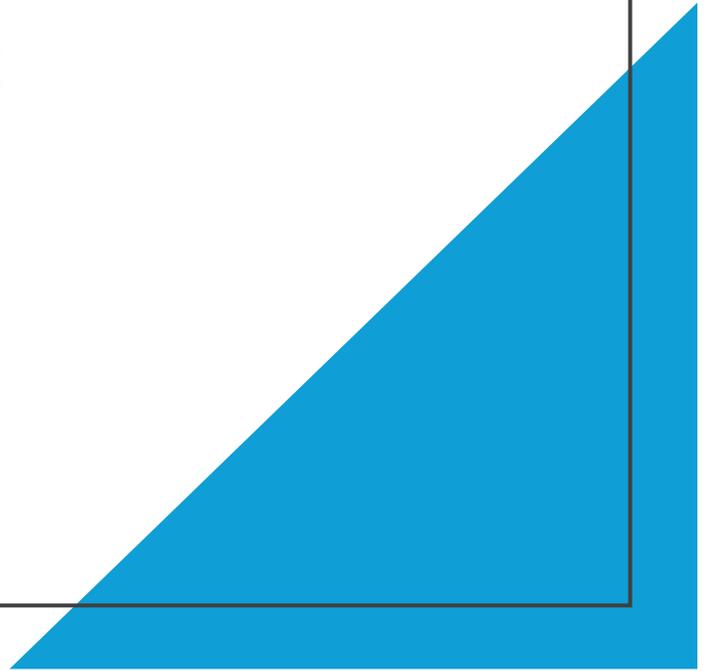# Collab for Success! Illinois Community College Board Partnership

- Lavon Nelson, Senior Director for Workforce Education

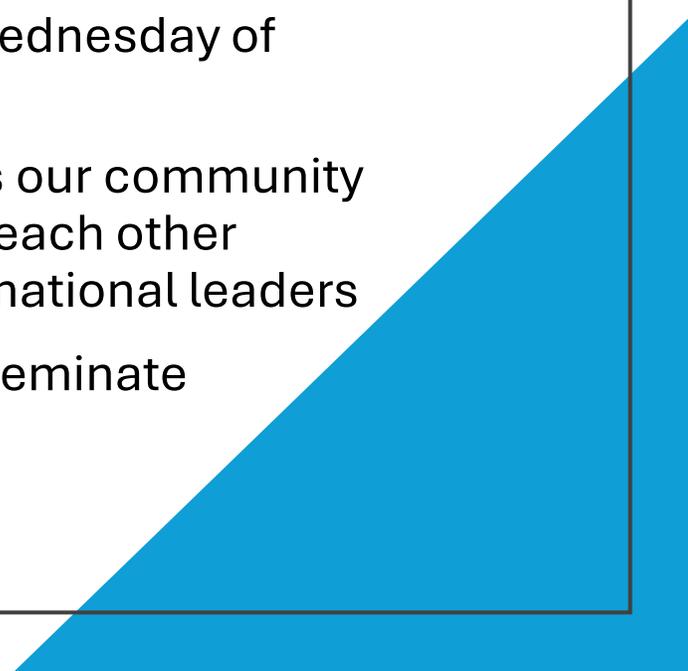- Angela Gerberding, Director for Work-Based Learning

- March 9, 2026

Topics for the next hour:

Ongoing work in the community college system apprenticeship space:

1) Highlight the ICCB survey – "*ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE APPRENTICESHIP REPORT: An In-Depth Analysis*"

2) Detail the support for IL community colleges

3) Share ways LWIAs and CCs are partnering

Our current support system:

✓ State-level Workgroup – comprised of 2 staff from ICCB and 6 staff from colleges leading the way in apprenticeships; this group meets at least monthly.

✓ Apprenticeship Survey – conducted in May 2025 of all 39 community colleges across the state – Find the full report [here](#).

✓ Virtual Learning Communities – started in late 2023. The 2nd Wednesday of each month and continues monthly

✓ Annual Community College Apprenticeship Convening – brings our community college system together around apprenticeships to learn from each other through sessions and networking opportunities and hear from national leaders

✓ Apprenticeship Listserv – maintained by ICCB and used to disseminate information to apprenticeship contacts at each college

State-level Workgroup: Members and Activities

8-member team – 6 from community colleges, 2 from ICCB

City Colleges of Chicago

College of DuPage

Heartland Community College

Lake Land College

Parkland College

William Rainey Harper College

How was the group created?

To strengthen statewide apprenticeship engagement, the ICCB convened a working group comprising apprenticeship leaders at community colleges.

What do they do?

- strategize forward momentum for the system
- lead learning communities
- aided in developing the survey
- serve as resources to other programs
- help organize and carry out annual convening
- present at various state and national conferences

Apprenticeship Landscape

80% of community colleges offer an apprenticeship program.

53% offer pre-apprenticeships.

234 unique apprenticeship programs offered in connection with community colleges:
- 194 are registered
- 219 are credit-bearing
- 15 offered through noncredit

Although there is significant variety, the majority of programs are in **manufacturing**, **healthcare**, and **information technology**.

