



2026 Apprentice Ambassador Program

Illinois Workforce Innovation Board (IWIB) – Work-Based Learning & Apprenticeship (WBLA) Committee includes leaders from state, business, industry, labor, education and community-based organizations. The overall goal of the IWIB and WBLA is to evaluate and meet the workforce needs of Illinois' employers and workers. The IWIB Apprenticeship Committee is dedicated to expanding and diversifying apprenticeship programs throughout Illinois. The Committee has implemented an Apprentice Ambassador Program, creating a cohort of diverse apprentices and apprentice graduates of all ages, backgrounds and regions within Illinois - spanning multiple industries.

Program Overview

The **Apprentice Ambassador Program** is a year-long initiative to elevate the voices of current and graduated apprentices across Illinois. This cohort will promote the value of apprenticeships, offer mentorship, and provide feedback to the IWIB Apprenticeship Committee.

Vision & Goals

- Leverage apprentice experiences to advocate for apprenticeship pathways.
- Build leadership, communication, and public engagement skills.
- Represent diverse industries, backgrounds, and regions statewide.
- Promote equity and opportunity through apprenticeship stories

Ambassador Expectations

- Serve as public champions and mentors for apprenticeships.
- Share experiences and success stories with stakeholders.
- Participate in 8 program engagements per year, including:
 - **4 virtual check-ins** with IWIB leadership
 - **2 in-person professional development sessions**
 - **Participation in National Apprenticeship Week & year-end ceremony**
 - **Optional engagements:** WIOA Summit, speaking events, Youth Apprenticeship Week

Eligibility & Selection

- Open to current and former apprentices (Registered or Unregistered).
- Goal: 10 ambassadors, ideally one from each Economic Development Region (EDR).
- Selected via application process launching Fall 2025.
 - The application will be created in MachForm and a link distributed.
 - DCEO will email past and current grantees along with Chambers and others.
 - Illinois workNet will provide regular announcements on social media and the www.ApprenticeshipIllinois.com website.
- Employers must support Ambassador activities and will be recognized as Apprenticeship Champions in Illinois.

Training & Support

- Professional development led by ICSPS, focusing on public speaking and networking.
- Ambassadors will receive coaching and recognition throughout the year.
- Promotions via social media, newsletters, and IWIB events.

Program Timeline

- **Launch:** December 2025
- **Conclusion:** December 2026
- **Training & Events:** Scheduled throughout the year (see Appendix A)

Contact:

Sheryl Morris: morris.sheryl@gmail.com

IWIB Member & Apprentice Ambassador Workgroup Lead

Appendix A:

DATE/TIME	EVENT	TOPIC	VIRTUAL, HYBRID, IN-PERSON
12/1/2025 9:00-12:00 1:00-3:00	2025 Ambassador Cohort Recognition *Optional Event* - More details given at a future date.		*Virtual
1/12/2026 12:00-1:30pm	2026 Ambassador Cohort Kick-Off	Program Info with Meet & Greet	Virtual
2/9/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session	“Tell Your Story” with Amiel Harper from Mopheus Consultancy	Virtual
3/9/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session	Introduction to Soft Skills with Zurich	Virtual
4/13/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session – Community of Practice	Past Ambassador Q&A – What do you want to know?	Virtual
4/26/2026-5/2/2026 Time: TBD	Attend one National Apprenticeship Week Event: *Event will be online or in-person locally*	National Apprenticeship Week (NAW)	Hybrid
5/11/2026 All Day	Illinois Workforce Summit: Ambassador Panel *Optional Event* - More details given at a future date.	Attend the Summit	Hybrid
5/18/2026	Professional Development Session – Community of Practice	Lessons from the Summit – General discussion	Virtual
6/15/2026 All Day	Professional Development & Networking Session	Zurich and PR Training with Eric Herman from Teneo	In-Person at ISU Alumni Center
7/13/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session	Financial Literacy with Lincoln Land Credit Union: Understanding Your Money	Virtual
8/10/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session – Community of Practice	Barriers To Succeeding – Open conversation in what’s holding your career back	Virtual

9/14/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session	Career Planning/ Application Process – LWIAs Speak	Virtual
10/12/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session	Hear from HR – Interview Practices	Virtual
11/9/2026 12:00-1:00pm	Professional Development Session – Community of Practice	Year in Review – Highs and Lows of being an ambassador	Virtual
12/10/2026 8:00am-5:00pm	Recognition Ceremony – IWIB/WBLA Quarterly		Hybrid