



From Chasing Smokestacks to Chasing People

REGION 6W WORKFORCE SUMMIT

NOVEMBER 8TH, 2023



About us

In 1997, a group of rural Minnesota advocates came together to create a rural policy “think tank” that would provide policy makers, rural advocates and concerned citizens with an objective, unbiased and politically unspun examination of today’s rural issues.

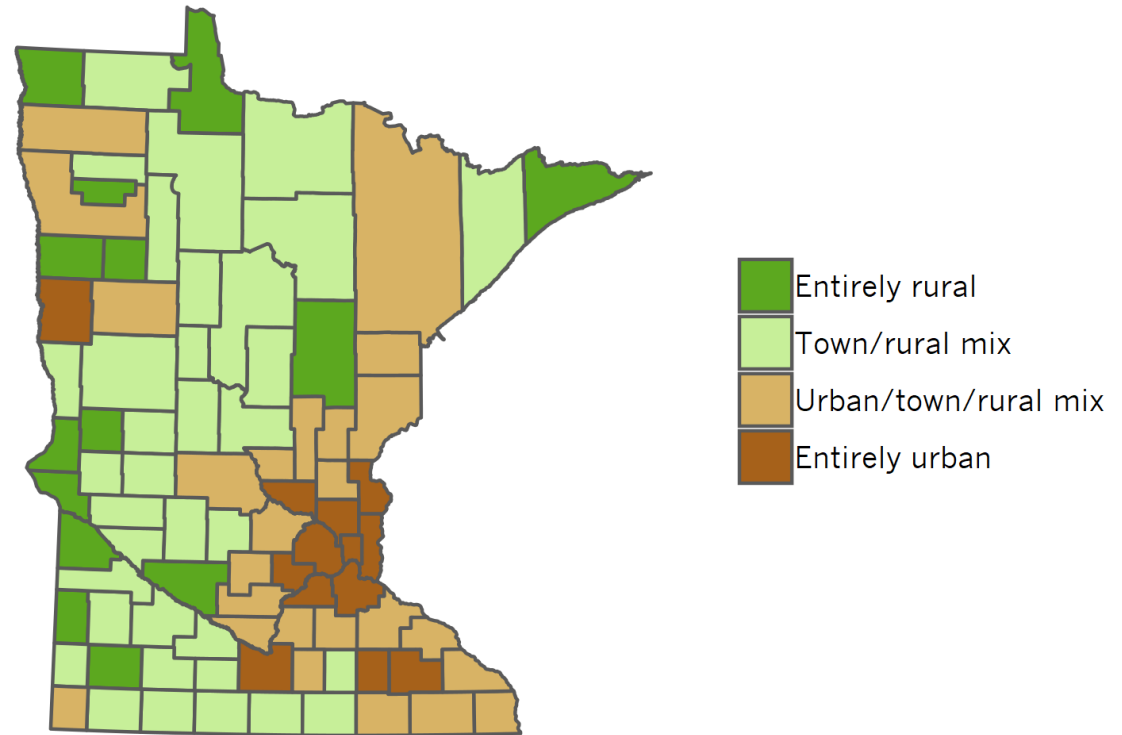
- Based in Greater Minnesota, serving Greater Minnesota.
- A non-partisan, non-profit policy research organization.
- Dedicated to providing Minnesota’s policy makers with an unbiased evaluation of issues from a rural perspective.
- 19 Board members
- 4 Staff members in home offices

What We Do

We take complicated and complex issues and present them in ways that give them meaning and relevance.

Our research is not designed to determine public policy, but instead to inform those making the decisions.

County categorizations based on rural-urban commuting areas



CRPD Staff



Left to right:
Kelly Asche, Research Associate in New London
Marnie Werner, VP of Research & Operations in Mankato
Julie Tesch, President & CEO in Waldorf

Our Latest Research

www.RuralMN.org



Shedding light on the education formula



Identifying bottlenecks and roadblocks in the rural mental health career pipeline



Rural Child Care Solutions:
From the ground up

Upcoming Research

- ▶ The Journey to Meaningful Employment for Southwest High School Graduates
- ▶ Suicide and 988 usage in rural Minnesota

Be the First to Know



Website: ruralmn.org



Research overview and
webinars on our website and



Center of Everywhere
Podcast on our website,
iTunes, and Spotify.

Content

A new normal

- Overview of job vacancies

A shift in economic development

- Resident recruitment and retention
- Engaging high schoolers
- The journey to meaningful workforce participation for Southwest students

Part 1: A new normal

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Minnesota – lets brag

Top-5 lowest unemployment rate

Top-5 highest labor force participation rate

Top performing state during recessions

5th most diverse economy

Source: Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Foundation, Minnesota: 2030

What may
threaten our
awesome-ness?

LACK OF PEOPLE!

