the most recent technology options available. Central Lakes College serves as the only regional resource for highly skilled road

construction workers. The college's current equipment needs major updating to maintain a quality technical program that will to continue to attract and train workers for this vital industry.

This proposal requests a one-time appropriation to purchase three heavy equipment simulators and at least two additional cabs and corresponding software. These purchases will increase training flexibility, efficiency and safety while reducing fuel costs, stabilizing maintenance overhead and reducing down time for equipment repair.

Participating Institution:

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Partners:

Ziegler Caterpillar
Frattalone Companies

Project Advocates:

International Union of Operating Engineers Local 49, Twin Cities Council
Associated General Contractors of Minnesota
Minnesota Underground Utility Contractors
Associated Builder and Contractors
Aggregate Redimix Association
National Asphalt Paving Association
Minnesota Asphalt Paving Association
American Equipment Manufacturers



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