

Northeast Wisconsin Job Center's Employer News Letter

DWD Secretary Roberta Gassman Announces Job Readiness Training & Certificate Program Now Available Statewide to Job Seekers and Employers

Under Recovery Act funded initiative, workers demonstrate job skill mastery

Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman announced that a nationally recognized training and certificate program is now available, free of charge, to all Wisconsin job seekers and employers looking to recruit new workers, thanks in part to the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) program helps individuals show mastery in basic workplace skills for current and potential employers.

"Most jobs require basic skills in reading, math and computer use, and the NCRC program helps job seekers demonstrate proof that they have skills," Secretary Gassman said. "Also, employers can use the program to measure applicants' skills and obtain the information they need to make the best possible hiring decisions. Through this free service, we are helping to make sure workers have the skills they need to be job ready, while helping employers find the skilled workers they need."

The NCRC is a nationally recognized credential demonstrating that a job seeker has workplace employability skills in areas such as reading and math. Participants use an online training system to build skills and measure their progress. To earn their NCRC credential, participants can take WorkKeys tests at local Job Centers and other locations throughout Wisconsin. They can earn a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum certificate, depending on their level of achievement.

Typically, interested job seekers must pay a fee for testing. DWD is now making the NCRC program free to job seekers who enroll through Wisconsin Job Service, as well as to employers that contact the Job Service in search of additional tools to assess prospective hires. This expansion is being funded in part by the \$7 million in ARRA funds Wisconsin received for Re-employment Services and provided by Job Service staff working with regional partners in Job Centers. To date, over 3,500 WorkKeys tests have been given in Wisconsin, and more than 1,000 individuals have earned their NCRC.

Johnsonville Sausage, of Sheboygan Falls, hosted NCRC on a pilot-basis, and the company is now integrating the system in its manufacturing recruiting process.

"As we recruit new members, we're always focused on finding the best candidates -- those who will be a good fit with the company for the long-term," said John Schwantes, Senior Business Partner for Johnsonville Sausage. "The NCRC process is something we're now beginning to implement as one part of our recruiting process, as we feel it will help bring in the most qualified and strongest candidates to our company. Additionally, we see this as another tool we can utilize to help maintain standardized hiring practices across our company and reduce turnover. **Additional details found on Page 6 of this bulletin on the NCRC Program or**

Northeast Wisconsin Employers can contact
Brian Pelon—At 920-448-6772 or
 E-mail: brian.pelon@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Reminder

The Green Bay Job Center has scheduled its Seventh Annual Job Fair for Wednesday, October 13, 2010 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

The Fall Job Fair will be held at the historic Riverside Ballroom
1560 Main St.
Green Bay, WI

The Job Fair is designed to help employers of Northeast Wisconsin meet their current and future hiring needs.

For more information, please contact Brian Pelon at 448-6772 or by E-mail at:

brian.pelon@dwd.wisconsin.gov

You can call or e-mail to request a Job Fair registration form

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We're Working to Keep Wisconsin Working

When Recruiting
Be sure to list your Job Openings at NO COST ON
JobCenterOfWisconsin.com
Sign-up Today

Affordable Care Act Tax Provisions

Reminder to review the IRS website for New Health Care changes

The Affordable Care Act was enacted on March 23, 2010. It contains some tax provisions that take effect this year and more that will be implemented during the next several years. The following is a list of provisions now in effect; additional information will be added to the IRS website as it becomes available.

Employer-Provided Health Coverage — Not Taxable

Starting in tax year 2011, the Affordable Care Act requires employers to report the value of the health insurance coverage they provide employees on each employee's annual Form W-2. This reporting is for informational purposes only, to show employees the value of their health care benefits so they can be more informed consumers. The amount reported does not affect tax liability, as the value of the employer contribution to health coverage continues to be excludible from an employee's income and it is not taxable.

