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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **New W3 Program Opens to Eligible Employers, UI Claimants**

*Innovative pilot will connect current Unemployment Insurance claimants with training placements*

MADISON – Department of Workforce Development Secretary (DWD) Reggie Newson today encouraged eligible employers and Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants to apply for the Wisconsin Workers Win (W3) pilot program, which formally launched June 1 in southern Wisconsin as part of Governor Walker's agenda to get Wisconsinites working again.

"The W3 program connects newly unemployed individuals with up to six weeks of training at a worksite of an employer that has a current job opening," said Secretary Newson. "During this time, the UI claimant keeps workplace skills current, and the employer determines whether the trainee would be the right fit as a new hire. This is truly a win-win for everyone involved, and I encourage eligible employers and claimants to take advantage of this program today."

Participants and employers are urged to contact the three DWD regional partners that are administering the program in the workforce development areas designated for this pilot:

- UMOS, which serves Milwaukee County.
- Racine County Human Services, which serves Racine, Kenosha, and Walworth counties.
- Community Action, Inc., which serves Rock, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, Grant, and Richland counties.

Contact information about each service provider, W3 eligibility criteria for participants and employers, and other details can be accessed from DWD's website at: [dwd.wisconsin.gov/wiworkerswin/default.htm](http://dwd.wisconsin.gov/wiworkerswin/default.htm). Service providers are ready to take applications from interested employers and prospective trainees.

Generally, eligible UI claimants must have begun receiving benefits on or after April 1, 2012, and must be in the first 20 weeks of regular state unemployment benefits. They must also live within one of the three workforce development areas designated for the pilot. In addition to continuing on unemployment benefits, trainees also receive a \$75 weekly stipend to help offset additional costs of training. The pilot phase is expected to serve approximately 500 training participants through June 30, 2013.

Legislation creating the program, co-authored by Senator Van Wanggaard and Representative Mark Honadel, unanimously passed the legislature and was signed into law by Governor Scott Walker earlier this year. This program is part of Governor Scott Walker's comprehensive "Wisconsin Working" agenda, which includes expanding the number of job fairs held in 2012 and additional efforts through partnerships with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, Wisconsin Department of Veterans' Affairs and other agencies.