

Annual Report

July 1, 2020—June 30, 2021



A proud partner of the AmericanJobCenter® network

Prepared by the Business Liaison & Marketing Committee of NCI Works!
Funds were provided under the Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Visit us at www.nciworks.org



Greetings!

As always, the staff of the one-stop system continue to strive to provide the highest quality services to all of our customers, youth, adult, dislocated workers, businesses and the general public. This past year has presented numerous challenges in light of the CoVid 19 pandemic. In response to these challenges, staff have worked remotely, staggered their presence in programmatic offices, developed virtual workshops, assisted area small businesses with state grant opportunities, and continued to provide a high level of services to all customers while maintaining strict observance of CoVid 19 restrictions. We applaud all partner staff for the ongoing commitment to the residents and businesses of our workforce area.

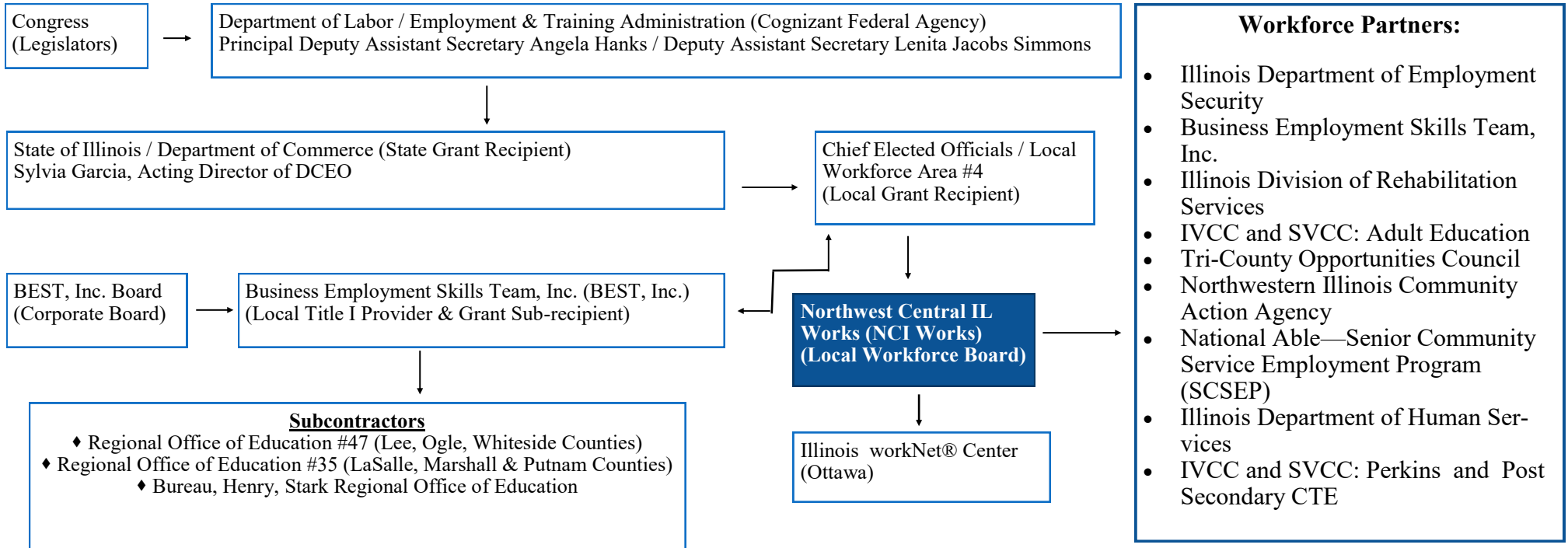
Linda S. Burt

Cary Robbins



NCI Works One-Stop Center
1550 First Ave
Ottawa, IL 61350

<https://nciworksamericanjobcenter.wordpress.com/about>
815-640-9407, TTY 800-526-0844 Monday-Friday 8:30am to 5:00pm
Closed State Holidays



Year in Review

Adult Education

To inquire about Adult Education Services log on to the following websites or call the contact listed below.

Illinois Valley Community College:

<https://www.ivcc.edu/adulted.aspx?id=2884>

Or Call 815-224-0358.

