


# Rural Minnesota CEP Celebrates 50 Years



A look back at the last 50 years...

# UNEMPLOYED ?

**RURAL  
MINNESOTA  
CEP**   
Concentrated Employment Program

## IS INTERVIEWING AT

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RURAL MINNESOTA CEP OFFICES LOCATED AT:

DETROIT LAKES:  
EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING CENTER  
200 East State Street  
Detroit Lakes, Minnesota 56501  
(218) 847-2101

MOORHEAD:  
1817 First Ave. North  
P.O. Box 657  
Moorhead, Minnesota 56560  
218-233-1541

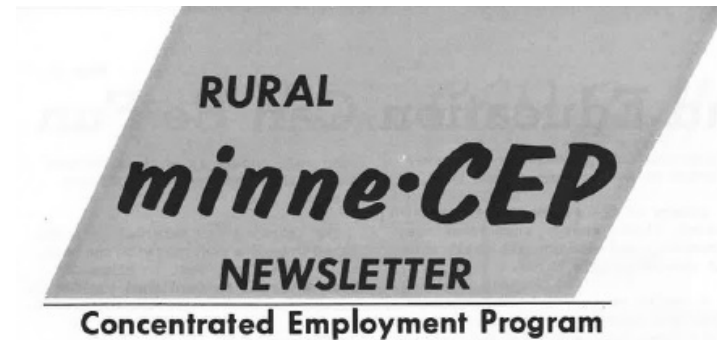
BEMIDJI:  
209 Third Street  
Bemidji, Minnesota 56601  
218-751-8012

BRainerd:  
303 N.W. 6th Street  
P.O. Box 511  
Brainerd, Minnesota 56401  
218-829-2856

MORRIS:  
608 Atlantic Avenue  
P.O. Box 205  
Morris, Minnesota 56267  
612-589-3900

Rural Minnesota  
Concentrated  
Employment Program  
(CEP) is a private non-  
profit corporation  
funded by federal,  
state, and county  
governments.

CEP was founded in 1968 to operate the various programs spawned by the Economic Opportunity Act and the Manpower Development and Training Act under one umbrella.



In 1971, Rural Minnesota CEP contracted with the U.S. Department of Labor to continue operating the CEP program through Oct. 31, 1972.

Director Marotzke said the average *annual wage* of those placed in employment by RMCEP was \$4,738 as compared to only \$1,352 when they entered the program.

## Concentrated Employment Program Receives Contract For \$1.8 Million

By DOUG HIRSCH

The Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program has negotiated a contract with the U.S. Department of Labor for \$1.8 million to operate the program through Oct. 31, 1972, according to director Emil Marotzke.

He told the Tribune that the contract called for an amount equal to that used in the program during the past fiscal year when enrollment and employment placement goals were exceeded. The program covers Becker, Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Crow Wing, Hubbard, Mahnomon, Morrison, Otter Tail, Todd and Wadena counties, as well as the Indian reservations at Red Lake, Leech Lake, Mille Lacs and White Earth.

Marotzke said that no major changes were contemplated for the program this



EMIL MAROTZKE

year. CEP centers will continue to operate in Detroit Lakes, Bemidji and Brainerd with a goal of working with 1,102 persons. Of this, plans include placing 674 in training and 474 in jobs.

According to Marotzke, during the program year just completed 1,598 persons enrolled in some phase of Rural Minnesota CEP, and of these 1,112 were totally terminated from the program, with 632 being placed in permanent jobs.

"I'm extremely pleased with the performance of the agency in the past year," said Marotzke. "With a down economy we permanently placed 632 people."

An enrollee is not considered placed until he has worked 30 days or more. CEP discovered that 60 days after the initial 30-day period, 85 per cent of these 632 persons had stuck with their jobs. The average annual wage of those placed in employment was \$4,738 as compared to only \$1,352 when they entered the program.

He said that 21 per cent of the jobs found for the enrollees paid \$2.50 per hour or more, while 75 per cent of them paid from \$1.60 to \$2.50 per hour. He said that 85 per cent of the jobs were in private business. Not shown in the employment figures were those who found their own job while on the program.

Since its beginning three years ago, Rural Minnesota CEP has served over 4,000 persons in the 11-county area of northern Minnesota. It is a non-profit corporation that contracts with the U.S. Department of Labor and agrees to meet certain enrollment and placement jobs as part of the contract.

"We exceeded our placement goal by 136 per cent in the past year," said Marotzke.

Rural Minnesota CEP is one of 82 concentrated employment programs in the United States and is one of the largest. There are 12 rural-oriented CEP's in the country, including two on Indian reservations. The local CEP is the only one in the United States that operates on a contractual basis with the U.S. Department of Labor, with the others operating under community action programs, reservations or governmental subdivisions, says Marotzke.

In the coming fiscal year, he said, 95 per cent of those persons taken into the program will be heads of households, 13 to 20 per cent welfare recipients and about 20 per cent Indians. Of the \$1.8 million in the grant, \$388,000 is marked for vocational training.

During the past year, said Marotzke, 70 per cent of the \$1.8 million grant went to CEP enrollees — at a cost of about \$2,913 per enrollee — while about 19 per cent went for staff and 11 per cent to operations. On the payroll are 38 regular employees and 10 purchased from the Minnesota Department of Manpower Services. The staff was reduced by seven persons last year, and will remain at the level this year, he said.

Marotzke says that his staff has noticed an increase in the educational levels of persons applying for entry into the agency, which he attributes to the downturn in the economy and the numbers of returning military veterans. CEP has never had to actively seek enrollees, who are supplied by the Department of Manpower Services, community action programs, welfare departments and walk-in business in quantities exceeding the program's capacity.

