



Industry Led. Community Focused.

OCTOBER 2025 E-NEWSLETTER

Workforce Development



Asante's Journey Spotlited at Tradeswomen Build Nations

After years in healthcare, Asante McKinney made the courageous decision to build a new future in the construction trades. While balancing overnight shifts and raising her young son, she completed the [Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) through HIRE360. Today, she is a paid trainee with [IBEW Local 701](#) in DuPage County, taking the next step toward a stable career in the electrical trades and a brighter future for her family.

Asante shared her story at this year's [Tradeswomen Build Nations](#) Conference in front of 6,000 attendees, the largest gathering of tradeswomen in North America. HIRE360 was honored to stand alongside partners and graduates shaping the industry's future. The event also featured insights from Cattie Tenzillo, HIRE360's Manager of Training and Mentorship, who spoke about the power of mentorship in creating lasting opportunities for women to succeed in the trades.

Hear from Asante on NPR [here](#). Thank you to [Illinois AFL-CIO](#) and [The Chicago & Cook County Building & Construction Trades Council](#) for helping to share her story.



25 Graduates, One Goal: Building Pathways Through Illinois Works

We're proud to celebrate the success of the second Cook County [Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) graduation! Hosted at our Training and Business Development Center, the event brought together contractors, labor leaders, elected officials, members of the [Illinois Legislative Black Caucus](#), [Illinois AFL-CIO](#), [Climate Jobs Illinois](#), [Operating Engineers Local 150](#) and community partners.

The day's program included a contractor roundtable, a discussion on progress under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), a tour of the HIRE360 facility, and a ceremony honoring 25 graduates who completed the program's rigorous nine-week training.

A special thank you to [Illinois House Speaker Emanuel Christopher Welch](#) for speaking to the graduates and supporting the next generation entering the building trades.



Chicago CLP Program

The HIRE360 Chicago CLP Program helps future commercial drivers get ready to pass the Illinois Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP) test. Instead of just reading the CDL Study Guide, participants take part in:

- Classroom lessons
- Group study sessions
- Daily quizzes
- Hands-on learning activities

This approach makes the material easier to understand and remember. Instructors check in regularly to see how each person is doing, offer extra help when needed, and make sure everyone is ready to succeed.

For more information, contact your Case Manager or email: info@hire360chicago.com

Business Development



Next Up in Our Blueprints for Opportunity Series

Our Blueprints for Opportunity series continues in October at the Training and Business Development Center with insights from [Turner Construction](#). They'll highlight the O'Hare baggage handling system, a major infrastructure upgrade at one of the world's busiest airports, and a new data center in Wisconsin, bringing innovative technology and construction opportunities to the region.

[Register today](#) to learn about upcoming scopes of work, connect with Turner representatives, and explore ways your business can get involved.



A grant designed for Cook County businesses poised for growth.

Eligible businesses may receive a \$100,000 investment to fuel what's next.

Cook County **SMALL BUSINESS SOURCE**  **Learn more, visit**
cookcountysmallbiz.org

Cook County Small Business Source

The [Cook County Small Business Source](#) offers no-cost support to small business owners through expert business advising, access to capital, events, and a network of over 50 partners. As a partner in this network, HIRE360 helps connect entrepreneurs with the tools and opportunities they need to succeed.

Just launched: The Catalyst Grant
Up to 88 growing businesses in select industries can receive \$100,000 to scale, whether by strengthening their workforce, improving operations, or upgrading facilities.

Whether you're launching a new business or ready to grow, the Source is here to help!

[Learn more and get connected today](#)



County Connection Small Business Outreach

DuPage County hosted its “County Connection” event in Wheaton to help small business owners learn how to do business with the County. Sessions covered bid documents, bonding, financial resources, and available business supports.

HIRE360’s Director of Business Development, Deborah Whitaker, joined the “What You Need” panel to share how HIRE360 creates opportunities for businesses and the workforce.

Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program Highlights

The **Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program** is opening doors to the future of clean energy in Illinois. Designed to recruit and prepare candidates from across the state, the program provides a pathway into unionized clean energy construction jobs—careers that offer stability, opportunity, and growth.

Interested in pursuing a career in the construction and building trades through the free Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program? [Learn more about careers in the clean-energy industry.](#)

Hands on Learning with Tool Belts On!

Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois at Belvidere Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program readiness class volunteered at Habitat for Humanity! Thanks to a donation from the Lowe’s Foundation, students received tool belts stocked with multiple basic construction tools, allowing them to try them on and get used to the weight and feel of the equipment.



Training the Next Generation in Alton

At Lewis & Clark Community College’s Scott Bibb Center, the Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program is opening doors to careers in Illinois’ growing clean energy sector. To date, 57 students have graduated and 47 are currently in training, building the skilled workforce that will power our state’s clean energy future.



Belvidere Climate Works Pre-Apprentices Visit Painters Training Facility

The [Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois](#) at Belvidere Climate Works Pre-Apprentices recently visited the [Painters District Council 30](#), where participants engaged in hands-on training and explored the many career paths the union offers. For some, the visit was especially meaningful—one participant came away inspired to pursue a career as a glazier.



Our Mission is to Expand Employment Opportunities

Recruitment

Apprenticeship Opportunities – Apply Today!

HIRE360 is proud to partner with leading trade unions across Chicagoland to offer apprenticeship opportunities in the skilled trades. If you're ready to launch a career in construction, now is the time to apply.

Trades Currently Accepting Applications:

- [Boilermakers Local 1](#)
- [Ironworkers Local 63](#)
- [IBEW Local 461 \(Aurora\)](#)
- [IBEW Local 176 \(Joliet\)](#)
- [Sheet Metal Workers Local 73](#)
- [Operating Engineers Local 150](#)
- [Pipefitters Local 597](#)
- [Roofers and Waterproofers Local 11](#)
- [Bricklayers District Council](#)

- [Electricians – IBEW Local 701 \(DuPage County\)](#)

Each trade has its own application process and deadlines. Your HIRE360 Case Manager can help you navigate the steps, prepare for testing, and strengthen your application.

Reach out for a letter of recommendation and test prep support.

Are You Taking Your Aptitude Test Soon? HIRE360 Is Here to Help You Prepare

Aptitude testing is a key step toward building your future in the trades, and HIRE360 is here to support you every step of the way.

Our Aptitude Test Prep Program includes:

- Access to practice materials
- Expert guidance
- One-on-one tutoring with a [Chicago Teacher's Union Foundation](#) (CTUF) tutor

Whether you're just getting started or need extra support, we'll help you sharpen your skills and improve your performance.

Get started today:

- Register for our next test prep session now
- Request personalized one-on-one tutoring with a CTUF tutor

Connect with your HIRE360 Case Manager or contact us at: info@HIRE360Chicago.com

Youth Engagement



Bright Futures Ahead: Creating Green Career Opportunities for Chicago's Youth

With the clean energy sector rapidly growing in Illinois, HIRE360 convened the “Green Schools, Good Jobs, Bright Futures” panel to explore how [Chicago Public Schools](#) students can access these opportunities. Together with [Illinois Climate Jobs](#), [548 Energy](#), and [Chicago Teachers Union](#), panelists discussed the future for clean energy careers, the role of career and technical education (CTE) educators in creating pathways into union jobs, and how we can ensure Black and Brown youth are prepared to launch good-paying, green union careers that will power Chicago's future.



Empowering Youth to Lead the Future of the Trades

Exciting news! Our Manager of Youth Engagement, Rashaan Meador, took the stage at the 2025 Youth Summit: Opening the Doors for Our Future to highlight how HIRE360 is preparing Chicago youth with the skills and opportunities to lead the future of the trades.

