



# HIRE 360

A 360-degree vision for  
community-connected employment  
in the service, manufacturing and  
construction industries





# HIRE360

## CHICAGO MODEL

A roadmap for cities seeking a more inclusive path to a diverse workforce and an empowered community.

Traditionally, the construction industry has worked in silos, with developers, general contractors and trade unions all pursuing their own approach to hiring. While some parts of the industry have worked toward greater representation for minorities and women, this fragmented approach makes it difficult. To address this reality, developers, general contractors and trade unions came together to create HIRE360, a first-of-its-kind, industry-led, community-focused organization. In 2020, our inaugural year, HIRE360 strengthened the industry participation of underrepresented communities, which has resulted in more than 1,300 workforce applicants and support for 75 small and emerging businesses through localized mentorship, direct investment and specialized services.

# HIRE360 | LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT and EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

---

More than \$100 billion in new construction projects will break ground in Chicago over the next 15 years. This work includes an unprecedented level of private investment highlighted by numerous “mega-projects” and significant public sector projects including the O’Hare Airport expansion and the CTA Modernization. It’s an incredible time to for our industry.

Nearly all of the mega-projects require W/MBE participation and labor hour goals for local economically disadvantaged areas. The success of any one of the projects in this extensive pipeline is fundamentally dependent on having a sufficient number of trained trade workers and established W/MBE companies being available to not only complete the work, but also meet the requirements and goals of each project.

Nearly two years ago, a small group of real estate developers, union leaders and the Chicagoland Associated General Contractors initiated discussions focused on how the

industry could respond to this unparalleled opportunity while maximizing the positive impact it could bring to all communities throughout Chicago.

From these conversations, HIRE360 was born to provide meaningful access to the community in construction.

HIRE360, our industry-led partnership is developing the untapped talent in Chicago’s disadvantaged communities and addressing the generational shift taking place in the construction industry’s workforce. As we celebrate the conclusion of HIRE360’s first year, we are also recognizing the tremendous potential for the skilled trades to help drive Chicago’s post-pandemic recovery, and the opportunity that HIRE360 offers the industry to create a workforce and business community that truly represents Chicago.

We’re just getting started, and we’re excited to help drive this transformation throughout Chicago, creating a model for the rest of the country and our industry as a whole.



**DON BIERNACKI**  
Chair



**JAY ROWELL**  
Executive Director

# HIRE360 | IMPACT STORIES

---



Hire360 provides entrepreneurs, particularly minorities and women, the tools to manage a feast-or-famine business

**November 30, 2020**

---



HIRE360, CTA modernization project connect new and out-of-work tradespeople with jobs

**June 11, 2020**

---



First-of-its-kind industry and labor partnership announces HIRE360

**December 27, 2019**

---



...new nonprofit aims to train women and minorities for construction trades

**December 6, 2019**

---



Developers, general contractors, unions launch workplace development, small business support program

**December 10, 2019**

---

# HIRE360 | AN INAUGURAL YEAR

HIRE360 held its grand opening event at Vista Towers, where industry, labor and community leaders unveiled our unique cross-industry partnership, creating an ecosystem that develops sustainable careers and business ventures for underrepresented individuals by encouraging prime businesses to invest in, hire and empower an inclusive workforce and promote small business development.

To inaugurate HIRE360's first year, **industry leaders raised \$850,000** to launch of a line-of-credit reserve fund to help women- and minority-owned businesses better compete for construction work. So far, the fund has **leveraged more than \$3.3 million in capital** for women- and minority-owned firms in Chicago.





2020  
RESULTS

## 1,336 PEOPLE

(50% African American and 35% Latino) have started the program to become **eligible for an apprenticeship** by taking a pretest and attending an orientation in HIRE360's inaugural year.

## \$3.5 MILLION

awarded to **26 minority- and women-owned small businesses** as a result of an initial \$800,000 raised by leaders in the construction industry to collateralize low-interest loans through the Small Business Loan Fund.

## 25 BUSINESSES

supported in securing **Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans** from the U.S. Small Business Administration during the COVID-19 pandemic.

# HIRE360 | FOUR PILLARS

---

## **HIRE.** WORKFORCE

Served as a bridge to careers in construction and professional services, helping more than 1,330 diverse individuals to become career ready, and recommending more than 200 candidates to apprenticeship programs through trades education, case management, supportive services, test preparation and financial assistance totaling \$200,000 to cover the costs of tools, workwear and related expenses.

---

## **INVEST.** SMALL BUSINESS

Elevated more than 75 minority- and women-owned businesses to compete for major development projects through bid support, access to working capital loans and back-office assistance from accounting to insurance/bonding and certifications. Helped six diverse firms to go union in 15 trades.