- Labor force growth has been decreasing for 2 decades
- Terrible at keeping youth (statewide)
- Immigration policy

Luke will discuss

Historically low unemployment rates

A drop in labor force participation

Job Vacancies

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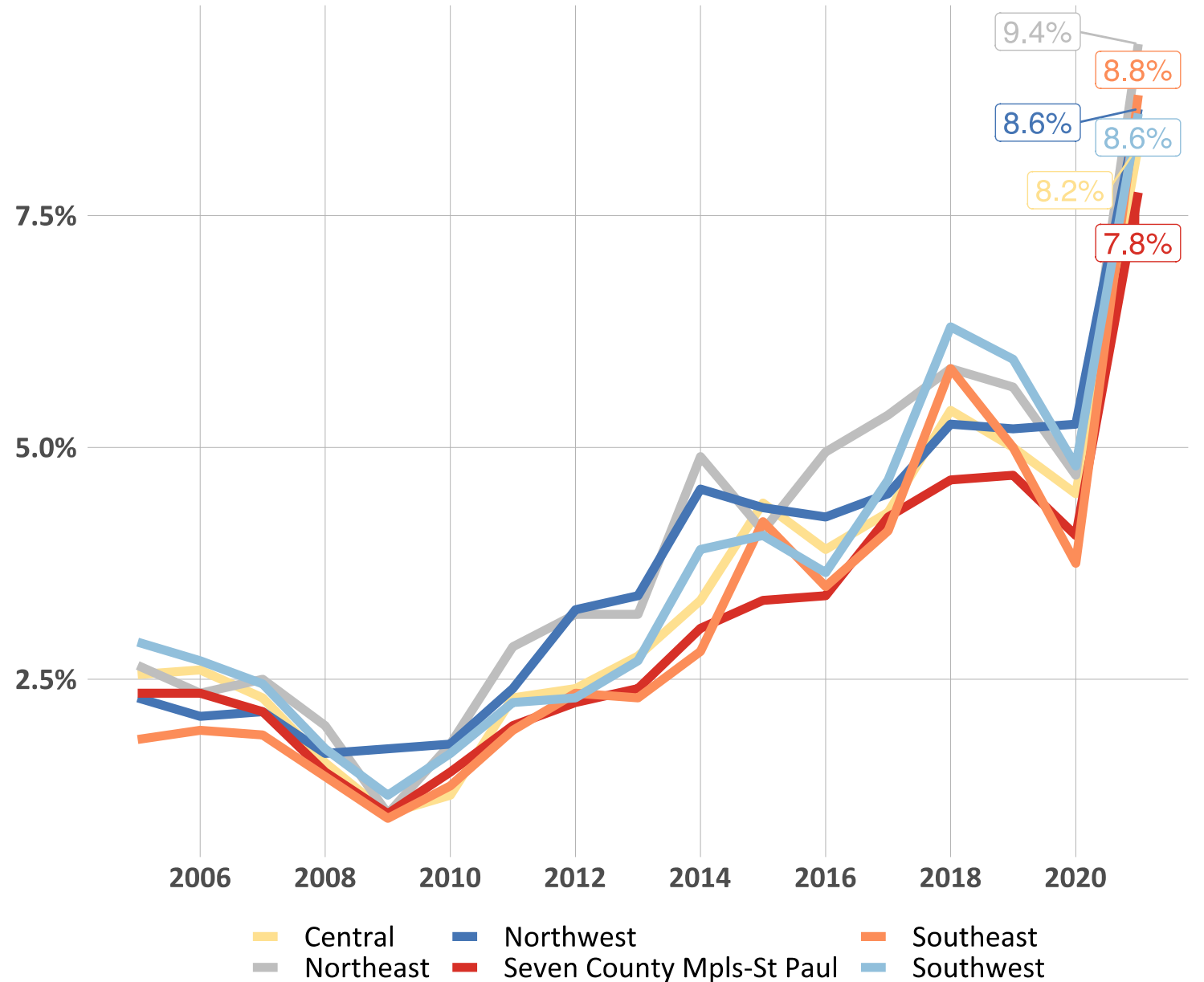
This Photo by Unknown author is licensed under [CC BY-NC-ND](#).

.4 job
seekers per
vacancy -
2021

The job vacancy rate is higher in Greater Minnesota

The job vacancy rate reflects the average quarterly number of job vacancies each year as a percentage of total jobs in the region. The higher the percentage, the more challenging it is to fill the positions. Every region in the state is at its highest vacancy rate ever, despite the dip during COVID-19.

