



WISCONSIN **FAST** *FORWARD*

➔ SKILLED WORKERS. SMART BUSINESS. **STRONG WISCONSIN.**

ANNUAL REPORT • DECEMBER 2015



STATE OF WISCONSIN



Department of Workforce Development

A man with a beard and safety glasses is focused on his work, leaning over a piece of industrial machinery. He is wearing a blue, vertically striped short-sleeved shirt. The background is a blurred industrial setting.

WISCONSIN **FAST FORWARD**

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Inside

- 2 Wisconsin Fast Forward Overview
- 3 Office of Skills Development
- 4 Grant Program Activity
- 8 Grant Program Impact
- 12 Labor Market Information System

"The rapid growth and expansion at our Merrill, Wisconsin facility presented InterFlex with the unique challenge of rapidly developing our existing workforce and being in a position to effectively train 60 plus new employees. Wisconsin Fast Forward grant funding, and partnering with the State of Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development, allowed us to develop a customized training plan for our employees, which has given us a tremendous opportunity to quickly develop our workforce to meet our strategic business objectives."

- Ryan J. Williams, Global Vice-President of Human Resources at InterFlex Group



December 29, 2015

Governor Scott Walker
Room 115 East
Wisconsin State Capitol
Madison, WI 53703

Senator Alberta Darling
Co-Chair, Joint Finance Committee
Room 317 East
Wisconsin State Capitol
Madison, WI 53703

Representative John Nygren
Co-Chair, Joint Finance Committee
Room 309 East
Wisconsin State Capitol
Madison, WI 53703

Dear Governor Walker, Senator Darling, and Representative Nygren:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, I am honored to submit the 2015 Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) Annual Report to you for your review. Your support of and investment in WFF has provided more than 21,000 workers and students with high demand skills training through over 330 grant-funded projects to help hundreds of Wisconsin businesses.

The 2015 WFF Annual Report highlights program activity and grant-funded training results per Wisconsin Statute 106.27 (3) requirements. To fully illustrate how your commitment to this important program is positively impacting Wisconsin's workforce, this report includes the following information from inception to September 30, 2015:

- ▶ Applicant requests for nearly \$70 million in grant funding to support worker training projects.
- ▶ Wisconsin Technical Colleges collectively exceeding Wait List Reduction grant student enrollment goals by 103% nine months earlier than anticipated.
- ▶ Launching Labor Market Information System enhancements to improve employer and talent connections through dynamic, advanced skills matching tools and easier access to integrated labor market data for making informed employment decisions.

As you know, WFF is intended to provide worker training grants based on employer demand for documented skill labor needs that are not currently addressed by other training programs. Our agency will continue to seek input from businesses, workforce and economic development partners, and education and training agencies and institutions to ensure that future grant announcements are responsive to the needs of employers and address known labor shortages.

We look forward to sharing additional WFF program successes in future reports.

Sincerely,

Secretary Reginald J. Newson
Department of Workforce Development

Wisconsin Fast Forward Overview

Bipartisan Initiative

Nationally-recognized, innovative talent development solution driven by Wisconsin businesses to train and retain highly skilled workers.

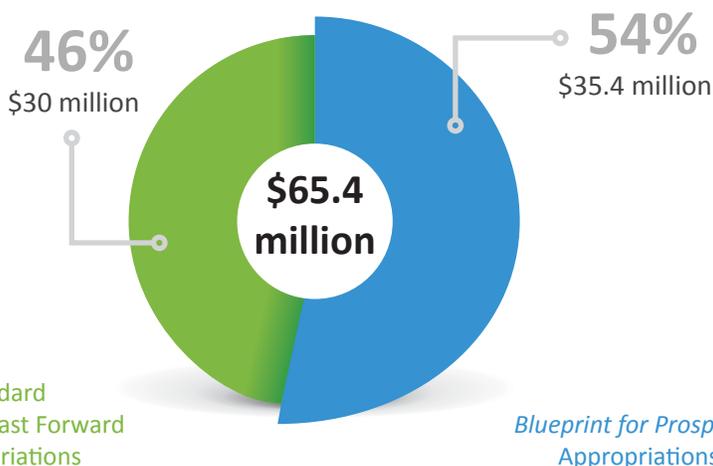
The **Standard Wisconsin Fast Forward** (WFF) (2013 Wisconsin Act 9) program was signed into law in March of 2013 with overwhelming bipartisan support from the State Legislature (Assembly 94-4; and Senate 33-0) to:

