

Dept. of Workforce Development: Announces almost \$1.3 million in Wisconsin Fast Forward worker training grants

Posted on Tuesday, Jul 25, 2023

>> **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.](#)**

MADISON – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today announced almost \$1.3 million in [Wisconsin Fast Forward](#) worker training grants.

The worker training grants will help support 12 employers and serve up to 714 trainees in the high-demand sectors of manufacturing and transportation. Many of the projects are made possible through partnerships with community organizations, local employers, and industry associations.

“Wisconsin Fast Forward is one of many innovative ways DWD is investing in the attraction, skill development, and retention of workers in our state,” DWD Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek said. “Through these solutions, we are meeting the talent needs of employers so our state’s economy can thrive.”

The Wisconsin Fast Forward standard grant program awards funds to Wisconsin businesses to reimburse costs associated with occupational training. The grants cover training costs for those who are unemployed or underemployed, as well as for incumbent workers. Participants who successfully complete the training program will gain opportunities for employment, higher-level employment, or increased wages.

In the 2023 fiscal year, DWD’s Office of Skills Development awarded and administered more than \$5.1 million in Wisconsin Fast Forward grants for up to an estimated 2,139 trainees.

Grants range from \$5,000 to \$400,000 and projects require a 50 percent 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 incumbent workers, underemployed workers, and the unemployed.

To receive funding, employers must meet these minimum requirements:

- 85% of the participants must complete training.
- 65% must gain employment (the unemployed, hired; the underemployed, promoted).
- 75% of incumbent trainees receive pay raises.

The \$1,292,506 in newly contracted Wisconsin Fast Forward awards include:

Manufacturing: \$195,720 to TCLAD Inc. in Pierce County. TCLAD will provide new training to 10 new trainees and 94 incumbent workers in Programmable Logic Controllers, equipment preventive maintenance and repair, technical cross-training, and new product certification. Incumbent trainees could receive a wage increase of 60 cents or more per hour.

Manufacturing: \$237,295 to Sellars Absorbent Materials Inc. in Milwaukee County. Sellars Absorbent Materials will provide training to 27 new trainees and 24 incumbent workers through a partnership with MRA and MATC Workforce Solutions. Training will include fundamentals of manufacturing maintenance and an MRA train the trainer course. Incumbent trainees could receive a wage increase of \$1 or more per hour.

Manufacturing: \$41,250 to Mitotec Precision in Juneau County. Mitotec Precision will partner with Tornos, JCOM Import, Quality Machinery Systems, Morris Midwest, Carl Zeiss Industrial Quality Solutions, and Synergy Resources to train 21 incumbent workers. Trained workers could receive a 61-cent or more per hour wage increase.

Manufacturing: \$178,936 to Arla Foods Inc. in Brown County. Arla Foods will partner with Intertek Alchemy, Picavi U.S. Inc., Gemba Academy eLearning System, Professional Control Corp, and Fox Valley Technical College. These partnerships will train 89 incumbent workers in courses including Gemba Academy, Alchemy Coach and Playbook application, and DC Pick Vision. When complete, trainees could receive a wage increase of 50 cents or more per hour.

Manufacturing: \$20,500 to SMC Ltd. in St. Croix County. SMC will provide training to 40 incumbent workers through the University of Wisconsin-Stout Manufacturing Outreach Center. Training will teach line lead coordinators, leads, and supervisors how to best construct workflow and work instructions for product building on the floor. Training will enhance operator efficiency and result in increased production output, decreased defective products and timely delivery. Trainees could receive a wage increase of \$1 or more per hour when complete.

Manufacturing: \$49,240 to Custom Service Plastics Inc. in Walworth County. Custom Service Plastics will partner with Gateway Technical College and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to provide training to 23 incumbent workers. Training will increase process efficiency by increasing technical and leadership knowledge for technicians, supervisors, and managers. Successful completion of the training will result in training certifications and Leadership Development Program college credits. Trainees could receive a wage increase of \$5 or more per hour after completing the training.

Manufacturing: \$129,450 to Westby Cooperative Creamery in Vernon County. Westby Cooperative Creamery will partner with Manage Assist Inc. to provide training to 140 incumbent workers. The training will focus on lean operations, management practices, and include a “Train the Trainer: The Practical Trainer” component. Following the training, trainees could receive a wage increase of 30 cents or more per hour.

Manufacturing: \$60,575 to Building Automation Products Inc. in Crawford County. Building Automation Products is partnering with Manage Assist Inc. to train 37 incumbent workers in day-to-day management, line balancing, internal auditor, and corrective action, and implementing workplace organization. Workers could receive a wage increase of \$1.25 or more per hour after this training.

Manufacturing: \$52,500 to Accord Manufacturing Inc. in Washington County. Accord Manufacturing will partner with Manage Assist Inc. to train 45 incumbent workers in lean manufacturing techniques, operations and management, and leadership. The training will develop a continuous improvement program to manage growth more effectively, meet business objectives with improved production efficiency, and retain employees. Incumbent workers could receive 20 cents or more per hour wage increase following training.

Manufacturing: \$147,320 to Teel Plastics LLC in Sauk County. Teel Plastics will

partner with Routsis and Madison College to provide training to six new and 30 incumbent workers to provide production staff a higher level of technical competency and expertise in the scientific molding process. Training will include four modules, requiring the trainee to pass each module prior to moving forward in training. As a result of this training, incumbent workers could receive increased wages starting at \$2 per hour.

Manufacturing: \$33,770 to Parker Plastics Inc. in Kenosha County. Parker Plastics will partner with the College of Lake County and Sipa North America Inc. to provide training to five incumbent workers and one new trainee. Employees will build a robust program to support their blow molding mechanics positions and gain job-specific technical skills to move up into higher-paying positions within the organization. Incumbent trainees could receive a wage increase of \$2.10 per hour.

Transportation: \$145,950 to Mueller Sports Medicine in Sauk County. Mueller Sports Medicine will partner with Manage Assist to provide 122 incumbent workers training necessary to help the company grow and meet its objectives and for staff to qualify for career advancement and wage gains. Training topics will include inventory management, managing supplier performance, and risk management. Following the training, incumbent workers could receive a wage increase of 54 cents or more per hour.