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The Latino Academy Regional Transportation Training Center

A New Partnership of the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association and the Wisconsin Beverage Association with the Latino Academy of Workforce Development

MADISON: The Latino Academy of Workforce Development responded to the pandemic last year by expanding transportation industry training opportunities for workers who found themselves suddenly unemployed, successfully doubling enrollments and program graduates. Now, a new partnership with the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association and the Wisconsin Beverage Association will extend the reach of this successful wraparound training model through the **Latino Academy Regional Transportation Training Center**.

This innovative partnership will connect unemployed and underemployed Wisconsin residents in South Central (Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Marquette and Sauk) and Southeastern Wisconsin (Kenosha, Racine, Walworth) with the needed support and training to complete the Commercial Driver License (CDL) training, find related employment, and quickly onboard with employers. These are family-supporting jobs, with benefits. As of Oct. 14, 2021, the average annual pay for a CDL holder driving a heavy or tractor-trailer truck in Wisconsin is \$57,311 a year, according to ZipRecruiter.

Neal Kedzie, President of the Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association states, "The Latino Academy of Workforce Development has a proven track record of successfully training individuals for a rewarding career in commercial truck driving through its commercial driver's license (CDL) school, helping to relieve the critical shortage of professional truck drivers here in Wisconsin."

"Wisconsin non-alcoholic bottling companies are continually challenged with a shortage of available CDL drivers, and the shortage has only worsened with the COVID pandemic," said Kelly McDowell, Executive Secretary of the Wisconsin Beverage Association. "While this national challenge will not be solved overnight, our partnership with the Latino Academy will begin to address the dire need for drivers, while also developing strong skills for participants."

The partnership is joined by more than 20 regional education, support and workforce training organizations in an application under the Vera Court Neighborhood Center organization in the [Wisconsin Innovation Grant Program](#), addressing the goal to help the regions of Wisconsin solve their most pressing workforce challenges.

More about the **Regional Transportation Training Center** is on our [website](#).

About the Partners:

The [Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association](#) (WMCA) is a non-profit trade association representing the Wisconsin Towing Association, Wisconsin Milk Haulers Association, Wisconsin Motor Coach Association and the Wisconsin Movers Association with 1,200 members ranging from independent contractors with one truck to companies with thousands of trucks.

[Wisconsin Beverage Association](#) (WBA) members, including Coca-Cola, Keurig Dr. Pepper, and PepsiCo employ some 4800 persons in Wisconsin, with roughly one-quarter working in distribution.

Since 2011, the [Latino Academy of Workforce Development](#)'s (LAWD) has achieved notable successes in **workforce training** and **job placement** through its **customized resource navigation approach**. Candidates are Latinx and other underrepresented populations who work with LAWD resource navigators before, during and after the training program to identify career interests and readiness while resolving potential barriers. Program participants can enroll in GED completion or English language classes as needed in addition to industry-specific training.

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