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2010 Innovations Awards Application

Deadline: March 1, 2010

ID # (assigned by CSG): **10-MW-17MN**

Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:

State: Minnesota

Assign Program Category (applicant): Human Resources / Education-Workforce Development

1. Program Name: Mn/DOT's Community Advisors on Recruitment and Retention Solutions (MnCARRS)
2. Administering Agency: Minnesota Department of Transportation
3. Contact Person (Name and Title): Emma Corrie, Workforce & Business Development Project Manager
4. Address: 395 John Ireland Boulevard, MS 200, St. Paul, MN 55155-1899
5. Telephone Number: 651.366.3327
6. FAX Number: 651.366.3407
7. E-mail Address: emma.corrie@state.mn.us
8. Web site Address: www.dot.state.mn.us/hr/mncarrs/
9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program. MnCARRS is a community partnership composed of Mn/DOT employees and community leaders representing minority communities, women, veterans and people with disabilities. The group builds lasting recruitment partnerships between Mn/DOT and communities underrepresented in Mn/DOT's workforce to assist the agency in recruiting and retaining qualified candidates from a variety of backgrounds. MnCARRS members serve as recruiters within their own communities for Mn/DOT jobs.
10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? October 2008
11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address? With only 20% female and barely 7% minority employees, Mn/DOT was facing challenges in recruiting and retaining a qualified and diverse workforce. Mn/DOT was not accomplishing its goals through solely attending job fairs and realized it needed to get involved in the minority communities and engage more community members in their recruitment process.
12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.
 - a. The group represents all four minority communities, women, veterans and people with disabilities. This group has served as a valuable recruitment resource for technician positions and various other positions. Job postings sent to them, in turn are further received by their individual networks of clients.
 - b. The group was actively involved with the recruitment for the recent technician positions filled by Metro Maintenance. Of the 73 candidates hired, 22+ candidates were directly recruited by MnCARRS members and represent the communities that they serve. This is the first time we have had such a diverse applicant & hired pool for these jobs.
 - c. Total of 37+ MnCARRS referrals have been hired statewide at Mn/DOT since October 2008.
 - d. MnCARRS members have hosted our meetings providing Mn/DOT with visibility and an opportunity to learn more about them. MnCARRS meetings have been held at the Minneapolis

Urban League, Hmong American Partnership, CLUES, Summit Academy OIC, American Indian OIC, Merrick Community Center and East Metro OIC.

