

**Jim Doyle**  
Governor

**Roberta Gassman**  
Secretary



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**Secretary Gassman Awards \$100,000 Training Grant for First of 400  
Workers Needed When Wind Turbine Plant Opens in Wisconsin Rapids**

***One of six totaling \$600,000, Governor Doyle's investments in emerging industries***

WISCONSIN RAPIDS – On behalf of Governor Jim Doyle, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today awarded a \$100,000 workforce training grant to prepare the first of 400 workers for green jobs when a new Wisconsin Rapids business starts manufacturing wind turbine blades.

“The strategic investment Governor Doyle is making today will help Wisconsin become the center of wind turbine production,” Secretary Gassman said. “We are creating jobs for the future and encouraging a strong, diverse regional economy, while gaining our energy independence.”

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 in three key sectors: renewable energy, biotechnology and advanced manufacturing. 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 North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board will be matched by more than \$60,000 locally. Among the goals of the Renewable Electric Power project is to train 35 individuals, including dislocated workers, for the first openings at the Energy Composites Corporation. Earlier this year, the firm announced its plans to construct a 350,000-square-foot, composites fabrication plant to manufacture wind turbine blades.

As part of the project, Mid-State Technical College is creating a 12-credit Composite Certificate, intensive, short-term, customized training in turbine blade fabrication. The 35 trainees are to complete six-months of instruction in June, allowing others to enter the pipeline for employment opportunities at the plant. In the process, the project will develop a green job career pathway for the emerging renewable energy sector in the north central region.

“This is our future,” Secretary Gassman said, “seizing green opportunities that will create good jobs for our citizens and fuel economic growth in the emerging industries of renewable energy, biotechnology and advanced manufacturing.”

In announcing the grant at Energy Composites, Secretary Gassman was joined by Sen. Julie Lassa of Stevens Point, and Reps. Marlin Schneider of Wisconsin Rapids, Amy Sue Vruwink of Milladore, and Louis Molepske of Stevens Point.