Sauk Valley Community College:

<https://www.svcc.edu/community/adult-education>

Or Call 815-835-6310

Highland Community College:

<https://highland.edu/adult-education>

Or Call 815-599-3460

Highland Community College

FY 21 Statistics

Adult Education served the following:

July 2020 to September 2020	Not Available
October 2020 to December 2020	6
January 2021 to March 2021	6
April 2021 to June 2021	13

Illinois Valley Community College

FY 21 Statistics

The IVCC Adult Education Department successfully developed online learning options for both the HSE and ESL students to facilitate learning at a distance using i-Pathways online HSE curriculum and Burlington English for ESL students. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, our Adult Education staff was able to virtually reach 162 contacts in FY2021. In addition, ICCB approved the "Bridge to Careers" course to include all careers and Integrated Career and Academic Preparation System (ICAPS) courses in Healthcare, focusing on CNA and Phlebotomy, and Manufacturing focusing on Welding.

IVCC Adult Education served a total of 206 students in FY21 despite the pandemic.

Sauk Valley Community College

FY 21 Statistics

Program participation:

Adult Basic Education (ABE grade levels 4.0 – 8.9)	34
Adult Secondary Education (ASE grade levels 9.0 -12.9+)	67
ESL – All levels	29
Total students (Unduplicated)	130

The Adult Education program at Sauk Valley Community College provided in-person instruction for the program year as well as virtual instruction for both GED and ESL students. At the end of the year, we served 130 students.

Some highlights from the past year include:

25 students complete their high school equivalency certificates (GED graduates)

1 student enrolled in the Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) ICAPS Program. The ICAPS program consists of dual enrollment in Adult Education and the CNA certificate program at SVCC. The successful completion of the ICAPS program results in the completion of the high school equivalency (GED), a college credential and/or college credits, as well as the CNA certification.

3 students completed the Health Careers Bridge Course

The Health Careers Bridge Course introduces students to the various careers and training opportunities in healthcare. By the end of the 8-week course, students will determine the health career they wish to enter. Students also develop study strategies, math skills, science knowledge as it relates to health careers, communication skills, and time management skills for college and career success.

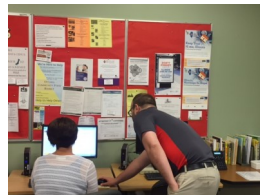
4 students completed the College and Careers Success Course

The College and Careers Success Course provides students with the opportunity to explore their college and career options. Students will also work to improve their reading, writing, vocabulary, technology, and math skills needed for future college classes and for employment. By the end of the 10-week course, students select their college program of study and enroll in Sauk Valley Community College for the next semester.

Bridge to Healthcare 6

Additional Partner Reports: July 2020—June 2021

Program	July – Sept. Cumulative	October – Dec. Cumulative	January – March Cumulative	April – June Cumulative
Title III Wagner-Pyser				
Ottawa	2,168	4,146	8,573	17,192
Sterling	99	4,000	6,053	8,414
Title IV – Vo- cational Reha- bilitation				
La Salle	Not Available	Not Available	202	Not Available
Sterling	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families				
DHS/TANF LaSalle County Office	506	1,072	1,662	2,220
DHS/TANF Bureau County Office	127	252	394	534
DHS/TANF Ogle County Office	164	346	530	706
DHS/TANF Whiteside Coun- ty Office	317	730	1,028	1,490



<https://nciworksamericanjobcenter.com>

Apprenticeship Navigator Grant: BEST, Inc.

The Navigator and BEST staff have met with a total of 142 individuals/companies either one on one or through our group events. We've held a total of 6 sector events. We are looking to late summer to hold Hospitality since summer should be their busiest time of the year. We thought we'd see how well they do after the year of CoVid restrictions and thought that late summer might give them, and us, the best idea of how an apprenticeship could help those in the hospitality sector.

GrainCo has signed their set of standards and anticipates their first apprentice starting this fall in classroom training (related training instruction). This is be our first official success and we have posted a success story on Illinois workNet. GrainCo is located in Ottawa.

Sauk Valley Community College/WACC/Fulton High School (River Bend High School) have entered into a partnership on a set of standards that would be administered by SVCC. These standards are for Maintenance Electrician and is an outgrowth of River Bend High School's effort to establish a Registered Youth Apprenticeship. This program will actually be available to River Bend students, WAC students and any adult apprentices at participating employers. Whenever a 3rd party (such as a school, college, or workforce area) holds the standard, DOL expects at least 1 participating employer to also sign onto the program for the OJT portion of the training. As of right now (July 28th) there are no participating employers. BEST has offered to assist in recruiting interested businesses for Sauk's program.

