



RESTAURANT, LODGING, RESORT AND  
CAMPGROUND ASSOCIATIONS

## **Support State Funding for the ProStart® Education and Hospitality and Tourism Management Programs (HF2341/SF2543)**

**Position:** Hospitality Minnesota supports a proposal of \$250,000 in state grant funding for well established, proven and successful education programs that help young people advance careers in the hospitality industry and address critical long-term workforce shortages.

**Background:** The hospitality industry faces significant worker shortages, with several job titles listed on the Department of Economic Development's "Occupations in Demand" top ten list. The ProStart and Hospitality Tourism Management Program (HTMP) are two successful initiatives already in place that can help to address worker shortage issues by training and developing talented youth to work effectively in the industry. Both programs are managed by Hospitality Minnesota Education Fund, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. These programs are highly successful and additional schools are seeking to add these programs, however, costs for curriculum and teacher training for new entrants, as well as current participants that need to update their curriculum, are a financial challenge.

Hospitality Minnesota and other business partners provide grants, scholarships and other funding to help students participate in ProStart and HTMP. Since 2008, Hospitality Minnesota Education Fund has awarded over \$750,000 in scholarships, however, additional financial support is needed to meet the demand of new school participants, as well as ongoing participants in need of teacher training and curriculum upgrades.

A state investment of \$250,000 in grant money would provide individual grants to 50 schools of up to \$5,000 each in order to cover the costs associated with curriculum purchases and teacher training. This investment will provide for thousands of students to enter the workforce trained and ready to succeed in Minnesota's hospitality industry.

**ProStart** is a nationwide, two-year high school program that unites the classroom and industry to develop the best and brightest talent into tomorrow's restaurant and foodservice leaders. ProStart teaches not only culinary skills, but also the business aspects of the foodservice industry. The program connects students with industry leaders, provides opportunities for scholarships and perhaps most importantly, prepares young people for careers as restaurant owners, managers, chefs and other positions. ProStart is currently offered in over 80 Minnesota schools engaging more than 5,000 students with over 750 already working in the industry.

The **Hospitality & Tourism Management Program** introduces high school students to the lodging industry through classroom learning, real-work experiences and field trips. The curriculum, developed by the American Hotel & Lodging Association Educational Institute, covers front office and housekeeping management, marketing and sales, food and beverage, as well as general management and leadership skills. Minnesota has 13 schools teaching HTMP with about 250 students. **There are currently ProStart and/or HTMP programs at high schools in 43 of Minnesota's senate districts and 65 of our house districts.**