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DWD Secretary Newson Salutes Employers, Workers, Partners at Kickoff Event for Workforce Development Month

On Governor Walker's behalf, labor secretary announces proclamation during BouMatic visit

MADISON – At a kickoff event for Workforce Development Month, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary Reggie Newson today saluted all partners in ensuring a highly skilled workforce and, as Governor Walker's Cabinet member for workforce development, reaffirmed the administration's commitment to reforming the system, improving training programs, and addressing the skills gap.

"Wisconsin has a proud history as a leader in workforce development, and it is known worldwide for quality goods and services produced by dedicated, skilled and hardworking men and women," Secretary Newson said. "During the Labor Day weekend and throughout the month of September, we celebrate these achievements. At the same time, we are committed to improving the system, closing the skills gap and providing employers the workers they need in this challenging, increasingly competitive global economy."

On Governor Walker's behalf, Secretary Newson issued the Governor's Workforce Development Month proclamation during a visit to BouMatic, the global dairy equipment manufacturer based in Madison and winner of the 2012 Governor's Export Award. Joining him were Secretary Ben Brancel of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and Pat Schramm, Executive Director of the South Central Wisconsin Workforce Development Board. Also present was Mary Gage, Regional Account Manager at the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC), appearing on behalf of WEDC CEO Paul Jadin.

Secretary Newson noted groups working on a number of fronts to improve on training programs and address the skills gap. They include the College and Workforce Readiness Council, the Council on Workforce Investment and the Minority Unemployment Task Force. Governor Walker made workforce system reform a priority when he established the workforce readiness council as part of his Wisconsin Working plan.

"We look forward to reviewing recommendations of all stakeholders and advancing those that are in line with the Governor's budget priorities," Secretary Newson said.

Secretary Newson cited BouMatic as a prime example of a successful global company representing two strong sectors in Wisconsin's economy, agriculture and manufacturing. BouMatic manufactures rotary milking systems, stainless steel tanks, chillers and other dairy equipment and supplies. The agri-business manufacturer employs more than 400 people worldwide in serving dairy operators in over 45 countries.

"Under Governor Walker's leadership, Wisconsin added 37,464 private sector jobs from March 2011 to March 2012," Secretary Newson said. "Manufacturing is leading the recovery in Wisconsin, adding more than 12,000 jobs over this 12-month period."

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According to DACTP, in the first half of 2012, Wisconsin exported \$1.5 billion worth of agricultural products to over 132 countries, an increase of 5 percent over the first six months of 2011. According to WEDC, Wisconsin's total exports grew by 7.9 percent during the first six months of 2012, with increases in exports of industrial machinery, agricultural products, vehicles, and medical and scientific instruments. Wisconsin exports totaled \$11.7 billion during the six-month period.

Throughout the month, DWD and its regional partners in workforce development will hold events across the state. For a calendar of events scheduled by the Wisconsin Workforce Development Association, see: <https://www.google.com/calendar/embed?src=wwdainfo%40gmail.com&ctz=America/Chicago>