

## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Business Friends of Education announced

MADISON –The Department of Public Instruction today recognized the first group of Business Friends of Education under its reconfigured program, designed to highlight and encourage partnerships among schools and the local business community.

“Our kids and their schools benefit from the opportunities that interaction with our business community provides,” said State Superintendent Tony Evers. “I’m encouraged by the number of businesses that came forward to be part of this program and look forward to finding new ways to promote the impact these relationships have.”

Any Wisconsin business or business-related organization or nonprofit group that is working with its local public schools to provide student offerings can submit an application to join the State Superintendent’s Business Friends of Education. Applications are verified and scored by a panel of industry professionals, local school leaders, and department staff. Businesses and organizations are eligible to apply for recognition throughout the year.

The State Superintendent’s Business Friends of Education award recognizes commitments at one of four levels – bronze, silver, gold, or platinum – based on the extent of the support and involvement of recipients in their local schools. Points are assigned for activities grouped into categories measuring involvement based on career development and awareness; leadership, volunteer, and training activities services, materials, and supplies; and mentoring and hiring in work-based learning. The first cycle saw 35 business receiving recognition, with one platinum award (Sargento Foods in Plymouth), five gold awards, 12 silver awards, and 17 bronze awards. In addition to public recognition, the revamped program establishes a network of successful business-education partnerships that can provide examples and assistance to other businesses and schools seeking to develop and expand their partnerships.

(more)

“I sincerely hope our school and business leaders use the first recipients as a model and expand upon the exciting work of their colleagues,” continued Evers. “The business and education sectors stand to gain a great deal in working together on behalf of students. This project is a clear example of how it can be done.”

The original Business Friends of Education started in 2002 as an annual awards program through which a small number of business-education partnerships were recognized. The program was redefined to encourage new partnerships with public schools, ensure all such partnerships have an opportunity to be recognized, and provide a network of successful business-education partnerships as a resource for schools and businesses.

Inaugural recipients of the reconfigured Business Friends of Education Awards are:

### **Platinum**

Sargento Foods – Plymouth

### **Gold**

Blackhawk Community Credit Union – Janesville

D&H Industries – Oconomowoc

Krueger International Inc. – Manitowoc

Nexen Group Inc. – Webster

Rockline Industries – Sheboygan

### **Silver**

Door County Business & Education  
Partnership – Sturgeon Bay

Lutheran Home & Harwood Place – Wauwatosa

McFarland State Bank – McFarland

Mercury Marine – Fond du Lac

MicroPrecision Inc. – Delevan

Milwaukee Brewers Baseball Club – Milwaukee

Northwest Builders Inc. – Rice Lake

Orthopedic & Sports Institute of the  
Fox Valley – Appleton

QBE North America – Sun Prairie

SSI Technologies Inc. – Janesville

Sunny Nutrition – Sun Prairie

We Are HOPE Inc. – Sturgeon Bay

### **Bronze**

Aurora Medical Center at Summit – Summit

Black River Memorial Hospital – Black River Falls

Educators Credit Union – Racine

Ericson Logging Inc. – Minong

Essential Family Vision Care – DeForest

Fagan Automotive – Janesville

JB Systems, LLC – Eau Claire

Junior Achievement of Wisconsin, Inc. – Milwaukee

Kicks Unlimited – Fitchburg

Leer Inc. – New Lisbon

LMI Packaging Solutions – Pleasant Prairie

Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of  
Commerce – Milwaukee

Pindel Global Precision Inc. – New Berlin

Pixels n Prints, LLC – Richfield

Primerica (Jim Martinson) – Madison

Riverfront Inc. – Janesville

South Central Wisconsin Builders  
Association – Janesville

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**NOTES:** Information and application forms can be found on the [Business Friends of Education website](https://dpi.wi.gov/business-friends) at <https://dpi.wi.gov/business-friends>. This news release is available electronically at <https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/news-release/dpinr2018-03.pdf>.