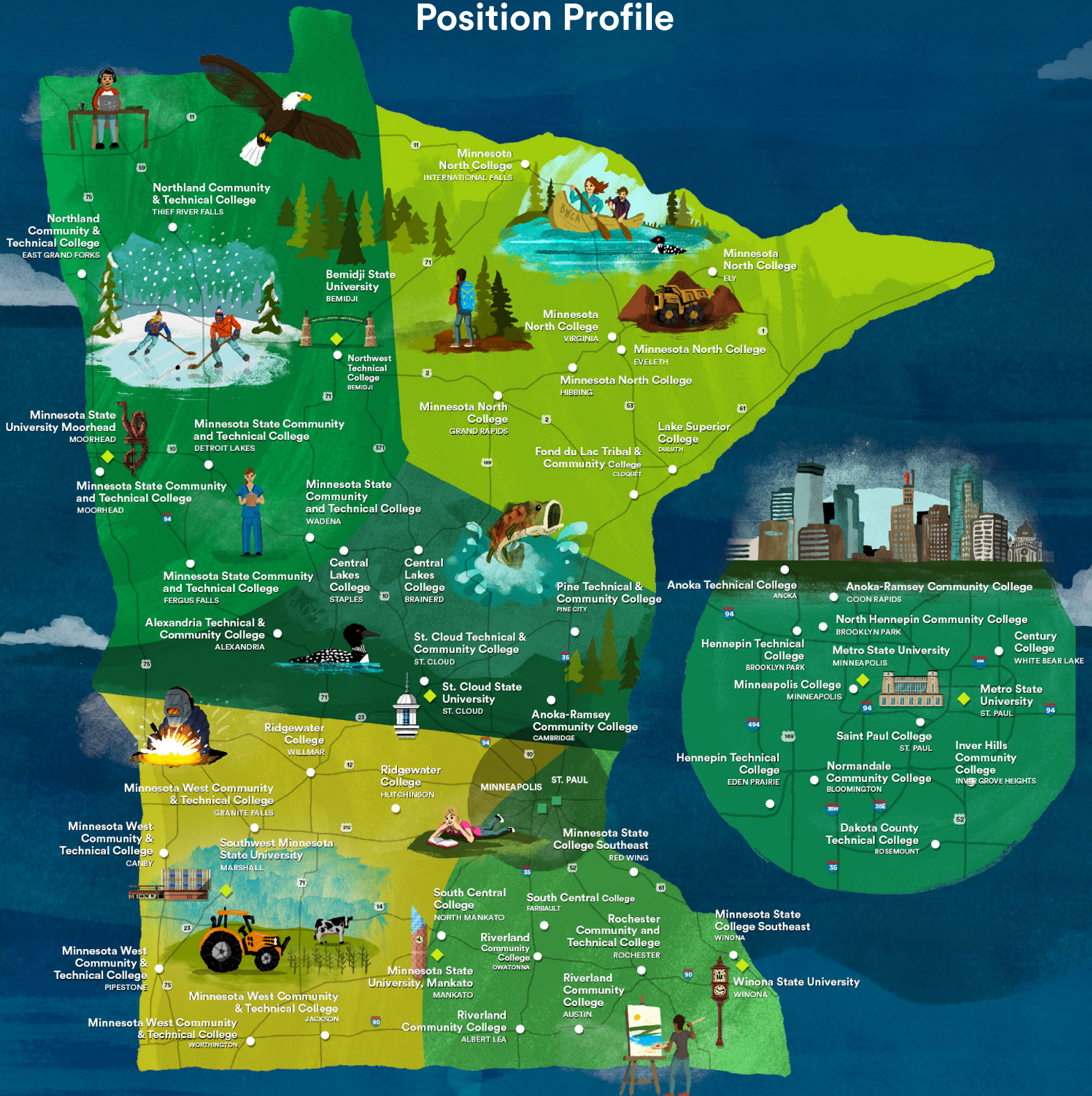




MINNESOTA STATE

CHIEF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Position Profile





MINNESOTA STATE

Extraordinary Education.
Exceptional Value.

26 state colleges · **7** state universities · **54** campuses · **47** communities



Minnesota State has an enduring commitment to enhancing Minnesota's quality of life by developing and fostering understanding and appreciation of a free and diverse society and providing equal opportunity for all its students and employees. To help effectuate these goals, Minnesota State is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in employment and education.

Opportunity Overview

Minnesota State invites applications and nominations for the position of Chief Marketing and Communications Officer.

