



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**EMBARGOED UNTIL 8:00 PM**

December 12, 2011

**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office  
312.744.3334  
[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

City Colleges of Chicago  
Contact: Laurent Pernot/Katheryn Hayes  
(312) 553-2719, (618) 203-6959

**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES 'COLLEGE TO CAREERS' PROGRAM FOR CITY COLLEGES THAT WILL REFOCUS TRAINING TO ADDRESS SKILLS GAP AND KEEP CHICAGO COMPETITIVE**

*Initial focus on health care and transportation/logistics will kick off innovative system that will better train Chicago's workforce for the jobs of today and tomorrow*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel announced during a major speech to the Economic Club of Chicago today that City Colleges of Chicago is launching an innovative program called "College to Careers" to ensure Chicago residents are ready for jobs in high growth industries - jobs that are available today but remain unfilled because of a skills gap. The program will forge partnerships between City Colleges, corporations and organizational partners to drive the creation of jobs in growing fields and help increase the competitiveness of Chicago's companies.

"We need skilled workers to rebuild our infrastructure, we need them to care for the sick; we need them to welcome the millions who visit Chicago each year in our hospitality industry; we need them to make the products people want to buy and to write the code that powers new technologies. But employers can't find skilled workers and workers can't find jobs. Like the rest of the country, Chicago has a skills gap," said Mayor Emanuel. "By making a diploma from our community colleges into a ticket to the workforce, we will make them a first option for job training and not a last resort."



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

This comprehensive strategy will draw upon the partners' industry expertise and knowledge of business demand to develop the definitive standard in industry credentials for respective fields. The partnerships will initially focus on two fields, healthcare and transportation, distribution and logistics, and will grow to include programs in other high-demand sectors.

"With this announcement, the City of Chicago is committing the City Colleges to providing our students with the skills to win the jobs of today and tomorrow," said City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Cheryl Hyman. "This effort will build on the strengths of the seven City Colleges of Chicago and respected corporate partners so Chicagoans can get the work skills and education they need for the careers they want."

"Delivering credentials of economic value is at the heart of City Colleges of Chicago's mission and our Reinvention initiative, and we can only be truly effective if we enjoy meaningful partnerships with the private sector that drive both student and company success," said Martin Cabrera Jr., Chairman of the City Colleges of Chicago Board. "We ask companies across Chicago to come join us as we build a future structure for our students and our city."

By 2020, Chicago will need approximately 75,000 more health care practitioners than currently exist and more than one third of those positions will be for holders of Associate's degrees. Chicago will need almost 18,000 newly educated registered nurses. In transportation, the region will need 4,000 new truck drivers to fill the openings that will occur between now and 2020.

The partnerships will bring corporations and City Colleges together in at least three ways:

- 1) CURRICULUM DESIGN & CREATION OF CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS:** Industry experts will inform the creation of best-in-class industry training programs that align with national standards, garner industry certification, and equip students with the skills they will need to be successful in growing fields.
- 2) CURRICULUM DELIVERY:** Partnerships will engage industry experts as teacher-practitioners to deliver a real-world perspective in City Colleges' classrooms.



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

**3) ACCESS TO INTERNSHIPS, INTERVIEWS, AND FACILITIES:** Partnerships will provide City Colleges students with direct access to top-notch facilities for training purposes and give students the opportunity to secure internships and job interviews.

Models will vary by employer based on the skills gap in the respective industry and employer capacity and interest.

The healthcare partnership will take advantage of Malcolm X College's proximity to the Illinois Medical District and build upon its strong and growing allied health programs. The transportation and logistics industry partnership will focus on enhancing existing programs and developing new offerings predominantly found at Olive-Harvey College.

"City Colleges are key to Chicago's economic viability," said Larry Goodman, CEO, Rush University Medical Center. "This initiative is crucial not only because it will ensure a pipeline of qualified workers in our field, but because we must all step up as corporate citizens to ensure that Chicago is a winner as more cities and countries vie for relevance in the world economy."

Partners in the respective fields include:

- Transportation/Distribution/Logistics: UPS, AAR, Chicago Transit Authority, Canadian National Railway and BNSF Railway.
- Healthcare: Rush University Medical Center, John H. Stroger Hospital of Cook County, Northwestern University Hospital, Advocate Healthcare, Baxter, Walgreens, Allscripts and Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council.

Officials across these fields also voiced their support of this innovative program:

"We anticipate significant job growth in healthcare. We need trained Allied Health professionals. The City Colleges are a key source for the training need for those jobs in Chicago," said Kevin Scanlan, President and CEO of Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council. "Our workforce is aging, technology is changing every day, and we need a steady supply of highly trained personnel and new employees to meet the needs of our hospitals. Ours is a local industry, it can't be outsourced out of state or overseas. Hospitals are a vital



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

component of their communities, contributing to the physical as well as the fiscal health of their communities. Partnerships like this are key to our success.”

“We believe there is tremendous opportunity to work with City Colleges to help students develop the skills needed for successful careers, and we applaud Mayor Emanuel’s leadership in this effort,” said Walgreens Chief Human Resources Officer Kathleen Wilson-Thompson. “As we continuously search for talented individuals for retail and health care positions and a variety of corporate support roles, we want to help City Colleges ensure its students are highly competitive in the job market.”

“The CTA is pleased to have the opportunity to be involved in this important effort, which will have significant impact on the future of Chicago’s workforce and economy. We applaud the leadership of Mayor Emanuel for taking the initiative in making sure that Chicago has a workforce that can meet the changing needs of our industry,” said CTA President Forrest Claypool. “CTA is in need of, and can benefit from, skilled workers who are trained to adjust to the changing needs of the transit industry. By working in partnership with the CCC, we can lay a solid foundation for future employees to be prepared for the jobs we have at CTA. We support this partnership with CCC because it can help CTA grow and stay competitive while improving the skills of potential employees, allowing CTA to hire employees with the proper training so we have workforce-ready workers and we spend fewer resources on retraining.”

“BNSF Railway is pleased to partner in this training effort for Chicago’s future workforce, and for our own future employees,” said Duncan Brown, Director of Human Resources, Chicago Division, BNSF Railway. “BNSF has been hiring new employees in Chicago and statewide this year and we expect to continue hiring to replace our retiring workforce and as business returns from the recession. This training partnership will help prepare students to become better applicants and better employees.”

# # #



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO

121 NORTH LASALLE STREET, ROOM 507, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60602