



SCOTT WALKER

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 18, 2014

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Blueprint for Prosperity: Governor Scott Walker Increases Investment in Wisconsin Fast Forward Worker Training Initiative

Madison – Governor Scott Walker visited Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) in Green Bay and Gateway Technical College’s SC Johnson iMET Center (GTC) in Sturtevant today to promote Act 139 providing a \$35.4 million increase to the *Wisconsin Fast Forward* program. The additional funds will be used to provide workforce training grants to technical colleges, grants for collaborative projects among school districts, technical colleges, and businesses, as well as grants to enhance employment opportunities for persons with disabilities.

“Targeted investments in worker training will develop the highly-technical, dependable workforce Wisconsin is known for,” Governor Walker said. “The economy is continuing to improve and businesses are expanding and hiring, but they need to have skilled workers to fill in-demand positions. The *Wisconsin Fast Forward* program will ensure job seekers are adequately trained to be able to jump into the workforce when an opportunity comes along.”

Northeast Wisconsin Technical College offers more than 100 associate degrees, technical diplomas, and apprenticeships, and 84 certificates. NWTC is ranked in the top 12 percent of U.S. two-year colleges in terms of student success, retention, and graduation. In 2012-2013, NWTC provided training to more than 26,000 employees for 1,070 different businesses.

Gateway Technical College offers associate degrees, technical diplomas, certificates, and advanced technical certificates in the areas of health, business, manufacturing, engineering, and service careers. Gateway excels at developing business partnerships, green career curriculum, and flexible education, such as nodal classrooms and a three-semester academic year.

Gateway’s SC Johnson iMET Center nearly doubled the size of its facility in January 2013 and is the region’s first flexible manufacturing lab. Students are able to learn with the equipment they would be using in the workforce, including CNC multiple-axis, precision measurement, robot programming, welding, and mechatronics.

Developing our Workforce

The \$35.4 million investment in Governor Walker’s *Wisconsin Fast Forward* initiative is in addition to the \$100 million investment in worker training included in the 2013-15 state budget signed by Governor Walker. *Wisconsin Fast Forward* initiatives provide customized worker training in key areas, like manufacturing, construction, and customer service.

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Last month, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD) announced its intent to award the first round of demand-driven worker training grants under Governor Walker's *Wisconsin Fast Forward* initiative. The approved applications total \$2.6 million for 32 innovative projects and will fund employer-specified training in high-demand fields including manufacturing, customer service, and construction. Grant recipients must commit to wage increases and/or new hires.

The Department also announced a second round of training grants available in areas including: health care, information technology, transportation and distribution, financial services, manufacturing, and construction. To learn how to apply for grants or for more information, visit www.WisconsinFastForward.com.

The state enrolled more than 1,200 high school students in the Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program, and in December, Governor Walker signed legislation at Nicolet Technical College to add at least 500 more high school students to the program.

Other workforce development initiatives include a \$1,000 per pupil incentive for high schools to provide career and technical education programs, and a scholarship for high school students, who excel in technical education. DWD also launched Skill Explorer, a web-based tool allowing individuals search for openings based on skills instead of job titles.

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