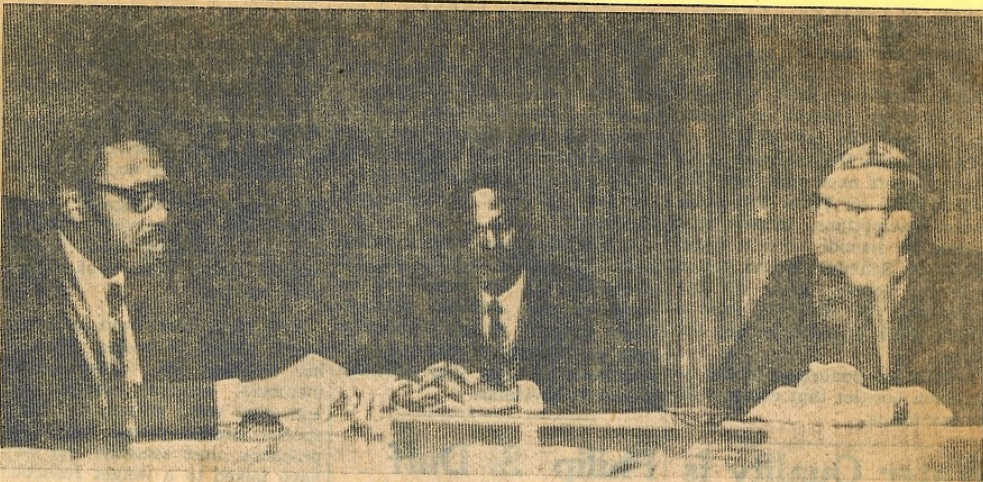
The Rural Minnesota CEP staff also services an active case of 150 ADC mothers and fathers under the Work Incentive Program (WIN). The same services are supplied to WIN enrollees as CEP enrollees, but they cannot be reported in the CEP's totals.

"Ours is a grassroots program helping people," concludes Marotzke. "It has significant impact when dealing with 1,600 in a year, especially with a low dropout rate of 3.34 per cent. To me it means people believe they are getting something from the program — especially gaining upward mobility."

The Board of Directors of Rural Minnesota CEP is considering applying for grants to help disadvantaged youths initiate post-high school education, as well as one for helping returning military veterans with vocational education, on-the-job training and work experience inputs.



Also in 1971, Rural MN CEP was in the Nation's Top 10% of most effective concentrated employment programs.



**U.S. Dept. of Labor**

**Rural Minnesota CEP Is In Nation's Top 10%**

Rural Minnesota CEP is among the most effective concentrated employment programs in the nation according to one U. S. Department of Labor official, Daniel P. Harley, Associate Regional Manpower Administrator, on a recent visit to CEP headquarters in Detroit Lakes, made the following statement: "Rural Minnesota CEP

Officials visit Rural Minnesota CEP. Pictured above at CEP's Detroit Lakes office are, l. to r., Daniel P. Harley, Associate Regional Manpower Administrator; David S. Johnson Jr., Government Authorized Representative; and Emil Marotzke, Director of Rural Minnesota CEP.

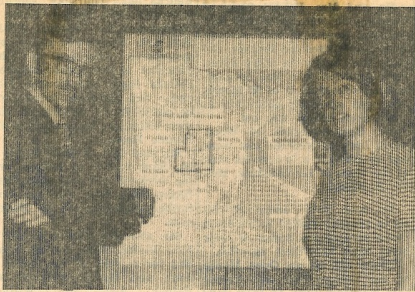
is in the top ten percent of Rural CEP's in the nation."

Mr. Harley is from the regional manpower office in Chicago and works with a six state area including Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin. He was accompanied on his past contract visit to Rural Minnesota CEP by David S. Johnson Jr., Government Authorized Representative. Mr. Johnson monitors all Manpower Programs in northwestern Minnesota for the Department of Labor.

The two visitors spent most of their time conferring with Director Emil Marotzke and other members along with prospects for future of the CEP staff. Present operation of the program was discussed years. Mr. Harley expressed his belief that with effective programs we can eliminate poverty from America during the decade of the 70's.

U.S. Dept. of Labor official Daniel Harley expressed his belief that with effective programs we can eliminate poverty from America during the decade of the 70's.

## RURAL MINN. CEP TO ESTABLISH SIX NEW AREA INTAKE CENTERS



NEW CEP INTAKE CENTERS—Fred Matson, Center Coordinator for the Brainerd office of Rural Minnesota CEP and Kay Janzen, Outreach interviewer pose with map showing location of new centers. Miss Janzen will visit each center on a regular weekly schedule.

Rural Minnesota CEP will establish six new centers in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison and Todd counties according to Fred Matson, Center Coordinator for CEP's Brainerd office.

Miss Kay Janzen, Outreach interviewer, will be in area towns on a regular weekly schedule to meet with prospective program enrollees.

Beginning, Monday, June 14, Miss Janzen will be in Staples at the City Hall each Monday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. She will be in Long Prairie at the Courthouse Annex on Monday afternoons from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Wednesday mornings will be spent in Pierz at the Village Hall and on Wednesday afternoons she will be available at the State Employment Office in Little Falls.

All day Tuesdays and Thursdays will be reserved for the CEP office at 1104 Willow St. SE in Brainerd. Applications will, however, be accepted every day in Brainerd. On Friday mornings she will be in the Emily-Ontario area (site to be announced) and on Friday afternoons will be at the Armory in Pine River.

Persons interested in enrolling in CEP for assistance in finding employment must be unemployed or underemployed and come from low income families. Those wishing more information on the program are invited to contact Miss Janzen at any of the above locations.

ed or underemployed and come from low income families. Those wishing more information on the program are invited to contact Miss Janzen at any of the above locations.

Emil Marotzke, Director of Rural Minnesota CEP, made the following comment on the expanded services, "With the establishment of these new Intake Centers it will be possible for almost all residents of the CEP area to obtain first-hand information on the program without driving long distances," he said.

### Women's Fellowship Meets Thurs., June 10

The Women's Fellowship of the Union Congregational Church of Hackensack will meet at 2 p. m. on Thursday, June 10. The Bill Burnsons will show slides of their trip to Chile.

The hostesses will be Esther Jensen, Bea Saltzman and Winifred Miller.

*Cass Co. Ind. June 1971*  
LLR-1 Walker

July 3, 1971

In June of 1971, Rural Minnesota CEP expanded their reach by establishing six new centers in Cass, Crow Wing, Morrison, and Todd counties.

"With the establishment of these new Intake Centers it will be possible for almost all residents of the CEP area to obtain first-hand information on the program without driving long distances" - Emil Marotzke, Director



In 1972, Rural Minnesota CEP sponsored The Irrigation Course for low income farmers.

A number of applications have already been received for entrance into next year's program and school officials are working with CEP to develop plans for the coming year of training.

## Sprinkler Irrigation Class Graduates 15 Area Farmers

The third class on Sprinkler Irrigation was recently graduated from Staples Area Vocational School. The Irrigation Course for low income farmers is sponsored by Rural Minnesota CEP, Emil W. Marotzke, Director.