---

## **REACH.** YOUTH EDUCATION

Initiated partnerships with Chicago Public Schools Career and Technical Education programs to enhance trades education programs for middle and high school youth in under-represented communities.

---

## **EMPOWER.** SUPPLY CHAIN

Signed a partnership agreement with Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council and leading contractors to create wholesale pricing opportunities for smaller suppliers of construction materials and services to compete with larger firms on a more level playing field; agreement also provides 220 diverse Chicago area construction suppliers access to HIRE360 partner projects.

---

# HIRE360 | OUR TEAM

In 2020, our staff of program directors, employment and training professionals, industry reps and liaisons grew to 18, responding to the opportunity and the need to make real the vision of an industry inspired by the communities who call Chicago home.



**Mia Berry**  
Manager of  
Training &  
Mentorship



**Cindy Bojorquez**  
Recruiter



**Samuel Boynes**  
Industry  
Representative



**Damian Flores**  
Program  
Manager



**Anthony Green**  
Recruiter



**Chynna Hampton**  
Director of  
Workforce  
Development



**Michael Hartge**  
Senior Policy  
Manager



**Mathew Holloway**  
Recruiter



**Earlene Jefferson**  
Recruiter



**Karen Larson**  
Director of  
Finance &  
Operations



**Ron Lawless**  
Manager  
of Youth  
Engagement



**Jada Lee**  
Recruiter



**Antoinette Mitchell**  
Manager  
of Business  
Development



**Ana María Montes de Oca-Rojas**  
Manager of  
Workforce  
Development



**Ashley Nicosen**  
Industry  
Representative



**Jay Rowell**  
Executive  
Director



**Deborah Whitaker**  
Director of  
Business  
Development



**Mark Williams**  
Grants Director

Executive Leadership  
•  
Workforce Development  
•  
W/MBE Business  
Development & Support  
•  
Youth Programming  
•  
Training & Mentorship  
•  
Operations and Grants



Working to increase  
representation of historically  
under-represented  
communities throughout the  
industry through education,  
advocacy and funding

# HIRE360 | OUR BOARD



## PRESIDENT

Don Biernacki  
Related Midwest SVP of Construction



## TREASURER

Michael Meagher  
Chicagoland Associated General Contractors  
& McHugh Construction



## SECRETARY

Don Villar  
Chicago Federation of Labor

## DIRECTORS



Karen Kent  
Unite Here Local 1



Ralph Affrunti  
Chicago & Cook  
County Building  
Trades



Jonathan  
Jones  
Chicago Regional  
Council of  
Carpenters



Brian Ortiz  
Trinidad Construction



Rashied Davis  
Saturday Place

## OUR SUPPORTERS

Bosch  
Bourbon, Tile & Marble  
Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership  
Chicago Community Trust  
Chicagoland Associated General Contractors  
Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance  
Chicago Transit Authority  
Clayco  
Gallo Family Foundation  
Gilbane Building Company

HIRE360's inaugural year successes were due in large part to the major support and shared vision of our partners from industry, the foundation community and local government.

The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation  
The Honorable Barack and Michelle Obama  
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity  
Joint-County Opportunity Benefit Support Fund  
JPMorgan Chase Foundation  
Lendlease Americas  
Magellan Development  
Midwest Moving & Storage  
Mortenson

Pepper Construction Group  
Power Construction  
Related Affordable Foundation  
Related Midwest  
Riverside Investment & Development  
Shamrock Electric Co.  
Sterling Bay  
Turner Construction Company  
Verizon

# HIRE360 | OUR PARTNERS



## Hire360 provides entrepreneurs, particularly minorities and women, the tools to manage a feast-or-famine business

By David Roeder | @RoederDavid | Nov 30, 2020, 5:30am CST



Herman Pride, owner of Complete Mechanical Piping, outside a job site at 226 W. Jackson Blvd. where an office building is being converted into two Hilton-brand hotels.  
*Anthony Vazquez/Sun-Times*

There's nothing small time about starting a small business.

That probably goes double if you are in the construction trades. A person can master a skill to become a carpenter or an electrician, decide that being your own boss is too tempting to pass up, and then suddenly find he or she must become a little of a lot of things: accountant, marketing agent, human resources manager, tech expert and cash management whiz.

Take it from Herman Pride, CEO of Complete Mechanical Piping in West Garfield Park: "It's not for everyone," the veteran pipe fitter said of going independent. "You have to be sure it's what you want to do. You have to plan it out and work at it."

