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Report to the Legislature
State Fiscal Year 2004

Minnesota
Displaced Homemaker
Program

Prepared By
Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development

Workforce Partnerships Division
Office of Employment Transition
February 2005

State Fiscal Year 2004 Legislative Report

Minnesota Displaced Homemaker Program

Statement of Purpose

The Minnesota Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP) has a 28-year tradition of providing services to displaced homemakers in the state. Local program providers operate within geographical areas of the state, serving people in 50 counties. They provide comprehensive pre-employment services that empower participants to enter or re-enter the labor market in order to support themselves and their families after losing their main source of financial support through death, separation, divorce, disability of spouse or partner or loss of other financial support.

The program is administered by the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), which is responsible for policy development, guidance, and fiscal and programmatic compliance monitoring.

This report examines the program activities and data for state fiscal year (SFY) 2004 — July 1, 2003 through June 30, 2004. The following findings reflect accomplishments of the DHP.

In accordance with MS 3.197, the cost of preparing this report was \$650.00.

This program is authorized under MN statute 116L.96.

This report is submitted pursuant to 2003 Minnesota Laws, Chapter 128, Article 10, Section 2, Subdivision 7.

Program Demographics

- ✦ The program served a total of 1,025 people.

- ✦ At time of enrollment 70 percent of participants had one or more dependents, 99.8 percent were unemployed or marginally employed, and 56 percent were receiving assistance such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), welfare, food stamps, or medical assistance.

- ✦ Of the 1,023 served, 40 percent received assessment and testing, 51 percent received career/education counseling, 29 percent received personal counseling, 52 percent received life skills development, and 6 percent received remedial education or skills training.

- ✦ Approximately 82 percent of participants exited the program with a positive termination, which includes job placement; training; a combination of training and employment; active with another program; or completion of the program objective.
 - ◆ 28 percent found full or part-time employment; average wage at placement was \$11.06.
 - ◆ 11 percent were enrolled in education or training.
 - ◆ 3 percent were in an employment/education combination.
 - ◆ 19 percent were active with another program.
 - ◆ 21 percent completed program objective.

- ✦ Cost of services averaged \$880 per participant.

Funding History

In 1977, the Minnesota Legislature authorized funding for the DHP. The first two pilot programs began in 1978 and 1979. In response to the success and the need, two additional programs were authorized by the Legislature.

In 1982, the Legislature increased the marriage license and dissolution filing fees to fund six additional DHP programs. These fees funded the DHP programs over the next eight years.

In 1990, the funding source was changed to a general fund appropriation and two additional programs were started. By 1994, all 87 counties in Minnesota were provided with Displaced Homemaker services.

In SFY 2002 - 2003 funding changed again to a near equal split between TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) and Workforce Development funds.

In the 2003 legislative session, funding was cut from a base of \$1,827,000 to a base of \$990,000. This necessitated a re-evaluation of the population areas to be served. Through careful analysis of numbers of potential program participants per county extracted from the 2000 census figures, and review of past program outcomes, it was decided that the number of programs would be reduced from 12 to six. The result was that 37 counties lost DHP services and five programs were forced to close. (See map, at the end of this report, for program location and county coverage.)

The 2003 legislative session added a provision to MS 517.08 which assessed a \$10 fee per marriage license issued and dedicated the funds to the displaced homemaker program. The current appropriation is \$990,000 for SFY 2005 (\$750,000 of which comes from the Workforce Development fund and \$240,000 comes from the marriage license fees). DEED contracts out \$900,000 to vendors and reserves \$90,000 for coordination and administration of the grant and for the allowance of a potential revenue short fall. In 2004, \$194,303 in funding was available to the program through the marriage license fee. The short fall of \$45,697 reduced the actual amount available for state operation to \$44,403.

Program Description

A displaced homemaker is defined as a person, either female or male, who worked in the home for a minimum of two years caring for home and family but because of loss of their main source of financial support due to separation, divorce, desertion, death, or disability of spouse or partner must now support themselves and their family.

The DHP provides the transitional services and vocational preparation needed to assist displaced homemakers to move into the labor market. There are many strategies employed to assist program participants to build confidence, identify skills, access appropriate training, and seek employment. There are support and networking groups, one-to-one personal and vocational counseling, resume development, decision-making classes, leadership development, and job seeking workshops. Referrals are made to appropriate community resources for such services as remedial education, child care, legal assistance, health issues, and other identified service needs. Transportation, childcare, work and school expenses, and emergency needs are covered when funds are available.