1. Create the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) – Office of Skills Development (OSD) to serve as a resource for any Wisconsin business seeking skilled workers and to administer the Wisconsin Fast Forward grant program.
2. Address Wisconsin's skills gap through a \$15 million State General Purpose Revenue (GPR) investment in fiscal years 13-15 and 15-17 for grants to employers to support customized skills training to fill current job openings and ongoing skill requirements.
3. Fund, develop, and implement an enhanced, cutting-edge Labor Market Information System (LMIS).

Applauded by policy makers for quickly targeting and addressing skill shortages by industry, local geography, and occupation, WFF was expanded in March of 2014 when the **Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative** (2013 Wisconsin Act 139) was enacted through a \$35.4 million investment to:

1. Reduce Wisconsin Technical College System waiting lists in high-demand fields.
2. Provide high school pupils with skills training and industry-recognized certification in high demand fields.
3. Enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, including service disabled veterans.

Standard WFF and Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative Appropriations Total (\$65.4 million)



Timeline

2013

- FEB: WFF legislation introduced
- MAR: Wisconsin Act 9 signed
- OCT: Emergency Administrative Rules take effect (DWD 801)
- NOV: WFF Round 1 GPA issued

2014

- FEB: WFF Round 1 grants awarded and Round 2 GPA issued
- MAR: → Blueprint for Prosperity enacted
→ High School Pupil GPA issued
- APR: Wait List Reduction GPA issued
- MAY: Permanent Administrative Rules take effect and High School Pupil grants awarded
- JUN: WFF Round 2 and Wait List Reduction grants awarded
- SEP: WFF Round 3 GPA issued
- DEC: → Training Workers with Disabilities grants awarded
→ WFF Round 3 grants awarded
→ High School Pupil Round 2 GPA issued

2015

- APR: High School Pupil Round 2 grants awarded
- MAY: WFF Round 4 GPA issued
- JUL: WFF FY 15-17 reauthorization signed
- AUG: LMIS Focus Groups held
- SEP: Launched LMIS – Phase 1
- DEC: WFF Round 4 grants to be awarded



DWD Assistant Deputy Secretary Georgia Maxwell, Governor Scott Walker, and DWD Secretary Reggie Newson at the WFF bill signing ceremony in 2013.

OSD Facts

Purpose

- ▶ Provide technical assistance to and serve as a resource for Wisconsin businesses experiencing a need for skilled workers.
- ▶ Administer Standard Wisconsin Fast Forward and Blueprint for Prosperity grants through a transparent and accountable process.

Outreach



Skills Development Support

Improving talent development outcomes by helping hundreds of Wisconsin businesses identify and implement effective training solutions to upskill thousands of workers.

Skills Development Inquiries

The Office of Skills Development (OSD) helps employers identify workforce training needs and make local talent development connections by coordinating meetings and facilitating conversations between Wisconsin employers and regional economic development corporations, Workforce Development Boards (WDBs), technical colleges, chambers of commerce, and other stakeholders. Skills development inquiries are reviewed and resolved quickly through the OSD – Inquiry Review Committee, consisting of knowledge experts from the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), and Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA). Employers and training providers may submit skills development inquiries at: wisconsinfastforward.com/skills_inquiry.asp.

Grant Program Management

The OSD effectively administers the Standard Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) and Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative grant programs through a transparent and accountable process. To address identified workforce skills gaps and labor shortages by industry sector or occupational area, Grant Program Announcements (GPAs) are formed with expert guidance from the DWD, WEDC, and Wisconsin Department of Revenue economic advisors who participate on the OSD – Technical Review Committee. As GPAs are issued, Wisconsin employers and their workforce and economic development partners may submit customized worker training grant applications. All eligible grant proposals within a GPA are reviewed by an evaluation committee that makes funding recommendations to the OSD for final award determination. Grant-funded projects are managed by the OSD for the duration of each grant period, possibly as long as two years from grant approval. Learn more about Standard WFF and Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative grants here: wisconsinfastforward.com.

