

**Jim Doyle**  
Governor

**Paul Linzmeyer**  
Chair



Sue Gleason, Liaison  
201 E. Washington Avenue, Rm. A200  
P.O. Box 7972  
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7972  
Telephone: (608) 266-0522  
Fax: (608) 261-6376  
Web site: <http://www.wi-cwi.org>

# Council on Workforce Investment

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## WORKFORCE STRATEGIES COMMITTEE

Country Springs Hotel  
(Woodfield B)  
2810 Golf Road -- Waukesha, WI 53187

**September 22, 2006**  
**12:45 to 2:30 p.m.**

### Meeting Agenda

- I. Call to Order and Minutes of August 3, 2006 Meeting -- **Action**
- II. Update on Current Activities
  - A. Regional Metrics
  - B. GROW II
- III. Future Opportunities
  - A. Shifting Gears (Joyce Foundation) Project
  - B. Life Long Learning Accounts
  - C. National Skill Standards -- Workforce Readiness Skills Certification
- IV. Planning for the Next Year
  - A. Review of 2005-06 Objectives/Strategies and Key Accomplishments
  - B. Priorities for 2007
  - C. Schedule of Future Meetings
- V. Adjourn

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### Meeting Materials Enclosed

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Page 9	Potential Future Issues for Committee Focus

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# COUNCIL ON WORKFORCE INVESTMENT

## Workforce Strategies Committee

Madison, WI

*(Draft Pending Committee Approval)*

August 3, 2006

**Members Present:** Dean Welch and Lee Rasch (co-chairs), Jewel Currie, Barb Fleisner, John Heyer, Debra Malewicki, A. Kent Olson, Patrick Schillinger, John Wagnitz (for Senator Dave Hansen), Mark Reihl and by phone: Jayson Chung (for Daniel Clancy), William Chaudoir, Susan Hatch, and James P. Hill

**Members Absent:** Rod Copes, Elizabeth Burmaster, Ellen Holt, Senator Joe Leibham, Norma Tirado, Joan Wilk

**Staff Present:** Fred Bartol, Sheryl Billups

**Guests:** Heather Hinkforth (general public) and by phone: Teresa Barch and Neil Hall (WAJTE), Dale Dulberger (Milwaukee Area Technical College), Jim Mackey (WTCSB)

### Key Issue

#### I. Call to Order and Minutes

Co-chair Dean Welch called the meeting to order at approximately 1:10 p.m. A new Committee member, Debra Malewicki (Wisconsin Small Business Development Centers, U.W. Extension), was introduced. Ms. Malewicki replaces Erica Kauten who retired.

While waiting for other members to join the meeting, Welch opened the floor to comments from guests. Heather Hinkforth requested time to discuss her thoughts on workforce issues. She briefly explained her background and interest in speaking at the meeting. She noted that she had been the only female in a bricklayer apprenticeship. She believes the union made things difficult/closed doors and that DWD and the apprenticeship program did not aggressively enforce EEO policies/requirements. She also explained that she was representative of working single mothers and this was a group that needed attention. She encouraged the Committee to consider EEO policies and enforcement efforts as part of its policy making efforts.

**Action:** Upon assurance of a quorum, Welch requested action on the minutes of the April 28, 2006 Committee teleconference. Lee Rasch moved to approve the minutes; Jewel Currie seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

#### II. CWI and DWD Initiatives

Fred Bartol and Sheryl Billups provided brief updates on a variety of CWI and DWD initiatives currently underway. Among initiatives discussed were the following.

##### A. **Healthcare Workforce Taskforce**

Bartol gave a brief update on the "Safe Lifting" grant initiative. The purpose is to encourage training in safe lifting of patients in various health care settings. \$325,000 in WIA discretionary funds had been made available for grants to health care providers; the Department received 31 applications requesting a total of \$628,000. Letters of intent have been issued to 18 grantees for grant amounts of between \$5,000 and \$20,000, and grant agreements were now in the process of being finalized. Rick Orton of the DWD Office of Economic Initiatives is the contact for further information.

## **B. Project Lead the Way**

Bartol provided a brief update on DWD's involvement with the "Project Lead the Way" pre-engineering program for high- and middle-schools. He noted that the Kern Family Foundation of Waukesha has been spearheading efforts to establish PLTW in schools throughout the state. DWD is now in its second year of partnering with the Department of Public Instruction to support schools implementing PLTW with Kern funds. One result of this partnership is that it gives DWD a place at the table in shaping the PLTW project statewide, particularly with regard to establishing ties between these school programs and regional Workforce Development Boards and WIA Youth Councils.

