

IUBDC Workshop

Workforce Development Webinar

Education Series

September 16, 2025



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Welcome & Introduction to Workforce Development

Laticia Holbert, Sr. Workforce Manager, ComEd



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Agenda

- Welcome from Laticia Holbert, ComEd
- Introduction to Workforce Development
- Workforce Development in Action
 - Ameren Illinois
 - ComEd
 - IL American Water
 - Nicor Gas
 - People's Gas and Northshore Gas
- Market Development Introduction & Panel Discussion

Workforce Development

Workforce Development refers to the policies and practices designed to help bridge the gap between individuals seeking employment and employers needing workers.

Activities can include:

- Training, education, and supports to prepare job seekers for employment
- Transitional employment or on-the-job training to support job seekers in gaining skills
- Training and support to upskill workers for current and future jobs
- Services and supports transitioning employees back to employment or education after layoff
- And, more

**Definition provided by the Department of Labor*



Benefits of Workforce Development for Employers

Employers can benefit because efforts:



Connect and expand employers to new pools of talent



Prepare future workers through industry-driven training



Improve employee skills and increased retention



Connect employers to drive industry-specific talent solutions

**Utilities across ComEd and other employers have partnered together to establish a variety of workforce efforts can help your companies access these benefits.*



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Workforce Development in Action

Ameren Illinois
ComEd
IL American Water
Nicor Gas
Peoples Gas / North Shore Gas



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Ameren Illinois: Workforce Programs

Partnerships are critical to feed our overall workforce development efforts. Ameren's partnerships are established & reviewed based on several factors including programming/curriculum, target audiences, employability, Ameren contributions/alignment, and ROI.

ADVOCACY & AWARENESS	EDUCATION	EMPLOYABILITY DEVELOPMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Alleviate systemic employability issuesBuild STEM and skilled trade skillsEstablish energy industry economies of scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Engage high schools focused on STEM and skilled craft curriculumsTarget under-represented communities, local & national colleges, universities & trade schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Focus on job readiness partnerships and pipeline programsSupport under-employed & under-represented individuals in alignment with Ameren's talent needs and

CONSORTIUMS & COALITIONS MIDDLE / HIGH SCHOOL TRADE / UNIVERSITIES NATIONAL MILITARY COMMUNITY BASED ORGS



FEEDER EXAMPLES

LONG-TERM WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	COMMUNITY TALENT SOURCING	NEAR-TERM PIPELINE PROGRAMS	AVAILABLE TALENT IN MARKET
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Missouri Energy Workforce ConsortiumEnergy Careers Educators Series thru Missouri ChamberBrand Awareness & Career Path marketingSTEMpact curriculum enhancementsMO Chamber, WashU Educator Externships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Ameren Scholars ProgramAmeren Power HoursCommunity Voices Advisory BoardReferrals from Ameren Talent Ambassadors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Collegiate Intern/Co-Op, & Early Career Rotation ProgsSkilled Craft Education ProgramMWII/Apprenticeship Ready Job Readiness ProgramUrban League C.A.R.E. Pre-Apprenticeship Prog.SkillBridge, Hiring our Heroes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Traditional sourcing through LinkedIn, Indeed, etc.Career Fairs, National STEM Conferences, HBCUs and HSIsAmerican Association of Blacks in Energy (AABE)CircaWorks Job Posting Distribution



ComEd: Workforce Programs

ComEd operates and supports several efforts in partnership with community to help us achieve our workforce goals. These include, but are not limited to:



STEM & Youth Exposure Programs

Portfolio of youth programs administered by ComEd including:

- CONSTRUCT Youth Academy
- Youth Ambassadors Tools of the Trade
- Tools of the Trade
- EV Rally, STEM Home Labs & More

In School Youth Programming

Portfolio of youth programs operated in partnership

- Powering Our Future (Big Shoulders)
- Chicago Builds (CPS)
- Ignite Your Future (CPS & CCC)



ComEd Infrastructure Academy

Portfolio of training programs that prepare adults for entry-level roles in the sector

