



2025 FALL NEWSLETTER

# INVESTING IN THE FUTURE OF MINNESOTA

## YOUTHBUILD HELPED MICHELLE FIND A CAREER PATH TO ENGINEERING

“I was working full time at places where I felt like I was overqualified,” Michelle said about her customer service jobs before joining Goodwill-Easter Seals Minnesota’s (GESMN) YouthBuild program. “YouthBuild encouraged me to overcome a lot. It’s been an eye-opener to be honest. It helped me realize that there’s so much more I can do. It got me really excited.”

At YouthBuild, Michelle participated in academic lessons, hands-on automotive training, drafted a resume and engaged in mock interviews with employer partners.



“It’s been really beneficial for me,” Michelle reflected. “The program helped set a routine, get a foot in the door with potential employers and really made me understand my skills and how to make them useful – not just for myself but for employers.”

Michelle’s dedication led to major achievements. She earned her GED, along with safety, automotive, and digital literacy certifications. She passed the Automotive Service Excellence (ASE) entry-level exam, a key step in advancing her career in the automotive service industry.

“I want to do some more school. I think it’s my best option, which YouthBuild helped me realize. I really like electronic engineering and computer stuff like cybersecurity,” Michelle said, excited for what’s next.

### YOUR GIFTS IN ACTION: Impacting youth

- **988 youth served** this year (and counting)
- Partnered with **62 schools** to help youth explore career interests, build skills and gain experience through work-based learning.
- Worked with **18 colleges and universities** to help youth develop post-secondary pathways.

**We need your help to offer critical services for career seekers in Minnesota.**

**Give Today!**

Visit [gesmn.org/give](https://gesmn.org/give)



# COMING SOON: New Career and Services Campus

This fall we're excited to open our new Career and Services Campus in St. Paul's Energy Park neighborhood to expand our services in the community.

This new space will bring together our Twin Cities-based Career Training & Education programs and provide a safe, welcoming space for program participants, employees and community members. The campus will include:

- Three dedicated **computer labs** and updated technology
- Ample **partner and community areas** for collaboration
- **Training space for new courses** in solar panel installation, heat pump installation and electric vehicle support equipment repair

“The new GESMN Campus and Services Center will meet the needs of a changing workforce. I'm excited that our new facility and its design will help us create career possibilities together with employer and community partners to serve even more people for years to come.”

— Michael Wirth-Davis, President and CEO

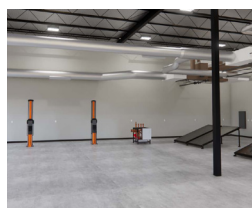
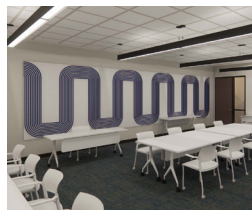
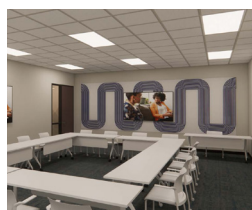
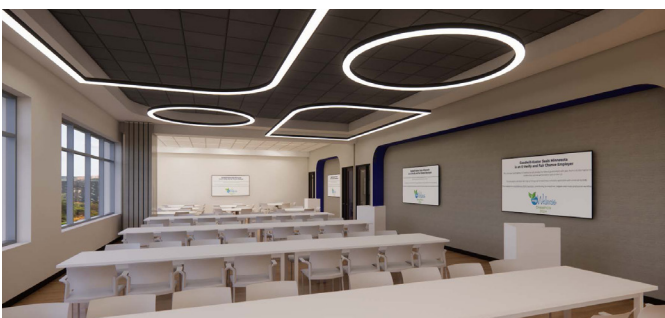


## VOLUNTEERISM: A powerful expression of generosity

Volunteering doesn't just benefit others, it's good for you, too! Studies show that volunteering can lower blood pressure, reduce stress, and ease symptoms of depression, anxiety, and loneliness. It's a powerful way to connect, give back and feel good doing it.

At GESMN, volunteerism reflects the heart of our mission, and we're proud to announce a new Volunteer Services Program.

To stay connected to upcoming opportunities: email [volunteerism@gesmn.org](mailto:volunteerism@gesmn.org).



# EMPLOYMENT SERVICES HELPED JUSTIN TO SUPPORT HIS FAMILY WITH A WELDING CAREER

After high school, Justin enrolled at Ridgewater College, where he earned a welding certificate through hard work and dedication.

Though welding was always a goal, Justin was open to any kind of work if it meant supporting his family. When Jennifer, his career navigator at GESMN, heard a local welding company was hiring, she told Justin about it. At first, he was hesitant and had some self-doubt. “We worked through it and did some role playing. We did interview skills together beforehand,” Jennifer added.



“They made things a lot easier for me – helping me build my resume and providing contacts of people to help me find my current job.”

Justin secured employment as a full-time associate welder, doing something he’s passionate about while helping the people he loves most – his family. He comes from a close-knit household with four siblings and his parents. Giving back to them has always been important to him.

Looking back, Justin shared, “I wouldn’t have the current job I have now if it weren’t for this program.”

## YOUR GIFTS AT WORK: Removing barriers to success

Work is a pathway to purpose and financial freedom. But for many people, it’s a daily battle just to secure life’s essentials, get to work or access basic technology. Your generosity helps provide stability and dignity for our neighbors.

**\$25 = Driver’s License Fee**

**\$45 = 1 Month of Public Transit**

**\$50 = Grocery Card**

**\$100 = Work Clothes or  
Refurbished Smartphone**

**\$200 = Laptop with office software**

Disclaimer: All gifts are symbolic and will go towards the greatest need.



Goodwill-Easter Seals Foundation  
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# STAY CONNECTED!

SIGN UP FOR INSPIRING STORIES AND  
WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

Visit [gesmn.org/connect](http://gesmn.org/connect)

## SHOP FOR GOOD AT GOODWILL

Goodwill store proceeds, coupled with your generosity, help fund nearly 20 customized services that create career possibilities for Minnesotans. Donating and shopping sustainably at Goodwill stores also helps slow the impact of fast fashion to keep Minnesota green.

**65 million pounds** diverted from  
Minnesota's landfills every year



**16 stores** across the  
state **offer services  
and programs**

**60%** of stores have electric  
vehicle **charging stations**



**75 million donated items**  
processed every year



“YouthBuild helped me  
realize that there’s so  
much more I can do.”

*Read Michelle’s story inside!*