

PROMISING PRACTICES IN ILLINOIS CAREER PATHWAYS



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is pleased to share the Promising Practices in Illinois Career Pathways Compendium. This compendium was developed by the Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support (ICSPS), with consultation from the featured colleges and in coordination with the ICCB's Career and Technical Education (CTE) team. This document highlights promising practices and innovative programs related to career pathways at a number of colleges across Illinois that represent different regions, populations, and economies. To identify promising practices ICSPS interviewed persons responsible for programs that demonstrated exceptional characteristics related to several of the career pathway principles. The focuses of the second volume of the Promising Practices in Illinois Career Pathways Compendium are partnerships, responsiveness to business and industry, and expanding access to career pathways to under represented groups. Importantly, this compendium is a living document, and will be expanded and revised in future versions.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Re-Entry: Lake Land College and Black Hawk College in Affiliation with the Illinois Department of Corrections | 2 |
| Work-Based Learning: Lincoln Trail College | 6 |
| Community Involvement: McHenry County College | 10 |
| English Learners: Prairie State College | 14 |
| Apprenticeship: Illinois Central College | 18 |
| Employer Engagement: Sauk Valley Community College | 22 |
| <u>Appendix</u> | |
| Endnotes | 25 |
| Acronym List | 26 |
| Definitions | 27 |

INTRODUCTION

Illinois, like many states across the country, has committed to implementing and strengthening career pathways and career pathway systems at the local, regional, and state levels. Career pathways are designed to continuously improve the connection between the education and the workforce systems. They are based on decades of experience and grounded in a tradition of strong career and technical education, support systems, adult education, and workforce systems. This document illustrates selected strategies, practices, and programs that demonstrate improved career pathway outcomes for students enrolled in Illinois community colleges.



In 2017, the State's education and workforce agencies collaborated to adopt a statewide career pathway definition that is aligned with the career pathway definition in the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). This common definition framework provides guidance for policymakers and practitioners when developing, improving, and sustaining career pathways.



There are many existing practices within Illinois' community colleges and among career pathway partners that the state can use as models to scale and expand effective career pathway programs. This series of briefs aims to illustrate those strategies, practices, and programs that fall under the comprehensive career pathways definition and have demonstrated improved career pathway outcomes for students enrolled in Illinois community colleges.

Illinois' Career Pathway Definition

A career pathway is a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that align both vertically and horizontally across secondary education, adult education, workforce training and development, career and technical education, and postsecondary education systems, pathways, and programs. Collaborative partnerships with these entities and business and industry, along with human services agencies, corrections, and other community stakeholders, serve as the foundational structure for high-quality and sustainable career pathways. A career pathway also includes multiple entry and exit points to facilitate skill building for individuals as they progress along a continuum of education and training and advance in sector-specific employment.¹

Career pathways in Illinois are administered by a variety of private, state, and local entities; and thus, several state education and workforce committees, including an extensive base of stakeholders, developed agreed-upon definitions to ensure alignment across agencies, legal frameworks, and initiatives. [The Career Pathway Dictionary](#) consists of four main components: 1) Introduction, which provides a detailed background of the intent behind this work as well as the research and refinement processes that resulted in the included definitions; 2) Illinois State definition for Career Pathways; 3) Illinois State definitions for elements within a career pathway program or system; and 4) Appendices containing related policy frameworks and definitions.

SUPPORTING UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

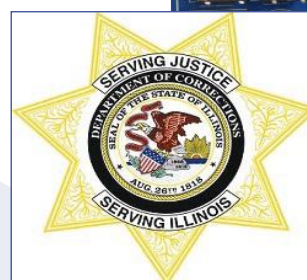
Lake Land College and Black Hawk College in Affiliation with the Illinois Department of Corrections

Lake Land College (LLC) is the largest provider of Correctional Education for the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC). Statewide, LLC provides a variety of secondary and postsecondary credit offerings at 23 adult prisons and two juvenile facilities. According to data provided by IDOC, 5,223 inmates enrolled in postsecondary educational programming in the 2017-18 academic year in Illinois. The focus of this article is the arrangement between LLC and Black Hawk College (BHC) wherein LLC leases space at the BHC Kewanee campus and provides a credit bearing welding program to inmates incarcerated at the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center; a unique educational program within the Illinois prison system and a model for prison education reform nationwide.

The Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center is one of two re-entry centers run by IDOC. The Center opened in February 2017 at the site of a former juvenile prison in Kewanee, Illinois. The multi-security center, described as resembling a small college campus, is designed to hold 648 adult males; the current population is approximately 300. Among its many unique aspects, the Center offers educational, job readiness, and cognitive behavior therapy courses to “medium and high-risk” inmates who have one to four years left on their sentence and qualify for placement. Incarcerated individuals from across the Illinois prison system are selected for transfer to the Kewanee site through an application process that includes an essay about how receiving the credentials will benefit them and assist them in becoming productive citizens. Since its opening in 2017, word has spread among the incarcerated population in Illinois prisons, resulting in more applications being received than there are openings available for program participants. The ultimate goal for IDOC is to reduce the rate of recidivism and provide skills that lead to opportunities to be productive and successful upon re-entry. For more information visit the following website at: <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/facilities/Pages/KewaneeLifeSkillsReentryCenter.aspx>

Career Pathways Programming at the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center

There are three phases of required programming: the first phase includes basic courses in financial literacy, computer and keyboarding skills, and communication and interpersonal skills. The second phase addresses mental health, parenting, and substance abuse issues. “High risk/high-need” individuals also receive intensive counseling to address specific behavioral issues. The third phase is vocational programming in one of several occupational areas. Each student has an individual training plan that results in about 300 program hours. The program requires students to have a High School Equivalency (HSE) or high school diploma and have reading and math skills equivalent to an eighth grade level before beginning technical training.



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Students can earn certificates in Custodial Technician or Restaurant Management I and II. Additional certificate programs in Manufacturing Skills began in the fall of 2018, and the Welding certificate program began spring 2019. The welding program is offered in cooperation with Black Hawk College at BHC's eastern campus located in Kewanee. Inmates at the Center are bused to BHC's satellite campus where LLC faculty teach in the space leased from BHC. The welding certificate program includes courses in shielded metal, stick welding, gas metal arc welding (GMAC/MIG), gas tungsten arc welding (GTAW/TIG), flux cored arc welding (FCAW), and oxyacetylene cutting and welding. Comprehensive training in flat, overhead, and horizontal welding positions is also provided. Most of the hands-on instruction is received at the leased BHC campus, and this instruction is paired with theory presented in textbook and workbook formats received at the Re-Entry Center.



In all phases of the program, course delivery is intensive. Classes are held six hours a day throughout the week. New courses begin every eight weeks, and there are five, eight-week sessions per year with no breaks in between sessions. The Northern Dean of Correctional Education at LLC indicated, "Lake Land College also offers the inmates an Associate of Liberal Studies (ALS) degree which provides vocational and academic coursework." All certificate programs and the ALS offered at the Kewanee site were selected because they prepare completers for occupations that are in demand and provide a living wage.

Exemplary Features

The major exemplary feature of this career pathway program is the partnership formed by the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center, the American Job Center (AJC), Lake Land College, and Black Hawk College. Additional partnerships with the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES), the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), the Illinois Migrant Council, Project Now, the University of Illinois Extension, and organizations in Kewanee that provide numerous volunteers all enhance the students' experiences as they prepare for life after prison. Described as "unique to Kewanee" the linkages across these diverse entities are what have led to its success, according to program leaders.

