

Dept. of Workforce Development: Announces \$3 million available in worker training grants

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MADISON – Department of Workforce Development Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek today announced the availability of Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) funding of \$3.1 million in for employer-led, customized worker training grants and urged employers to collaborate with local partners in proposing skill-building solutions.

The deadline to submit applications is 3 p.m. on April 15. Find [more information here](#).

“With Wisconsin Fast Forward, employers can take the lead, collaborate with regional partners, their technical colleges and workforce development boards, and develop innovative solutions,” Pechacek said. “Workers and all who want to work benefit, too, by learning job skills that are in demand and earning a better paycheck as they complete training and advance in their careers.”

Pechacek said Wisconsin Fast Forward is one among many ongoing employment and training programs that the workforce agency provides with its partners to build and strengthen Wisconsin’s workforce in the 21st century and beyond. Other efforts to reduce employment barriers and expand skills are taking shape through the Evers’ Administration’s historic \$130 million Workforce Solutions Initiative.

“Through these investments and the remarkable resilience of employers and workers alike, Wisconsin is bouncing back from the pandemic with an unprecedented economic recovery,” Pechacek said.

The current round of Wisconsin Fast Forward grants will range from \$5,000 to

\$400,000. Awards require a 50% cash or in-kind employer match. The grant program is open to all industry sectors. The training must provide transferrable skills. Individuals eligible for training are current employees, underemployed workers, and the unemployed.

The program sets the following thresholds to receive funding. At a minimum,

- 85% of the participants must complete training,
- 65% must gain employment (the unemployed, hired; the underemployed, part-time or temporary upgraded to full-time and/or permanent), and
- 75% of those who are current employees receive pay raises.

In the previous round of funding, awarded in December 2021, 1,496 individuals began customized training in projects to meet the workforce needs of 43 businesses. The training began under 19 contracted grants totaling nearly \$2.2 million. By sector, the list includes:

Agriculture

- \$182,970 to Renard's Rosewood Dairy, LLC., Algoma, nine individuals, training to be advanced cheesemakers, hands-on and online instruction through University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Customer Service

- \$49,340 to The Cheel restaurant, Thiensville, 30 individuals, WI ServSafe, customer service, restaurant worker training.

Construction

- \$66,065, W.J. Higgins & Associates, Weston, 12 employees, training to gain new skills to use 3-D modeling software and advance to Architectural Drafter positions.

Healthcare

- \$391,755, Quality CNA Training, LLC, Fremont, 700 individuals, training to earn receiving Nurse Assistant certification, meet workforce needs at multiple

nursing homes.

- \$184,255, Champion Care, Madison, 30 individuals, Herzing University and Wisconsin Health Care Association training to earn Medication Aid Certification.
- \$24,180, Meriter Foundation Inc., Madison, 24 individuals, UnityPoint Health-Meriter trainees to earn Phlebotomy Technician Certification.

Manufacturing

- \$193,870, Wisconsin Aluminum Foundry, Manitowoc, 70 individuals, customized training in safety, production and finishing.
- \$19,500, Spartek, Sparta, 13 individuals, training in lean manufacturing, continuous improvement, productive maintenance, financial and leadership skills.
- \$36,000, RBS Activewear, Argyle, 22 individuals, training to include sales, management, and succession planning.
- \$18,000, New Tech Metals, New Franken, 44 individuals, lean training Team Based Problem Solving and Six Sigma Green Belt.
- \$29,000, MSI Express, Inc., Fond du Lac, 23 individuals, training in machine maintenance, systemizing food handling procedures, problem solving skills.
- \$167,500, CORE Consulting, Thiensville, 30 individuals, training in either CAD or Manufacturing leading to industry recognized certification.
- \$9,800, Specialty Cheese, Reeseville, 26 individuals, training in standardizing procedures and problem solving.
- \$49,500, Goetsch's Welding and Machine Inc., Merrill, 27 individuals, training in customer service, leadership, dealing with change, and workplace organization.
- \$89,500, Northwire Inc., Osceola, 143 individuals, training to increase sales, to improve efficiency, reduce waste.
- \$34,500, Norlen Incorporated, Schofield, 24 individuals, training in lean manufacturing, continuous improvement, productive maintenance, financial and leadership skills.
- \$47,500, Seroogy's Holiday House, Green Bay, 45 individuals, training in leadership, sales skills, management, and teamwork.
- \$189,575, Vera Court Neighborhood Center, Madison, 80 individuals, Critical Core Manufacturing trainees in industrial electro-mechanical essentials, OSHA10, CPR.

Transportation

- \$400,000 grant to Kreilkamp Trucking, Inc., Allenton, partnering with Moraine Park Technical College to train 144 workers to earn Class A Commercial Drivers' License (CDL).

Learn more about [Wisconsin Fast Forward](#).