



# ANNUAL REPORT

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# DECEMBER 2019



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December 27, 2019

The Honorable Tony Evers  
Office of the Governor  
115 East, State Capitol Building  
Madison, WI 53702

Senator Alberta Darling  
Co-Chair, Joint Finance Committee  
317 East, State Capitol Building  
Madison, WI 53702

Representative John Nygren  
Co-Chair, Joint Finance Committee  
Room 309 East, State Capitol Building  
Madison, WI 53702

Dear Governor Evers, Senator Darling, and Representative Nygren:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, I am pleased to submit the 2019 Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) Annual Report. The WFF program is an innovative talent development grant program driven by Wisconsin businesses to train and retain highly skilled workers. WFF exists to provide workers specialized skills to thrive in the workforce. WFF grants encourage Wisconsin employers to implement customized training programs that provide workers with the practical and customized job skills they need to succeed in a 21st century workforce. The WFF grant program is helping hundreds of organizations across Wisconsin upskill thousands of workers to fill job openings, advance in the workplace, and earn higher wages.

#### **Wisconsin Fast Forward 2018-19**

This year's annual report focuses on activities occurring during the 2019 state fiscal year in programs that continued under WFF after it was restructured by 2017 Wisconsin Act 370. For these programs, WFF issued a total of \$14.3 million in awards to 88 grantees. These awards represent grantee commitments to benefit over 5,000 individuals. Expenditures for these awards totaled \$1,796,699.75 in the reporting period.

Thank you for your consideration of this report.

Sincerely,



Secretary-designee, Caleb Frostman  
Department of Workforce Development

# Wisconsin Fast Forward Overview

The Wisconsin Fast Forward (WFF) program is an innovative talent development solution driven by Wisconsin businesses to train and retain highly skilled workers. The WFF program (2013 Wisconsin Act 9) was signed into law in March 2013 with near-unanimous bipartisan support from the State Legislature. Since 2013, the Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) Office of Skills Development (OSD) has helped hundreds of organizations across Wisconsin upskill thousands of workers to fill job openings, advance in the workplace, and earn higher wages.

In state fiscal year (SFY) 2019 (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), a total of \$14.3 million was awarded to 88 grantees across all WFF programs. Awards averaged \$162,000 per grantee. Expenditures for these awards totaled \$1,796,699.75. The number of grants, award amounts, and expenditures by program are as follows:

<b>Program:</b>	<b>Grants</b>	<b>Awards</b>	<b>Expenditures</b>
Standard WFF	37	\$ 5,581,582	\$ 349,849
Jump Start	10	994,597	-
Training Teachers to Teach Dual Enrollment	14	3,652,406	201,487
Industry Recognized Credentials	14	1,276,301	225,372
Blueprint for Prosperity - Commute to Careers	3	338,350	30,217
Blueprint for Prosperity - Project Search	3	107,138	55,057
Employee Resource Network Pilot	3	158,980	7,884
Nursing Training for Middle & High School Students	2	1,499,983	926,832
Re-entry Initiatives	1	400,000	-
Technical College System Grant Program	1	250,000	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>\$14,259,336</b>	<b>\$1,796,700</b>

These awards represent grantee commitments to benefit over 5,000 individuals. Individuals by program are as follows:

<b>Program</b>	<b>Benefiting Individuals</b>
Standard WFF	969
Jump Start	823
Training Teachers to Teach Dual Enrollment	1,093
Industry Recognized Credentials	535
Blueprint for Prosperity - Commute to Careers	73
Blueprint for Prosperity - Project Search	194
Employee Resource Network Pilot	386
Nursing Training Middle & High School Students	877
Re-entry Initiatives	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,010</b>



Wisconsin Lieutenant Governor Mandela Barnes joined Secretary-designee Caleb Frostman for a WFF ▲ press brake operator graduation in Oshkosh.

