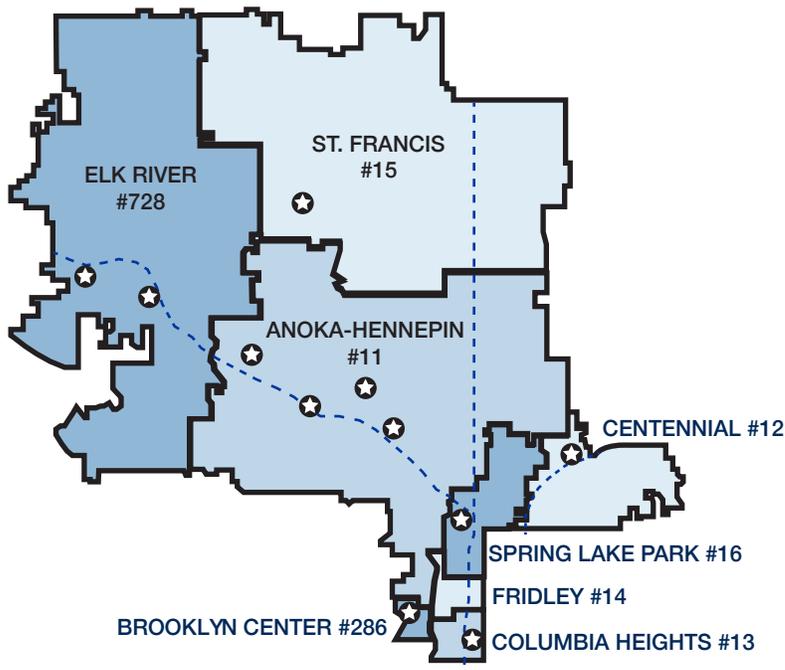




## Metro North ABE is a consortium of eight school districts



We are pleased to introduce our newsletter's new name. We heard from you that the former title, *Consortium Newsletter*, didn't clearly convey the work we do. The new name, Metro North LINKs, conveys our focus: educating adults in the mix of skills they need to achieve their life and career goals and bringing together partners to support students in achieving those goals.

We view you as a partner, either through the support and hard work you have already put into helping students succeed, or because you are a key potential partner. The work is challenging and our students face many barriers to success, but with our combined forces our students expand their knowledge while honing skills to get to the next stage. Together, I am certain our prior success will be multiplied in the future.

Regards,  
*Theresa Zingery*  
Metro North ABE  
Consortium Manager

# NEWS FROM OUR SITES

Adult Basic Education (ABE) is a free program to help adults develop basic reading, writing, math and English skills to achieve their goals and thrive in their community and work-place. Metro North ABE is a partnership between eight school districts in the north metro area to provide these services in a range of locations and with various schedules to meet student needs. For more information go to [www.metronorthabe.org](http://www.metronorthabe.org)

**Our mission:** to inspire and challenge all learners to reach their full potential. In a safe, supportive environment we will teach the skills needed to succeed as responsible citizens in our changing world.

**Our vision:** to provide programs that develop the skills needed by individuals to achieve their goals.

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Anoka sites  
763-433-4200

Molly Liberto:  
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763-433-4200

Kathleen Moriarty:  
Columbia Heights/Fridley  
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Cori Sendle:  
Centennial  
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Pam Moriarity:  
Elk River  
763-241-3400 ext. 5525

Tammi Bernard:  
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763-753-7190



## Anoka

Through our partnership with the Anoka County Job Training Center, we were awarded a grant to expand the Integrated Reentry, Occupational Cohorts (IROC) pathway. This pathway will offer ABE classes and supports for students in a partner college course to gain a marketable skill in the in-demand field of manufacturing. The pathway is open to reentry populations under correctional supervision in the Anoka County Workhouse, on a court-ordered probation or supervised-release program.



## Blaine

After months of planning and coordination, the Blaine Learning Lab proudly rolled out its new student kitchen area.

Recognizing a need to provide additional resources, the Blaine Learning Lab Wellness Committee teamed up with the Anoka County Statewide Health Improvement Partnership program to create a space open to learners equipped with the basics needed to help keep them on the road to good health.

Through work with the county, the Blaine Learning Lab built a new partnership with the Salvation Army site that is co-located in the Human Resources of Anoka County building. Every Wednesday, the Salvation Army donates a cart full of groceries to stock the kitchen area with healthy food that learners can prepare while at school, including fresh fruits and veggies, different bread items, and occasional treats.