Completing the course this year were fifteen area farmers: Halbert Barrett, Walter Perry, and Roy Seideman of Staples; Jerome Gotheman, and Melvin Tyrell of Eagle River.

Oscar Kawlewski, Dale Menze, and Russell Chalmann of Ottertail, Clark Meech and Robert Meech of Sebeka; Kenneth Rasmussen of Motley; Jerome Wagner of Parkers Prairie; Lawrence Welch of Wadena; LeRoy Westphal of Backus; and Charles White of Verndale.

Tom Kajer served as instructor for the class. He has been meeting regularly during the last year.

Stan Edin, Assistant Director

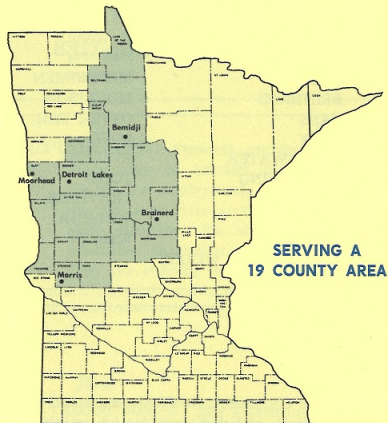
of the Vocational School presented certificates to each of the graduates. Larry Buboltz, Deputy Director of CEP spoke briefly on the program as did Rich Curtis, MSHA Councilor.

A number of applications have already been received for entrance into next year's program and school officials are working with CEP to develop plans for the coming year of training. Plans call for another group of fifteen farmers to start classes in March.



• A PATHWAY TO EMPLOYMENT •

**RURAL  
MINNESOTA  
CEP, INC.**



**CETA PRIME  
SPONSOR**

**With the advent of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973, RMCEP received special designation as one of four rural CEPs nationwide to be “grand-fathered in” as a CETA Prime Sponsor.**

**Local administrative units were given considerable decision-making power over the training provided and the individuals served. As a result, much was accomplished in the effort to place the area’s poor into jobs**



BRAINERD DISPATCH  
Tues 8/13/74

# THE I

In the Heart of the Lake Region

## Boards Back New Program For Offenders

The Crow Wing and Morrison County Commissioners, meeting together yesterday, accepted the recommendation of the Community Corrections Board and authorized signing of an appropriation to subsidize a new corrections program.

The program, a pilot venture to be conducted in cooperation with the state, is a new approach to treatment of law offenders, treating more persons in their home communities rather than sending them to state institutions.

Tom Hegstad, Crow Wing County probation officer and chairman of the Community Corrections Board which is comprised of members in both this and Morrison County, briefly reviewed the program for the commissioners again yesterday. The program was outlined earlier, amended and reviewed by state officials. Following its approval by the two county boards, it now goes to the state for final approval.

Basic purpose of the program is to keep law offenders out of state institutions as much as possible. The already functioning programs of POIT (Probation Offenders Rehabilitation Training) in Crow Wing County, and MORAD, a Morrison County program which provides a group home for juveniles, will come under the Community Corrections program.

Hegstad said a number of other programs are also in the planning stages, including those dealing with work programs,

foster homes and use of volunteers in various areas. He said that prevention and diversion are the most important aspects of the Community Corrections program.

The state is providing \$270,000 for the implementing of the program this coming year. The two counties are required to spend an amount equal to what they are spending at the present time for the treatment of law offenders. This has been determined at \$8,100 over a three-month period or a cost of about \$30,000 a year.

In passing the resolution accepting the program, the two boards added an amendment stating that the program be tried for at least a one-year period. The state provides a clause in the Community Corrections Act allowing withdrawal by a county at the beginning of any quarter.

The Community Corrections program will be administered by a 17-member advisory board, headed by Hegstad, and directly responsible to the two boards of commissioners. Members of the committee are representative of a broad segment of the two counties. Administration will be handled through the county auditor's office here.

Later in the day on Monday, the commissioners met with representatives of the CEP (Concentrated Employment Program) to hear an explanation of a new aspect of that program. Invited to the meeting were city and township clerks, school superintendents and representatives of other governmental units throughout the county.

Title II under Minne-CEP is similar to the Emergency Employment Act, according to Russell Schrupp, official of the

COMMISSIONERS  
Continued on Page 2

### COMMISSIONERS

Continued from Page 1

program. State funds are allocated to the regions where there has been a minimum of 6.5 per cent unemployment for a three-month period.

Under the program, the allotment for the 19-county region including Crow Wing is \$205,000. The program is a three-year plan with funding provided one year at a time. The money provides for employment of individuals in various positions under county, city, township, school, and others, their salaries and other benefits completely reimbursed up to \$10,000 per person from the CEP Title II program.

Because of the size of the area served in the region, CEP officials are asking county commissioners to take charge of the program. The money would be sub-granted to the counties who, in turn, would sub-grant it to various municipalities and other units who employ people under the program.

Those units who have positions they wish filled under the program are asked to let the county commissioners know. The CEP will be notified of the vacancies to be filled, will notify the employment office and applicants will be sent for interviews and possible employment.

Schrupp pointed out that applicants for posts will be selected from among veterans and from among those who have been unemployed for 30 days or more or those presently working less than 30 hours a week at present. Referrals from the Social Services Department and former Man Power program recipients will have high priorities.

The county commissioners told those present that they would try to begin suggesting posts to be filled within the county offices to CEP at their next board meeting on Monday. Other units wishing employees for various posts were advised to contact the county commissioners at as early a date as possible if they wish to be included in the program.

In other action at yesterday's meeting, the commissioners:

In 1974, Crow Wing County and Morrison County Commissioners accepted a pilot program to treat law offenders as people in the community as opposed to sending them to state institutions.

Currently, under WIOA, we provide assistance to offenders and former offenders to get back into the workforce.

Thanks to CETA Funds, CEP was able to place an unemployed person into a public service job for a limited time and pay their wages.

The 150% jump in applications was in response to a CEP advertisement about a public service employment program and exceptionally high unemployment

## Job Applications 'Jump' At Brainerd CEP Center

Applications for Rural Minnesota CEP assistance in finding employment jumped 150 per cent in the Brainerd CEP Center last week, according to coordinator Dennis Gruenhagen.

Gruenhagen said the big increase apparently reflects the exceptionally high unemployment in the area and was in response to a CEP advertisement about a public service employment program started Jan. 13.

He said Rural Minnesota CEP received special funds for public service employment through the Department of Labor's Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) to provide transitional employment until the economic situation improves.