Funding for WFF grants and administration is provided under s.20.445(1)(b) and s.20.445(1)(bm), respectively. Below is a summary of SFY 2019 allocated amounts and expenditures by appropriation.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Budget</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount Allocated SFY19</b>	<b>Amount Expended SFY19</b>
20.445(1)(b)	All 106.27 (1) programs	\$ 13,813,848	\$ 1,711,426
20.445(1)(b)	All 106.27 (1g) programs	338,350	30,217
20.445(1)(b)	Internship coordination	0	180,446
20.445(1)(b)	Project SEARCH	107,138	69,634
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 14,259,336</b>	<b>\$ 1,991,723</b>
20.445(1)(bm)	Admin. Workforce training programs & LMIS	\$ 0	\$ 3,124,072
20.445(1)(bm)	Admin. Youth apprenticeship	0	134,841
20.445(1)(bm)	Admin. Apprenticeship programs	0	732,715
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 14,259,336</b>	<b>\$ 3,991,628</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 14,259,336</b>	<b>\$ 5,983,350</b>

The s.20.445(1)(b) grant programs listed above are the programs that were in place throughout SFY 2019 and are the programs that continued under WFF after it was restructured by 2017 Wisconsin Act 370. These programs are the focus of this 2019 annual report.

## Wisconsin Fast Forward Activities

### Workforce Training Grants – WFF Standard

Standard training grants provide employers resources to attract and retain workers who need specialized skills to succeed in the workplace. Organizations are awarded grants and use the funds to train their incumbent employees or to train unemployed and underemployed workers. In most cases, organizations share in the training costs through a one-to-one match of grant dollars. In SFY 2019, 37 organizations received \$5,581,581.51 in WFF standard grants to provide training to 969 individuals.

WFF currently measures the success of worker trainees in four categories: (1) unemployed workers obtaining a job; (2) underemployed workers improving their employment status; (3) new hire employees using skills obtained in training to retain a position; and (4) incumbent workers increasing their skills and growing their salaries. WFF measures success by a completed trainee's employment status and income at the end of training. Grantees may offer a single training or a series of trainings to meet their business objectives and employee training needs.

In SFY 2019, DWD's new administration reviewed WFF policies and procedures, including metrics, and identified new goals for WFF. These goals include: improve alignment of the WFF program with other Department of Workforce Development programs, better leverage WFF investments for the benefit of Wisconsin employers and workers, and improve measurements of the impact of WFF on increasing the skills and economic opportunities of Wisconsin's workers.

<sup>1</sup>Expenditures for Project Search are higher in this table than in the first table on the previous page because total expenditures include costs for allowable program activities outside of grantees' awards.

## Jump Start

Jump Start is a new WFF effort targeting entry-level workers. Funding is provided to organizations offering both supportive services and training that focuses on essential skills coupled with customized skill training specifically related to workforce needs. Jump Start targets unemployed and entry-level workers and prioritizes training to individuals with barriers to successful employment. The Jump Start program's goal is a 60% placement rate of trainees. In SFY 2019, OSD awarded 10 organizations a total of \$994,596.67 to provide training to 823 individuals. These diverse projects provide career training opportunities in health sciences, banking, arboriculture, construction, heavy equipment, manufacturing, and customer service. These grants are in the early stages of program development and implementation.

## Training Teachers to Teach Dual Enrollment

OSD provided \$3.7 million in grants to 14 technical colleges across the state to train high school teachers in 209 school districts to meet the accreditation standards needed to teach dual enrollment courses. Funding covers the cost of training for 1,093 teacher-students.

## Industry-Recognized Credentials Grants

Grants totaling \$1.3 million were provided to 14 technical colleges across the state to benefit an estimated 535 sophomores, juniors, and seniors enrolled in Wisconsin high schools with workplace readiness and technical skills, leading to industry-recognized certifications in high-demand fields.

## Blueprint for Prosperity – Commute to Careers

Grants totaling \$338,350 were awarded to three organizations. During the reporting period, 4,371 rides were provided to 73 riders with disabilities to maintain their employment.

## Blueprint for Prosperity – Project SEARCH

Project SEARCH is a business-led collaboration that enables young adults with disabilities to gain and maintain employment through training and career exploration. The initiative started in 2014 as part of Blueprint for Prosperity. Each Project SEARCH project involves a partnership between the Department of Workforce Development's Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), a local business, a school, a vocational services agency, and a disability services agency (e.g. a managed care organization).

