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Lt. Governor Kleefisch, Secretary Newson, Regional Workforce Leaders Dedicate New Mobile Manufacturing Training Lab

Mobile lab lets Lakeshore Technical College bring skills training to students across Northeastern Wisconsin

CLEVELAND – During a visit this morning to commemorate Lakeshore Technical College's (LTC) new mobile manufacturing training lab, Lieutenant Governor Rebecca Kleefisch commended the projects' partners for efforts to connect Wisconsinites from across the region with skills training for jobs that are in demand.

"There are opportunities now to develop skills that we know manufacturers are seeking," Lt. Governor Kleefisch said. "Communities across Northeastern Wisconsin will reap the economic benefits thanks to approaches like this new mobile training lab to address the skills gap and prepare individuals for good-paying jobs in today's labor market."

Lt. Governor Kleefisch joined Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson, Department of Corrections (DOC) Executive Assistant Dennis Schuh, leaders from LTC and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC), and private-sector partners to celebrate the completion of the new mobile manufacturing training lab.

The lab, modeled after a similar lab that NWTC and the Bay Area Workforce Development Board jointly launched in 2011, will travel to local high schools in the LTC district to provide on-site training in advanced manufacturing. The training will provide students instruction in industrial maintenance, programmable logic controls, and other components. Students will be able to complete a 5-credit technical college course that can be applied to LTC's electro-mechanical technology program.

In addition to schools, the lab will also travel to DOC adult institutions in the region to help inmates learn marketable skills that will help them successfully pursue good-paying jobs upon their transition from prison back into the community. The vast majority of prison inmates will complete their prison sentences and one day return to the community. Successful employment is a key factor to help reduce recidivism.

The lab was developed as a partnership between DWD, DOC, Lakeshore and Northeast Wisconsin Technical Colleges, and several partners in the private sector, including Rockwell Automation, Curt G. Joa, Inc., and Plenco.

DOC Secretary Ed Wall said: "We are pleased to partner with Lakeshore Technical College on their mobile lab unit. The lab will give inmates the chance to learn skills that will help them get a job in the community. This partnership provides opportunities for offenders to change their behavior and make Wisconsin a safer place."

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DWD Secretary Newson said the training lab is reflective of the innovative approaches that DWD is taking under Governor Scott Walker's leadership to address the skills gap and prepare Wisconsin residents for the modern workforce.

The "Wisconsin Fast Forward" bill (AB 14 / SB 23), which Governor Walker wants fast-tracked through the Legislature, would fund the development of a cutting-edge labor market information system, \$15 million in worker training grants to be administered by DWD, and 4 positions in an Office of Skills Development to be created at DWD. The legislation is part of a larger \$100 million investment in Wisconsin's workforce that Governor Walker has proposed over the coming biennium.

"Governor Walker has committed significant resources to develop our state's workforce and provide flexible resources to private-sector job creators," said DWD Secretary Newson. "DWD and Wisconsin's technical colleges are close partners in connecting Wisconsin job seekers to training opportunities and, ultimately, good-paying jobs in the private sector. This mobile lab is one more innovation that will empower job seekers to transition into good-paying jobs that promote independence and will help them pursue their dreams."