

# ILLINOIS COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT REPORT BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SERVICES FISCAL YEAR 2008

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**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT REPORT  
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SERVICES  
FISCAL YEAR 2008**

*Executive Summary*

The Illinois Community College Board provided more than \$3.3 million to community colleges during fiscal year 2008 to provide workforce and economic development services through their Business and Industry Centers. The workforce development activities conducted under this grant include customized job training on campus or on-site at a business; assisting entrepreneurs in business start-up; providing counseling and management assistance to small and medium sized business owners; helping businesses with government procurement opportunities; offering professional continuing education; developing training programs for unemployed and underemployed workers; and serving businesses with alternative education modalities, such as distance learning. The grant funds allow colleges to help companies grow by providing economic development assistance at costs they can afford and by providing needed technical and English language training for upgrading workers' skills. Below are highlights of the community colleges' activities for fiscal year 2008.

- **Contract/Customized Job Training.** Community colleges provided 8,776 contract training courses to 2,890 companies. Through these courses, 101,059 employees were trained for a total of 203,946 contact hours of instruction or 25,493 days of training. This contributed to the formation of 9 companies, expansion of 53 companies, and the retention of 342 companies. A total of 864 jobs were created and another 6,515 jobs were retained.
- **Entrepreneurship Seminars and Workshops.** Community colleges conducted 597 entrepreneurship seminars and workshops for 8,342 participants. This helped in the creation of 44 new businesses, expansion of 20 businesses, and retention of another 19 businesses. As a result, 136 jobs were created and 60 jobs were retained.
- **Counseling and Management Assistance.** Counseling and management assistance was provided to 3,792 individuals or organizations. This assistance resulted in 176 companies being formed, 111 companies expanding, and 129 companies being retained. A total of 1,165 jobs were created and 807 more jobs were retained as a result of business counseling.
- **Contract Procurement Assistance.** Eight community college districts provided 824 businesses with government contract procurement assistance. As a result, 68 businesses received 4,646 federal contracts totaling \$826,889,935. The receipt of these contracts contributed to the creation of 13 firms, expansion of 50 businesses and retention of 311 businesses while 148 jobs were created and 3,814 jobs were retained.
- **Public Training Activities.** Illinois community colleges provided 2,274 noncredit public training courses and 2,962 noncredit workshops and seminars to 37,156 individual participants and served 2,923 organizations.

- **Employment and Training Services for Unemployed or Underemployed Workers.** Twelve community colleges reported offering 282 noncredit workshops and seminars to 3,898 unemployed or underemployed individuals. In addition, another 227 noncredit/credit courses were provided to 1,666 participants. As a result, 8,604 individuals received job placement services. Community colleges also reported 79 additional activities such as advisement services, resume workshops, and career fairs. These additional services affected another 25,377 individuals
- **Business Attraction, Retention, and Expansion.** Business attraction, retention, and expansion activities at 10 community colleges assisted 542 companies in potential expansion and other activities. Participation in other economic development activities by community colleges led to the creation of 12 companies, expansion of 23 companies, and retention of 65 companies. As a result, 432 jobs were created and 2,005 jobs were retained.
- **Distance Learning and Continuous Improvement.** Community colleges offered 1,850 noncredit internet courses, 12 satellite broadcasts, and 178 two-way interactive video courses.
- **Other Workforce Development Activities and Partnerships.** Throughout the state, the colleges' Business and Industry Centers performed job testing for 84 organizations and developed job profiles and assessments for 60 organizations. Six benchmarking studies and 39 workplace literacy programs were conducted. A total of 1,518 other programs were offered, including German and Spanish courses, post assessments, programs in Lean, ISO, and APICS, and ACT Work Keys Exams.

In summary, Illinois Community colleges provided workforce and economic development services to a total of nearly 185,000 businesses and individuals. These services resulted in the start up of over 250 companies, expansion of almost 260 companies, and retention of more than 850 companies. In addition, nearly 2,750 jobs were created and more than another 13,000 jobs were retained.

**WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT GRANT REPORT  
BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY SERVICES  
FISCAL YEAR 2008**

**Introduction**

The Illinois Community College Board provided over \$3.3 million in workforce preparation grant funds to all Illinois public community college districts in fiscal year 2008. Business and Industry Services grants provide funding for a Business and Industry Center at each community college to provide a variety of employment, training and business services both in and outside the classroom. It is necessary for colleges to provide a diverse set of services for businesses. Therefore, the services the community colleges offer are focused on a variety of issues, including government regulation and compliance, identifying potential employees, identifying and implementing organizational systems, and upgrading the skills of current employees. The demand for customized training continues to increase because of the dramatic changes in the use of advanced technology in the workplace. In addition to customized training, colleges used the funds to offer workshops, seminars and counseling on entrepreneurship and business management, assistance with obtaining governmental business contracts, services for the unemployed and underemployed, training activities for the public and many other useful resources for businesses and individuals in the district. Each community college is committed to supporting its community, including its economic development and workforce needs.

