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## **DWD Secretary Newson: 'JobFest' Recruitment Event Highlights Seasonal Employer Consortium**

MILWAUKEE – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today visited JobFest, hosted by Interfaith Older Adult Program's Seasonal Workforce Coalition, to meet with employers and job seekers and to learn more about the work of the Seasonal Workforce Coalition in improving job prospects for workers in the Milwaukee area and beyond.

"The Seasonal Workforce Coalition provides an important service to employers in southeastern Wisconsin, helping to bring together qualified workers with available job openings," Secretary Newson said at the event, held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Grand Avenue Mall Center Court. "These collaborative approaches are the kinds of efforts that will continue to advance Wisconsin's economy under Governor Walker's job creation agenda."

The Seasonal Workforce Coalition is comprised of 28 employers in southeastern Wisconsin that have joined with Interfaith Older Adult Programs to offer a systematic approach helps enables workers obtain year-round work. Workers have the opportunity to boost their earnings through consistent wages that promote economic self-sufficiency. The Coalition has joined with over 30 area community organizations to help Milwaukee residents access employment and develop marketable skills that will translate into higher-skilled work and permanent employment.

Shannon Gallagher, Director of the Wisconsin Seasonal Workforce Coalition, said: "The Seasonal Workforce Coalition is a critical link for area employers seeking qualified workers. Providing year-round opportunities for seasonal employees help to increase their skills, resulting in higher-paying work and a family-supporting job."

Secretary Newson said the goals behind JobFest are in line with Governor Walker's "Wisconsin Working" plan to connect job seekers with available jobs through an expanded number of job fairs, additional staff to help people receiving unemployment benefits return to work quicker, and other efforts.

Additionally, he said the efforts complement the Governor's Transform Milwaukee initiative, a \$100 million initiative to rebuild the city's workforce, strengthen its manufacturing sector and in doing so, revitalize neighborhoods. The collaborative effort involves DWD, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, the Wisconsin Housing and Economic Development Authority and the Department of Children and Families, working with the City of Milwaukee and private foundations.