



ILLINOIS TOLLWAY NEWS

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY CONGRATULATES BUSINESSES GRADUATING IN ITS TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM CLASS OF 2024

Training program administered by Inner-City Underwriting Agency assists firms to bid for contracts

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway congratulates leaders from 18 businesses in the Class of 2024 graduating in from the Tollway Technical Assistance Program administered by Inner-City Underwriting Agency.

The business owners will be recognized at a ceremony in Chicago on Thursday, January 23, for successfully completing a six-week estimating class that provided those participants with the skills needed to help them submit more accurate, competitive bids for construction projects.

“We’re pleased these business leaders are making use the Illinois Tollway’s Technical Assistance Program’s training and resources that can make the difference between earning revenue and delivering critical projects in the field or sitting on the sidelines,” said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Cassaundra Rouse. “With the Tollway’s commitment to small businesses, and billions in infrastructure investments in the pipeline with IDOT, the City of Chicago, Cook County and municipal agencies across the region, these firms are now more prepared that ever to take their companies, and the people who work for them, to the next level.”

The Tollway Technical Assistance Program Class of 2024 includes representatives of 18 firms that offer a wide range of services, including electrical, excavation, concrete and masonry work, carpentry, demolition and remodeling, commercial cleaning, heating and cooling, landscaping and trucking.

Graduates to be recognized for their achievements include:

- Henry Shelton, Jr., Arlington Ventures – Chicago
- Carl Seestadt, KKC Gerscot – Chicago
- Yanell Arroyo, Phoenix CCI – Chicago
- Torrence Lambert, Armor D2 – Chicago
- Rickey Crawford, Heritage Steel Services – Dyer, IN
- Cinthia Soto and Eunice Echeverria, Dardon Construction – Chicago
- Carlus Taylor, Cornerstone Unlimited – Calumet City
- Salin Uddin and Saima Uddin, USH Construction – Lincolnwood
- Frances Ellis, Frank’s Consultant and Construction Corp. – Chicago
- Troy Deen, Magnet Maintenance Electrical – Champaign
- Maria Morales, Air and Wellness Safety Training – Chicago
- Alex Macias and Roy Vazquez, All Carpentry Concepts – Naperville
- Malki Brown, MGE Property Solutions – Chicago
- Valdes Burgess, SB Unlimited – Phoenix
- Earis McGee, SMM Construction – Chicago
- Melissa Chinwah, Melissa Chinwah Enterprises – Homewood
- Jerome Cheetam, RTC Construction & Restoration – Lynwood
- Lance Cathey, Cathy’s Construction -- Romeoville

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The [Illinois Tollway Technical Assistance Program](#) is designed to prepare emerging and established transportation-related construction and professional engineering services firms, including small, diverse and veteran-owned businesses to participate on highway and vertical construction contracts, including the Tollway's ongoing 16-year, \$15 billion *Move Illinois* capital program and its new 7-year, \$2 billion Bridging the Future capital plan.

In 2024, firms participating in the Technical Assistance Program submitted more than 150 bids and proposals for Tollway projects. As a result, firms were awarded more than \$19.5 million in contracts, both for construction and professional services in 2024. Nearly 400 construction and professional services firms were served by Technical Assistance Program providers last year.

Participants in the Tollway Technical Assistance Program receive comprehensive, customized business development assistance to build financial understanding and business plan development for increased business stability and growth in the transportation-related construction industry. Services are customized to the assessed strengths, challenges and needs of participating firms. Each participant must have been in business for at least three years and earn annual revenue of at least \$100,000.

The Technical Assistance Program is administered by Inner-City Underwriting Agency. and the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Technical Assistance providers are available to help construction firms and professional engineering firms interested in working on transportation-related planning and construction projects. They offer a range of services for businesses in areas across the Tollway system. These providers manage programs targeted to regional needs and objectives.

About Inner-City Underwriting Agency

Inner-City Underwriting is a Chicago-based social equity risk-management firm that helps organizations achieve diversity goals by increasing the number and size of diverse companies that can compete work in various fields.

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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