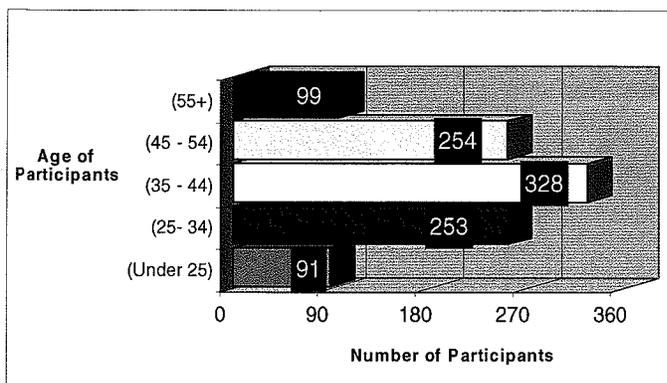
DHP participants are typically 25 to 54 years old, have never been in or have been out of the workforce for an extended period, and have multiple barriers to finding and keeping employment. They need to identify and resolve many barriers before they can be competitive in the workforce. Often they are worried about such basic issues as being evicted, having their utilities shut off, or caring for a spouse or child with a disability.

Displaced homemakers are likely to experience any combination of the following barriers to employment: little or no work history, lack of childcare, housing and transportation issues, child support and custody issues, or grief over a recent death. Often they have low self-esteem and a high level of anxiety concerning entry into the labor market. It is in these areas the program provides the mentoring, encouragement, and support to give DHP participants the confidence to succeed.

There are a limited number of people in this population that qualify for other programs with comprehensive services to prepare them for economic stability. Twenty-six percent of DHP participants received Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) services and six percent received Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services in SFY 2004.

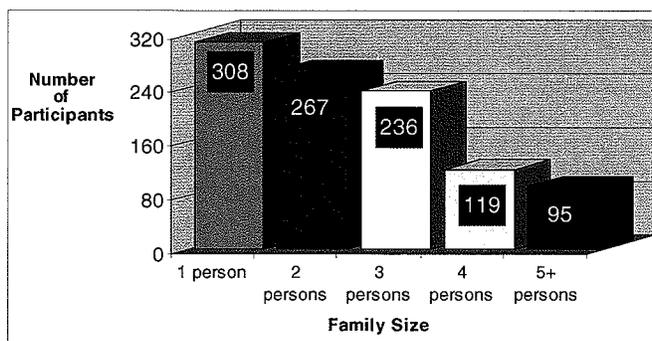
Participant Profile (at time of enrollment)

- ✚ The typical DHP participant is female. The program is available to males, but only 2 percent of participants in 2004 were male.
- ✚ DHP participants were predominantly between the ages of 25 and 54, which is when most people are in the workforce. The highest number of enrollees was between the ages of 35 and 44. (See chart below.)



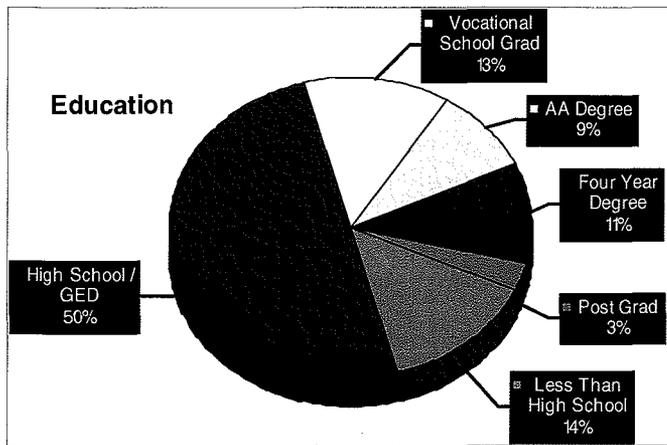
Age of Participants	Number of Participants
(Less than 25)	91
(25 - 34)	253
(35 - 44)	328
(45 - 54)	254
(55+)	99

- ✚ The participants are from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, but the vast majority of those served were Caucasian (84 percent).
- ✚ The program serves many participants who have no children in the home (30 percent). This is one reason they may not qualify for such programs as MFIP. The next largest group of participants had a family size of two or three (49 percent). (See chart below.)



