



WIRED Initiative Abstract

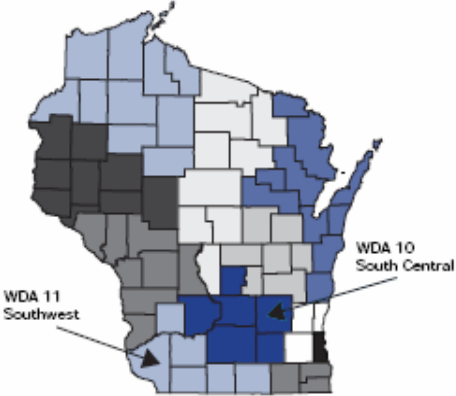
Submitted by the Workforce Development Board's of South Central
Wisconsin and Southwest Workforce Development Board to the
Department of Labor

Granted July 2007

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A. IDENTIFICATION OF REGION

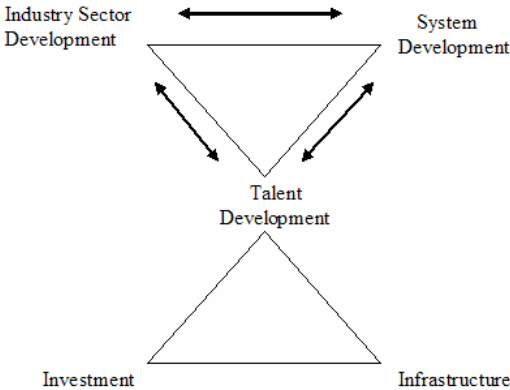
Wisconsin's Workforce Development Areas (WDAs)



The South Central – Southwest Grow region includes the twelve Wisconsin counties of Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Lafayette, Marquette, Richland, Rock and Sauk.

Strategies for Transformation - Our strategies encourage sector and system developments while supporting and developing the regional talent pool. The design of our transformation collaboration can be seen in the following diagram.

South Central - Southwest Wisconsin WIRED Region



WIRED grant resources will catapult our efforts to build our South Central – Southwest Grow region as a primary engine for economic development within the State of Wisconsin.

Innovate America

The diagram above represents how the GROW region’s work is aligned with the WIRED grant foundations. The

Summary of Challenges/Strategies/Impacts/Outcomes		
<p>Sector Development Challenge Address the rapid changes in Industry Sectors to support future growth and innovation. Landmark changes in manufacturing and agriculture include global</p>	<p>System Development Challenge Keep pace with the skill development needs of our targeted high-growth industry sectors through flexible industry-driven training. Address constraints (staff, equipment,</p>	<p>Talent Development Challenge The current talent pool is not replacing the high skill profiles of the retiring workers. Many potential workers</p>

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Summary of Challenges/Strategies/Impacts/Outcomes		
<p>competition and worker shortages. Converging technologies are creating a need for workers with a broad range of skills.</p>	<p>facilities) of educational partners’ resources to create new flexible instructional platforms to meet sectors’ talent development needs.</p>	<p>demonstrate deficiencies in basic workplace and technical skills.</p>
<p>Strategy #1 Develop modular/career pathway based industry-driven training to support high-growth and emerging sectors.</p>	<p>Strategy #2 Develop robust and regional infrastructure to support talent development.</p>	<p>Strategy #3 Establish cross industry strategies to develop skills within emerging, under-prepared and incumbent workers.</p>
<p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Organize and launch new degree and certificate programs in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sustainable and Entrepreneurial Agriculture. ○ Laboratory Sciences ○ Utility Worker 	<p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand technical facilities/ training tools through shared technology-based facilities for Health Care and Advanced Manufacturing including: medical Sim Lab, robotics training center, and mobile maintenance trainers. ▪ Expand distance learning capacity including networked “Workplace Skills Centers” at One Stops. ▪ Create job learning-networking opportunities for industry and economic/workforce development partners, K-12 & technical college educators, parents and students. 	<p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop Workplace Skills Centers that focus on applied basic skills and foundational industry skills with bilingual curriculum features. ▪ Develop industry-based internships and youth and adult apprenticeship to support workforce development opportunities within our targeted sectors. ▪ Launch Career Pathway Academies.
<p>Impact: A collaborative environment for sector growth. Changes in how companies hire and train employees. A multi-path platform supported by industry, education, workforce and economic development partners to support sector-based skill pathways.</p> <p>Impact, continued Flexible instructional content to support talent development, growth and innovation.</p>	<p>Impact: Worker recruitment, training and development infrastructure that provides maximum access to workers seeking to participate as the talented workforce of our growing and emerging industries.</p>	<p>Impact: Clear, accessible and effective solutions built on a 12-county platform to prepare the under prepared and emerging worker to be successful within career pathways in our targeted sectors.</p>
<p>Total Outcome: Train 350 people</p> <p>Agriculture – 100 Laboratory Science – 100 Utilities – 150</p>	<p>Total Outcome: Train 880 people</p> <p>Health Care Excellence Centers – 350 Robotics and portable systems – 330 Learning Academies – 200</p>	<p>Total Outcome: Train 850 people</p> <p>Workplace Skills Centers – 500 Career Pathway Academies – 350</p>

