



Industry Led. Community Focused.

NOVEMBER 2025 E-NEWSLETTER

### HIRE360 Recognized at Constellation Workforce Development Summit

We were honored to join the [Constellation](#) Workforce Development Summit, where our Executive Director, Jay Rowell, spoke on a panel about how collaboration across unions, developers, contractors, and educators is driving real change in expanding access to family-sustaining careers in the trades.

A special thank you to Constellation for recognizing HIRE360's commitment to building pathways for the next generation of skilled workers—and for celebrating the incredible work of our Manager of Training and Mentorship, Cattie Tenzillo, and her team. Their customized test prep programs are helping meet Constellation's workforce needs and opening doors to meaningful careers in the energy sector.



### Workforce Development

#### Julian Diaz's Journey into the Electrical Trades

South Side native Julian Diaz is forging his path in the trades as a new electrical apprentice. After connecting with HIRE360 at a high school trade fair, he completed the [Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship program](#) and stayed in touch with his coordinator, while waiting for the opportunity to join the union.

His patience paid off when Julian was accepted into the program and began his apprenticeship this fall with [IBEW Local 9](#). Along the way, he earned his CDL license and gained the preparation needed to succeed.





## Apprentices Get a Behind the Scenes Look at Bally's Casino Project

At October's mentoring session, HIRE360 apprentices toured the once-in-a-generation [Bally's Casino](#) build, a project bringing new energy and entertainment to Chicago. Hosted by Miguel d'Escoto and the [Chicago Community Builders Collective](#) (CCBC), the group learned about city coordination, safety culture, and the logistics of managing a major downtown construction site.

Leaders also highlighted the importance of mental health and resilience in the trades, reminding apprentices that strong careers are built through both skill and support. The day wrapped with a powerful takeaway: "Nothing great is easy."

Thank you to Miguel d'Escoto and CCBC for inspiring the next generation of Chicago trades leaders.

## Pre-Apprenticeships Are Reshaping Illinois' Construction Workforce

A new study from the [Illinois Economic Policy Institute](#) and the [Project for Middle Class Renewal](#) confirms what we see every day: Pre-apprenticeship programs are changing the face of construction. Women and Black workers are entering union careers at record rates, gaining access to the skills, stability, and opportunities they deserve.

Programs like HIRE360's strengthen Illinois' workforce and open doors to lasting careers in the building trades.

Read the full study [here](#). See ILEPI's summary [here](#).



## From Classroom to Jobsite: HIRE360 Workforce Candidates in Action

At HIRE360, hands-on learning is central to preparing our candidates for long-term success in the trades and clean energy fields. This fall, participants strengthened their skills through a series of site visits and trainings that brought classroom lessons to life.

Candidates toured [International Union of Operating Engineers Local 399's Training Center](#), gaining a firsthand look at the essential role building engineers play in operations and maintenance. They also completed forklift certification training, mastering safety protocols and accident prevention while gaining confidence through practical application.

The Clean Energy cohort advanced their skills at [Kankakee Community College](#), where they heard an engaging session on solar installation, electrical theory, and tool safety—all reinforced through hands-on practice. The group then toured the [400 Lake Shore construction site](#), observing pipefitters in action and experiencing the scope of a major downtown project from the 47th floor down.

Candidates visited the [Obama Presidential Center](#), exploring the library, music production center, and community garden while learning how large-scale projects can strengthen neighborhoods and create opportunity.

These experiences deepened technical knowledge and inspired participants to see themselves as part of Chicago's future workforce—skilled, confident, and community-minded.

Special thanks to our partners, [IUOE Local 399](#), [Kankakee Community College](#), [Related Midwest](#), [Specialty Construction LLC](#), and [Lakeside Alliance](#), for opening their doors and helping our candidates take the next step from classroom to jobsite.

**Correction:** In our July newsletter, we misstated the union that Dagoberto Castillo joined. Dagoberto is a proud member of the [International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Local 701](#).

## Business Development



Brought to you by:



## Next Up in Our Blueprints for Opportunity Series

Our Blueprints for Opportunity series continues this November with Part 1: The Practitioners Panel, moderated by [Commissioner Ciere Boatright](#) of the City of Chicago Department of Planning and Development. Thank you to Commissioner Boatright for leading this conversation and bringing her invaluable perspective to the series. Join us for an engaging evening with community development practitioners who are actively shaping Chicago's neighborhoods.