Community Colleges provide an array of services to business and industry as well as individuals. This report highlights many of those services and activities. The workforce development activities conducted under the grant are divided into nine categories in order to capture the diversity of activities as well as the outcomes resulting from each service. During fiscal year 2008, the Illinois Community College System reported providing services to nearly 185,000 businesses and individuals through colleges' Business and Industry Centers. These services resulted in the start up of over 250 companies, expansion of almost 260 companies, and retention of more than 850 companies. In addition, nearly 2,750 jobs were created and more than another 13,000 jobs were retained.

**Contract/Customized Job Training**

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The diversity of contract training programs is growing in Illinois as the needs of area businesses change. Colleges designed or brokered programs that were tailored specifically to meet the training needs of employers. Businesses determined the type of training they need, the schedule that fits their

operation, and the location of the training. Customized training was offered in company facilities and on campus. Instructors were chosen from within the companies, among subject-matter experts, or from college staff depending on the demands of the business. Not only do businesses seek assistance from community colleges to increase the skills and knowledge of their

workforces, but they are also seeking assistance with strategic planning, process improvement and other business-wide operations that lead to increased productivity.

In fiscal year 2008, community colleges provided 8,776 contract training courses to 2,890 companies. Through these courses, 101,059 employees were trained for a total of 203,946 contact hours of instruction or 25,493 days of training. This contributed to the formation of 9 companies, expansion of 53 companies, and the retention of 342 companies. A total of 864 jobs were created and another 6,515 jobs were retained.

### **Case Study:**

Southwestern Illinois College and United States Steel Corporation (USS) have maintained a partnership for more than three decades. USS is a major employer in the college district employing nearly 2,000 area residents. The company's participation has been instrumental in keeping Selsius™, the college's workforce training agency, abreast of workforce needs. Since 1997, Selsius™ has been working with USS to provide training programs and other performance improvement services for employees. Training has been provided to more than 100 USS employees in the areas of leadership and management development, retention, and turnover. Selsius™ works with USS to provide 40 hours of leadership training twice each year, covering either essential topics for new management associates. Using in-house curriculum, Selsius™ partnered with USS to facilitate basic leadership skills training to front-line leaders who had never received any formal training. In addition, Selsius™ recently implemented a business writing course for two groups of upper level managers to improve the effectiveness of communications throughout the plant.

### **Entrepreneurship Seminars and Workshops**

Entrepreneurship seminars and workshops are provided by community colleges across Illinois. These learning opportunities are open to individuals who are interested in starting a business and for individuals who are currently running their own business. Individual assistance is provided with business plans, finances, state and federal employment laws and other resources needed to be successful. Many of the community colleges providing entrepreneurship programming are

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part of the Illinois Entrepreneurship Network which is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO).

Community colleges conducted 597 entrepreneurship seminars and workshops for 8,342 participants during fiscal year 2008. This helped in the creation of 44 new businesses, expansion of 20 businesses, and retention of another 19 businesses. As a result, 136 jobs were created and 60 jobs were retained.

### **Case Study:**

After over twenty-five years of working for someone else, an individual approached the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) at Lincoln Land Community College for help pursuing

his long-delayed entrepreneurial dream. While his entire career was spent working for banks, his focus had been on technology, remittance processing, and electronic banking. Thus, he did not know the process of obtaining a loan. Adding to his challenge was the importance of keeping his pursuit of a new business opportunity extremely confidential in respect to his current employer, fellow employees, and the local business press. Counselors at the SBDC worked confidentially with the potential business owner to create a business plan. They also assisted throughout the purchase process, spending over six hours in direct counseling. Commercial loans of over \$1.9 million were secured, the purchase was completed, and the business was able to remain open under the new ownership.

### **Counseling and Management Assistance**

Small business owners have come to depend on the educational information, support and resources that are provided by the local community college Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs). The majority of these SBDCs are part of the Illinois Entrepreneurship Network which is sponsored by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. During the initial start up phase of a business, positive relationships are built as support and resources are shared. These contacts continue to grow over the years and develop into long-term relationships.

During fiscal year 2008, community colleges provided counseling and management assistance to 3,792 individuals or organizations. This assistance resulted in 176 companies being formed, 111 companies expanding, and 129 companies being retained. A total of 1,165 jobs were created and 807 more jobs were retained as a result of business counseling.