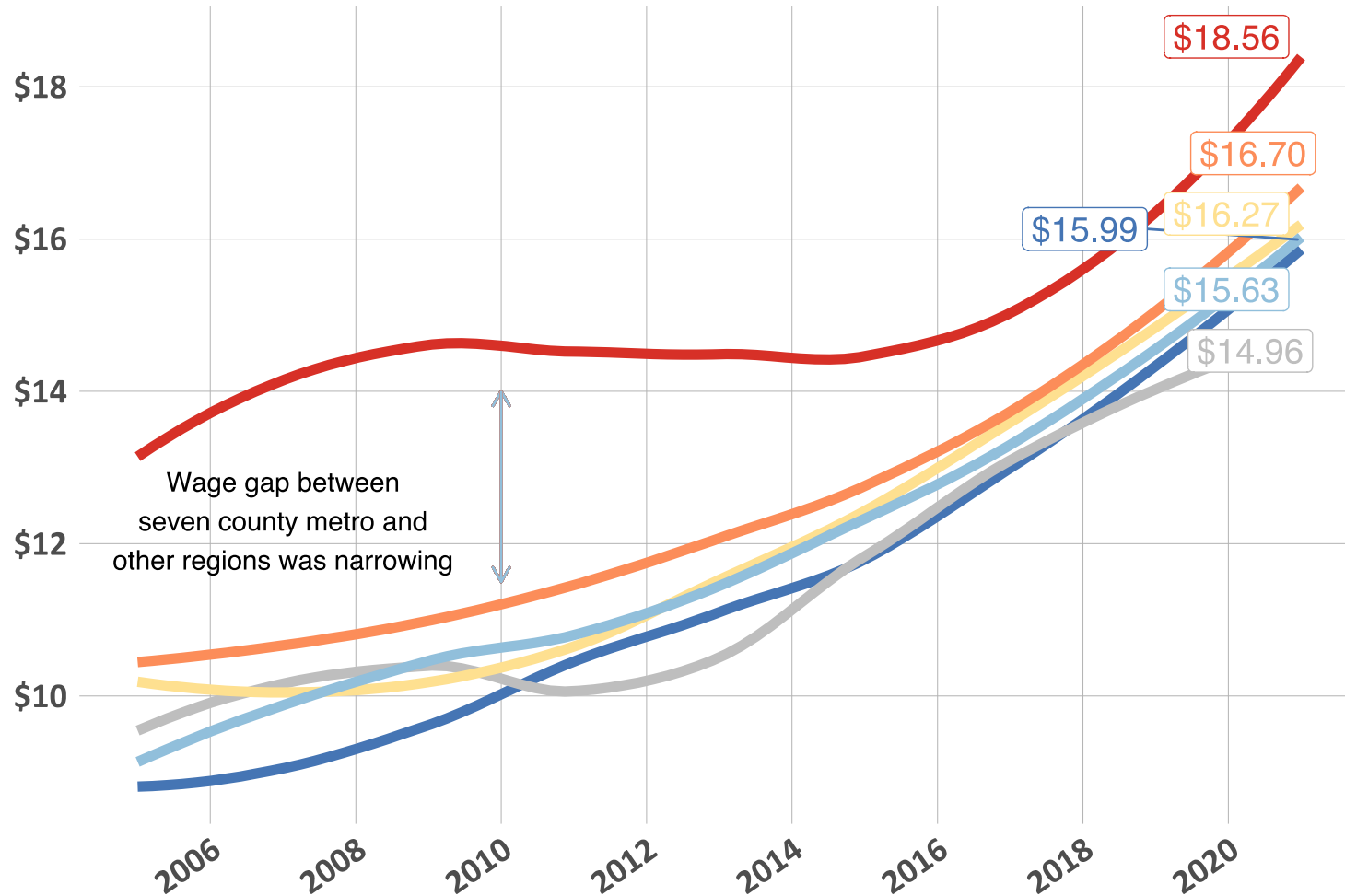
Job vacancies as a percent of total employment



MN DEED - Job Vacancy Survey

Median wage of job vacancies

Gap in wages maybe increasing again



MN DEED - Job Vacancy Survey

Job Vacancies:
The gap in median wages of vacancies are closing...

Data is clear.



The pressure to fill job vacancies in Greater Minnesota at or exceeds levels experienced in the Twin Cities.



Gap in wages has narrowed.



Significantly larger number of job vacancies are full-time.

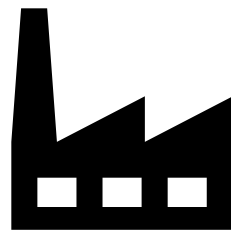


Significantly larger number of job vacancies offering health insurance benefits.

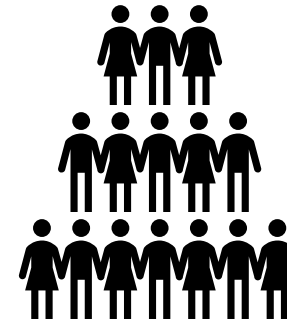


Job requirements used as lever for applicant pool.

A fundamental shift is taking place in economic development



From Business
Recruitment



To People
Recruitment

This is a statewide issue!



What to do?

