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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, October 8, 2008

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Secretary Gassman Announces \$121,000 Training Grant, Funding for Lakeshore Tech to Boost Skills of 530 Workers at Three Manufacturers

Labor Secretary highlights Governor's workforce agenda to grow economy, create jobs

SHEBOYGAN – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today presented Lakeshore Technical College a Workforce Advancement Training grant of \$121,186, funding to improve the skills of 530 workers at three manufacturers, boost production and create jobs.

"This is Governor Doyle's Grow Wisconsin plan in action, investing in people, growing our economy and creating jobs," Secretary Gassman said. "With this grant, Lakeshore Technical College can improve the skills of 530 workers and help their employers, Nemschoff Chairs, Rockline Industries, and LDI Industries, increase production and reduce costs. As they become more efficient and profitable, Nemschoff and Rockline expect to add 100 jobs each in three years."

As part of his Grow Wisconsin plan, Governor Doyle created the Workforce Advancement Training (WAT) grant program in the 2005-2007 budget with \$2 million, and it has provided training to nearly 30,000 incumbent workers employed by businesses throughout the state. With the current budget, he provided \$5 million for WAT grants over the two year period.

In a visit to Nemschoff Chair, Secretary Gassman presented the grant to Lakeshore Technical College (LTC), described the training workers will receive, and highlighted additional workforce agenda items in Grow Wisconsin – The Next Steps, the Governor's latest plan to build on the success of earlier investments in workforce and economic development.

"Despite the major economic difficulty at the national level, the Wisconsin economy is holding its own, due to investments we have made under Governor Doyle's leadership," Secretary Gassman said. "In the months ahead, we must take the next steps to keep Wisconsin moving forward and ensure a first-rate workforce."

The WAT grant she presented will provide the following training:

- **Nemschoff Chairs, Inc., Sheboygan** -- LTC will train 190 employees in lean manufacturing principles and Quick Start Manufacturing, a cellular or team approach to production, instead of assembly line production. Teams build products from start to finish, rather than one component. With greater efficiency and profitability, the furniture manufacturer will continue operations in Sheboygan and remain competitive. Nemschoff expects to add 100 jobs in three years.
- **Rockline Industries, Sheboygan** – LTC will provide similar training to 200 employees to reduce costs for the leading manufacturer of private-label coffee filters and baby wipes. Training in leadership, management and project development will improve Rockline's ability to compete in the global market. Like Nemschoff, Rockline expects to add 100 jobs as a result in three years.
- **LDI Industries, Manitowoc** – LTC will train 140 employees at LDI Industries, a leading designer and manufacturer of lubricating equipment and hydraulic components. Employees in all departments will receive training in lean manufacturing principles. As a result, LDI expects to create opportunities for 30 employees to advance to jobs with higher skills and more pay in three years.