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### **Case Study:**

Star Manufacturing made the initial contact with Highland Community College's Business Institute requesting assistance with internal communications with employees at management level. From that point forward, the college assigned one of its lead instructors to work with the company. During this period, the instructor met with several people within the company individually and as small groups to discuss their current situation in an attempt to find where the problem was. Once information was gathered, a six hour training course was customized for eleven participants. Response from course participants was very favorable. Each received quality information, gained a new perspective on proper communications, and received some of the tools necessary to improve the overall communication within the company.

### **Contract Procurement Assistance**

Many businesses have discovered that the federal and state governments can be profitable and stable clients. However, the process of applying for government contracts can be difficult and time consuming. Procurement Technical Assistance Centers (PTAC) help businesses to navigate through government processes. In fiscal year 2008, over \$825 million in contracts were awarded to Illinois businesses who sought assistance from the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers.



Many of the community colleges that have a Procurement Technical Assistance Center are part of the Illinois Entrepreneurship Network which is sponsored by the DCEO.

Eight community college districts provided 824 businesses with government contract procurement assistance during fiscal year 2008. As a result, 68 businesses received 4,646 federal contracts totaling \$826,889,935.

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contracts contributed to the creation of 13 businesses, expansion of 50 businesses and retention of 311 businesses while 148 jobs were created and 3,814 jobs were retained.

### **Case Study:**

JM Industrial Supply, founded in 1984, sells maintenance, repair, and operations material to light and heavy manufacturers and other industrial markets. The company acts as a hardware store and mill supply house for the metals industry, especially large manufacturers. The company initially requested assistance from the IL PTAC at Illinois Central College to expand its markets into the government and prime contractor sectors, leverage its Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) status by applying for certifications, balance out unpredictable sales cycles and increase their bottom line. The IL PTAC has provided many services including: pricing histories to help the company bid competitively; key contacts and introductions to contacts; internet research; information and assistance with completing requirements for a Blanket Purchase Agreement and getting on GSA Schedule; information and assistance with getting SBA 8(a) certified; workshops to increase knowledge base and network with buyers, large businesses, and other small businesses; and Mentor-Protégée information and contacts and renewal of ORCA registration. Since 1997, JM Industrial has secured and reported 117 government contract awards which total \$1,788,528 and retained two jobs.

### **Public Training Activities**

As technology continues to expand and businesses become more sophisticated, employees find it necessary to return to the classroom to continue their education. Businesses have also found a need to document individual and employee skill development. Therefore, community colleges have increased the number of publically offered professional development classes that are designed to increase the employee skill in computer application, management principles and other skills related to specific professions.

In fiscal year 2008, Illinois community colleges served 2,923 organizations through noncredit public training courses, workshops, and seminars.

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## Case Study:

Kaskaskia College has begun a program called “KC at Work” with the hope of assisting employees of some of the district’s area industries further their education. Through the program, employees of a company can earn college credit and work toward obtaining a degree or complete a degree while working at their place of employment. Currently, KC at Work programs are being utilized by Nascote Industries, Innertech, and NOTS Servics. The Maschhoffs, Inc. is starting its own comprehensive in-house training through which they will partner with the college giving them the capability of offering credit classes to their employees. Classes for these programs are offered both at the business location and at one of the college’s education centers. These programs are intended to help employees retain jobs by increasing their skill level through providing higher education at the job site.

## Employment and Training Services for Unemployed or Underemployed Workers

Partnerships are often developed between the local community colleges and local employment assistance organizations to provide resources and services to individuals and employers. Linking businesses and individuals to employment opportunities is a core activity of the community college. Colleges provide various resources such as one-on-one job counseling, resume writing, interview techniques, and other noncredit workshops that provide support for those who are unemployed or underemployed. Community colleges encourage economic growth by providing quality education to individuals and then link those skilled individuals to employment opportunities within the community.

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reported 79 additional activities such as advisement services, resume workshops, and career fairs. These additional services affected another 25,377 individuals.

## Case Study:

Elgin Community College Corporate Services, in partnership with the Elgin Area Chamber of Commerce, hosted the second annual Manufacturers Resource Conference. It was attended by manufacturing companies, educators and community leaders. The theme of the conference was “Forming Alliances of Community, Business and Educational Organizations to Solve the Workforce Crisis”. Dr. Edward Gordon, author of *The 2010 Meltdown* gave the morning keynote address entitled “People can’t find jobs and businesses can’t find people”. The conference included a portion where individuals from DDI (Development Dimensions International) and Monster.com interviewed more than 5,000 individuals for selection in a research study.