This panel will spotlight organizations driving transformative projects in housing, retail, and business corridors, turning bold visions into real change on the ground. Panelists include Tonya Trice from [South Shore Community Development Corporation](#), Kareem Cousar from [IFF](#), Cecile De Mello from [Teamwork Englewood](#), Ja'Net Defell from [Community Desk Chicago](#), Deon Lucas from [E.G. Woode](#) and [TRIEND CDC](#), and J. Andrew Stables from [DL3](#).

Register [here!](#)

**Running a small business is hard.** 

The Source is here to help!

**We offer small business owners:**

**Expert Advising**  
The foundation of The Source's work consists of providing expert, one-on-one business advising from members of our trusted network of [Business Support Organizations \(BSOs\)](#). Through a simple intake form, The Source matches business owners with a dedicated business advisor who provides in-depth knowledge and the necessary support to take your business to the next level.

**Informative Events**  
Join in-person and virtual events that connect entrepreneurs to our network of BSOs and industry experts on topics critical to small business success.

**Valuable Resources**  
Access a robust list of resources, including the latest information, announcements, trends, and marketing, creating opportunity for business owners at any stage of development.

**Our Business Support Organization (BSO) Network:**

- Alles for Community Business
- Beyon Development Corporation
- Builders Alliance
- Chicago Priority Supplier Development Council
- Chicago Urban League
- Chinese Mutual Aid Association
- Greater Business Development Corporation
- Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- Illiana Restaurant Association
- Region 70a Business Alliance
- Southland Development Authority
- Women's Business Development Center
- WISource

**The Source's Impact\***

**\$67M** in grants distributed to small businesses

**28K+** businesses served directly

**80%** of businesses served owned by people of color

**63%** of businesses served owned by women

**93%** of businesses served are microbusinesses (one-third employees)

\*2020 - 2024



**Mohammad Salehi**  
Owner of Heray Spices, Chicago, IL

"They say to raise a child, you need a nation or a village. I think to raise a business, you also need a nation - you need **advisors** like the Cook County Source."

Learn more and sign up for assistance for your small business at [cookcounty.com/smallbiz.org](https://cookcounty.com/smallbiz.org)

**SMALL BUSINESS SOURCE**

COOK COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## 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.

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

[Learn more and get connected today](#)



## Blueprints for Opportunity with Clayco and AECOM Hunt Clayco Bowa JV

Earlier this fall, our Blueprints for Opportunity series continued with a powerhouse discussion featuring leaders from [Clayco](#) and the [AECOM Hunt Clayco Bowa](#) Joint Venture, who shared insights on major projects shaping Chicago's future, including [PSI Quantum Park](#), [O'Hare International Airport](#), and the [CTA Training & Controls Center](#).

The conversation, led by Sam Boynes, Manager of Public-Private Initiatives at Clayco, brought together Kendall Williamson from AECOM Hunt, Eric Dickerson from Clayco, Jim McInerney from Bowa Construction, Heath Cowan from Clayco, and Tom Conroy from [All Construction Group](#) for an engaging look at how these landmark developments are creating opportunities for local contractors and tradespeople.

Attendees wrapped up the evening with networking and conversation, connecting directly with the industry leaders driving these transformative projects.

## 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.](#)

## From CEJA Pre-Apprentice to Ironworker and Mentor

Moments like this remind us why we do the work. Cameron, a graduate of [Goodwill Industries of Northern Illinois Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) and now a proud Iron Worker, recently returned to Goodwill to speak with current students—sharing an inspiring message about perseverance, hard work, and believing in yourself. His story proves that perseverance pays off, and seeing him return as a mentor reminds us that today's trainees are tomorrow's leaders.



## Southwestern Illinois College Celebrates New Climate Works Graduates

[Southwestern Illinois College's fourth Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship cohort](#) is celebrating another milestone! Six graduates have completed their training, and participant Demarion Buchanan is already applying to unions and employers, turning dedication into opportunity.



## Celebrating East Building Trades Fall Climate Works Graduates

## in Champaign

We're proud to celebrate the Fall graduates of [East Building Trades and Construction Trades Council Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) in Champaign! Over 13 weeks, participants gained the hands-on skills and knowledge needed to launch rewarding careers in the trades. Graduate Lawante Montgomery shared, "Coming in I didn't know how to read a tape measure. I learned so much and I am so grateful."

