



COMMUNITY INFO SHEET

Duluth, MN

Things Duluth is known for:

Lake Superior, the lift bridge, Grandma's Marathon, Canal Park, Duluth Pack, Enger Tower, Bentleyville Tour of Lights, winter sports, countless outdoor activities, and several unique museums and aquariums.

Duluth History:

The city of Duluth initially began as a hub for French fur traders. However, rather than trade, it was extracting natural resources that caused Duluth to prosper. Copper, iron ore, and timber were the major resources in the area. In 1871, a canal was dug so ships could easily enter the harbor. In the 1900s, Duluth's port handled more goods each year than New York City. It was thought that Duluth would eventually become a port city larger than Chicago. Today, Duluth has found a successful balance between industry in the port and tourism. The port is busy with regular shipments of grains, coal, and taconite. Tourists visit Duluth to see beautiful Lake Superior, enjoy the city, and explore the natural beauty surrounding the area.

History of YouthWorks in Duluth:

Serving since 1998, Duluth is one of the earliest YouthWorks sites to be established. Throughout the years, we have stayed in a few different locations across the city but have maintained many of our original service partnerships. We have partnered with Our Savior's Lutheran Church since summer 2016 and enjoy supporting this church as they serve this community. They are excited to see the partnership with YouthWorks continue to grow and develop throughout our summers.

Why is Youthworks in Duluth?

Duluth is a small urban community residing on the North Shore of Lake Superior, the world's largest freshwater lake by surface area. Duluth is a major port city shipping coal, iron ore and grain all over the world. Due to the industry in the area, Duluth once had the most millionaires per capita in the United States. The shipping industry brought a wave of immigrants to the area which established a strong working class. Later, the city experienced an economic and industrial decline, which shifted much of the local economic focus from industry to tourism. This shift has changed the types of jobs that are available and left



Duluth Census Stats

POPULATION: 86,697

RACE:

- White (Non-Hispanic) – 89.7%
- Black or African American – 2.3%
- Hispanic or Latino – 2.3%
- Native American – 1.8%
- Asian – 1.6%

POVERTY RATE – 18.2%

CHILD POVERTY RATE – 10%

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME – \$52,463

HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE – 60%

MEDIAN HOME VALUE – \$163,300

**All data from Data USA except for child poverty rate (Census Reporter)*

WEATHER INFO – Expect mid 60's to mid-70's throughout the summer. Nights will be cooler, especially with the lake nearby. Summer months do have a higher likelihood of rain as well.

many without steady income. The instability of the job market combined with a shortage of affordable housing and prevalence of food deserts throughout the community has led to an extremely high percentage of residents living in poverty.

Many of YouthWorks service partners in Duluth help introduce students to what it is like to serve in a small urban community. YouthWorks has many long-standing service partners and our presence in this community helps to expand their impact. The longevity in such partnerships has allowed for meaningful service and relationships to develop over time.

Issues in Duluth

POVERTY

Due to the demands of the shipping industry, Duluth saw an influx of immigrants to the area, which developed a strong working class. As the impact of tourism has grown and shifted the economy for Duluth, the market of jobs changed with it, leaving many of those working-class folks without a steady income. The job market became unstable, affordable housing was tough to find, and food deserts became more common leading to a high percentage of residents living in poverty. Currently, 40% of Duluth's metro area's residents live below the poverty level.

FOOD INSECURITY

In a survey conducted by Community Action Duluth, about 41% of respondents indicated that access to food was a problem, creating something called a food desert – an area with limited access to affordable and nutritious food. Respondents cited that not having enough money for healthy food was the major contributor to the problem, along with not having access to transportation that would allow for access to healthy food.

HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness in Duluth is a major issue. As of 2020, there were 1,894 households on the "coordinated entry homeless housing priority list", a 26% increase from 2018. While not all people experiencing homelessness live on the streets, the lack of consistent and secure housing can cause significant stress on individuals and families. For those that are homeless, extreme weather can be dangerous in the winter.

Positive Opportunities & Why Serving in Duluth Matters:

RELATIONSHIPS

Community youth love having one-on-one attention, and participants can help provide meaningful interactions, especially at Valley Youth Center. COVID has impacted many service partners in Duluth, so we're hopeful to connect with care facilities and build relationships again as senior citizens enjoy sharing their knowledge and stories with the youth.

ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

Visitors bring fresh energy, willing hands, and can be a huge blessing to help to accomplish projects. Additionally, many of our partners like Duluth Gardens and Volunteer Service of Carlton County greatly need additional volunteers to help with yard work and cleaning.

SUPPORT

Everyone has their own perceptions of life in Duluth. During each week, you will have the chance to share what you've been learning about the area, talk about the incredible things you see happening in Duluth, and be a part of the ongoing growth God has for this community.