

Gov. Evers: Highlights investments in innovative solutions to state's workforce needs

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers [last week announced](#) nearly \$60 million in grants through the [Workforce Innovation Grant Program](#) for 12 regional projects aimed at developing long-term solutions to Wisconsin's workforce challenges. Throughout the week, the governor, together with members of his cabinet, made several stops around the state visiting with grant recipients, highlighting the significance of these investments and how each project will meet the unique needs of the surrounding communities and regions. In total, the 12 projects selected will receive up to \$59.5 million in grants through the first round of the Workforce Innovation Grant Program.

To kick off the governor's statewide tour announcing these awards, on Tues., Dec. 14, 2021, Gov. Evers, together with Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) Secretary and CEO Missy Hughes and Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek, visited the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire where they highlighted two of the regional projects to address workforce needs in the Eau Claire area. First, the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and Mayo Clinic Health System, in partnership with local school districts and social services organizations, will use up to \$9.4 million to help grow and retain education, healthcare, and social work professionals in rural communities in the region.

The second project featured during the governor's stop in Eau Claire was Chippewa Valley Technical College's proposal to use up to \$10 million to support the Restoring Employment through Support, Training, Outreach, Recruitment, and Education (RESTORE) project. This project will use strategically located multi-purpose training centers and mobile labs in rural communities to address the need for skilled

workers in metal fabrication across the manufacturing sector. Photos of the visit in Eau Claire are available [here](#) and [here](#).

Also on Tuesday, the governor visited Mid-State Technical College's campus in Stevens Point to learn about their plans to use up to \$9 million in grants to engage 2,500 unemployed, underemployed, underserved communities, and youth with skill training and barrier-removing support services. This includes the construction of the Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering Technology, and Apprenticeship Center, which would focus on training to serve the region's manufacturing, engineering, and technology industries. According to Mid-State Technical College, the construction of this center will expand the College's educational programs to train more than 400 students every year. A photo of the visit at Mid-State College is available [here](#).

Finally, on Tuesday, the governor stopped in the city of Kenosha to visit Gateway Technical College to highlight the College's plan to use up to \$5.6 million in grants to expand their High School Equivalency Diploma (HSED) program to help individuals overcome education barriers that keep them out of high-demand fields. To effectively serve individuals participating in the program, courses will be offered in person and online, courses offered in person will be centrally located and offered both during the day and in the evening, and transportation and childcare services will be sourced as needed. Students participating will also have individual case managers that will monitor their progress and help them on their path to success.

During this stop, the governor also highlighted the city of Kenosha's plans to use approximately \$990,000 to partner with Gener8tor to bring an entrepreneurship skilling program to the city, specifically to work with startup founders of color and women founders in Kenosha. The programing, known as gBETA, will provide coaching, mentorship, and networking needed to develop a system of entrepreneurs in the city to build strong, sustainable companies, that provide strong, sustainable, family-supporting jobs in the area. Photos of the visit in Kenosha are available [here](#) and [here](#).

On Thurs., Dec. 16, 2021, the governor, joined by DWD Secretary-designee Pechacek, continued his statewide tour to highlight these vital projects with a stop at Madison Area Technical College. The governor announced there that the College is proposing using up to \$2.9 million to address two significant pandemic-related workforce issues in South Central Wisconsin, including expanding access to quality,

affordable childcare and providing training and upskilling for in-demand jobs, including in advanced manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology. Photos of the visit at Madison Area Technical College are available [here](#) and [here](#).

The governor then visited the Ready Center with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee who plan to use up to \$3.3 million in grant funding for the Ready Center Collective (RCC). In partnership with Milwaukee Public Schools, Employ Milwaukee, Milwaukee Area Technical College, Herzing University, and more than a dozen large scale employers serving Milwaukee, the RCC will be a strong force in positively engaging the area's youth in career counseling, occupational skills training, and internship and apprenticeship experiences. Photos of the governor's visit at the Ready Center are available [here](#), [here](#), and [here](#).

Finally, the governor finished his statewide tour in Door County at the Door County Community Foundation, Inc., where he highlighted the work United Way of Door County will be doing to utilize up to \$3.5 million to help two childcare facilities renovate and build new spaces to serve the community's working families. A photos of the visit is available [here](#).

This round of grants was funded by the governor's \$100 million investments in the Workforce Innovation Grant program [announced earlier this year](#) which was made available through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). A second round of grants will be awarded in 2022.