Minnesota State seeks a strategic communications leader to continue building brand and system awareness, manage against reputational risk, and serve as a consultant to the system's 33 college and university presidents and communications teams.

This position leads the small but high-functioning Marketing and Communications Division of the Minnesota State system office. This team is responsible for the system's external facing earned, owned, and paid media, and partners closely with the chancellor, Board of Trustees, members of the cabinet, college and university presidents, communications teams, and advancement professionals.

The Chief Marketing and Communications Officer reports directly to the chancellor and serves on the chancellor's cabinet. This position is responsible for setting and executing the strategic direction for the unit to position Minnesota State as the state's most efficient tool to build prosperity for students, their families, and their communities while ensuring an educated and civically engaged workforce.

The Chief Marketing and Communications Officer is responsible for leading a team of four individuals who are responsible for external communications, including system marketing, digital content, graphic design, publication development, events marketing, brand standards and voice, public relations, issues management, and crisis communications. In addition, a member of the team serves as liaison between college- and university-related foundations and Minnesota State, providing staff support, development, consistent measurement of ROI, and is pursuing a future, in partnership with leadership, that may include coordinated private donor cultivation.



26 State Colleges, 7 State Universities, 54 Campuses

ONE MINNESOTA STATE

At Minnesota State, we provide opportunities for all Minnesotans to build a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities. With 26 community and technical colleges and seven state universities on 54 campuses in 47 communities, Minnesota State is the nation's third largest system of colleges and universities and serves nearly two-thirds of Minnesota's undergraduate students.

Each year, Minnesota State colleges and universities serve approximately 270,000 students through credit and non-credit education. About 64 percent of all Minnesota residents pursuing an undergraduate credential attend a Minnesota State college or university. Together, the colleges and universities offer 4,000 academic programs and award more than 34,000 degrees, certificates, and diplomas annually, preparing the majority of Minnesota's essential workforce.

Minnesota State is committed to equitable outcomes for all students. In 2019, the system launched Equity 2030, an enterprise-wide commitment to eliminate educational equity gaps at every Minnesota State college and university by 2030. Achieving Equity 2030 is both a moral and economic imperative and is advanced through data-informed strategies, student-centered programs, and partnerships with communities, employers, and the state legislature. Minnesota State serves more Black and Indigenous students, and students of color, than all other higher education providers in Minnesota combined.

EMPLOYEES AND LABOR REPRESENTATION

Minnesota State employs 14,560 faculty and staff across its colleges, universities, and system office. Most employees are represented by one of several bargaining units and personnel plans, including:

- » Inter Faculty Organization
- » Minnesota State College Faculty
- » Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty
- » American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees

- » Minnesota Association of Professional Employees
- » Minnesota Government Engineers Council
- » Middle Management Association
- » Minnesota Nurses Association

WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Minnesota State faculty and staff account for over a third of all State of Minnesota employees and partner with businesses and industries to deliver more than 12,000 customized training, occupational, and professional classes each year.

GOVERNANCE

Minnesota State is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees appointed by the Governor of Minnesota. The board holds policy responsibility for system planning, academic programs, fiscal management, personnel, admissions requirements, tuition and fees, and systemwide rules and regulations.

Learn more on the Board of Trustees page at MinnState.edu/board.

CHANCELLOR

Under the direction of the Board of Trustees, the chancellor serves as the system's chief executive officer and provides leadership to the 33 colleges and universities of Minnesota State, ensuring effective and efficient operations and meeting the current and long-term educational and workforce development needs of Minnesotans statewide.

Learn more on the Chancellor's Office page at MinnState.edu/system/chancellor.

Extraordinary Impact

Minnesota State is making a difference.

From the students we serve, to our business partners, to those we employ, chances are good you or someone you know has benefited from the work of Minnesota State colleges and universities.



third largest

system of colleges and universities in the United States

26

STATE COLLEGES

7

STATE UNIVERSITIES



54

convenient campuses across Minnesota



34,650+

degrees, certificates, and diplomas awarded each year



3,968

academic programs to choose from



12,000

customized training, occupational, and professional classes



270,000 students

attend our colleges and universities each year



6,579

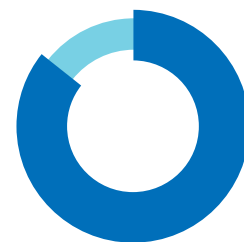
veterans and service members attend a Minnesota State college or university each year

We serve more

Black and Indigenous students, as well as students of color, than all other higher education providers in Minnesota combined

40–74%

of Minnesota State students graduate with no debt at all, depending on the academic award received



86% job placement in a related field of study



64% of Minnesota resident students who are pursuing an undergraduate credential are doing so at a Minnesota State college or university



Minnesota State Marketing and Communications Division

The Marketing and Communications Division serves as the steward of brand, reputation, and strategic storytelling for the Minnesota State system. Our work helps Minnesotans understand the value, impact, and opportunity created by Minnesota State — through the individual colleges and universities, and collectively through the power of the system.