## **Business Attraction, Retention and Expansion**

Growing companies are in need of a skilled workforce, updated facilities and access to technology. Many communities strive to provide all these resources to attract and retain businesses that bring economic growth to the area. Community colleges play a key role in attraction, retention, and expansion activities. Colleges possess a wealth of resources that

Business attraction, retention, and expansion activities at 10 community colleges assisted 542 companies in potential expansion and other activities in fiscal year 2008.

businesses look for when faced with location and expansion decisions. Community colleges often assist businesses by designing, developing, and delivering incumbent employee training for expanding businesses; providing preemployment testing and training; and temporary use of college facilities.

Business attraction, retention, and expansion activities at 10 community colleges assisted 542 companies in potential expansion and other activities in fiscal year 2008. Participation in other economic development activities by community colleges led to the creation of 12 companies, expansion of 23 companies, and retention of 65 companies. As a result, 432 jobs were created and 2,005 jobs were retained.

### **Case Study:**

Corporate and Continuing Education and The Illinois Small Business Development Center at Kankakee Community College participated in an economic development venture in which a local steel employer was anticipating relocating his business to another state and possibly displacing more than 20 full time employees. The college was the first point of contact and arranged a meeting with SCORE, Opportunity Returns, and the Kankakee County Planning Department for the revolving loan program. Together, they developed an economic incentive document that highlighted the advantages of remaining in Kankakee County as well as financial incentives to assist the company with expansion. Several meetings were hosted by KCC to link to various state financial incentive programs. In the end, the company not only decided to remain in Kankakee County, but initiated an expansion project that created 25 new well-paying jobs with benefits.

## **Distance Learning and Continuous Improvement**

Increasing access to education is a priority for community colleges. Providing a wide range of alternative and supportive education services have become common. As a result, Illinois community colleges are delivering noncredit internet courses and satellite broadcasts to expand their distance learning offerings. Businesses are continually searching, implementing, and refining ways to meet or exceed the needs and expectations of the customer. Community colleges provide an array of services to help businesses manage continuous improvement strategies.

During fiscal year 2008, community colleges offered 1,850 noncredit internet courses, 12 satellite broadcasts, and 178 two-way interactive video courses.

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### **Case Study:**

Approximately 5 years ago, Client Solutions owned a laptop laboratory equipped with the latest software for delivery of customized training at area corporations. The lab and its software became outdated and the service was no longer valuable to area organizations. After a closer look, it was determined that a new lab needed to be purchased and equipped for training. Many different staff, including staff at the College of Lake County were involved in this project. Once the lab was built and staffed properly, Client Solutions was able to sell 20 events of mobile laptop lab training over the course of FY 2008. They trained 175 people at 8 organization in the county using the equipment. The events generated \$23,350 with a gross profit margin of \$14,000 which completely covered the expense of purchasing and equipping the laptops for delivery and training. Client Solutions now owns a fully equipped set of laptops available for use by area organizations. They will continue to market this valuable service to area organizations and grow to exceed 20 deliveries in FY 2009. It is also anticipated that as organizations switch over to MS2007 products, the lab will come into greater use.

### **Other Workforce Development Activities and Partnerships**

Community colleges are involved in many workforce development activities. This may include cosponsored activities, facilitated programs, or providing facilities, labs, and equipment for community organizations, agencies and businesses. Other activities include workshops showcasing services colleges have to offer, certification training for specific industries, bilingual training courses and special training for Latinos, leadership skills workshops for supervisors and marketing to find sponsors for workshops.

Throughout the state, the colleges' Business and Industry Centers performed job testing for 84 organizations and developed job profiles and assessments for 60 organizations. Six benchmarking studies and 39 workplace literacy programs were conducted. A total of 1,518 other programs were offered, including German and Spanish courses, post assessments, programs in Lean, ISO, and APICS, and ACT Work Keys Exams.

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### **Case Study:**

Spoon River College is a partner with the Spoon River Partnership for Economic Development. To better serve the needs of its existing businesses, the Partnership decided to implement a retention survey for which on-site visits were made with 48 businesses located in and just off the downtown square during which the surveys were conducted. To assist the Partnership, the college provided meeting space and technology for the committee meetings, prepared all drafts of the survey, assisted in conducting the site visits, prepared the results and reported to the Partnership's Board of Directors. The survey will continue to be conducted each year with a new area of the community being the focus. Every five years the survey will begin again thus providing updated information for continued strategic planning.

## **Summary**

In summary, Illinois Community colleges provided workforce and economic development services to a total of nearly 185,000 businesses and individuals. These services resulted in the start up of over 250 companies, expansion of almost 260 companies, and retention of more than 850 companies. In addition, nearly 2,750 jobs were created and more than another 13,000 jobs were retained.