



**South Suburban Cook County American Job Center at Prairie State  
College**  
Monthly Partners Meeting  
August 18th, 2022  
10:00 am

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

Ariana Alexander, Illinois Department of Unemployment Security (IDES); Aundrea Wilder, Prairie State College; Kim Kunce, Prairie State College; Niasa Hollins-Watson, National Able Network; Rosylen McGhee, IDES; Vicky Garcia, Prairie State College; Camilla Benjamin, scaleLIT; and Robert Guzman, scaleLIT.

***Virtual Meeting Attendees:***

Anna Slater, IDES; Anna Slater, IDES; April Walton, National Able Network; Brittney Davis, Paul Simon Job Corps; Crystal Catlett, IDES; David Stephens, South Suburban College; Georges Sanon, Prairie State College; Jillian Campbell, IDES; Karen Bickcom, IDES; Karen Tollenaar Demorest, Youth Job Center; Maria Diana Gutierrez, South Suburban College; Nikki Rogers, IDES; Pilar Trejo, Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (CCWP) Raylynn Stokes, South Suburban College; Roger Fisher, Prairie State College; Tiara Davis, Youth Job Center; Tina Salgado, IDES; Valencia Funches, IDHS; Wendy Harris, National Able Network; Ema Mailhot-Beutel, scaleLIT; Megan McGinty, scaleLIT; and Nidia Mejia, scaleLIT.

***Agenda:***

- New Hybrid Procedures
- Dashboard
- Partner Updates
- Networking Topic: [Talent Solutions Connector](#)

***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.
- [Click here to view the August 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 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.
  - 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 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.
- 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.
- Cook County Trade Program has expired as of June 30th. Once each state has run out of funds, the programs will end indefinitely. There are 18-24 months left of services able to be funded.
- Staff is focusing on federal advocacy in D.C. to encourage Congress to respond with Trade Act reauthorization. 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)

- 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

- 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.](#)
- Staff is refraining from using the term GED because the state of Illinois has adopted the title High School Diploma Certificate.
- Loaner laptops are being provided through the Librarian from PSC.
- A Veterans interview event will be held at 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 8th the college will be hosting a blood drive from 9 am- 3 pm.
- On September 14 and 15, Prairie State College and the Village of Park Forest will host the CAF Red Tail Squadron's "RISE ABOVE Traveling Exhibit.
- 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.
- Prairie State University College took part in the Black Women's Expo.

- Prairie State College's Transportation, Distribution, and Logistic Building will host a Truck Event on September 17th. Participants of all ages will have the opportunity to explore a variety of trucks and other vehicles. [To learn more about the event or to register, click here.](#)

#### South Suburban College

- Registration for Fall Semester ESL Classes and GED/High School Equivalency Classes is in progress.
- Late registration will run through September 8<sup>th</sup>.
- SSC will offer a CNA bridge program and welding ICAPS program in the fall.

#### Moraine Valley Community College

- 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)

- August 24th through the 29th, Illinois JobLink will be down. New updates are being implemented to make the site more visually understandable. Notices will be sent to partners who utilize Joblink on August 22nd.
- 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.
- Upcoming Event:
  - [Click here for the event flyer for the Law Enforcement Employment Expo at the King Center on August 25th](#)

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

- The State Link card system will be temporarily unavailable from August 20th - August 21, during this time the card will not work. They are changing EBT providers so customers will get new cards in waves. The old cards will continue to work until the customer receives and registers a new card.
  - [Click here for a direct link with more information about system changes.](#)
- 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)

- There was a Job Fair/Expo at DRS Field Office in Chicago Heights on 7/14. This is the first time they have done a field office event. There are several other events in the works.
  - DRS is having a Lake Country Job and Resource Fair for individuals with disabilities. [Click here to register.](#) [Click here to view the flyer.](#)
- 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.](#)
- Reach out to Biswa Phuyal at [biswa.phuyal2@illinois.gov](mailto:biswa.phuyal2@illinois.gov) and Arthur Hawkins at [Arthur.Hawkins2@illinois.gov](mailto:Arthur.Hawkins2@illinois.gov) with any questions.

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

##### National Able Network SCSEP

- Jackie Owens, [jowens@nationalable.org](mailto:jowens@nationalable.org), has been promoted to Program Outreach Manager.
- 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 Emily Orenstein at [eorenstein@thehacc.org](mailto:eorenstein@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

- 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

- The immigration office is currently closed, and not taking new cases. Immigration Office will reopen in September.
- 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. 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.
  - [Click here for Flyer with information about Two Week Manufacturing Boot Camp starting in September](#)
- 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).