Preparing incarcerated individuals for successful re-entry into society and the workforce is a tremendous undertaking, one that demands coordination and intensive services by a partnership of agencies and institutions, as well as the support of the community. Some of the individuals have been incarcerated over 20 years, and their eventual release presents a multitude of adjustments, both complicated and basic. The Life Skills Re-Entry Center has partnered with the Rock Island Tri-County Consortium, one of 22 American Job Centers in Illinois that provide services through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act.

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The Kewanee AJC has a specialized one-stop center inside the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center. Services are customized to the needs of incarcerated individuals and potentially include help finding transportation, housing, employment, or additional training upon release. A career planner is at the AJC one to two days per week to assist individuals with determining what they need to do to enter a career. There is also a resource room where incarcerated individuals have access to career information. The career planner also helps with resumes, job searches, and mock interviews. Individuals in the program receive work-based learning experience through jobs they have in the prison. They also participate in events where they can meet employers and service providers to make connections that further their opportunities upon release.

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) provides training statewide via career planners, employment services, and veterans' services. Their role in the partnership is to connect participants with a system that provides services and builds relationships prior to their release and offers continuing support after re-entry. The Executive Director for the Kewanee AJC explained, *"We want to make sure inmates are job-ready before they are released and have a safety net once out in society."*

Businesses willing to hire program graduates or provide further training for them work with the American Job Center to ease the transition. Program staff, along with the AJC staff, are optimistic that the Legislature will continue to fund the program and find additional resources and partners to allow it to expand to accommodate unmet industry needs. Along with stakeholders who are working to provide needed support services, program staff feel confident they are doing everything they can to ensure the programs' graduates do not return to the correctional system.

A Comprehensive Career Pathways Approach to Educational Programming

The second exemplary feature is the foresight of the Illinois Department of Corrections to implement comprehensive educational career pathways that lead to high-skilled and high-wage jobs. It is important for all educational providers to prepare students with the knowledge and skills needed for employment. It is essential for incarcerated students to be enrolled in programs where they can earn credentials that lead to in-demand occupations that provide family supporting wages. Vocational offerings are prompted by hiring trends related to in-demand occupations and reflect ongoing collaboration with IDCS, one of the key stakeholders in the partnership. The curricular component is but one of several key ingredients in the comprehensive approach. The program at the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center addresses the curricular components and the students' emotional, personal, and practical needs. It also coordinates the services provided within the partnership during and after program completion and eventual release from prison. This program is one of only a few in the nation that addresses inmates' educational needs and combines those with other essential support services, exemplifying a comprehensive career pathway approach.



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Outcomes

Since the program is relatively new, there are limited outcome data available. In the 2018-2019 academic year, there were 95 unduplicated participants in the four certificate programs and the Associate of Liberal Studies Degree program offered by LLC at the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center. These students collectively earned a total of 1,916 credit hours. As of spring 2019, there have been ten graduates of the Custodial Technician certificate, 25 graduates in one of two certificates in Restaurant Management, and eight in Manufacturing. In addition, 17 students have completed their Associate of Liberal Studies. However, the credentials earned are only one aspect of successful outcomes of students at the Center. According to a February 2019 article in the Kewanee Star Courier, about 150 inmates have completed the entire sequence of behavioral programming and have been released from the Life Skills Re-Entry Center.² Only 20 inmates dropped out before completing all three phases of behavioral programming. The shared efforts of the various partners of this unique collaboration allow students to simultaneously complete multiple levels of academic and behavioral programs, thus demonstrating outcomes that are showing positive impact that matters to all stakeholders.

Sustainability and Scalability

The Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center is considered sustainable and scalable, though expansion will require additional funding. A variety of funding sources support the various partners including a line item in the state budget, state Career and Technical Education grant funds, federal Perkins grant funds, and federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act grant funds. The Kewanee area is supportive of the Center. The Assistant Warden of Programs exclaimed, *"The citizen support is unbelievable to us and includes volunteers for religious services, our Day with Dad event, and donations of books and items for the clothing closet."* Due to the acceptance and early success of the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center, a similar center was opened in Murphysboro, and IDOC is planning to open another center for women offenders at Logan Correctional Center.³

Improving Career Pathways

The Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center represents a connection between comprehensive career pathway programming and systems of support available to incarcerated individuals as they prepare for a successful transition upon their release and entry into the workforce. Due to all partners' awareness of and investment in this transition, they have removed barriers and expanded opportunities for these inmates to create as smooth a transition as possible. The Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center, Lake Land College, Black Hawk College, and the American Job Center each realize that they provide a critical piece that creates the pathway to success for these individuals. As the partners continue to work together to eliminate barriers and expand opportunities for incarcerated individuals, the community thrives and society benefits.

Local Contact

For more information about the program at the Kewanee Life Skills Re-Entry Center, contact the Adult Education and Vocational Services Department of Corrections at (217) 558-2200 or visit <https://www2.illinois.gov/idoc/programs/Pages/AdultEducationVocationalServices.aspx>

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Lincoln Trail College

Lincoln Trail College (LTC) is one of four colleges in the Illinois Eastern Community Colleges organization which serves most or part of Lark, Clay, Crawford, Cumberland, Edwards, Hamilton, Jasper, Lawrence, Richland, Wabash, Wayne, and White counties and includes 17 local school districts. Lincoln Trail is located in Robinson, Illinois. The college was founded in 1969 and serves approximately 2,000 students each year. For more information visit: <https://www.iecc.edu>.

Business and Industry Partnerships in Broadband Telecom

The Broadband Telecom Program began at Wabash Valley College in 1981, but moved to Lincoln Trail College in 1993. This program provides coursework in various areas of the telecommunications field. Students study topics such as splicing and maintaining fiber optic and copper cables, home and business telephone systems, and central office switching. Specific courses in math, electricity, electronics, and computers; as well as communication and customer relations skills; also make up a portion of the program. Additional training is provided through an internship program by placing students with telecom firms as on-the-job trainees.

Program leaders cite their “*exceptional partnership*” with business and industry as a contributor to the program’s success. The partnership starts with an advisory committee made up of representatives from Broadband Telecom business partners, secondary guidance counselors, TRIO Support Services, and the Twin Rivers Career and Technical Education System. The advisory committee meets several times a year. The committee holds roundtable discussions to stimulate dialogue around the various aspects of the program. These roundtables allow for each partner to have a voice in guiding the program. To build relationships with business and industry, the advisory committee members sit in on classes to hear what students are learning and make sure the content aligns with industry’s needs. The program instructors pay close attention to their suggestions, and changes are made to the curriculum to ensure students are receiving instruction on the most up-to-date skills needed for the industry.

Beyond the advisory committee meetings, business and industry provide resources to the program by donating equipment, participating in career days (where they conduct interviews with students), and offering internships and employment opportunities while students are in the program and after graduation. The industry relies on the training of these students to help meet the needs of their workforce. Per the Vice President of Government Policy at Shawnee Communications, “*The partnership with Lincoln Trail College is beneficial to our company. The College is able to provide us with students who can do the job well, starting on day one.*”



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Internships are provided to students after their first year. Instructors visit the sites when the students are present, solicit feedback from the employers, and verify students have the skills necessary to perform their work. These site visits are another mechanism through which feedback provided by employers guides changes to the curriculum.

