

**CWI GROW Grant for the
Greater Milwaukee Regional Workforce Alliance
General Concept Summary – October 6, 2005**

To provide a clear workforce development linkage with Governor's Doyle's recently announced grant to the Greater Milwaukee Economic Development Partnership, the Department of Workforce Development (DWD), on behalf of the Governor's Council on Workforce Investment (CWI), will provide a \$150,000 grant to the Waukesha-Ozaukee-Washington (WOW) Workforce Development Board to coordinate a seven county regional workforce initiative that encompasses three of Wisconsin's eleven workforce areas.

This grant to the WOW Workforce Board echoes Governor Doyle and Mayor Tom Barrett's recognition of the strong interdependence between the city of Milwaukee and the surrounding counties of southeastern Wisconsin. The WOW WDB has a long history of collaboration with economic development, education, business and labor and will bring strong workforce leadership to this regional effort. The Waukesha County Workforce Development Center has gained national and international recognition as a model workforce center and is the only center in Wisconsin to be honored by the Baldrige-based Wisconsin Forward Award for its commitment to quality continuous improvement.

In its capacity as grant recipient, the WOW WDB will take the lead in finalizing a grant project plan in collaboration with other partners. As a point of departure for that collaboration, DWD has identified the following core elements the initiative is expected to have:

- The objective of this grant is to **identify and implement unique regional workforce strategies** that will dramatically increase workforce development collaboration on a regional basis. Linkages between workforce development, economic development and education should be strengthened where they exist and developed where they do not.
- This initiative will have a **leadership team** that includes but need not be limited to: Mayor Tom Barrett, the private sector business chairs of the three workforce development boards of the region, a leader of the metro business organizations (MMAC/GMC), at least two leaders of the region's post secondary institutions, the regional CESA 1 Director, and at least two leaders of the region's economic development community.
- The activities of this initiative will be a **combination of key projects** proposed by the two proposals that were submitted, thereby bringing the best of the publicly funded workforce system and the private and philanthropic sectors to the table to develop collaborative regional workforce strategies.
- This grant will include **partnership linkages** with the recently launched Greater Milwaukee Economic Development Partnership, education to include the CESA #1 schools as they also embark on a regional education initiative, the post-secondary UW and WTCS system, and the southeast regional economic development partnership WISREP.

Core projects and outcomes DWD will be seeking through this grant include:

- Development of a **regional economic report** to identify short and long term objectives for the region. The regional report will be developed at no cost to the grant by DWD Office of Economic Advisors and serve as a basis of information to develop the objectives.
- Establishment of a **Greater Milwaukee Workforce Board Alliance** to coordinate the local Workforce Investment Act plans for the three workforce board areas and to create a regional

alliance website presence to share information and develop regional initiatives (a possible model for which is one developed by the Workforce Boards of Metro Chicago).

- Engagement of the **best thinking of leading national organizations** to explore innovative strategies for the region, which might include workforce intermediary concepts and the creation of “Centers of Excellence” to provide short-term industry specific training in key industries.
- Maximization of available resources by creating an **inventory of public, private and philanthropic** resources and convening a “Donors Forum” to engage private foundations and attract potential national funding. Results from CWI UW-Milwaukee Landscape grant offer a place to begin with this effort.
- Creation and/or expansion of current **industry councils** in the region and improved linkages, through these councils, between regional economic development, education, and sector-specific workforce development efforts..
- Implementation of specific strategies to **address minority and diverse workforce issues** such as: a) expanding the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Council to the region & convene an LEP conference; b) increasing the capacity to meet the needs of the minority communities, in particular the black community in Milwaukee and Racine.

In order to ensure efficient use of funds in furthering the GROW grant program’s objectives and CWI priorities:

- Each project above will have specific deliverables, to be developed and agreed upon by the parties and with DWD and including some based on previous GROW grant proposals, on terms that are realistic given the time and funding available.
- WOW WDB and its partner organizations must provide matching resources of at least 25% of the total project costs, either through cash allocations or in-kind contributions.
- Grant funds should be focused on value-added activities that further the goals of the alliance with minimal costs charged for administration, overhead, operational costs. These latter costs should be covered to the extent possible by other funding sources, in which form they may be offered as match for this grant.
- It is expected that minimal costs, if any, will be charged for already funded existing WDB staff.
- The CWI, both as a whole and through its various committees, will maintain an active interest in the progress of this new alliance and its various projects and will seek periodic progress reports from WOW WDB and its project partners.

To finalize this grant, DWD expects that a working team consisting of staff of the three WDBs, a representative of the Milwaukee Mayor’s Office, and a representative from the Greater Milwaukee Regional Economic Development Partnership (suggesting MMAC or GMC) will develop a collaboratively revised proposal that incorporates the above projects and an accompanying budget.

The revised proposal and budget should be submitted as soon as possible. DWD management and grant staff are available to participate on the working team to ensure that the final proposal is accepted and funded as soon as possible.