Plastic Products, a manufacturer in Rock Island County, is moving quickly to establish a program for their tool and die employees. They are working through Eastern Iowa Community College, a 3rd party intermediary, to sign on to their program. The program is already developed and meets the company's needs so we expect that this will be up and running within a few months at most.

Nikelle has reached out to the Ottawa Chamber of Commerce to have a discussion about "Why Apprenticeships" (our moto basically). Jeff Hettrick, Executive Director of the chamber, has expressed his desire to know more, including about 3rd party intermediaries/sponsors, about apprenticeship programs. He believes some of his members might be able to benefit.

In addition to the establishment of new and expansion of existing apprenticeship programs, the grant is also focused on expanding the number of registered apprentices in our region by 20. It allows us to count any first year apprentice that we may have worked with through our Title 1 funding and we can count those we served through Title 1 since July 1, 2019. Thus far we have served 16 first year apprentices through Incumbent Worker Training for a total of \$22,610 in leveraged funding.

BEST, Inc. – Adult, Dislocated Workers and Youth
Program Year 2020 (July 1, 2020—June 30, 2021)

Incumbent Worker Training

For Program Year 2020 a total of 102 employees were trained through the Incumbent Worker Training program. Total expenditures and obligations for the year ending June 30, 2021 were \$238,239.80.

Rapid Response

LWIA 4 participated in 2 Rapid Response efforts taking place in neighboring workforce areas. In addition, there were 7 Rapid Response event within LWIA 4 resulting in the dislocation of 451 employees.

Education Outreach Program – Lee Ogle Whiteside Regional Office of Education

Provides youth with academic instruction toward completion of high school equivalency, career information, work-based learning, job search assistance, supportive service and training for in-demand occupations

Services are provided to youth ages 17-24 who have dropped from school and live in Lee, Ogle, and Whiteside Counties.

The program served 110 youth this year. Site locations include Sterling, Oregon and SVCC

Step Ahead – Henry Bureau Regional Office of Education

Provides youth with academic instruction toward the attainment of a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate and also provides work-based learning opportunities

Instruction is provided, usually one-on-one, at the local library in each youth's community. Youth are 17-24 years old, have dropped from school and live in Bureau County.

Program served 17 youth this year

Regional Work Study – Regional Office of Education #35

Provides youth from Putnam and LaSalle counties with academic instruction toward the attainment of a high school diploma and also provides employment opportunities

Instruction is provided at IVCC in Oglesby, IVCC in Ottawa and at the library in Mendota. Youth are 16-21 years old and have dropped from school.

Program served 30 youth this year

Opioid Grant

The Opioid Dislocated Worker Grant has served a total of 24 participants since starting in November of 2019. A lack of funds from DCEO occurred in April 2020 resulting in 6 customers being transferred from the Opioid Grant to regular WIOA Title I funding. New participants in May and June were placed directly into WIOA.

The initial end date for the grant was 6/30/2021 with just a handful of remaining participants finishing up their subsidized work experience. All but 1 participant was hired directly on by their worksite. They are working full time and are receiving benefits. One participant is enrolled in On-the-Job Training at Perfectly Flawed in La Salle.

Three of the new participants, currently in WIOA services due to a funding lag, are in WIOA services and placed in work experience with Sauk Valley Voices of Recovery.

Adult Redeploy Workshops

BEST partners with LaSalle County Probation to provide Job Search workshops for job-ready clients referred by the department. In program year 2020 BEST held workshops for 5 Adult Redeploy clients.

The workshops cover job search basics, resume writing, and interviewing. Special emphasis is placed on helping clients learn ways to present themselves positively to employers, and to overcome any objections/biases that employers may have toward someone who has a criminal background. Each client receives a professionally prepared resume at the conclusion of the 3 required workshops.

Emergency Small Business Grant (CoVid 19 Layoff Aversion Grant)

In April 2020 BEST staff began accepting applications for an Layoff Aversion Emergency Small Business Grant. The grant was designed to reimburse companies for purchased that would allow for staff to observe required social distancing, through the purchase of PPE and/or the equipment needed for staff to move to remote work. The grant originally received 20 approved applications. Of those applications, 17 were paid out with 3 accepting funding from other sources and declining the funding through this grant. The grant period ran from June 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021. The grant paid out a total of \$ 240,074.89.

Tri-County Opportunities Council

Established in 1965 by a group of concerned citizens in the counties of Lee, Ogle and Whiteside, Tri-County has grown to serve a total of nine counties- Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark and Whiteside. Our mission is to investigate the impact of poverty throughout our nine county service area and to work, in partnership with individuals, families and communities to provide opportunities that supports movement towards stability and self-sufficiency. Our organization does this through a variety of programs. All programs are income based and require an application.

