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Secretary Gassman Announces Start of Safety Calendar Art Contest

Labor Secretary urges all Boys & Girls Club members to enter, help ensure job safety

KENOSHA – During a “Capital-for-the-Day” visit to the Boys & Girls Club of Kenosha, Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Roberta Gassman today announced the start of the fourth annual Safety Calendar Art Contest and urged Club members across the state to enter and help Wisconsin workers focus on safety.

As with last year’s contest, Club members have an added incentive to enter. Besides certificates signed by Governor Doyle and the Secretary, winners of the 2009 Safety Calendar Art Contest will receive \$25 each, and the young artist with the winning cover illustration will receive \$50. A Kenosha Club member, Breeanna Scuffham, was among last year’s \$25 winners.

“Wisconsin has a solid record on job safety, and that’s evident from our comparatively low rates for worker’s compensation insurance, as well as our favorable ranking in a recent national report on workplace safety,” Secretary Gassman said. “But we can always do better, and with the help of Boys and Girls Club members throughout the state, we can help keep the focus on safety every working day of the year. This art contest is part of a broad effort to prevent injuries on the job, maintain a healthy, productive workforce, and keep our economy growing.”

Since 2003, DWD’s Division of Worker’s Compensation has strengthened workplace safety initiatives. The division investigates about 200 accidents a year to enforce regulations and stress prevention. On major projects, such as the Marquette Interchange, the division provides comprehensive coverage to help reduce premiums and heighten safety awareness. For such efforts, the Wisconsin Safety Council recently honored Division Administrator Frances Huntley-Cooper with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

Recently, the AFL-CIO released its 17th annual national report comparing states and their safety and health protection records for America’s workers. Issued on April 28, 2008 – Workers Memorial Day – the report said Wisconsin was among the states with the lowest rates of fatal workplace injuries: 91 in 2006 for a rate of 3.1 per 100,000 workers.

Secretary Gassman urged Boys and Girls Club members to talk to their parents about their work and job safety to get ideas for illustrating safety tips. The deadline for contest entries is Friday, July 25, 2008. Secretary Gassman will lead a panel of judges in selecting the winners this fall. In December, DWD’s Division of Worker’s Compensation will mail 4,500 calendars to employers for display in worksites throughout the state.