The following are a few examples of partnerships this program has made that benefit students and employers: Shawnee Telephone Company received a grant to install fiber in 560 homes and needed assistance. The company contacted program instructors to see if they could hire eight of their students to assist with installs. The program arranged for their students to be hired, providing them with on-the-job training and a vehicle to use while completing this work.



In a second example, Wabash Telephone Company needed four students to assist with installation in homes in 2018. In order to meet the Company's needs, the college ensured their program included flexible scheduling and provided credit for work-experience. According to the Dean of Instruction at Lincoln Trail College, *"Industry partners know that LTC prepares its Broadband Telecom students for the job and as a result, are not only willing for our students to earn hands-on and on-the-job training with them, but seek out LTC students. Our Broadband Telecom instructors devote time to training students both in the classroom, and when monitoring and documenting the learning experiences for our on-the-job students."*

The third example is a partnership with Metronet, a broadband and telecom company located in Indiana. The program trains Metronet employees by offering week-long classes in New Hire, Advanced Training, and an online Fiber Optics course. The company provides an incentive to their employees with step increases in salary after they have completed the classes. *"We see our partnership with Lincoln Trail College as an opportunity to continue to grow curriculum and teach our technicians more advanced services and techniques,"* says the Executive Vice President and General Manager at Metronet. *"I can't thank Lincoln Trail College enough for this partnership."*

Exemplary Features

The program instructors indicated this program offers multiple pathways for students to pursue giving them more options that directly relate to their interests and preferences. For example, students who prefer to work in an outdoor environment can be involved with cable placement, running heavy equipment, fiber lines, cable plowing, or cable splicing, while those who want to work in an office environment can focus on Computer Networking. The program offers students nationally known and industry-valued fiber certification and allows students to take work that counts toward the Information Technology Fundamental Certification. All three of the program instructors have these certifications, qualifying them to teach any of the classes. This ability ensures the programs ability to adapt to students' needs related to scheduling.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The Dean of Instruction indicated there are multiple on-ramps within this program. To begin, the college offers opportunities for high school students through dual credit courses. On campus, students in their mid-20s and 30s make up the majority of the program. They enter into the program and take the classes they need to acquire the skills needed to obtain employment, certification, and/or an Associate Degree. The partnership with Metronet also enables the program to provide training for incumbent Metronet employees. Other businesses have approached the program for this type of training. But, due to the success of this partnership, the college would need to hire additional instructors in order to offer courses to other business partners.

Outcomes

Lincoln Trail College's Broadband Telecom program demonstrates excellent student success outcomes. During the 2016 and 2017 academic years, 26 students returned for their second year to complete the program. Of those 26 students, 25 (96%) graduated, and completed the Fiber Optic Association (FOA) certifications. Additionally, in 2016-2017, the Broadband Telecom program had near 100% placement of students who completed their Associate Degree. Of the 25 graduates, 22 (88%) accepted positions within the Broadband Telecom industry. The remaining three students (12%) continued their education. Starting salaries for Broadband Telecom graduates from these academic years ranged between \$18 and \$20 per hour and included full benefits.

Sustainability and Scalability

The Broadband Telecom Program has been in existence at Illinois Eastern Community Colleges for 38 years and is considered sustainable. Broadband Telecom is an in-demand field with need for skilled employees. Lincoln Trail College has a strong team of internal and external partners on their advisory committee who help guide the program to ensure students are receiving the most up-to-date skills and using current technologies that reflect requirements in the workforce. The instructors are from the broadband telecom industry and have industry certifications. Their experience and skills assist in making sure the program addresses needed changes each year. The industry partners provide many resources including equipment, internships, curriculum advice, and jobs for graduates.

The college provides monetary resources through tuition, property taxes, apportionment, and funds generated through the training of Metronet employees. They also seek out grant funds, including Illinois Community College's Career and Technical Education Improvement and Illinois Cooperative Work Study grants at the state level.

Internal funds such as Illinois Eastern Community College's Innovations in Technology Teaching Award are also used to assist in obtaining updated equipment and development of an approved apprenticeship program for Broadband Telecom.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Sustaining and scaling the program is supported by recruitment strategies that use multiple forms of engagement. The campus marketing team creates videos of students on internship assignments and assists with written communications for the program; instructors promote the program through a newsletter, social media, and career fairs; and the program is even represented in community events by using a float to participate in parades in the community.

Improving Career Pathways

Formal and informal evaluation by industry and instructors is a continuous process for this career pathway program. The College is exploring the possibility of building a more robust dual credit opportunity that would give students the opportunity to gain 24-25 credit hours while enrolled in high school. The goal is to make sure the students have the foundational skills to be placed in an internship within the industry and obtain a certificate after completing the dual credit courses, allowing them to enter employment. Lincoln Trail College also received a grant from the Illinois Community College Board to create another career pathway for students within this program in the form of an approved apprenticeship.

Although most of Lincoln Trail College's Broadband Telecom students are traditionally-aged, the program's lead instructor actively recruits local adults returning to education later in life. One success story is personified in the program's most recent faculty hire. The new faculty hire worked for a telecommunications company in Effingham County for many years. He decided to further his education by enrolling in the Broadband Telecom program. Upon graduation, he was hired to replace a retiring faculty member. According to the lead instructor, *"There was nothing traditional about his pathway to teaching. He worked in the industry for many years, earned his degree, and then started his teaching career at Lincoln Trail College. He is a great addition to our program."*

Local Contact

For more information about the program at Lincoln Trail College, contact Brent Todd, Dean of Instruction at toddb@iecc.edu or (618) 546-2257.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

McHenry County College

McHenry County College (MCC) serves most of McHenry County, Illinois; portions of surrounding counties; and 14 local school districts. The college is located along U.S. Route 14, on the northwest side of Crystal Lake, Illinois and serves approximately 7,000 students (unduplicated) each year. MCC was founded in 1967, just two years after the community college system was established in Illinois in 1965. For more information visit: <http://www.mchenry.edu/>

Occupational Therapy Assistant Career Pathway

The Occupational Therapy Assistant (OTA) Associate of Applied Science (AAS) program began at MCC in 2012. The first cohort graduated in 2013. The OTA AAS program prepares students to function as professional OTAs under the supervision of a Registered Occupational Therapist in a variety of health care settings including hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, private homes, and schools. An OTA uses compassion and interpersonal skills to help patients develop, recover, improve, and maintain skills needed for daily living and working. They provide direct therapy to patients and perform support activities. They administer treatment after injuries, provide ongoing rehabilitation, work in geriatrics, work in pediatrics, and encourage patients' independence.

The MCC OTA program admits students in the fall, and program capacity is 16. The OTA program has support services in place to ensure student success. The program has a dedicated tutor (an OTA program graduate) to help with program-specific content. Tutors are also available for help with general education courses. A local orthopedic surgeon volunteers to tutor at the college and invites students to visit his clinic and apply the concepts they've learned. A current OTA student asks, *"How often does one have the opportunity to be tutored throughout the semester by an orthopedic surgeon in a small group setting? I feel quite fortunate to be enrolled in an OTA program that provides access to professionals of this caliber. He has helped me solidify what I'm learning in the classroom by sharing his expertise and knowledge, and my confidence has grown."*

There are multiple entry and exit points for the students in the OTA program. The program recruits high school students at health fairs, career fairs, and college sponsored events. Some students enter right out of high school, but many are older, have a postsecondary degree, and return to college to earn this credential because their lives have been impacted by an OTA.

