



# the SUMMIT

Spring 2010

*"the best social program in the world is a job" - Ronald Reagan*

## **JOBS PRODUCTION TEAM: PURSUING PARTNERSHIPS TO EMPLOY GRADUATES**

*"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door." - Milton Berle*

In the current economic times, a job that pays well is hard to find. Now imagine that the highest degree you hold is a high school diploma or a GED, you have a criminal record and three children to support.

Summit believes that the first step to a career that pays a living-wage is access to an education, which is why we offer short-term vocational programs in high-demand fields. But vocational and life training skills are only part of helping Summit graduates find employment; the other part consists of identifying hiring opportunities and ensuring that graduates have access to those opportunities.



In an effort to provide our future graduates with the best chance of finding employment, Louis King, President and CEO, has formed the Jobs Production Team (JPT) committee. Consultants and internal staff meet weekly to stay on top of job placement and retention rates for fulfillment of current contracts, as well as identify and work towards potential new contracts.

There is currently more than \$2 billion being spent on construction projects in the Twin Cities metro area in the next two years including projects funded by light rail, MnDOT and the University of Minnesota. The JPT committee has developed a system to track these projects early on and become an active partner in establishing placement of highly qualified minority and women employees on these projects. Many subcontractors are discovering having a hiring contract already established through Summit that ensures they will meet minority hiring mandates helps them in the bidding process. They also know that in working with Summit they gain an active labor partner for the long-term.

The JPT committee is focused on serving both our graduates and hiring partners to ensure long-range continuous flow of work partnered with highly-qualified, diverse workers to fill the opportunities.

### *Whats Inside?*

*Read about our newest program, learn how Summit is making a difference, hear stories from successful graduates, and much more...*

## **EXPANSION TO ST. PAUL**

The recent economic downturn has put St. Paul's community-based resource workforce system in a state of stress. Summit Academy OIC is taking its mission of empowering individuals to become educated, employed and contributing members of the community to St. Paul. The St. Paul campus will be opening in fall/winter 2010/2011.

"At a time when many nonprofits are scaling back or closing, we felt the need to expand our reach so that individuals from all parts of the Twin Cities can have access to programs that can literally change their lives," said Louis King, CEO of Summit Academy OIC. "We truly believe that there is no better way to assist these individuals than by teaching them the skills they need to get a living wage job."

Currently Summit is providing free transportation for St. Paul residents interested in participating in weatherization, construction and healthcare training at its Minneapolis facility.

"We are excited to be expanding our offerings to individuals with a variety of cultural backgrounds to ensure that they can succeed now and into the future," King said. "Working together, we can and will make a difference in these communities."



### MnDOT expanding efforts to train, hire more minorities

by Dan Olson, Minnesota Public Radio  
May 24, 2010

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St. Paul, Minn. — State transportation officials say they will increase the amount of money they spend to train more minorities and women for construction jobs, and at the same time MnDOT says it is increasing its efforts to expand the business it does with women and minority-owned companies.

The announcement earlier this month by the Minnesota Department of Transportation comes after five years of talks with ISAIAH, a coalition of religious groups that proposed the change.

MnDOT says it will spend one-half of one percent of the federal highway money it receives each year to put more minorities and women on construction crews.

Officials say they'll start with a commitment this year of \$700,000 that will more than double in four years.

Sarah Mullins, one of the ISAIAH negotiators said the money will be used to find, hire and train women and minorities for a range of skilled construction jobs.

"[It] could start with an unskilled labor job but you want them to have the skills to be able and go to do the heavy equipment operation or become a journeyman," Mullins said, "[and] to really move through a full path of being able to work any of the multitudes of jobs that contractors actually hire people to do."

Details of how the money will be spent are still being worked out.

Agency officials say nearly \$400,000 may be spent on six-month internships with trucking and highway contractors. Another \$250,000 might be spent on heavy equipment operator training.

Louis King, executive director of Summit Academy, a Minneapolis construction training program and a participant in a more recent set of talks with MnDOT, said the new hiring commitment from the agency is more than a token gesture.

"We had nothing. So to go from zero to \$700,000 today of taxpayer money is very valuable," King said. "By 2014 it's up to \$1.7 million. Given the size [of] their initial commitment and that it more than doubles over a four-year period says a lot about them. I would not have thought they'd get there so quickly."



*Summit Academy training manager Gary Courtney sits at the controls of a John Deere excavator simulator, part of a 20-week training program at the Minneapolis construction training program.. (MPR Photo/Dan Olson)*

#### AUDIO

MnDOT expanding efforts to train, hire more minorities (feature audio)

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May 24, 2010

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May 9, 2010

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February 8, 2010

## What's New

### Highway Heavy Program

In partnership with the Local 49ers Union, Summit has added Pre-Apprentice Heavy Equipment Operator to its training opportunities. This unique offering will allow graduates to work on Minnesota's horizontal construction, such as roads and bridges.

