



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
JB Pritzker, Governor

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**Governor Pritzker Awards Over \$18 Million in Grant Funding
through the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program**

Grant funding supports the state’s continued effort to build a pipeline of talent and increase access to good-paying jobs for historically underrepresented populations

CHICAGO - Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) today awarded over \$18 million in funding to 36 recipients, serving 1,700 community members statewide, to expand the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program. The program creates a qualified talent pipeline of diverse candidates in construction and the building trades.

The Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program launched in 2021 with the goal of increasing diversity and access to apprenticeship programs. Comprehensive pre-apprenticeship programs help participants gain admission to apprenticeship programs, which provide a greater opportunity to obtain employment in the construction trades and secure a lifelong career.

“As Rebuild Illinois continues to transform every aspect of our state’s infrastructure, my administration remains committed to building out a workforce that is as talented as it is diverse,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Today, I couldn’t be prouder to announce that we are dispersing \$18 million to expand the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship program, so that even more underrepresented Illinoisans gain access to good-paying jobs in the construction trades.”

“The Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program is illuminating new paths and economic opportunities for diverse workers that are typically underrepresented in the trades,” **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “Trades are vital to our state’s long-term health, and we need to make sure everyone, no matter their zip code, has the opportunity to recognize that value. Apprenticeships deepen the talent pool that will develop into a healthy, flowing workforce.”

The Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship program was specifically designed to increase access to good-paying jobs in the trades for historically underrepresented populations.

	Diversity (Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, Native American)	Women
Percentage of Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program Participants in 2023	84%	25%

Percentage of Illinois Apprentices in 2022	31%	5%
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“Apprenticeships provide a clear path to good-paying, long-term career opportunities,” said **DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. “The continued expansion and success of the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program is critical to ensuring students, particularly those from underrepresented communities, have the tools and resources they need to thrive.”

Through Illinois Works, DCEO is expanding its statewide network of providers to recruit, prescreen, and provide pre-apprenticeship skills training. Equally important, the program providers offer structured pathways and manage the program graduates' transition from the pre-apprenticeship program to a full apprenticeship program in construction and building trades.

Participants of the program attend tuition-free and receive a stipend and other supportive, barrier reduction services to help enter the construction industry. Upon completion of the program, pre-apprentices receive industry aligned certifications which prepare and qualify them to continue to a registered apprenticeship program in one of the trades.

2024 Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program Recipients:

Organization Name	Area Served	Grant Award	Organization Status
Associated Builders & Contractors, Illinois Chapter, Inc.	Springfield	\$165,000.00	Renewed
Awaken Foundation LC3	Rockford	\$195,000.00	New
Bethel Family Resource Center	Chicago Heights	\$440,000.00	Renewed
Chicago Women in Trades	Chicago	\$770,428.00	Renewed
Chicagoland Prison Outreach	South Holland	\$550,000.00	New
Children First Fund: The Chicago Public Schools Foundation	Chicago	\$250,000.00	Renewed
Community Assistance Programs	Chicago	\$656,639.18	Renewed
Community Development Institute	Chicago	\$550,000.00	Renewed
Danville Area Community College	Danville	\$550,000.00	Renewed

EDDR Foundation - Chicago	Chicago	\$550,000.00	Renewed
EDDR Foundation - Rockford	Rockford	\$440,000.00	Renewed
Evanston Rebuilding Warehouse	Evanston	\$550,000.00	Renewed
HIRE360	Chicago	\$550,000.00	Renewed
Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA)	Chicago	\$550,000.00	Renewed
Illinois Foundation of SkillsUSA - Region 4	Pekin	\$550,000.00	New
Illinois Foundation of SkillsUSA-VICA	Pekin	\$751,000.00	Renewed
Lewis University - Aurora	Aurora	\$549,999.10	Renewed
Lewis University - Grayslake	Grayslake	\$549,900.32	
Lewis University - Joliet	Joliet	\$550,000.00	New
Lumity	Chicago	\$330,000.00	Renewed
Macon County	Decatur	\$429,000.00	Renewed
Metropolitan Family Services	Chicago	\$550,000.00	Renewed
Metropolitan Family Services - North	Chicago	\$550,000.00	New
Project H.O.O.D. Communities Development Corporation	Chicago	\$250,000.00	Renewed
Quad County Urban League	Aurora	\$330,000.00	New
Revolution Workshop	Chicago	\$220,000.00	Renewed
Richland Community College	Decatur	\$495,000.00	Renewed
Rincon Family Services	Chicago	\$1,650,000.00	Renewed
Rock Island County	Rock Island	\$195,000.00	New
Sista Girls and Friends	Decatur	\$880,000.00	Renewed

Southwestern Illinois College	Belleville	\$355,542.10	Renewed
Teens Against Killing Everywhere	East St Louis	\$440,000.00	Renewed
Women's Innovation Group	Lynwood	\$260,000.00	New
YouthBuild Lake County	North Chicago	\$330,000.00	Renewed
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago - Buehler Fry	Chicago	\$550,000.00	New
YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago - South Side	Chicago	\$550,000.00	New Grantee

“The Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program has seen tremendous success since its inception in 2021, and I’m eager to see what lies ahead for the program participants,” **said Sen. Assistant Majority Leader David Koehler (D-Peoria)**. “Pre-apprenticeships change lives, and hundreds of Illinoisans will soon be on the path toward meaningful careers in the construction and building trades industries.”

“Opening the doors to opportunities for Illinoisans to pursue careers that allow them to support their families is a top priority,” **said Rep. Will Davis (D-Hazel Crest)**. “Through the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program, the State is moving in the right direction by equipping its world-class workforce with the resources and opportunity to thrive in the workplace.”

“The State of Illinois is proving its commitment to supporting its diverse, top-tier workforce by expanding the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program,” **said Rep. Maurice West (D-Rockford)**. “Working families in Rockford and throughout the state will have a breadth of opportunities to serve as registered apprentices after gaining critical skills through Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeships.”

Signed into law in 2019, the Illinois Works Jobs Program Act is designed to promote diversity, inclusion, and use of apprentices in state-funded capital projects. The Act created three major programs: the Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program, the Illinois Works Apprenticeship Initiative, and the Illinois Works Bid Credit Program. Together these three programs aim to create a talent pipeline of skilled and diverse candidates to fill new job opportunities created by the \$45 billion Rebuild Illinois capital plan.

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