Invest in non-traditional economic development

- Resident recruitment and retention initiatives
- High school engagement
- Child care
- Housing
- Engaging retired

Policy implications: from chasing smokestacks to chasing people

JOB RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Tax incentives

Infrastructure investments

Focus on labor force

PEOPLE RECRUITMENT & RETENTION

Collaboration

Housing programs

Childcare

Localized CTE pathways

Visitor strategies

Health care

Current resident engagement

Investments in natural amenities

Focus on quality of life issues

Source: University of Minnesota Extension | Center for Community Vitality

Part 2: A shift in economic development

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Resident Recruitment and Retention

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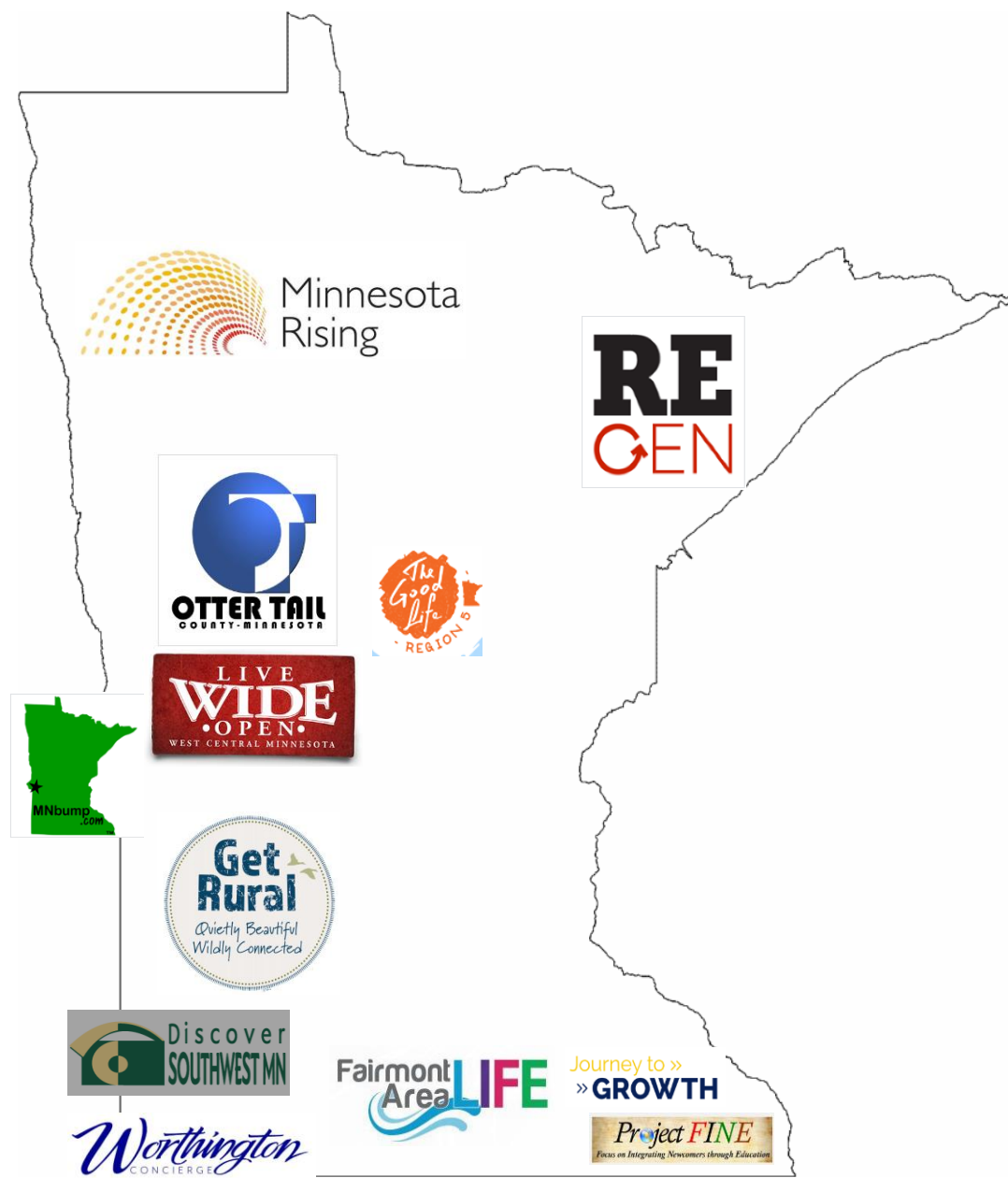
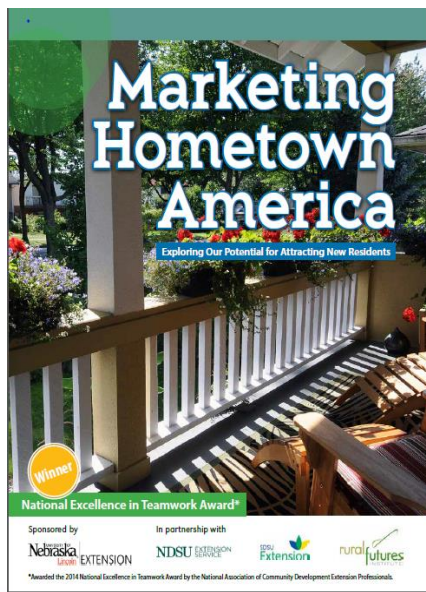
Rural Envy

The seven-county metro has a great example of resident recruitment with Greater MSP.