Special Thanks

On behalf of the DWD, the OSD extends its most sincere appreciation to the WEDC and WTCS for their continued WFF partnership. The OSD is also deeply grateful for the time commitment from countless volunteers and industry experts who serve on OSD's Inquiry Review Committee, Technical Review Committee, and GPA Evaluation Committees. Their important work ensures that grant opportunities support the workforce training needs of employers and have lasting value to incumbent workers, new hires, and underemployed and unemployed individuals who benefit from grant-funded training.

WFF Newsletter

Subscribe now to learn about new grant opportunities:
wisconsinfastforward.com/newsletter/subscribe.htm

Cultivating a strong environment for private sector job creation

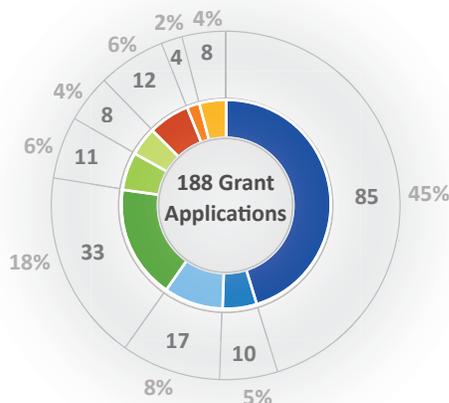
The Standard Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) grant program cultivates a strong environment for private sector job creation by helping Wisconsin businesses train highly skilled workers to fill current job openings and ongoing skill requirements. As a catalyst for talent development, the program encourages increased collaboration between Wisconsin businesses and workforce training partners for the development and implementation of customized and sustainable short- and medium-term training programs that place workers in long-term positions with opportunities for professional growth and economic advancement.

A total of \$30 million in State General Purpose Revenue (GPR) has been made available to Wisconsin businesses for Standard WFF customized worker training grants to enhance the skills and credentials of incumbent workers, new hires, and underemployed and unemployed individuals. The below table highlights Standard WFF funding allocations and account balances through September 30, 2015:

Program	Allocation	Applicant Requested	Intent to Award Grant Amount	Contracted Grant Amount	Reimbursed	Contracted Grant Awards
Round 1	\$2,700,000	\$4,071,700	\$2,604,943	\$2,599,158	\$1,247,453	32
Round 2	\$7,500,000	\$5,622,313	\$3,429,005	\$3,424,005	\$1,234,844	47
Round 3	\$8,000,000	\$11,048,041	\$6,820,821	\$6,322,427	\$795,396	67
Round 4	\$8,000,000	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Total	\$26,200,000	\$20,742,054	\$12,854,769	\$12,345,590	\$3,277,693	146

During the first three rounds of grant funding, Grant Program Announcements (GPAs) were issued to support workforce training needs in nine industry sectors and occupational areas with high demand for skilled workers. The following showcase the number of Standard WFF grants received and Intent to Award trainee counts by GPA:

Standard WFF Applications Received (188) in Rounds 1, 2 and 3



Standard WFF Intent to Award Trainee Counts (14,011)



- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Transportation
- Information Technologies
- Customer Service
- Healthcare
- Small Business
- Agriculture
- Financial Services

The Standard WFF – Round 4 grant cycle was announced in the second quarter of 2015. A total of nine Grant Program Announcements were released with staggered application deadlines through the fourth quarter of 2015. The Office of Skills Development anticipates issuing Round 4 Intent to Award decisions by December 31, 2015.

New Berlin School District, Waukesha County

\$27,990 Grant | 20 High School Student Trainees | Certified Nursing Assistant

The New Berlin School District's Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative – High School Pupil Worker Training grant will train 20 high school students for a career pathway in healthcare as a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA). Successful trainees receive CNA certification, Waukesha County Technical College credits, and job placement opportunities at Linden Grove, Wheaton Franciscan – Elmbrook Memorial Campus, and other local healthcare facilities.



DWD Secretary Reggie Newson, Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow, New Berlin School District Board President David Maxey, and Waukesha County Board Chair Paul Decker meet CNA trainees at the District.

"Being a professional in the healthcare industry for over 38 years, I realize the need we face in not only having enough workers available to fill our positions, but also having well trained and qualified workers.

This grant has demonstrated that by designing a program that can be an entry level employment avenue for future careers in health care we are addressing a future need that will provide us qualified health care professionals."

