

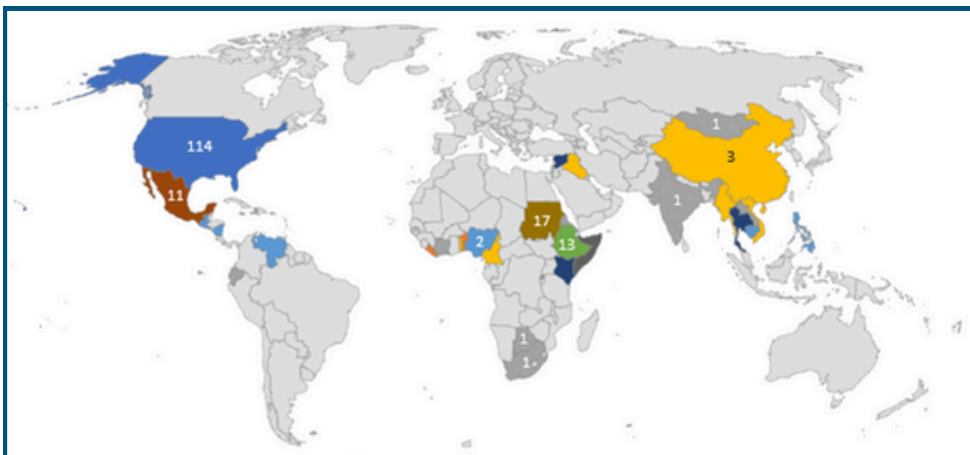
Bridges to Careers in Healthcare

Serving career seekers and employers
throughout Southeast Minnesota.



Bridges to Healthcare was created to support individuals with diverse backgrounds, low incomes and limited educational backgrounds in accessing training that results in credentials leading to family-sustaining wage occupations in healthcare.

Since it's creation in 2013, B2HC has done exactly that. Lives continue to be changed, and communities continue to be supported throughout the Southeast Minnesota region because of this powerful and important work.



B2HC Participants since 2024 hail from 36 different countries around the world but now call Southeast Minnesota home.

300+

Students Enrolled

45%

of participants identify as
an immigrant or refugee

76%

of participants are
at, or below, 200% of the
Federal Poverty Guidelines

SUCCESS STORY

Kocou and Yawavi are Bridges to Healthcare participants in Mower County. They grew up in Africa, met at the University of Togo while going to school, and were married in 2019. They received a permanent visa to come to the US and arrived in Austin in summer of 2022, not knowing anyone, and did not speak English. They said they chose Austin because they did some research and found that it would be a good place due to the cost of living, job opportunities, and friendly people. They immediately began working after arriving in Austin, and enrolled in ESL classes, where they said they first heard about the Bridges to Healthcare Program. Kocou and Yawavi were excited about the opportunities available through the program, since they both already had education in nursing, and had dreams of becoming nurses in the US.

Kocou and Yawavi shared that things were difficult as they struggled financially and to learn the language and did not have childcare or a strong support system close by but were determined to keep moving forward one step at a time. They enrolled in pre-req nursing classes, and with the help of Bridges to Healthcare, completed their CNA and TMA training. This spring, they were accepted into the Riverland RN program which began in August and anticipate graduating Spring of 2026. Kocou hopes to continue his education after RN and receive his BSN, and eventually work as an anesthesiologist in a hospital. Yawavi would also like to continue her education for BSN, and hopes to become a midwife, caring for pregnant women and helping them through the labor and delivery process.

Although they are very busy with two little children, being full-time nursing students, and working part-time at a local long term care home, Kocou and Yawavi are motivated to keep working hard to reach their goals and want their children to have a better life in this country. Yawavi said she feels passionate about working in healthcare and with vulnerable populations because "it makes you feel important – people need you and they appreciate you". Kocou shared that he "is happy because we have good things to talk about. We want to be a witness to others for everything the Bridges program has helped us with." They said they are grateful not only for the WDI staff who have encouraged and motivated them each step along the way, but also in terms of the financial assistance for training and support services they have received. Kocou and Yawavi are excited for the future, and to turn their dreams into reality.

**B2HC
Partners:**

Workforce
DEVELOPMENT, INC.

*The Workforce Development Board
of Southeast Minnesota*



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All WDI services are free! Our services include assessment, career planning, skills training, job search guidance and resources, and preparation for further training and education. We also offer scholarships and connections to many other great programs and resources in Southeast Minnesota. Contact us today!

Reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities provided, upon request, by calling 507.292.5152 or by using your preferred relay service. Workforce Development, Inc. is an Equal Opportunity Employer/Program Provider and a proud partner of the American Job Center Network.