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Secretary Gassman Appoints Jessica Erickson as Executive Assistant

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today announced the appointment of Jessica Erickson as Executive Assistant for the Department.

“I am pleased to announce the appointment of Jessica Erickson to the top management team at the Department of Workforce Development,” Secretary Gassman said. “Jessica brings a diverse array of talents, executive experience, and a proven track record of success to the position. She will be a tremendous asset as we work during these challenging times to implement the Governor’s plans to grow our economy, create jobs, and expand worker training programs.”

As Executive Assistant, Erickson will fill one of the Department’s top three leadership roles and be responsible for external relations for the Secretary’s Office, including communications, legislative, and congressional relations, as well as interactions with DWD partner agencies and organizations. The appointment is effective February 23, 2009.

Erickson most recently served in state government as Press Secretary for Governor Jim Doyle and as Communications Director at the Department of Workforce Development, where she played a key role in helping to develop and advance Governor Doyle’s Grow Wisconsin: The Next Steps agenda. She began working in communications for Governor Doyle in 2002 and has also served as a legislative and policy aide in the Wisconsin State Senate, Campaign Manager for State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster’s successful re-election bid, and as Executive Director and Communications Director at the Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

A native of La Crosse, Erickson is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Madison and a member of the Wisconsin Women in Government (WWIG) Board of Directors.

Erickson replaces Executive Assistant Hector Colon, who has been appointed Executive Assistant for the state Department of Regulation and Licensing.

“Hector’s leadership, particularly in implementing the Governor’s GROW Wisconsin workforce development agenda, will be missed,” Secretary Gassman said. “I wish him the best in his move to the Department of Regulation and Licensing and am confident that Secretary Jackson and her leadership team will benefit greatly with Hector on their team.”

Among his many significant contributions, Secretary Gassman listed Colon’s work on regional sector-based workforce development and his efforts with the state apprenticeship program, where she said he played a major role in developing a new strategic plan resulting in greater minority involvement in the program.

A member of Governor Doyle’s cabinet, Secretary Gassman leads the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development and oversees 1,650 employees charged with strengthening the state’s workforce. DWD provides training and employment assistance to job seekers, enforces worker’s rights, administers Unemployment Insurance, Apprenticeship, and Worker’s Compensation, and works with employers to fill jobs.