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## **GOT IT?**

### *IT Career Exploration Fair Highlights Career Opportunities for Students*

In Dakota County, Thomson Reuters, Blue Cross-Blue Shield, Unisys, and Frontier Communications (among others), employ numerous IT professionals. In fact, almost every county company employs IT pros who keep web sites and computer networks functional and secure. But, according to the MN Department of Employment and Economic Development and the MN IT Workforce Collaborative, Minnesota faces a coming shortfall of over 1,000 IT workers per year, a deficit that could pose a problem for Dakota County businesses.

To avoid potential difficulties and to keep the Dakota County business climate vibrant, workforce agencies and higher education partners collaborate with local companies to promote the opportunities of an IT career. "GOT IT?" is an effort geared toward students (tomorrow's labor force). As stated by executive director, Bill Coleman, of Dakota Future, "events like "GOT IT?" are one component of a broader strategy to improve Dakota County as a place for business investment."

On Saturday, November 14, Thomson Reuters, the state's largest IT employer, will host "GOT IT?," an IT career exploration fair, from 8:30 a.m. – noon at their Eagan campus, 610 Opperman Drive. The career fair will include exhibits about area companies, presentations on IT careers, and hands-on activities. High school students, parents, and undecided college students are invited to discover the range of jobs available in the IT career area through participation in the ongoing activities. Attendees may arrive at any time between 8:30 – 12, but to get the most benefit from the day, the sponsors encourage attending the entire event. Pre-registration online is requested for the FREE career fair at [www.mnitcareers.org/node/453](http://www.mnitcareers.org/node/453).

Dakota-Scott Workforce Investment Board, Dakota County Technical College, Inver Hills Community College, Metropolitan State University, the Center for Strategic IT & Security, and Dakota Future sponsor the event. The St. Paul and Dakota County educational institutions offer a variety of IT programs covering certificate, associate, bachelor, and masters degree levels. The Center for Strategic IT & Security is a MNSCU Center of Excellence that partners with other IT programs to enhance student recruitment, curriculum alignment, industry involvement and career preparation. Dakota Future, a countywide economic development organization, recently launched its Intelligent Community Initiative that includes a focus on creating, supporting, and attracting knowledge workers, including IT workers.