



# ***Press Release***

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Illinois Community College Board Awarded \$4.0 Million Federal Grant to Expand Apprenticeship Programs**

SPRINGFIELD – A federal grant will allow the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) to serve more than 1,600 apprentices in pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs that will lead to employment in the information technology sector.

The \$4.0 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, announced earlier this month, will support the development and expansion of apprenticeship programs in partnership with ten Illinois community colleges that represent the geographic and demographic diversity of the state.

“The community college apprenticeship programs integrate classroom learning with paid employment,” said Dr. Lazaro Lopez, chairman of the ICCB. “Apprenticeship programs are critical to supporting economic development in communities across our state by creating seamless pathways for residents to acquire the skills to meet employer workforce needs.”

Over the next four years, the ICCB will work to develop or expand a Customized Apprenticeship Program-Information Technology (CAP-IT) Model at each of the ten partner colleges. This model includes bridge programs to help low-skilled and low-wage workers improve their basic skills; programs to provide related technical instruction; and apprenticeship programs to provide paid work based learning and postsecondary education.

“The expansion of the CAP-IT model will benefit from statewide efforts to expand apprenticeships in multiple industry sectors across Illinois,” said Dr. Brian Durham, executive director of the ICCB. “Spurred by the alignment of education, workforce, and economic development partners working toward a common goal, Illinois is poised to be a leader in the development of statewide pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship.”

The participating colleges will receive extensive professional development, support, and technical assistance. The ICCB will utilize its existing Professional Development Network, supplemented by support from CompTIA, Jobs for the Future, and Harper College to ensure that the colleges have the resources they need to be successful.

In addition to expanding apprenticeship opportunities, participating colleges will be looking to identify ways to promote greater inclusion and diversity in apprenticeships.

“I look forward to expanding opportunities for all Illinoisans including veterans, service members transitioning to the civilian workforce, and groups that have been traditionally underrepresented

in apprenticeships such as women, minorities, and those transitioning from the justice system to the workforce,” said Durham.

The ten partner colleges are:

City Colleges of Chicago (Chicago)

College of Lake County (Grayslake)

Illinois Central College (Peoria)

Kishwaukee College (Malta)

Lincoln Land Community College (Springfield)

Oakton Community College (Des Plaines)

Parkland College (Champaign)

Prairie State College (Chicago Heights)

Rend Lake College (Ina)

Richland Community College (Decatur)

As the third largest community college system in the country and the leading public workforce development trainer in the state, Illinois community colleges serve over 600,000 residents each year in credit, noncredit, and continuing education courses. Illinois is home to 48 colleges in 39 community college districts which provide high quality, accessible, cost-effective educational opportunities to the entire state. The Illinois Community College Board is the state coordinating board for community colleges and has statutory responsibility for administering state and federal grants to community college districts and adult education providers and managing high school equivalency testing for Illinois.

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