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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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

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## **Secretary Newson Announces Office of Skills Development Web Page**

MADISON – Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson announced today that DWD has launched a landing page on the agency's website to provide an overview, answer frequent questions and provide contact information for the new Office of Skills Development (OSD).

"We invite employers, workforce development and economic development partners, education providers, and other stakeholders to learn more about the new Office of Skills Development as it gears up to implement elements of Wisconsin Fast Forward," Secretary Newson said. "We know interest has been high for more details about Wisconsin Fast Forward, and we are happy to provide this online resource to ensure the most up-to-date information is available to everyone."

The web page at <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/osd> provides information to employers, workforce and economic development professionals, and education providers about OSD, including updates in developing the grants program. It also provides contact information for OSD Director Scott Jansen, as well as Program Manager Dennis Schuh. A permanent website that will provide additional details about the Wisconsin Fast Forward Initiative is currently under development and will be launched in the coming months.

Governor Scott Walker signed 2013 Act 9, also known as Wisconsin Fast Forward, in March 2013 following nearly unanimous support from the Wisconsin Legislature. The bill includes \$15 million to support employer-focused worker training grants and additional resources to develop a cutting-edge labor market information system and to staff the new OSD.

In addition to administering the worker training grants program, OSD will also serve as a resource to businesses, providing information to interested stakeholders that will help them to access and utilize resources that will help to grow their company. The worker training grants will be made available to companies whose need for resources cannot be met through another existing program.

DWD has also begun formulating administrative rules that will govern the worker training grants funded through Wisconsin Fast Forward and has already conducted the initial comment period for the economic impact analysis of the rules. DWD will submit the rules to the Wisconsin Legislative Council for review with hearings to follow.