



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MDI awarded \$10,000 grant to fuel innovative Unified Work program

New CenterPoint Energy Foundation grant will support Unified Work courses, VR and STEM experiences

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. – MDI today announced that it received a \$10,000 grant from the [CenterPoint Energy Foundation](#) to fuel its [Unified Work](#) program, which provides free, accessible career skills classes to people with disabilities and other community members who face barriers to employment. This grant will help support these classes, as well as innovative workforce learning experiences like science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) activities and [interactive virtual reality \(VR\) headsets](#).

“From supportive soft skills training courses and creative technology experiences to interactive learning opportunities, MDI’s Unified Work program seeks to empower individuals with disabilities and build a more accessible workforce for everyone,” said MDI Vice President of Employment Services Jeanne Eglinton. “This grant ensures Unified Work can continue their efforts to build a more qualified and experienced workforce. We’re grateful for the CenterPoint Energy Foundation’s support.”

MDI’s groundbreaking Unified Work program launched in 2017, offering in-person and virtual classes to equip individuals with disabilities across Minnesota with the soft skills necessary for success in the workplace. It now offers general career skills programming to outside organizations and community members facing barriers to employment. In 2025, Unified Work’s goal is to provide 50,000 learning experiences through classes, virtual reality work, STEM experiences and other opportunities, putting MDI on track to achieve its bold target of achieving one million learning experiences by 2030.

CenterPoint Energy Vice President for Community Relations June Deadrick remarked, “The CenterPoint Energy Foundation is proud to support dynamic workforce development programs like MDI’s Unified Work. By investing in this initiative, we hope to help sustain and inspire meaningful employment opportunities for all Minnesotans.”

Based in Minneapolis with additional facilities in Grand Rapids, Cohasset, Hibbing and Roseville, MDI is a nonprofit social enterprise manufacturer with a mission of providing meaningful employment for Minnesotans with disabilities. When MDI hires a new employee at one of its facilities, it focuses on the person’s abilities and strengths, rather than their limitations.

The CenterPoint Energy Foundation strives to be a catalyst in the communities it serves by leveraging everyday opportunities and resources to increase the vibrancy of these communities. Grants are awarded to eligible nonprofit organizations with programs that support community vitality and education in CenterPoint Energy's footprint.

About Unified Work

[Unified Work](#) is founded on the belief that everyone deserves the opportunity to work. When a person is employed, it gives them independence and self-sufficiency, helping them feel empowered and valued. Created and powered by [MDI](#), Unified Work provides training to people and businesses. The goal of the program is to give people with disabilities the tools they need to thrive in their careers. Learn more at unifiedwork.com.

About the CenterPoint Energy Foundation

The CenterPoint Energy Foundation provides philanthropic support to meet the needs of communities where CenterPoint Energy customers live and work. The Foundation is funded by shareholders and has no impact on customer rates. More information about the Foundation can be found at CenterPointEnergy.com/Foundation.