Small Business Health Care Tax Credit

This new credit helps small businesses and small tax-exempt organizations afford the cost of covering their employees and is specifically targeted for those with low- and moderate-income workers. The credit is designed to encourage small employers to offer health insurance coverage for the first time or maintain coverage they already have. In general, the credit is available to small employers that pay at least half the cost of single coverage for their employees.

√ Eligibility Rules

Providing health care coverage. A qualifying employer must cover at least 50 percent of the cost of health care coverage for some of its workers based on the single rate.

Firm size. A qualifying employer must have less than the equivalent of 25 full-time workers (for example, an employer with fewer than 50 half-time workers may be eligible).

Average annual wage. A qualifying employer must pay average annual wages below \$50,000.

Both taxable (for profit) and tax-exempt firms qualify.

√ Amount of Credit

Maximum Amount. The credit is worth up to 35 percent of a small business' premium costs in 2010. On Jan. 1, 2014, this rate increases to 50 percent (35 percent for tax-exempt employers).

Phase-out. The credit phases out gradually for firms with average wages between \$25,000 and \$50,000 and for firms with the equivalent of between 10 and 25 full-time workers.

Learn more by browsing our page on the Small Business Health Care Tax Credit for Small Employers at:

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=223666,00.html>

Changes to Flexible Spending Arrangements

Effective Jan. 1, 2011, the cost of an over-the-counter medicine or drug cannot be reimbursed from Flexible Spending Arrangements or health reimbursement arrangements unless a prescription is obtained. The change does not affect insulin, even if purchased without a prescription, or other health care expenses such as medical devices, eye glasses, contact lenses, co-pays and deductibles. The new standard applies only to purchases made on or after Jan. 1, 2011, so claims for medicines or drugs purchased without a prescription in 2010 can still be reimbursed in 2011, if allowed by the employer's plan. A similar rule goes into effect on Jan. 1, 2011 for Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), and Archer Medical Savings Accounts (Archer MSAs). Employers and employees should take these changes into account as they make health benefit decisions for 2011.

Health Coverage for Older Children

Health coverage for an employee's children under 27 years of age is now generally tax-free to the employee. This expanded health care tax benefit applies to various work place and retiree health plans. For this purpose, a child includes a son, daughter, stepchild, adopted child or eligible foster child. This new age 27 standard replaces the lower age limits that applied under prior tax law, as well as the requirement that a child generally qualify as a dependent for tax purposes. The Affordable Care Act also requires plans that provide dependent coverage of children to continue to make the coverage available for an adult child until the child turns age 26. The extended coverage must be provided not later than plan years beginning on or after Sept. 23, 2010. These changes immediately allow employers with cafeteria plans — plans that allow employees to choose from a menu of tax-free benefit options and cash or taxable benefits — to permit employees to begin making pre-tax contributions to pay for this expanded benefit. This also applies to self-employed individuals who qualify for the self-employed health insurance deduction on their federal income tax return.

For More Information

For tips, fact sheets, questions and answers, videos and more, see the IRS Affordable Care Act of 2010: News Releases, Multimedia and Legal Guidance page at:

<http://www.irs.gov/newsroom/article/0,,id=222814,00.html>

Information on other healthcare provisions of the Affordable Care Act can be found on this website, **IRS.gov.**

ARE YOU USING THE SKILLS OF WISCONSIN VETERANS?

The United States' Armed Forces produces thousands of highly trained and experienced individuals each year in fields ranging from the trades, to production, to the sciences, to administration and personnel, to management and much more. Along with this training and experience veterans also possess many of the other qualities employers are seeking in candidates today. These qualities include:

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Accelerated learning curve ★ Strong leadership skills ★ Teamwork ★ Diversity and inclusion in action ★ Efficient performance under pressure | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Respect and follows procedures ★ Technology and globalization ★ Integrity ★ Conscious of health and safety standards ★ Triumph over adversity |
|---|---|

Hiring veterans is not only good for business but the bottom-line. The Veterans Employment Representatives available through out Wisconsin's Job Centers are able to help employers find those qualified veteran candidates they are seeking. Please contact one of the representatives for Northeastern Wisconsin today.