In response to questions Bartol explained that the Kern Foundation provides the bulk of the funding -- approximately \$2.3 million dollars; DPI contributes approximately \$125,000 and DWD contributes \$50,000.

## **C. WIA Performance Incentive Grants**

Billups reported that DWD, Wisconsin Technical College System and Dept. of Public Instruction are working together to develop the guidelines that local areas will use to apply for the \$714,000 in WIA Incentive funds provided by the U.S. DOL. The projects funded through these dollars will focus on advanced manufacturing and occupational basic academic and employability skills/competencies. Career Pathways will provide the over-arching framework for projects. It is expected that guidelines will be distributed, proposals submitted and projects approved in time for a January 2007 start-up. Three projects are expected to be funded, one for each of three target groups: adult/incumbent workers, dislocated workers, and youth.

## **D. GROW Grants**

All of the GROW regional partnerships have submitted 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter reports indicating progress on their projects. Bartol provided very brief overviews of each project, and noted that the guidelines for the second round of GROW grants went out July 10, with applications due August 25. Only current grantees were eligible for this second round; the seven current regions cover the entire state. The current plan is to evaluate proposals in time to announce grant awards at the CWI meeting on September 22. Bartol also noted that two of the regions gave presentations on their projects at the Governor's Workforce Development Conference, and the Milwaukee/Southeastern Wisconsin GROW partnership was slated to present to CWI on September 22.

During follow-up discussion on GROW, Kent Olson suggested that a detailed report on each GROW region's activities would be helpful to other regions in planning their GROW II projects. Bartol indicated that such a report was one of several steps, including a web page and the regional metrics report, that OEI planned to develop soon to provide more detailed information on the GROW grant program.

## **E. Regional Metrics**

The list of proposed metrics had been finalized based on discussions with this committee and a public comment process. The DWD Office of Economic Advisors has produced a complete set of draft metrics for one region; OEI staff is now in the process of finalizing a report format for presenting these and those for the other 6 regions. OEA has indicated producing the numbers for those other six regions should be able to be produced fairly quickly. The plan is to try to have a draft metrics report on all seven regions ready to present at the September 22 CWI meeting. The one exception was the special metric on business "births and deaths," which CWI requested at its June 16 meeting, but will involve additional time to develop. The report format is designed to create a fairly streamlined report: for each indicator a numeric value, that value as a percentage if appropriate, and, for comparison purposes, the percentage for the US as a whole.

In discussion, members noted the need to look at metrics from the perspective of a "balanced scorecard" rather than a "report card".

#### **F. CWI Special Innovation Grants**

As announced at the last CWI meeting, three grants have been approved -- Racine Area Manufacturers and Commerce Advanced Manufacturing project, South Central WDB's Regional Distance Learning project, and Southwest WDB's Virtual Job Center Project. All three have submitted the additional information needed to proceed with grant development and have received authority to begin as of July 1, 2006 while grants are being finalized.

#### **G. Joyce Foundation Grant**

After a series of listening sessions (in which some CWI members participated), the Joyce Foundation has issued an RFP for grant proposals for "Shifting Gears" grants (up to \$1 million each for projects lasting two years) aimed at major state level policy transformations in the area of workforce development. DWD has been working with the technical college system, WAJTE, the Center on Wisconsin Strategy, DPI, the UW System and other partners to develop a proposal, and submitted a letter of intent July 21. The project concept focuses on organizing more of the state's workforce programs around a "career pathways" approach. The Department expects to hear next week whether it has been invited to submit a full proposal, which would then be due August 25. The Strategies Committee will have an important role to play in any eventual project supported by this grant.

#### **H. U.S. DOL High Growth Job Training Initiative for Advanced Manufacturing**

The U.S. DOL has issued a grant solicitation focused on advanced manufacturing. \$10 million is available nationally for grants to develop and implement innovative, industry-driven training solutions that address advanced manufacturing's critical workforce challenges. Several grants are being submitted from Wisconsin. One is a multi-state national demonstration project under the umbrella of the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council. It focuses on implementing manufacturing skill standards and credentialing in five states -- Wisconsin, Minnesota, Indiana, Ohio and California. Milwaukee Area Technical College, through their WISPASS program, is the Wisconsin partner in this project. At the request of MATC, the DWD Secretary and the CWI Chair submitted letters of support for this project.

