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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DWD Announces Recipients of Wisconsin Fast Forward Grants for Jump Start**

*Grants will support skills development and customized training for entry-level Wisconsin workers*

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) has awarded six Wisconsin Fast Forward Jump Start grants to employers who have demonstrated a critical need for skilled workers. The training grants will be used to develop and implement training programs for entry-level workers.

DWD awarded more than \$600,000 to six Wisconsin employers, which will serve 24 businesses and at least 495 trainees across Wisconsin.

"These grants aim to help trainees from at-risk, vulnerable or special populations, including those who are chronically unemployed, formerly incarcerated, economically disadvantaged or have a disability," said DWD Secretary Caleb Frostman. "Advocating for the economic advancement and inclusion of all Wisconsinites is of the utmost importance to this administration and this agency."

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:

**Urban League of Greater Madison** – DWD issued a grant of \$197,774.

- The organization will partner with Latino Academy of Workforce Development and will provide training to 100 unemployed individuals
- Trainees will be able to receive Commercial Drivers' Licenses (CDLs) and receive multiple industry certifications
- Training will include: English and bilingual construction readiness and apprenticeship readiness

**W.G. & R. Furniture Co. (Greene Light Holding Company)** – DWD issued a grant of \$91,225.37.

- The organization will partner with Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and will train 65 incumbent new hire trainees
- Training will include: customer service, inter and cross department training, emotional intelligence, delivery driving, production, selling, time management, problem solving and leadership essentials

**Urban League of Greater Madison** – DWD issued a grant of \$120,810.

- The organization will partner with Exact Sciences to train 90 unemployed individuals as entry-level biological technicians, medical records and health information technicians, order clerks and customer service representatives

- After training, trainees will be placed in employment at Exact Sciences

**Employ Milwaukee** – DWD issued a grant of \$73,041.

- Employ Milwaukee has partnered with BankWork\$ to train 150 unemployed individuals for entry-level banking positions in the Milwaukee Area
- Eight employment partners have agreed to employing those who complete the training
- Trainees will receive 192 hours of training over eight weeks

**La Casa de Esperanza** – DWD issued a grant of \$79,625.

- The organization will partner with Milwaukee Community Service Corps to train 50 unemployed trainees as entry-level construction laborers
- Trainees will receive OSHA 10 certification, forklift certification, PACT training, Wisconsin Lead Renovator certification, CPR/AED certification as well as soft skills employment readiness training
- Training will include: two 9-week training cohorts combining classroom and hands-on training

**Northcott Neighborhood House, Inc.** – DWD issued a grant of \$49,924.

- The organization will partner with Milwaukee Area Technical College and Hoppe Tree Services to provide arborist training to 40 unemployed individuals
- Training will include: Urban Arborist Pre-Apprenticeship and PACT through Northcott Neighborhood House, instructions for ground operations specialist and tree care through Milwaukee Area Technical College and hands-on tree care training through Hoppe Tree Services

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