MINNEAPOLIS SAINT PAUL REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

[LEARN MORE](#)

People Recruitment Efforts In Minnesota

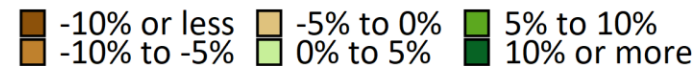
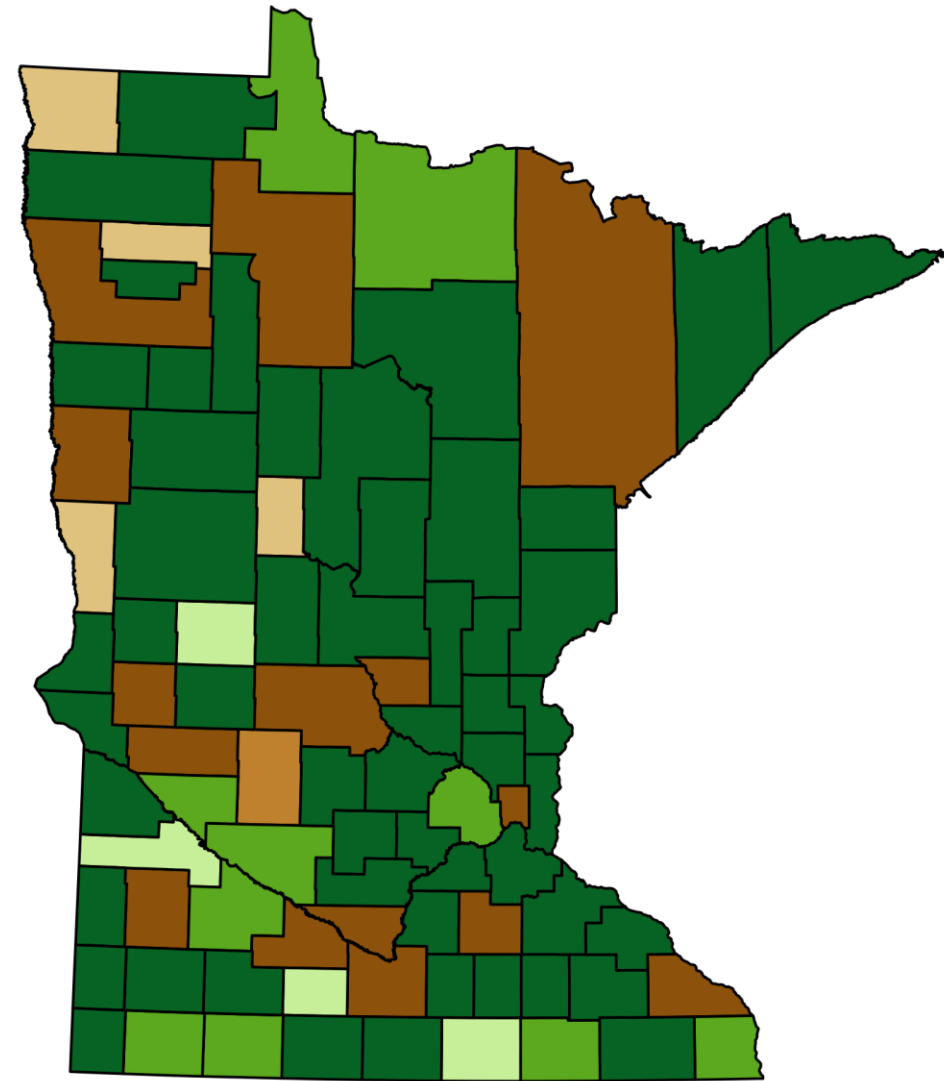


Migration: % higher or lower of expected
30- to 34-year-olds (2000-2010)

In-migration of 30- to 49-year- olds

People recruitment campaigns across Greater Minnesota are based on research conducted by U of MN Extension that highlights the in-migration of 30- to 49-year-olds.

<https://extension.umn.edu/economic-development/rural-brain-gain-migration>



Why migrating to rural areas?



