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## **Secretary Gassman Awards Certificates, Urges More Workers to Enter Rigorous Manufacturing Training Program, Pathway to Advancement**

### ***Event honors first to earn Manufacturing Skill Standards Certification at Blackhawk Tech***

JANESVILLE – Department of Workforce Development Secretary Roberta Gassman today awarded certificates to workers completing a rigorous training program in manufacturing, and she urged more workers and employers to participate in Governor Doyle’s Grow Wisconsin initiative and gain skills that will prove valuable in the nation’s economic recovery and reinvestment efforts.

In a ceremony at Blackhawk Technical College, Secretary Gassman and Dan Clancy, President of the Wisconsin Technical College System, congratulated 14 workers who earned national Manufacturing Skill Standards Certification (MSSC). Blackhawk Technical College began offering MSSC training a year ago, and these are the first workers to successfully complete all four training modules.

“Manufacturing is our heritage and our future,” Secretary Gassman said. “Under Governor Doyle’s leadership, Wisconsin became the first state to formally embrace the MSSC training program, because he knows we must invest in people, their education and training, to ensure a skilled workforce and economic growth. The skills these workers have gained will help Wisconsin remain a strong manufacturing state and lead the way as our nation’s economy begins to recover.”

As part of his Grow Wisconsin – The Next Steps plan, Governor Doyle set a goal of having 40 percent of Wisconsin’s manufacturing workers achieve MSSC standing by 2016. He launched Wisconsin’s MSSC effort two years ago with \$250,000 in grants, enabling DWD’s partners, regional workforce development boards and the technical colleges, develop training programs throughout the state.

“Wisconsin’s working families and communities, especially Janesville, have been hard hit by the deepening recession,” Secretary Gassman said. “Our country’s economic crisis also has left the state with an unprecedented \$5.75 billion deficit. In the face of these challenges, Governor Doyle remains true to our priorities of investing in people, building strong families and communities. He is determined to protect what is most important to our recovery and well being, good schools for our children, health care for those who need it, and police and fire protection for all communities.”

Among the MSSC graduates at Blackhawk are nine employees of SSI Technologies, including Georgia Ellis, training coordinator for the Janesville manufacturer. The group also includes Bill Jeffrey, a retired GM project manager who has become Blackhawk’s MSSC instructor since he completed the training last spring. In all, 16 individuals have completed the program at the college. Two were unable to attend the ceremony.

For more information about MSSC, visit the Wisconsin MSSC website at: <http://mssc.wi.gov>.