



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Governor Tony Evers / Secretary Kevin A. Carr

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Collaboration Helps Men Prepare to Rejoin State Workforce

Beaver Dam, Wis. - The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) and Moraine Park Technical College (MPTC) celebrated the results of a collaborative vocational education program last Thursday, July 28, on the College's Beaver Dam campus.

Six men in DOC care at the minimum-security John C. Burke Correctional Center (JBCC) received their certificate of completion from a 12-week, 12-credit program offered by the College. The men received lab and classroom instruction at MPTC's Beaver Dam campus, learning how to perform basic welding processes, interpret blueprints, apply welding symbols and operate equipment.

"Being able to learn the team-building, problem-solving and other commonly used skills in real world manufacturing and management roles is going to be a great tool for me in my future career path," said Jeremy Thompson. "I took the initiative to enroll in this program expecting a basic understanding of some welding processes, and I walked away with a reinforced understanding and ability to use advanced math and blueprint reading, as well as very thorough knowledge and skill of setting up and performing GMAW, which is known as MIG welding, and GTAW, which is known as TIG welding."

All six men who started the training went on to complete the program. DOC worked with DWD Apprenticeship staff on getting this program approved as a certified Pre-Apprenticeship program. As a leader in apprenticeship, Wisconsin relies heavily on partnerships to develop high-quality, effective programs that address the state's workforce needs. This program helps participants develop new skills and prepare for Registered Apprenticeship opportunities.

DOC also worked with the Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin (WDBSCW) to combine funding sources to enroll participants in this program. The students received a total of \$2,850 through their work in the program and they will also receive a \$100 completion bonus.

During his remarks, Sec. Kevin Carr thanked all the groups and people involved in the collaboration.

"I can talk all day about all the people, partnerships and resources it took to reach this day, but at the end of the day, it came down to the will and drive of our graduates," Carr said during the completion ceremony. "You all set a goal, made a commitment and then worked hard to complete this program. You should be extremely proud of what you've accomplished."

The students began their training in March and finished in June.

More than 60% of persons in DOC care have five years or less left to serve on their sentence. DOC's mission includes providing opportunities and tools people will need to be successful when they return to the community.