
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, September 9, 2013

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Secretary Newson Joins Regional Partners to Open New Computer Training Lab at Fox Cities Workforce Development Center

Highlights Workforce Development Month, Governor Walker's workforce investments

MENASHA – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today joined regional partners in opening a new Computer Training Lab at the Fox Cities Workforce Development Center and highlighted more than \$100 million in additional investments being made as part of Governor Walker's comprehensive workforce agenda.

"The new lab serving job seekers represents more investments to come, from new worker training grants, to a state-of-the art labor market system and a renewed funding for apprenticeships," Secretary Newson said at the event coinciding with Workforce Development Month. "Under Governor Walker's leadership, and in collaboration with legislative partners, we are making strategic investments to help ensure a skilled workforce that will sustain and promote economic expansion and job growth in Wisconsin."

Figuring prominently in Governor Walker's workforce agenda is Wisconsin Fast Forward, an initiative the Legislature approved with overwhelming bipartisan support. Wisconsin Fast Forward includes a new state-funded \$15 million grant program to address the skills gap by helping employers train new and incumbent workers. Also part of the initiative is a new, cutting-edge Labor Market Information System to provide real time data and better connect job seekers to jobs by keying on skills. The state budget that the Legislature passed and Governor Walker signed recently also restores state funding of apprenticeship training, supported for the past decade with federal dollars.

The computer lab will provide free computer literacy training to job seekers using the Fox Cities Workforce Development Center. DWD shared in the cost of the project, a collaborative effort with contributions from both the Fox Valley Workforce Development Board and Bay Area Workforce Development Board, as well as Fox Valley Technical College, Outagamie County, Goodwill and the Forward Service Corporation.

"While a good investment overall, the new computer lab comes at a particularly opportune time, as we increase efforts to help unemployed individuals connect to new jobs," Secretary Newson said. "Next month, new UI claimants who are required to register for work will have to do so through JobCenterofWisconsin.com in order to receive benefits. This change will not only ensure Wisconsin is complying with all applicable laws, but it also gives them direct access to a wealth of employment and training resources."

Starting October 13, UI claimants who by law must register for work will have 14 days to register with Wisconsin Job Service in order to receive benefits. They can do so either online or by visiting their local Job Center. The registration process, which takes an average computer user about an hour to complete, includes completing a Job Profile, identifying their skills, abilities, work experience, education and training, and other crucial information that can help Job Service staff connect them to new opportunities.