

Jim Doyle
Governor

Roberta Gassman
Secretary



State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

201 East Washington Avenue

P.O. Box 7946

Madison, WI 53707-7946

Telephone: (608) 266-3131

Fax: (608) 266-1784

<http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/>

e-mail: dwdsec@dwd.state.wi.us

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, August 12, 2009

CONTACT: Dick Jones, Agency Liaison, 608-267-4780

Secretary Gassman Awards Second of Six Training Grants, \$600,000 for Emerging Industries, Governor Doyle's Latest Grow Investments

Training for green jobs in biotech, renewable energy, advanced manufacturing

MENOMONIE – On behalf of Governor Jim Doyle, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today awarded a \$100,000 workforce training grant to provide skilled workers for green jobs in three key emerging industries of western Wisconsin.

“Biotechnology, renewable energy and advanced manufacturing are emerging sectors offering jobs of the future,” Secretary Gassman said. “The strategic investment Governor Doyle is making today will help these sectors grow, create employment opportunities, particularly green jobs that will help us gain our energy independence and protect the environment.”

The grant announced today is one of six \$100,000 awards in a second round of funding under Governor Doyle's Emerging Industries Skills Partnership (EISP) initiative. In all, approximately 300 workers will receive training, meeting the needs of over 30 employers statewide. Governor Doyle included new EISP funding in the nearly \$6 million worker training package he announced in March.

The \$100,000 grant awarded to the West Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board will be matched by \$100,000 locally, drawing in part on American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. This \$200,000 project will recruit 100 individuals, including 50 job seekers and 50 individuals working in the targeted industries.

The goal of the one-year project is employment for job seekers and advancement for incumbent workers following their training. The training will be provided by Chippewa Valley Technical College, Indianhead Technical College and the Northwest Wisconsin Manufacturing Outreach Center at the University of Wisconsin-Stout. Other partners include the Manufacturing Works Alliance, Momentum West, county economic development corporations, and the region's bio-industry and biotechnology firms.

Secretary Gassman made the announcement at Specialty Pallet and Crate, which recycles up to 3,000 pallets per week for 60 employers in western Wisconsin and the Twin Cities area. By recycling materials, the firm helps conserve natural resources. Scraps are used either as landscape mulch, livestock bedding or wood pellets for fuel.

Earlier this year, owner Kyle Olson formed a new company, Bioensertech, with plans this fall to produce biomass fuel from wood scraps. The new operation could add from 30 to 50 “green jobs” to the local economy. Olson's businesses and workers are among those to benefit from the project, made possible with the EISP grant and ARRA funding.