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1. Sector Development:

Agriculture

Madison Area Technical College (MATC) and Southwest Technical College (SWTC) will collaborate to organize and launch a new degree and certificate program in Sustainable and Entrepreneurial Agriculture. This program, based on a successful model in Iowa, will assist farmers to introduce new value-added products, sustainable and organic practices. It will have equal focus on farming as well as entrepreneurial skills such as business plans, marketing and accounting. The program will be available as a full degree program as well as certificates for experienced farmers. MATC and SWTC will collaborate with The Wisconsin Bio Ag Gateway, a 350-acre Bio Ag economy research, commercialization and business center located in Madison.

Laboratory Sciences

Madison Area Technical College is a 2007 recipient of a \$1.9 million Department of Labor grant to develop a five-stage training program for an industry-designed technician career ladder. With MATC in the lead, we will work to increase the number of companies developing sub-bachelor job classifications that will serve as a portal for the entry-level worker in the region.

Our goal will be to collaborate with the four technical colleges and the workforce development system to expand this effort to the entire 12-county GROW region.

Utilities

There is an impending demographic crisis facing the utility industry. By 2010, 60% of the region's experienced utility workers will retire. Additionally, the traditional entry point for new workers to the industry (meter reader) will be eliminated within the next five years as the function is automated. We will work with the regional energy companies to form an industry partnership which will identify and address shared solutions to prepare new workers for the industry.

2. System Development

The educational and WIA systems that support workforce development in the region operate at a high degree of collaboration. However, capacity issues plague both systems. The following strategies will increase capacity in targeted areas to support regional economic development.

Health Care Training:

The project will establish health care excellence training centers in three locations within the region. The training centers will be managed by the area technical colleges and lead by Health Care Excellence Consortiums comprised of the leadership of the area hospitals and clinics supported by the workforce and economic development professionals.

Phase 1 of our work will focus on working with the current Health Care Excellence Center Team which represents the major hospitals and clinics in Dane County. This team proposes working collaboratively to explore a shared physical training infrastructure. Currently one of the significant challenges to maintaining a health care workforce is the lack of physical space and the expense of more efficient simulation equipment strategically located near the care facilities as well as the emerging workforce.

Phase 2 of our work will focus on translating this work to a smaller scale strategically with our regional hospitals and clinic networks in Beaver Dam (located in Dodge County in the South Central area) and a location to be determined in our rural Southwest area. Our metro and regional healthcare networks are connected by the Dean Health Systems. Dean Health Systems has built significant outreach and provider networks that create a healthcare web within our region. We will also look to statewide partners to participate and advise our efforts to include the Wisconsin Hospital Association, the Wisconsin Rural Health Care Association, Wisconsin Area Health Excellence Center Association, the Long-Term Care Health Association, the associated health care unions.

Advanced Manufacturing Training:

The project will establish an Advanced Manufacturing Training Center that would combine a centrally-located Robotics training facility augmented by mobile trainers for PLC and other maintenance systems. This center will include skill building instruction provided on a 24/7 schedule in the following areas identified by a recent survey of regional companies: manufacturing technical training and related IT, Lean and Quality Improvement, automated manufacturing, team, supervisory and performance assessment. The regional Training Center will be located on the east side of Madison, Wisconsin, which is adjacent to all major highway transportation corridors in the region.

Technology Augmentation of the One Stop System:

Our goal is to create a 12-county operational platform.

Distance Learning Applications: In collaboration with the Educational Communication Board, University of Wisconsin Extension and our technical

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colleges, we will continue to work to combining the technologies of compressed video, Internet protocol and Integrating Data Casting to transmit both live instruction and educational materials in the form of video, audio, graphic and text. Data casting will also give us the ability to download, store and deliver instruction at a later date or time including non-traditional instruction hours (2nd or 3rd shifts). We will be able to package our training into workshop or series formats that can be simultaneously broadcast throughout our region including directly to all of the region's Job Centers.

