



COMMUNITY SUPPORT FUELS POWER OF WORK CAMPAIGN

2024 FALL NEWSLETTER

CELEBRATING THE CAMPAIGN

Through the *Power of Work* comprehensive campaign, our generous community invested more than \$13 million to create pathways to prosperity and self-sufficiency. With your partnership, this investment provides the tools participants need to achieve their dreams. **Thank you!**



Josie advanced her career with the Business Professional Pathways program.

Overcoming the Digital Divide

The campaign invested resources into urgent needs, like bridging the digital divide for participants. This included hiring new technology staff and providing 200+ critical digital support services (like laptops and hotspots) in 2023 alone. Metadel Lee, digital services coordinator, is working to create a more robust digital literacy program to help participants bridge the gap.

“Just giving computers to participants doesn’t solve the issue,” explains Lee. “While some may know everything about Instagram or TikTok, they may not know how to use a PC or set up an email account. Some people have steady and reliable access to the internet, others don’t. We know that having access to technology and a diverse set of digital skills is essential for finding and keeping employment.”

Immersive Virtual Reality

The campaign supported innovative resources like virtual reality, allowing students to “try on” a variety of in-demand careers - from manufacturing to automotive.

“Immersive learning experiences transform the classroom and allow students to gain exposure in safe spaces,” says Julie Danda, Director of Workforce Development. “This can be especially powerful for youth with disabilities and other barriers. Teachers tell us the most engaged students were the ones who tend to be harder to reach.”



Jordan uses a VR headset for automotive training.

Give Today!
Visit gesmn.org/give



TAKING CAREERS TO THE NEXT LEVEL



After holding a leadership position in her call-center job, Natasha was ready to take her career to the next level.

Last year's mission awareness advertising campaign helped spread the word about GESMN's career resources and training. During her commute Natasha noticed one of these ads. "I saw the billboard and I was like 'this is a sign,'" she said.

Natasha took action from the ad and connected with GESMN's Business Professional Pathways program. She earned certifications in project management and got assistance securing a laptop and getting bus rides to class.

Thanks to *Power of Work* campaign support, more than 500 potential participants like Natasha reached out to GESMN through a new texting tool. They connected directly with staff to learn about individualized career support opportunities.

Natasha is starting her job search after graduating from the program. With her drive and talent, plus GESMN skills training, her future looks bright.

CAMPAIGN IMPACT

GESMN supports individuals and families in preparing for, securing, and maintaining stable employment. The *Power of Work* campaign builds on that commitment in powerful and tangible ways:

- Community needs assessments in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota inform how we grow new training programs, impact technology expansion, and support new partnerships.
- Digital skills training and better-equipped computer labs provide enhanced access for participants to grow their digital competencies.
- A new case management system helps move our data infrastructure forward in more equitable ways, supported by the new Data & Evaluation Manager role.
- Remodeling the Prior Avenue training center created a reception area so staff can welcome and support participants arriving for training.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Sita & Andy Morantz

*chose to make a bequest gift
in honor of their fathers*

“My dad, John Howard, worked hard all his life in farming, then later in the construction industry,” says Sita. “He was able to find success even though he couldn’t read or write. I want others to have help to seize opportunities despite any barriers to work like my dad had.”

Andy’s father, Stanley Morantz, came from a family of immigrants who fled to America from Russia to escape religious persecution. He served in the U.S. Army during WWII, then earned his Juris Doctorate and worked in the family paper supply business.

“When it comes to employment, we don’t really have a level playing field,” says Andy. “There are barriers, whether it’s being the wrong race or the wrong religion or having a criminal background.”

Sita adds, “we chose to make a bequest gift through a life insurance policy because it fits in with our priorities. Our fathers taught us lessons in family and community that have shaped us and our children. We honor their memories every day. By making a planned gift, it feels like a gift from our whole family.”



POWER OF WORK CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE 2019-2024

Thank you for your leadership

John Bergstrom, *co-chair*

Sita Morantz, *co-chair*

Lisa Adelman

Joe Barsky

Becky Brink Ray

Debbie Galka

Lorraine Hart

Guy Mingo

John Schonberg

Michael Wirth-Davis



Make a Planned Gift

You can help ensure support for our community for years to come with a planned gift. To learn more, visit plannedgiving.goodwilleasterseals.org.





Goodwill-Easter Seals Foundation
553 Fairview Ave. N. | St. Paul, MN 55104
gesmn.org

NON PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
TWIN CITIES, MN
PERMIT NO. 1309

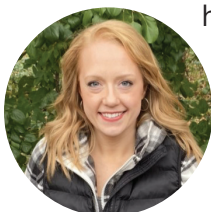
THANK YOU!

Your Campaign Report Inside

STAY CONNECTED!

*Sign up for inspiring stories
and ways to get involved.*

“Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota means so much to me and many others. I needed support and encouragement to make a career change and to find full-time employment and I was able to find that support here. Completing this training program has made me a stronger and more confident person, and your support will help others experience this as well.”



~ HEATHER,
automotive training graduate

SAVE THE DATE!

POWER OF WORK
ANNUAL SIGNATURE
FUNDRAISING EVENT

MAY 8, 2025

Quincy Hall, Minneapolis

Learn more
gesmn.org/pow



Visit
gesmn.org/connect