- Michael Zimmermann, Chief Administrator at Linden Grove in New Berlin

"We are extremely grateful for the support of Linden Grove, our employers and the Wisconsin Fast Forward – High School Pupil Worker Training grant program. It is our collective work to provide students with relevant learning experiences that will help them develop their talents and inform their post-secondary plans."

- Joe Garza, Superintendent at the School District of New Berlin



▲ **Natalie Perleberg, New Berlin Eisenhower High School** - My grandpa became sick and part of his treatment required the assistance of a CNA. I had the opportunity to see firsthand the way CNA professionals can help others. This inspired me to earn my CNA through the Dual Enrollment program offered at my high school.

Nearly 7,170 Wisconsin Youth and Adults Obtain In-Demand Training

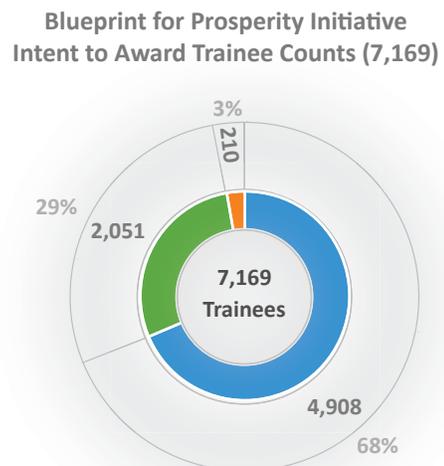
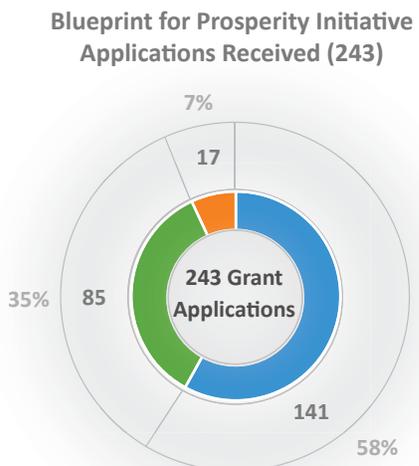
The Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative expands the WFF program through an additional investment of \$35.4 million in State General Purpose Revenue to provide in-demand skills training for three target populations: Wisconsin technical college students, high school pupils, and persons with disabilities, including service-disabled veterans. To ensure that grant training opportunities provide the skills required by Wisconsin employers, Grant Program Announcements (GPAs) are developed and managed in partnership with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and Department of Workforce Development – Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. Grant awards include:

1. \$28,021,052 to 16 Wisconsin Technical Colleges to reduce wait lists for 4,908 students.
2. \$4,651,112 to 75 projects to train 2,051 high school pupils in high demand fields.
3. \$622,340 to enhance employer-driven job opportunities for 210 persons with disabilities.
4. \$850,000 to expand Project SEARCH to assist students with disabilities with their transition into the workforce.

Employers, in consultation with DWD, began developing customized training curriculum in early 2015 to address the unique needs of participating job-seekers with disabilities. The training curriculum was developed with the needs of the employer partner as a focus, ensuring that trainees would gain marketable and valuable skills that would help the business meet its talent development needs. Given the need to build customized training from the ground up, most grant projects began training in the second quarter of 2015. See the below table for Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative funding allocations and account balances through September 30, 2015, which was the end of the third quarter of 2015:

Program	Allocation	Applicant Requested	Intent to Award Grant Amount	Contracted Grant Amount	Reimbursed	Contracted Grant Awards
Technical College Wait List	\$31,000,000	\$38,696,551	\$28,021,052	\$27,641,935	\$7,661,610	100
High School Pupil - Round 1	\$1,500,000	\$3,209,450	\$2,125,939	\$2,065,652	\$1,176,693	30
High School Pupil - Round 2	\$3,000,000	\$3,124,924	\$2,525,173	\$2,385,628	\$67,263	45
Training Workers w/ Disabilities	\$1,000,000	\$1,189,112	\$622,340	\$621,385	\$27,181	11
Project SEARCH	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$850,000	\$22,797	1
TOTAL:	\$37,350,000	\$47,070,037	\$34,144,504	\$33,564,600	\$8,955,544	187

The below graphs demonstrate the need for and desire of trainees to participate in high value, in-demand training opportunities that provide industry credentials and improve career pathways:



Grand Geneva, LLC in Lake Geneva, Walworth County

\$38,508 Grant | 24 Trainees with Disabilities | Entry-Level Culinary Arts Jobs

Corporate staff at the AAA Four Diamond-rated Grand Geneva Resort and Spa used Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative – Training Workers with Disabilities grant funds to develop course curriculum and provide two-month instruction on hospitality basics, food storeroom best practices, stewarding, and culinary basics.