Michael Mack
Local Veteran Employment Representative
Wisconsin Job Center Green Bay
(920) 448-6776
Email: michael.mack@dwd.wisconsin.gov

Connie Clayton
Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist
Wisconsin Job Center Marinette
(715) 732-7843
Email: connie.clayton@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Outreach Locations: Florence, Oconto and Shawano Counties, and the Menominee Reservation

Brian Marquardt
Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist
Wisconsin Job Center Green Bay
(920) 448-6778
Email: brian.marquardt@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Outreach Locations: Door and Kewaunee Counties

Michael Martin
Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist
Wisconsin Job Center Green Bay
(920) (920) 360-0230
Email: michael.martin@dwd.wisconsin.gov
Outreach Locations: Manitowoc and Sheboygan Counties

James Warner
Disabled Veteran Outreach Specialist
Wisconsin Job Center Green Bay
(920) 448-6739
Email: james.warner@dwd.wisconsin.gov



Talent Has No Boundaries: Workforce Diversity INCLUDES Workers with Disabilities

The U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy has announced the official theme for October's National Disability Employment Awareness Month:

"Talent Has No Boundaries: Workforce Diversity INCLUDES Workers With Disabilities."

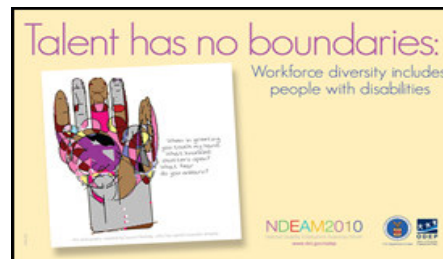
The theme serves to inform the public that workers with disabilities represent a diverse and vibrant talent pool for hire. Employers who hire people with disabilities find they have tapped into a talented, skilled, and diverse pool of workers, who often bring a unique perspective of diversity to the workplace. Many myths concerning the hiring of people with disabilities exist among personnel managers and recruiters.

Employers and the ADA: Myths and Facts is available for review online and provides employers with research and facts that negate those myths at

http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/fact/ada.htm?cm_sp=ExternalLink_-_Federal_-_DOL

The 2010 NDEAM poster, Talent has no boundaries: Workforce diversity includes people with disabilities, is now available to order or download online in PDF format at:

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/pubs/ndeam2010poster.htm>



Being inclusive of people with disabilities—in recruitment, retention, promotion, and in providing an accessible environment—gives businesses a competitive edge.

Consumer Price Index

Consumer Price Index - All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) *											
National (U.S. City Average) 1982-1984 = 100			% Change	Class B/C - Midwest States (1996/1997 = 100)			% Change	Class D - Midwest States (1982-1984 = 100)			% Change
U.S. City Average	Jul-10	Aug-10	Aug-09	Size 50,000-1,500,000	Jul-10	Aug-10	Aug-09	Size Less than 50,000	Jul-10	Aug-10	Aug-09
All Items	218.0	218.3	1.2%	All Items	134.1	134.4	1.7%	All Items	204.0	205.0	1.6%
Food & Beverage	219.5	219.9	0.9%	Food & Beverage	136.1	137.0	1.4%	Food & Beverage	215.1	216.1	0.6%
Housing	217.1	216.9	-0.3%	Housing	127.0	127.0	0.4%	Housing	194.4	194.7	1.2%
Apparel	115.2	116.7	-0.3%	Apparel	82.6	82.1	-0.1%	Apparel	116.0	115.8	-0.8%
Transportation	193.1	193.5	4.9%	Transportation	142.2	142.1	5.0%	Transportation	172.5	173.3	4.5%
Gasoline (All Types)	234.1	235.1	4.4%	Gasoline (All Types)	248.3	247.0	5.2%	Gasoline (All Types)	204.1	207.2	5.2%
Medical Care	387.9	388.5	3.2%	Medical Care	168.3	169.0	4.0%	Medical Care	370.2	370.4	1.1%
Energy	212.4	212.7	3.8%	Energy	208.0	207.9	6.2%	Energy	183.9	185.2	4.8%

Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics *Not Seasonally Adjusted

Labor Force Update

Green Bay MSA (Brown, Kewaunee, & Oconto counties)	August-10	July-10	August-09	Change from one month ago July 2010	Change from one year ago August 2009
Civilian Labor Force	172,152	172,523	172,986	-371	-834
Employed	159,832	159,973	158,945	-141	887
Unemployed	12,320	12,550	14,041	-230	-1,721
Unemployment Rate %	7.2%	7.3%	8.1%	-0.1	-1.0
Total Nonfarm (NFWs) ***	163,300	162,800	162,800	500	500
Goods Producing	35,600	35,300	35,500	300	100
Service Producing	127,700	127,500	127,300	200	400
Constr., Mining & Nat. Resources	7,600	7,500	7,200	100	400
Manufacturing	28,000	27,800	27,700	200	300
Trade	22,000	22,100	22,100	-100	-100
Transportation & Utilities	11,200	11,200	11,000	0	200
Financial Activities	12,300	12,300	12,400	0	-100
Education & Health Services	21,500	21,400	21,000	100	500
Leisure & Hospitality	16,600	16,200	15,800	400	800
Info., Prof & Bus. Svcs., & Other Svcs.	24,400	24,400	24,200	0	200
Total Government	19,700	20,100	20,700	-400	-1,000
Federal	1,200	1,300	1,200	-100	0
State	2,100	2,000	2,300	100	-200
Local	16,800	16,400	17,200	400	-400

*** Includes employment with employers located in area. Estimates are not seasonally adjusted.

Current month estimates are preliminary. Totals may not add due to rounding. Calculations based on unrounded numbers.

All monthly estimates are subject to annual revisions.

Source: Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Bureau of Workforce Training, LAUS, CES

Job Center Job Order Stats:

Snapshot in time - Active Job Orders as of —September 24, 2010

Statewide 28,844 Job Openings
 Resumes/applications on JCW 32,360

New Job orders listed on JobCenterOfWisconsin.com (Does not include uploads to JobCenterOfWisconsin.com from JobCentral.com)

	July 2010		August 2010	
State Wide	4,669 Job Orders	10,800 Job Openings	5,339 Job Orders	11,052 Job Openings
Bay Area (10 Counties)	684 Job Orders	1,530 Job Openings	827 Job Orders	1,874 Job Openings
Fox Valley (7 Counties)	691 Job Orders	1,495 Job Openings	719 Job Orders	1,659 Job Openings

ATTRACTING AND RETAINING SKILLED WORKERS IN NORTHEAST WISCONSIN

In a time of tough fiscal choices business leaders are seeking creative solutions for attracting and retaining skilled workers. In seeking creative solutions some business leaders have discovered a pool of talented employees ... people with disabilities.

- √ There are over **41 million** Americans (1 in 7 people) that reported having disabilities in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007).

403,114 working age (16-64) Wisconsin residents reported having disabilities (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007).

42.1% of working age (16-64) Wisconsin residents that reported having disabilities are employed (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007).

79.9% of working age (16-64) Wisconsin residents that reported NOT having disabilities are employed (U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007).

- √ The labor pool of potential employees with disabilities remains largely untapped!

The contributions that people with disabilities bring to the workforce are clearly documented:

- Industry reports consistently rate workers with disabilities as average or above average in performance, attendance, and safety (Unger, 2002).

More than 900 managers who participated in a Harris Poll had this to say about their employees with disabilities:

88% of top managers gave employees with disabilities an "excellent" (24%) or "good" (64%) rating on job performance. They said employees with disabilities work as hard as or harder than those who do not have a disability (Allen, 1994).

