



Ashley Haynes/Freeman Staff

Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes, right, and Department of Financial Institutions Secretary-designee Kathy Blumenfeld, center right, check out some thermal imaging technology at Waukesha County Technical College on Monday morning.

A down payment toward the future

State officials visit WCTC following \$25M increase in funding

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PEWAUKEE — The recently signed state budget includes a \$25 million investment to the Wisconsin Technical College System. A task force of state officials including the lieutenant governor has been touring technical colleges across Wisconsin to see the work the schools do in training the workforce of the future.

On Monday, the task force stopped by Waukesha County Technical College to discuss how the state can continue to provide support.

“When you talk about the

need for workforce readiness, you see that happening here in real time regardless of workforce (area),” said Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes.

During a brief tour of WCTC, Barnes, Department of Safety and Professional Services Secretary-designee Dawn Crim and Department of Financial Institutions Secretary-Designee Kathy Blumenfeld got a firsthand look at some of the areas technology students are utilizing, including rapid prototypes and thermal imagers.

WCTC staff members also shared how the college is planning to add to its current catalog of programs to

address workforce needs.

“We’re also appreciative of the recent budget that was passed that will provide us with more funding and a chance to expand some of our programs,” said School of Applied Technologies Dean Mike Shiels.

He said WCTC is looking at expanding its offerings in the construction field, while representatives from the School of Business and the School of Protective and Human Services discussed plans to add degrees in digital marketing and massage therapy.

The collaboration between WCTC and local businesses and employers impressed Blumenfeld.

“The ability to see how you tailor the (state’s) investment to the needs of your community is fantastic,” Blumenfeld said. “We’re excited to see all of these new programs coming up.”

She added that the task force is also looking at ways to help inform future students of the benefits of a technical education, including the likelihood of immediately finding a job and the smaller cost of attending school.

Blumenfeld said the money granted to the state’s technical college system is a down payment toward the future the state and citizens want to attain.