



News release

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High school students to gain skills for in-demand welding career through DWD grant award to Gateway

High school students will be able to gain the skills for the in-demand career of welding through a \$100,000 Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development Fast Forward grant to Gateway Technical College.

The grant will train 34 high school students from schools located in Gateway's district through a Welding Academy project. They will earn up to 17 college credits toward a Welding – Maintenance and Fabrication technical diploma as well as industry certificates and qualify for a Welding Youth Apprenticeship.

"This grant provides further support to technical colleges expanding a plethora of course offerings to high school students across Wisconsin," said DWD Secretary Ray Allen. "In supporting accelerated learning in high-demand career fields, Wisconsin supports a capable future workforce."

Students who successfully complete the academy will be prepared for entry-level welding careers in such areas as automotive repair; heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC); and facility maintenance operations.

"The Fast Forward grant provides the training for students to gain the skills to successfully start a well-paying, entry-level position in welding," said

Gateway's Katie Graf, assistant director, College Access Partnerships. "They will graduate from Gateway with a technical diploma at no cost to them, their parents and their school.

"So, they will have earned college credit, gained the skills to an in-demand career and earned a technical diploma – before they even graduate high school. That represents a great cost savings and they can start their welding career early."

A total \$592,813 was awarded to six technical colleges that will serve 43 school districts and at least 328 high school students across Wisconsin.

The Wisconsin Fast Forward program encourages increased collaboration between Wisconsin's workforce, employers, local or regional economic development organizations, workforce development boards, post-secondary institutions and private training providers to develop and execute business-led training programs.

Gateway Technical College collaborates with communities in Kenosha, Racine and Walworth counties to ensure economic growth and viability by providing education, training, leadership and technological resources to meet the changing needs of students, employers and communities.

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