

NEWS

Summit Academy Helps People Live Better

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(credit: CBS)

By Liz Collin, WCCO-TV

MINNEAPOLIS (WCCO) – For the last few years, finding work has been a challenge for many Minnesotans. A program in the Twin Cities is proving it's possible.

Summit Academy in Minneapolis trains people for jobs in construction and [health care](#).

Omega Robinson is just getting started with his training at Summit Academy OIC.

"I always liked being outside working with my hands. This does that for me," Robinson said.

Before the outside work, a simulator trains students to operate heavy equipment.

Robinson said it is realistic training.

“You need to stay focused because if you’re not a lot of peoples lives are in danger including your own,” he said.

The program is 20 weeks long. Beyond construction, the nonprofit, vocational center also has a focus on [health](#) care.

Louis King is president and CEO of Summit Academy.

“This is the core mission that business exists for and we’re here to provide workers. I feel very good about that every day,” King said.

While, the construction industry has certainly slowed in this economy it’s not stopping Summit students. More than 90 percent of recent graduates have construction careers.

“The companies we’re talking to now say they are in a better position now than they were this time last year,” King said.

It’s encouraging news for those like Robinson tired of jumping from job to job.

“Now I’m setting my feet in the right path for a career,” he said. “Summit is a great place to get started if this is what you want to do.”

There are 54 Summit Academy’s across the country. Tuition is about \$5,000 but many grants are available and most students don’t end up paying anything for their training.