In discussion about individual initiatives and in general, staff clarified the funding history of the GROW grants (first round with \$500,000 in 2005; second round with \$400,000 in 2006) and the CWI involvement in determining how funds will be used, including focus on advanced manufacturing (March 2006 CWI meeting). Discussion also focused on the difficulty that members have in explaining to new partners what the CWI does and what initiatives/grants it has initiated. It was suggested that staff provide members information on what regions are doing and CWI initiatives underway.

### III. Strategies Committee Organization

Co-chair Lee Rasch reported that the Workforce Strategies Committee Co-chairs and Workforce System Development Committee Co-chairs have started to meet quarterly. The meetings are intended primarily as problem-solving session. Rasch noted that the Co-chairs addressed issues related to helping Committees function more effectively, particularly issues related to member participation. While noting that most members were able to attend this meeting, he offered some suggestions to consider, e.g., defining a quorum as those attending, forming a steering committee, reconfiguring membership, etc.

Jewel Currie suggested that some form of simple communication method (newsletter or other means) about what the CWI is doing and accomplishing would help members educate themselves and others about the CWI and the issues it is addressing. Among other suggestions were establishing a year long meeting calendar, allowing proxy votes, developing a brief document/publication listing key accomplishments, and developing an "activity action" list and assigning members responsibility for following through on specific activities (short-term commitments).

#### IV. Committee Next Steps

##### **A. Use of CWI Advanced Manufacturing Project Funds**

Sheryl Billups briefly reviewed the Committee's previous discussions about the \$100,000 designated by the CWI for support of advanced manufacturing. While recognizing that not all committee members responded, she noted that the results of the survey of members on focus areas for use of the funds indicated support for the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council assessment, training and certification system as the top priority. Billups also reviewed staff recommendation focusing on capacity building (e.g., support for comprehensive Job Centers as certification centers, staff training, and employer education). The rationale for focusing on capacity building activities moving in this direction is that this is a new system that may not be consistently connected to the workforce development system and may not be widely understood by employers or workforce development professionals. In addition, this focus is more likely to support, rather than duplicate, other activities currently being funded to support advanced manufacturing (e.g., Workforce Advancement Training grants, Advanced Manufacturing Solutions, U.S. DOL Advanced Manufacturing grants in process, etc.).

There was considerable discussion about the standards and system, with active participation from Jim Mackey (Wisconsin Technical College System) and Dale Dulberger (Milwaukee Area Technical College). Among key issues discussed were the following:

- The importance of helping employers understand the need to/value of upgrading the skills of their workforce and how the MSSC system can help them
- Evidence that employers are interested in such a system demonstrated and that the system can make a difference by:
  - ⇒ involvement of employers in standards development (over 400)
  - ⇒ participation in pilot projects in several states (including Wisconsin) over the last two years
  - ⇒ national and state studies demonstrating the core skills/competencies that employers identify as critical and in short supply
- The need for incentives to encourage workers and employers to engage in assessment and training, particularly financial incentives for employers to support assessment and training to the standards (initially may need see some evidence of positive results before they will commit their own resources).
- Concerns about the various initiatives and resources being directed to support advanced manufacturing in the state, lack of specific results to date and need for evaluation on bottom-line business results (e.g., productivity).

**Action:** Barbara Fleisner moved to accept the staff recommendations; John Heyer and Jayson Chung jointly seconded the motion. The motion passed with one no vote (Kent Olsen).

##### **B. Use of Remaining CWI Special Innovations Project Funds**

Fred Bartol provided a brief background on the Special Innovation Project funds, why approximately \$100,500 of these funds were not fully allocated in the just completed solicitation process, the Committee's role in recommending alternate uses for the funds, and the staff recommendation for use of the funds. The staff recommendation suggested using the funds for a set of small "GROW Supplement" grants, that could be integrated into existing GROW projects and directed to innovations in specific areas. The two areas recommended by staff included proposals that would:

- Adapt and apply state- or regionally-developed economic and workforce data to specific elements of an established regional strategy, or
- Initiate, or take specific implementation steps in, career pathway projects.

Committee discussion and comments focused on other potential project ideas, particularly ideas that might be generated from "best practice" activities already implemented or underway through the

current GROW grants and the need to incorporate a clear focus and clear metrics for evaluating results. There was also discussion of how and when grants would administratively be integrated into GROW (simply added to current grants or separate grants).