"We're thrilled to implement this culinary training program on property, further addressing the need to find meaningful work for people with disabilities. The hands-on techniques that the associates will experience will be an everlasting window of opportunity for these individuals."

- Tom Mason, General Manager at Grand Geneva Resort and Spa



▲ Current training participant Eugene Lindeman, permanently hired training graduate Dylan Rossmiller, DWD Secretary Newson, Executive Pastry Chef Brian LeFeber, and Executive Chef Michael Sawin visit during a recent tour of the culinary training program at Grand Geneva Resort and Spa.



Customized Grant Training Increases Skills and Wages of Wisconsin Workers

Standard Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) supports customized skills training for 14,011 workers at more than 300 Wisconsin businesses through 146 Intent to Award grants issued by the Office of Skills Development (OSD) in three rounds of funding that included nine industry-specific Grant Program Announcements (GPAs). As the below graph illustrates, trainee wages vary greatly depending on the occupational title and market demand for skilled labor by industry and region:

Standard WFF – Rounds 1, 2 and 3
Average Grantee Proposed Post-Training Wages by GPA



VSI, LLC, Brown County
\$25,000 Grant | 14 Worker Trainees | Manufacturing Process Improvement

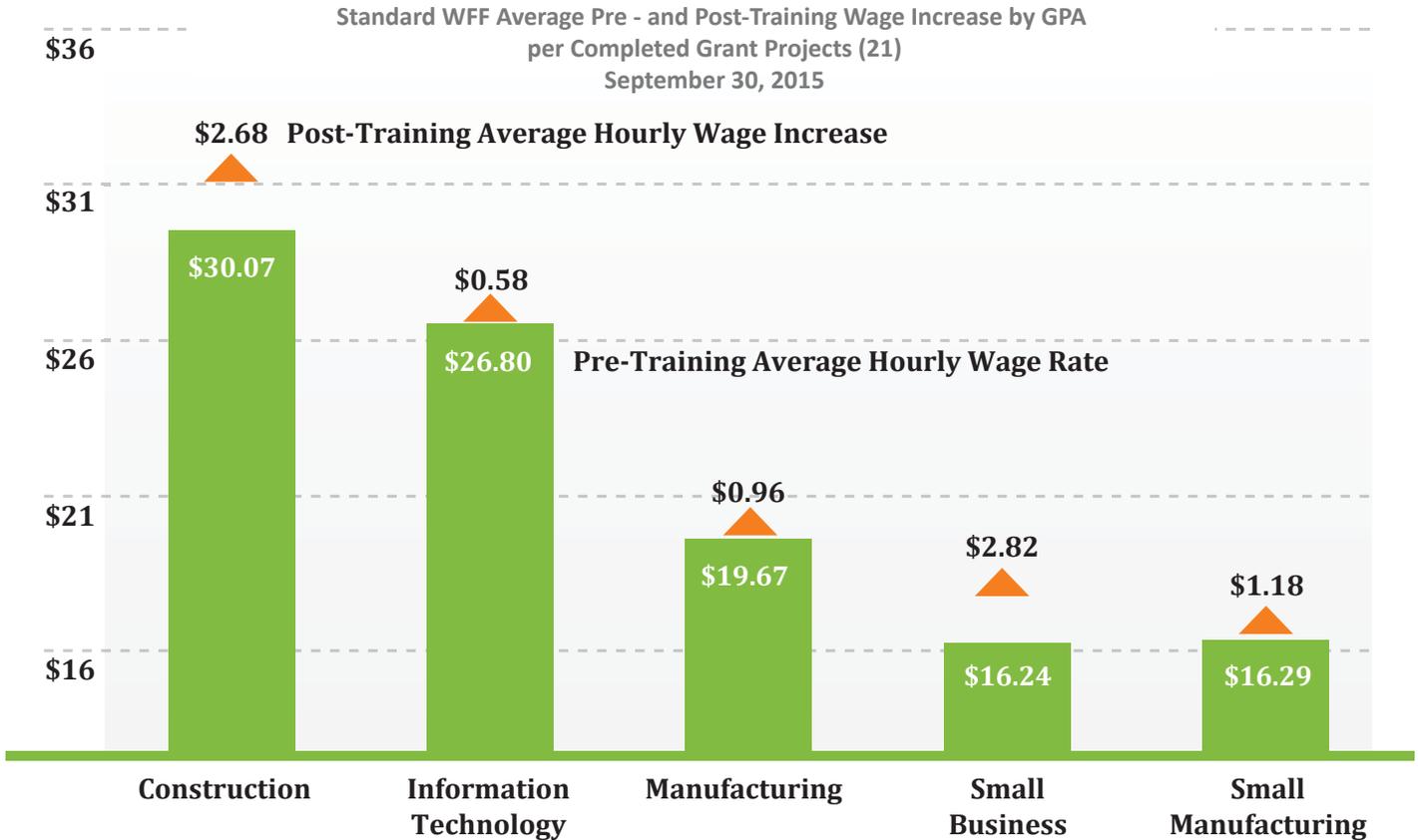
To eliminate a shortage of certified workers and enable the small business to secure new long-term contracts, VSI's grant provided training through Northeast Wisconsin Technical College and an industry provider in customer-required internal auditing processes and lean manufacturing.

