



Industry Led. Community Focused.

JUNE 2026 E-NEWSLETTER



Vehicles for Change Helps Drive Workforce Opportunity Forward

Reliable transportation can make all the difference when it comes to accessing careers in the trades, especially for individuals traveling to job sites, apprenticeship programs, and training opportunities across Illinois. Earlier this month, HIRE360 joined [Vehicles for Change](#), [Constellation](#), [Liberty Auto City](#), and workforce partners to award low-cost vehicles to individuals pursuing careers in the construction industry, including HIRE360 candidates Nico Reaves and Valana Dale.



Among the recipients was Nico, a South Side Chicago resident who completed [HIRE360's JPMorgan Chase Clean Energy Construction Trades Pathway Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) before entering the Carpenters apprenticeship and later securing employment with [Diverzify](#). Through the program, Nico earned industry certifications and received transportation support through [Lyft](#) ride codes while preparing for a career in the trades. Access to a reliable vehicle will now help Nico more consistently travel to job sites and continue building his career as a carpenter apprentice. He is currently working on the 400 Lake Shore Drive project lead by [Related Midwest](#), [LR Contracting Company](#), and [Bowa Construction](#). Thank you to Vehicles for Change, Constellation, and all partners involved in helping create stronger pathways into long term careers across Illinois' construction industry.

Help drive opportunity and

Chicagoland Workforce



Hector Arias De Loza Continues His Path into the Electrical Trades

Hector Arias De Loza recently reached an exciting milestone in his workforce journey with his acceptance into the [IBEW Local 134](#) Electrical Apprenticeship Program. Hector first connected with HIRE360 through the [Take Charge: EV Charging Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) before continuing his training through the [Illinois IBEW Renewable Energy Fund's Summer Solar Program](#), where he gained hands-on experience and technical training in renewable energy technologies.

Since completing the program, Hector has continued building on the skills and industry knowledge he developed through his training. His acceptance into IBEW Local 134 marks the next step in his career and reflects his dedication to pursuing opportunities in the electrical industry. Congratulations to Hector on this achievement, and we look forward to following his continued success in the trades.

Salvador Viramontes Starts His Career with J and E Duff

Salvador Viramontes, a Cicero native, recently began his career with [J and E Duff](#) after discovering his interest in construction through a high school construction class. Through HIRE360's Bricklayers pre-apprenticeship program, Salvador gained a better understanding of the union construction industry, connected with industry professionals, and found his path into the Bricklayers trade. He also received stipend assistance for tools and work boots that helped him prepare for training and his first days on the jobsite.



After successfully completing the program, Salvador joined J&E Duff and began putting his training to work in the field. We're proud of Salvador for this exciting milestone and look forward to following his continued success in the industry!



Cook County Illinois Works Cohort Celebrates Graduation

Congratulations to the 27 graduates of the Cook County [Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#)! The graduation brought together [16th Ward Alderman Stephanie D. Coleman](#), who spoke to the cohort and attended in support of two graduates from her ward, labor leaders, contractors, workforce partners, and community organizations to celebrate this cohort.

Throughout the nine-week program, participants earned industry-recognized certifications and prepared for careers in the union construction trades. Congratulations to the entire graduating class as they take the next step in their careers across Illinois' construction industry!

Illinois Works Will County Cohort Visits Illinois Holocaust Museum Jobsite

Participants from HIRE360's Illinois Works [Will County Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) recently traveled to Skokie for a behind the scenes visit to the [Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center](#) construction project led by [Pepper Construction](#). The visit gave participants firsthand exposure to active construction operations and the wide range of career pathways available across the skilled trades, including electrical work, welding, carpentry, and general construction.

Throughout the tour, participants connected with Pepper Construction leadership, including Superintendent Ken Freeman and Director of Inclusion and Industry Engagement Ashlie Stapleton, who shared insights on career growth, professionalism, safety, apprenticeship opportunities, and the day-to-day realities of working in the construction industry. Ken also spoke about his own journey from carpenter to superintendent, highlighting the importance of accountability, consistency, and leadership in building a long term career in the trades. Thank you to Pepper Construction for creating this opportunity and helping participants gain valuable real world exposure to careers in construction.