We connect strategy to impact, ensuring Minnesota State is clearly, consistently, and credibly positioned as the state’s most valuable higher education partner and a high-quality higher education option at the most affordable price for students and their families.

WHAT WE DO

Advance Strategic Priorities

The Minnesota State Marketing and Communications Division plays a central role in advancing understanding of the system’s most critical priorities — including Equity 2030, enrollment growth, workforce development, affordability, and public trust — by translating complex policy, strategy, and system work into messages and stories that resonate with students, families, employers, legislators, donors, and communities across the state.

“Systemness” is core to the strategic approach. The division’s work helps stakeholders understand not just the value of individual campuses, but the unique value Minnesota State creates when its colleges and universities work together to meet statewide needs.

Lead System Marketing Campaigns

The division leads statewide marketing and paid media efforts designed to increase awareness, drive campus visits, and support application growth — while complementing and amplifying campus-level marketing work.

Signature initiatives include:

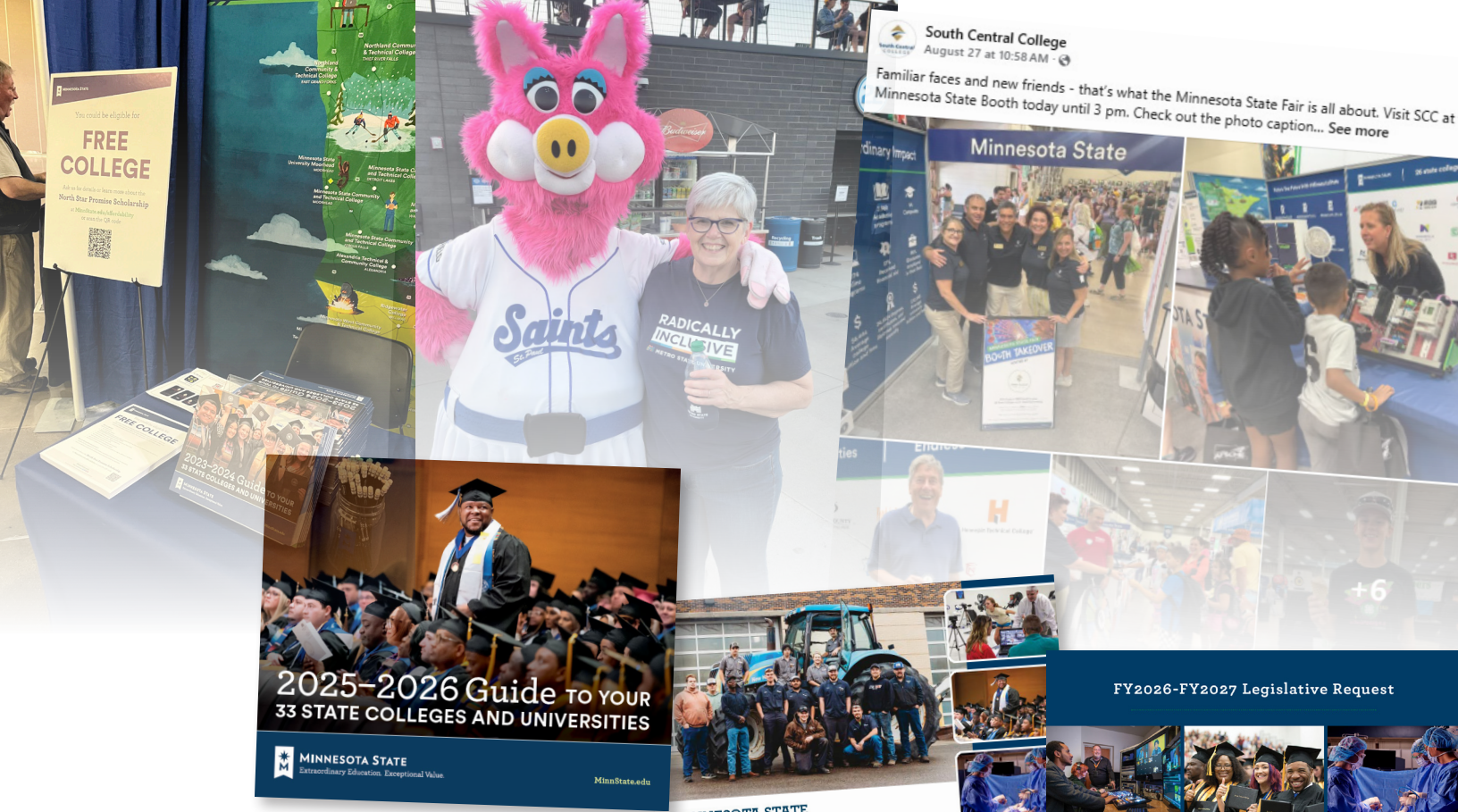
- » Minnesota State Week, to promote campus visits
- » Minnesota State Month, to promote college and university applications
- » The Minnesota State Promise, including messaging around affordability, financial aid, and the value of a Minnesota State education