25% reported serving as a program sponsor, alleviating the administrative burden from employers.
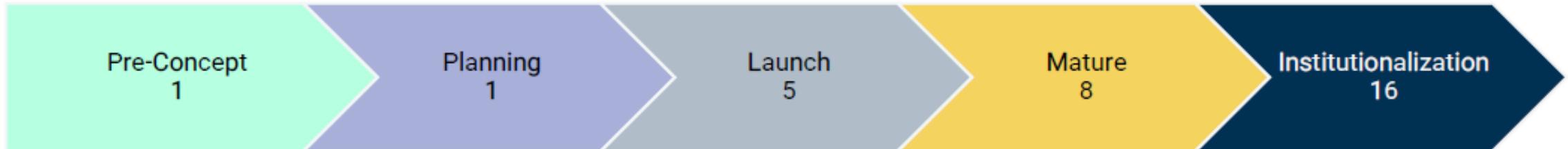
1,729 students enrolled in Illinois community apprenticeship programs in FY24.

Apprentice Enrollment Trends

APPRENTICES PARTICIPATING IN ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE PROGRAMS[4]	FY22	FY23	FY24
Participated In USDOL Registered Apprenticeship In Reporting Year	1,486	1,185	1,608
Participated In Nonregistered Apprenticeship Training Model In Reporting Year	136	135	121
TOTAL	1,622	1,320	1,729

[4] **ICCB Annual Enrollment and Completion (A1) Data**

Programming and Implementation

Pre-Concept 1	Planning 1	Launch 5	Mature 8	Institutionalization 16

19 are **intermediaries** that offer expertise to employers and labor organizations to successfully launch, promote, and expand registered apprenticeship programs in growing industries.

Where are Illinois Community Colleges on the Apprenticeship Implementation Spectrum?

None – 9 - Apprenticeships do not exist formally

Pre-Concept – 1 – considering where to start and how

Planning – 1 – have an apprenticeship in mind and are determining steps to implement

Launch – 5 – have started at least 1 apprenticeship program

Mature – 8 – currently running and scaling apprenticeships

Institutionalization – 16 – looking to identify other industry sectors to develop employer partners to add new apprenticeship opportunities
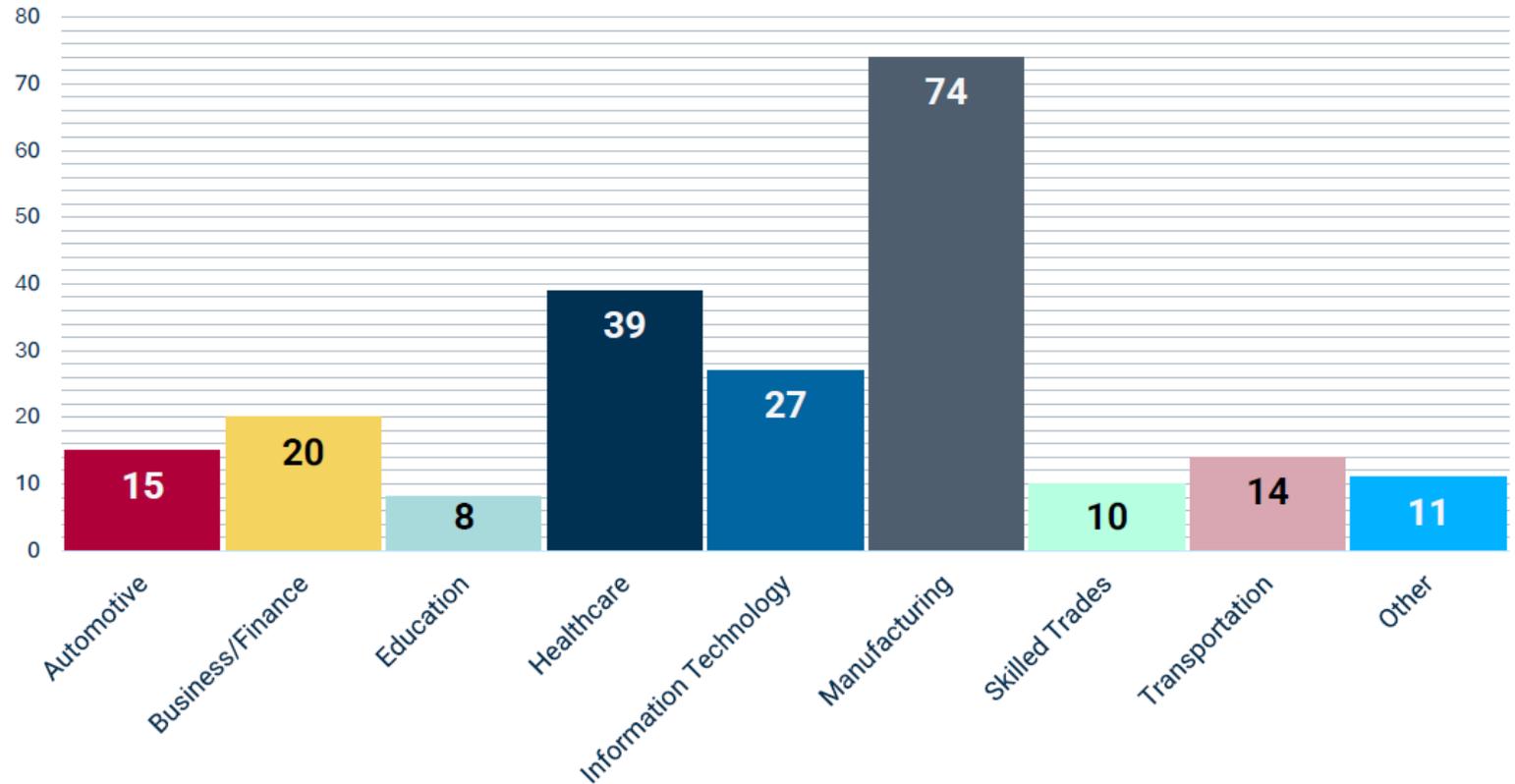
Additionally, 17 colleges are program sponsors.

