

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Secretary Gassman Announces \$112,760 Industry Partnership Grant for North Central Wisconsin Advanced Manufacturing – During ‘Up North’ Tour, State Labor Secretary cites job opportunities



Photo by: John Dipko

Pictured left to right are: NCWWDB Business Services Director, Doris McAllister; NCWWDB Acting Executive Director, Jane Spencer; NATC President, Elizabeth Burmaster; DWD Secretary, Roberta Gassman; Joe Fierst, Vice President Operations, Wausau Paper - Rhinelander Mill; D.J. DeMeyer, President USW Local 15; and Rich McAllister, Vice President USW Local 15.

8/26/2010—RHINELANDER – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman recently announced a \$112,760 Wisconsin Industry Partnership grant to train workers for the north central region’s advanced manufacturing sector that plans to add hundreds of good-paying jobs by 2014.

“Manufacturing is our heritage and our future,” Secretary Gassman said. “Wisconsin has added almost 11,000 manufacturing jobs statewide already this year as our economy steadily improves. In the north central region, employers plan to hire hundreds more over the next several years. With

this training grant, Governor Doyle makes another key investment in Wisconsin's workforce, one that will create a pathway to family-supporting jobs in advanced manufacturing.”

Secretary Gassman awarded the grant to the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board (NCWWDB), DWD's regional partner. The board worked with 13 employers and four labor unions to develop the project. With nearly \$111,900 in local matching resources, funding for the project will total more than \$224,600. Nicolet Area Technical College (NATC), another key partner, will train the workers and job seekers.

The project, Advanced Manufacturing Industry Training and Partnership Support, will benefit current workers and unemployed or underemployed individuals. Their training will include a solid foundation in math, reading, writing and computer proficiency, preparing them for success at the post-secondary level. At Nicolet, participants also will gain skills in advanced manufacturing with a goal of earning Manufacturing Skill Standards Certification (MSSC) credentials.

In seeking the grant, the regional board and its partners cited a survey of manufacturers in the area's six counties. Results show that over the next three years, 47 employers plan to hire more than 900 individuals in new entry level jobs, 186 in new technical positions and 87 in new professional level positions. The board and its partners also said that as senior, highly-skilled workers retire, vacancies will occur in industry machinery, laminated packaging and steel production jobs that pay from \$58,500 to \$95,000 a year.

As part of Governor Doyle's "Up North" Tour, Secretary Gassman announced the grant during a visit to Wausau Paper, an employer involved in the project. Governor Doyle launched the Industry Partnership program early last year with nearly \$3 million in funding. Last month, he provided another \$3 million for the program, which represents an innovative approach to training that involves area employers, labor unions, workforce development agencies, economic development agencies, technical colleges, K-12 schools, and University of Wisconsin institutions.

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NCWWDB: The North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board is a public / private partnership between government and business that plans, administers and coordinates Workforce Investment Act (WIA) employment and training programs for adults and youth in the North Central Wisconsin counties of Adams, Forest, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood. Visit NCWWDB at: www.ncwwdb.org.

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