**Action:** John Heyer moved to incorporate the funds into the GROW grants; Barbara Fleisner seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

In follow-up discussion, Welch requested that staff prepare a survey of potential project focus areas that could go out to Committee members as soon as possible. The survey should incorporate project activities that might be considered "best practices" of GROW regions, as well as the two ideas presented by staff. These would help the Committee determine priority areas for use of these funds; it could also offer a starting point for considering future Committee focus areas.

### **C. Committee Objectives and Long Term Next Steps**

Billups noted that the CWI's 2005 Report to the Governor included goals and objectives that were intended to guide Council activities over the year and highlighted the three objectives assigned to the Strategies Committee. She suggested that it might be helpful for the Committee to review those objectives and their related strategies and action steps in assessing progress to date and planning future activities.

The co-chairs indicated that at its next meeting the Committee will be working to identify its work activities for the next year, as well as developing its recommendations on use of the remaining CWI Innovations project funds. To assist in that effort, he directed staff to prepare a meeting schedule for next year, the results of the survey on project ideas, and a list of all grants (with brief description). The Co-chairs also requested that staff send the Committee's 2005 objectives as part of the meeting package.

### **V. New Business and Announcements**

Staff highlighted several upcoming events/activities of potential interest to the Committee, including:

- A orientation and training session on the Aspen Institute's Business Value Assessment, sponsored by WAJTE and the CWI, is scheduled for September 13 and 14. A small amount of funds segregated for CWI meetings (\$500) was committed to help support this even.
- The next CWI meeting is scheduled for September 22 and will be held in Waukesha
- The Governor will be designating September as Workforce Development Month again this year. Staff is looking for opportunities to highlight this in some way at the September meeting.

### **VI. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

**WORKFORCE STRATEGIES COMMITTEE**  
*Committee Work Plan and Key Accomplishments for 2005-2006*

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Key Accomplishments</b>
<p><b><u>Objective A- Workforce Information</u></b></p> <p>Improved statewide and regional information (and methods for its ongoing collection and distribution) about workforce preparation and skill needs, employer demand, and industry/occupational growth, in forms readily usable in public and private decision-making.</p>	<p><b><u>Strategy 1:</u></b> Identify skill gaps facing current employers and workers in established industries/occupations.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy 2:</u></b> Identify additional data needs at the regional level to assist in economic development, education and workforce planning.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy 3:</u></b> Develop techniques and mechanisms to quickly identify state and regional opportunities.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy 4:</u></b> Develop ways to communicate new opportunities in order to encourage well educated and highly skilled workers, particularly those trained in Wisconsin, to remain in Wisconsin.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collect, document, review and summarize best available documentation and data on current and anticipated state industry skill needs.</li> <li>○ Plan and conduct "gap analysis" of anticipated skill needs/gaps in emerging industries</li> <li>○ Identify (and, as necessary, pursue development of) electronic resources for monitoring and assessing industry skill needs/gaps as closely as possible to "real time."</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Review and make recommendations on Regional Metrics Initiative</li> <li>○ Recommend uses for Labor Market Information Grant funds</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Objective B - Workforce Preparation and Support</u></b></p> <p>Advance and enrich lifelong learning for Wisconsin citizens through innovative PK-16 education and employer-based training systems, with special attention to under-served and special-needs populations.</p>	<p><b><u>Strategy 1:</u></b> Maximize the development, effectiveness, and use of distance education technology.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy 2:</u></b> Provide for a workforce preparation system that is more flexible and responsive to economic needs.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy 3:</u></b> Transition to a career development system that is transparent, accessible and has the capacity to meet the needs of a diverse citizenry and workforce.</p> <p><b><u>Strategy 4:</u></b> Strengthen access and articulation to post-secondary education and work, such as recommended in the COBE (Committee on Baccalaureate Expansion) Report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Collect information and report on trends, current use, and demand for distance learning in K-adult education and make recommendations on investment.</li> <li>○ Identify and develop report on existing flexible education/training options in Wisconsin Technical College System.</li> <li>○ Collect information and report on effectiveness of various youth programs.</li> <li>○ Scan and report on innovative career development systems.</li> <li>○ Explore and report on feasibility of convening a Career Education "Summit" to reenergize the state's commitment to career education.</li> <li>○ Monitor and report on COBE implementation activities/liaison with implementation committee.</li> <li>○ Collect information/report on Carl Perkins and educational options and trends in funding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recommend support for COBE report</li> </ul>

