



**South Suburban Cook County American Job Center at  
Prairie State College  
Monthly Partners Meeting  
September 15th, 2022  
10:00 am**

***In-Person Meeting Attendees:***

Melissa Veach, Calumet Area Industrial Commission (CAIC); Vicky Garcia, Prairie State College; Camilla Benjamin, scaleLIT; Ema Mailhot-Beutel scalelit; and Robert Guzman, scaleLIT.

***Virtual Meeting Attendees:***

Antoinette Golden, Illinois Department of Employment Services (IDES); April Walton, National Able Network; Brittney Davis, Paul Simon Job Corps; Christopher McElroy, South Suburban College; Crystal Catlett, (IDES); Diana Gutierrez, South Suburban College; DLonra Gary, Job Corps; Matt Weis, National Able Network; Meg Dawczak, Moraine Valley Community College; Moises Ortiz, (IDES); Tina Salgado, (IDES); Valencia Fuenches, IDHS; Megan McGinty, scaleLIT; and Nidia Mejia, scaleLIT.

***Agenda:***

- Hybrid Meeting Reminders
- Dashboard Review:
  - Center Engagement
  - Customer Satisfaction Survey
- [Meeting Format Survey](#)
- Partner Updates
- [Networking Topic: Digital Learning Lab](#)

***OSO Update:***

- OSO shared the Dashboard engagement rate for Southwest AJC and on-site survey data.
- OSO will be hosting Hybrid Monthly Partner Meetings. We hope that offering both an in-person and virtual option will make these meetings more accessible for our partners. **If you plan to attend in person, RSVP by emailing [camilla@scalelit.org](mailto:camilla@scalelit.org).** Detailed instructions for in-person attendance and agenda will be sent out two days before the scheduled meetings.
- OSO surveyed partners to determine the format of future meetings.
- [Click here to view the September South Suburban Cook County AJC at Prairie State](#)

## [Resources Newsletter](#)

### **Partner Updates:**

#### South Suburban Cook County American Job Center at Prairie State College Building Update

- South Suburban AJC at Prairie State College reopened to the public on July 21st.
- The center is open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and accepts walk-ins.
  - Customer surveys will be posted on-site to be completed after orientations.
  - Niasa Hollins-Watson is the new Site Director/Programs Manager for WIOA Title I in Chicago Heights 708 709-7971; [nhollins-watson@nationalable.org](mailto:nhollins-watson@nationalable.org).
- Prairie State College has lessened its Covid-19 restrictions.
- The campus will be thoroughly cleaned to welcome students in the fall.
- Face masks are still required in the classrooms.

#### Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA Title I-B)

##### National Able Network

- In-person orientation is held on Thursdays at 10:00 am and virtual orientation is on Tuesdays at 1:00 pm.
- Recruiting for Dislocated workers and ConstructionWorks program.
- Orientations have been well attended.
- Recruitment for all programs is ongoing.
- National Able Network will be collaborating with Partners on the following event:
  - Career Connector Event at the Near West AJC in Pilsen on October 5th. Flyer coming soon.

##### Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP)

- The next Career Connector event is scheduled for September 22nd from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Triton College. [Click here to learn more.](#)
- The Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership) has been awarded a Good Jobs Challenge grant from the U.S. Department of Commerce's Economic Development Administration (EDA). The EDA's Good Jobs Challenge will award the Partnership \$18.5 million for employer-led workforce development.

#### Trade Adjustment Act (TAA)

##### National Able Network

- No longer holding orientations but still providing services.
- The Cook County Trade Program has expired as of June 30th. Once each state has run out of funds, the programs will end indefinitely. Projecting that programs will continue for the next 2-5 years.
- Staff is focusing on federal advocacy in D.C. to encourage Congress to respond with Trade Act reauthorization. So far there has been no action, but hopeful for reauthorization by the end of October.
  - [Click here to download the TAA Advocacy Document](#) shared by Matt Weis.
- Many individuals who were eligible for TAA benefits as a result of these layoffs are Spanish-speaking.

- Contact Daniela Cueva at [dcueva@nationalable.org](mailto:dcueva@nationalable.org) for more information about how to support and advocate.

#### Veteran's Forward

- National Able has a CSBG Transitional Job Program for Veterans, for any veterans who could benefit from support in managing barriers to employment.
- The last scheduled Veteran's Forward orientation was May 25th, 2022. All subsequent orientations have been postponed until further notice.
  - For any veteran-specific services, referrals, etc. after next week, the contact will be Michelle Malone. She can be reached via email at [mmalone@nationalable.org](mailto:mmalone@nationalable.org) or via phone at (312) 994-4297.