VSI extended the training opportunity to 27 employees, nearly doubling the number of workers with new skills and significantly reducing the cost per trainee. Upon training completion, all trainees received an industry-recognized certificate and some trainees also earned Continuing Education Units. In addition, 24 trainees received an average post-training wage increase of \$1.45/hour.

VSI anticipates creating new Wisconsin-based jobs with increased business as a result of Standard WFF grant training.

As of September 30, 2015, a total of 29 standard WFF grant projects have closed, of which 21 grantee successfully completed training deliverables. Eight projects were withdrawn or discontinued at the grantee's request or due to inactivity, allowing identified funds to be redirected toward other high-impact WFF grant projects. This underscores the accountability and value of the program's reimbursement structure, which optimizes and protects the taxpayer's investment.

The 21 completed grant projects span five Grant Program Announcements (GPAs): Construction, Information Technology, Manufacturing, Small Business, and Small Manufacturing. The next charts depict average pre- and post-training wages per completed grant projects:



**Standard WFF Average Pre- and Post-Training Wages
per Completed Grant Projects (21)
September 30, 2015**

Trainee Classification	Total Trainees	Trainees with Wage Data	Pre-Training Avg Hr Wage	Post-Training Avg Hr Wage	Post-Training Avg Hr Increase
Unemployed Trainees Who Obtained Employment	44	25	\$0.00	\$13.22	\$13.22
Underemployed Trainees Who Obtained Employment	87	80	\$31.38	\$33.14	\$1.76
New Hire Trainees Who Retained Employment	114	100	\$17.35	\$17.60	\$0.25
Incumbent Worker Trainees Who Received Wage Increases	357	245	\$21.11	\$21.94	\$0.83
Total	602	450	\$20.96	\$22.38	\$1.42

Total Grant Training Participation Soars to 21,180 Workers

The Office of Skills Development (OSD) has issued 187 Blueprint for Prosperity Intent to Award grants to provide targeted training opportunities for an additional 7,169 trainees, increasing in-demand skills training for 21,180 workers through the WFF program. The following table provides an overview of the Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative training enrollment outcomes by grant program through September 30, 2015:

Blueprint for Prosperity Initiative
Training Enrollment Outcomes by Grant Program

Grant Program	Intent to Award Trainees	Grantee Contracted Trainees	Trainees Enrolled in Training
Technical College Wait List	4,908	4,908	5,043
High School Pupil - Round 1	949	939	786
High School Pupil - Round 2	1,102	1,026	257
Training Workers w/ Disabilities	210	210	52
TOTAL:	7,169	7,083	6,138

Exceeding Technical College Wait List Reduction Student Enrollment Goals

The 16 Wisconsin Technical Colleges collectively exceeded the Technical College Wait List Reduction grant program enrollment goal of 4,908 students, registering 5,043 students or 103% of the contracted enrollment outcomes nine months prior to grant program completion. To date, enrolled students have earned 2,163 high demand credentials through Blueprint for Prosperity initiative grant funding.

