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**WISCONSIN SPECIALTY CHEESE INSTITUTE FEBRUARY SEMINAR
TO ADDRESS WORKFORCE PLANNING, HIRING STRATEGIES**

(January 4, 2018) – Got workforce challenges? You’re not alone. Labor issues and rapidly changing workforce dynamics make recruiting, engaging and retaining quality employees among the toughest challenges businesses face. The [Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Institute \(WSCI\)](#) will address those challenges at its February 2018 meeting, with educational sessions targeting strategic workforce planning and connecting emotional intelligence (EQ) to the recruitment process.

The meeting takes place Friday, Feb. 16, 2018, at [Chula Vista Resort](#), 2501 N. River Rd., Wisconsin Dells, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. On-site registration opens at 8:30 a.m. WSCI members and non-members alike are invited to attend.

The morning session, *Strategic Workforce Planning: A Critical First Step in Workforce Optimization*, will be presented by Thomas O’Rourke, president and CEO of Connolly Clarke, LLC, a human capital advisory firm based in Madison, Wis. Prior to launching his consultancy, O’Rourke led human capital management and organizational change initiatives at leading firms including Baker Tilly, Accenture, and Arthur Andersen. He’ll offer insights on the Wisconsin labor market and share goals and best practices, as well as an actionable workforce planning process and tools, including:

- Setting strategy direction.
- Evaluating supply/assessing demand and creating workforce strategies to close gaps.
- Developing employer value proposition and company culture.
- Executing, monitoring and evaluating workforce strategies.
- Identifying strategies for employee onboarding, retention, and engagement.

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Following a networking lunch, the agenda targets hiring strategies. In a session entitled *Connecting EQ (Emotional Intelligence) to the Selection Process*, Andie Knight Gebert, learning and development manager at Waukesha, Wis.-based HR management firm MRA, will share insights on emotional intelligence and why it's important for hiring managers to assess. She'll also provide street-smart strategies for how to interview for EQ and discern if candidates possess skills in selected areas of competency.

“Regardless of product line, customer base or business model, every company in every link of the Wisconsin cheese supply chain faces tough challenges when it comes to developing a workforce that enables success and supports growth,” says Chris Roelli, WSCI president and owner of Roelli Cheese Haus in Shullsburg, Wis. “We’re excited to present an expert-led educational program focused on helping WSCI members and guests address these challenges. We encourage everyone to come out and join us on February 16.”

Meeting cost: Free for WSCI members; \$50 per person for non-members. **RSVP by Friday, Feb. 9, 2018**, to Kathy Brown at (262)740-2180 or kathy@planningoptionsinc.com.

Special hotel rates: February 14-16, 2018 — \$109 for Tower Room or \$249 for 2-bedroom El Grande Condo; February 17, \$169 and \$399 for the same accommodations. All rates are plus tax. For reservations and to receive the special rates, contact Chula Vista Resort at (866) 856-6789 **before 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 22, 2018**, and refer to “WI Specialty Cheese Institute” booking ID #71435.

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About WSCI: *The Wisconsin Specialty Cheese Institute works to promote and support the development of a robust, profitable specialty cheese industry in Wisconsin. Founded in 1994 in cooperation with the Wisconsin Cheese Makers Association and the Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, the WSCI serves as a resource for both the cheesemaker and the cheese buyer, hosting educational and promotional activities for all things specialty cheese. [http:// www.wispecialtycheese.org](http://www.wispecialtycheese.org)*

