

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Career EXCELerate cohort ready to enter WI workforce

Supported by a WI Workforce Innovation Grant, students earn free certificates to launch in-demand careers

Menasha, WI—On December 11, Career EXCELerate™ Wisconsin celebrated its latest cohort of students to earn certificates through the collaborative program operated in partnership with Goodwill North Central Wisconsin (NCW), Fox Valley Technical College and Rawhide Youth Services. Rawhide President and CEO, Alan Loux; and WEDC Deputy Secretary/COO, Sam Rikkers, presented during the Winter 2025 ceremony for students who completed certificates in Certified Nursing Assistant, Patient Care Technician, Professional Truck Driving, Welding Fundamentals, and Manufacturing Technician.

“Career EXCELerate is a powerful example of how we use innovative strategies and partnerships to fulfill our mission of Elevating People by Eliminating Barriers to Employment,” Chris Hess, President and CEO of Goodwill NCW said. “This program equips participants with career-boosting credentials that help them gain new skills, sustain employment, and improve financial stability. From here, the impact of the program spreads as these individuals bring their skills into our communities and makes them stronger.”

Career EXCELerate is a comprehensive career-training program that was created in summer 2022 with support from a Workforce Innovation Grant from the state of Wisconsin. The program is offered at no cost to individuals who want to launch a lasting career and would benefit from individualized support to advance in their profession, enter a career or return to the workforce. The goals of the program are to support individuals as they seek in-demand careers in specific areas of study and create a pipeline of job seekers who have the credentials to fill vital roles across Wisconsin.

As of November 17, 2025, 382 individuals have received certificates through the Career EXCELerate program. In addition, those who have completed the program and attained

employment are benefiting from improved financial stability, as they have seen an average increase of approximately \$11.36 in wages from intake to their current job.

Sarah Lipps, a participant in Career EXCELerate truck driving pathway, said, "My job is absolutely amazing, and I'm loving every minute of it! I'm so grateful for the CE program—it has truly given me the best situation for me and my family." Sarah now drives for Ottery Transport, continuing her success story.

The program focuses on providing pathways that have future career development options. Enrollment takes place on an ongoing basis for all educational certificate programs. Educational tracks offered by Career EXCELerate include:

- **Health Services**
 - Certified Nursing Assistant
 - Certified Direct Care Professional
 - Pharmacy Technician
 - Patient Care Technician
- **Manufacturing**
 - Welding Fundamentals
 - Manufacturing Technician
- **Retail**
 - Retail Fundamentals
- **Truck Driving and Maintenance**
 - Professional Truck Driving - Class A CDL and Maintenance

For job seekers: Individuals interested in earning a certificate through Career EXCELerate can complete the online application form at CareerEXCELerateWI.org.

For local employers: Employers can partner with our team to recruit qualified candidates. Contact careerexceleratewi@goodwillncw.org to learn more.

If you know someone who could benefit, they can be referred to Career EXCELerate by any local agency, nonprofit, employer or personal contact.

Career EXCELerate Wisconsin, a collaborative program from Goodwill North Central Wisconsin, Fox Valley Technical College and Rawhide Youth Services, offers free job training for high-demand careers, assistance to find a job after completion and supportive resources for the first year of employment, with personalized support throughout the journey. Career EXCELerate is being supported, in whole or

in part, by federal award number SLFRP0135 awarded to Goodwill via the Wisconsin Workforce Innovation Grant Program by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. Learn more at: CareerEXCELerateWI.org