From 2015 to 2019, up to 38% of students earning an AAS in OTA already possessed a higher degree. After students receive their AAS, they can continue their education and earn a BS degree through articulation agreements MCC has with various universities in Illinois.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The articulation agreement allows OTA courses that would not normally transfer based on Illinois Community College Board's regulations, to be transferred towards the specific health care focused bachelor's degree. Students can also bridge to a master's program in Occupational Therapy, after earning a baccalaureate degree.

Exemplary Features

Program leaders cited three features that make the OTA program exemplary: relationships with community members and other departments at the College, the use of simulation to enhance the didactic curriculum, and a strong advisory committee. There are numerous activities included in the curriculum that build relationships with community partners, including having students interview a variety of people whom OTAs have the potential to help. In its relatively short existence, the program has built strong working relationships which has enabled them to provide a variety of settings for students' fieldwork. *"We are very intentional about forming good relationships and thinking outside of the box when it comes to the partnerships and relationships we build in the community,"* they explained.

Program faculty work with community partners to help students understand how the application of OTA skills impacts people across their lifespan. Faculty explained, *"We like to ask [our community partners]: 'What can we do for you?' which has resulted in more opportunities for our students."* Students' fieldwork and project-based activities are carried out with partners at libraries, schools, nursing homes, and in many other contexts. In many of the settings, students also learn to work with family members and teach them how to help their loved one achieve independence. Students from McHenry's OTA program were the first to visit the Chicago's Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, the first-ever "translational" research hospital where clinicians, scientists, innovators, and technologists work together in the same space, applying research in real time to physical medicine and rehabilitation. These types of experiences deepen the students' knowledge about the profession and prepare them to assist patients more effectively.



The second exemplary feature is the use of various levels of simulations to help students apply more theoretical concepts. One simulation has people from campus and the community play the role of a patient interacting with a student. The simulations are video-taped and students provide treatment for the client, based on an evaluation and plan of care provided to them. The OTA students also conduct observations of programs at the College, such as the Fitness Center, or with their community partners. One such program is a special services transitional program that aims to prepare students ages 18-22 for independent living and provide supports for employment and education, run out of Huntley Community School District 158.⁴ There are also opportunities for OTA students to work with other programs within the College. The OTA and Nursing programs have created interprofessional simulations with students from both programs working as a team for a specific client. The students not only apply their clinical skills, but also experience the importance of a medical team and effective communication between providers.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

As explained by an OTA Student, *“When we work together and respect what each profession brings to the table, we can be a great team. I valued her input and expertise and she respected ours. The client is the one who benefits from this working relationship, and we can learn from each other.”* OTA students also benefit from a project with the Early Childhood Education Program.

Students from each program work together to complete screenings for children from the College’s Early Childhood Center and develop age appropriate activities for the preschool teachers. OTA students also partner with the Automotive program to create switch enabled or touch-activated toys for children with fine motor impairments.

The third exemplary feature noted by program leaders is the strong advisory committee. Program leaders explained the advisory committee is *“very broad with much diversity from the healthcare industry, including some representatives that typically do not hire OTAs.”*

The committee also includes representation from the secondary education system, and current and former students. Program leaders cited the committee’s breadth of diversity as an important factor that helps open the minds of its industry partners and creates new opportunities for additional fieldwork sites. Programs are analyzed via survey of supervising staff, and the feedback assists the instructors and advisory committee in providing recommendations for improvements to the curriculum. According to a supervising OTR/L, *“I recently had the opportunity to mentor a student from the McHenry County College Occupational Therapy Assistant program. It was refreshing to see how well prepared the student was. She had knowledge in varied areas, asked provoking questions, demonstrated proficient skills, and conducted herself professionally. After hearing from other community members who had similar experiences, I am certain that students in this program receive a well-rounded, high-quality education that prepares them for success in their field.”*

Outcomes

Program leaders embrace the use of the data to keep the program relevant and accredited. They also stressed the importance of data transparency, citing the benefit to student recruitment and securing industry partnerships that enhance the students’ educational experience. Since the inception of the OTA Program in 2012, 100% of students have passed the certification exam within a year of graduation with 97% passing on the first attempt.⁵

One area of outcome data identified for improvement is post-graduation information, such as employment rate and satisfaction with educational preparation. Though faculty stress the importance of returning postgraduate surveys to graduating students, return rates are low. Program faculty explained that not only is the information critical for accrediting purposes, it also provides the rich information needed to continuously improve the program.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Sustainability and Scalability

The OTA program is considered sustainable and scalable. Funds from a variety of sources support the OTA program including tuition, taxes, class fees, state funding, and federal Perkins grant funding. As with community college programs across Illinois, this program has weathered funding decreases, but program leaders are confident the program will remain, given its demand and support from the community. The program's focus on making changes needed to enhance the curriculum also aids its stability. For example, a survey is being developed that will provide useful information to OTA instructors that is needed for curricular enhancement. The Clinical Reasoning Development Survey will assess how students have gained clinical reasoning through the program, and will be given for the first time in the spring of 2019.

The program's instructors understand the need to remain up-to-date with innovations in the field and changes in industry standards. Many of them continue to work in the occupational therapy field and are also pursuing advanced degrees. They also attend conferences that showcase new research on current industry and academic practices, bringing those ideas to their program. *"We like to stay on top of trends,"* one faculty member explained.

Improving Career Pathways

The OTA program offers multiple on- and off-ramps for its students. While many recruitment efforts focus on the traditional transition from secondary to postsecondary, this program attracts students from a variety of age groups with a familiarity with the profession due to personal experience. According to a December 2018 MCC OTA graduate, *"I returned to college at McHenry County College (post baccalaureate degree) for a career change. I chose occupational therapy to help others become as functional as they can be in their everyday lives; just as another OT helped my daughter with special needs, in previous years. MCC is where I found an occupational therapy assistant program that could give me a quality education that incorporated textbook learning and hands on experience. The OTA program instructors at MCC strive to make their students the very best therapists with high ethical standards; ensuring the highest quality of evidence-based care for the student's future patients. The coursework, while challenging, made each of us expand our thinking from case studies to real life applications during simulations and fieldwork. Because of MCC's OTA program, I was able to confidently apply to take my board exam, as well as search for positions after graduation. I knew I had been fully prepared to enter my new career immediately. I could not be more proud to be a graduate of McHenry County College's OTA program and will always be forever grateful."* As requirements are changed, updated, and modified and put into place for accreditation, the program faculty will continue to work with their partners to create a pathway that leads to a Baccalaureate.

Local Contact

For more information about the program at McHenry County College, contact Gina McConoughey, Ed.D, Dean, Career and Technical Education at gmconoughey@mchenry.edu or (815) 455-8996.

SUPPORTING UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

Prairie State College

Prairie State College (PSC) is a two-year community college serving residents in Community College District 515, which consists of: Beecher, Chicago Heights, Crete, Flossmoor, Ford Heights, Glenwood, Homewood, Matteson, Monee, Olympia Fields, Park Forest, Richton Park, Sauk Village, South Chicago Heights, Steger, University Park, portions of Country Club Hills, Hazel Crest, Lynwood, Tinley Park, adjacent unincorporated areas of Cook and Will counties, and nine local school districts. The college is located in Chicago Heights, Illinois and serves approximately 12,000 students (unduplicated) each year. The college was founded in 1957 as Bloom Township Junior College, and first offered classes the following year in the basement of the First Christian Church. The College was reorganized in 1967 as a Class I junior college and renamed Prairie State College. For more information visit the following website: <https://prairiestate.edu/>.