Affordable Housing



Small class sizes



Quality of life



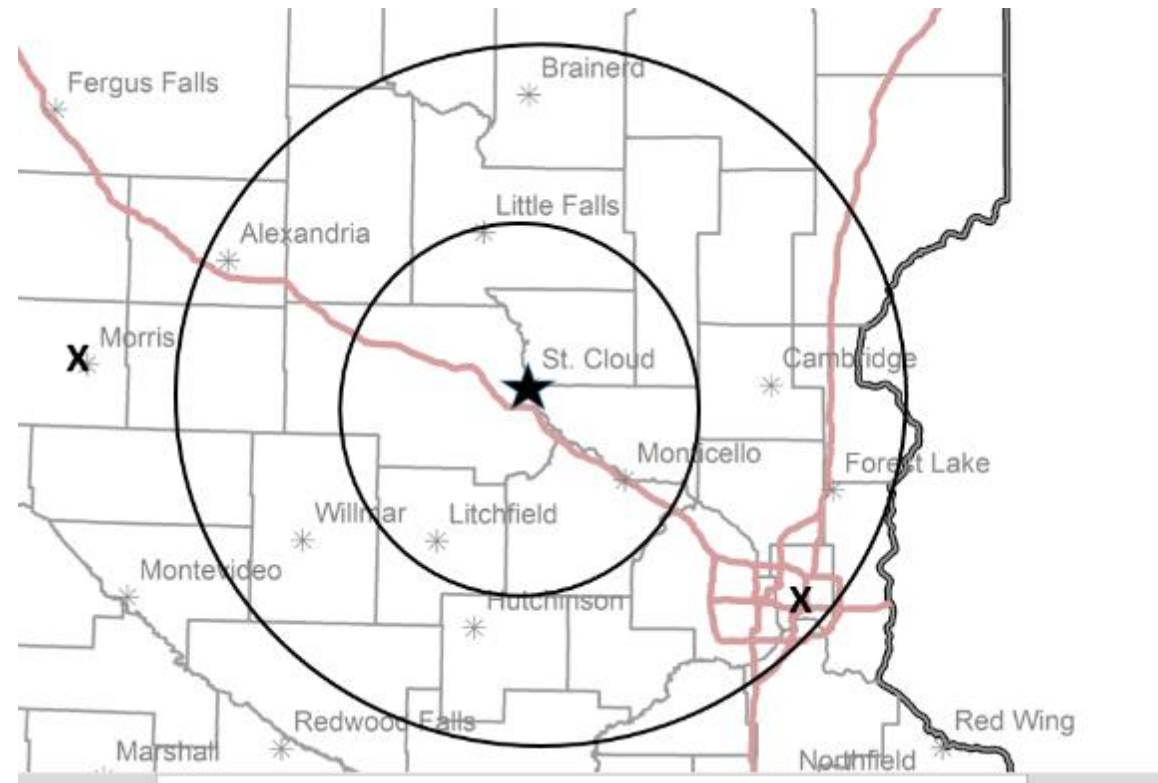
Jobs (immigrant and
refugee populations)

<https://extension.umn.edu/economic-development/rural-brain-gain-migration>

Exercise

- ★ where you live
- X where you work

- Circle around:
1. Shop / eat out
 2. Play / recreate



Get
Rural
Mn

Come visit, better yet -
make the move!
to
Western Minnesota



Housing

Online Platforms
(Zillow, Realtor.com)

Local Realtors



Employment Opportunities

Online Platforms
(Indeed, Monster, etc)

Local Newspapers

Employers

Broadband

Entrepreneurship



Things To Do

Outdoor Adventures

Places to Eat

Places to Stay

Places to Shop

Events



Family Essentials

Schools

Healthcare

Childcare

Cost of Living

Promoting and engaging

Recruitment Challenges



Building a Network from Scratch



Who's responsible?