This new seasonal offering brought us many applicants for our May 3 enrollment; we went through a diligent selection process that filtered those who applied by math tests, GPA, ability to travel and personal interviews. Everyone selected from that pool then needed to pass the Local 49ers Ramsey Exam. We are proud to say every one of our selected students passed with a score of 90% or more. The average score is 75%. Congratulations to all the 22 students currently enrolled and training.

The program begins with 15 weeks at Summit for classroom, online and simulator training. Instructors include, Arnie Kraft who works with the 49ers as a subject matter specialist. Mr. Kraft trains MSHA (Miners Safety Hazard Awareness) and Competent Persons for the union and brings these along with a host of other specialized training expertise to Summit's curriculum.

With four simulators on site, (pictured left in MnDOT article), a novice with no experience on heavy equipment is taught in a virtual world. Being able to train this way not only accelerates training, but it also ensures that trainees are kept safe in this early learning stage and no damage is done to actual equipment.

Once students have passed all the classroom, online and stimulator requirements, they spend their last five weeks in Hinckley, Minnesota training on real "live" equipment at the 49ers state-of-the-art training facility. Beyond the privilege of training directly under the union and making connections, it is also a good test to see if working on the road is a good fit. It is not uncommon in the construction industry, especially horizontal construction, to travel and stay where the work is located. The program has been set up to ensure students are best prepared for the expectations and demands of the career.

This industry-crafted, specialized training program not only opens up more placement opportunities with much foreseeable work, it also results in a path to union membership. We look forward to watching our graduates take their place in building Minnesota roadways and bridges.

*If you're interested in seeing these exciting new training simulators call us for a tour or join us at our Summer Party where one will be on display as this year's Fund-a-Need.*

### Students Speak!

*"What do you see yourself doing after you graduate from Summit?"*

#### **Amoke Kubat CHW Program**



"I will use my certificate to enhance my skills in addressing the health disparities in my community. I will connect with families to build their health literacy, including how health impacts school readiness, childhood obesity and increasing low cost or free leisure activities."

#### **Chester Clay McSwain II HHH Program**



"I will pursue a position where I can utilize the skills I have acquired. I would like to become employed with a union affiliated company and work as an apprentice finish carpenter; with hard work and dedication my goal is to become a reputable journeyman carpenter in the finish industry."

#### **Ethel Ash CHW Program**



"I would like to go work with seniors in the community and help empower their families to learn how to help them with goals in their healthcare and in their home lives. As a Community Health Worker for seniors, I hope to be able to share my knowledge with our older community."

## Scaling the Summit 2010

In an event that simply focuses on Summit's mission and the real people that benefit from its work, Summit held its 3rd annual Scaling the Summit fundraiser on May 6, 2010. Over 150 people attended the luncheon and thanks to the generous donations of Summit supporters—old and new—we raised over \$68,000 in only sixty minutes.

The event was emceed by Dawn Stevens from Fox 9 who shared her personal connection with Summit. While filming a news feature about our weatherization program—her first introduction to Summit—she realized that what Summit offered was perfect for her brother-in-law (now a proud Summit graduate).



*Graduate speakers before the event*

Most moving, were stories from Summit graduates. Each told their unique experience with our training programs and openly shared personal stories of past struggles. Through Summit, they found hope. And each is now proudly working in their chosen field. All expressed deep gratitude to Summit and its supporters, without which they would not have had the means to turn their lives around.

Lashawn Wright was one of the graduate speakers who shared his past troubles with the law. He would try to work but get laid off and then go back to bad habits to support himself. It was what he knew and what surrounded him. He did time in prison and after being released knew he wanted a different life for himself. Not only did Summit train him for a career, the training helped him focus on goals, gain self discipline and “become a better man.” Now Lashawn proudly displays his union cards and talks about putting up the bulls-eye at Target Field. He looks forward to serving as an example to others who feel trapped in the cycle. Through hard work and some help there is a way to change your situation.

Closing the event, Doug Ruth (Summit's Advisory Board Chairman) spoke to guests about how important their donations are to Summit's mission. How often can \$5,400, the cost of tuition, so greatly impact the life of an individual and our community? Thank you to all our speakers who all shared one common message with guests: The best social service program in the world is a job.

If you couldn't make it to this year's luncheon, but would still like to make a contribution, you can do so on our GiveMN.org “Scaling the Summit” page. Simply visit [www.givemn.org](http://www.givemn.org) and search “Scaling the Summit” in the Find a Nonprofit box. Help us meet our goal of raising \$150,000 for this project by June 30th!