- CONSTRUCT Infrastructure Academy
- Craft Academy
- Power Up Academy
- Business Operations Academy
- MDI Initiatives / Energy Efficiency Service Provider Incubator Program

Barrier Removal

Portfolio of investments designed to enable participants to join the sector

- Future of Energy Scholarships (STEM & Trades)
- Clinics: CAST, Climbing, STAR Interview, and CSR Clinic



Focus-Funded Programming

Portfolio of investments in nonprofits operating programs that align with ComEd's workforce goals:

- Dawson Technical Institute Overhead Electrical Line Worker Program
- Hire360 – EV Job Training
- Revolution Workshop - Professional Pathways
- Chicago Corporate Coalition



IL American Water: Workforce Programs

Flow Forward: Our aim to inspire high students by exposing them to career opportunities at American Water, introducing them to STEM, business, and skilled trades, while building their confidence through hands-on learning, internship, and goal setting.

- **CAVE:** Partnership with **The CAVE 201** (Center for Academic and Vocational Excellence), with our local LiUNA 459 through an apprenticeship experience. Students gain hands-on training within the Belleville distribution team under our union team members.
- **Water Up:** Program prepares participants for entry-level careers in the water industry through training in water systems, treatment, safety, customer service, and leadership, along with OSHA 30 certification, and hands-on utility experience.
- **CONSTRUCT:** Participants have the opportunity to identify and isolate a water leak on a SCADA system through a simulated exercise



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Nicor Gas: Workforce Programs



Nicor Gas Career Academy

- A six-week, 120-hour career readiness program
- Curriculum:
 - Industry fundamentals
 - Safety protocols
 - Job shadowing
 - and much more!

STEM Career Awareness Events

- Career expos, fairs, panels, classroom presentations
 - Participated in 40+ events in 2024
 - Engaged with 7K+ students

Community Partnerships

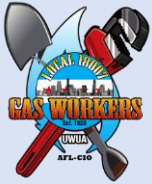
- Energizing Student Potential (ESP) workshops
- Boys & Girls Club
- CREO DuPage
- Junior Achievement
- Griffin Museum of Science & Industry (MSI)
 - Black Creativity Showcase
 - Engineer Your Future
- And many more!



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Peoples Gas & NorthShore Gas: Workforce Programs

Workforce Development



- Utility Workers Military Assistance Program
 - Partnership with Gas Workers 18007 and City Colleges of Chicago
- Project Worker to Utility Worker Program
 - Partnership with Gas Workers 18007
- Bright Futures U
 - Partnership with Chicago Public Schools
- Xchange Chicago
 - Partnership with SDI and Xchange
- P33
 - Partnership with SDI and P33



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PEOPLES GAS®
175 Years
1850-2025

NORTH SHORE GAS®
125 Years
1900-2025



Market Development Initiative (MDI) Programs



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Market Development Initiatives

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), signed into law in 2021, includes several Market Development Initiatives aimed at fostering a more inclusive and sustainable clean energy economy.

“We are building an environmentally and economically prosperous future—one where every Illinoisan has access to the good-paying jobs of tomorrow, while we create a cleaner and more sustainable world.” –Gov. JB Pritzker



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MDI Panel



Moderator: Laticia Holbert
Workforce Development Sr. Manager
ComEd



Tim Dickson
Program Supervisor
Ameren Illinois



Bill Quinn
Sr Business Programs Manager
ComEd



Allison Gregoire
Program Manager, Energy Efficiency
Nicor Gas



Omayra Garcia
Manger, Energy Efficiency Programs
Peoples Gas / North Shore Gas



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What is your utility's approach to implementing the Market Development Initiative (MDI)?



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Ameren Illinois: MDI Programs

MDI Goals: Engage customers, increase the pipeline of workers into the energy efficiency space and support and grow local businesses throughout the service territory.

Workforce Development Mission: to support every jobseeker on their individual pathway to success.

