



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

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DCEO Celebrates National Apprenticeship Week

SPRINGFIELD – The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) today marked the beginning of Apprenticeship Week 2017. This national celebration recognizes leaders across industry, education and government who support apprenticeships and help prepare our next generation of workers. National Apprenticeship Week stretches from November 13 to November 19.

“Apprenticeship programs are a win-win for the Illinois economy,” said Illinois Governor Bruce Rauner. “They deliver a pathway to good paying jobs and stable careers. Apprentices are given the skills and education necessary to maximize their potential. I am proud of the work we have done to invest in our workforce through apprenticeships, and I look forward to continuing to support these programs across our great state.”

Under the leadership of Governor Bruce Rauner, Illinois has made a concerted effort to increase and support apprenticeships throughout every industry. In July, the Department announced the locations of the initial Apprenticeship PLUS pilots under the Governor’s Cabinet for Children and Youth. The pilots specifically target both in-school and-out-of-school youth between the ages of 16 and 24, and provide them with specific career education, a chance to earn industry-recognized credentials and on-the-job training.

“Apprenticeships are crucial to maintaining a top-notch workforce,” said DCEO Director Sean McCarthy. “We have seen the tremendous benefits these hands-on experiences bring to both workers, who receive the training necessary to excel at an often high-paying career, and employers, who cultivate a highly skilled and dynamic workforce. Illinois has been working to expand these crucial opportunities to support more youth and adults looking to embark on a new career pathway.”

Throughout the week, the Illinois Department of Commerce will be profiling apprenticeship programs, educators and participants from across the state.

Registered apprenticeship data supplied by the U.S. Department of Labor indicates that Illinois has 13,754 registered apprentices, with 486 active Registered Apprenticeship Programs and 296 sponsors. Sponsors are entities such as businesses, employer associations, community colleges and local workforce areas.

“National Apprenticeship Week is a chance for us to recognize the men and women across the state who are helping develop our workforce,” said Julio Rodriguez, Deputy Director of DCEO’s Office of Employment & Training. “Apprenticeships have a positive impact on workers, offering them quality training through experiential learning. They have a proven track record of success.”

A copy of the Governor’s official proclamation is attached.

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