39% of line managers rated employees with disabilities as better on attendance and punctuality than employees without disabilities, and 40% rated them about the same (Allen, 1994).

A 2002 survey of 255 supervisors of employees with disabilities yielded very similar results. The survey revealed that supervisors are satisfied with the overall work performance and productivity of workers with disabilities and that workers with disabilities perform as well as or better than their co-workers without disabilities (Unger, 2002).

- √ People with disabilities (whether the disability is congenital or acquired) must develop other strengths, traits, and qualities, such as perseverance, problem solving, goal setting, and determination, that make them valuable and marketable in the workplace (Sheehy, U.S. Department of Education).
- √ A diverse workforce is an asset that improves organizational competitiveness and performance, and inspires new business. A diverse workforce can assist a company in creating innovative solutions to business challenges and will attract more diverse customers.

Recruiting and hiring qualified candidates with disabilities can help employers maintain their competitive advantage and add value to their company. Recruiting people with disabilities will expand a company's pool of qualified candidates, thus increasing their ability to attract and retain skilled workers.

Wisconsin can lead the way ... creating successful partnerships that benefits businesses and workers.

About NEW Partnerships for Employment

NEW Partnerships for Employment is a coalition of stakeholders (individuals, employers and organizations) who seek to build and support sustainable partnerships focused on improving community employment opportunities of people with disabilities.

Contact NEW Partnerships for Employment for additional information or to receive an electronic copy of our Annual Report.

NEW Partnerships for Employment

Member Contact Information:

Fran Renn-Malcheski

Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) # 7

Phone: 920-617-5627

Email: frennmal@cesa7.k12.wi.us

Website: www.cesa7.k12.wi.us

The National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) helps:

Find the RIGHT candidate

The NCRC is a transferable credential that proves an individual is work ready. It is a tool that demonstrates to employers that an individual possesses the basic skills required for success in today's workforce. The program is based on hard-skills testing integrated into a system called WorkKeys®, which was created by ACT, a nationally-recognized assessment organization.

The ACT WorkKeys assessment system is a validated, EEOC-compliant system used to evaluate jobs and compare the skills required by certain jobs. It verifies that the person can handle tasks in

- √ *Applied Mathematics,*
- √ *Reading for Information, and*
- √ *Locating Information.*

These are skills critical in 85% of the jobs in the country.

Improve your bottom line

- √ **Find Better Applicants:** It helps you find better-quality job applicants. You can interview only applicants who have the skills desired for the position.
- √ **Reduce Hiring Costs:** It reduces hiring expenses by streamlining hiring. Employers can use the NCRC as another filtering tool for screening the best applicants.
- √ **Reduce Turnover:** It reduces turnover because it provides you with workers who have documented skill proficiencies.
- √ **Improve Effectiveness of Training Dollars:** It improves the effectiveness of your valuable training dollars. When a new employee enters a job with an identified skill level, training dollars can be targeted to address any skills gaps.

Assess the Work Readiness of Your Applicants

To qualify for a National Career Readiness Certificate, career seekers take the three WorkKeys assessments: Applied Mathematics, Locating Information, and Reading for Information. Certificates are awarded in four levels, including Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum.



Bronze: The person scores at least a level 3 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 35 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

Silver: The person scores at least a level 4 in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 65 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

Gold: The person scores at least a level five in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 90 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

Platinum: The person scores at least a level six or above in each of the three core areas and has the necessary foundational skills for 99 percent of the jobs in the WorkKeys database.

Contact information:

For additional information, please send an email using one of the following links:

Wisconsin's NCRC page:

<http://www.wisconsinjobcenter.org/ncrc/employer/>

For additional information, please send an email using one of the following links:

For Employers: NCRCEmployers@dwd.wisconsin.gov

For Job Seekers: NCRCJobSeekers@dwd.wisconsin.gov

WorkKeys and the National Career Readiness Certificate are registered trademarks of ACT, Inc.