- e. MnCARRS members in turn have made the effort to visit Mn/DOT locations to learn more about our business as they help us recruit candidates within their communities for our jobs. Recent visits included Mn/DOT truck stations and Snow Plow Operator training tour at Camp Ripley.
 - f. MnCARRS members participated in the various job information sessions offered in preparation for the Metro technician hires. They assisted with Interview preparation training.
 - g. MnCARRS was a major resource while Mn/DOT recruited for the Commercial Drivers License training pilot program at Century College. 3 additional classes are scheduled for 2010.
 - h. Several MnCARRS members are serving as community mentors for the temporary technician candidates hired at Mn/DOT. UPDATE: 10 of the 12 candidates hired directly through the MnCARRS efforts are now full time permanent snow plow operators at Mn/DOT.
 - i. MnCARRS is one of MnDOT's steps in building lasting relationships within the various underrepresented communities that we serve as an agency in Minnesota.
 - j. MnCARRS has broadened Mn/DOT's recruiting opportunities and avenues for reaching a diverse audience. Since the group formed, we have attended career fairs/job information events/mock interview sessions at various member locations.
 - k. Most recently having learned of some of the MnCARRS efforts, Mn/DOT was approached by the Department of Human Service – MN Family Investment Program and Ramsey County. Mn/DOT now has a major contract with DHS and Ramsey County to assist MFIP recipients to gain employment at Mn/DOT locations across the state. The American Indian Family center is a major participant in the Ramsey county partnership and is represented on the MnCARRS team.
 - l. A MnCARRS team member is now formally assisting Mn/DOT HR with integrating diversity into the 'Competency based interview training for Mn/DOT supervisors'.
 - m. Finally, MnCARRS members have been involved in the entire process - recruitment, selection, placement, training and mentoring post hire. They serve as a positive voice within a larger diverse community about Mn/DOT and its efforts to diversify its workforce and partner with their communities.
13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method? The program engaged community representatives to actively recruit and prepare qualified, diverse candidates to interview for open technician positions at Mn/DOT. To further support retention, the community representatives remained involved in mentoring the candidates as they were hired by Mn/DOT.
 14. What were the program's start-up costs? No specific start up costs but it did require current staff time to set up the MnCARRS group. Once the group was operational, one of the MnCARRS recommendations was to develop and implement the Metro temporary Transportation Associate program with twelve qualified TAs. This program was a one-time cost of \$150,000 in salaries for the TAs. After the pilot period, candidates' salary costs were transferred onto the staff budget of the individual areas hiring them.
 15. What are the program's annual operational costs? Staff time for 4 quarterly meetings and field trips
 16. How is the program funded? Mn/DOT leadership, Sue Mulvihill and Pam Tschida, made the commitment to fund the MnCARRS pilot program at an investment of \$150,000. Office of Human resources covers staff time, refreshments for meetings and field trip costs.
 17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number. The program did not require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations.
 18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program? There was nothing unique used for this program.
 19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address. Yes, the innovators were Theresa Johnson, Mn/DOT, Staffing Manager, 651-366-3370, theresa.johnson@state.mn.us and Emma Corrie, Mn/DOT, Recruitment Programs Manager, 651-366-3327, emma.corrie@state.mn.us. Address for both is in the application above.
 20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ? I am not aware of any similar programs in other states.
 21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken? The short term objective to partner with communities to recruit and hire a qualified, diverse group of candidates for open technician positions was fully implemented. However, work remains for the long term objective to maintain ongoing

recruitment partnerships with Minnesota's diverse communities throughout the department and other state agencies with the intent to grow the diversity of applicant and hired pools for all jobs.

22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples. The program achieved its short term objective to attract and hire qualified, diverse candidates for the open technician positions in the Twin Cities metro area. In all, 37 MnCARRS referrals have been hired at Mn/DOT since the partnership was formed in October 2008. Recruitment efforts were originally focused on the Twin Cities metro area and have since been expanded to southeastern Minnesota. Other agencies in the State of Minnesota have also become interested in the program and are exploring the potential to expand it within their recruitment and retention efforts. Minnesota Representative Joe Mullery and Representative Karen Clark have both shown interest in the program and have supported its efforts. In addition to addressing challenges initially identified for the program, new challenges were discovered. One such challenge included the lengthy hiring process. To address this, Mn/DOT is in the process of introducing a direct hire methodology to manage the hiring process in a more expeditious manner.
23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception? As noted above, the program has expanded to other areas of Mn/DOT and has attracted the attention of several other agencies in the State of Minnesota.
24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program? They may have to establish new relationships with community groups that they have not traditionally worked with. They should also be prepared to establish very specific, measureable goals for their preliminary work. This will help build trust among community members and it will help everyone see progress from their contribution. It is important that they are transparent about their processes and allow their community partners to be empowered and really get involved in all aspects of the recruitment and selection process. Finally, if other states have strong union representation, they should involve their unions immediately to work through concerns and potential implementation issues.

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2010 Innovations Awards Application Program Categories and Subcategories

Use these as guidelines to determine the appropriate Program Category for your state's submission and list that program category on page one of this application. Choose only one.

Infrastructure and Economic Development

- Business/Commerce
- Economic Development
- Transportation

Government Operations and Technology

- Administration
- Elections
- Information Systems
- Public Information
- Revenue
- Telecommunications

Health & Human Services

- Aging
- Children & Families
- Health Services
- Housing
- Human Services

Human Resources/Education

- Education
- Labor
- Management
- Personnel
- Training and Development
- Workforce Development

Natural Resources

- Agriculture
- Energy
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Natural Resources
- Parks & Recreation
- Water Resources

Public Safety/Corrections

- Corrections
- Courts
- Criminal Justice
- Drugs
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety

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CSG Innovations Awards 2010
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Lexington, KY 40578-1910

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This application is also available at www.csg.org.