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For Immediate Release: Friday, Sept. 4, 2009

Summer Work Experience Provides a Look Into the Auto World

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Labor (DOL) provided 19-year-old Brandi Boardman an unforgettable opportunity this summer with a temporary work experience at Watertown Ford Chrysler that ultimately resulted in a full-time job.

Boardman was among 756 young people, ages 14-24, who benefited from \$2.9 million in federal stimulus funds South Dakota received for job-training opportunities through the Summer Youth Work Experience program. The program helped them establish work histories, gain references, acquire new skills and build good work habits.

Boardman had an interest in automotive mechanics, and DOL was able to pay her wages through the Summer Youth Work Experience program and ensure she learned mechanical skills as well as gain communications and customer service experience.

“Brandi was referred to DOL from the Career Learning Center,” said Sue Bogen, Watertown DOL office manager. “We are proud of her accomplishments this summer – passing her GED and getting meaningful work experience to start building a resume.”

The training program written by DOL was designed so Boardman could work in the dealership’s express lube area. She learned how to interact with co-workers, supervisors and customers. Her job was to take customers’ orders and schedule the proper service.

Watertown Ford Chrysler also taught Boardman how to service and inspect vehicles, check fluids and tire wear, and do routine maintenance - such as oil changes.

Boardman’s supervisor said she did a great job, and she was hired permanently when her work-experience program concluded Aug. 28.