<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Action Steps</b>	<b>Key Accomplishments</b>
<p><b>Objective C - Targeted Regional Priorities</b></p> <p>Increased opportunities for innovative regional partnerships that support career opportunities and advancement in key occupational sectors.</p>	<p><b>Strategy 1:</b> Identify/pursue job creation methods and workforce education and training models to maximize career advancement opportunities in existing regional industry sectors.</p> <p><b>Strategy 2:</b> Identify, support and disseminate successful models of public-private cooperation for implementing industry-driven education and training for both future and incumbent workers.</p> <p><b>Strategy 3:</b> Support multilateral regional networks/partnerships (of business, labor, education and economic development and workforce development agencies) for cultivating high-growth, high-wage industry occupations appropriate to each region.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gather information and report on "workplace learning centers."</li> <li>○ Gather information and report on "best practices" in private sector driven incumbent worker training.</li> <li>○ Clarify and differentiate among alternative ways of defining "region" for workforce development purposes.</li> <li>○ Oversee/monitor GROW Region by Region project implementation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Recommend program guidelines and funding priorities for GROW I and II Grants</li> <li>○ Recommend support for WTCS Advanced Manufacturing Solutions Initiative</li> <li>○ Participate in review and recommendation of CWI Special Innovation Projects</li> <li>○ Recommend CWI Advanced Manufacturing fund focus on MSSC implementation</li> </ul>

## WORKFORCE STRATEGIES COMMITTEE POTENTIAL FUTURE ISSUES FOR COMMITTEE FOCUS

The Committee has initiated or played a significant role in developing several initiatives over the last 18 months, with major activities focused on Committee Objective 1 (Workforce Information) and Objective 3 (Targeted Regional Priorities). The Committee may want to focus future efforts on "next steps" related to initiatives it has already started (e.g., regional metrics, MSSC), on unaddressed strategies/action steps in its current plan, and/or on new strategies with potential to significantly advance its objectives. The following are some emerging strategies, related primarily to Objective 2 (Workforce Preparation/Support) that may be of particular interest.

### Shifting Gears/Regional Industry Skills Education (RISE) Initiative

Under this initiative, DWD and the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) would lead a statewide partnership effort to align the workforce system around a "career pathways" model, bring industry-driven career pathways to scale throughout the state, and provide career-ladder footholds to low-wage workers with limited skills. A structured collaboration between state-level programs and GROW regional partnerships would pursue the following three strategies:

1. *Developing replicable career pathway models* for improving access, by workers and jobseekers at varying skill levels and career stages, to employer-demanded skills and credentials in high-wage, high-growth industries.
2. *Improving career-pathway access specifically for low-wage, low-skilled adults* through industry-driven programs bridging Adult Basic Education (ABE), English as a Second Language (ESL), and General Educational Development (GED) study to post-secondary vocational education.
3. *Propagating adult career pathways and basic education bridges to pathways throughout the state*, through "innovation investment" grants to GROW partnerships.

### Life Long Learning Accounts (LiLAs)

The CWI discussed LiLAs at its June 2006 CWI Meeting. LiLAs are employer-matched individual asset-building accounts to finance lifelong learning so that workers can upgrade their skills and knowledge to achieve their career goals while meeting the demands of businesses for a skilled workforce. Key components of LiLAs are: universal eligibility, employer based, portable, contributions from individuals and potentially third parties, voluntary participation, and informed choice. CAEL is supporting a three-site, multi-sector LiLA demonstration that will include a comprehensive demonstration. The federal government and a number of other states are considering or have initiated LiLA programs/pilots and legislative responses to support LiLAs, including third-party incentives such as tax credits and state matching funds to encourage participation.

### National Workforce Readiness Credential

Implementation of a new national credentialing system is now underway, this one focused on "work readiness" skills. The National Work Readiness Council is initiating a targeted "soft" launch of the National Work Readiness Credential (WRC) this month through 50 sites around the country, with full implementation expected to begin in January 2007. The WRC is the first national standards-based assessment for entry-level workers to provide a universal, transferable, national standard for work readiness. It is based on nationally-validated *Equipped for the Future* learning standards, which were created as part of the National Institute for Literacy's ten-year standards development initiative. The Credential provides a national, portable certification that affirms that individual job seekers have demonstrated knowledge and skills needed for successful performance as entry-level workers. The WRC assessment includes four modules - situational judgment, oral language, reading and using math -- and assesses whether the test taker can use nine skills well enough to carry out critical entry-level tasks and responsibilities.