CETA funds were triggered into the Rural Minnesota CEP area by the Secretary of Labor when area unemployment topped seven per cent. With the funds, CEP is able to place unemployed persons into public service jobs for a limited time, and to pay their wages.

He said he welcomes calls or visits from all public agencies or non-profit organizations within the Brainerd Center's service area so that work positions can be developed that will benefit the employer as well as the employee.

The Brainerd CEP Center, at 303 NW 6th St., serves Crow Wing, Todd, Morrison, south Cass and east Hubbard counties and is interviewing daily.

from L. Falls  
Transcript  
1-28-75

## CEP Applications Up 150 Per Cent

Applications for Rural Minnesota CEP assistance in finding employment jumped 150 per cent in the Brainerd CEP Center the week of Jan. 13, Dennis Gruenhagen, coordinator, said.

Gruenhagen said the big increase apparently reflects the exceptionally high unemployment in the area, and was in response to a CEP advertisement about a public service employment program started Jan. 13.

He said Rural Minnesota CEP received special funds for public service employment through the Department of Labor's Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) to provide transitional employment until the economic situation improves.

"Following the CEP advertisement, applications for employment assistance soared," Gruenhagen said, "indicating that unemployment in the area is more serious than most people realize."

CETA funds were triggered into the Rural Minnesota CEP area by the Secretary of Labor when area unemployment topped seven per cent. With the funds, CEP is able to place unemployed persons into public service jobs for a limited time, and to pay their wages.

The Brainerd CEP Center at 303 N.W. Sixth Street serves Crow Wing, Todd, Morrison, south Cass and east Hubbard counties and is interviewing daily.

Gruenhagen said applications are accepted and interviews also given at outreach stations in Walker, Park Rapids, Bagley and Baudette.

From Brd Dsp.  
1-28-75





The Rural Minnesota CEP Board of Directors heard of increased funding for fiscal '77 and '78. Pictured (standing); Chairman of the Board Richard Donat (Staples); Board Member Bob DeLane (Little Falls); from left: CEP Director Larry Buboltz; Department of Labor Federal Representative James A. Hale and Board Member Ione Lass (Barnesville).

## CEP Board told increased funding is expected for CETA programs

Rural Minnesota CEP can expect a substantial increase in federal funds for CETA Programs when President Carter's Job Program bill is passed, CEP Director Larry Buboltz reported at the January Board of Directors meeting in Bemidji.

He said that if the bill is passed with little modification the result will be more responsibilities and more money for the Department of Labor's CETA Prime Sponsors, because no new titles or administrative agencies are planned.

Buboltz' statements were verified by James A. Hale, federal representative for the Department of Labor's Regional Office in

Chicago. He said that if President Carter's bill is passed Rural Minnesota CEP and the Governor's Manpower Office, Minnesota's two largest Prime Sponsors, could expect substantial increases in program monies without four to six weeks.

The CEP Director said much of the new money would be directed to Title II and Title VI programs, which would see a pronounced increase in Public Service Employment in the 19 county area served by Rural Minnesota CEP.

And he said there is some indication that CEP will be asked to significantly increase its Youth

Program and change it to a year-long operation rather than the Summer Program and In-School Program now operated.

Buboltz said CEP funding last year exceeded \$15 million and that even though he didn't know what a substantial increase would amount to, he was gearing the agency for a much increased work load.

As Prime Sponsor for the Department of Labor's Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) in 19 rural Minnesota counties, CEP operates Centers in Moorhead, Morris, Detroit Lakes, Brainerd and Bemidji.

The next CEP board meeting will be at 10 a.m. Feb. 22 in the CEP office in the old courthouse in Little Falls.

The CETA funds received in 1977 significantly increased CEP's Youth Program and change it to a year long operation rather than the Summer Program and In-School Program.



FRAN SCOTT, vice president of administration for Scorpion, Inc., assists C-1 High School seniors in filling out employment applications. Students, left to right, are Shirley Yeager and Laurie Otto of Star Route, Merrifield; and Judy Mount of Riverton Route, Ironton. Ten selected students, who are members of the Minnesota Youth Program, will work as trainees at Scorpion.

## Crosby Students Take 'Positions' At Scorpion

Ten students from Crosby-Ironton High School are applying for "work without pay" at Scorpion, Inc. in Crosby. Special training positions have been arranged by Scorpion in cooperation with the school and the Minnesota Youth Program. Arrangements were made by Fran Scott, Scorpion's vice president of administration and Michael Clay, youth program counselor. All of the students are

seniors and many have had business training in school. The new training positions will provide practical on-the-job experience. The students will not replace any Scorpion employees but will work as trainees for two hours per day until the end of the school year. Students will be placed in several departments including: Parts, Warrant, Personnel, Engineering, Purchasing, and Public Relations.

"We look at this program as a two way street," says Mr. Scott. The company, he feels, is helping young people to choose a career and there is the possibility that Scorpion will be able to hire some of them as partially trained employees. Student applicants are screened by the High School counselors with final selection and placement being made by Mr. Scott.

The Minnesota Youth program was designed to assist local school districts with career education. Crosby-Ironton is one of 13 schools, in north-central Minnesota, cooperating in the program. The youth program is directed by Larry Buboltz of Detroit Lakes.

Youth program members at Crosby-Ironton High are engaged in a number of career related activities. These include career exploration classes and counseling. Recent field trips for interested students included trips to the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis and also a trip to the Duluth Campus of the University.

Thirty-five other youth program members are working part-time in career related jobs with public agencies in the area. Scorpion, Inc. is one of the first private businesses to cooperate in such student training.

*Scorpion  
Employees  
2/2/78*

In 1982, the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) was created to replace CETA. Again, CEP was chosen as a program deliverer.