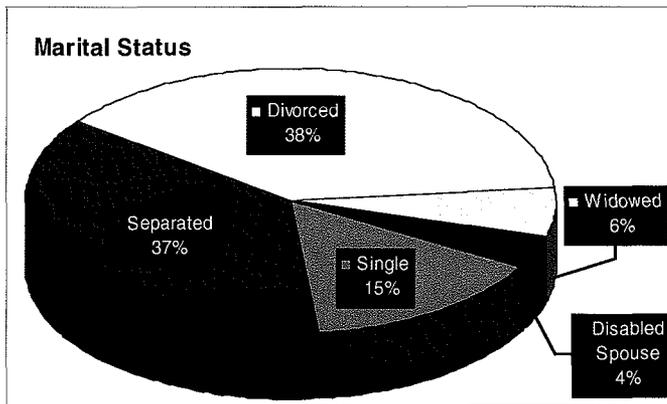
Family Size	Number of Participants
1 person	308
2 persons	267
3 persons	236
4 persons	119
5+ persons	95

At the time of enrollment, 50 percent of participants had a GED or high school education and another 36 percent had education and degrees beyond high school. (See chart below.)



Education	Number of Participants
Less Than High School	14%
High School / GED	50%
Vocational School Grad	13%
AA Degree	9%
Four Year Degree	11%
Post Grad	3%

The largest group of enrollees was either divorced or separated (75.6 percent). (See chart below.)



Marital Status	Number of Participants
Single	15%
Separated	37%
Divorced	38%
Widowed	6%
Disabled Spouse	4%

The large majority of enrollees came into the program totally unemployed (69.2 percent). The other 30.8 percent of enrollees were marginally employed.

Program Services

There are currently six Displaced Homemaker Program providers serving 50 counties. Each program has a specific geographic area that it serves. Two programs are independent non-profit agencies, two are housed in Community Action agencies, and two are housed at technical colleges.

The programs offer core pre-employment services such as:

- ◆ Assessment and testing
- ◆ Vocational counseling
- ◆ Resume development
- ◆ Interviewing practice
- ◆ Jobseeking and keeping methods
- ◆ Assistance in applying for remedial or higher education
- ◆ Referrals to other agencies

Most of the programs also offer life-skills workshops that help with:

- ◆ Decision making and goal setting
- ◆ Identifying interests, skills, values, and strengths
- ◆ Communicating assertively
- ◆ Balancing work and family
- ◆ Improving self-esteem
- ◆ Managing conflict

Other valuable services include employment support and networking groups, personal counseling, and basic computer literacy training.

The services offered are customized and based on the participant's specific needs. The agencies offer seamless, wrap around services through their own programs and through coordination with a network of other agencies.

The programs offer flexibility to participants by scheduling workshops and sessions at night, on weekends, and in their homes or other convenient meeting places. Counselors act as advocates for participants when necessary. All programs obtain additional resources through in-kind contributions such as meeting space in churches or public buildings, speakers from other agencies, and informational interviewing from local businesses.

Displaced homemakers, with little or no work history, often need additional training in order to compete in the job market. While displaced homemakers have always been eligible for service through the federal and state dislocated worker programs, DEED is proposing legislation that will clarify that displaced homemakers are eligible for services under the state dislocated worker program.

Program Outcomes

Program outcomes are tracked through data submitted to DEED. The following data reflects all major activities and positive outcomes for SFY 2004. The program has a goal of 75 percent positive outcomes.

Displaced Homemaker Program		
Outcomes		
Types of Terminations	Number of Successful Terminations	Percentage
	SFY 2004 7/1/03 - 6/30/04	SFY 2004 7/1/03 - 6/30/04
Employment (Full or Part Time)	148	28%
Employment combined with education	14	3%
Remedial Education (ESL, GED, ABE)	4	0.5%
Certificate Program (under 2 years)	36	6.5%
Degree Program (2 or more years)	22	4%
Active with another program (MFIP, WIA, Rehabilitation Services)	105	19%
Completed Program Objective (accomplished goals outlined in employment plan) *	113	21%

The average length of enrollment for DHP terminees in SY 2004 was 40 weeks.

* *Examples of accomplished goals:*

completed skills assessment, developed resume, developed job skills, obtained stable housing, moved out of temporary shelter, obtained drivers license, gained self sufficiency skills, reconciled with spouse, remarried, divorced, moved out of an abusive relationship, regained custody of children.

