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Secretary Newson Urges Educators, Other Stakeholders to Attend Statewide Apprenticeship Conference, Submit Workshop Ideas

MADISON – As part of statewide efforts to raise awareness about Wisconsin Apprenticeship's role in addressing the skills gap, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today encouraged educators, local workforce leaders and other stakeholders to take part in the 26th Biennial Apprenticeship Conference. He said organizers are looking now for workshop proposals for the January 2014 conference, which has the theme *The Apprenticeship Solution: Meeting the Challenge*.

"Apprenticeship is one of our most effective programs, and yet it remains one of our best kept secrets," Secretary Newson said. "We've mounted a multi-media educational initiative to change that, and at our state's next apprenticeship conference, we want an expanded audience of educators, workforce system representatives, industry employers and other new audiences to join us as we discuss ways to strengthen Wisconsin Apprenticeship and maintain its success at ensuring a skilled workforce for employers now and in the future."

The DWD Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards and the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council are sponsoring the 2014 conference January 27 and 28 at the Chula Vista Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Earlier conferences were attended primarily by local apprenticeship committees, employers participating in apprenticeship training and labor union representatives. The goal for the biennial conference in 2014 is to include regional and local workforce development boards and agencies; educators and instructors, K-12 through technical college, and local nonprofit organizations serving job seekers, the unemployed and under employed.

Boards, agencies and organizations interested in presenting conference workshops are encouraged to propose workshops that relate to one of four major challenges: Changing Workforce, Partnership in Workforce Development, Regulation and Policy, and Awareness and Outreach. Proposal forms are available to access and file [online](#) or printed and sent by email, fax or regular post.

The proposal submission deadline is June 3. Forms to register as conference attendees will be available in the coming months.

DWD in April launched a statewide educational initiative encouraging more employers and job seekers to take advantage of the successful on-the-job training program that lets apprentices earn while they learn and employers train workers to their specific needs. The educational effort includes a public service announcement, videos on the DWD website, billboards in metro areas and an apprenticeship "toolkit" with brochures and flyers on how to become an apprentice or to become a participating employer.

For more information, visit www.WisconsinApprenticeship.org.