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## *Wisconsin Business Development Announces 2014 Small Business Achievement Award*

**Monona, WI** - Wisconsin Business Development is pleased to present Proto-1 Manufacturing with the 2014 Small Business Achievement Award. Proto-1 Manufacturing was selected based on their commitment to their customers, employees and local community, strong recent sales and employment growth. Presentation of the award will take place at the fourth annual Friends of Small Business Luncheon to be held on October 15, 2014 at the Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel in Brookfield, WI.

Proto-1 Manufacturing located in Winneconne, WI was established in late 1996 and has been the leading manufacturer of specialized pipe and tubing fabrication equipment. Today, the company is led by John and Valerie Schwochert. Proto-1 collaborates with their customers in the development of progressive tube end forming systems made to precise tolerances tailored to their customer's exact specifications. The parts made by Proto-1 machines are used by a variety of companies and products. Over 100 companies that service companies like Caterpillar, Navistar International, John Deere, Ford, Nissan, Toyota, Volvo, Briggs & Stratton, and Boeing Aircraft, rely on Proto-1 to provide the machines to make the parts they need. Proto-1 produced materials can be found in exhaust tubing, automotive airbag deployment systems, heavy truck charged air systems, ATV's, motorcycle exhaust forms, copper tubing for plumbing, heating and air conditioning systems, hydraulic systems and more.

Owners John and Valerie Schwochert are dedicated to ensuring that Proto-1 Manufacturing is an innovative company. "Our specialty is making the impossible, possible, assisting our customers with the difficult parts that nobody else wants to or thinks can't be done, and the ability to adapt and change quickly because we are a smaller company and have a pride and passion for our work. Our goal is to be the leader in the tube forming industry - not a follower," John said. This philosophy that has guided the company for over 17 years of operation and will continue to guide them as the company moves forward. In 2006 and 2013, Proto-1 expanded their existing facility by 54,750 square feet to offer more products and services.

### ***About Wisconsin Business Development (WBD)***

Since 1981, WBD has partnered with Wisconsin financial institutions to fund more than \$2 billion of small business loans that have created more than 50,000 jobs statewide. WBD offers SBA guaranteed 504 long-term, fixed-rate loans to businesses to use for acquisition and expansion projects. The company also assists qualified businesses in accessing other guaranteed loan programs.

WBD's mission is to provide the knowledge, services, resources and solutions that foster economic development that creates jobs, grows businesses, and builds communities. Over the years, the company has developed an expertise in finding solutions and strategies for small businesses looking to grow. WBD has nine offices located across the state and takes a personal interest in each customer. For more information, visit [www.wbd.org](http://www.wbd.org).

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