



SCOTT WALKER

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For Immediate Release

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Governor Scott Walker Proclaims October as Manufacturing Month

Madison – Governor Scott Walker today proclaimed October as Manufacturing Month. Manufacturing is a leading industry in Wisconsin and the month will be spent highlighting the industry and ways to train workers for skilled manufacturing jobs.

“Nearly 450,000 Wisconsinites hold careers in manufacturing,” Governor Walker said. “Manufacturing makes up the backbone of our economy and to remain on the cutting-edge, we need to invest in our workers. We want to draw attention to these innovative, family-supporting jobs to encourage people to enter the field and find success.”

Wisconsin manufacturing is growing. Workers earn \$52,000 per year on average, which is 25 percent higher than the average for all private-sector workers. More than 450,000 workers are employed by approximately 9,400 Wisconsin manufacturers with metal fabrication and machinery manufacturing ranking as the two largest sectors in Wisconsin. CNBC recently ranked Wisconsin number five in its top states for manufacturing.

Our manufacturing workers are highly trained and innovative with 46 percent having some form of post-secondary education. Apprenticeships for manufacturing have increased 10 percent since January 2011 with CNC machining and tool- and die-making being among the in-demand manufacturing occupations.

Events will be hosted throughout October focusing on the strength of Wisconsin manufacturing and addressing the skills gap. The Wisconsin Technical College System will host events at each technical college to highlight all manufacturing has to offer. The skills gap is a significant issue facing the industry, but targeted investments from the state are aimed at alleviating the gap. The 2013-15 state budget included a \$100 million investment in worker training, and the bipartisan fall legislative agenda includes a package of eight bills aimed at enhancing the state’s workforce development efforts, including:

- Smart investments in apprenticeship training programs;
- Vocational rehabilitation services for those with special needs;
- Assistance for the unemployed wanting to transition into new careers;
- Incentives for high schools graduating students with job ready credentials;
- Scholarships for high school seniors who excel in career and technical education courses;
- Getting state licensees tested, trained, and to work faster;
- Helping low-income and low-skilled workers transition into employment;
- Tuition reimbursement for apprentices and employers.

The Department of Workforce Development is coordinating events throughout the month with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the Department of Revenue, the Wisconsin Technical College System, the Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce, and the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership.

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