Will County Cohort Explores Careers in the Electrical and Sprinkler Fitting Trades

Participants from HIRE360's Illinois Works [Will County Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) recently visited both the [IBEW Local 701](#) Joint Apprenticeship Training Facility and [Sprinkler Fitters Local 281](#) to learn more about careers available through union apprenticeship pathways. Throughout the visits, participants explored hands-on training environments, learned about apprenticeship expectations and application processes, and gained insight into the technical skills, professionalism, and preparation required to succeed in the electrical and sprinkler fitting trades. Representatives from both unions also shared information about long term career opportunities, industry training, and the wide range of commercial and industrial projects supported throughout Illinois' construction industry.

Thank you to IBEW Local 701, the Joint Apprenticeship Training community, and Sprinkler Fitters Local 281 for welcoming our cohort and helping participants gain valuable real world exposure to careers in the trades.



Chicago Water Week Panel Highlights Workforce Pathways in the Blue Economy

HIRE360 Executive Director Jay Rowell joined business, civic, and workforce leaders during Chicago Water Week for a panel discussion on the blue economy and Chicago's water-secure future. Hosted by the [ChicagoGland Chamber of Commerce](#) in partnership with [Current](#), the conversation brought together leaders across industries to explore how water is shaping corporate strategy, infrastructure investment, and long term economic growth.

Moderated by Jack Lavin, President & CEO of the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, alongside Jay the panel featured Alaina Harkness, CEO of Current Water; Autumn Fox, Global Sustainability Director at [Mars](#); and Estelle Winkleman, Director of Climate Philanthropy at [Salesforce](#). The discussion also focused on workforce pathways, including the training, partnerships, and industry alignment needed to prepare individuals for careers in water stewardship, climate resilience, and related sectors, and how employers can play a more active role in building those pipelines.

Thank you to the Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce, Current, and all panelists, as well as partners and attendees from organizations including [ComEd](#), [World Business Chicago](#), [Cara Collective](#), [Skills for Chicago](#), [Openlands](#), and the [Illinois Science & Technology Coalition](#), for convening this important conversation.

Central and Southern Illinois Workforce

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.](#)



Former Personal Trainer Finds Career Path Through Climate Works Program

After struggling through a series of unstable jobs despite earning a degree in exercise science and working as a personal trainer, 26 year old Keith Perry from Alton, Illinois is now a member of [Roofers Local Union 2](#) working on commercial roofing projects across Missouri and Illinois.

Keith graduated from [HIRE360 Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) at [Lewis and Clark Community College](#), where he connected directly with union apprenticeship opportunities and discovered a stable career path in the trades that he previously never realized was accessible to him.

Having grown up in a low-income household, Keith's journey reflects how Climate Works is helping individuals across Illinois access workforce training, union career pathways, and long term opportunities in the skilled trades.

Alex Coker Begins Union Apprenticeship with Ironworkers Local 380

After struggling with addiction, homelessness, and instability throughout much of his 20s, Alexander James Coker, a 31 year old Champaign resident, found a new path forward through [HIRE360's Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) with [East Central Illinois Building and Construction Trades Council](#). During the program, Alex strengthened practical skills, explored multiple union trades, connected directly with union representatives, and was recognized as one of the top students in his class.

With support from HIRE360, Alex received reimbursement assistance for union application fees, transportation expenses, and child care while preparing for apprenticeship opportunities. He has now been accepted into the [Iron Workers Local 380](#) apprenticeship program in Urbana, marking an important next step toward the stable career and future he set out to build for himself and his family.



Awaken Foundation Celebrates Latest Climate Works Graduating Cohort

Congratulations to all graduates of the latest [HIRE360 Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program](#) cohort in Rockford in partnership with [Awaken Foundation](#)! We're proud to celebrate the 16 participants as they take the next step toward careers in the skilled trades after completing hands-on construction training, earning industry-recognized certifications including OSHA 10, CPR, and First Aid, and connecting directly with union apprenticeship and workforce opportunities tied to Illinois' growing clean energy and construction sectors.

Thank you to Awaken Foundation for their continued support in helping Illinois residents access workforce training and pathways into long term union careers across Illinois.