Program Activities

The following are the main activities participants were engaged in during their enrollment in the program and the number of individuals participating in each.

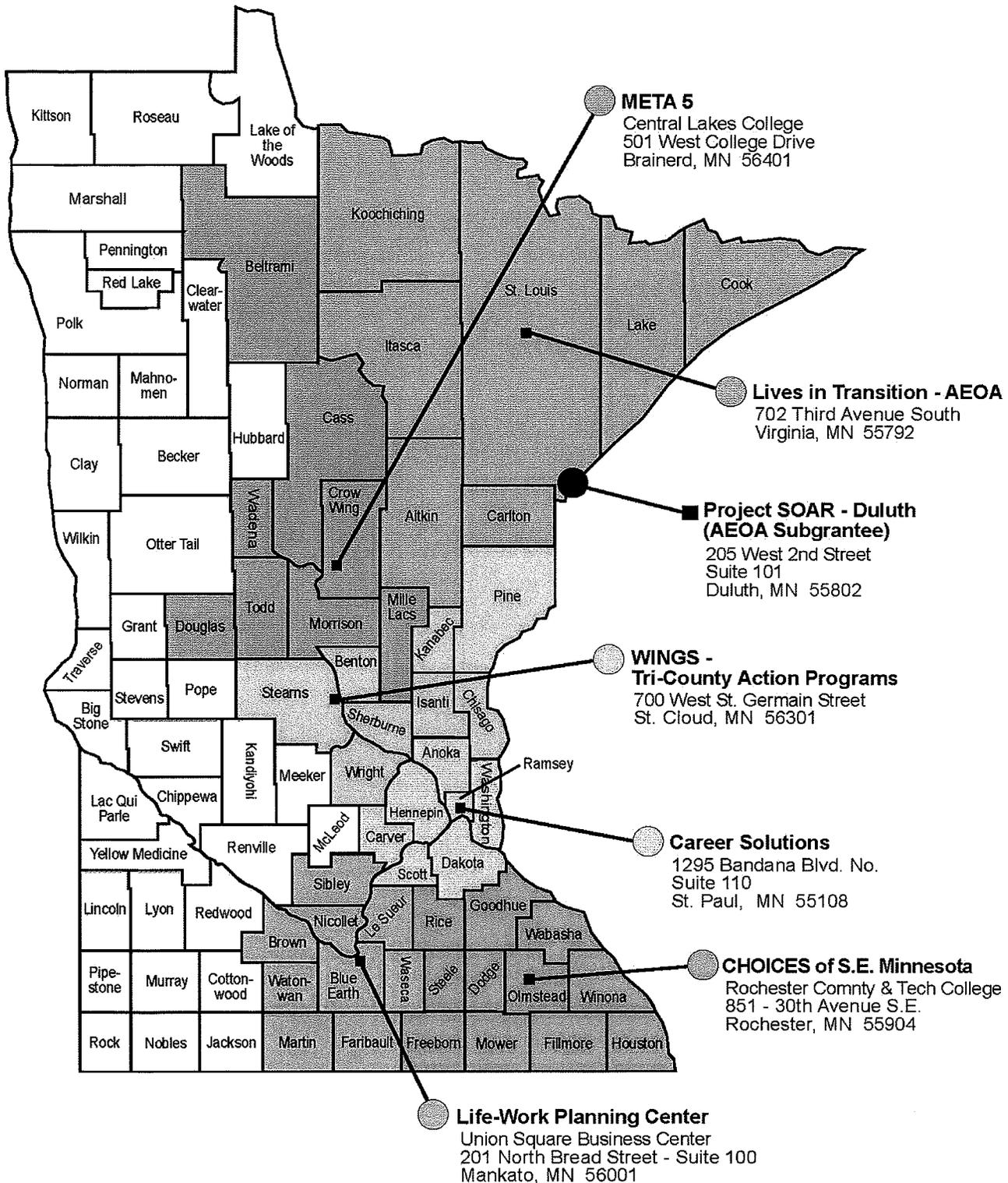
Displaced Homemaker Program	
Activities	
Types of Activities	Number of Participants SFY 2004 7/1/03 - 6/30/04
Orientation – <i>(introduction to the program and services available)</i>	949
Career Counseling – <i>(exposure to career and educational options, career laddering opportunities, informational interviewing, job shadowing)</i>	522
Pre-Employment Preparation – <i>(resume development, interviewing techniques, job applications, barrier resolution)</i>	340
Personal Counseling – <i>(crisis intervention, guided support groups, therapeutic guidance)</i>	297
Life Skills Development – <i>(assertiveness training, self esteem building, short and long range planning, goal setting and decision making strategies, financial management)</i>	537
Referrals – <i>(for legal assistance, debt management, vocational rehabilitation, alcohol and drug abuse programs, general healthcare, housing)</i>	175
Remedial Education – <i>(English as a Second Language, GED, basic skills literacy training)</i>	17
Assessment & Testing – <i>(interest inventories, personality assessment, skill testing, educational assessments)</i>	411
Skills Training – <i>(classroom training, internships, on-the-job training, basic computer skills)</i>	49
Job Development / Placement – <i>(outreach to employers, guided job clubs, assisted self-placement)</i>	27

