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On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

Secretary Gassman Urges Milwaukee Job Seekers to Complete Free Career Readiness & Skills Training, Earn Key Certificate

National Career Readiness Certificate program is part of Recovery Act-funded Re-employment Services, Governor Doyle's efforts to put people back to work

MILWAUKEE – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today encouraged Milwaukee County residents to take advantage of free training and certification in career readiness during remarks to regional workforce partners in Milwaukee.

“Helping put Wisconsin back to work involves helping workers gain the skills they need to succeed in today’s labor market as our nation’s economic recovery continues,” Secretary Gassman said. “Since most jobs require workers to be skilled in areas such as reading and math, we are encouraging Milwaukee County residents to take advantage of this free testing and training to enhance their marketability with employers.”

In her remarks at a Southeast Wisconsin Regional Workforce Alliance summit at Discovery World Museum, Secretary Gassman said the National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) is among many services offered statewide as part of Governor Doyle’s workforce agenda. With \$7 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, the state significantly increased Re-Employment Services (RES), and these services include job-ready assessment and certification.

“Governor Doyle’s number one priority is helping our businesses create jobs and giving our workers opportunities to get those jobs,” Secretary Gassman said. “Under his leadership, Wisconsin has some of the strongest economic development tools in the nation. We are seeing signs of a recovery, so it’s important that people are job ready. This certificate helps open doors to employment opportunities.”

The NCRC service is free to all Milwaukee County job seekers and will remain free while funding is available, thanks to U.S. Department of Labor grant administered through DWD and awarded by the Regional Workforce Alliance. Through the grant, all Milwaukee County residents can pursue certification at no cost to them.

NCRC is a nationally recognized credential that demonstrates that a job seeker has achieved a certain level of workplace employability skills in areas such as reading and math. Participants use an online training system to build competency in these key areas and test their advancement. Upon reaching a certain level, participants are eligible to be tested for certification at a local Job Center. Job seekers can earn a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum certification, depending on their level of proficiency.

Over 13,000 Wisconsin residents, including 2,000 in Milwaukee, have participated in online training. Milwaukee County residents interested in taking part should first register online at www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com, then call the Job Center of Wisconsin’s toll-free number at 1-888-258-9966 for additional assistance.