Negative Narrative and Perceptions



Diversity of skill set required for initiatives

Changing the story for high schoolers

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Two types of influences



Relationships



Observations

Influencers: relationships



COLLEGE ADMISSIONS



IMMEDIATE FAMILY



FORMAL ADVISORS

Influences: observations



Career opportunities



Community opportunities

Retention – engaging youth



Lots of activity in Greater Minnesota

INVOLVEMENT FROM BUSINESS COMMUNITY

INCREASING INTEREST IN CTE



Build Dakota Scholarships



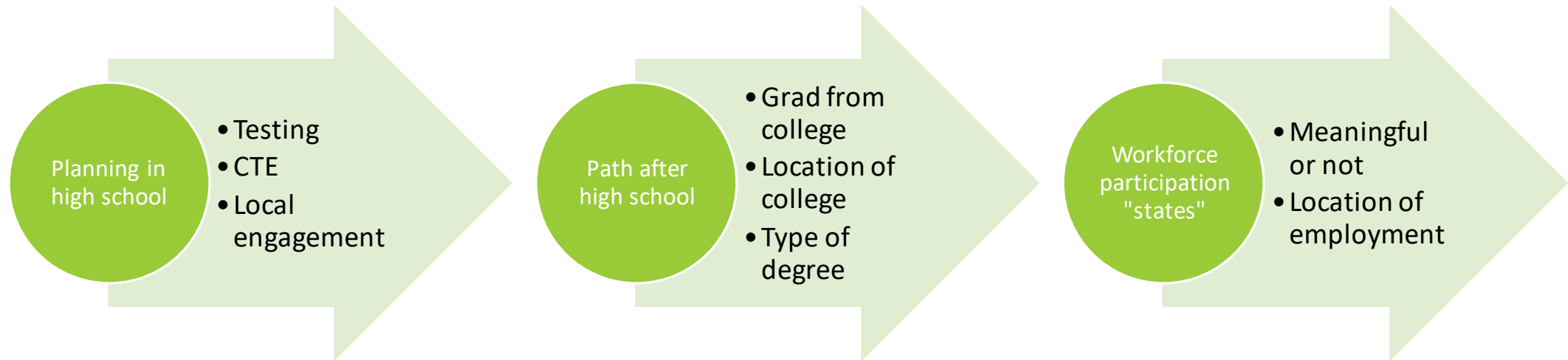
Program Details

- Both in-state students and out-of-state students are eligible for the scholarships.
- Scholars of all ages are welcome to apply.
- The scholarships will support tuition, fees, books and other required program expenses in the eligible technical institute programs.
- Recipients of the scholarships will commit to living and working in the state, in their field of study, for three years following graduation.
- In the first five years, a projected 300 scholarships will be awarded annually. Beyond the first five years, the endowment will support approximately 50 full-ride scholarships.

Student Commitment

- Enroll full-time in a technical institute program determined as high-need workforce area in South Dakota
- Following graduation, work full-time in field of study in South Dakota for a minimum of three years.

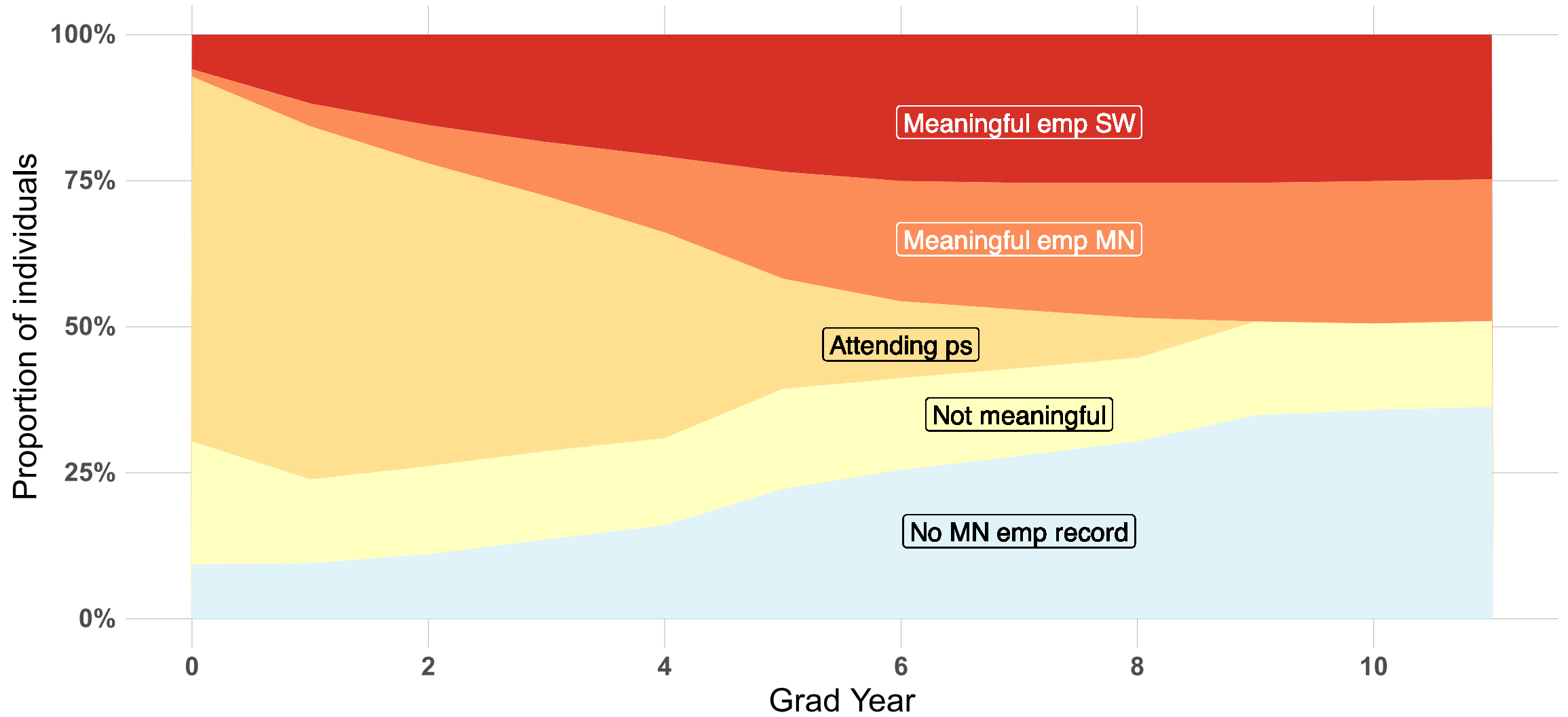
The Journey to Meaningful Workforce Participation