Originally scheduled to end in June 2016, Wisconsin Technical Colleges will have an opportunity to extend Wait List Reduction grant training opportunities due to successful student enrollment outcomes. The grant training extension will enable the DWD's technical college partners to serve more students on current wait lists through additional courses during the summer and fall.

“Employers in every sector and region rely on Wisconsin’s technical colleges to advance their goals. Those partnerships result in immediate, relevant career opportunities for our students. We’re seeing that yet again with these results.”

- Dr. Morna K. Foy, President, Wisconsin Technical College System



Find high skill training at your technical college: wtcsystem.edu



Grant Training Success

Fox Valley Technical College, Outagamie County

\$190,890 Grant | 120 Worker Trainees | Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)

To address ongoing local employer shortages of CNAs, the Technical College Wait List Reduction grant helped Fox Valley Technical College expand programming by 12 additional sections for 120 wait list students who enrolled in training and earned credentials.

"Fox Valley Technical College has made significant strides in helping meet the demands for nursing assistants through its partnership with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and Fast Forward grant funding. The college exceeded an original benchmark of the grant by training 120 new nursing assistants by more than 150%, and extended funding will enable us to sustain momentum in addressing a skill shortage for our region's healthcare providers."

- Zoe Cujak, Dean - Health Division, Fox Valley Technical College

Northcentral Technical College

\$470,933 Grant Project | 35 Students Enrolled | Information Technology (IT) Software Developer

Northcentral Technical College's Wait List Reduction grant expanded instructional capacity to help 35 students earn a one semester certificate and one-year technical diploma as IT Software Developers at the Wausau Campus. Contracted to enroll 35 students, NTC leveraged its grant training resources to enroll 59 students to help area businesses fill current, high demand IT job openings.

NTC Student Adam Stall Benefits from Grant-Funded Training

Adam Stall was pursuing a career in the restaurant industry prior to beginning his education at Northcentral Technical College (NTC). Encouraged by a graduate, he pursued and discovered his passion for Information Technology (IT) while completing four industry training programs in two years, including those offered through Technical College Wait List Reduction grant support. During Adam's fourth semester, he was hired by a software company in central Wisconsin where he will work while completing the Instructional Assistant position he currently holds at NTC.

"I was able to finish the program quickly. I felt confident finding employment since the end of my second semester at NTC after attending an IT Job Fair at the College and hearing stories of graduates who had come through before me."

- Adam Stall, Graduating December 2015



New, mobile-friendly employment tools available

Launching dynamic tools that enable users to develop skills-based job postings and resumes and conduct advanced talent and job searches. These enhancements will help employers and job seekers make more effective employment connections.

New Tools for Employers and Job Seekers

The first phase of LMIS enhancements launched on September 16, 2015, making new, mobile-friendly employment tools available to employers and job seekers at no cost, 24 hours a day on Wisconsin's online public labor exchange, JobCenterofWisconsin.com (JCW). Phase 1 enhancements move the state's LMIS toward the ultimate vision of a best-in-class system that integrates existing applications, such as JobNet Business, Skill Explorer and WORKnet, with the latest available labor market information (LMI) to connect talent with job postings based on skills.

JCW – Phase 1 Enhancements Offer:

- ▶ Streamlined registration from over 20 screens to 5 screens.
- ▶ Improved usability and search features.
- ▶ Advanced skills matching to connect talent with job postings.
- ▶ Integrated LMI for making informed employment decisions.



New Tools for Employers and Job Seekers

Employers

- ▶ Access to real-time LMI to drive hiring decisions and job growth for the expansion or relocation of businesses to Wisconsin.
- ▶ Improved solutions for building job descriptions based on required skills to connect with an expanded group of job seekers across industries based on desired and transferrable skill sets.
- ▶ Ability to automatically post and add company logos to job openings without the need for staff review and approval.

Job Seekers

- ▶ Ability to explore careers and make informed job decisions through real-time LMI with regional wage data by industry occupation.
- ▶ Improved solutions for building resumes that capture more information about employment skills, interests and work history.
- ▶ Access to job spidering technology that searches the Internet for and makes over tens of thousands of job openings available for review in one location.

