

Gov. Evers, Dept. of Workforce Development: Recognize exemplary veterans employers

Posted on Wednesday, Dec 7, 2022

>> **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.](#)**

Gov. Tony Evers, together with Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek, last week attended an event in Milwaukee honoring Rockwell Automation and We Energies as part of DWD's [Vets Ready Employer Initiative](#).

“By supporting veterans and their families, these companies are making a difference for Wisconsinites across our state,” said Gov. Evers. “Our Vets Ready award and the recipients’ hard work amplify the value veterans bring to the workforce, and I was glad to recognize and honor these employers, like Rockwell Automation and We Energies, who go above and beyond to support veterans and their families.”

The Vets Ready Initiative encourages employers to establish a support system within their workplace, hire and retain more veterans, and connect with veterans in the community and their families. Businesses are separated into three categories and either receive a gold or silver certification. For 2022, DWD is honoring 10 employers statewide for their achievements in highlighting the importance of veterans in Wisconsin’s workforce.

“Wisconsin’s veterans bring critically important skills to the workforce, and their contributions have helped our economy achieve record-breaking performance this year,” said DWD Secretary-designee Pechacek. “By leveraging the experience and talents of veterans, Wisconsin’s award-winning Vets Ready employers are building a more competitive workforce while creating stronger communities. DWD applauds these efforts.”

An advanced manufacturing academy at Rockwell Automation provides 12 weeks of intensive, in-demand skills training to military veterans with room and board included, while We Energies keeps its veterans connected through professional development and business resource groups. These are among the strategies Wisconsin's exemplary employers are using to recruit, retain, and support veterans and their families.

At the recent Milwaukee event, We Energies received a Gold Level 2022 Vets Ready award.

"We are incredibly proud and honored to receive this award. At We Energies, supporting our veteran and active-duty military employees is more than a promise. It is part of who we are as a company," said We Energies Executive Vice President for Customer Service and Operations Bill Mastoris. "We hope this award will promote our company as an employer of choice for other veterans and active military members who may be considering a career in the energy industry. More importantly, it's an acknowledgment of the efforts of our current employees who served and have made a difference."

Rockwell Automation received the Silver Level 2022 Vets Ready award.

"This award is especially meaningful to us, as Rockwell is immensely proud of our employees who are military veterans," said Chairman and CEO of Rockwell Automation Blake Moret. "We recognize the character and important assets that veterans bring, and we have made it one of our goals to support and enable them through Rockwell initiatives, including our training program that helps them transition into family-supporting careers in advanced manufacturing."

Other Vets Ready recipients were recognized at earlier celebrations held throughout the state, including in Madison and Green Bay. The 2022 Vets Ready Winners are: **4IMPRINT, Oshkosh - Gold Award.** The company: Prioritizes veteran employment opportunities, sending open positions to veteran-specific organizations and other diversity organizations to recruit and attract new talent. Celebrates veterans with paid time off that goes above and beyond for veterans and their spouses, including Veterans Day. Displays photos of veteran associates and emblems of each military branch throughout their facilities. Sets veteran hiring goals, with an annual benchmark of 5.7 percent protected veteran employees.

Children's Products, Neenah - Gold Award. The company: Utilizes the resources

from the Office of Veteran Employment Services and the Fox Valley Veterans Council to help staff engage with benefits, including education, medical claims, career assistance, and job training. Connects all veteran employees with a mentor on their first day of work to support their success and help them get started. Partners with local food pantry organizations to help veterans and their families in need of food.

Deloitte, LLP., Madison - Gold Award. The company: Facilitates a successful transition from military to civilian life through a veteran-specific onboarding program. Provides veterans with a support system of mentors and peers to foster their success. Equips transitioning service members with resources and tools through the Career Opportunity Redefinition and Exploration (CORE) leadership program. Connects veterans through the VET Connectedness initiative, bringing together 300+ veteran employees.

Kimberly-Clark, Neenah - Gold Award. The company: Hosts the SALUTE (Service Alliance Uniting Together) employee resource group whose vision is to make a positive impact on Kimberly-Clark, veteran employees, their families, and the communities they live in. Hosts the Capabilities First employee resource group, which directly supports employees and their families with disabilities. Supports veteran-community efforts, including sending cards and packages to deployed service members and raising funds for local veteran charities. Accepting the award for Kimberly-Clark, Wayne Beyer said of the program, "We're not done yet...we look forward to the work we have yet to accomplish for veterans."

Kingsbury, Oshkosh - Gold Award. The company: Prioritizes veteran hiring, as 6.4 percent of the workforce is veterans, and the goal is to raise that level two percent each year. Honors veterans through a veteran wall, flag display, and photos of veteran team members and their families. Writes and hand-delivers personal letters to veteran staff during Military Appreciation Month.

MCC Inc., Appleton - Gold Award. The company: Strives to support and utilize veteran employees' leadership in every part of the company. Engages with Wisconsin veteran organizations such as veteran nonprofits, DWD, and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA). Posts jobs at Transition Assistance Program (TAP) centers nationwide to attract veteran talent from across the country.

Oshkosh Corp., Oshkosh - Gold Award. The company: Employs more than 1,100

veterans. Hosts the Oshkosh Corporation Military Network (OCMN), a veteran employee resource group that provides career coaching, mentoring, and an opportunity to connect with service members across the company. Uses a mentorship program to support the OCMN and other employee business resource groups. Accepting the award for Oshkosh Corp., Jay Junkins, a U.S. Air Force veteran, said, "We truly believe that a veteran is a force multiplier."

Precision Iceblast Corp., Peshtigo - Gold Award. The company: Employs a veteran liaison who manages veteran recruiting and serves as the primary point of contact for veteran support in the community. Prioritizes veteran hiring initiatives to achieve a steadily increasing veteran workforce. Works to match and exceed veteran wages in comparable military service grades. Joel Williams, accepting the award for the company, said that while the company initially set up its program focusing on the question, "What can veterans do for us?" the focus has shifted. "Veterans have attributes we found desirable, but as our veteran hiring program took shape, we began to ask a different question: 'What can we do for our veterans?'"

Rockwell Automation, Milwaukee - Silver Award. The company: Hosts the Military Veterans and Allies Group (MVAG), which launched in 2014 and has 274 members. Sponsors educational events throughout the year, including events during Armed Forces Week and Veterans Day. Provides on-the-job training opportunities through the Academy of Advanced Manufacturing Program. The program works with ManpowerGroup to provide training to 1,000 military veterans over the next 10 years.

We Energies (WEC Energy Group), Milwaukee - Gold Award. The company: Provides awareness for all employees regarding the number and diversity of veteran staff, along with the leadership skills gained through military experience. Supports and hosts veteran, professional development, and community engagement events. Connects veterans through the Military Service Members Association business resource group. Provides GI Bill on-the-job training through apprenticeship training facilities. Supplies a Military leave policy that goes above and beyond minimal requirements.

Each year DWD's [Office of Veteran Employment Services](#) (OVES) serves more than 1,100 veterans seeking employment in Wisconsin. Once these veterans are ready for employment, OVES seeks employers ready to hire them.

This announcement comes as the state of Wisconsin today recognizes National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. Gov. Evers yesterday [announced](#) the flags of the United States and the state of Wisconsin would be flown at half-staff today in honor of National Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. The governor also proclaimed Dec. 7, 2022, as “Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day” across the state. A copy of the governor’s proclamation is available [here](#).

A photo of the governor and secretary-designee with We Energies is available [here](#). A photo of the governor and secretary-designee with Rockwell Automation is available [here](#).