



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 14, 2022

ICC Peoria Cradle to Career Initiative jump-started by \$500,000 in funds secured by Congresswoman Bustos

Illinois Central College's Peoria Cradle to Career Initiative (CCI) received \$500,000 in secured funds from Illinois 17th District Congresswoman Cheri Bustos' direct request as part of the \$1.5 trillion federal spending bill passed by Congress last week.

The \$500,000 in federal funding, along with over \$70,000 from PNC, for CCI will help reenergize the project aimed at addressing the needs of children and families who live in the impoverished 61605 Peoria zip code, one of the most distressed areas in the country.

The Initiative is a community-based partnership between Illinois Central College, Peoria Public Schools, the City of Peoria, the CEO Council, and 29 additional community partners designed to transform the neighborhoods of the distressed 61605 zip code. This initial funding lays the groundwork for the reapplication of a \$30 million U.S. Department of Education Promise Neighborhood Grant.

"We could not be more excited about the funding of the Jump-Starting the Peoria Cradle to Career Initiative, which lays the foundation for community revitalization of the 61605 neighborhoods," Illinois Central College President Dr. Sheila Quirk-Bailey said. "Through assessments of each family's education, workforce training, employment, housing, healthcare, and other needs, a regional plan will be launched to ensure members of one of the most devastated communities in the country, receive the support they need to become productive and successful members of their community."

The \$500,000 will be used to take inventory of human resources and infrastructure necessary to establish baselines for the improvement of educational outcomes, the expansion of technology capabilities, and stronger engagement with career and community resources.

"I greatly appreciate Rep. Bustos for understanding the importance of the Peoria Cradle to Career Initiative, a village approach to transforming neighborhoods in Peoria's south side," Peoria Mayor Dr. Ria Ali said. "Ultimately, the families of zip code 61605 and the entire city will benefit from the socio-economic investments planned for this area."

The Peoria 61605 zip code has a Distressed Communities Index Score of 99.6 out of 100. This score is an analysis of more than 25,000 zip codes conducted by the Economic Innovation Group, with problems ranging from low education attainment, high crime rate, unemployment, poor health outcomes, and inadequate infrastructure.

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