

# Wisconsin Dept. of Workforce Development: Highlights accomplishments in 2017 Annual Report to Governor

Posted on Friday, Dec 29, 2017

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, December 28, 2017

CONTACT: DWD Communications, [608-266-2722](tel:608-266-2722)

On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

On Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/WIWorkforce>

On Twitter: @WIWorkforce

## **DWD Highlights Accomplishments in 2017 Annual Report to Governor**

MADISON – Today, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Ray Allen provided Governor Walker with DWD’s 2017 Annual Report, which summarizes Department operations and provides highlights of the key successes that move the state forward in accomplishing Governor Walker’s workforce development agenda.

“I would like to thank Governor Walker and members of the Wisconsin State Legislature for supporting DWD throughout 2017, and I especially want to thank and recognize all DWD staff for their efforts in making this year so successful for working families across the state,” Secretary Allen said. “As we head toward a strong finish in 2017, we also look forward to an even stronger 2018 as we work together to deliver innovative worker training solutions that grow Wisconsin’s skilled talent and provide businesses with the pipeline of workers they need to expand right here, in Wisconsin.”

Highlights of the report include:

**#StudentSuccess**

- DWD continued to work with our apprenticeship partners to bridge the Youth and Registered Apprenticeship programs, to allow students to transition seamlessly from high school into a full-time registered apprenticeship career. Bridges have been created in 10 different occupations in the Construction and Manufacturing sectors, including Machinist, Welder, Carpenter, Plumber, Electrician, and more. Additional bridges will be constructed in the IT sector in the coming year.
- The Wisconsin PROMISE program has helped nearly 500 youth with disabilities and over 500 of their family members find work while reducing their reliance on Social Security Disability Insurance and other government benefits.
- Wisconsin continued to expand our nationally recognized Project SEARCH program, and in 2017, 11 of the 14 sites that were active in the 2015-2016 school year received national employment outcome awards, ranking Wisconsin in the top 5 internationally in this measure.
- DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) expanded summer youth programming to serve all Workforce Development Areas (WDAs), starting pilot programs in several WDAs for potentially eligible youth, and working on a pilot program for youth with significant barriers to employment requiring wrap-around services.

## **#RewardingWork**

- In 2017, Wisconsin was ranked in the top 10 amongst states for the percentage of people with disabilities who were employed, according to the 2016 Annual Disability Statistics Compendium. Since Governor Walker took office, the state has helped over 25,000 individuals with disabilities reach their employment goal through services provided through DVR.
- In Milwaukee, DWD administered the Pipeline to Employment re-entry program for men and women seeking to re-establish themselves as productive members of society. Participants receive a plethora of services to help prepare them for employment. Through November 2017, the program achieved a 70 percent placement rate for the nearly 50 former offenders that participated in the program.

## **#WIWorking**

- Between October 1, 2016 and September 30, 2017, 3,096 new apprentices were registered and as of October 1, 2017, Wisconsin had 10,097 total active Registered Apprentices.

- The Youth Apprenticeship program issued \$3.2 million in grants for the 2016-17 year to 32 local partnerships. Enrollment for the 2016-17 school year reached an all-time high, with 3,559 youth from 293 school districts working at 2,540 businesses.
- DWD's network of local Job Centers say attendance of more than 218,000 individuals, with significant services provided to more than 72,000 individuals.
- In October 1, 2016, Wisconsin received a \$1.5 million Apprenticeship USA State Expansion Grant. The goal is to grow the number of women and underrepresented populations specifically in the construction industry, as well as develop new apprentice occupations in the Financial Services and Biotech industries. Working in conjunction with two of the state's workforce boards, BAS committed to adding 427 new apprenticeship contracts over the 18-month life span of the grant. As of July 1, 2017, BAS added 686 apprentices in construction trades.

The 2017 DWD Annual Report can be accessed [here](#).