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**Workforce Development creating career opportunities in southeast Minnesota with federal stimulus funds**

**Rochester, Minn., May 7, 2009** - Minnesota's Workforce Development, Inc. will be using \$3 million in federal stimulus funds to further expand on opportunities for youth and dislocated workers in 10 counties in southeast Minnesota. The stimulus dollars have been distributed in response to rising jobless claims in Minnesota and around the nation.

\$1.4 million will be used to fund youth-specific jobs and training opportunities. Of the \$1.4 million, \$1 million will be focused on creating summer jobs and training programs. The remainder will be spent creating opportunities for youth throughout the year.

Dislocated workers will benefit from \$1.6 million of the Workforce Development federal stimulus funds. \$400,000 of the \$1.6 million will go to higher education providers to develop new, unique training for high-demand skills. The balance will assist an additional 350 dislocated workers from small businesses in the area to access other existing vocational classes.

The stimulus spending is being aimed at helping workers gain new, valuable skills allowing them to return to the workforce. The programs targeted toward youth will create an addition to the Minnesota workforce and generate invaluable experience for young workers.

**Workforce Development, Inc.**

Workforce Development, Inc. (WDI) is an independent, non-profit agency with a long history of serving the needs of job seekers and employers in southeast Minnesota. WDI is dedicated to developing and advancing the workforce to meet the current and future needs of the 10 counties they serve in southeast Minnesota.

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