Kansas Department of Commerce awarded
an H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant

Unemployed engineering graduates focus of $5 million funding

The Kansas Department of Commerce announced today that it was awarded a $5 million, four-year H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant by the U.S. Department of Labor. The grant can be used by employers for on-the-job training to support the hiring of new engineers.

The individuals eligible for training funded by the grant can be both recent graduates not currently employed in the field and other dislocated or unemployed engineers who meet educational prerequisites but may lack the specialized skills and experience necessary for a particular engineering job opportunity. Employers can receive up to $25,000 per individual to reduce the costs of training an engineer to fill a particular position.

“The state must be focused on doing what we can to encourage the recruitment, training and employment of much needed engineers, if the Kansas economy is to recover and expand,” said Kansas Commerce Secretary Pat George. “This grant complements nicely with the Brownback Administration’s Kan-Grow Engineering Fund, which is a 10-year investment to substantially increase the number of engineering students graduating from Kansas State University, the University of Kansas and Wichita State University,” said Kansas Commerce Secretary Pat George.”

Use of this funding is intended to reduce the number of H-1B visa hires and to create greater opportunities for Kansans and other eligible participants. Fees charged to employers hiring foreign workers under the federal H-1B visa program serve as the basis of this grant’s funding.

To recruit eligible participants, the Department will join with Workforce Partnership, which will coordinate with the entire KANSASWORKS workforce system, university engineering schools/placement services, the Department’s workforce response coordinators, and employers’ human resource departments.

Unemployed individuals with engineering backgrounds are encouraged to contact their local KANSASWORKS Workforce Center. Contact information can be found at KANSASWORKS.com under the “Contact” link. Employers are encouraged to contact their Department of Commerce business executive and industry liaison or Keith Meyers, director of training services for the Department, at (785) 296-5115 or kmeyers@kansascommerce.com.

###