

Walker talks tech education, workforce development at WCTC



Ashley Haynes/Freeman Staff

Waukesha County Technical College student Dustin Stigler shows Governor Scott Walker some of the technology students learn to use in the Automation Systems Technology program.

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PEWAUKEE — Gov. Scott Walker made another campaign stop in southeast Wisconsin Wednesday afternoon ahead of the November election. This trip found him at Waukesha County Technical College, where he toured the college's robotics workshop and discussed the importance of students and workers developing skills for high-tech jobs.

"Wisconsin is ready to win the 21st century and part of that is making sure our workforce has the skills to compete in the global

economy," said Walker.

He added that for many employers, the number one ongoing challenge they face is finding people with the skill sets needed to fill their positions. Walker says by investing in the state's workforce through training programs such as those offered at WCTC, he is also investing in the state's future. The state has made a \$365 million investment in workforce development, which includes funding for training programs.

Walker said he would ideally like to see workforce training programs available to younger students.

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Walker

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"Our hope is apprenticeships in seventh and eighth grade, and other accelerated programs can help students get ready for technical college right out of junior high," said Walker.

Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program, which started in 2010, more than doubled in funding by 2016, from \$1.6 million to \$3.2 million. The program is designed for juniors and seniors in high schools to gain hands-on experience at a worksite with classroom instruction. In June 2017, the Department of Workforce Development announced \$3.9 million in Youth Apprenticeship state grants, which will serve 4,300 students.

Walker said another of his goals is to make sure that every student in the K-12 system at least graduates from high school.

"We have jobs here, but more importantly we have careers here. We just need to make sure people have access to the education they need," said Walker.

Other current events

When asked what he thinks about President Donald Trump's \$12 billion plan to help farmers affected by his tariffs, Walker said:

"Well, I think the best thing to do is what the president himself said last month and that's to get to zero tariffs. Our workers, our farmers, can compete with anyone in the world, especially with no tariffs."

When asked his thoughts about extending the tuition freeze in the University of Wisconsin System for four more years, Walker said:

"I see college students all across the state who talk about the high cost of education, particularly for four-year programs. We want to make college as affordable and accessible for everyone. In the years before we put a freeze in place, tuition went up by an average of eight percent."

When asked about Matt Flynn running for governor:

"This past week, when Matt Flynn as a candidate said he had never had any interaction with priests who were accused of assaults and abuse, yet the documents clearly show that he had been... I think he is unqualified to be governor of the state of Wisconsin. I'm calling for him to get out."