Business & Supply Chain



Clark Construction Strategic Partnership Program Celebrates New Graduates

Congratulations to this year's graduating class of [Clark Construction's Strategic Partnership Program \(SPP\)](#)! HIRE360 was proud to join Javid Aboutorabi, Director of Community Affairs for [Clark Construction](#), partners, industry leaders, and participating businesses in celebrating the completion of the eight-month program, which helps construction businesses strengthen their capacity, expand industry knowledge, position themselves for long term growth, and most importantly, understand the value of working as a team. HIRE360 submitted twenty-two Business Development clients, most of whom were accepted into this year's cohort.

The highlight of the program is the Capstone Project, where participants work in teams, leverage the knowledge gained throughout the course, and finally present to a panel of Clark executives. This year's winning team presentation was called "Urban Construction Group," which included the following HIRE360 Business Development clients:

- Darneice Strozier ([N&M Divine Services](#))
- Camaro Johnson ([Enhancement Trucking](#))
- Forest Brown ([Silverline Construction](#))
- Tiffany and Jimmie Williams ([Urban Roots](#))
- Angelia Hopson ([SHE Consulting Group](#)) – team mentor

*"I'm so glad HIRE360 recommended me for this program. It really exposes you to all phases of construction," said **Darneice Strozier of N&M Divine Services**. "I'm working on contracts now that I have been able to apply what I've learned through the program."*

HIRE360 is excited to see how this year's graduates continue growing their businesses and creating impact across Illinois' construction industry. The next cohort will begin in September and we're already identifying new candidates.

Youth Engagement



25 CPS Candidates Selected for City of Chicago Laborers Trainee Program

Congratulations to the 25 [Chicago Public School \(CPS\)](#) candidates recently selected for the [City of Chicago](#)'s Summer Laborers Trainee Program. Participants gathered at City Hall alongside representatives from the City of Chicago, [Streets and Sanitation](#), and [LiUNA Laborers' Local 1001](#) as they prepared to take the next step in their workforce journey. HIRE360 will support the candidates by covering fees associated with joining Local 1001 and continuing to serve as a resource as they pursue future opportunities within the construction trades. We're excited to see this group gain valuable experience and continue building pathways toward long-term careers in the trades and public service!



OneGoal Career Expo Connects Students to Careers in the Trades

Rashaan Meador, Director of Youth Engagement at HIRE360, recently participated in the [OneGoal Career Expo](#) at the William Blair building, where students had the opportunity to connect directly with professionals across multiple industries and learn more about future career pathways. During the event, Rashaan moderated the "Careers in Trades" panel alongside industry leaders including Jorge Toro of [Redmond Construction](#), Brittany Taylor of [Work With Focus](#), Montrell Hurt of [UJAMAA Construction](#), and Francis Pascal of Vendador. Panelists shared insight into career growth, training pathways, workplace expectations, and the opportunities available throughout the trades.

Thank you to OneGoal, event sponsors, and all participating professionals for creating meaningful conversations and helping students gain valuable exposure to future career opportunities.

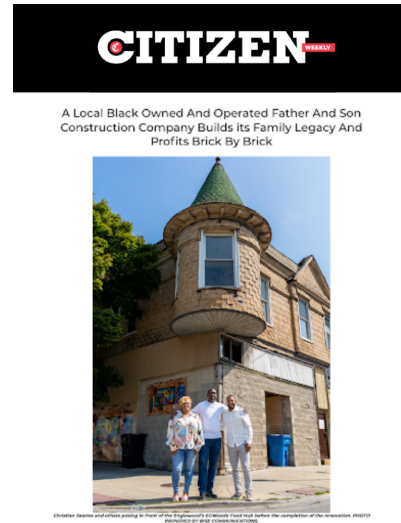
In The News

Featured Story: Francis Construction Builds Legacy Across Chicago

[Francis Construction](#) was recently featured in the [Citizen Newspaper Group](#) for its continued growth across Chicago's construction industry and its work on major development projects in Englewood, including the E.G. Woode Food Hub and a \$6 million project in partnership with R.A.G.E.

The story highlighted how Francis Construction, a Black-owned father and son construction company led by Steve and Christian Searles, has continued expanding its business while helping create career and investment opportunities across Chicago communities. The feature also highlighted the company's relationship with HIRE360 and how workforce and contractor development support helped Francis Construction scale projects and expand opportunities across its job sites.

