



Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Illinois Central College Hosts Apprenticeship Signing and Recognition Day**

East Peoria, IL (11/19/24) – Illinois Central College (ICC) hosted its annual Apprenticeship Signing and Recognition Day on Tuesday, November 19, at the Peoria campus. Twenty-seven students who are starting apprenticeships signed contracts with their new employers, including Caterpillar, Eaton, Liberty Steel and Wire, and Nestlé. Thirty students who completed their apprenticeships were also recognized.

ICC started its apprenticeship program in 2018 with five employer partners. This year, ICC is partnering with 35 employers to create apprenticeships. In total, over 180 ICC students have enrolled in apprenticeship programs.

Cameron Joost, Assistant Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, presented a proclamation on behalf of Governor J.B. Pritzker to ICC and the employers in attendance.

The event was part of the U.S. Department of Labor's tenth annual National Apprenticeship Week (NAW), which showcases the positive impact apprenticeships have on advancing students' careers, providing a skilled workforce for local businesses, and growing the regional economy.

Regional statistics on apprenticeships show that the average starting wage after completing an apprenticeship is \$62,500. Apprenticeship programs also increase employee loyalty with 90% of apprentices staying with their employer.

Dr. Sheila Quirk-Bailey, President of ICC, said, "ICC is committed to creating pathways to allow individuals in our region to earn credentials leading to jobs that pay a family-sustaining wage. Apprenticeships are one of the many opportunities for individuals to change the trajectory of their and their families' lives while providing employers in our region with the skilled workforce they need to create a vibrant regional economy."

ICC offers eleven apprenticeships registered with the Department of Labor: CNC Precision Machinist, Industrial Maintenance, Industrial Electrical Technology, Mechanical Maintenance Technician, Automotive Technician, Secure Software, Network Administrator, Surgical Technologist, Certified Nursing Assistant, Licensed Practical Nurse, and Registered Nurse. Eight more apprenticeship programs are in the registration process: Welding, HVAC Technology, HVAC Technician, Agricultural Technician, Radiographer, Diagnostic Medical Sonographer, Respiratory Therapist, and Central Sterile Service Technician. ICC also offers six

pre-apprenticeship programs: Advanced Manufacturing, Health Careers, Highway Construction, Climate Works Construction, Solar Pipeline, and Information Technology.

In addition to apprenticeships, ICC leads Employ Central Illinois, an initiative to develop a regional ecosystem to provide high school students with access to high-quality dual credit courses, work-based experiences, and post-graduation apprenticeships. The initiative leads students to career pathways including Certified Nursing Assistant, Construction, HVAC Technology, Industrial Electrical Technology, Industrial Maintenance Technology, Information Technology, and Welding. Employ Central Illinois is a partnership between ICC, Illini Bluffs High School, Pekin High School, Peoria Public Schools, the Peoria Regional Office of Education, SkillsUSA Illinois, and the West Central Illinois Building and Construction Trades Unions. It is funded through the U.S. Department of Education's Perkins Innovation and Modernization (PIM) Career Connected High Schools Grant Program.

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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).