The following services are available to low income households:

Community Services Block Grant Program (CSBG)

Provides comprehensive needs assessment, information and referrals and numerous case management programs to eligible customers to obtain self-sufficiency for employment, youth, education, housing, medical and emergency needs.

Offers various housing programs to those facing homelessness or on the verge of becoming homeless.

Annually awards education scholarships to income eligible service area residents attending an Illinois institution of higher learning.

Bureau County Food Pantry- Provides food to meet meals gaps to families residing in Bureau County.

COVID 19 programs are available in the areas of housing, health, food assistance and transportation needs for those who have been laid off, had a reduction of work hours or have been quarantined due to Covid 19.

Low Income Energy Assistance (LIHEAP)

Makes a one- time payment to the utility company.

Repair or replace furnaces to homeowners who are current on their mortgage and taxes.

Percentage of Income Payment Plan (PIPP) is designed to help clients' pay their own bill with a manageable budget bill.

Illinois Home Weatherization Program

Make homes more energy efficient, provide safe heating equipment, if needed, replace furnace and provide clients with safety equipment.

Ameri Corp Seniors Program

Provides meaningful volunteer opportunities for those in the lower income range who are 55 years old and older. This program offers supportive person-to-person services to at risk children in reading, math, spelling, are and other constructive projects.

Head Start/Early-Head Start Program

These programs are federal programs that provides comprehensive early childhood education, health, nutrition, and parent engagement services to children from birth to 5 years of age, expectant mothers, and their families.

Tri-County Opportunities Council has offices in nine counties and information regarding our sites can be found on our website at www.tcochelps.org or by calling our main office at: 800-323-5434 or 815-625-7830

The following chart represents the number of students receiving financial support from NCI Works for Program Year 2020.

Provider	Number of Students	Amount Spent
Illinois Valley Community College	80	238,681.52
Sauk Valley Community College	93	208,504.94
Kishwaukee College	9	45,438.87
Highland Community College	13	53,803.78
Midwest Technical Institute	14	98,254.00
Castor Health Institute	17	12,000.00
Rasmussen College	5	20,485.00
160 Driving Academy	9	37,860.00
Blackhawk College	1	3,167.63
Dental Assisting Technology	1	0.00
Eastern Iowa Community College District	2	610.00
Methodist Med. College of Nursing	4	21,906.00
Carl Sandburg College	2	0.00
Illinois Central College	2	2,235.50
Advantage Driver Training	2	4,100.00
Rock Valley Com. College	2	5,510.00
West Chicago Prof. Center	2	9,950.00
Illinois Welding School	1	15,500.00
Joliet Junior College	2	0.00
Northern Illinois University	1	0.00
Trinity College of Nursing and Health Sciences	1	12,041.00
MicroTrain Technologies	1	10,925.00
Computer Training Source	1	10,000.00
MedCerts	1	4,000.00
	264	814,973.24

Chief Elected Officials for WIA #4

Marshann Entwistle, Chairman
Bureau County Board

Kevin Reibel, Chairman
Carroll County Board

Don Hill, Chairman
Jo Daviess County Board

Don Jensen, Chairman
LaSalle County Board

Bob Olsen, Chairman
Lee County Board

John Finfrock, Chairman
Ogle County Board

Charles Lenkaitis, Chairman
Putnam County Board

James Duffy, Chairman
Whiteside County Board

Represented by:

Robert Albrecht, Member
Bureau County Board

Randy Freeman, Member
LaSalle County Board

Marilyn Shippert, Member
Lee County Board

Wayne Reising, Member
Ogle County Board

Steven Malavolti, Member
Putnam County Board

The following list represents local businesses that utilized services offered from NCI Works!