Bilingual Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Program

The Bilingual Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration (HVACR) program began in 2014, with a cohort of six students. The Bilingual HVACR was designed to provide additional support for students with limited English-proficiency seeking to become HVACR Technicians.

The need for a Bilingual HVACR program was identified when a student shared information that they had friends who were interested in HVACR, but did not think they could meet the English language skills needed to be successful. There was and continues to be a growing Hispanic population in the Chicago Heights community, yet the college's HVACR program reflected only a 1:10 ratio of Hispanic to Caucasian students. Many Hispanic students wanting to enroll also needed financial assistance, but, in some cases, were not eligible for financial aid. In order to assist the first Bilingual HVACR cohort, the Prairie State College Foundation provided 1/3 of the tuition, a grant from the Illinois Community College Board provided 1/3 of the tuition, and the student was responsible for the remaining 1/3 of the tuition. The PSC program leaders consulted with a neighboring for-profit HVAC Technical Program that was teaching HVAC in Spanish as they implemented their program. This early version of the program was taught entirely in Spanish for the first semester, in English the second semester (with tutoring) and finally, the third and fourth semesters were taught completely in English. Program leaders worked with their Adult Education partners to identify English Language Learners (ELL) students who were interested in the program.

The Bilingual HVACR program was successful, with all six students completing the program. Five students found employment in the HVACR field, with the remaining student securing employment in a related field. According to a former student, *"This program provided us a good balance between the English as a Second Language (ESL) and technical education that we needed to be successful in the HVAC field."*



SUPPORTING UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

Due to the state budget impasse, the program ended in 2016, but there has been interest in the program's return among the Hispanic community and the institution's HVAC business partners. HVAC jobs filled with skilled workers who can serve Hispanic populations benefit the local community, and the businesses that serve this community. PSC wants to bring back a modified version of the program in the fall of 2019. The re-launched program will include the following changes: a focus on HVAC only, introduction of English language content into the first semester, additional first semester support provided by Adult Education and ESL partners, and inclusion of secondary students with a history of behavior problems that prevent them from attending high school.



As businesses and individuals demand more energy efficient and environmentally responsible systems, the need for highly trained HVAC technicians grows. PSC's HVAC certificate program qualifies students as entry-level heating, ventilation, and air conditioning technicians and installers. Students learn the basic skills needed to diagnose electrical and mechanical problems, as well as how to repair, replace, or install equipment. Classrooms and labs are fully equipped and provide a hands-on learning environment for students.

Exemplary Features

Program leaders cited three features that make the Bilingual HVACR program exemplary: the ability to meet the needs of the Hispanic population in the community, the partnerships with HVAC companies, and their team teaching approach.

The first exemplary feature is the program's primary focus on serving the local community. By designing programs to meet the community's needs and by creating opportunities for students to gain in-demand, high paying jobs in the community, PSC can strengthen the economy of its region, develop a strong recruitment pipeline for its programs, and ensure a productive relationship with its business partners.

The second exemplary feature is the program's partnership with HVAC companies. A number of local companies primarily serve the Hispanic community, and they are eager to provide opportunities to students of this program. The approach used in the bilingual HVACR program provided companies with access to skilled workers who can communicate and work effectively with their customers. The HVAC companies were deeply invested in the program and are eager for the redesigned program to return. Companies participate on an advisory committee, donate equipment to the program, and provide internships for the students. The strength of these partnerships can be seen in the fact that Hoekstra Heating and Air Conditioning has hired ten students from PSC in the last six years.

SUPPORTING UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

The third exemplary feature is the team teaching approach used in the Bilingual program. In the relaunched program, students will learn English, taught by an ESL instructor, while taking HVAC coursework. This method helps students build comprehension and speaking skills. In this team teaching model, the ESL teacher will partner with a service technician/teacher to create materials for the students. Books will be provided in Spanish to assist with instruction. The Associate Professor/Coordinator of HVACR explained, *"I am pleased with the outcome of the Bilingual HVACR program and am excited to re-launch it in the future. This program truly shows that we are responsive to the needs of the community."*

Outcomes

The overall success of the Bilingual HVACR program can be measured by the success of the first cohort. Of the six students in the first cohort, 100% were retained and completed the program, five were placed in HVAC companies, and one was placed in a high school charged with maintaining the school's HVAC. The students' hourly pay rate ranges from \$12 to \$20 an hour and 100% of the cohort earned the Environmental License.

The regular HVAC program is foundational to the success of the Bilingual HVACR program. According to the Associate Professor/Coordinator of the regular HVAC program, *"On average, 12 students start the program every semester and on average we are completing eight students every semester. This would be a completion rate of approximately 66% in our regular HVAC program. I would also say that out of those eight on average that are graduating, about 50% of them are getting jobs in the HVAC field. One outlier here is that it is not the goal of a majority of our students to obtain full-time employment in the HVAC field. We have many students who are company sponsored and/or currently working in the maintenance field and are not looking for a career change."*

Sustainability and Scalability

A Bilingual HVAC program can be sustainable and scalable, and PSC already has a strong HVAC program in place. The instructors are actively working in the HVAC field, which helps ensure the HVAC program's curriculum stays current. PSC has a dedicated team of internal and external partners, ensuring students receive the support they need to be successful. They are also opening the program to high school students who need similar assistance, creating the opportunity to connect with students at an earlier age and develop a more robust recruitment pipeline. HVAC is a field with great demand for skilled employees and many companies are seeking bilingual workers. This program provides students with skills that will make them marketable and valuable to HVAC companies.



SUPPORTING UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

Improving Career Pathways

Providing a Bilingual HVAC program gives students an opportunity to learn a second language while building the skills necessary to have a career and earn a living wage. There are many components of the program that support students' success including: the integration of language with subject-matter instruction, a bilingual staff, a supportive learning environment, a culturally responsive environment, and on-going staff development. These types of support services contribute to the high rates of retention, completion, and employment. PSC is determined to provide the services that help students complete the program, be prepared to enter employment, and be successful in the HVAC industry. The Dean of Career and Technical Education explained, *"Research has demonstrated that it is critically important to provide students additional resources beyond what is available in the classroom in order to promote student success and build their capacity to move forward and attain goals. The services that the students were provided in this program were intentionally designed to meet this objective, and the end results are indicative of how the proper support services and resources encourage student retention and success."*

Local Contact

For more information about the program at Prairie State College, contact Janice Kaushal, MFA, Dean, Career and Technical Education, Academic Affairs at jkaushal@prairiestate.edu or (708) 709-3595.

