



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Illinois Central College Participates in Classroom to Career Summit at the White House**

*ICC was invited to participate for its IT Workforce Accelerator and Employ Central Illinois initiatives*

East Peoria, IL (11/14/2024) – On November 13, 2024, Illinois Central College President Dr. Sheila Quirk-Bailey participated in the Biden-Harris Administration’s “Classroom to Career” White House Summit. President Joe Biden and First Lady Jill Biden welcomed approximately 200 education and workforce leaders to the White House for the event.

The Administration’s Investing in America agenda is creating millions of good-paying jobs—many of which do not require a four-year college degree—and its investments will continue to drive job creation for years to come. The Summit highlighted record progress to expand career pathways to these good-paying jobs in infrastructure, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, and more. The Summit brought together Cabinet members and other senior Administration officials, state and local elected officials, community college presidents, K-12 leaders, unions, workforce development leaders from the nine White House Workforce Hubs and other communities across the country, business leaders, representatives of philanthropic organizations, and students.

ICC was recommended for participation in the Summit by both the U.S. Economic Development Administration for its IT Workforce Accelerator program and the U.S. Department of Education for its Employ Central Illinois initiative. The White House recognizes that the regional innovations and ecosystems ICC is creating demonstrate national best-in-class outcomes that make them future national models for serving students and communities.

At the Summit, President Biden announced that more than \$80 billion from his American Rescue Plan has now been committed to strengthening and expanding the American workforce, helping to meet the promise of these historic investments—from supporting high-quality free community college programs in high-demand fields to expanding Registered Apprenticeships to attracting and retaining a skilled, diverse workforce in critical industries. These efforts are helping students and workers—including those without four-year degrees—access good-paying opportunities spurred by the Investing in America agenda.

Following the White House Reception on Career Pathways, the U.S. Department of Education hosted an afternoon summit focused on the economic imperative for career-connected education and how education and industry leaders can build high-quality pathways from

classroom to career. Quirk-Bailey joined leaders from across the Administration, as well as institutional, state, and industry experts, to discuss efforts to address workforce needs by aligning education with high-demand careers.

“Being invited to participate in the Classroom to Career Summit by our federal partners for multiple projects is a tremendous honor for ICC,” said Quirk-Bailey. “We are incredibly proud of the impact ICC is making in our community to help individuals obtain high-demand, higher-wage jobs, and we hope the recognition we received from the White House will allow our programs to be leveraged on a national level so individuals and communities across the country can benefit from our work.”

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Illinois Central College is a two-year community college with campuses in East Peoria, Peoria and Pekin, Illinois, providing a high-quality, affordable education to prepare students to enter the workforce or to transfer to a four-year institution. ICC is the 2020 awardee of the National Community College Charles Kennedy Equity Award from ACCT, a 2022 EDA Good Job Challenge Institution, and the Lead College for the state of Illinois’ Workforce Equity Initiative. ICC also conducts original research in agricultural fields, including water quality and soil conservation. For more information, visit [icc.edu](http://icc.edu).