Programming and Implementation

Examples:

- Industrial Maintenance Technician

- Certified Nursing Assistant

- Precision Machinist

- Cybersecurity Specialist

- Surgical Technician

- Early Childhood Educator

- Paralegal

PROGRAMS OFFERED BY SECTOR

Sector	Programs
Automotive	15
Business/Finance	20
Education	8
Healthcare	39
Information Technology	27
Manufacturing	74
Skilled Trades	10
Transportation	14
Other	11

Funding

Many of the programs are funded primarily through grants and employer contributions via a cost recovery model. Grants vary by source, including federal, state, and philanthropic entities.

Institutional leadership and dedicated staffing were essential to successful community college apprenticeship programs.

Common Grants:

- Pipeline for the Advancement of the Healthcare Workforce (PATH) (ICCB)
- Taking Back The Trades! Grant (ICCB)
- Perkins Leadership Grants (ICCB)
- Job Training and Economic Development (DCEO)
- Apprenticeship Expansion (DCEO)
- Partnership To Advance Youth Apprenticeships (PAYA)
- Jobs For the Future (JFF) Grants
- Urban Institute-Dell Family
- Noncredit Strategies at Work (ICCB)
- Innovative Bridge and Transitions (ICCB)

Partnerships with employers were strong when they were...

Intensive

Strategic

Continuous and varied

Community awareness

Solution-oriented

Brought in or used other partners to help make the sale

Showcased existing programs

Outcomes

REPORTED IMPACT & OUTCOMES		
Apprentices	**Community Colleges**	**Employers And Local Communities**
• Hands on experience • Industry connections • Structured pathway to develop in-demand skills and experiences	• Retention and enrollment tool • Strengthening community partnerships • Enhancing reputation • Supports workforce development in the region	• Satisfied employers • Connections to the community colleges • Support workforce development in the region • Meets employer needs

What are the biggest obstacles to adopting or expanding apprenticeships on campus?

EMPLOYER BUY-IN
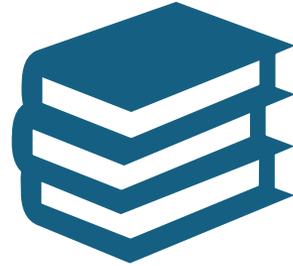
RESOURCES

CAPACITY

STAFFING

CROSS-CAMPUS COLLABORATION

SCHEDULING CHALLENGES

AWARENESS

Virtual Learning Communities – past topics

Year 1 – "Essential-to-Know" apprenticeship topics

Registered vs. Unregistered Apprenticeships

National Apprenticeship Week Activities

Proposed Rules from DOL

Youth Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships 101

Year 2 – topics by industry

Manufacturing
Healthcare
IT
Finance, Business, Banking
Education
TDL
Electric Vehicle and Agriculture

Virtual Learning Communities – continued

Year 3 – Needs identified in the survey and Think Tanks

Needs identified:
Employer engagement (Aug)
Funding options (Oct)
Internal Partnerships (Dec)
Pipelines for apprenticeships, Marketing, data tracking (future)

Think Tanks:
Group discussions around the previous month's topic (Sept, Nov, Jan) – utilizing break out rooms, collecting notes, and using AI to summarize results to share with the group

Ways LWIAs and Community Colleges are partnering

- *Regular meetings with Business Services Team*
- *Monthly county-wide apprenticeship meeting*
- *Joint meetings with local employers*
- *Co-Host National Apprenticeship Week Event at the college*
- *Braided funding*
- *Top community college administrators attend LWIB meetings as members*
- *Colleges have WIOA leads for vetting and assisting students*
- *Colleges house American Job Center (AJC) Office*
- *College Career Development Teams coordinate job fairs with LWIA*

Discussion...

What did we miss that you know is already happening?

How can community colleges and LWIAs collaborate better in the apprenticeship space?