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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES AUSTIN POLYTECHNICAL ACADEMY RECEIVES \$2.7 MILLION DOLLAR GRANT FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

On the heels of the \$70 Million Dollar Grant to Build the Nation's Flagship Research Institute in Digital Manufacturing, Chicago Receives another Federal Grant to Improve Learning and Career Training Opportunities for Austin Polytech Students

Mayor Emanuel announced that Austin Polytechnical Academy has been awarded \$2.7 million from the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to participate in the Youth CareerConnect (YCC) program. This initiative encourages America's school districts, institutions of higher education, the workforce investment system, and their partners to integrate rigorous educational standards with work experiences and skills in ways that enhance instruction and deliver real-world learning opportunities for students.

"This grant will improve the academic and career offerings at Austin Polytechnical Academy High School, strengthening a school that helps students learn valuable skills and get an internship or job that will give them a solid head start on the economic ladder," Mayor Emanuel said. "This is part of our larger plan to retain and bolster Chicago's status as an economic leader in manufacturing by bringing together resources from businesses and non-profits while leveraging grant funding to make strategic investments in workforce training and job creation such as the new \$320 million dollar digital manufacturing lab."

This federal investment will boost the learning opportunities available through Austin Polytechnical Academy's Manufacturing Careers & College Connect (MCCC) program, a unique college and career model and partnership between Austin Polytechnical Academy and Chicago Public Schools, local manufacturers, the Chicago Teachers' Union, and the local Austin community. MCCC has the support of over a dozen key manufacturing employers that employ hundreds of people and have high-skilled jobs going unfilled. This initiative represents a full partnership between Manufacturing Renaissance, Chicago Federation of Labor, Chicago Public Schools, City Colleges of Chicago, the Chicago/Cook Workforce Partnership, the Chicago Workforce Funders Alliance, and local manufacturing companies.

"There are approximately 20,000 vacant manufacturing jobs in this region, and the number will continue to increase as baby boomers retire," said Jorge Ramirez, President of the Federation of Labor. "The Austin Polytech model and its sister programs will help pipeline skilled workers to fill these positions by providing the training that gives students the experience they need for high-

skilled, high-road manufacturing. This grant from the U.S. Department of Labor will complement the \$70 million grant for a Digital Lab that was recently awarded to the City of Chicago by the U.S. Department of Defense. With its access to water, railroads and air travel, Chicago has always been an important hub in the U.S. manufacturing industry, and this grant will give Austin Polytech the ability to continually develop and advance its program as technology continues to evolve.”

Austin Polytechnical Academy received one of 24 Youth CareerConnect awards, which will provide up to \$107 million to local partnerships of local education agencies, workforce investment boards, institutions of higher education and employer partners as they re-design the teaching and learning experience for youth to more fully prepare them with the knowledge, skills, and industry-relevant education needed to get on the pathway to a successful career, including postsecondary education or registered apprenticeship.

"We are extremely thankful for the opportunity that has been made for our young people today," said Alderman Emma Mitts, 37th Ward. "This investment will continue the work that Freedman Seating Company has done as a great partner with Austin Polytech, and we look forward to seeing continuing growth and opportunity on our West Side."

The Youth CareerConnect grant will provide the staffing and resources to achieve the following:

- Under the MCCC, employers and other partners will prepare students for college and careers through career mentoring, field trips to manufacturing companies and trade shows, job shadowing experiences, paid internships, summer jobs, industry-recognized machining credentials, full-time employment after graduation and pursuit of postsecondary education in engineering or manufacturing pathways.
- The MCCC will also integrate National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS) credentials to provide students the opportunity to earn both NIMS certifications and enhanced STEM-related knowledge focused on engineering and technology.
- Manufacturing Renaissance will work with CPS to provide professional development and training for CPS personnel and teachers to permit greater integration between standard curriculum and manufacturing themes.
- APA will increase counseling and mentoring services for students.

There are 3,500 small manufacturers within 10 miles of Austin Polytechnic Academy. To address job demand, the Mayor committed \$1.25 million of recovered TIF funds to manufacturing learning opportunities in Austin, including outreach to inspire local elementary school students to pursue education and careers in advanced manufacturing-related fields and investments in programs at Austin Polytech Career Program and Austin Manufacturing Training Center.

Preserving Chicago’s status as a leading hub for advanced manufacturing is a key strategy in the Mayor’s Program for Economic Growth and Jobs. Delivering on this promise, Chicago was also recently awarded a \$70 million federal grant to build a Digital Manufacturing Design Lab (Digital Lab), which will be the nation’s flagship research institute in digital manufacturing. An additional

\$250 million in public and private sector matching funds was raised to support the winning bid to bring more jobs to Chicago.

To watch a video about Austin Polytech, click [here](#).

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