

MICC

CAREERS

PROGRAM

**PARTICIPANT
HANDBOOK
SUPPLEMENT**

2021-2022




Revised June 2021

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	3
Employment Supports	4
THE CAREERS CENTER	5
Hours and Contact Information.....	6
CAREERS DEPARTMENT PHILOSOPHY.....	7
Design of Services.....	8
Entry and Eligibility Criteria	11
Ineligibility.....	11
Waiting List.....	11
CENTURY COLLEGE ACCREDITED CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS	12
First Year	13
Second Year	13
Third Year	13
Curriculum.....	13
Partnerships	13
Volunteering.....	13
Attendance	14
Accommodations	14
Background Checks.....	14
Transportation.....	14
Workplace Dress.....	14
Misconduct	15
Staff Training and Development.....	15
Outcome and Measurement Report	15

1

INTRODUCTION



Since 1996, MICC has provided employment services including job placement and job coaching for individuals with autism or other learning differences who require assistance to obtain and maintain employment in the community.

MICC Careers Department emphasizes integrated work with supports as needed in accordance with CARF standards and the Olmstead Plan. Participants seeking Careers services must be enrolled in the College Program or a graduate of the College Program.

As of 2015, MICC Careers Department has received accreditation from CARF –Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities. CARF provides a consultative accreditation process to promote continuous improvement services that center on enhancing the lives of individuals served.

The Olmstead Plan was developed to ensure that services provided to individuals with disabilities are in the most integrated setting appropriate to the individual.

Employment Supports

Careers Department staff are available for assistance throughout the entire year participants receiving careers services. The Careers Department support College Program students August through May. During the summer months, Careers Instructors collaborate with select College Program staff to deliver summer programming for both prospective students and current MICC participants.

2

THE CAREERS
CENTER

The Careers Center is located within Woodlake Church (2120 W. 76th Street, Richfield, MN 55423). The Careers Center entrance is located on Oliver Street and can be identified by the MICC sandwich board and signage. All MICC participants and employees enter at this location. Participants are prohibited from loitering in the church building. Students may remain at the Careers Center if they have an hour or less in between classes.

Students are welcome to use the Careers Center participant lounge, but all other rooms should not be occupied by participants unless programming is in session. If a participant would like to utilize technology, Wi-Fi, or other resources at the Careers Center, a staff member from the Careers Department can arrange this.

Hours and Contact Information

Careers staff are available Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm.

NAME	PHONE #	TITLE/INFO
Sarah Arentson	612-876-9410	Director of Careers Program
Becky Waege	612-326-5765	Employment Support Specialist
Jeff Myhre	612-876-9415	Job Developer
Ali Brickner	612-326-5448	Job Developer
Allyson Price	612-326-5480	Retail Instructor
Clare Schmid-Debo	612-876-9419	Health Services Instructor
Scott Schneider	612-876-9418	Culinary Instructor
Krista Espelien	612-876-9414	Hospitality Instructor

3

CAREERS
DEPARTMENT
PHILOSOPHY

MICC Careers Department emphasizes integrated competitive work for individuals with autism and other learning differences by providing services that are designed around the identified needs and desires of the person served, are responsive to their expectations, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice. This is in accordance with CARF standards and the Olmstead Plan. MICC utilizes Person-Centered Planning (PCP) approach when providing Careers services.

Design of Services

MICC Careers services are designed around the identified needs and desires of the person served, are responsive to their expectations, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice. MICC is committed to a system that nurtures personal growth and dignity of persons served, which is emphasized during orientation and ongoing staff training.

To facilitate integrated service delivery, MICC communicates mechanisms regarding the participant's services. MICC understands the need for timely communication to ensure services and programs are consistently provided. Participants can expect communication and collaboration to occur in the program/ service through written or oral communication, such as electronic formats, face-to-face meetings, case notes, specialized communication devices, facilitative communication, handheld devices and computers, videos, and one on-one teaching. Each MICC staff is equipped with an office phone, email and a cell phone in which you can use to directly communicate. Although hours of the Careers Program are typically Monday through Friday, 8:00-4:00pm, MICC staff maintain a flexible schedule beyond those specific hours directly based on each participant's work schedules and support needs.

While receiving careers services from MICC, staff work to ensure that participants are informed about securing and retaining additional support services for which they are eligible. Staff will provide information regarding these services through referral to the appropriate support services, which may include Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance, SNAP (nutritional assistance), bus passes, metro mobility, and local, county, and state assistance, such as insurance/benefit programs. This may include educating participants on how social security benefits may be affected by employment.

The following outline is considered to be MICC's procedure for acceptance into the Careers Program. The timeframe for services will vary for every participant based on their needs and in consonance with MICC's Person-Centered Planning (PCP) approach when providing careers services. PCP is a life-planning model designed to enable individuals with disabilities to increase their personal self-determination and independence. This model is based on accepted practice in the field of providing employment services to individuals with disabilities. MICC utilizes this evidence-based practice and recognizes that individuals with disabilities must be a driving force in making important decisions that affect their lives.

Step 1: Referral is received.