Based on past experience and demonstrated effectiveness, the agency continued to operate successful programs



EXECUTIVE ORDER NUMBER 58

- WHEREAS, on October 13, 1982, President Reagan signed into law the "Job Training Partnership Act" (JTPA), Public Law 97-300; and
- WHEREAS, the Governor and the Secretary of Labor signed an agreement assuring the State would comply with the JTPA, applicable rules and regulations and the Wagner-Peyser Act, as amended, and specifying the Secretary would accept guidelines, interpretations and definitions of the Governor if they are consistent with JTPA and applicable rules and regulations; and
- WHEREAS, the Governor by Executive Order Number 24 (June 30, 1986) designated the Department of Economic Development (DED) as his administrative agency for JTPA and established within the executive offices of the State the State Job Training Coordinating Council (SJTCC); and
- WHEREAS, Senate File 2409, signed into law on May 2, 1996, transferred the administrative responsibilities for the JTPA to the Workforce Development Department (WDD); and
- WHEREAS, administrative continuity is necessary to ensure all mandated activities and plans continue in operation during and after the transition of responsibilities to the WDD.
- NOW, THEREFORE, I, Terry E. Branstad, Governor of the State of Iowa, by the virtue of the authority vested in me by the Laws and Constitution of the State of Iowa and JTPA, do hereby delegate to the Workforce Development Department, the authority and responsibility vested in the Governor under JTPA for administering and carrying out employment and training policies, programs and activities under JTPA.
1. The Workforce Development Department acts on the Governor's behalf as the JTPA state administrative agency. The Governor shall:





*A Workforce System Partner*

**Between 1996 and 1999, CEP worked with the Job Services, Rehabilitation Services, and State Services for the Blind to convert to one-stop service centers.**

**In 2009, CEP successfully operated the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) programs which were designed to stimulate the country's economy.**

**Approximately 200 young people were employed during the summer through RMCEP due to the federal stimulus money.**



**In 2014, The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law replacing The Workplace Investment Act of 1998.**



**RMCEP transitioned their programs, standards, and delivery methods and showed, once again, their capacity to adapt with success.**

**CEP has contracted with counties in its service area since 1987 to deliver services to people receiving cash public assistance or food stamps.**



**1988 - Project STRIDE** (*Success Through Reaching Individual Development and Employment*)

**1997 - Federal TANF** (*Temporary Assistance to Needy Families*)

**1997 - Minnesota MFIP** (*Minnesota Family Investment Program*)



# Rural Minnesota CEP - Brainerd



The 2002 closing of Potlatch was devastating to the Brainerd Lakes Community. Brainerd Rural MN CEP was flooded with Dislocated Workers.

660 people found out they would be out of jobs in 60 days when the plant would close

THE BRAINERD DAILY

# DISPATCH

MONDAY

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Brainerd forecast  
Inch or two of snow  
Details on Page 2A

Light 2002 — Brainerd, MN 56401 Vol. 120-189 Monday, March 18, 2002 50¢ Daily, \$1.50 Sunday

## Potlatch closing

**Potlatch**  
Sale to leave 660 employees of paper mill without jobs in 60 days

By RENEE RICHARDSON  
Senior Reporter

Employees were described as shocked and sad after today's announcement that Potlatch's Brainerd mill, with 660 employees, will close in 60 days.

Potlatch announced a sale agreement of its coated fine paper business to a South African corporation for \$480 million in cash. The sale to Suppli Limited, a coated fine paper business based in Johannesburg, is expected to be finalized in mid- to late May but still has to undergo reviews, such as regulatory approval.

The agreement calls for the sale of Potlatch's Chaparral pulp and printing papers facilities and associated assets to a Suppli Limited subsidiary. Potlatch stated it will leave the coated printing papers business.

"We will be seeking a buyer for the plant," Mike Sullivan, Potlatch director of corporate communications in Spokane, Wash., said today. "We are going to make an honest and good faith effort to find a buyer."

But Sullivan added Potlatch agreed to a non-compete clause and cannot sell the plant to a competitor who would produce coated paper. Sullivan said it was inappropriate to speculate on the chances of locating a buyer for the Brainerd mill.

"We are engaged in a feasibility study to find out what the options are," he said.

See POTLATCH / 5A

## Wallin: Shutdown 'devastating'

By MIKE O'BROURKE  
Associate Editor

Brainerd Mayor James Wallin said today the shutdown of Brainerd's Potlatch operation here was devastating to the community.

"When you figure that's over 600 people who work there and they're all what I consider high-paying jobs," Wallin said. "They've been our major employer for years. To me it's just devastating."

Wallin, who's worked in the printing business for 40 years, said there has been concern the plant might close for some time. Wallin works part time for Range Printing and is co-owner of Lakes Area Mailing. He has two sons who work at the mill.

Minnesota Senate President Don Stensrud, DFL-Brainerd, said today the plant closing would have a huge economic impact on the community.

"It's a blow to our entire state economy," he said.

He would like to see state officials contact the new owners and see if there are other uses for the plant, consider extending unemployment benefits for first workers and offer employment training for employees.

See SHUTDOWN / 5A

## For workers, a time for tears and concern about future

By JENNIFER STOCKINGER  
Staff Writer

When the news hit this morning that Potlatch's Brainerd mill would be closing, tears filled some employees' faces as to what the future has in store for them.

There will be 660 employees out of a job in 60 days.

Doree Zelinski has worked at Potlatch for 27 years.

"A lot of good people will go down the tube," she said. "I saw it coming. You can't run a business that is hanging by a thread."

This is the worst thing that could have happened.

Her family will be hit twice as hard. Her husband, Leon Zelinski, also works at the mill and they have three children. He has been there for 22 years.

Zelinski said it is easy to think that both incomes will be gone. However, she said her family will do what they have to survive. Zelinski said there are many couples who work at Potlatch.

"No one is too happy," said Jeff Seymour. Seymour works in the finishing room and has been there for 10 years. "I have no clue on what to do once the shock is over with. We'll have to move on."

It's a shock, said Nina Elmer, who has been employed with Potlatch for 24 years. "I'll start looking now (for a new job). I have to make a house payment like everyone else does."

Elmer has an accounting degree so she hopes she can find something in that field.

John Deshan works at Potlatch as well.

See REACTION / 5A

Nina Elmer, a Potlatch worker for 24 years, learned of the plant's closing this morning. Elmer, along with about 660 workers at the Brainerd mill, will be out of jobs in 60 days when the plant closes. The company parking lot remained full this morning as news spread among employees. (Dispatch Photos by Steve Kahl)

French honor Brainerd D-Day survivor Carlson

In 2008, the Brainerd CEP office was recognized for excellence after a review of 20 performance standards established by the state.



"The office in Brainerd, which works with job seekers and businesses, stood out for performance in exceeding 16 standards and meeting one standard in workforce development efforts" - Daniel Wenner, Executive Director





The unemployment rate for Brainerd in December of 2009 was 17.1%. The highest in the state for a city with a population of more than 10,000 people.

