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Council of State Governments Honors state DSPS Secretary

Dan Hereth is first CSG 20 under 40 winner from Wisconsin

Madison -- Wisconsin Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) Secretary-designee Dan Hereth learned Wednesday he had earned a prestigious award and recorded a first for Wisconsin.

The Council of State Governments (CSG) announced the 2023 recipients of its *20 Under 40 Award* late yesterday, which included Hereth. Each year, CSG recognizes 20 up-and-coming elected and appointed leaders from across the United States who exemplify strong leadership and a passion for public service.

“While the outstanding state officials recognized by CSG this year come from diverse backgrounds, different political parties, every branch of state government and every region of our country, they share the same commitment to serve others,” said David Adkins, CSG Executive Director/CEO. “They are hard-working, visionary leaders whose passion for public service is producing results for their states.”

Hereth has spent his young career in public service. He served as the Deputy District Director for Congresswoman Gwen Moore from 2008-2018, after which he joined DSPS as Assistant Deputy Secretary. In August 2022, Gov. Evers promoted Hereth, appointing him to lead the department.

“You don’t get into public service for praise or to win awards,” Hereth said about the CSG recognition. “My entire career, I have focused on creating access to opportunity and ensuring a safe, consistent, and fair environment in which people can pursue their opportunities. I’m honored to be included with such a fine group of public servants from across the country.”

Hereth’s tenure at DSPS has been defined by focused investments in the people, processes, and tools necessary to do improve DSPS’s work while maintaining the department’s commitment to public safety. He used ARPA funding dedicated by Governor Evers to invest in people and technology, drastically lowering license application review times in the state. Reviews of new application materials by DSPS, previously measured in months and weeks, are currently averaging 2-5 calendar days. In August, the department began publicly sharing licensing performance data on its dashboards, [Occupational Licensing: By the Numbers](#).

Hereth has also overseen a major improvement in plan review times at the department. Plan review times were taking [14-22 days in September](#), depending on project type. As recently as 2017-18, plan review times consistently took 12-16 weeks.

“I take immense pride in my efforts to build an innovative and results-driven agency that is responding to current challenges and creating a better future for Wisconsin. However, the success we have had at DSPS could not have happened without the hard work of our leadership team and line-level staff, as well as the support of Governor Evers and his office. So, while it bears my name, this honor reflects the work and dedication of many others,” Hereth said.

Beyond faster review times, Hereth has improved outreach to Wisconsin employers, professional associations, and institutions of higher education to identify common ground and common-sense projects that improve licensing for the more than 240 professions DSPS regulates in Wisconsin. He has personally spearheaded collaborations with the Wisconsin Dental Association, the WI Pharmacy Society, and the Universities of Wisconsin to find redundancies and efficiencies in the licensing process. Hereth has also overseen upgrades to the state’s [Prescription Drug Monitoring Program](#), launch of a [new fire risk tool](#) to better protect Wisconsin communities, and the [first update](#) to state plumbing code in well over a decade.

“Dan leads with humility and humanity. He is extraordinarily accessible to stakeholders and staff. Dan is committed to finding a path to progress and he is relentless in his pursuit to drive improvement for staff, stakeholders, and the general public,” Congresswoman Moore wrote in a letter supporting Hereth’s nomination. “He is skilled in motivating people, securing resources, establishing strong relationships, and forging strategic partnerships.”

20 Under 40 Leadership Award recipients are selected from a competitive pool of applicants. Those nominated should have demonstrated excellence in one or more of the following areas:

- Ability to engage officials across party, departments, branch and/or state lines in meaningful ways to advance the common good for their state/territory;
- Provide exceptional leadership to a state project, committee, chamber, commission or special group;
- Serve as a champion of change and seek to enhance the lives of all constituents within a specific policy area.

“We are honored to highlight the important work of this year’s 20 Under 40 class member supporting the citizens of their states,” said Lorna Patches, CSG deputy director of membership engagement and leadership development. “Their efforts serve as inspiration for leaders across the nation.”

CSG will honor award recipients at the 2023 CSG National Conference this December in Raleigh, North Carolina. Learn more about the CSG 20 Under 40 Leadership Award, and this year’s recipients, by visiting web.csg.org/20-40.

About DSPS

DSPS issues more than 240 unique licenses, administers dozens of boards and councils that regulate professions, enforces state building codes, runs the state fire prevention program, and maintains the award-winning Wisconsin Enhanced Prescription Drug Monitoring Program, which is a key tool in the multi-faceted public health campaign to stem excessive opioid

prescribing. A fee-based agency, DSPS is self-sustaining and receives no general fund tax dollars for its day-to-day operations. With five offices and 250 employees throughout Wisconsin, DSPS collaborates with constituents and stakeholders across a wide range of industries to promote safety and advance the economy.

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