#### WIOA Title I-Y

##### Youth Job Center (YJC)

- Actively recruiting for all programs, Matt invited everyone to please refer young job seekers to YJC. Benefits and programs are formatted differently than Adult or dislocated work programs.
- The YJC's This Way Onwards initiative connects youth ages 16 to 24 with job opportunities at Old Navy. To complete the application process, two-day training is required. There is still space for direct placement. [Click here to view the flyer.](#)
- Lucretzia Jamison is the new Executive Director at Youth Job Center. She can be reached at [ljamison@youthjobcenter.org](mailto:ljamison@youthjobcenter.org).
- Youth Job Center is offering a free [IT program](#) and a [Healthcare training program](#).
- For more information contact Tiara Davis at [tdavis@youthjobcenter.org](mailto:tdavis@youthjobcenter.org) or Francesca Snow at [fsnow@youthjobcenter.org](mailto:fsnow@youthjobcenter.org) or NuDonna Williams at [nwilliams@youthjobcenter.org](mailto:nwilliams@youthjobcenter.org).

#### Prairie State College

- The first session of ESL classes is still going, with the second session set to start on October 3rd.
- Soon, the Forklift ICAPS Program will be available to the public. Flyer to come.
- FASFA Workshop for GED and ESL students is being hosted in October, the flyer is to come.
- Evaluation Credential Workshop for ESL students, two sessions about converting degrees from other countries into valid credentials in the U.S.
- A Financial Aid Literacy Workshop is in the works; please contact Vicky Garcia if you would like to present resources or training.
- Fall registration is in progress, enrollment has increased.
- Students who were unable to join the August start date will be able to join the second onramp in October. [Click here to learn more about the high school equivalency preparation course.](#)
- ESL students can register in person. [Click here to learn more about the ESL classes and registration.](#)
- Loaner laptops are being provided through the Librarian from PSC.
- The Prairie State College Office of Military Student Affairs will have a representative from Jesse Brown VA's VITAL program at the Military Student Affairs Center every second Thursday and fourth Wednesday of the month.

- The VITAL program is there to help veterans navigate their needs and concerns and maximize their unique skill set of strengths, skills, and life experiences as they develop and translate their interests and talents into an academic setting.
  - Reach out to Georges Sanon, Coordinator of the Office of Military Student Affairs, at [gsanon@prairiestate.edu](mailto:gsanon@prairiestate.edu).
- [Click here to download the brochure.](#)
- On September 24th, Prairie College will also host an event for post-9/11 veterans, spouses, and family members over the age of thirteen. The program focuses on developing confidence and learning how to live the life you desire.

#### South Suburban College

- Fall Semester has started and classes are going well.
- Dates for November registration will roll out the first week of October. Flyers to come.
- Midlothian Public Library continues to host ESL classes.
- SSC is offering a CNA bridge program and welding ICAPS program this fall.

#### Moraine Valley Community College

- HSE and ESL classes for the fall semester will begin on September 17th. Enrollment is extremely high, and students are eager to begin classes.
- Special classes for the bridge to healthcare, critical thinking, and career pathways are still open to HSE and ESL at the main campus.
- Citizenship classes are being taught at Blue Island and Main Campus.
- Moraine Valley Community College Adult Education is offering free Adult Education classes. [Click here to learn more.](#)
- Fall Session will begin September 19th.
- Reach out to Meg Dawczak at [dawczakm@morainevalley.edu](mailto:dawczakm@morainevalley.edu) for more information.

#### Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES)

- Individuals can call the 1-800-244-5631 number if they are experiencing difficulties with UI claims and can schedule an in-person appointment through the self-service benefits portal.
- Every day at 3:30 p.m., IL Job Link hosts a workshop. The most recent version of IL Job Link is very nice, and it feels similar to Indeed.
- Nikki Rogers is no longer the local office manager, she has been promoted. A new interim manager has been appointed.
- IDES is meeting with claimants by appointment only. IDES and National Able Network staff can help walk-ins set up appointments to work through any issues or answer questions.
- New Staff to add to IDES slides:
  - Moises Ortiz at [moises.ortiz@illinois.gov](mailto:moises.ortiz@illinois.gov)
  - Antoinette Golden at [antoinette.golden@illinois.gov](mailto:antoinette.golden@illinois.gov)
  - Caitlin Catlett at [caitlin.catlett@illinois.gov](mailto:caitlin.catlett@illinois.gov)
- Upcoming Event:
  - [Transportation Industry Job fair September 28th - 8 employers confirmed to attend](#)

- [Click here for more information about the Veterans Event on October 5th in Pilsen.](#)
- Reach out to Michelle Malone at [mmalone@nationalable.org](mailto:mmalone@nationalable.org) with any questions.

#### Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS)

- All FSCRCs are open for in-person services but phone lines and portals are still live.
- Effective July 1, 2023, income standards for All Kids Premium 1 and 2 benefits have been increased.
  - [Click here for information about the increased income standards.](#)
- IDHS Cook County Office staff received new laptop computers to facilitate continued virtual customer contact and services via the ABE portal.
- Partners who handle Ukrainian Parolee cases can refer Ukrainian non-citizens to SNAP, Medical, and other cash programs.
- Customers are exempt from the SNAP work requirements until June 2023. Individuals do not need to be working or enrolled in work programs to receive SNAP.
- Customers now have the option to receive texts or emails about their benefits. Customers can set up notifications through Manage My Case on the <https://abe.illinois.gov/abe/access/> website.
  - Customers can get alerts whenever there are notices about interviews, benefits expirations, or denials.
  - Call Center number: 1-800-843-6154
- The State of Illinois is now offering healthcare benefits coverage, as of March 25th, to senior undocumented IL residents. Individuals who are unable to receive Medicaid and earn below the federal poverty level can apply online or at the local IDHS office.
  - [Click here to visit the ABE \(Application for Benefits Eligibility\) website.](#)
- [Click here for information about the upcoming Virtual Recruitment Presentations](#)

#### Vocational Rehabilitation

##### IDHS Division of Rehabilitation Services (DRS)

- Partners can connect with the field offices via phone or website. They continue to accept referrals online. Services are being offered remotely. [Please encourage residents to visit DHS public page to learn more about DRS services and the application process.](#)
- Hosting Upcoming Event: 2nd Annual Virtual Employment Workshop and Hiring Event. [Click here for more information and a flyer.](#)
- Reach out to Biswa Phuyal at [biswa.phuyal2@illinois.gov](mailto:biswa.phuyal2@illinois.gov) with any questions.

#### Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

##### National Able Network SCSEP

- Wendy Harris, [weharris@nationalable.org](mailto:weharris@nationalable.org) is the new SCSEP Career Coach and primary contact for SCSEP. Please reach out to Wendy for direct referrals, questions, or other information.

#### Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

##### Housing Authority of Cook County (HACC)

- Reach out to Kevin at [KCasson@thehacc.org](mailto:KCasson@thehacc.org) with any questions.

#### Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)

## CEDA

- Contact Lohnjonice Allen, the North Regional Manager, at [lallen@cedaorg.net](mailto:lallen@cedaorg.net) for more information.

## Job Corps

- D'Lonra shared that there is a New Center Director at the Joliet Site, more information, and contact to come.
- Upcoming Career Fair Sept 29th, 1-5 pm with on-the-spot interviews - Flyers to come.
- On-the-spot interviews will be conducted at the Citywide Career Fair on September 30th.
- Hopeful to have Job Corps staff at more AJCs
- Traditional enrollment at Paul Simon Job Corps is ongoing.
- Reach out to Brittney Davis at [davis.brittney@jobcorps.org](mailto:davis.brittney@jobcorps.org) with questions about Paul Simon Job Corps. Contact D'Lonra Gary with questions about the Joliet Job Corps Center at [gary.dlonra@jobcorps.org](mailto:gary.dlonra@jobcorps.org).

## Legal Aid Chicago

- Legal Aid Chicago offices are open by appointment only.
- Legal Aid Chicago has legal teams specializing in a variety of areas, covering employment, immigration, education, child and family services, records relief, public benefits, and veterans. All services are completely FREE.
  - The Senior Services program through DFSS and the Fair Housing program continue to be offered to Cook County residents.
  - Legal Aid Chicago also has a new program for LGBTQ survivors of domestic/sexual/dating violence, stalking, and harassment.
- Regina encourages all partners to use Legal Aid Chicago as a resource for clients and teams. If you are interested in having any legal teams share a presentation with your team or customers, reach out to Regina at [rrizzo@legalaidchicago.org](mailto:rrizzo@legalaidchicago.org).

## Calumet Area Industrial Commission (CAIC)

- Through the One Workforce Program, CAIC can cover tuition, books, and fees for students pursuing manufacturing at 10 community colleges and other providers. [Click here to learn more about the One Workforce Program.](#)
  - CAIC can support students who are completing training at any of our Adult Education Partners at this AJC (Moraine Valley Community College, Prairie State College, and South Suburban College) and are interested in pursuing a Manufacturing Career Pathway. There is still H1B funding available.
    - [Click here to view the Approved Manufacturing Programs.](#)
  - You can also refer high school seniors who may be interested in manufacturing to the interest form on the website.
- Reach out to Debbie Newman at [debbie@calumetareaindustrial.com](mailto:debbie@calumetareaindustrial.com) or Melissa Veach at [melissa@calumetareaindustrial.com](mailto:melissa@calumetareaindustrial.com) with any questions.

## **Next Steps:**

- Updated flyers can be submitted to the OSO email address at [oso@scalelit.org](mailto:oso@scalelit.org).

