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Friday, January 24, 2014

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Apprenticeship Conference Offers Workshops on New Training Programs to Address Skills Gap, Prepare Workers for High-Tech, Family-Supporting Jobs

Three-day event starts Sunday in Dells; includes Apprentice Expo for students, nearly 600 expected

MADISON – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson said today the 26th Biennial Apprenticeship Conference, starting Sunday in Wisconsin Dells, features a new hybrid apprenticeship model that quickens the pace on the career path to family-supporting jobs in high-tech manufacturing.

"With the new hybrid apprenticeship model, we are helping employers address the skills gap, but this new approach represents much more than that," Secretary Newson said. "The hybrid model in metalworking lets apprentices advance based on competency, rather than just time spent in training. This is how we are building the workforce to move Wisconsin forward, by continually improving one of our premiere training programs."

Employers and workers can learn more about the hybrid training model in a workshop, "Moving the Machine Tool Industry into the 21st Century through the National Institute for Metalworking Skills." The workshop covers innovative approaches that employers in southeastern Wisconsin and the Waukesha County Technical College are piloting. Workshops at the three-day conference offer an introduction to apprenticeship, the latest green skills training in energy efficient and renewable energy technologies, and the role of apprenticeship partners in providing students core skills needed for careers in the trades.

The Apprenticeship Conference, *The Apprenticeship Solution: Meeting the Workforce Challenge*, at the Chula Vista Resort includes a special Apprentice Expo for high school students. Nearly 600 students from schools in central and southern Wisconsin are expected. More than 25 training partners including unions, employers, utilities and merit shop organizations will host hands-on, interactive displays for more than 50 skilled occupations in construction, manufacturing, utility, service and agriculture sectors.

The conference program includes nationally recognized speakers Anirban Basu, President and CEO of SAGE Policy Group and Mark Breslin, founder and CEO of Breslin Strategies. Dan Ariens, President and CEO of the Ariens Company will also speak at the conference, co-sponsored by DWD and the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Advisory Council.

New apprentice contracts last year increased by 31 percent compared to the previous year and by 56 percent compared to three years ago. The increases by trade sectors were:

- **Construction** – new apprentices, 1,570, the biggest increase, 51 percent compared to 2012 new contracts and 73 percent compared to new contracts three years ago.
- **Industrial/Manufacturing** – new apprentices, 581, a 9 percent increase compared to the 2012 new contracts and 75 percent compared to new contracts in 2010.
- **Service** – New apprentices, 1,199, a 22 percent increase compared to the 2012 new contracts and a 29 percent increase compared to 2010 figure.

For conference details and registration, visit: <http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/apprenticeship/conference/default.htm>.