

Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline Agriculture Industry Forum

Meeting Notes

Date: February 5, 2020: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Location: Department of Labor and Industry, 443 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, MN

Welcome and introductions

Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline Updates: Dan Solomon & Kathleen Gordon

- Offered refresher on general principles of Minnesota Dual-Training Pipeline.
- Gave update on last speaker series event held on December 5, 2019 that was about Good Mental Health in the Workplace; reminded attendees that Pipeline staff are always looking to bring in new speakers and new topics and are open to suggestions.
- Provided update on Community Conversations that occurred in December 2019 and January 2020, noting that key observations included lack of access to childcare, lack of affordable housing, challenges of low unemployment in general and an often-cited desire to better align high school education opportunities with real world work experiences. Attendees also noted how last year's particular struggles with weather posed some challenges.

Youth Skills Training and Connection to Dual-Training Pipeline: Rich Wessels, Dan Solomon and Forest Lake Educator Mike Miron

- Rich Wessels gave a brief overview of the Youth Skills Training program at Department of Labor and Industry. Attendees learned that the **goal** of YST is to provide high school students with safe and meaningful work experience in high-growth, high-demand industries. They also learned that is intended to prepare students for successful careers and address the shortage of skilled employees and that this work is done through creating programs for “student-learners” so 16 and 17 year olds can participate in on-the-job training at employer sites.
- Mike Miron, Educator from Forest Lake High School, shared about how his school has received a Youth Skills Training grant and is creating career pathway programming that includes agriculture careers. He spoke about how their first two initial agriculture work experiences for students will be with mechanic programs fixing small agriculture equipment and also working with a veterinary clinic as well. Mike also shared how

the school continues to do outreach to agriculture businesses and hopes to have more partners going forward as the program grows.

- Dan Solomon shared how a goal is to be able to have students gain meaningful career exposure through Youth Skills Training and then potentially even be hired by the employer they did their work experience with as they graduate high school and hopefully lead to either a Dual-Training Pipeline and/or Registered Apprenticeship opportunity. Attendees were impressed that the YST program was attracting students and that the school was committed to expanding its programming in agriculture.

New Occupations: Dan Solomon

Dan Solomon shared that two new occupations will be added for 2020 so far and those occupations are below. Dan also described that Pipeline is always interested in adding new in-demand occupations. In addition, attendees discussed the potential for adding occupations relating to veterinary agriculture practices and/or aquaponics potentially going forward.

- Horticulture Farm Manager
- Crop Farm Manager

Dual Training Grant Update: Dan Solomon

- OHE awarded \$2.8 million in 2019 to 58 different companies with 2 in agriculture.
- The next Dual Training Grant Round 9 for new and existing employers will open for application on March 23, 2020 and close on May 1, 2020. (Contact Jacquelynn.Mol.Sletten@state.mn.us at the Office of Higher Education for more information). Award notices will be given out by June 15, 2019.
- Dual Training Grant workshops with four workshops scheduled from February 18 through April 9.

Next Steps

- Next All-Industry Forum on June 15, 2020
- Speaker Series on March 12, 2020. If anyone has ideas for future speaker topics, please let us know.
- If anyone has suggestions for agenda items for next Industry Forum, please let us know.