

Dept. of Corrections: Minimum-security inmates complete Industrial Maintenance Program

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GREEN BAY – Department Secretary Cathy Jess joined Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC) President Jeff Rafn, family, and friends to congratulate 11 Sanger Powers Correctional Center inmates graduating from NWTC's [Industrial Maintenance Certificate](#) program.

The 14-week, 14-credit technical training program provides instruction in the basics of PLC motors and drives, pneumatics, hydraulics, and mechanics. Certificate completers can provide basic troubleshooting and maintenance on industrial machinery.

The inmates, who are in minimum-security status, represent part of the Department's efforts to train inmates nearing release for in-demand careers in the community. Over the last several years, the Department has devoted significant resources to increasing educational and vocational opportunities for inmates. This includes hosting short-term intensive academies across the State of Wisconsin in concert with local technical colleges in construction, welding, CNC machining, and industrial maintenance.

These academies result in industry-recognized credentials inmates can utilize to

find family-sustaining jobs in the community in an effort to reduce recidivism. The Department has also purchased a mobile lab which enables us to provide instruction in CNC machining. The Department received additional funds in the 2017 - 2019 biennial budget to purchase additional mobile labs which will provide instruction in welding and industrial maintenance.

DOC Secretary Cathy Jess said: “Expanding vocational education opportunities for inmates are invaluable for inmates seeking a second chance and employers seeking skilled workers. National research shows that every dollar invested in educational opportunities for inmates can save taxpayers [five dollars](#) in reincarceration costs over the next three years. We look forward to continuing to expand our education and vocational offerings to provide inmates the opportunity to receive their high school degree, learn an in-demand skill, and release to the community with good prospects for employment. ”

“NWTC has a long history of helping people start a new path that will transform their lives, support their families, and meet employer needs,” said Dr. Rafn. “Based on my conversations with area business leaders, Wisconsin’s critical manufacturing industry needs more trained technicians in industrial maintenance than they can find. Training students for a promising career that meets area business needs is one of the ways NWTC stands out, and one of the ways we keep Wisconsin’s economy growing. I’m very happy to see this day arrive - for everyone involved.”