*A special thanks to the host of our highest grossing table, Paul Ravich.  
Together his guests raised \$14,308!*

## *Thank you Table Captains!*

Joe Anthony  
Jeff Arnesen  
Jim Beck  
Steve Beck  
Richard Copeland  
Steve DeRuyter  
John Downey  
Dale Forsberg  
Gary Haugen  
Steve Hoyt  
Paul Jaeb  
Frank Lang  
Greg Moltumyr  
Jose Peris  
Paul Ravich  
Doug Ruth  
Scott Schwefel  
Ken Sorenson  
Paul Sween  
Jeff Tate  
Ryan Tlustosch

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## Student Success



### A Reason to Quit Running

Laura Mitchell gave up on learning at an early age. After being diagnosed with a learning disability and put in special education classes with other children who had more severe disabilities than her for several years, Laura began skipping school, drinking and falling in with the wrong crowd. So when a guy pulled up in a GTX 426 Hemi and asked her if she

wanted to party, she found her way out. She quit school and ran away from home in 9th grade, began hanging out on the Connecticut River and rebelling against everything she was expected to do.

After years of running, running from the law, running from the memory of her child dying in front of her, Laura ended up in Arizona where she became a tile laborer. For the first time in her life, she felt like she fit in, was confident in her work and was making her own money. And while this is where Laura first discovered her passion for construction, she still wasn't sober. That's when a friend asked her to leave everything and come up to Minnesota where he lived. Once here, Laura became a part of the Union of Painters and Allied Trades Local 386 where she again succeeded in her work. Then came the really tough times for union workers and she again turned to drinking away her problems. When she finally realized she needed to change once and for all, she checked herself into Metro Hope Ministries' Healing House where she went through treatment for a year.

Located right across the street from Summit Academy OIC, the Healing House is where Laura first heard about Summit's construction programs. Once she came to an information session, everything just fell into place. Laura excelled in Summit's carpentry program and was often recognized for her stellar work by her instructors. She is now a successful graduate, working with Greg's Marine Services and beginning work with Olympic Wall Systems in June, and wants to thank all of her instructors for their knowledge, encouragement and excellent teaching skills. Laura ends by saying that her time at Summit was "truly a blessing."

*P.S. Congratulations to Laura and last edition's "Student Success" story, Dean Peters, on their recent wedding!*

### Want to hear Laura tell her story first-hand?

Visit our YouTube site: <http://www.youtube.com/user/SummitOIC> where you can watch a video of Laura sharing her experiences that led her to Summit.

Our YouTube channel also features video stories from nine other recent Summit grads, including Brooke Larson who came to Summit's Community Health Worker program to help her community with their need to better understand health disparities. She also wanted to give her daughters a dream—proving that you can achieve goals and finish school, even later in life.

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**120 graduates gained employment in the 2008/2009 fiscal year**

The income our graduates spent within our community grew exponentially. Instead of SPENDING money to incarcerate these individuals or GIVING money in public assistance, money was POSITIVELY injected and redirected straight back into our economy. Dollars spent in stores, restaurants and other businesses infuse and reciprocate, generating taxes rather than using them. And it goes well beyond the numbers. This kind of impact creates a positive ripple effect that the whole community feels.

- 46% of graduates increased their average wage by \$22,663<sup>1</sup>
- 24% increased their average wage and did not require an average incarceration expense of \$32,766<sup>2</sup>
- 30% increased their average wage and did not receive an average public assistance payment of \$12,060<sup>3</sup>

That's

**\$4,103,934**

of positive economic impact on our community in one fiscal year.

1. Students were making an average annual wage of \$3,707 at enrollment. They now make an average annual wage of \$26,370.

2. According to 2009 MN Dept of Correction

3. According to MN Dept of Human Services Welfare in Minnesota: Facts and Figures (May 2009)

## Summit Advocacy

### Buy a Raffle Ticket to Support Summit!

For only \$25 you could win:

12 person suite for Vikings vs. Packers home game (Sunday, Nov. 21, Noon), plus \$500 food and beverage credit and parking pass.

Donated by Bearpath Golf & Country Club.  
Value: \$8,500

54.6 inch Toshiba flat screen HD TV

Donated by Toshiba. Value: \$2,500

\$250 Best Buy gift card

Donated by Best Buy. Value: \$250

To buy tickets, visit our Web site: [www.saoic.org/raffle](http://www.saoic.org/raffle) or contact Kris Ackley, event coordinator, at [kackley@saoic.org](mailto:kackley@saoic.org) or 612-278-5237.



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You can also connect to us on both Facebook and Twitter through our home page: [www.saoic.org](http://www.saoic.org)

## Join Us! Golf Classic & Summer Party

*"Building a Better Twin Cities"*

It's not too late to participate in our upcoming Golf Classic and Summer Party events. The Golf Classic will be held Monday, June 14, 2010 at Bearpath Golf and Country Club in Eden Prairie followed by Summit's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Summer Party.

Come early for happy hour from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m., where you can enjoy wine and appetizers while you browse jewelry, cosmetics, cigars and more from select vendors. Then at 6:00 p.m. the Summer Party kicks off with food, drinks and live music. Come socialize and don't forget to bid on our fantastic auction items!



2009 Summer Party Auction

This year's auction includes a signed Brett Favre jersey, a champagne and massage package, an afternoon at the ballpark with four Twins tickets and the always crowd pleasing Adirondack chair sets. To RSVP, call Kris Ackley at 612-278-5237.



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