

## **Request for Workforce Aid Funding** Moorhead Career Workforce Academy

### **Background: The Moorhead Career Workforce Academy**

In November of 2019, Moorhead residents overwhelmingly approved a bond referendum to support the transformation efforts that included both the career academy and rebuilding of the high school. Work began in August of 2020 on the MHS Career Academy, which repurposed a former Sam's Club building to provide program space for multiple career pathways including Farm to Table, Health and Human Potential, Entrepreneurship and Business, Information Technology and Design Thinking, Manufacturing and Transit, Personalized Core Curriculum and Liberal Arts & Communication. At the Career Academy, we already have 974 9-12 grade students enrolled in at least one class related to an in-demand field.

Collaborative learning, student engagement and authentic experiences are at the core of a multi-year effort by Moorhead High School to re-imagine education for every student in the district's diverse and growing student body. Innovative changes to curriculum and the adoption of a new schedule model will enable students to have improved access to career pathways with the goal of making every student ready for college, career, or both when they graduate. Future 9-12 grade students and adult learners will have incredible opportunities in this new facility to explore their potential, discover their passion, work toward industry certifications and gain real work skills, ultimately impacting the Moorhead community, region, state of Minnesota and the world.

### **Capital Needs: \$10 million one-time funding (facilities – \$7.4M and programming – \$2.6M)**

Our region, like many across Minnesota, is struggling with a severe workforce shortage. As a community, we are working alongside businesses, non-profits, education partners, and other community partners to develop innovative solutions to address the workforce crisis.

Our community desperately needs a community-based approach, bringing together public and private dollars, to address regional workforce demands. The two major demands are a need for a strong pipeline of workers in the in-demand fields, and programs to upskill the current workforce with an emphasis on minority populations, new MN citizens, and underskilled workforce. The Moorhead Career Workforce Academy is a natural vehicle to do so, but additional investment is needed to enhance this innovative workforce facility and catalyze its programming potential.

### **Facility Needs: \$7,383,506 (approximate sq. ft - 64,000+)**

With the Career Academy currently utilized for 9-12 grade students, retrofitting of the current space is necessary to transform the space to be used for upskilling the current workforce. An additional **\$7.4 million in capital construction funding is necessary to achieve full realization of the Career Academy**. Robust new lab spaces are included for building

trades, automotive and small engine repair, metal fabrication and carpentry along with several large flexible lab spaces for STEM courses such as engineering, robotics and aviation. This funding allows for the completion of lab spaces supporting workforce development needs in the following pathways:

#### **Draft Budget**

- **Healthcare Professions - \$727,766**
- **Education Professions - \$192,855**
- **Engineering, Robotics, Avionics, Electronics, BioTechnology Professions - \$1,463,605**
- **Food Services, Hospitality Professions - \$989,690**
- **Automotive and Small Engine Professions - \$1,574,235**
- **Industrial Technology Professions (Fabrication and Construction) - \$2,033,200**
- **Integrated Technology Labs (Graphic Design, Marketing, Digital Technology) - \$402,155**

**Programing Needs: \$2,616,494**

Minority populations, new MN citizens, and under-skilled workers are most in need of community education opportunities, so the creation and enhancement of necessary equipment and programs is vital to supporting these underserved populations. **\$2.6 million in one-time funding is needed to institute the necessary programming for community education to address current workforce shortages.** The programing funds will support the creation of a personalized learning curriculum for students in grades 9-12, the creation of an adult education program, associated support roles, retrofitting programs, and the implementation of IgniteFMWF. The programming offered will be in high-demand careers in the region such as the building trades, healthcare, childcare, agriculture, cybersecurity and manufacturing. Education in these careers will provide a skilled workforce, a stable workforce pipeline, and quality livelihoods. This funding allows for the program support and development needs in the following areas:

#### **Draft Budget**

- **Student Programming - \$1,000,000**
  - Personalize learning for all students in grades 9-12 (i.e. expansion of personalized career education plans that involve exploration and investigation).
- **Adult Programming - \$1,000,000**
  - Workforce programming for those aged 19+ (i.e. Adult Based Education Program expansion).
- **Education to Workforce Continuum - \$616,494**
  - Reduce existing cross-cultural barriers and intentionally workforce and employer connections (i.e. IgniteFMWF expansion).

#### **Additional Information:**

[MHS Career Academy Grand Opening Packet](#)

[City of Moorhead Video highlighting MHS Career Academy](#)

[MHS Career Academy Overview Presentation](#)  
[IgniteFMWF](#)