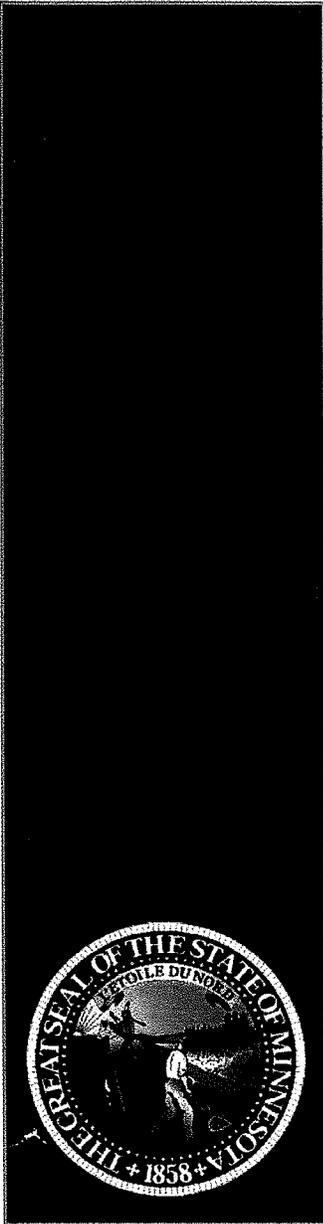
Program Coordination

- ✦ DHPs routinely coordinate and collaborate with other community agencies. This has proven to be a successful model for providing comprehensive services and maximizing resources. They have formed partnerships with area churches and faith based organizations, Community Action Programs, county social service agencies, domestic abuse organizations, legal resources, local employers, mental and chemical health programs, other local city and county resources, technical colleges, WorkForce Centers, and other agencies that provide services for those in need of economic stability.
- ✦ Many DHPs have agreements with MFIP providers to coordinate activities and employment plans for their common participants to get their needs met and satisfy the requirements of both programs. These relationships help provide the wrap around services for participants that prevent long term dependency on government programs and provide lasting benefits to the client and ultimately the local community.
- ✦ DHPs often go on-site to partner agencies to provide such services as soft-skills training, career-development training, job search and retention techniques. In addition they may provide life-skills workshops, support groups and jobseeking workshops at crisis centers, domestic abuse agencies, technical colleges, and local HRA (Housing Redevelopment Authority) hi-rises.
- ✦ They coordinate with Community Action Agencies to access services such as financial counseling to clear up credit problems and help establish budgets. In addition they work with HUD (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development) personnel to assist clients facing foreclosure and those hoping to purchase a house.
- ✦ They also work with DH eligible inmates in the county jails to help them establish a plan for housing, transportation, and jobs when they are released.
- ✦ They maintain offices at some WorkForce Centers and attend staff meetings.
- ✦ They participate in various projects such as:
 - ◆ Fathers and Families Network in MN.
 - ◆ Female Offender's Probation Team and the Domestic Violence Team of Probation Officers and Social Workers.
 - ◆ Healthy Moms Healthy Families pilot program for addicts.
 - ◆ Conflict resolution and mediation.
 - ◆ Support groups for women over 50.
 - ◆ Seminars on life losses and moving on.
 - ◆ Parents Forever curriculum to deal with the impact of divorce on children.

Minnesota Displaced Homemaker Program (DHP)

- Service Areas as of 7/1/03 – (All non-shaded counties do not have DHP programs) -





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