

Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board, Inc.

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Northwest Wisconsin workers will soon benefit from a new training opportunity, made possible through the efforts of the Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board (NWWIB) and Northcentral Technical College (NTC). Steve Terry, Executive Director of the NWWIB, announced that the region recently received a \$100,000 grant for advanced manufacturing training. This competitive grant came from Governor Doyle's Emerging Industry Skills Partnership (EISP) initiative.

According to Mr. Terry, "The purpose of our project with NTC is to train people in manufacturing electronic maintenance, an advanced skill that is applicable across many different types of manufacturing, such as food processing, paper mills, and construction machinery. Kraft Foods in Taylor County worked closely with us on this, and the company will be sending six employees to the training. In addition, we'll be recruiting ten people from the community, focusing on unemployed workers who have the aptitude and motivation for this type of education."

The Manufacturing Electronic Maintenance (MEM) certificate consists of eight courses, taken over the course of two semesters, for a total of 240 training hours. Students will begin the fast-paced curriculum this September, 2009, and complete all course work by May, 2010.

"There has been a real need for employees with this advanced training across Northwest Wisconsin," Terry said. "The MEM certificate increases the long-term employment security of current workers, while serving as a career entry point for unemployed job seekers. And, this eight-course program can become the basis for a technical diploma and eventually an Associate's degree in Electromechanical Maintenance."

Participants will be recruited primarily from Taylor, Rusk, and Price Counties. The Concentrated Employment Program, Inc (CEP, Inc) will oversee the application process, with details defined over the next month. "We'll be getting more information out in August about the specifics of the program," Terry added.

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