



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

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Pritzker Administration Awards \$8.6 Million for South Central Illinois (SCI) Training & Innovation Center

LITCHFIELD – Governor Pritzker, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), local and state leaders today announced the award of \$8.6 million for a new South-Central Illinois (SCI) Training & Innovation Center. The grant will be used to redevelop a warehouse in the City of Litchfield’s Industrial Park and will create a regional training center, providing Career and Technical Training (CTE) for school districts in Montgomery & Macoupin Counties. The center is expected to launch in Fall of 2023.

“Educational opportunities are key to an economically prosperous state—and the new South Central Illinois Training & Innovation Center is just one of the many ways we are preparing our young people for the jobs of today and tomorrow,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Thanks to an \$8.6 million award from DCEO, students in Montgomery and Macoupin Counties will have access to top-tier training in everything from welding and auto technology to precision machining and IT certifications. This investment is a win for our young people, the South-Central region, and the entire state of Illinois—and I am grateful to DCEO and our partners at Lincoln Land Community College and Lewis and Clark Community College for their leadership.”

The Center will offer training to both high school students as well as displaced workers located in the region. In partnership with Lincoln Land Community College & Lewis and Clark Community College, students will have the opportunity to earn college credits and industry credentials while still in high school – helping them meet the needs of regional workforce demands while preparing them for postsecondary success.

“Providing students and displaced workers with training opportunities to prepare them for good-paying jobs is a key economic development strategy and focus of the Pritzker Administration,” **said Deputy Governor Andy Manar**. “Establishing a Training & Innovation Center will provide fantastic workforce opportunities for Litchfield and the surrounding region while solidifying the area as a training hub.”

“Gaining firsthand experience in technical fields can be a game changer for folks trying to figure out their career path. Facilities like the Training and Innovation Center in Litchfield will help folks prepare for good paying careers in manufacturing and other growing industries in Illinois,” **said DCEO Director Sylvia I. Garcia**. “Under Governor Pritzker’s leadership, the state has taken a comprehensive approach to supporting Illinois’ workforce by increasing training opportunities for job seekers across the state, building career pipelines for growing industries, and launching programs to provide new skills for workers in an evolving marketplace.”

The Center will offer training in auto technology, welding as well as an Illinois Laborers’ & Contractors apprenticeship program focused on the trades. The warehouse will be retrofitted to offer state-of-the-art facilities including a full-scale auto garage, welding center, and separate modules different areas within the trades – all designed for hands-on learning.

“Today we are laying the groundwork for helping people in Litchfield and the surrounding region meet their full potential and get the training they need to land a good paying job,” **said State Sen. Doris Turner (D-Springfield)**. “Ensuring that centers for career and technical education have state-of-the-art facilities is essential for a vibrant economy. I am thrilled to support this amazing opportunity for Montgomery and Macoupin County workers, businesses, and communities.”

“We are collectively excited and grateful for our \$8.6 million DCEO grant that will allow us to partner with our neighboring K-12 districts, community colleges, and regional business partners to grow targeted skill development for students and displaced adult workers in the Montgomery and Macoupin Counties Region,” **said Superintendent of the Litchfield Community School District, Dr. Gregg Fuerstenau**. “The South-Central Illinois (SCI) Training & Innovation Center will be used to train the next generation of career & technical workers and will be a great tool for growing our regional workforce and ultimately furthering our region's economic development.”

Located within the City of Litchfield’s Industrial Park, the Center is expected to add additional areas of training designed to meet the demands of the workforce, including Precision Machining, IT Certifications, & Agriculture Technology.

This \$8.6 million dollar investment is part of the State’s commitment to supporting and growing Illinois’ workforce by providing capital grants for training centers, creating targeted training opportunities and building pipelines. This includes more than \$15 million for the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship program, \$15 million in capital grants for Advanced Manufacturing Academies, \$20 million to boost equitable workforce recovery through the Training and Economic Development Program (JTED) program, and much more. To learn more about job training and workforce development efforts and opportunities, please visit dceo.illinois.gov.

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