MICC receives a referral for services both in College and Community Programs. All applications are received and reviewed by the Director of Careers Programs. Based on the information provided by the referral, the perspective participant may be contacted for additional information.

Step 2: Participant is assigned to a Job developer.

- Participants are assigned to a job developer after the intake form is completed.
- College students are assigned to a job developer prior to the start of their senior year. The job developer will review the process of job development that will begin when they return for their senior year.

Step 3: Job Developer contacts the participant.

- College Program participant's assigned job developer contacts the student to begin the intake process within 7 days of the start of their senior year.
- The Community participant's assigned job developer contacts the participant to set up an intake meeting. The participant must respond to this contact within 14 days in order to remain eligible for services. If the participant has not contacted the job developer, a letter will be sent to the participant/guardian and the funding source stating that the participant's name has been removed. If there are extenuating circumstances that prevent the participant from contacting the job developer, such as hospitalization or vacations, the situation will be reviewed by the Director of Careers Programs to determine a satisfactory outcome for both parties involved. Also, if the participant contacts the job developer after the letter's specified date, but within a reasonable timeframe, the participant will be placed at the end of the waitlist as opposed to being removed from it.

Step 4: Intake Assessment is completed.

The initial appointment with the job developer is an opportunity for everyone involved to learn about the policies and procedures as they relate to receiving careers services from MICC. It is also the perfect time for the job developer and the participant to get to know one another. The job developer and participant will review:

- Careers Handbook
- ADA Rights
- EEOC Information

In addition, the job developer and the participant will review other appropriate documents, which may include:

- Past evaluations- vocational, psychological, risk assessments
- Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or other documents from high school special education programs
- Previous employment plans
- Resume
- References from previous employers
- References from previous service providers

Step 5: Employment Planning Report.

A key element of the intake appointment is an agreed-upon individualized service and employment planning report. This employment planning report clearly states the planned employment outcomes and/or plan to achieve the desired employment outcomes that include:

- Relevant jobs available in the employment market
- Strengths of the individual
- Identified barriers
- Other support needs.

This intake meeting and plan provides the blueprint guiding to desired employment outcomes.

Step 6: Employment Plan.

The employment planning report informs the development of the employment plan. Plans are highly specialized, reflecting the individuality of the person served.

They are reviewed on an annual basis and revised based on the satisfaction and changing needs of the person served to maintain meaningful employment. Information used in the development of the participant's service plan includes:

- Relevant medical/psychological history
- Information on social aptitudes
- Information on previous employment services

An employment plan is based on the participant's

- Strengths and abilities
- Needs and preferences
- Desired outcomes
- Cultural background
- Other issues as identified

With the input of the participant, plans are developed to determine:

- Overall employment goals
- Specific measurable objectives
- Methods to achieve the objectives
- Responsible parties for implementation of the goals

The following needs are addressed in the plan:

- Assistive technology
- Reasonable accommodations
- Identified health and safety risks
- Other needs as identified by the participant or advocate

Upon completion of the plan, a copy of the plan will be provided to the participant and funding source within 14 working days.

Step 7: Skills Assessment/Job Readiness.

Participants begin by working with their assigned job developer to identify vocational needs, skills, qualifications and preferences. At this point, participants may also complete a self-evaluation of employment exploration and engage in job readiness activities with their job developer. These activities may include resume development, networking, attending job fairs, and practicing interviewing skills.

A person seeking employment is informed of job opportunities and requirements in the employment market consistent with the person's interests and abilities through research of the current labor market information and using websites including Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and onetonline.org.

Entry and Eligibility Criteria

Career services are available to all participants that meet the following entry requirements. (Please note that based on certain circumstances, exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Director of the Careers Programs.)

- Are at least 18 years old
- Have a disability that interferes significantly with the ability to be gainfully employed in the community
- Possess 2 forms of valid ID (a state-issued identification card, driver's license, social security card, passport)
- Are legally eligible to work in the United States
- Enrolled in or a graduate of the College Program

Ineligibility

If a person is found ineligible for services, the employment support specialist will contact the prospective participant and/or designated guardian as well as the funding/referral source to explain the reason(s) they were not accepted into the Careers Program. MICC will also provide resources for vocational services.

Waiting List

There may be a waiting period for services. Participants are enrolled on a first-come, first-serve basis. The Director of Careers Programs will inform the person of the approximated wait time upon completion of the intake process. Additionally, MICC works closely with the College Program to provide careers services to students immediately upon returning to school their senior year.

Participants may be removed from the waitlist by their own request or if they are working with another agency. Should a participant decide to begin vocational services with a different agency while on the MICC waitlist, it is expected they notify MICC as soon as that has been determined. Future referrals for that participant will be placed at the bottom of the waitlist.

4

CENTURY COLLEGE
ACCREDITED
CERTIFICATE
PROGRAMS

The Careers Department offers courses that help students prepare for future employment by acquiring the skills for specific jobs or industries. These courses are designed to meet the workforce needs identified by employers within the Richfield and surrounding communities.

First Year

Employment exploration sites are utilized for the student to obtain desired information including: interests, needs and functional abilities. Employment exploration assesses the student's performance related to job skills, interest in a particular job, work-related behaviors, and need for potential accommodations.