Craig Nathan proposed a theory as to why Brainerd had such high unemployment. He theorized that Brainerd could no longer rely on legacy industries like paper, timber, mining, and the railway.



## WorkForce Center offers free job search help

By RENEE RICHARDSON  
Senior Reporter

Sheila Stofferahn, Ironton, was out of her job just weeks before she was at the WorkForce Center in Brainerd taking advantage of a free job hunting strategy class.

"I haven't had to look for a job for 20 years," the 39-year-old Stofferahn said. "I don't even know what's out there."

The WorkForce Center offers a five-day Job Search Strategies class and a one-day Creative Job Search Workshop. In addition, the staffed Resource Room offers free use of information, computers, phones, fax machine, even paper for resumes. There is no criteria for use of the facility other than a desire to look for work.

Heather Aanes, job counselor at the WorkForce Center, recently led participants through the basics of a job search. At the Job Search Strategies class, people complete a skill and interest inventory, learn do's and don'ts of completing job applications, and

The course covers the basics of job hunting and where to look for job openings. Participants all walk away with a resume and participate in mock interviews. The Resource Room provides access to career planning and skill assessment workshops, a resume template, an opportunity to search for jobs online or fill out online applications, access to the job bank and information on "hot" careers.

The WorkForce Center offers Internet access and phones for people to sign up for unemployment benefits.

A recent job search class included the recently jobless, workers who have been displaced for longer periods and a stay-at-home mom who was looking to get back in the work force.

The course is designed to give people an edge when they go out to find a job or consider options for education or training. Other free services include informal networking groups that meet Monday mornings and Tuesday nights. Typically eight to 15 people gather to talk about job hunting strategies, share tips and resources.

"The WorkForce Center in Brainerd is budgeted for four job counselors to work with dislocated workers, three are full time.

"We are really at capacity or beyond and have been for awhile," said Sue Hilgart, Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment



Brainerd Dispatch/Steve Kohls  
**Heather Aanes, job counselor at the WorkForce Center in Brainerd, spoke to participants in a Job Search Strategies class.**

That doesn't count the people who use the free resources.

Hilgart said that 464 number is double what it would be in a strong economy. With four counselors to work with more than 400 people for intensive services, the center had to put a gate up on taking more people. Counselors continue to work people in the program until they have a job. People who signed up in January are still on the waiting list.

"I think jobs are starting to come back," Hilgart said. "It's not necessarily high wage jobs, but I see some movement."

People are using temp jobs to get a foot in the door or volunteering to expand their contacts. Hilgart said this year didn't include the typical push to find seasonal help, but said that may be because workers went to area resorts looking for jobs.

Hilgart said the waves of newly laid-off has stopped. But Hilgart said she is still seeing troubling cases of people who wait to come to the WorkForce Center once their unemployment benefits are nearly exhausted.

But she said part of the reason for that trend is likely from people who feel they should be able to find a job on their own just as they have in the past.

Hilgart said: "And it's different now."

People should know there isn't a stigma in needing help to find a job, Hilgart said. Even if people just want to come in and see the resources or polish a resume, it is there for them, Hilgart said. Staff are adept at understanding the stress dislocated workers are under, Hilgart said.

"We want people to see the opportunities out there and not be discouraged,"

she said.

At the job search class, Aanes said with so many people applying for a limited number of job openings, participants are told anything they do carelessly in the job application means a prospective employer is likely to look past them. These days employers can afford to be choosy.

The class looks critically at examples of job applications and considers how to fill out the tricky question of "salary desired." Aanes encouraged class participants to research wages in the area and provide a range.

"They give you a really good motivation," Stofferahn said. "There is a lot of positive thinking, which is helpful."

RENEE RICHARDSON may be reached at renee.richardson@brainerddispatch.com or 855-5852.

In 2010, The Brainerd WFC was offering five-day Job Search Strategies classes and a one-day Creative Job Search Workshop for the numerous displaced workers. The Workforce Center was budgeted for just four job counselors at the time.

"We are really at capacity or beyond and have been for a while"  
- Sue Hilgart, Team Leader

#### Wausau Paper to Close Brainerd Mill This Spring

Wausau Paper is closing the Brainerd mill this spring, with production expected to cease in April.

The company announced the closure of the mill Thursday afternoon. Employees were told about 3:30 p.m. Thursday during company meetings. The mills employs 134 workers.

In a statement, Wausau Paper reported it explored a range of alternatives after deciding to divest itself of the technical specialty paper business to focus on its tissue business.

"It has become clear that Brainerd will not contribute to those alternatives and the closure will significantly improve the continuing paper segment operating results," Wausau Paper stated. The mills other technical specialty paper business in Mosinee and Rhinelander, Wis. will continue to operate.

"A number of factors, including our accelerated exit from the print business, protracted global economic weakness and recent competitive paper capacity additions in Asia have impacted the viability of the Brainerd operations and created operational losses from the mill that were unsustainable," said Hank Newell, Wausau president and CEO, in a news release. "Our employees and the community of Brainerd have done all we have asked in our efforts to create a long-term viable operation and we thank them for their support."

How long the Brainerd mill will continue to operate before it is closed in the spring depends on current customer orders, said Perry Grueber, director of investor relations.

Grueber said care will be taken to close the mill and protect its future possibilities and maintain paper making equipment. Grueber said the company isn't saying it won't still try to sell the mill, but Wausau Paper thinks the mills in Wisconsin will be more attractive to the market.

Just two years ago, Wausau Paper invested \$27 million to convert the Brainerd mill to technical specialty grades, such as those used in masking tape and to a limited degree packaging for the food industry. Grueber said the decision was based on market research.

"The weak economy we've all been suffering through proved those projections to be incorrect," Grueber said.

Plant closures or layoffs of 50 people or more trigger additional state resources and a rapid response team, and Wausau's competition in Asia opened the door for federal resources for training. Those resources will coordinate with Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program (CEP) at the WorkForce Center in Brainerd.

Craig Nathan, Rural Minnesota CEP operations manager, said federal trade adjustment assistance (TAA) was awarded last week, bringing in a lot of additional resources to help employees make transitions. It's a familiar story in Brainerd, including other large plant closings from Potlatch in Brainerd to the Weyerhaeuser plant in Deerwood. Nathan said some employees have been through this process two other times, when Potlatch first closed the mill and later when Mississippi Paper closed. All that came before Wausau Paper purchased the mill in 2004.