- Allegion
- Ace Hardware Dixon
- Avanti's Foods
- Badge-A-Minit
- Bonnell
- Candlelight Inn
- Carroll Industrial Molds
- Carus Corporation
- Castor Home Nursing, Inc.
- CGH Medical Center
- Climco Coils
- Circa 1888
- Coloma Township Park District
- Community Bank
- Community Healthcare Partnership of Illinois
- Compliance Signs
- DC Computers
- Dixon High School
- Draftech, Inc.
- FN Smith
- Forster Products
- Gerdes Truck Sales
- Goodwill of Northern Illinois-Ottawa
- Happy Tails Humane Society
- HCC
- Heritage Health
- Heritage Woods
- Heusinkveld, Inc.
- Illinois Cement
- Illinois Valley Community College
- IMEC
- James Hardie
- JJM Printing
- Jo Daviess Carroll CTE
- Jonas Martin Well Drilling
- KSB Hospital
- Lee County Council on Aging
- Lee County Health Department
- County of Lee
- LW Schneider
- Martin Engineering
- Mac Chropractic
- Methodist College
- Mineral Township
- MightyVine
- MTM Recognition
- NICIL
- North Central Illinois Council of Governments
- Northwest IL Economic Development
- Oregon Chamber

For information regarding the Northwest Central IL Works (NCI Works) or any of their initiatives and/or projects, contact:

Carrie Folken, Executive Director

Business Employment Skills Team, Inc. • 815 N Orlando Smith Ave, Room C-328
Oglesby, IL 61348
815-224-0375
carrie_folken@best-inc.org



Oregon High School
 Ottawa Chamber of Commerce
 Ramza Insurance
 Rochelle - City of
 Rochelle - Economic Development
 P&P
 Perry Memorial Hospital
 Perfectly Flawed
 Pet Supplies Plus
 PGI
 Putnam County Schools
 Quik Kill Pest Eliminators
 Reilly Law Office
 Rock Falls Chamber
 St. Margaret's Hospital
 Sauk Valley Community College
 Sauk Valley Food Bank
 Saunders Family Properties
 Savanna Market Place
 Shelby Township Library
 Sinnissippi Center
 Spring Lake Pool
 Straka & Johnson
 Starved Rock Media
 Sterling Schools Foundation
 Sterling Township
 Stertil ALM
 Trailside Enterprises
 Upscale Resale
 Verifacts
 Wash Salon
 Whiteside Senior Center

Wiggins Computing
 Woods Equipment (Blount International)
 Stewart Heating and Air Conditioning
 SuperValu
 Team Products
 Teen Turf
 Tri-County Opportunity Council
 WalMart DC

The Partners of NCI Works provide a variety of services, free of charge, to area business from recruiting assistance to incumbent worker training. The partners of NCI Works are here to assist you with your workforce needs.

For information on NCI Works Employer Services contact Dianna Schuler at 815-640-9406, or email her at dianna_schuler@best-inc.org.

Number of individuals enrolled in services in Program Year 2020

	Enrolled	Exited
Youth	201	61
Adults	250	97
Dislocated Workers	104	48
Universal Services offered to the general public		1533

Economic Impact on the Communities from BEST exits for Program Year 2020

Adults	73 individuals
Total Annual Wages Earned	\$2,778,293.56
Average Annual Wage	\$37,544.51
Dislocated Workers	50 individuals
Total Annual Wages Earned	\$1,976,004.68
Average Annual Wage	\$39,520.09

Northwest Central Illinois Works Membership

Dave Argubright

*Business Agent, Carpenters Local #174
Illinois Valley Building Trades*

Ed Bochniak

*Executive Director
Carroll County Housing Authority*

Mary Boogemans

*Manager
UNFI*

Linda Burt

*Vice President of Quality & Community
Services
St. Margaret's Health*

Lyndsay Bliss

*Vice-President of Human Resources
Carus*

Danelle Burrs

*Bureau Manager
Lee County Farm Bureau*

Dr. Jerry Corcoran

*President
Illinois Valley Community College*

Marcia Derrer

*Executive Director
Northwestern Illinois Community Action
Agency*

Sara Escatel

*Adult Education Director
Illinois Valley Community College*

Abby Farrell

*General Manager
Starved Rock Lodge & Conference Center*

Dan Fitzgerald

*Director of Programs and Services
Horizon House of Illinois Valley, Inc.*

Abby Farrell

*Director of HR
Starved Rock Lodge & Conference Center*

Randy Freeman

LaSalle County Board

Janet Graham

*Local Office Administrator
IL Dept. of Human Services*

Jill Guynn

*County Director
University of Illinois Extension (Bureau,
LaSalle, Marshall & Putnam Counties
Unit)*

