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NEWS

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WISCONSIN MARKETING TEAM TRAVELING TO MINNESOTA TO SEEK BUSINESS EXPANSIONS *Forward Wisconsin Marketing Mission Generates over Fifty Meetings with Minnesota CEOs*

MADISON - - Twelve economic development officials from western and northwestern Wisconsin are in Minnesota this week to talk to Twin Cities area CEOs about the advantages of doing business in Wisconsin. Forward Wisconsin's annual fall Twin Cities Marketing Mission starts today with an evening strategy session and culminates with CEO meetings on Wednesday, October 12 and Thursday, October 13. The Marketing Mission is a three-month direct mail and telemarketing effort that culminates in face-to-face meetings with corporate executives that have expressed an interest in expanding their companies to the state. This year's marketing calling program has yielded over 50 appointments with Minnesota CEOs that will be conducted by the Wisconsin Team.

"We continue to see a high-level of interest from Minnesota CEOs in expanding their businesses to Wisconsin. Wisconsin definitely offers a lower overall cost of doing business versus Minnesota and that fuels continued over-the-border growth to Wisconsin," said Pepi Randolph, Forward Wisconsin President. "In addition, Governor Doyle has worked hard to strengthen Wisconsin's business climate through regulatory reform, eliminating the tax on creating jobs, reducing permit times, and creating a sales tax exemption on energy used in manufacturing. These efforts and his newly proposed 2005 Grow Wisconsin agenda help make Wisconsin an even more attractive place to do business."

The Wisconsin Team will form six groups and visit each of the CEOs who want to talk about their firms and why they are interested in doing business in Wisconsin. Forward Wisconsin and its partners will then follow up with more detailed information on Wisconsin, based on the needs and inquiries of the interested CEOs.

In addition to Wisconsin's strong primary and secondary educational systems; its productive and skilled workforce; and great quality of life, a Wisconsin business location can offer many cost advantages. For example, a recent National Association of Industrial and Office Properties study found that a typical 99-employee manufacturing company in a 70,000-square-foot building would pay \$110,234 in property taxes in Minnesota, while paying just \$63,264 in Wisconsin. In addition, Wisconsin worker's compensation rates, on average, are lower than Minnesota's, and Wisconsin's corporate income tax rate is 7.9% compared to Minnesota's 9.8%. Wisconsin also has lower personal income tax rates and sales tax rates than Minnesota.

Forward Wisconsin's 2005 Twin Cities marketing mission team includes:

Andy Albarado, Rusk County Development
Dennis Blang, Forward Wisconsin
Tara Bergeson, UW-Stout
Brian Doudna, Eau Claire Area EDC
Vern Kenas, Xcel Energy
Andy Lisak, The Development Association, Superior

Dr. Barbara Nemecek, UW-River Falls
Ted Penn, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation
Tiffany Richter, City of Eau Claire
Bill Rubin, St. Croix EDC
Scott Wagner, First National Bank of Hudson
Mike Welch, Polk County EDC

Forward Wisconsin, Inc., (ForwardWI.com), created in 1984, is a unique public-private state marketing organization. Its job is marketing Wisconsin's business advantages outside the state to inform decision-makers about the positive benefits of living, working, playing, and doing business in Wisconsin. Governor Doyle is Forward Wisconsin's Chairman of the Board.