"We as community partners and that includes the Brainerd Lakes Chamber, Central Lakes College and Brainerd Lakes Area Economic Development Corp. (BLAEDC), we have all worked together in the past to see what each of our agencies can bring to the table and we will likely do the same," Nathan said.

Wausau Paper management in Brainerd and the unions have been working with the Minnesota Rural CEP since layoffs were announced last year.

Nathan said employees are already calling the WorkForce Center and there will be early help in career exploration, job searches and talks with job counselors. But employees will need to stay with their current jobs at Wausau until they are actually laid off in order to take full advantage of retraining benefits. Nathan

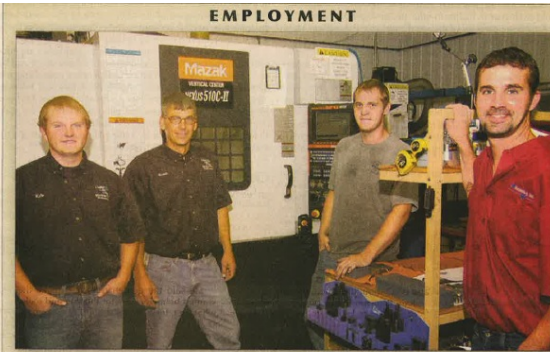
**The Wausau Paper Mill closing in 2013 was another blow to the Brainerd Area. 134 people lost their jobs. Again, Rural MN CEP was ready to help.**

**The Brainerd Workforce Center offered networking session to help dislocated workers to accelerate their job search efforts.**



2012 brought a new program to high schools to fill a gap in career counseling. About 1,468 teenagers learned about post-secondary education, financial aid, research of occupations, career interest and aptitude, college selection, and job-seeking strategies.





Jeremiah Miller (right), owner of JDM Machining, Staples, is confident more job opportunities await trained graduates of the future. Miller hired 2012 Central Lakes College graduate Kyle Moench (left) due to business growth. Ron Redenske (second from left) is the college instructor who taught Miller, Moench, and JDM employee Eric Kostreba (second from right).

## FastTRAC grant to support manufacturing careers

Due to a rise in job openings, local partners are working together to increase awareness and develop skills for entry into careers in the manufacturing employment sector.

A \$100,000 FastTRAC Manufacturing grant is supporting the plan to build career pathways for unemployed/underemployed people. Partners are Rural Minnesota CEP, Central Lakes College (CLC), Brainerd School District Adult Basic Education, Clow Stamping and Manufacturing, Lexington Manufacturing, Pequot Tool, and Lakeland Mold.

Graduates of one- and two-year diploma programs in machine tool technology, welding and fabrication, and robotics are finding employment opportunities in the manufacturing sector. The latest effort to supply trained employees to industry includes refresher and basic education that prepares students for college-level coursework.

According to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), the Occupations in Demand for Economic Development Region 5 (EDR 5) forecasts that over the next two years, there will be a need for more than 346 new manufacturing related jobs that pay \$26,349-\$39,655 annually. Even more important, however, may be the need to replace hundreds of skilled manufacturing employees who are now starting to retire.

"Area companies are calling us constantly looking for more skilled manufacturing graduates — particularly welders and machinists," said Jeff Wig, dean of career and technical programs at CLC, in a news release. "Students finishing just one year of training at CLC have no problem getting employed in our area, and we don't see that changing anytime soon. That's why we are so excited about the FastTRAC program."

Minnesota Adult Career Pathway in Manufacturing is a program that aims to engage lower skilled adults in a career pathway, which can lead to an increase in the average annual wage by more than \$7,600 for each student completing it.

"Area Manufacturers have indicated a skills mismatch in the available workforce leading to position vacancies," said Craig Nathan, area manager for Rural Minnesota Concentrated Employment Program at the Brainerd Workforce Center, in a news release. "This program will help alleviate that issue while providing a valuable benefit for adults looking to increase their employability."

The program intends to support the employment of up to 50 individuals.

Students will be provided the foundational education

manufacturing/math skills. The courses will include ABE Integrated Instruction.

Credits apply toward a Central Lakes College diploma in machine tool technology, welding and fabrication, and robotics.

The classes, which are free, start as early as Sept. 20 and will be offered in the fall of 2012 and 2013. Classes run two days per week for up to three hours per day.

A significant emphasis of the FastTRAC Manufacturing program is to help the students become familiar with real-world manufacturing operations and build their network for future employment.

During the entire program participants will have the opportunity to tour manufacturing plants and interact with speakers and mentors from local manufacturing plants.

One local employer who welcomes the program is Jeremiah Miller, owner of JDM Machining, Staples. In the midst of an expansion project that will triple his production facility, Miller is optimistic that more jobs in the industry are on the horizon.

Miller, a 1999 graduate of the Machine Trades program at CLC, has built a thriving plastic injection molding enterprise since 2000. Several employees are CLC graduates. Kyle Moench of Wadena is June graduate from the CLC program learning more specific aspects of CNC machining at the job shop north of Staples. "I really enjoy the work," he said.

Other CLC graduates working at JDM are Aaron Denny of Nimrod, and Eric Kostreba and Devon Redenske of Staples.

"We've continued to grow," said Miller, whose new building of 6,400 square feet is twice the size of the existing structure. "I think our industry and this area have a good future for graduates who know computer-numeric controls and programming for the variety of molds we make."

The firm recently ordered its third Mazak 510 vertical machining center to join a shop bursting at the seams with equipment valued at more than \$1 million.

JDM, which builds the tooling for plastic injection molding and also does a lot of prototyping, is part of a subcontractor network that makes parts for John Deere, Arctic Cat, Caterpillar, and other machinery manufacturers.

Funding for the FastTRAC Manufacturing grant was provided through the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED).

For more information, contact the Workforce Center 828-2450, Central Lakes College at 855-8000, or Brainerd

# The \$100,000 FastTRAC Manufacturing grant helped support plans to build career pathways for unemployed/underemployed people during 2012 and 2013.

Partners included RMCEP, CLC, Brainerd Adult Basic Education, Clow Stamping, Lexington Manufacturing, Pequot Tool and Lakeland Mold



# Starting over

By RENEE RICHARDSON  
Senior Reporter

When Thomas Rosko lost his job when the Deerwood iLevel by Weyerhaeuser plant closed last year, he said more than a paycheck went with it.

Center shows loss of a job doesn't mean loss of hope

When a job is gone, often a sense of identity is lost as well.