These campaigns provide shared strategy, creative, and toolkits that campuses can adapt locally, allowing Minnesota State to show up with greater scale, consistency, and impact than any one institution could achieve alone.

Accessible Communication

Equity 2030 is a throughline in the work of the division with intentionally inclusive storytelling, accessible design, and clear communication. This ensures system messages reflect the diversity of the employees and students Minnesota State serves and removes barriers to understanding and engagement.

Minnesota State communications comply with accessibility standards, but also model best practices in representation, usability, and plain language.



Protect and Strengthen Reputation Through Strategic Communications

The division serves as trusted communications counsel to the chancellor, presidents, and system leadership particularly during moments of complexity, change, or heightened public attention. The team ensures communications are accurate, coordinated, timely, and aligned with Minnesota State values while protecting institutional credibility and public confidence.

This includes:

- » Media relations and spokesperson support
- » Crisis and issues communications
- » Legislative and public policy messaging in partnership with Government Relations
- » Guidance on sensitive or high visibility campus and system matters

Support Philanthropic Efforts

The Minnesota State Marketing and Communications Division provides support, facilitation of development opportunities, and leadership towards consistent reporting best practices across Minnesota State for its related college- and university-related foundations

Support Advancement and Communications Leaders

The Minnesota State Marketing and Communications Division convenes and supports the system's statewide community of marketers, communicators, and advancement leaders to build alignment, strengthen capacity, and foster a culture of collaboration while honoring campus identity, expertise, and local relationships.

WHY IT MATTERS

At its core, the Marketing and Communications Division tells the compelling and authentic story of Minnesota State — one that reinforces public trust, supports campuses, and ensures Minnesotans and prospective students understand how Minnesota State changes lives, strengthens communities, and fuels the state's future.



Core Duties and Responsibilities

- » Set strategic direction for the Marketing and Communications Division, including measurable goals that advance systemwide priorities and outcomes
- » Develop the unit's annual work plan and budget, in coordination with other units and divisions within the Minnesota State system office
- » In collaboration with campus marketers, advise and support colleges and universities in anticipating communications needs and managing emerging issues and reputational risk
- » Provide strategic counsel and support to the chancellor, cabinet, trustees, campus presidents, and campus marketers relative to strategic communications, media strategy, and reputation management
- » Oversee the development and implementation of strategic messaging, media relations strategy, marketing concepts, web presence, and all digital content distributed on owned and paid channels
- » Provide strategic guidance to support systemwide advancement efforts, including the possibility of enterprise-level private donor cultivation and coordinated, statewide philanthropic campaigns, in partnership with college and university foundation leaders
- » Serve as lead staff for the Board of Trustees Outreach and Engagement Committee



Qualifications

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- » Education: Baccalaureate degree
- » Minimum of 10 years' progressive experience planning and implementing brand, marketing, and communications strategies, preferably in large, complex organizations
- » Demonstrated excellent verbal and written communication skills, including journalism, copywriting, speech writing, and editing
- » Skill and experience articulating organizational vision and ensuring clarity and consistency in all communications
- » Expertise with issues management and crisis communications
- » Experience with providing high-level counsel to c-suite executives
- » Demonstrated ability to build visibility and positive perceptions through media
- » Experience making effective use of emerging technology to achieve marketing and communications goals
- » Expertise developing compelling messages for targeting diverse audiences
- » Demonstrated ability to influence behavior without direct positional authority
- » Ability to lead, manage, and motivate teams
- » Experience formulating and successfully implementing projects with collaborative leadership and team strategies
- » Demonstrated experience supporting equity through marketing communications

PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS

- » Advanced degree in field relevant to the position
- » Experience in Minnesota
- » Experience in higher education
- » Understanding of the value and unique missions of the system's community colleges, technical colleges, and comprehensive regional universities
- » Experience with resource development, advancement communications, or philanthropic engagement in complex organizations





Nomination and Application Process

Kris Hnastchenko, president of Heinze & Associates Executive Search, is supporting Minnesota State in this search. Screening of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled. The preferred date to receive application materials for maximum consideration is **May 20, 2026**. The search will be conducted with a commitment of confidentiality for candidates until finalists are selected. Applications must include:

- » Letter of interest stating how the candidate's experiences and qualifications connect with the strategic priorities expressed in the position prospectus
- » A resume
- » Names, addresses, telephone numbers, and email addresses of five references for future contact, including the candidate's professional relationship with each reference listed. References will only be contacted with permission of the candidates
- » Finalists may be asked to submit a portfolio

Confidential inquires, nominations, and application materials should be directed to:

Kris Hnastchenko, President

Heinze & Associates Executive Search

kris.heinzeandassociates@gmail.com

763-242-9926

The target start date for the new Chief Marketing and Communications Officer is mid-July 2026.



MINNESOTA STATE

UNIVERSITIES

Bemidji State University
BEMIDJI
218-755-2040
bemidjistate.edu

Metro State University
MINNEAPOLIS
ST. PAUL
651-793-1302
metrostate.edu

Minnesota State University,
Mankato
MANKATO
507-389-1822
mnsu.edu

Minnesota State University
Moorhead
MOORHEAD
218-477-2161
mnstate.edu

Southwest Minnesota State
University
MARSHALL
507-537-6286
smsu.edu

St. Cloud State University
ST. CLOUD
320-308-2244
stcloudstate.edu

Winona State University
WINONA
507-457-5100
winona.edu

COLLEGES

Alexandria
Technical & Community
College
ALEXANDRIA
320-762-0221
alextech.edu

Anoka Technical College
ANOKA
763-576-4850
anokatech.edu

Anoka-Ramsey Community
College
CAMBRIDGE
COON RAPIDS
763-433-1300
anokaramsey.edu

Central Lakes College
BRAINERD
STAPLES
218-855-8031
clcmn.edu

Century College
WHITE BEAR LAKE
651-779-3300
century.edu

Dakota County Technical
College
ROSEMOUNT
651-423-8000
dctc.edu

Fond du Lac Tribal &
Community College
CLOQUET
218-879-0800
fdltcc.edu

Hennepin
Technical College
BROOKLYN PARK
EDEN PRAIRIE
952-995-1300
hennepintech.edu

Inver Hills Community
College
INVER GROVE HEIGHTS
651-450-3000
inverhills.edu

Lake Superior College
DULUTH
218-733-7601
lsc.edu

Minneapolis College
MINNEAPOLIS
612-659-6200
minneapolis.edu

Minnesota State College
Southeast
RED WING
WINONA
877-853-8324
southeastmn.edu

Minnesota State Community
and Technical College
DETROIT LAKES
FERGUS FALLS
MOORHEAD
WADENA
877-450-3322
minnesota.edu

Minnesota
North College
HIBBING
ITASCA
MESABI RANGE
RAINY RIVER
VERMILION
888-223-8068
minnesotanorth.edu

Minnesota West Community &
Technical College
CANBY
GRANITE FALLS
JACKSON
PIESTONE
WORTHINGTON
800-658-2330
mnwest.edu

Normandale Community
College
BLOOMINGTON
952-358-8201
normandale.edu

North Hennepin Community
College
BROOKLYN PARK
763-424-0724
nhcc.edu

Northland Community &
Technical College
EAST GRAND FORKS
THIEF RIVER FALLS
218-683-8800
northlandcollege.edu

Northwest
Technical College
BEMIDJI
218-333-6600
ntcmn.edu

Pine Technical & Community
College
PINE CITY
320-629-5100
pine.edu

Ridgewater College
HUTCHINSON
WILLMAR
320-222-5200
ridgewater.edu

Riverland Community College
ALBERT LEA
AUSTIN
OWATONNA
507-433-0600
riverland.edu

Rochester Community and
Technical College
ROCHESTER
507-258-7210
rctc.edu

Saint Paul College
ST. PAUL
651-846-1600
saintpaul.edu

South Central College
FARIBAULT
NORTH MANKATO
507-389-7220
southcentral.edu

St. Cloud Technical &
Community College
ST. CLOUD
320-308-5000
sctcc.edu



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Exceptional Value.

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MinnState.edu

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