

Gov. Walker: Promotes Wisconsin veteran-owned businesses as part of #WIVetBiz Day

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MADISON - Governor Scott Walker and Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA) Secretary Daniel Zimmerman are unveiling the Wisconsin Veteran-Owned Business logo statewide today during visits to veteran-owned businesses, recognizing 17 total businesses throughout the state. Governor Walker also proclaimed today as Veteran-Owned Business Day throughout Wisconsin.

"It's true, the brave men and women who chose to serve in the United States Armed Forces deserve our full support and assistance when they return home," Governor Walker said. "However, supporting veteran-owned businesses is not only a way to show our thanks to Wisconsin veterans, it's also good for the entire state." There are more than 390,000 veterans living in Wisconsin, about half of whom are working age. Approximately 11 percent of all businesses in the state, or 65,000, are veteran-owned. Wisconsin's veteran-owned businesses account for around \$20 billion in sales every year.

"A veteran's military experience provides him or her with the skills that make a savvy business owner - leadership, the ability to work under pressure, meet deadlines, planning skills, organizational skills, and adaptability," WDVA Secretary Zimmerman said. "We are committed to supporting these veteran entrepreneurs who are creating jobs and improving the employment situation in our state."

As part of #WIVetBiz Day, Governor Walker and Secretary Zimmerman visited four veteran-owned businesses throughout the state to encourage consumers to utilize veteran-owned businesses, promote local partnerships with groups that help train and develop entrepreneurs, and encourage veteran-owned businesses to get certified so they may become part of a statewide Veteran-Owned Business Directory that will be administered by WDVA. To become certified, veteran-owned businesses should visit www.WisVets.com and click on the Wisconsin Veteran-Owned Business logo.

As part of the certification with the State of Wisconsin, businesses will receive an official Wisconsin Veteran-Owned Business certificate, gain access to use the Wisconsin Veteran-Owned Business logo, and may also be included in a Wisconsin Veteran-Owned Business Directory that is being developed.

The Wisconsin Department of Administration (DOA) will also continue to facilitate opportunities for certified veteran-owned businesses to sell their goods and services through the statewide vendor database, Vendornet. Veteran-owned businesses that registered with the state prior to the development of the logo and directory will automatically be given their certification, access to the logo, and provided the opportunity to be included in the directory.

The businesses visited today include:

- **Vines to Cellar Winery, Port Washington** - a micro-winery that offers a variety of wines and has supplies for wine-making. Owned by CJ and Jim Wirsching-Neuser, a husband and wife duo, both of whom are U.S. Army Veterans.
- **Rightstone Financial, Appleton** - a financial services company that helps investors pick investment methods and professionally manages investment portfolios. Owned by Eric Hall, a U.S. Army Veteran.
- **Prosthetic Orthotic Center, Wausau** - makes and fits prosthetic or orthotic devices for their clients, including veterans, that make their day to day lives better and more comfortable. Owned by Bob Lots, a U.S. Navy Veteran.
- **Ledegar Roofing, Inc., La Crosse** - a full-service commercial and residential roofing company. Owned by Dan Koonce, a U.S. Navy Veteran.

As part of #WIVetBiz Day, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Ray Allen, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Deputy Secretary Tricia Braun, and WDVA Assistant Deputy Secretary Kathy Marschman visited the following business as well:

- **Aberdean Consulting, Madison** - provides IT services including data protection and recovery, solution design and implementation, managed services, and management and governance. Owned by Jim Blair, a U.S. Army Veteran.

Other veteran-owned businesses that participated in the events today include:

- Affinity Goods, Madison
- Applied Fab and Machining, Wausau
- Edge Business Management Consulting, Waukesha
- Homes for Heroes, Sun Prairie
- Jaco Systems Technical Services, La Crosse
- JDog Junk Removal & Hauling, Milwaukee
- Pink Ribbon Mastectomy Boutique, Wausau
- Restoration Cider, Madison
- Riveter Enterprises, Fond du Lac
- Snap180 Media, Oshkosh
- Spa on the Go, West Allis
- Spearity, New Berlin