States of Workforce Participation

1. Meaningful workforce participation – SW (EDR 6E, EDR 6W, EDR 8)
2. Meaningful workforce participation – MN, not SW
3. Not meaningful, not attending Post-secondary
4. No Minnesota employment record

Percent share by year(s) after graduating high school



Meaningful workforce participation - SW

After high school path

- Graduate from a college in Southwest
- Graduate from a 2-year college
- Attain an Associate degree or less credential

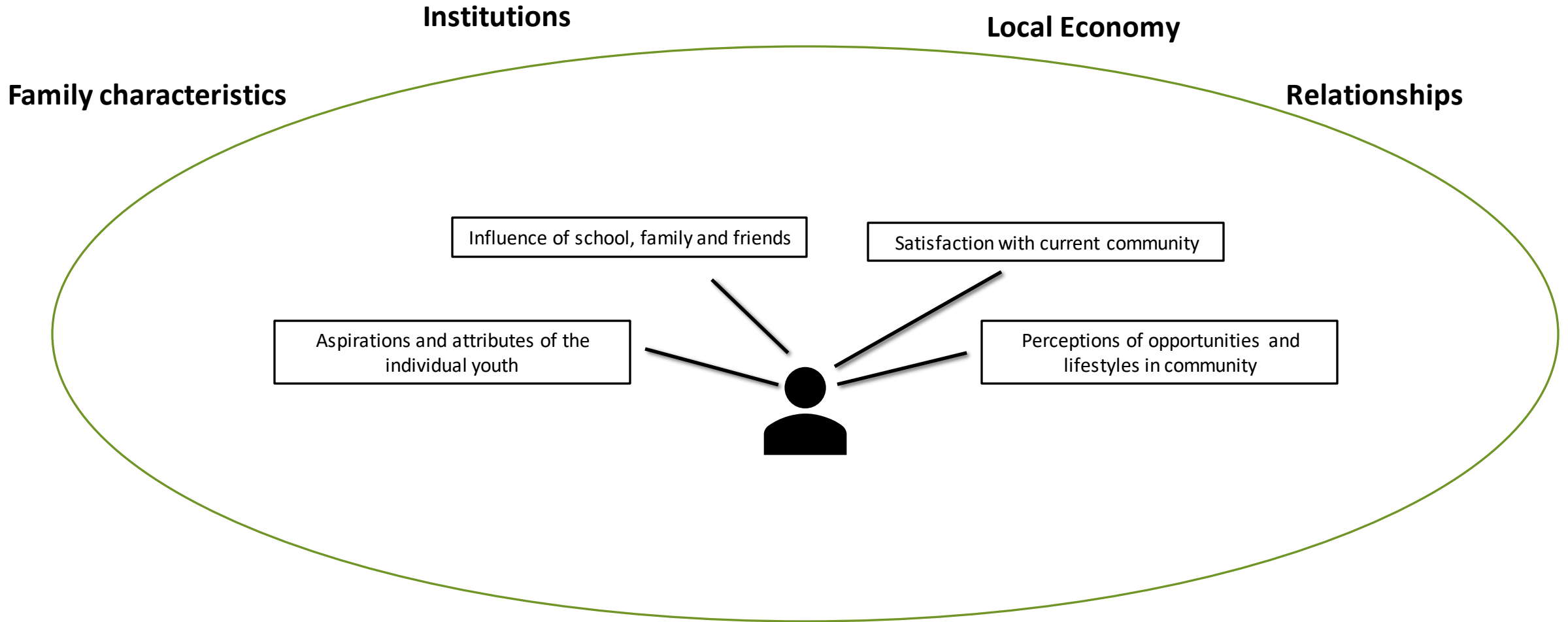
High school planning

- CTE engagement
- Not as engaged in planning for college

Personal Characteristics

- Location of high school
- BIPOC populations

A Mismatch





Report Release Date

Report release and webinar

Date: November 14th

Time: 2pm – 3:30pm

In-person: Minnesota West Community and Technical College – Student Services Building, Room 113, Worthington

Virtual option: Yes (email me for link)



Housing

Childcare

Find more
online.....

Thank You

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