



CAREER PATHWAYS

Launch Your Future Today

LYFT 2.2 Funded Projects

Launch Your Future Today (LYFT) Career Pathways is a rural career and technical education pathway initiative in the 18-county service region of southwest and west central Minnesota, launched in 2018 with a legislative grant secured by the Southwest West Central (SWWC) Service Cooperative and its partners. Since then, LYFT Pathways continues to be supported through a state-wide Rural Career and Technical Education (CTE) Consortium Grant, which was passed by the Minnesota Legislature.

Since 2017, LYFT Career Pathways has funded over 80 projects. Nearly 19,000 students in southwest and west central Minnesota were impacted by these projects, and 40 of the projects were new CTE courses. An article titled "High School Career and Technical Education as a Workforce Retention Strategy" published in June of 2022 examines the role that high school Career and Technical Education (CTE) can play in building a future pipeline of workers. The evidence presented in the article says "that investments in high school CTE can help sustain regional labor force growth and thus mitigate workforce shortages in Greater Minnesota. Students who participate in CTE more intensively become employed locally at higher rates than other students; CTE programming can contribute to workforce retention by connecting students to local postsecondary institutions and local employers".

On April 10, 2023, the LYFT Pathways Advisory Committee announced a new round of funding (2.2) for innovative CTE projects in southwest and west central Minnesota to begin as soon as July 1, 2023. The goal of LYFT Pathways funds is for every student in the region, grades 7-12 to gain marketable skills leading to further education and careers that match our region's labor market needs. The CTE project criteria include 1) support and engage students to gain greater exposure to careers and/or build work skills through innovative hands-on learning, 2) include the collaboration of at least one school and one or more businesses or industry-related partners, and 3) align to local/regional career opportunities.

The maximum amount of funding that could be requested was \$15,000. LYFT Career Pathways received a total of 14 proposals, totaling \$213,807. This grant opportunity estimated that \$100,000 was available to fund 6-7 proposals. Selection and notification of successful applicants was made on Friday, June 16, 2023.

We are thrilled to announce the following applicants whose partnerships have been selected and awarded LYFT Pathways Innovation Grant funding.

Marshall High School Tiger Cafe (\$14,879), Shared Intro to Medical Careers Course (\$15,000), Technology Integration for Industrial Programs (\$15,000), Montevideo Foundations of Medical Careers (\$15,000), Tracy HS Next Level Welding (\$15,000), PIC Youth Career Connector- North (\$15,000) and CMJTS Career Navigator- Somali Student Engagement (\$15,000).

For more information, contact Eriann Faris, CTE Project Coordinator at SWWC.