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

## **Secretary Perez Tours Milwaukee Gear, Meets Machinists Trained and Hired with Help of DWD and Partners**

### ***State Labor Secretary cites increasing demand for labor in manufacturing, other sectors***

MILWAUKEE – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Manny Perez today congratulated machinists trained and hired recently at Milwaukee Gear with help from DWD and its partners, and he said many opportunities exist for others as the economy improves under Governor Walker's new leadership.

"Under Governor Walker, Wisconsin is open for business, and the manufacturing sector is driving the economic recovery," Secretary Perez said. "Just last month, the manufacturing sector added 2,800 jobs. Milwaukee Gear is a good example of the growth we're seeing. The global manufacturing of precision gears recently hired 16 individuals, trained as machinists with the help of DWD and its partners. As the demand for labor increases, we stand ready to help others return to work."

Secretary Perez said that for the past two weeks, the department's online employment site, [www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com](http://www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com), has exceeded 28,000 openings. He said the increasing job opportunities are indicative of the normal hiring season. However, he said the business-friendly climate Governor Walker has created is contributing more significantly to the positive growth occurring in Wisconsin.

The newly-hired workers received training as machinists skilled in using high-tech computerized production equipment through the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership/BIG STEP program. The 10-weeks of CNC (Computer Numerical Control) Machinist training was provided with federal Workforce Investment Act funding administered by DWD. The training project also involved DWD's regional partner, the Milwaukee Area Workforce Investment Board (MAWIB).

The 16 workers included dislocated workers and others who were unemployed and qualified for WIA Adult services. All of them successfully completed the course and are now employed in entry level machinists jobs starting at \$15 an hour. At Milwaukee Gear, the newly-hired employees also are beginning training in advanced manufacturing to earn Manufacturing Skill Standards Certification credentials. Meanwhile, DWD and its partners are exploring the possibility of recruiting and training a new group of machinists.

While at Milwaukee Gear, Secretary Perez also met another recent hire, Charles McNeal, who was an unemployed machinist. McNeal received help through the DWD dislocated worker program and Job Service. He became eligible for CNC Programmer training at Milwaukee Area Technical College under the Trade Adjustment Act. As an interim step, he worked to improve his math, reading, writing and computer skills at the HIRE Center. He soon learned Milwaukee Gear was hiring, and he said the HIRE Center training and the Job Service assistance he received enabled him to get the job.

Job seekers can find more information about increasing employment opportunities at:  
<https://jobcenterofwisconsin.com/>