Patricia Head

*Controller
F. N. Smith Corporation*

Linda K. Hessenberger

*Assistant Vice-President/Real Estate Loans
Central Bank*

Vanessa Hoffeditz

*Community Services Coordinator
Tri-County Opportunities Council*

Deana Jones

*Staffing and Training Coordinator
Wahl Clipper Corporation*

William Keene

*Attorney
Keene Law Offices*

James Knauf

*Public Service Administrator
Illinois Department of Human Services*

Rhonda Krueger

*IDES Office Manager
IL Department of Employment Security*

Robert Lentz

*HR Manager
Walmart DC*

Kevin Lindeman

*Executive Director
North Central Illinois Council of Govern-
ments*

Terry McGuire

*Senior Vice President
Halo*

Kris Noble

*Executive Director
Sauk Valley Area Chamber of Commerce*

Daniel Payette

*Executive Director
Blackhawk Hills Regional Council*

Thomas Pigati

*Owner
Pigati Builders, Inc.*

Kevin Reibel

Carroll County Board Chair

Cary Robbins

*Manager of Human Resources
Sterling Steel Company, LLC*

Len Saunders

*Business Representative/Organizer
Carpenters Union Local #790*

John Spencer

*President/General Manager
Starved Rock Media*

Amy Strawn

*HR Director
Ace Hardware*

Teresa Strum

*Center Director
Area Health Education Center (AHEC)*

Joel Torbeck

*Program Manager
Business Employment Skills Team, Inc.*

Gerald Waszkowiak

*Director
American Nickeloid*

DeAnne White

*VP/Chief Operations Officer
Sinnissippi Centers*

Marcie Mulholland

*Manager of Billing
Rescar, Inc.*

Justin Wiggins

*Owner
WCT-Midwest*

Program Year 2020 State Award Winners

Each year the Illinois Workforce Partnership recognized outstanding achievements made by both a member of the business community and a workforce system customer. Below are the local area 4 winners with a brief summary of each winner. We extend our congratulations to both our award winners.

Business Leadership Award Winner John Spencer, Starved Rock Media Oglesby, IL



Starved Rock Media, one of the primary sources for news and information in our area, and BEST, Inc., along with our local workforce board (NCI Works), have worked together and benefited from this partnership in a number of ways. John Spencer, President and General Manager for Starved Rock Media, has been an active member of the local workforce board for over 10 years and for the last 3+ years has been the host of Getting to Work, a podcast of NCI Works. John has played an active role in the selection of relevant topics and guests (which has included most workforce partners from IDES to multiple economic development entities), designs and directs the actual interview, and does the initial editing prior to turning the recording over to Workforce 180 for final editing and uploading to the workforce board's website. The podcast series, which focuses on helping job seekers get to work and companies hire and train, has had over 10,000 downloads and a lot of its success is due to John's contributions to the effort.

John has donated his time and professional experience/expertise to making the podcast series the success it is today. Through this partnership, and John's desire to give back to the community, Starved Rock Media's "listeners and online readers have come to recognize us as a trusted source for workforce news that affects them, their businesses, and their communities."

At the beginning of the CoVid 19 pandemic, while also trying to keep Starved Rock Media's 3 radio stations operating under state and CDC pandemic mitigation standards, John was able to take the time to record special edition episodes of Getting to Work to inform workforce customers that partners were still available to assist them with their needs. Episode after episode was devoted to strategies and information concerning how businesses and job seekers could continue to be successful under the growing concern for personal safety and business disruption. Starved Rock Media itself found it necessary to obtain a Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant from DCEO, that BEST, Inc. was administering, which enabled them to make essential technical upgrades to avoid layoffs by allowing some employees to work remotely.

Whether it is recording a podcast, PSAs for workforce partners, or setting the example for embracing remote work, Starved Rock Media is a committed workforce innovation system partner. A partner with whom LWIA 4 is proud to be associated with, along with John Spencer its President and General Manager.

Congratulations

**Customer Achievement Award Winner Jose Montanez
Sterling, IL**

In March of 2021, Jose contacted the BEST, Inc. office in Sterling to inquire about getting assistance with job training to help him enter the workforce. He had recently been released from prison after serving nearly 25 years and wanted to train for a career that would offer stable employment and a self-sufficient income.

Knowing that his options for employment were limited due to his felony record, Jose was interested in enrolling in the CDL program through Midwest Safe Driver at Sauk Valley Community College. In June, Jose was determined eligible for WIOA services and was able to get help from BEST, Inc. with tuition assistance and mileage reimbursement.

Jose did very well in class and successfully completed his training and licensing exam in August. Shortly thereafter, he was hired at Queen's Trucking in Rochelle, IL where he began working with a pay rate of \$18.50 per hour.



Congratulations