

Gov. Walker: Announces \$5 million state investment for the Brown County STEM innovation center

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Madison - Governor Scott Walker announced today his Capital Budget will include \$5 million for the construction of a 55,000 square-foot Brown County Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Innovation Center in Green Bay. Governor Walker made the announcement at CA Lawton in De Pere and was joined by Brown County Executive Troy Streckenbach. The center will be built in the Brown County Research and Innovation Park adjacent to the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and will promote private/public collaborative STEM programming to support the continued development of manufacturing in Brown County and Northeast Wisconsin. "The Brown County STEM Innovation Center will continue to strengthen the already strong history of manufacturing in Northeast Wisconsin," Governor Walker said. "In order to meet the growing demand of manufacturing jobs in our state, we must provide our students with hands-on opportunities to develop the skills and training needed to thrive in a manufacturing job upon graduation. Upon completion, the center will be a hub for those interested in pursuing a family-supporting career in manufacturing, which further supports the future of Wisconsin's workforce." The \$5 million included in Governor Walker's Capital Budget, along with the \$10 million grantee match, will go towards building a two-story, 55,000 square-foot facility providing community-based training, educational, research, and entrepreneurship center to better meet regional workforce needs and support strategic growth and innovation for Wisconsin's manufacturing industry. The Brown County STEM Innovation Center will house:

- **The proposed University of Wisconsin-Green Bay Baccalaureate degree in Mechanical Engineering**
- **Three existing Engineering Technology degree programs - Electrical, Mechanical, and Environmental**
- **Non-profit organizations like The Einstein Project and the Greater Green Bay STEM Network**, both of which are dedicated to providing a link between industry and early high-quality STEM-focused education to around 60,000 local students
- **The Greater Green Bay Gigabit Initiative**, which provides business accelerator space to help entrepreneurs grow high-tech startups by giving access to high-speed 10-gigabit connection services.

The STEM Innovation Center will additionally serve as a catalyst for the development of the 240-acre Brown County Research and Innovation Park, which will foster collaboration and innovation as well as provide entrepreneurs access to educational and mentorship opportunities to successfully launch companies whose goal is to strengthen and expand the local manufacturing sector. The center will be managed by Brown County in cooperation education and industry partners.

"We thank the Governor for securing northeast Wisconsin's future manufacturing base and for helping us to create a feeder for future job growth and economic development," said Troy Streckenbach, Brown County Executive. "I hope the Legislature will support his efforts to create family-supporting jobs in northeast Wisconsin."

Manufacturing is the largest employment sector in Northeast Wisconsin with nearly one of every five workers in Brown County employed in this industry. According to the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) Baccalaureate and Master's Engineering Supply and Demand in Wisconsin study, Northeast Wisconsin had a significantly higher demand for Baccalaureate Degree engineers than any of the other Wisconsin regions studied in 2013. The Brown County STEM Innovation Center will bolster the region's growth by providing engineering training to meet Brown County's 18.5 percent increase in demand for engineering professionals since 2010. This will ultimately allow the region to remain competitive in manufacturing.

The manufacturing industry is constantly evolving and the center will help support continued growth, foster infrastructure development and job creation, and strengthen the positive impact manufacturing has on the local and state economy by expanding opportunities for those currently employed in manufacturing while also creating new opportunities for potential employees and entrepreneurs as Wisconsin's manufacturing sector continues to grow.