Each partner contributes to the initiative. For example, the local business provides a business liaison, an on-site training classroom, and rotational internship opportunities for on-the-job training. The school provides an instructor. DVR collaborates with the local vocational services agency to supply job coaches who support students as needed in their internships and assist with final job placement. The disability services agency works alongside any eligible student who is hired and provides worksite assistance to that student.

More than 700 individuals have participated in Project SEARCH since it started in Wisconsin. During the reporting period, 194 interns enrolled in Project SEARCH and 186 completed their internships.

## Nursing Training for Middle and High School Students

In SFY 2019, OSD awarded \$1.5 million in grants to support public-private partnerships that provide nursing training programs for middle school and high school students. The partnerships have committed to training 877 students.

## Employee Resource Network Pilot – Workforce Retention Grants

Three grants were awarded in SFY 2019 for a total of \$158,979.64. These grants create public-private partnerships to improve workforce retention through employee support and training. Grantees have committed to providing 386 workers with employee retention services.

## Re-Entry Initiative

Because of the critical and growing need to assist formerly incarcerated individuals in successfully returning to their communities, and the opportunities a tight labor market presents, WFF launched an initiative with the Department of

Corrections (DOC) to train inmates at Taycheedah and Jackson Correctional Institutions and issued a grant of \$400,000. DOC will collaborate with Moraine Park Technical College (MPTC) and Western Technical College (WTC) to provide comprehensive welding and mechanical maintenance training. DOC has committed to providing training to 60 participants annually over the next two years.

## Wisconsin Technical College System

WFF funded a \$250,000 grant to Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS). Project funds will be used to sustain registered apprenticeship opportunities across the 16 WTCS campuses where demand has exceeded the available apprenticeship funding. WTCS students will receive classroom instruction as a component of 158 apprenticeship training programs in 71 distinct occupations funded in part with this grant.

## Wisconsin's Internship Initiative

In SFY 2019, the Wisconsin Internship Initiative developed new functionality on the WisConnect internship portal and actively coordinated use of WisConnect with employers and academic advisors, including career service advisors and college professors.

WisConnect (InternshipWisconsin.com) Phase 3 development was released to the public in November 2018. The new features in Phase 3 are interactive maps that depict available internships on both a statewide and local level, resources to help students prepare for interviews, resources for employers to start or grow their internship program, and tools for searching historical data about specific types of internships. With these tools, students can locate potential internship opportunities that match their skills, as well as gauge their competition, while employers can search for students who match their needs and measure the meaningfulness of their opportunity against what other employers offer. DWD also developed a new user role specifically for DWD staff and partners who work with veterans and people with barriers to employment. This role allows staff and partners to help these individuals locate internship opportunities to enhance their professional skills and transition into more permanent employment.

Wisconsin Internship Initiative (WIIN) staff coordinated use of WisConnect through in-person events focused on college students and employers. Staff attended over 20 career fairs to connect with students throughout Wisconsin, including in Platteville, Superior, Green Bay, and Milwaukee during the spring career fair season that ran from late January to March 2019. WIIN staff provided demonstrations of WisConnect to college professors and, on two occasions, inside the college classrooms. WIIN staff also exhibited information at the Wisconsin School Counselors' conference. Finally, WIIN developed connections with employers through events with the La Crosse Area Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), Monroe County Economic Development Conference, and at an Envision Greater Fond Du Lac Lunch and Learn.

Usage of WisConnect grew significantly in SFY 2019, particularly with student users and their academic advisors. By the end of the fiscal year, user numbers were:

- ◆ 1,054 employers at 2,702 worksites, an increase of 53% and 31%, respectively, over SFY 2018;
- ◆ 4,963 internship listings, an increase of 40%;
- ◆ 1,322 student profiles, an increase of 89%; and
- ◆ 138 career services and academic staff advisors, an increase of 214%.

