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State of Wisconsin
Department of Workforce Development
Jim Doyle, Governor
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On the Web: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwd/news.htm>

Secretary Gassman Highlights Governor Doyle's Job Training Initiatives, Salutes Workers Served, Now Employed or Job Ready

During 'Up North' Tour, State Labor Secretary visits Rhinelander Job Center

RHINELANDER – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman said today Wisconsin is putting people to work and helping others become job ready, with Governor Doyle's initiatives, American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, and existing employment and training programs.

"Step by step, we are helping job seekers, the unemployed and underemployed, succeed," Secretary Gassman said. "Challenges remain, but we are encouraged by the spirit and determination of the people we serve. As they find work, stay employed, or learn the latest skills for a new job, we congratulate them. "

As part of Governor Doyle's annual "Up North" Tour, Secretary Gassman visited the Job Center in Rhinelander, where she met people served by DWD and its partner, the North Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board.

Secretary Gassman cited Governor Doyle's investments in worker training, more than \$10.4 million in the last two years. She also noted more than \$61 million in ARRA funding supplementing existing programs serving dislocated workers, adults, youth and people with disabilities.

Secretary Gassman met with Heidi Schaefer of Rhinelander. After chemotherapy treatments resulted in a hearing loss, Heidi's career as an independent insurance agent was in jeopardy. With the help of DWD's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Heidi received vocational rehabilitation services so she was able to resume her career and maintain her business.

Secretary Gassman also met with Rhonda Strzelecki, a Manitowish Waters resident who recently earned her nursing degree and is now employed as a registered nurse earning \$20 per hour. Previously working in a low-wage, part-time job as a cook, Strzelecki benefited from existing employment and training programs, as well as ARRA-funded assistance to help cover transportation costs to classes.

Individuals meeting with Secretary Gassman also included two recipients of Opportunity Grants, a Governor Doyle initiative to provide up to \$1,000 for technical college tuition to low-wage workers. Jennifer Mitchell of Rhinelander used the grant to complete training at Nicolet Area Technical College to become a registered nurse. Traci Dumpprope, also of Rhinelander, is currently using a grant to complete her education at Nicolet and become a registered nurse.

For more information about DWD programs and employment opportunities, visit:

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

<https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/>