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DWD Unveils New Broadband Service Technician Apprenticeship

STRUM – The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) today announced the creation of a new broadband service technician registered apprenticeship that will support the growing demand for quality broadband across Wisconsin.

"Governor Evers made broadband a priority with the signing of the 2019-2021 budget," Secretary-designee Caleb Frostman said. "This is the largest ever investment in broadband expansion in this state at \$48 million to reach more underserved areas and underserved citizens of the state. That means we'll need skilled Wisconsinites to help build and maintain infrastructure that will support small business and help even the most rural areas thrive with better access to education, commerce and healthcare."

This new registered apprenticeship was created in partnership with DWD's Bureau of Apprenticeship Standards, the Wisconsin State Telecommunications Association, Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College, and Tri-County Communications Cooperative.

"Registered apprenticeship has excellent outcomes for workers and businesses. With a 150% return on investment, we look to continue investing in apprenticeship so we can better support working families and businesses, close skills gaps and adequately train our future workforce," Frostman said.

Apprentices in the broadband service technician program will participate in a 12-month program consisting of 2,000 hours of on-the-job training and 144 hours of related classroom instruction as well as completing the Customer Proprietary Network Information (CPNI) training.

"Reliable broadband is a significant part of a strong Wisconsin infrastructure that connects communities and businesses globally," said PSC Chairperson Rebecca Valcq. "The creation of this apprenticeship will help ensure that service provided is done by quality trained technicians."

Chairperson Valcq spoke at the event in Strum to a crowd of more than 30 industry leaders, community members and subject matter experts.

"Our rural communities need high-speed broadband to remain competitive in today's economy," said Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Secretary-designee Brad Pfaff who also spoke at the event. "It's becoming industry standard for Wisconsin's farmers to be well-connected to data on crops and livestock."

The broadband service technician apprenticeship is developed through the Wisconsin Apprenticeship Growth and Enhancement Strategies (WAGE\$) grant, a \$5 million American Apprenticeship Initiative grant awarded to DWD by the US Department of Labor. The purpose of the WAGE\$ grant is to expand apprenticeship opportunities into three new areas-IT, Advanced Manufacturing and Healthcare.

More information visit: [Wisconsin Registered Apprenticeship](#)