Increasing Access to Job Center Resources via web based tools: Enhanced web based resources that can be accessed from anywhere there is Internet access – participants' personal/home computer as well as through local Job Center locations, and numerous off-site locations (i.e., libraries or local chambers of commerce). Job seekers will use the website much like they use the physical Job Center to obtain help and information about local job opportunities, training programs and other services that will assist them in obtaining a job. Many job seekers will simply access information using the website as a portal to a comprehensive variety of core services provided by Job Center partners such as Job Service, Unemployment Insurance and Food Stamps. Instant messaging capability along with a “call center,” staffed by Job Center partners, will provide an opportunity for participants to obtain the information they need directly without having to travel to a Job Center site. The web based resources will be linked to the region's distance learning capability.

Workplace Skills Centers:

The project will network “Workplace Skills Centers” via distance learning technology including compressed interactive video, data casting and Internet-based instruction. Networked Workplace Skills Centers will position foundational industry instruction so that the under-prepared workers who enter a community-based site make a smooth transition into a company-based instruction after hire. This will enable us to optimize the expertise of the staff throughout the region and provide high quality service to our rural communities. Features will include: career counseling; adult basic education operations; industry-applied English as a Second Language instruction; Manufacturing Skills Standard Assessment and Certification testing; and foundational industry skill instruction focused on the application of science and math to health care, laboratory sciences and advanced manufacturing sectors.

Learning Communities:

We will create joint learning and networking opportunities for sector-based industry partners, economic development partners, K-12 – technical college educators and workforce development professionals, parents and students. All of our current partners tell us that one of the key problems to talent development is lack of understanding of the workforce and economic development trends, resources and challenges. We believe that by creating cross discipline learning and then moving that learning into collaborative projects, we will maximize and focus our region's resources to effectively support our economic growth.

3. Talent Development

The final element of our project focuses on the third component of the Workforce Development System: Talent Development. We must develop cross industry strategies targeted to developing skills within our emerging, under-prepared and incumbent workers. In order for our region to remain competitive, we must focus on assuring that we are developing the talent of our emerging and under-prepared worker.

Foundational Skills:

We will transform Workplace Skills Centers to focus on applied basic skills and foundational industry skills with bilingual curriculum features. We will expand the capacity of these centers, both community-and industry-based, beyond providing Adult Basic Education (preparation for high school equivalency). Centers will serve the dual function of providing support to persons participating in sector-based training and foundational support to the under-prepared and emerging worker. We will work with our variety of Workplace Skills Centers (community-based, One Stop Center-based and industry-based) to operate as a networked instruction that enables the under-prepared workers who enter a community-based site to make a smooth transition into a company-based instruction after hire.

Internships and Apprenticeships:

We will develop industry-based internships and youth and adult apprenticeships to support workforce development opportunities within our targeted sectors. It is clear that for many under-prepared and underemployed workers, traditional educational settings are not effective ways for them to gain workplace skills. But regional experience with partners like Operation Fresh Start has demonstrated that a combination of paid work and related learning is an effective method to integrate even hard-to-reach individuals into workforce systems. We will work with the United Way of Dane County and their study of Disconnected Youth to experiment with work and learning programs. In addition, successful high school students also benefit from work-based learning. We will work with the K-12 system to introduce Youth Apprenticeship programs into our targeted industries. Finally, many of the traditional apprenticed trades are having difficulty finding a skilled and diverse workforce. We will work with our One Stop partners and local employers to introduce and reinvigorate apprenticeships in the selected targeted industries.

Career Pathway Academies:

We will establish Career Pathway Academies focused on 8th through 12th grade students and targeted to our selected industry sectors. Career Pathway Academies will be managed by the regional School to Work Consortia in collaboration with the Workforce Development Boards' Youth Councils and our Technical Colleges Tech Prep Consortium. Initial academy engagement will start with 8th grade students within our region. The goal for each student will be to develop a "Career Pathway Plan of Study" identifying courses that student will need in order to reach their post-education employment goal. Career plans will be created using materials already developed by Wisconsin's Career Clusters Initiative, which breaks

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down the core educational components required by career cluster. Yearly check in will occur for the 8th through 10th grades with guidance from parents.

After the first semester of the sophomore year, the student would apply for enrollment in a Career Pathway Academy. Students accepted in to the academy would begin contextual learning opportunities and workplace learning opportunities in their junior year and continue that through their senior year. Classroom coursework will articulate to the technical college system.

The overarching goal of our three strategies is to achieve alignment, integration and synergy among the workforce, economic and educational systems' resources to build a sustainable infrastructure to support talent development within our GROW region. The WIRED grant will also give us the opportunity to create tools that can be shared throughout the State of Wisconsin and the country to strengthen our vital talent development systems.