Second Year

Students will select one of four Century College accredited certificate programs: Culinary, Health Services, Hospitality, or Retail. Certificate program students attend weekly classes and practicums to develop industry-specific technical and professionalism skills needed for obtaining employment in a variety of settings. Coursework supports students' skills development through direct, hands-on learning experiences and critical reflection around industry specific skills. Practicum provides students with workplace skills training taught by local industry professionals in a variety of workplace settings. Upon graduation, students receive a Century College transcript and certificate of completion.

Third Year

Students primarily work one-on-one with a Job Developer to begin the process of obtaining a job. Students also take one career course to learn about common processes and procedures that take place upon obtaining a job.

Curriculum

Curriculum focuses include but are not limited to attendance and punctuality, work stamina, grooming skills, hygiene and appropriate work attire, job-seeking skills, on-the-job performance skills related to quality and quantity of work, functional literacy skills, ADA rights and EEOC, knowledge of work practices, work-related academic skills, work-related communication skills, work-related interpersonal skills, work ethics, corporate or work culture, customer service and computer literacy.

Partnerships

Job Developers network with local businesses in order to secure mutually beneficial partnerships. Instructors develop practicum sites and maintain relationships with valuable community partners. These partnerships may lead to employment for our participants. The Careers Department also collaborates with business partners to provide industry specific expertise to inform our certificate programs and job placement services.

Volunteering

The Careers Department focuses primarily on integrated, paid employment for all participants. Should a participant choose to volunteer in addition to their paid employment, it is assumed that they are motivated and able to independently manage their volunteering. In some cases, a participant may choose volunteering over paid employment. A job developer may support a participant with volunteering if this is their vocational goal. Volunteer opportunities are also available through the Community Program's activity schedule.

Attendance

The Careers Department follows the same attendance protocol as the College and Community Programs. It is expected that participants enrolled in courses, practicums, and career services attend all scheduled classes, meetings, and events. It is essential that participants practice punctuality and attend daily commitments in order to develop independent work routines. As successful employment requires regular attendance to work shifts, the Careers Department will develop an attendance support plan should a participant fail to meet attendance requirements.

Accommodations

The Careers Department works with participants to identify reasonable accommodations that increase employability. Job Developers advocate and negotiate these accommodations with employers. Job developers and instructors utilize the Job Accommodation Network (JAN) as a valuable resource to develop appropriate accommodations based on the participant's learning difference. JAN provides consultation services to individuals and employers. The Careers Department also works with Pacer Center's Simon Technology Center for assistive technology training and lending.

Background Checks

Currently, the Careers Department does not require a background check for all participants. Background checks may be required for participants that are enrolled at practicum sites such as nursing homes and healthcare facilities or to obtain employment. Should a participant fail a background check, the Careers Department will coordinate alternative practicum site options or employment.

Transportation

Students enrolled in a certificate program are expected to commute independently to practicum after thorough transportation instruction. Occasional transportation will be provided for events such as tours and informational sessions. Transportation costs are included as part of the College tuition. Participants of the Community Program and employed seniors must commute to work independently. Optional modes of transportation include walking or biking, public transportation, Metro Mobility, and app-based transportation services. The cost to travel to/from work is covered by the participant. If a participant requires assistance with scheduling Metro Mobility rides, determining a route to/from work, or comparing transportation options, a job developer can assist in these areas.

Workplace Dress

Certificate programs have specific guidelines for what students should wear at each practicum site; generally, the dress code requires business casual attire or a specified uniform. Students will be informed of the expectations of each practicum site prior to the start of the semester. Students are advised to have at least three business casual outfits in their MICC apartments.

As students advance through the Careers Program, they will also need appropriate attire for job search activities and interviewing. In general, students who are job searching should have clothing appropriate for many employment situations and will be required to demonstrate that they are able to dress as if they were planning to go to a job or impress a potential employer. A student may be required to purchase additional items based on their individual work uniform requirements. Job developers also provide guidance to participants in maintaining a clean uniform or wardrobe for work.

Misconduct

The Careers Department abides by all policies and procedures established by the College and Community Programs regarding participant misconduct. Misconduct that occurs at a practicum site or a participant's place of employment will be addressed by the employer and their determined course of action.

Staff Training and Development

Employees of the Careers Program are well-equipped to provide vocational services specifically to individuals with learning differences. MICC employees receive ongoing training to stay abreast of resources that benefit participants. This includes monthly training on autism and learning differences as well as industry specific training for instructors. The Careers Program utilizes the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) to stay informed on current employment growth and trends.

Outcome and Measurement Report

The outcome measurement report is a tool developed to track specific information such as wages, hours worked, transportation mode, industry, and retention rates. This information determines MICC's Careers Department effectiveness, efficiencies, and progress made for individuals receiving services. This information also informs decision making around new department goals and improvements.

**Minnesota Independence
College and Community**

7501 Logan Avenue South / Suite 2A
Richfield, MN 55423

Phone: 612.869.4008
Fax: 612.869.0443
miccommunity.org