A big thank you to the [National Conference of Puerto Rican Women Northern Illinois Chapter](#) for convening more than 120 young women from seven schools alongside partners such as [Power Construction](#) and the [Cook County Workforce Partnership](#), inviting us to be part of this important conversation.

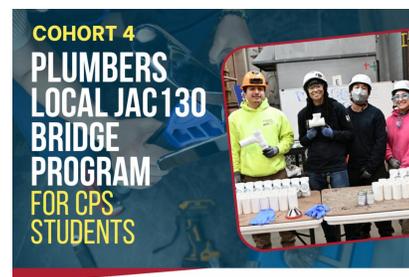
Click "View Entire Message" to see more below!



Plumbers Bridge Program Open House

In partnership with [Chicago Public Schools \(CPS\)](#) and [Plumbers Local 130](#), we hosted a Plumbers Bridge Program Open House that welcomed more than 100 CPS students. Attendees toured the training facility, met instructors, and applied for the program on the spot.

The Bridge Program officially begins on October 7 and will provide students with hands-on training, mentorship, and a pathway to future apprenticeships and careers in the trades.



Part 1:
Plumbers Bridge Program
Oct 7 – Dec 11, 2025

- ✓ Tuesdays & Thursdays
4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
- ✓ Hands on introduction to Plumbing trade
- ✓ Build confidence and real-world skills by working with the tools and materials required in the trade

More Information
CHICAGO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
CPS's Early College and Career Education
ECCE@cps.edu

cps.edu/PlumbersBridgeProgram

Part 2:
HIRE360 Test & Interview Prep
Jan 6 – Jan 20, 2026

- ✓ Tuesdays & Thursdays
4:30 PM – 6:30 PM
- ✓ Support and career opportunities in construction
- ✓ Get financial sponsorship to cover apprenticeship related costs

**Must be a senior at a CPS high school
Must be 18 or older by June 2025**
* Other requirements apply.



WBEZ
CHICAGO

ECONOMY

Inside the largest gathering of unionized tradeswomen in the world, talk of tariffs

By Andrea Hsu, Ayesha Rascoe, Hadeel Al-Shalchi



3-Minute Listen

+ PLAYLIST

≡ TRANSCRIPT



National Stage for Our Work with Tradeswomen

NPR recently featured HIRE360's participation in the [2025 Tradeswomen Build Nations](#) conference in Chicago, the largest gathering of unionized tradeswomen in the world. The story highlighted the voices of tradeswomen from across the U.S. and Canada, including HIRE360's role in preparing and supporting women as they enter and grow in the construction industry.

Read more [here!](#)

Catch up on the latest HIRE360 headlines

[HIRE360 Celebrates Second Cook County Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Graduating Class](#) | Citizen Newspaper

[Illinois pre-apprenticeship programs boost women and minorities in construction, study says](#) | Chicago Sun-Times

[Lewis and Clark Community College Training Next Generation of Clean Energy Workers in Illinois](#) | River Bender

Taj Development Builds Futures with HIRE360

Roxanna Daniel, who was raised in Bronzeville, spent years working as a painter and facing challenges in a male-dominated trade. Then, in 2009 she launched [Taj Development Company](#). Today, the Harvey-based firm provides carpentry, painting, flooring, and more, while creating fair pricing and expanding access to opportunities in the trades. Taj Development Company stands out as one of the few Black, LGBTQ+, woman-owned contracting firms in the country.

With support from HIRE360 and partner [Allies for Communities Business \(A4CB\)](#), Taj Development accessed a specialized contractor loan that stabilized cash flow, expanded union partnerships, and gave employees access to critical benefits. This partnership has helped position the company for growth, contributing to projects such as the [Obama Presidential Center](#) and the Eleanor Roosevelt Fruit and Vegetable Garden. Taj Development continues to grow with a clear focus on building opportunity, opening doors in the trades, and strengthening communities across Chicago.



HIRE360

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