Special thanks to [City of Champaign Deputy Mayor Will Kyles II](#) for his inspiring remarks and to everyone who helped make this program possible. Congratulations to all 13 graduates!



## Lewis and Clark Jobs Fair Connects Illinois Residents to Career Opportunities

The [Lewis and Clark Community College](#) Jobs Fair in Alton brought together local jobseekers, five unions, IDOT, King Heating & AC, and Bush Refrigeration to highlight pathways into the trades.

The event reflects the continued impact of CEJA, which is helping Illinois residents access careers in clean energy and construction through programs like [Climate Works](#) that strengthen the workforce across the state.



**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](#)
  - Programs Offered: Heavy Equipment Operator, Repair Technician, Geothermal Driller, Construction Inspector
  - Applications Accepted: rolling basis
  - More Info: [ASIP Local 150\[4\]](#)
- [Pipefitters Local 597](#)
- [Roofers and Waterproofers Local 11](#)
  - Applications Accepted: Monday–Friday, 7:30 AM–2:00 PM
  - Program Info: [Chicago Roofers Apprenticeship](#)
- [Electricians – IBEW Local 701 \(DuPage County\)](#)
- [Bricklayers Local 21 \(Chicago\)](#)
  - Applications Accepted: year-round, Monday–Thursday, 8:00 AM–2:00 PM
  - More Info: <https://www.bac2school.org>
- Electricians – IBEW Local 701 (DuPage County)
- [IAM Mechanics Local 701](#)
  - Programs Offered: Automotive Technology, Diesel/Heavy Truck Repair, Equipment Technician
  - Training Locations: Aurora & Carol Stream
  - Apply Online: [local701training.org/apply](http://local701training.org/apply)
  - Program Overview: [IAMAW Mechanics Union Local 701\[5\]](#)
- [Plumbers Local 130 UA \(Chicago\)](#)
  - Application Window: November 17, 2025 – February 13, 2026, or until 2,000 applications are received
  - Apply Online: <https://apply.jac130.org>

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](mailto:info@HIRE360Chicago.com)

## HIRE360 Chicago CLP Program

The HIRE360 Chicago CLP Program helps future commercial drivers prepare for the Illinois Commercial Learner's Permit (CLP) test through an engaging, hands-on approach.

Participants take part in interactive lessons, group study sessions, daily quizzes, and practical exercises that make learning easier and more effective. Instructors provide ongoing support to track progress and ensure every participant is ready to succeed.

For more information, contact your case manager or email [info@hire360chicago.com](mailto:info@hire360chicago.com).

Click "View Entire Message" to see more below!

## Youth Engagement

### Record Breaking Attendance at this Year's ETHS Skilled Trades Fair

This year's skilled trades fair was the largest in recent [Evanston Township High School](#) history, welcoming more than 1,800 students and featuring over 30 skilled trade partners across industries including aviation, construction, manufacturing, electrical, and more. We were thrilled to engage and share how our programs help turn curiosity about the trades into real opportunities for long term careers!



## In The News



### Featured Story:

The Chicago Tribune recently published an opinion piece by Christian Searles, HIRE360's Director of Public Affairs, highlighting how Illinois' new megaproject legislation will help get residents back to work. The piece emphasizes the importance of community investment, workforce training, and ensuring local workers have access to opportunities created by major infrastructure projects.

Read more [here!](#)

### Catch up on the latest HIRE360 headlines

[\*From Rehabbing Homes to Drilling Foundations: How Lenell Gross Found His Calling with HIRE360\*](#) | The Driller

[\*HIRE360 in The Acclivus Hour\*](#) | WVON 1690AM

## Business Spotlight

### Enhancement Trucking

Enhancement Trucking, owned and operated by Ms. Camaro Johnson, is a certified MBE, WBE, and DBE firm specializing in dumping, hauling, and freight services. A third-generation business owner with more than nine years in operation, Ms. Johnson continues her family's legacy of excellence in the trucking industry.



Referred to HIRE360's Business Development Program by another client, she is focused on expanding her network and accessing new resources for growth. The company's fleet has supported major projects including the Obama Presidential Center, municipal infrastructure work, and partnerships with general contractors and suppliers.

Enhancement Trucking has also expanded into freight brokering and logistics coordination, offering safe, reliable, and on-time delivery solutions for commercial and infrastructure projects. For more information, contact [enhancementtrucking@gmail.com](mailto:enhancementtrucking@gmail.com).

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