[Read more here.](#)



HIRE360 in the News

[First-Year Carpenter Apprentice Taylor Dobson on the Union Difference](#) | America's Workforce Union Podcast

[Cook County Illinois Works celebrates workforce training pre-apprenticeship program grads](#) | Chicago Defender

[HIRE360 Celebrates Cook County Illinois Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program Graduating Cohort](#) | Plumbing & Mechanical

Business Spotlight

Ryan's Plumbing 1 Inc.

Ryan's Plumbing 1, Inc. is located at 420 E. 142nd, in Dolton, IL. The company has been delivering high quality plumbing and underground utility services since 2014. Founded and operated by Ryan Brown, the company is a trusted Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and Section 3 Certified contractor serving municipal, commercial, and residential clients throughout the Chicago area.

With extensive experience across the full spectrum of plumbing services, from site utilities to full system rehabilitation, Ryan's Plumbing 1 is known for



reliability, technical expertise, and the ability to execute complex infrastructure projects from start to finish. HIRE360 provides assistance with networking, certifications, and back-office support to help this business continue to grow. Ryan's Plumbing 1, Inc. is a signatory contractor for [Plumbers Local 130](#), [Local 150](#) & [Laborers Local 2](#). They operate under the following NAICS codes: 238220, 237110, 423720, 332913, 324121, 562119, and 237990.

To learn more about Ryan's Plumbing 1, Inc., contact them at [\(773\) 263-6195](tel:(773)263-6195) or ryanbrownplumber31@yahoo.com.



Our Mission is to Expand Employment Opportunities

Recruitment

IAM Mechanics' Local 701 Automotive and Diesel Training Program - September 2026 Enrollment

Are you considering a career as a Union Automotive Technician or Heavy-Duty Diesel Technician? The IAM Mechanics' Local 701 Automotive and Diesel Training Program September 2026 enrollment is now open for a limited time! This is the opportunity for debt free high-quality training that can give you the in-demand skills that the industry needs and employers want. Classes are held just one day per week to allow you the ability to learn while you earn a full-time position prior to graduation.

Visit www.local701training.org for enrollment applications and details for both programs, or call at 630-216-9853.

Apprenticeship Openings

The following apprenticeship programs are **open now**:

Electrical

- [IBEW Local 134 \(Alsip\)](#)
- [IBEW Local 176 \(Joliet\)](#)
- [IBEW Local 701 \(Westchester \(Cook County - DuPage County\)\)](#)

Pipefitters/Plumbers

- [Pipefitters UA Local 597 \(Chicago – Cook County\)](#)

Sheet Metal

- [Sheet Metal Workers Locals 265 \(Downers Grove\)](#)

Iron and Structural

- [Iron Workers Locals 63 \(Chicagoland\), 444, and 498](#)

Concrete / Laborers

- [Cement Masons Local 502 \(Bellwood\)](#)
- [Chicagoland Laborers District Council](#)

- [Bricklayers District Council Training Center \(Addison – DuPage County\)](#).

Roofing / Finishing / Glass

- [Roofers Local 11 \(La Grange – Cook County\)](#).
- [Finishing Trades Institute DC14 \(Berkeley - Cook County\)](#).
- [Glaziers Union Local 27 \(Lyons\)](#).

Heavy Equipment

- [Operating Engineers Local 150 \(Wilmington - Will County\)](#).

Riggers, Machinery Movers, and Machinery Erectors

- [Riggers Local 136 \(Broadview - Cook County\)](#).

Need Help Applying?

Our team is here to support you with apprenticeship test preparation, resume updates, recommendation letters, and understanding application requirements.

Contact your Candidate Support Advisor (formerly Case Manager):

- Phone: [\(312\) 575-2500](tel:(312)575-2500)
- Email: info@HIRE360Chicago.com

If you are serious about building a career, not just finding a job, now is the time to apply! We are proud to support pathways into union, family-sustaining careers.

Virtual Job Club

Job club happens every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, candidates can register here for the next job club. [Click here to register for the next job club!](#)

If you have any questions or would like more information about future Job Club sessions, feel free to reach out to your recruiter or case manager directly. You can also contact us at info@HIRE360Chicago.com or call [\(312\) 575-2500](tel:(312)575-2500).

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