"This is what I am and now it's gone so who am I?" Rosko said.

The job loss can leave people feeling alone in a struggle to readjust their lives and plans for the future. In a struggling economy, displaced workers or those looking for help with career planning or a job change have an area resource to turn to — and most of the services offered are free.

The Brainerd WorkForce Center — one of many across the state — offers a resource room that is open to the public and provides all the tools to write resumes, research businesses and find employers who are hiring. Computers and high-speed Internet are available along with paper, stamps, a fax machine and staff assistance. If job seekers are finding it difficult to get a job, there are workshops on job searches that cover

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# Through the years, RMCEP's programs have evolved. Rural Minnesota CEP has evolved. And we are still making Employment Dreams a Reality.

## JOBLESS IN

Brainerd

POP 13,718

More inside on the job problem:

- WorkForce center staffers helping job seekers.
- Congress hopes a rare bipartisan bill featuring a tax break for employers will lead to more jobs
- Report points to increased production despite a decline in jobs

Stories on Page 6A

## Resources are there for jobless

By RENEE RICHARDSON  
Senior Reporter

A trickle-down effect is creating another wave of unemployed.

Tom Street, job search instructor at the Minnesota WorkForce Center in Brainerd, said as people lose jobs and health care coverage or face higher deductibles while they cut back on spending, help starting to see chiropractic assistants and dental hygienists looking for work.

"That's something new we haven't seen before," Street said.

Street said seasonal unemployment has long been part of the lake country of central Minnesota. But the recession means people are jobless for longer periods and more industries are affected. And one domino tends to strike another.

"We are getting different faces than before," Street said.

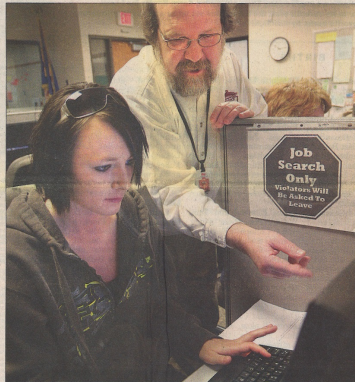
Street said there has been a 150 percent to 200 percent increase in the number of people coming through the WorkForce Center's doors seeking services. Job hunters range from entry level to mid and upper management.

"It's pretty much all over the place," Street said.

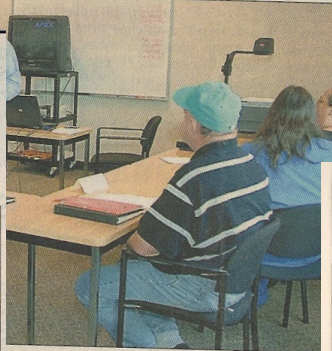
The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics figures for November noted there are 6.4 job seekers per available job — or 22.9 million more unemployed workers than job openings. That's an increase from 1.1 job seekers per job opening in December of 2000 and 1.7 job seekers per job opening in December 2007.

Tim Bahma, a 42-year-old plumber, moved to Minnesota from Montana to be

See RESOURCES, Page 6A



Kourtney Dugel of Deerwood worked with Tom Street, a job search instructor at the Minnesota WorkForce Center in Brainerd.



Brainerd Dispatch/Steve Kol consultant, worked with a job search class at services Building on Laurel Street in Brainerd. Workshops to help anyone with a job search. The and interviewing skills are available to the

## Workforce Center and CLC Helping Retrain for Employment

By JENI PIERCE  
Staff Reporter  
jenipierce@brainerd Dispatch.com

At the Brainerd Lakes area, like many areas across the state, continues to try work itself out of the increasing jobless rates.

"For many employers that need to require someone with a high school degree, they now can get someone with a college degree because those numbers are out there in those looking for work," said Nathan.

Street said there has been a 150 percent to 200 percent increase in the number of people coming through the WorkForce Center's doors seeking services. Job hunters range from entry level to mid and upper management.

"It's pretty much all over the place," Street said.

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Central Minnesota's Home Photographs (MCC) located The Crow Wing County Community Services building houses the Workforce Center.

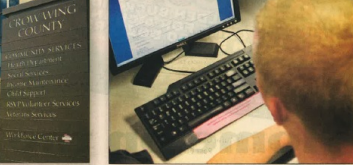
years ago and began looking outside of his comfort zone, for an occupation that was in high demand — something he recommended to all job seekers to consider.

"A great portion of our (state) funding goes toward re-training, so (education) focused skills, that can be earned with a degree in two years or less."

"Five years of education and you can come out with a pretty good skill set and that much better of chance to be looked at and considered for the job."

Nathan said many high-demand jobs in the county include positions that require better education, like healthcare, which currently sits atop the area's highest in-demand positions.

See EMPLOYMENT, Page 23L



Central Minnesota's Home Photographs (MCC) located The Crow Wing County Community Services building houses the Workforce Center.

## Finding their futures a career at a time

By JENI PIERCE

Staff Reporter

jenipierce@brainerd Dispatch.com

Hundreds of students attend Career Exploration Day at Central Lakes College.

Liberal arts, engineering and nursing.

Graphic design, photography and videography.

Business, management and administration.

Human services.

Automotive, construction and heavy equipment.

Healthcare, food and natural resources.

"Today is all about career exploration and to help students figure out what they want to be when they grow up," said Sue Hilgert, team leader for Rural Minnesota Career Exploration Day.

Hilgert admits that making the event even more appealing to high schoolers in the day away from school and a chance to hang out with friends.

"All these students come in today really excited and Hilgert, who led the opening orientation for Career Exploration Day for each school."

"They're obviously excited because number one, they get to be out of school and there's a college, but number two because of the potential they can get out of this."

"It's incredible to see the realization of all that's out there for them and when they walk around they're all engaged with all the different things here, it's great."

For Deanne Mulvener and Sara Hopkins, juniors at Pine Street Academy, the day was about realizing the future they already had in mind.

"I think it's really cool to see all the different careers that they are not aware of before."

David Blake from Crosby took part in the "Dragon's Breath" demonstration in the chemistry lab at Central Lakes College. For more photos go to: spottedbrainerddispatch.com.

See CAREERS, Page 9A



David Blake from Crosby took part in the "Dragon's Breath" demonstration in the chemistry lab at Central Lakes College. For more photos go to: spottedbrainerddispatch.com.

# Rural Minnesota CEP Celebrates 50 Years



A look back at the last 50 years...