



# ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **ILLINOIS TOLLWAY PROMOTES CONSTRUCTIONWORKS EVENTS TO INTRODUCE COMMUNITY LEADERS TO INNOVATIVE WORKFORCE PROGRAM**

*Workers receive training, services and hiring assistance for jobs in construction industry*

**DOWNERS GROVE, IL** – The Illinois Tollway is inviting community, workforce development and business leaders to learn more about ConstructionWorks and help spread the word to residents interested in pursuing good paying jobs and ultimately successful careers in the heavy highway construction industry.

In cooperation with The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership), the Tollway hosted the first of four fall events at St. Augustine College at Lewis University in Chicago today with additional events scheduled in Rockford, North Riverside and Chicago's Chatham community area to spread awareness of the program and to help reach a broader base of candidates.

ConstructionWorks is an innovative program that creates a pool of diverse male and female candidates ready to work in a variety of roles, including equipment operators, carpenters and electricians in demand in the heavy highway and related construction industries. The program, funded by the Illinois Tollway and administered by The Partnership, offers comprehensive training, job placement assistance and access to construction companies at no cost to participants through service centers available throughout Northern Illinois.

"We're thrilled to be out in the communities spreading the word about the resources available through ConstructionWorks to residents who are interested in starting careers in the construction industry," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassaundra Rouse. "We want community leaders to help us send the message that ConstructionWorks provides a clear path to a successful, satisfying career in an industry that plays a vital role in keeping the Tollway and the state moving forward."

"This unique program leverages our network to offer the comprehensive training needed to succeed in this field, while also assisting with job placement by linking new workers with a network of construction companies that are hiring," said George Wright, CEO of the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership. "Working with the Illinois Tollway, we're dedicated to expanding the reach of this program to bring these career opportunities to more residents across Northern Illinois."

In 2024, ConstructionWorks has enrolled more than 160 participants, including more than 20 entering unions and nearly 60 entering careers in construction through August. Since launching 2018, more than 1,200 participants have been enrolled in the program with more than 200 candidates entering unions and more than 400 participants gaining employment within the construction sector, including 70 participants working directly on Illinois Tollway construction contracts.

ConstructionWorks prepares individuals, including minorities, women and veterans, for entry into union apprenticeships and training programs that lead to stable jobs and ultimately well-paying careers in the construction industry.

Participants are supported throughout the program with a hands-on career coach and guided through applications, union entry and links them to hiring construction contractors.

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In addition, the program offers assistance to help participants overcome barriers to employment including enhancing their skill sets and providing individualized support services including transportation, work apparel, short-term childcare, union dues and testing fees.

ConstructionWorks also benefits construction contractors by providing them with access to a diverse pool of job candidates. Contractors who hire ConstructionWorks candidates receive incentives that include cash reimbursements to help cover wages and bid credits that can be applied to future Illinois Tollway contracts those companies pursue.

More information about enrolling in ConstructionWorks is available at the [Illinois Tollway ConstructionWorks](#) or at [Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership](#).

### **About the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership**

The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) is a non-profit umbrella organization that operates one of the largest public workforce systems in the country serving career seekers and employers. As the designated administrator of federal workforce development funding for the City of Chicago and Cook County, The Partnership oversees a network of community-based organizations, American Job Centers, satellite sites, and sector-driven centers. The organization also oversees a diverse portfolio of workforce initiatives representing other public, corporate and philanthropic funds. For more information, visit <https://chicookworks.org/>.

### **About the Illinois Tollway**

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 294 miles of roadways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

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