LEARN AND EARN MODELS

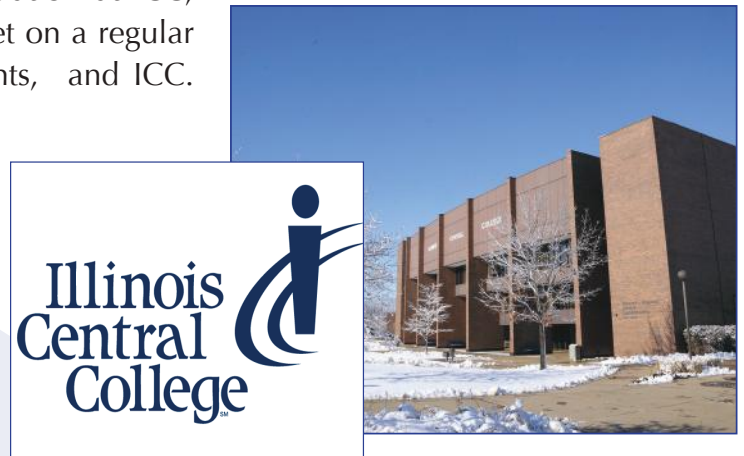
Illinois Central College

Illinois Central College's (ICC) district covers 2,322 square miles and serves 38 high schools in all or parts of 10 counties: Peoria, Tazewell, Woodford, Bureau, Logan, Marshall, Livingston, McLean, Stark and Mason. ICC has three campuses, including locations in East Peoria, Peoria, and Pekin. The College was founded in 1967 and serves approximately 9,000 students each year. In its 52 years, ICC has touched more than half a million lives. For more information on ICC's history, visit the following website: <https://icc.edu/about-icc>.

Business and Industry Partnerships in the Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship Program

Research by Georgetown University's Center for Education and the Workforce shows a community requires at least 60% of its members to have a credential beyond high school to be economically viable. Currently, 40% of the adults in the Peoria region hold that type of credential. ICC's vision is to increase the number of adults who have earned a credential leading to jobs earning a living wage, thereby changing their lives and that of their families. An environmental scan showed many employers were leaving the area because they could not find skilled employees, and students who wanted to acquire the new skills needed opportunities to earn an income during their education in order to pay their bills. ICC moved their vision forward by hosting a Manufacturing Summit in the fall of 2017. During this summit, business and industry leaders expressed a need for trained mechanics who could repair machines. The development of the program began with seven individuals meeting on a regular basis to layout the program. They used William Rainey Harper College's industry-recognized apprenticeship program as a model and solicited the expertise of their Dean of Workforce Development to assist in mentoring them through the program development process. ICC was in a good position to be able to offer this program, since it already had the curriculum for Mechatronics in place.

The new program was called the Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship Program. However, ICC saw the benefits of changing the name of the degree earned to the Associate of Applied Science Degree in Industrial Maintenance Technology. This change came from the recommendations of industry partners to align with the language used in current job postings. The industry partners from AECOM, Alcast, Caterpillar, and Illinois Valley Plastics, along with the faculty and administration at ICC, came together to develop the new program. They met on a regular basis, working on contracts with companies, students, and ICC. The contracts outlined the expectations of all parties involved. The program was designed to allow students to earn while they learn, with the end result of providing trained employees for the companies.



LEARN AND EARN MODELS

The Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship Program is a two-and-a-half year program. Students attend class for eight weeks and are on the job for eight weeks during the semester. Students continue to work during semester and summer breaks. Students are paid a wage of \$13.70 for the class and job portion. The students are assigned to an employer mentor to teach them the skills necessary for the job. Training in classroom strategies is provided to the workforce mentors where they learn how to teach to diverse learning styles and work with the younger generation. A few companies worked with their unions to modify their contracts to allow the apprentices/students to work. The unions saw the benefit of the program in providing their companies with trained employees. The contract with the apprentices/students requires them to work for the company for two years after they complete the program. The companies pay for tuition, hourly pay, books, and supplies for the students. The first Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship Program began at ICC in the fall of 2018.



Exemplary Features

Program leaders cited the following as exemplary features of the program: earn and learn opportunities and robust industry support. There are many benefits to setting up a program that allows the students to earn an income while they are learning. Since the average age of a student in the Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship Program is between 28 and 32, the program allows students to learn skills in a new area and leave with a degree and employment without giving up their income in order to attend college. The majority of students in the program would be unable to attend college without the income-earning component. According to a current student in the Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship program, *"This learning environment has been beneficial, because I am able to devote the majority of my time and attention to my studies when I am going to school. This ability has helped to alleviate much of the stress that is associated with trying to go to school and working a full-time job simultaneously to pay for an education. The schedule also helps to keep things interesting, because we get a change of environment every couple of months between going to school and getting on-the-job training with our employers. Without this apprenticeship opportunity, I wouldn't be able to afford to put myself through this program as a full-time student while still being able to provide for my family."*

The second exemplary feature is industry support. Through the Manufacturing Summit, local companies identified a need and determined the importance of having trained employees in the area of Industrial Maintenance. They know how important it is to invest their time in designing a program that will give them trained employees. They invest time and resources, paying for the students to acquire the training needed to meet the skill demands of the modern workplace.

LEARN AND EARN MODELS

According to the Assistant Facilities Manager and Webmaster from Alcast Company, *“ICC’s Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship program is important because it fills a large void in the skilled trades fields. Before getting involved in ICC’s apprenticeship program, I unsuccessfully spent over a year and half trying to find a new maintenance employee. The Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship program provided Alcast Company with dozens of qualified applicants, and ICC is now providing our two apprentices with an invaluable education, combined with the importance of on-the-job training, at our location.”*

Outcomes

Program leaders indicated the success of the program could be measured by the success of the nine students enrolled in the first year of the program. It is too soon to have quantifiable data on the success of the program, but the companies have indicated the nine students are doing well and consider them to be stellar employees. The students meet with the Workforce Development Coordinator to report on their progress on the job site and in their general studies. The instructors are collecting the data on the students’ first year to document how they are doing in their coursework and to see if any modifications are needed. The general studies have been contextualized for this program in English, communications, math, and the humanities. It is anticipated that all nine students will graduate and have full-time employment with the companies where they are currently placed.

Sustainability and Scalability

The Industrial Maintenance Apprenticeship program is sustainable and scalable. Program leaders indicated more companies are interested in participating in the program. Since the companies supporting the program provide a significant amount of funding, the program will be in existence as long as there is a need in this field. Companies have also supported the program by donating equipment, so students are learning on the most up-to-date technology in the field. The program is not reliant on any grant funds, since the companies are providing all the necessary financial support. The ICC Associate Vice President of Workforce Development said, *“The power of these apprenticeship programs is that companies are growing their own highly trained and sustainable workforce. When they run the numbers of hiring an apprenticeship and paying tuition and classroom training, it is still far below recruitment and internal training costs. Essentially, they can custom order an extremely educated and motivated worker.”*

ICC Workforce Development Division also is actively recruiting additional business and industry by communicating with them on a regular basis. The Division is hosting another Manufacturing Summit in the next year to share the success of the program and to gain participation in the program from other companies. ICC is also hosting an Earn and Learn event to recruit students to ensure the recruitment needs of their business and industry partners can be met.



LEARN AND EARN MODELS

Improving Career Pathways

ICC is improving pathways by leveraging the expertise of their partners to assist in evaluation and by expanding opportunities to multiple populations by providing multiple on-ramps into the program. Industry leaders and program instructors are continuously evaluating this pathway program during its first year in order to make adjustments that will lead to improved student success. This form of evaluation identified a potential problem with the course schedule, and triggered an adjustment in which students work eight weeks in the class and eight weeks in on the job. It was important to all partners to ensure the schedule was appropriate for students, businesses, and the College. The resulting change considered each partner's concerns and found a mutually beneficial solution.

