

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 31, 2023

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Young Adults Get Paid Work Experience Through Summer Young Professionals Program

NORTHWEST LOWER, MI—20 young adults in northwest Lower Michigan earned money and gained meaningful work experience through the Summer Young Professionals program offered through a partnership between Northwest Michigan Works! and three intermediate school districts. A \$220,000 state grant paid for the program which provided the young adults with eight weeks of job skills, earned income, and career exploration and preparation activities.

Participants in the program included two youth from the Char-Em ISD, nine from Northwest Education Services, and nine from the Wexford-Missaukee ISD. The Char-Em participants gained work experience at Fletch's GMC & Audi and County Wide PowerSports in Petoskey. Northwest Education Services and Wexford-Missaukee ISD offered welding classes and the participants in those classes earned a total of 15 welding certifications.

"We once again have enjoyed another summer of young professional work thanks to our partnership with Northwest Michigan Works!, said Jim Rummer, CTE Director, Char-Em ISD. "Not only has this collaboration led to some of our youth landing some really incredible paid internship opportunities, it has been of an added value to the businesses who have partnered with us."

"A huge thank you to Northwest Michigan Works! for providing this outstanding opportunity for our students," said Pat Lamb, Assistant Superintendent, Northwest Ed CTC. "The Summer Young Professionals Program allowed our students to be paid while learning advanced skills in the welding trade as well as an opportunity to earn a recognized industry credential. I would like to thank Northwest Michigan Works for providing the resources to fund this great program."

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"Wexford-Missaukee CTC had the honor to partner with Northwest Michigan Works! for this outstanding opportunity to work with nine talented individuals over the summer," said Matt Larkins, Welding Instructor, WMISD CTC. "Because of this generous program these young professionals learned valuable skills, work experience, certifications, and received career insight from local industry partners in the Metal Fabrication & Welding skilled trade. This community outreach is a fantastic way to provide the necessary skills and encourage individuals with varying demographics to start a career in a skilled trade that is increasing in need year after year."

The Young Professionals initiative is designed to reduce youth unemployment and place young adults, ages 14-24, on the right path to achieve lifelong economic self-sufficiency. The initiative supports young adults who are struggling to obtain employment by exposing them to multiple career and educational opportunities, such as entering a Registered Apprenticeship program, earning a college degree or certificate, and obtaining sustainable employment.

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NOTE to Media: Images are oftentimes available upon request by emailing Dan Boss at dan.boss@networksnorthwest.org and stating preferences for resolution, file format, and file size. Or phone (231) 929-5047. Check our online Media Room at: networksnorthwest.org/media.

Founded in 1974, Networks Northwest facilitates and manages various programs and services for the 10-county region. These programs include Northwest Michigan Works, APEX Accelerator (formerly PTAC), various business services, and many different regional planning initiatives in response to our communities' requests and needs. You will see the broad spectrum of workforce, business, and community services Networks Northwest offers if you visit our website, networksnorthwest.org. Networks Northwest's member counties are Antrim, Benzie, Charlevoix, Emmet, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau, Manistee, Missaukee, and Wexford.