## Brooklyn Center

The Brooklyn Center sites merged into one this past fall. The Brooklyn Center at Lutheran Church of the Master site continues to offer leveled ESL classes three mornings and two evenings each week. This year, it also hosts an evening GED prep/Brush up/College Prep class. We've welcomed several new staff to the Brooklyn Center site including a new position that is focused on volunteer support and outreach. Programming at the Community Corner location is on temporary hold.



### Elk River

While attending a recruitment event, the Elk River Site Coordinator was greeted by a fellow community organization partner who approached her and said, "Do you remember me? I started your GED classes in Elk River 20 years ago. I struggled with having the confidence and belief in myself that I could pass the tests, even though you told me I was test ready. I didn't finish then, but I wanted you to know, I finally got my GED even though it took me 20 years to do it. I never forgot that and so appreciated your vote of confidence."

You never stop reaching. Sometimes, it takes a while before a learner takes the steps necessary to complete their initial goal. And sometimes ABE students often start at one school and then enroll in different schools over multiple years. Since July 1st, Metro North ABE has enrolled 570 students who were previously enrolled in another program.

### Columbia Heights/ Fridley

Students at all levels have an interest in learning about US government and history. The Adult Education Center-Columbia Heights/Fridley offered two citizenship preparation classes last fall. One class was open to students with higher reading levels and was offered in partnership with the Columbia Heights Public Library.

Thirteen students enrolled and eight completed the full course which was offered on Monday and Wednesday nights at the library. In addition, a lower reading level Citizenship class was offered on site in the afternoons for six students. Students in both classes built vocabulary and a basic understanding of important documents that have shaped the United States as a representative democracy.

### Centennial

This year, Centennial Adult Continuing Education has combined our Adult Education classes with other Metro North ABE locations that are close to our school. Centennial Adult Continuing Education is making progress in developing ESL classes at a new convenient location which we hope to have open soon.

### St. Francis

Minnesota state Representative Calvin Bahr visited students at the St. Francis Learning Center. Rep. Bahr explained to students how a bill becomes law and answered their questions about Minnesota state government.

# Child Nutrition Program leads to a "hopeful future"

By Caileena Lind, ABE Volunteer and Outreach Assistant Coordinator

Chaitali Patel is a student at Metro North ABE. In addition to her evening classes, she is currently enrolled in the Anoka-Hennepin Child Nutrition Internship Program (CNP). In this paid internship, students learn the different policies and work expectations that go along with working in school kitchens, and they gain valuable work experience.

As soon as Chaitali came to the U.S., she wanted to learn to speak English well, and she enrolled in Metro North ABE. That's when Molly Liberto, the ABE Program Supervisor for Blaine, came to class to tell the students about the CNP.

"I think, 'I'm free, and I want a job, so let's do it!'" Chaitali signed up right away.

Chaitali attended her first Wednesday evening class in August, where she met her instructor, Shelly Tallman. "[Shelly] is very good. She helps with everything." The students are working towards a ServSafe certification, which nationally recognizes an understanding of proper food safety regulations and methods.

In the CNP, the students learn a lot of different things, like temperatures for food safety, how to properly clean a kitchen and the differences in knives and cutting boards. Chaitali found that what she is learning isn't only useful in her career. "It helps at home. It's helpful every time I cook in my kitchen."

In addition to class time, CNP students take part in a paid internship, offering \$13.65 an hour, from September 2019 until June 2020. Chaitali is working at an elementary school in Blaine. "I really like this job, and all the other employees are good."

Chaitali's life has changed a lot since starting the CNP Program, and she feels lucky to have heard about it. "I have more confidence in myself. I think I can do more and more!" Her conversational English continues to improve as she consistently speaks English, having gone from three evenings of English practice a week to daily practice with her coworkers.

Chaitali shares that she is a much happier person at work and at home. With the internship, she needed her own car for transportation. Before, her husband drove her everywhere, but now she drives herself to work and school. "I feel free!" And when I ask her about her husband, she laughs. "He's happier too!"

For those who are interested in the program, Chaitali says that there is so much good information to learn "for normal life, and it's not a big investment of time."

"If they have kids, this job is perfect for them." Chaitali points out that beyond convenience, it's a great way to know more about a child's school: what is happening there, what they are eating, how the food is prepared, etc. She also points out that someone working in the CNP could have the same schedule as their child. For those without kids it's still a great program. "I have a hopeful future," she says a few times while we talk.

She recommends the Anoka-Hennepin Child Nutrition Program for anyone who is looking to explore careers. "For a first job, it's very good." It's less hours than other jobs, so she can continue her education at Metro North ABE. The CNP is filled with great people, and she likes serving kids. "They always smile, and they keep servers happy."



***"Partnering with Metro North ABE can connect you to a new workforce and help our students fill their dreams"***

For more information on this program and many more please contact us.

**Metro North**  
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION

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