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DWD Announces Recipients of Wisconsin Fast Forward Grants

Grants will support skills development and customized training for Wisconsin workers

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has awarded 10 Wisconsin Fast Forward grants to employers who have demonstrated a critical need for skilled workers. The training grants will be used to develop and implement training programs to upskill employees to fill the employment demands of growing and expanding employers.

DWD awarded more than \$1.6 million to 10 Wisconsin employers, which will serve 11 businesses and at least 893 trainees across Wisconsin.

"The investment of grant awards simultaneously results in Wisconsin residents being better equipped for our current and future job market and provides our state's employers with a more skilled workforce," said DWD Secretary Caleb Frostman. "Strategically investing in transferable skills will help lift industries, communities and Wisconsin's economy."

The Wisconsin Fast Forward program encourages increased collaboration between Wisconsin's workforce trainers and employers to develop and execute business-led training programs. These training programs are designed to provide sustainable, short- and medium-term training and placement of workers in positions that offer trainees long-term professional growth and economic opportunity.

The grants were awarded to the following organizations:

Dane County Department of Human Services - Children, Youth & Families and Centro Hispano – DWD issued a grant of \$63,040.19.

- The organization will partner with Madison College to provide training to three new and 11 incumbent minority staff
- Trainees will receive 12 credits through Madison College in the area of Human Services through a customized cohort
- Training will give trainees the training to work with diverse and barriered populations, treat for substance abuse and lead client interviews within the agency setting

Sand Valley – DWD issued a grant of \$88,816.

- The organization will partner with Mid-State Technical College to provide Culinary Arts training to 24 unemployed individuals
- Trainees will receive 289 hours of training over a six-month period
- Training will include: hands-on, classroom and on-the-job internships at Sand Valley

Stevens Construction Corp. – DWD issued a grant of \$269,188.

- The organization will provide training to 16 unemployed, 208 incumbent new hire and 78 incumbent existing workers
- Training will include: specialized laborer training, general safety, fall protection, post tension, welding, concrete and carpentry

United Lutheran Program for the Aging (Luther Manor) – DWD issued a grant of \$47,667.

- The organization will partner with Living as a Leader to train 40 incumbent existing managers and supervisors in leadership skills to address retention and recruitment needs of the business
- Training will include: coaching, conflict resolution, change management and situational exercises to reinforce skills application

ThedaCare, Inc. – DWD issued a grant of \$51,080.

- The organization will partner with Fox Valley Technical College to provide customized Medical Assistant training to eight incumbent existing workers
- Trainees will receive 760 hours of training over 18 months and will receive their Medical Assistant Technical Diploma upon completion
- Training will include: classroom training and a hands-on practicum

Gehl Foods, Inc. – DWD issued a grant of \$367,890.

- The organization will provide training to 50 incumbent new hires and 103 incumbent existing workers
- Gehl will partner with several external training providers
- Training will include: basic and advanced training on new Bottle Fill equipment

MacDonald & Owen Veneer & Lumber Company, Inc. – DWD issued a grant of \$75,679.

- The organization will partner with UW-Stout Discovery Center to provide training to 70 incumbent existing workers
- Training will include: leadership, critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they relate to worker's specific roles at the company

Nueske's Applewood Smoked Meats – DWD issued a grant of \$59,240.

- The organization will provide training to three incumbent new hire and 33 incumbent existing workers
- Trainees will receive 120 hours of training over one year
- Training will include: product and production equipment training, food safety and quality control

Green Bay Packaging, Inc. – DWD issued a grant of \$400,000.

- The organization will provide training to six unemployed, 28 incumbent new hire and 152 incumbent existing workers
- Training will be provided by in-house trainers as well as specialist trainers from Voith and Rockwell Automation
- Training will prepare employees to operate the new equipment at their new mill

Blackhawk Transport – DWD issued a grant of \$204,873.

- The organization will partner with Blackhawk Technical College to provide Commercial Drivers' Licensure (CDL) training for 60 unemployed workers
- Trainees will receive 37 hours of training through Blackhawk Technical College towards their CDL
- Trainees will also participate in a 13-week ride-along training with internal Blackhawk Transport trainers

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