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Secretary Baumbach, Regional Partners Highlight Governor's Job-Creation Agenda at Workforce Development Month Kickoff

State Labor Secretary announces Governor's proclamation, first in series of events promoting workforce partnerships that empower workers, advance economy

BARABOO – Kicking off Workforce Development Month, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Scott Baumbach said today that strong state and regional partnerships in workforce and economic development are critical to meeting Governor Walker's goal of creating 250,000 private sector jobs by 2015.

"Wisconsin is home to many successful businesses, large and small, companies with national and global standing, and their success is due in part to a well educated, trained and highly skilled workforce," Secretary Baumbach said. "This month we celebrate the state and regional partnerships in workforce development that empower workers and job seekers with skills to succeed. Working together, we will help Governor Walker improve Wisconsin's business climate and support the creation of 250,000 new private sector jobs by 2015."

During a visit to Teel Plastics, Inc., Secretary Baumbach read from Governor Walker's proclamation. The visit was the first of many Workforce Development Month events to highlight Wisconsin's competitive advantages and rally all partners and stakeholders to advance the economy.

As a sign of Wisconsin's improving business climate, Secretary Baumbach said job postings on DWD's online employment site, JobCenterofWisconsin.com, recently exceeded a record 34,000 openings. As part of Workforce Development Month, DWD and its partners will celebrate the third year of the online employment site that was launched in September 2008 and has since become increasingly popular with employers and job seekers.

Mari Kay-Nabozny, Chief Executive Officer of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board, Inc., and Chief Information Officer of the Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA), said: "The Wisconsin Workforce Development Association (WWDA) is excited to offer many events across the state during Workforce Development month. There are a number of opportunities in September to visit your local Job Center and attend a workshop, job fair, youth event, or simply get help in finding a job. WWDA members, the local workforce boards, are committed to working within our regions to assist job seekers and businesses with employment needs."

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While at Teel Plastics, Secretary Baumbach presented the company with a commendation, citing its strong partnership in economic and workforce development. Teel Plastics is a longstanding participant, for example, in Wisconsin's Apprenticeship Program. A leading manufacturer of plastic components for medical, industrial and construction sectors, Teel Plastics recently expanded operations and continues to add jobs. Teel Plastics participates in the state Apprenticeship Program, and it has close working relationship with the South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board.

"Teel Plastics continues to propel and lead the region's advanced manufacturing industry in both innovation and workforce development," said Pat Schramm, Executive Director, Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin. "The proof lies in how the Baraboo-based firm builds up both the local economy and the communities and the workers that drive it."

In 2008, Teel Plastics completed construction of its new headquarters and production facility, a \$14.6 million project at the entrance to Gateway Business Park. Teel has added 33 new jobs in the past year and currently employs 275 workers at four locations in Baraboo. The firm is a leader in Wisconsin's plastics industry sector, which ranks eighth nationally in employment and 10th in the number of establishments. Wisconsin's plastic and rubber exports exceeded \$610 million.

Throughout Workforce Development Month, DWD and its regional partners will highlight programs and services to empower and support Wisconsin's workforce as part of Governor Walker's overall strategy to advance the economy and help create private sector jobs. A schedule of events can be found at <http://wwda.org/wfcmonthcalendar.html>.