

Workforce Solutions Summit



\$25 INCLUDES

- Lunch, with keynote speaker Gardner Carrick, The Manufacturing Institute
- Breakout sessions featuring more than 10 speakers with real-world solutions, from work culture impact to alternative workforces
- Networking time with your peers

P2P: Peer to Peer Learning

Learn from and connect with other employers about real-world workforce solutions for your industry!

Thursday, May 12, 2016
11:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Bigwood Event Center, Fergus Falls

Sponsored by West Central Initiative and the West Central Minnesota Labor Force Development Council

MANUFACTURERS: Come early to attend the STATE OF MANUFACTURING 2016 report release with Enterprise Minnesota President Bob Kill at 10 a.m.

The report release event is free and open to the public.

Learn more and register online:
WORKFORCESOLUTIONS.WCIF.ORG



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FOCUS
 on the region



“We feel the creation of the Fund signals the beginning of a new era in rural Minnesota,

one that shows hope and promise for restoring vitality to our region. We believe that our region’s greatest asset is its people. Any investment strategy should have at its core the development of our human capital.”

So stated Roger McCannon in his board president’s message in West Central Initiative’s—known then as the West Central Minnesota Initiative Fund—first annual report in 1987. The fund had just finished a momentous inaugural year, providing more than \$217,000 in loans and \$253,000 in grants, plus technical assistance to many businesses and nonprofits. In addition, the fund established both a business incubator and leadership program.

Since that first year, WCI has grown in leaps and bounds in number of loans, grants and services, yet with the same core beliefs. “Human capital is still our region’s greatest asset,” says current WCI Board Chair David Nelson. “Investing our resources in the people of the nine counties we serve is still WCI’s main premise for building economic stability in our region, whether it’s helping start up or expand businesses, supporting workforce training or community leadership development, or working to create safe, caring communities in which our children and families thrive. Imagine how much more vibrant west central Minnesota will be 30 years from now as we, as a region, continue to reinvest our resources in improving the lives of the people who live here, and who cherish our rural way of life.”

30 YEARS Continued inside.

FOCUS on the region

West Central Initiative’s Quarterly Report
 WINTER-SPRING 2016

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West Central Initiative is an equal opportunity provider, lender and employer.



Excellence. Accountability. Impact

our mission

Serving to improve west central Minnesota through funding, programs and technical assistance.

our vision

Uniting ideas and resources to help people and communities create a better tomorrow.

- 1986
West Central MN Initiative Fund incorporated
The McKnight Foundation provides two-year start-up funding
- 1989
Officially started development of component funds
- 1994
Began Workforce 2001 (now 2020) grant program
- 1995
Federal EDA contracts with WCI to become Economic Development District Designee
- 1996
Labor Force Development Council formed
- 1998
Transportation partnership with MnDOT
- 2003
Minnesota Early Childhood Initiative started
- 2006
Early Childhood Dental Network created
- 2012
WCI introduces Access to Capital loan program
- 2014
WCI joins PPREP disaster preparedness cohort
- 2016
WCI celebrates 30 years!

30 years continued

Check out a timeline of our history at wcif.org/who-we-are/history.

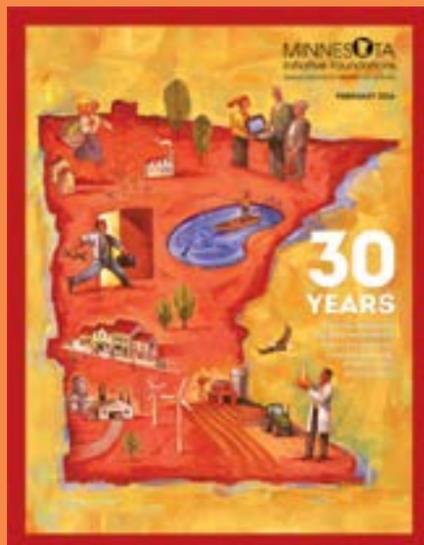
30 years of making a substantial impact in west central Minnesota

- Approved more than **600 grants** totaling **\$42.5 million**.
- Provided more than **957 loans** to businesses in excess of **\$42.7 million**.
- Contributed more than **\$85 million** to the region in support of programs.
- Created and retained more than **7,000 jobs**.
- Leveraged more than **\$210.2 million** in loans to regional businesses.
- Established **75 component funds** with combined assets exceeding **\$18.9 million**.
- Developed a WCI general **endowment** fund in excess of **\$30 million**.



30 Stories for 30 Years: Read about West Central Initiative and the communities, people and organizations that make this region so great.

30for30.wcif.org



WCI is one of six organizations dedicated to Greater Minnesota communities. Read about the first 30 years of the Minnesota Initiative Foundations and learn more about their impact in our state at www.greaterminnesota.net/celebrating-30-years/



Report: regional roundtables focus on workforce needs

Childcare. Housing. Transportation.

Those three needs to workforce recruitment and retention were mentioned over and over again during a series of workforce roundtable discussions throughout the region.

A grant from West Central Initiative to the Family Economic Success Jobs, Careers & Employability workgroup provided funding for Lakes Country Service Cooperative staff and area agencies to convene and facilitate the discussions. The conversations ultimately focused on three big issues: the lack of childcare availability and affordability; a variety of issues around housing that is dependent on geographic location within the region; and a lack of reliable transportation options for lower- to middle-income workers.

Read the full report of the Family Economic Success workforce roundtable discussions at blog.wcif.org



Minnesota Cup 2016 is now open!

WCI is pleased to be a sponsor of this statewide entrepreneurial competition. Our goal is to encourage those with a business, business startup—or even just a germ of a great idea—to enter. Monetary prizes, mentorships and more come with winning the multiple awards!

Learn more and enter at mncup.org.

Shannon Snell joins WCI as VP—Operations

New VP part of organizational changes at foundation

WCI welcomes Shannon Snell as its new vice president of operations. Snell brings 20-plus years of management experience to WCI.

As VP—Operations, Snell is in charge of making sure WCI functions efficiently and responsibly. His duties include human resources, financial management, IT, and grounds and building upkeep.

Snell brings 20-plus years of engineering, operations and general management experience to WCI. This experience has primarily been in manufacturing industries ranging from electronics to heavy machinery. His expertise is in continuous improvement management. He also spent time consulting and teaching these methods and tools to manufacturers throughout the state.

“I’m looking forward to sharing my skills and experience in a new environment,” Snell said. “I’m pleased to be part of an organization that is truly making a difference in west central Minnesota.”

“Shannon is a results-oriented, strategic thinker who will help us incrementally improve here at WCI in a well-documented and communicated way. He is already knowledgeable of our WCI services and programs. We look forward to his operations



leadership,” said Brad Barth, WCI President/CEO.

Snell holds a B.S. in mechanical engineering from North Dakota State University, Fargo, ND. He lives in Alexandria with his family.

Snell part of new leadership team

Snell takes the VP-Operations reins from Sandy King, who is transitioning into a new role as vice president of philanthropy and programs.

“Sandy’s invaluable years at WCI and her great relationships with our constituents make her a smart choice for heading up both our philanthropy and grant areas,” Barth said.

Dale Umlauf’s role has also expanded as vice president of business and economic development. Along with leading WCI’s efforts in business financing and assistance, he will also oversee WCI’s economic development and planning staff.

“All of these changes have been made so that staff are working even more collaboratively with each other and with our stakeholders,” Barth said. “Our goal is to be out and about in our region’s communities more than ever.”