



**Illinois  
Department of Commerce  
& Economic Opportunity**

Pat Quinn, Governor

December 18, 2012

Dear Governor and General Assembly:

The Employment Opportunities Grant Program (EOGP) (20 ILCS 605/605-812) requires the Department to administer a grant program to expand employment opportunities for targeted populations in eligible grant areas in Illinois, and report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the activities undertaken by all awardees. For your review, please find below the program summary and program implementations to optimize efficiency and execution of the Employment Opportunities Grant Program.

**SUMMARY**

The Employment Opportunities Grant Program is administered by the Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity's Office of Urban Assistance for FY 12. EOGP continues to focus on the original intent of the legislation of preparing targeted populations to successfully enter building trades apprenticeship programs and/or building trades employment.

EOGP was allocated \$300,000 to award grant funds for FY 12, a significant decrease from FY 11's \$1,095,000 budget. As a result three FY 11 EOGP grantees, from targeted communities across the State in good fiscal and programmatic standing, were selected to receive a \$100,000 budget supplement. This enabled these grantees to continue their respective grant programs for one year, but significantly decreased the potential impact to the targeted communities due to the overall reduction in the size of the EOGP grant.

**PROGRAM MODEL**

The FY 12 program model focused on the fundamentals in construction designed to provide program participants with exposure to the skills and knowledge used in the building and construction trades industry. Thus enabling many program participants to become self-employed entrepreneurs, continue their education, and obtain careers in the building trades industry.

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## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The major accomplishment of the EOGP initiative since FY 11 has been to restore financial and programmatic integrity to the program. While the majority of FY 11 grants are still open, with four ending in May 2013, the reporting documentation submitted to date demonstrates EOGP is once again headed in the right direction: 61% of EOGP participants are completing their respective training programs; 25% of EOGP participants are being accepted into apprenticeship programs; 8% of EOGP participants are being placed in building trades employment; 17% of EOGP participants are entering non-union/non-building trades employment; 10% of EOGP participants are now self-employed entrepreneurs; and 12% of EOGP participants are continuing their education.

## GRANTEE SUCCESSES

As a result of program revitalization, our current grantees are demonstrating outstanding success stories this calendar year as highlighted below:

- Through one grantee's partnership with a building trades union, program participants received technical training at the union training facility. Upon successful completion of a 12 week pre-apprenticeship program, program completers were afforded the opportunity to take the test for the building trades' apprenticeship program. Nineteen participants then entered into a 9 week apprenticeship program. Upon completion, they become 1st year apprentices.
- Through one grantee's program, after successful completion of the 8 week program, project participants earned 8 transferable college credits in Construction Management and 7.5 non-transferable college credits making continuing education an easier pathway.
- Based on the strength of their program and the funding from the EOGP grant, one grantee was able to leverage an additional \$100,000 in matching funds from Chase Bank in support of their EOGP program.
- After successful completion of one grantee's program, graduates joined together to create their own construction company in the South Suburban Community.

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**FY 11/FY 12 GRANTEES**

| <b>Grantee</b>  | <b>Address</b>                                     |
|---|--|
| <b>Chicago Women In Trades -<br/>Technical Opportunities Program</b>              | 2444 W. 16th St., Ste. 3E<br>Chicago, IL. 60609    |
| <b>*Coalition for United Community Action -<br/>Pre-Apprenticeship Program</b>    | 2925 S. Wabash Ave., Ste 102<br>Chicago, IL 60616  |
| <b>Will County Housing Development Corp. -<br/>Pre-Apprenticeship Program</b>     | 6 South Broadway Street<br>Joliet, IL 60436        |
| <b>*Prairie State College -<br/>Pre-Apprenticeship Program</b>                    | 202 S. Halsted Street<br>Chicago Heights, IL 60411 |
| <b>*Southwestern Illinois College -<br/>Construction Training Program (Green)</b> | 2500 Carlyle Avenue<br>Belleville, IL. 62221       |
| <b>Youth build Lake County -<br/>Building Trade Apprenticeship Program</b>        | 1636 Kristan Avenue<br>North Chicago, IL. 60064    |
| <b>Youth Conservation Corps, Inc. -<br/>Building Trades Program</b>               | 1020 W. Greenwood Avenue<br>Waukegan, IL. 60087    |

\*- indicates grantee who received supplemental funding

**YEAR TO DATE PERFORMANCE MEASURES \***

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| # of individuals accepted   | 374 |
| # of individuals who complete the program                                   | 198 |
| # of program participants accepted into apprenticeship program              | 44  |
| # of program participants placed in non-union building trades employment    | 29  |
| # of program participants entering non-union non-building trades employment | 36  |
| # program participants becoming self-employed entrepreneurs                 | 16  |
| # of individuals continuing education                                       | 21  |

\*-Please note these are not the final performance measure counts as four grants end in May 2013

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The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's – Office of Urban Assistance has successfully revitalized and restored the integrity of the Employment Opportunities Grant Program. Our primary objective continues to be to support program participants' successful completion of an EOGP funded training program. These programs will arm participants with the skill set necessary to enter a building trades' apprenticeship program and/or building trades employment and improve access to job opportunities where they can earn a living wage. This in turn impacts the Illinois economy by creating a stronger pipeline of trained workers who are able to obtain and keep jobs in the building trades industry. By opening these doors, we are increasing the diversity within this industry and preparing more individuals for careers in this vital field, which will help keep our workforce strong and competitive and provide better opportunities for Illinois working families.

Respectfully submitted,

Adam Pollet  
Acting Director

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