This program is working to provide multiple on-ramps for students at various points in their lives. ICC not only is attracting older students returning to the classroom to further their careers, they are making sure the curriculum is aligned between secondary and postsecondary levels of education to attract the student from the secondary level. They work with their local high schools to align the coursework so there is a smooth transition into the program.

ICC, along with the Economic Development Council, is also providing Career Development activities for all students. The Economic Development Council supports a career exploration event where junior high students learn about the 16 Career Pathways. ICC has an application on their website where students can take a career assessment, which assists the student in aligning their interests to a career pathway. The college is considering expanding this apprenticeship model to other programs. The computer, automotive, and agriculture programs have noticed the benefits for students enrolled in this model. The College is exploring the possibilities of apprenticeship with these industries. The ICC Agricultural and Industrial Technologies Dean said, *"There is interest in developing additional training for those who may not be able to attend school because they need to continue working their current part-time or full-time jobs just to pay their bills. There are other academic programs within the College that recognize the potential to meet skills gaps by offering such a training model."*

Local Contact

For more information about the program at Illinois Central College, contact the Workforce Development Department at apprenticeships@icc.edu or (309) 690-6863.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Sauk Valley Community College

Sauk Valley Community College (SVCC) serves all or parts of five counties in northwest Illinois. The College enrolls around 4,000 students per year, with 47% pursuing transfer degrees in 40 programs and 46% seeking degrees in the 19 career and technical education programs available at the college. SVCC also offers 47 certificate programs. For more information visit the following website: https://www.svcc.edu/about/did-you-know.html?utm_source=header&utm_medium=multiple&utm_campaign=Top%20Navigation.

Multi-Craft Extended Internship Program

In fall 2016, SVCC first offered the internship program as a response to ten area manufacturers in this predominantly rural part of Illinois that wanted to recruit and train new talent in the field of industrial maintenance. Working with industry partners, SVCC Technology Department faculty and staff developed the Multi-Craft Extended Internship Program (MEIP). The program involves two intensive days of coursework per week in technical, workforce readiness, and general education courses at SVCC interspersed with three days of work-based learning opportunities via internships at participating businesses. Students are selected for the program based on an online application and sign an internship agreement that includes attendance requirements and other obligations for both parties. Each employer determines the student interns' wages, and some employers offer tuition reimbursement as part of compensation. Students are not guaranteed employment at the end of their coursework, that decision is made by the businesses providing the internships.

Students can enter the program in the fall or spring semester, and those completing the two-year program earn an Associate of Applied Science in Multi-Craft Technology. Coursework and part-time internships are spread over four semesters, and some include a summer session. Students choose an area of emphasis within the program, either electrical, electronics, HVAC, welding, or machining/computer numerical control (CNC). Some students can also earn a certificate, depending on their area of emphasis.

Exemplary Features

The Dean of Career and Technical Education (CTE) who oversees the Multi-Craft program was quick to identify the most exemplary feature of the program: its industry partners. He counts on their leadership and involvement to keep the program in line with emerging industry needs and to develop and expand interest among potential students and additional employer partners. During the planning stages of the program, over 35 area industry partners met to discuss the aging workforce and impending skills gap in occupations such as industrial maintenance, tool and die makers, manual machining, and computer numerical control (CNC) machining.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

The internship program started with an active advisory council that still meets monthly, and another machining/CNC/tool-and-die advisory council has been created. Both councils provide industry-specific information to program staff and help with recruitment, equipment needs, math tutoring, work placement, and other issues to successfully move students through the career pathway.

"No [partner] looks at this program as a competition to find future employees," said one college leader, *"MEIP partners see the program as a way to improve the industry for everyone in our area."* The

advisory committee members have expanded to include not only industry representatives, but also elected officials, school administrators, economic development specialists, and others. MEIP's 2019 website lists 15 companies that provide student internships, five more than were involved the first year. The Dean of CTE stated, *"Our partners pound the pavement to sing the opportunities for students in this program, which is rather rare [for industry partners]."*



The second exemplary feature cited was the College's willingness to condense coursework into two days per week so students could work while attending school. This decision...*"exemplified Sauk's dedication to the completion agenda"* according to program staff. Students attend class on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 am until 6:50 pm, an intensive schedule that has nonetheless, proven manageable for working students. Students' technical coursework is supported by MEIP faculty who are experienced electricians, mechanics, machinists, welders, and electronics technicians. Their practical, workplace knowledge and highly developed technical skills ensure what the students learn is current and relevant. There are two full-time and three adjunct instructors in the program. *"We were lucky to find very experienced and talented instructors who [could make more money working in industry, but] at this point in their lives, were very interested in sharing their knowledge and experiences with others"* said the Dean.

Outcomes

The College measures outcomes including enrollment, internship placements, the number of participating companies, and credential attainment. Anecdotally, program leaders know that students find employment, though the College is not able to formally track that outcome. Data collection is the responsibility of the Director of Institutional Research at SVCC. MEIP outcomes are shared with the manufacturing community to help convey that *"their work is paying off,"* according to one college administrator. Program data are also shared with area superintendents and guidance counselors. The program's students are predominantly male, though three females have enrolled; students' average age is 28. The program is working with the College's marketing department to expand their reach to underserved groups to help increase diversity in the program and in the workforce.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Sustainability and Scalability

Program growth and increasing employer involvement are two key ingredients of a sustainable program. Enrollment increased from 12 students in the first cohort to 24 by the second year. Currently, there are about 65 students enrolled. Program staff point out that many small changes have led to a dynamic program adding, *“We are managed by a very hands-on advisory council and faculty who have a continuous improvement mindset.”*

The College’s Perkins funds help buy program equipment. Area industries provide additional private funds, as well as donations of metal for welding classes and CNC equipment. There is also an industry-led capital fund program that has raised \$300,000 for the program.

Program staff point to area demand for the occupations and to the advisory committees for their *“robust support”* of the program. In fact, a nearby Walmart Distribution Center has adopted the MEIP learn and earn model that it shares with community colleges near their distribution centers across the nation. Further, SVCC is planning to replicate the condensed coursework schedule developed in MEIP to allow students to work while going to school in the College’s agriculture program. Already, many agriculture companies have extended offers to students for part time employment while they, too, attend classes two days a week.

Improving Career Pathways

Some MEIP students enter the program from the Whiteside Area Career Center where they get a head start on their educational credentials and workplace experience in dual credit courses that are part of the program. Students can earn eight credit hours at the Career Center that are transferrable to the Multi-Craft Technology associate degree at SVCC. MEIP has also expanded the offer of stackable certificates in order to meet area employers’ needs. Many MEIP partners send their full-time employees to SVCC to earn additional skills and credentials, as well as acquire critical thinking and communications skills taught in the general education courses all MEIP students take.

Through MEIP, SVCC is helping Illinois reach its P-20 goals, to ensure that 60% of Illinoisans have high quality degrees and credentials by 2025. In doing so, the college has created an exemplary partnership structure with local business and industry, and has reengineered the way it delivers education in order to meet the needs of students at various points along their career pathway.

Local Contact

For more information about the program contact Joshua West, Dean of Business, Career and Technical Programs at joshua.j.west@svcc.edu or (815) 835-6334.