## Labor Market Information System (LMIS) Related Activities

In SFY 2019, \$769,614 in funding was used to maintain DWD's Labor Market Information (LMI) systems. These systems include the Automated System Support for Employment and Training (ASSET) application, the state's Job Center System (JCS), the Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW), Skill Explorer, and WisConomy. These systems are accessible to everyone and are used for the purposes of identifying LMI data and employment opportunities in the state.

## WFF Administration

In SFY 2019, \$2,354,458 in funding was spent on WFF administration. DWD developed applications, forms, procedures, and criteria for applying for and awarding WFF grants; developed the specific reporting requirements and outcomes for each type of grant funded; and managed the grant award and monitoring processes.

# WFF Annual Report Summary Table – Report Elements by Statutory Reference

The table below summarizes WFF Annual Report elements (expenditures and metrics) by statutory reference.

	Awarded	Expended
s. 20.445(1)(b)	\$14,259,336	\$1,991,723
s. 20.445(1)(bm)	\$0	\$3,991,628

s. 106.27(1) or (1)(b) or (1)(c) or (1)(g) or (1j)			
Number of Awards	Awarded	Expended	Participating Trainees
66	\$11,037,564	\$559,221	3,331
Employment and wage results below are from the subset of programs within this statutory category for which metrics in the required reporting elements are available:			
	Unemployed to Gainful Employment		179
		Wages Before	Not Applicable
		Wages After	\$16.41
	Underemployed to New Employment		74
		Wages Before	\$12.05
		Wages After	\$15.56
	Incumbent to Increased Wages		206
		Wages Before	\$18.02
		Wages After	\$20.11

s. 106.27(1g)(a)			
Number of Awards	Awarded	Expended	Waiting Lists Reduced
None	None	None	Not Applicable

s. 106.27(1)(a) or (e) or (1g)(b)			
Number of Awards	Awarded	Expended	Participating Students
16	\$2,776,284	\$1,152,205	1,412

s. 106.27(1)(f)			
Number of Awards	Awarded	Expended	Building Modifications
None	None	None	Not Applicable



s. 106.27(1g)(c)

Number of Awards	Awarded	Expended	Persons with Disabilities
6	\$445,488	\$99,851	267

s.106.27(1r)

Number of Awards	Awarded	Expended	Student Interns Placed
None	\$0	\$180,446	Not available <sup>2</sup>

## WFF Activities Prior to Restructuring under 2017 Wisconsin Act 370

2017 Wisconsin Act 370, enacted in December 2018, formally appropriated funding for seven programs that had been funded as programs within WFF. These seven programs are: (1) Career and Technical Education Incentive Grants, (2) Technical Education Equipment Grants, (3) Teacher Development Program Grants, (4) Apprenticeship Programs, (5) Youth Apprenticeship, (6) Employment Transit Assistance, and (7) Youth Summer Jobs. The number of grants, award amounts, and expenditures by program that were funded under the WFF program in SFY 2019 prior to implementation of Act 370 in SFY 2019 are included, and as follows:

Program:	Grants	Awards	Expenditures
Career and Technical Education	1	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,500,000
Technical Equipment Grants	35	1,001,000	524,355
Teacher Development Grants	40	3,931,961	281,279
Apprenticeship Programs	n/a	n/a	233,179
Youth Apprenticeship	41	4,521,618	2,818,621
Commute to Careers	20	4,000,000	215,186
Youth Summer Jobs	1	22,500	22,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>\$16,977,079</b>	<b>\$7,595,120</b>

These programs have laid the groundwork for a vibrant and intentional pipeline from school to highly-trained, well-compensated employment, preparing students to thrive in tomorrow's economy. These programs also address transportation barriers to successful employment with employment transportation grants totaling \$4 million, which were awarded to Wisconsin businesses and employer consortiums. WFF is committed to funding programs at the forefront of developing the Wisconsin workforce and nurturing future opportunities for its students, workers, and employers.

<sup>2</sup>Processes to follow up with WisConnect site visitors and students who participated in outreach events regarding internship placements were not in place in SFY 2019.

**STATE OF WISCONSIN**



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