Pride knows plenty of people in the trades who prefer to do their jobs and leave it behind at shift's end, while running your own business can take over your life.

So there's no shame in seeking help from a source that can give a fresh entrepreneur an honest assessment while also aiming for a side benefit: providing connections for work and advancement to disadvantaged groups.

Pride found Hire360, an organization created in 2019 when leading developers, general contractors and trade unions in Chicago gathered to talk about how to get more minority- and women-owned firms into the fold. Everybody found themselves with a common interest in dealing with the problem.

Except this group was more about action than talk. Hire360's executive director, Jay Rowell, said organizers quickly saw the biggest problem facing emerging contractors, especially those from communities that usually get passed over, was access to capital. Money is needed to hire people and procure supplies for bigger jobs.

Rowell credited David Carlins, CEO of Magellan Development Group, with pushing creation of a collateral pool to enhance contractors' credit. The organization's board passed the hat last year and collected \$855,000 for the fund, which has been used to leverage \$3.3 million in loans at the prime rate, Rowell said. He said 26 firms got the loans, and there have been no defaults. Hire360 partners with the Chicago Federation of Labor and unions that have an ownership stake in Sun-Times Media.

For Pride, the help has made a huge difference. He's gone from handling small-scale home renovations to work on high-rises. His company has worked on the Jesse Brown VA Medical Center, the Illinois Tollway and O'Hare Airport. Starting with two or three people when he got going in earnest in 2016, he's been able to put about 25 union tradespeople to work during peak times.

His line of credit "opened the door to expand the business. You've got to get the money to float these larger projects," Pride said. Also invaluable, he said, were the connections Hire360 provided. Pride said he's had about nine projects going at once this year and sees business continuing to be active in 2021.

The organization also provided a lift to Lou Ochoa, owner of Ochoa Mechanical Group in Logan Square, who has gone from two to three people on staff to around 10 to 12, although he's seeing more of a slowdown connected to the pandemic. He was working on a building with the developer Related Midwest, where Senior Vice President of Construction Don Biernacki brought him to Hire360. Biernacki is a leading voice for inclusion in commercial real estate contracting.

"They got me some nice introductions to old and new contacts," Ochoa said. Along came a line of credit from Wintrust Bank that could become a vital support. He said he was booked for three projects at Midway Airport that are on hold at least until mid-2021. On other jobs, "customers and lending companies are not releasing the funds," Ochoa said.

Pride and Ochoa are among 28 employers that got federal loans under the Payroll Protection Program with Hire360's advice, Rowell said.

From Rowell's vantage point, he sees the pandemic's impact in another part of Hire360's work, its apprenticeship programs that bring minority and female workers into the trades. With slack in the construction labor market, Rowell said there is less demand for apprentices. But he believes the effort remains important because someday, hard as it may be to imagine, COVID-19 will be behind us.

Rowell wants everyone to focus on the opportunities. Public works and private construction in the area could be worth \$100 billion over the next 10 to 15 years, he figures. Rowell is looking ahead to such work as O'Hare improvements, the CTA's Red and Purple line modernization, Mayor Lori Lightfoot's capital expenditure list, the megaprojects known as Lincoln Yards and The 78, perhaps even the Obama Presidential Center. Opportunities abound for construction cranes.

"Just think of what happens when government returns to restarting the economy and provides more opportunities," Rowell said.



# HIRE 360

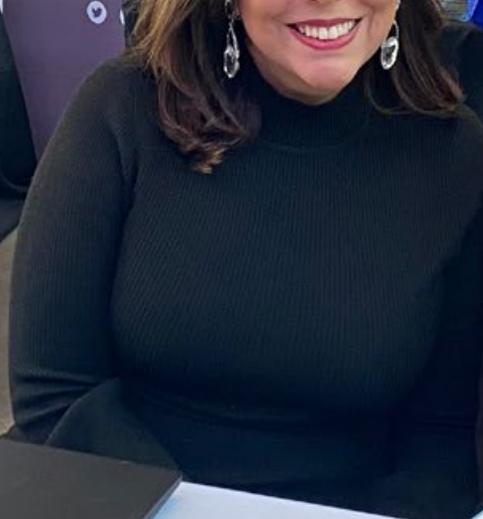
Hire360Chicago.com

## CAREERS

Become A Valued  
Member of Our  
Team

Make an impact in the  
community.

SAHChicago



## FIRST CLASS OPPORTUNITIES

firstclassworkforce.com

## FIRST CLASS

Workforce Solutions



FOOD SERVICE

RETAIL

KEEPING