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ACRONYM LIST

AAS: Associate of Applied Science Degree

AJC: American Job Center (also commonly called a “one-stop”)

ALS: Associate of Liberal Studies Degree

BS: Bachelor of Science Degree

CNC: Computer Numerical Control Machining

CTE: Career and Technical Education

DCEO: Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

ELL: English Language Learner

ESL: English as a Second Language

HSE/GED®: High School Equivalency/GED® (Specific brand of High School Equivalency test)

HVAC: Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning

HVACR: Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration

ICCB: Illinois Community College Board

ICAPS: Illinois Career and Academic Preparation System

ICSPS: Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support

IDES: Illinois Department of Employment Security

IDOC: Illinois Department of Corrections

MIEP: Multi-Craft Extended Internship Program

OJT: On-the-Job Training

OTA: Occupational Therapy Assistant

OTR/L: A Licensed and Registered Occupational Therapist

P-20: Preschool - Grade 20

WIOA: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act

DEFINITIONS

Advisory Committee

A Program Advisory Committee is a group of stakeholders which may include representatives from local business and industry, college administrators, faculty, staff, and representatives from transfer institutions who advise the institution on the development, implementation, and evaluation of CTE programs to ensure programs are tailored to meet the workforce requirements of the community while addressing student needs. Additionally, they provide expertise pertaining to technological change. Although advisory committees do not set academic policy, their recommendations play an instrumental role in programming. Program Advisory Committees are required for CTE Programs of Study by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act of 2018.

Apprenticeship Models

An employer-driven, “learn while you earn” model that combines structured on-the-job training (OJT) with job-related instruction in curricula tied to the attainment of industry-recognized skills standards and leading to an industry credential. The OJT is provided by the employer, who hires the apprentice at the commencement of the program and pays the participant during the program.

Registered Apprenticeship

An apprenticeship registered with the U.S. Department of Labor meeting the standards defined by USDOL.

Non-Registered Apprenticeship

An apprenticeship that is not registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, but that meets all Registered Apprenticeship criteria other than application for registration. Often referred to as an Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship.

Pre-Apprenticeship

A program that has a documented partnership with an employer and is designed to prepare individuals to enter and succeed in a Registered Apprenticeship or Non-Registered Apprenticeship. Pre-Apprenticeships have additional requirements.

Youth-Apprenticeship

A program for youth (ages 16 to 24) currently enrolled in secondary education or pursuing a high school equivalency, including those with disabilities, that includes: paid on-the-job training under the supervision of a mentor; at least 2 semesters of related instruction that minimally leads to an Industry Credential; ongoing and a final assessment measuring success in mastering skill standards; career exploration; wraparound supports; and, upon completion, support in gaining employment or entering into a registered apprenticeship program.

More details can be found in Promising Practices in Illinois Career Pathways Volume 1.

DEFINITIONS

Bridge Programs

Bridge programs prepare adults with limited academic or limited English skills to enter and succeed in credit-bearing postsecondary education and training leading to career-path employment in high-demand, middle- and high-skilled occupations. The goal of bridge programs is to sequentially bridge the gap between the initial skills of individuals and what they need to enter and succeed in postsecondary education and career-path employment. The following definition outlines the key components of bridge programs in Illinois. This definition provides a foundation for bridge program design in Illinois.

Core Elements:

1. Contextualized instruction that integrates basic reading, math, and language skills and industry/occupation knowledge.
2. Career development that includes career exploration, career planning within a career area, and understanding the world of work (specific elements depend upon the level of the bridge program and on whether participants are already incumbent workers in the specific field.)
3. Transition services that provide students with the information and assistance they need to successfully navigate the process of moving from adult education or remedial coursework to credit or occupational programs. Services may include (as needed and available): academic advising, tutoring, study skills, coaching, and referrals to individual support services, e.g., transportation and childcare.

Note: Career development and transition services should take into account the needs of those low-income adults who will need to find related work as they progress in their education and career paths.

Career and Technical Education

- (A) A sequence of courses that
- i. provides individuals with rigorous academic content and relevant technical knowledge and skills needed to prepare for further education and careers in current or emerging professions which may include high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand industry sectors or occupations, which shall be, at the secondary level, aligned with the challenging State academic standard ...;
 - ii. provides technical skill proficiency or a recognized postsecondary credential, which may include, an industry-recognized credential, a certificate, or an associate degree; and
 - iii. may include prerequisite courses (other than remedial courses);
- (B) includes competency-based, work-based, or other applied learning that supports the development of academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupation specific skills, and knowledge of all aspects of an industry including entrepreneurship, of an individual;
- (C) to the extent practicable, coordinate between secondary and postsecondary education programs through programs of study, which may include coordination through articulation agreements, early college high school programs, dual or concurrent enrollment program opportunities, or other credit transfer agreements that provide postsecondary credit or advanced standing; and
- (D) may include career exploration at high school level or as early as the middle grades.

Section 3(5) Perkins V.

DEFINITIONS

Dual Credit

Dual Credit is an instructional arrangement where an academically qualified high school student enrolls in a college-level course and, upon successful course completion, concurrently earns both college credit and high school credit. Dual Credit is governed by ICCB Administrative Rules (section 1501.507-11) and the Dual Credit Quality Act.

Internship

Also referred to as work experience, internships are planned, structured learning experiences that take place in a workplace for a limited period of time. Internships and other work experiences may be paid or unpaid, as appropriate and consistent with other laws, such as the Fair Labor Standards Act. An internship or other work experience may be arranged within the private for profit sector, the non-profit sector, or the public sector. Labor standards apply in any work experience setting where an employee/employer relationship, as defined by the Fair Labor Standards Act, exists. Transitional Jobs are a type of work experience *20 CFR 680.180*.

Team Teaching

A required component of an ICAPS/IET program, team teaching is a method by which two teachers, one basic skills/Adult Education instructor, and one college-level Career and Technical Education instructor, work together to integrate the education that is provided to students. A minimum 25% overlap of instruction is required. In addition to team teaching, a Support Course is required to provide students with additional support for the Career and Technical Course material. This Support Course is taught by the basic skills team teacher. A required component of the ICAPS program, the Support Course serves to provide students with additional support with assimilation and understanding of the complex concepts and material that is taught in the team-taught Career and Technical Course.

A full definition for ICAPS/IET programs can be found in Promising Practices in Illinois Career Pathways Volume 1.

Work-Based Learning

Sustained interaction with industry or community professionals in real workplace settings, to the extent practicable, or simulated environments at an educational institution that foster in-depth, firsthand engagements with the tasks required in a given career field, that are aligned to curriculum and instruction.

We Want to Hear from You!

The Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) is in the process of expanding the Promising Practices in Illinois Career Pathways Compendium. This compendium was developed by the Illinois Center for Specialized Professional Support (ICSPS), with consultation from the featured colleges and in coordination with the ICCB's Career and Technical Education (CTE) team.

On behalf of the ICCB, the ICSPS is currently looking for additional examples of successful practices related to Career Pathways. We would like information about what your programs are doing in relation to dual credit and articulation; stakeholder engagement; apprenticeships/pre-apprenticeships; career pathway development/programs of study; the use of data for program improvement; and work-based learning. If you are interested in highlighting your program in the 2020 Promising Practices in Career Pathways, please complete the survey through the following link: www.surveymonkey.com/r/ctefy20pathways

For more information regarding the Career Pathway Compendium, please contact:

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