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Diversity Awards, Ann Lydecker Award Announced by State Council on Affirmative Action and Office of State Employment Relations

The State Council on Affirmative Action recognized three state agencies for their excellence in diversity achievements, and the Office of State Employment Relations (OSER) Director Karen Timberlake awarded the first annual Ann Lydecker Educational Award to a UW campus for an innovative educational program initiative at the State Capitol today.

“The recipients of this year’s awards demonstrated resourcefulness and innovation in advancing diversity in the state’s institutions and workforces. We hope other agencies and campuses will be inspired by the achievements of their peers to expand their own efforts to foster diversity,” Timberlake said.

Representative Robert Turner presented remarks at the ceremony praising the agencies’ achievements and the state’s dedication to fostering a diverse workforce. The agencies and university that received recognition are:

- **The Department of Workforce Development**
- **The Department of Employee Trust Funds**
- **The Office of Justice Assistance**
- **The University of Wisconsin- Green Bay**

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The State Council on Affirmative Action's Diversity Awards recognize achievement in all phases of equal employment opportunity/affirmative action programs, disability services, retention and upward mobility. The educational diversity award, conferred this year by OSER, recognizes the efforts and achievements of a Wisconsin institution of higher learning in preparing minorities, women, and persons with disabilities for the workforce—particularly in public sector employment. The award honors the memory of UW-River Falls Chancellor Ann Lydecker, who passed away earlier this year shortly after receiving the 2003 educational diversity award on behalf of UW-River Falls.

Following are descriptions of the award-winning programs:

Department of Workforce Development (DWD): Selected for its strong commitment to upward mobility, DWD filled nine of 11 available management positions this year with targeted group members. DWD also developed an innovative and applicant-friendly recruitment plan to hire a diverse group of candidates, which included advertising in multiple newspapers and publishing Internet job announcements.

The Department continues to demonstrate a commitment to the state's Summer Affirmative Action Internship Program, which provides college students with practical and meaningful work experience to help prepare them for entering the workforce. DWD's workforce demographics show higher percentages of racial/ethnic minorities, women, and persons with disabilities than the statewide labor force percentages. It has also demonstrated a strong commitment to diversity within Limited Term and Project positions.

Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF): ETF was selected for its development of an innovative partnership with Lincoln Elementary School, a school rich in diversity, and the Department's overall outstanding diversity achievements. To positively influence the lives of younger children, the elementary school partnership matched at-risk students with volunteer ETF employee mentors and brought students to ETF for events such as the annual "Take Your Child to Work Day."

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Demonstrating a strong commitment to diversity, ETF's workforce is above the state's workforce percentages of women, ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities. The agency was also commended for its innovation in addressing the upward mobility of employees through its career development, temporary reassignment and Certified Public Manager programs.

Office of Justice Assistance (OJA): OJA has made great strides in diversity representation and was selected for its Diversity Initiative and Diversity Expansion efforts. Despite its small size, the Office showed a 400 percent increase in minority staff and a 150 percent increase in women in supervisory and management positions. Also noteworthy are its efforts to form more diverse interview panels, solicit and interview more diverse candidate pools and hire qualified diversity candidates. OJA has taken proactive steps to ensure retention, equity and career growth for OJA staff, including reviewing and upgrading position classifications and establishing a process to review salary equity issues.

University of Wisconsin-Green Bay: The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay received the prestigious Ann Lydecker Educational Award for its creative Phuture Phoenix program. The program is a coordinated effort with university students and local community members to introduce fifth graders to post-secondary education. In so doing, UW-Green Bay hopes to inspire students who typically do not finish high school to make it their goal not only to complete high school, but also to continue with post-secondary education.

In addition, the State Council on Affirmative Action presented a memorial award on behalf of Governor Jim Doyle to the parents of former Council member David Schaefer, who passed away earlier this year. The award honors Mr. Schaefer's tremendous contributions in the service of diversity and civil rights for persons with disabilities.

About the State Council on Affirmative Action

The State Council on Affirmative Action has an overall purpose of fostering progress toward an equitable and diverse state workforce. The council consists of fifteen public members, the majority of whom are minorities, women and persons with disabilities. They are appointed for

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three-year terms by the senate president and minority leader, the assembly speaker and assembly minority leader, and the governor.

Council members include: Yolanda Santos Adams, Kenosha; Amos C. Anderson, Madison; Lakshmi Bharadwaj, Milwaukee; Alicia Herrera, Milwaukee; Janice K. Hughes, Madison; Lauri A. Millot, Wausau; Blong Moua, Schofield; Roger L. Pulliam, Whitewater; James R. Parker, La Crosse; Adelene Robinson, Kenosha; Sandra Ryan, Sun Prairie; and Roland Wetley, Milwaukee.

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