- Providing jobseekers with resources to prepare them for jobs in energy efficiency
 - › Training: BPI and access to a suite of over 75,000 trainings
 - BSP, BA-T, BA-P
 - › Personalized one-on-one coaching and job shadow opportunities
 - › Resume design, job application assistance and interview preparation
- Wrap Around Services
 - › Relocation, rent, deposits, eviction prevention, utility assistance
 - › Transportation: car repair, bus passes, Ubers, drivers license reinstatements, ticket expungement
 - › Misc: clothing for interviews, job attire, groceries, LLC creation and insurance fees
- How to connect: Workforce@ameren.com



Energy Efficiency
PROGRAM



MARKET DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE



Budget Allocation:

- Training: 50%
- Rent/Utilities: 21%
- Stipends: 12%
- Transportation: 10%
- Miscellaneous: 7%



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ComEd: MDI Programs

MDI has a mission of enhancing contracting opportunities for diverse business enterprises and community-based organizations (CBOs) and fostering a more inclusive and representative Energy Efficiency (EE) workforce.

Incorporates four areas of focus:

- **Training and development:** To date, we have provided training and certification opportunities to 123 new and experienced energy efficiency professionals
- **Opportunities for business development:** Aims to increase diversity and inclusivity within the EE industry by developing a pipeline of local suppliers from which to procure products and services, with over 200 vendors added to our database
- **Resources for service providers:** Provide support to current and prospective Energy Efficiency Service Providers, with the aim of increasing the amount of EE work completed within our service territory. Over 140 businesses have received various types of support.
- **Community collaboration:** Collaborates with CBOs, faith-based organizations, and other non-profits to promote awareness and facilitate outreach among local communities

There are two* types of training options offered at no cost to participants:

1. **Newcomer:** 8-week program for job seekers. 5 days per week.
2. **Skilled Cohort:** 5-week program to upskill those working. 3 days per week.

**In 2026, the ComEd Energy Efficiency Service Provider (EESP) Incubator – a standalone program focused on increasing the number of local and diverse-owned businesses participating in the ComEd EE program - will merge with MDI, offering another training and development option.*



Program partners include:



Nicor Gas: MDI Programs

Initiative Objectives

- Increase opportunities for diverse contractors and workers
- Build support from community partners
- Increase transparency and equity for contractors

Trade Ally Development Program:

Since 2023, we have helped 37 small business owners develop and expand their current service offerings, reach more customers, improve their marketing plans and become diverse businesses with the State of Illinois.

- Support the growth and development of diverse trade allies as they expand their businesses into the energy efficiency industry
- Improve business practices for resiliency
- Create a business mentorship environment
- Learn about the Nicor Gas Energy Efficiency Program's rebates and incentive opportunities
- Provide support for diverse/technical certifications

Workforce Training & Employment Program:

Since 2023, we have successfully impacted more than 50 individuals with the skills, certification and on-the-job training needed for a meaningful career in the weatherization industry.

- Increase the energy efficiency workforce by developing skilled building scientists
- Provide free hands-on training and industry certifications
- Help individuals find gainful employment in the industry to enhance their family's financial stability.



Peoples Gas & North Shore Gas: MDI Programs

Fuel your Future in Energy Efficiency

Take the First Step Towards Your New Career



We work with local organizations to support and train a workforce for the energy efficiency industry.

Boost Your Diverse Business



We help diverse-owned businesses in the energy efficiency industry to grow.



Scan the QR codes to get started



PEOPLES GAS®
175 Years
1850-2025

NORTH SHORE GAS®
125 Years
1900-2025

Market Development Initiative Panel

What is the process for prospective participants to access information, apply for the program, and how are candidates selected?

What strategies does your utility employ to assist participants with job placement upon program completion?

How does your utility support participants throughout the certification process, particularly in navigating diverse certification requirements?

Please share one or two success stories that exemplify the goals and impact of the MDI initiative.



Moderator: Laticia Holbert
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Manger, Energy Efficiency Programs
Peoples Gas / North Shore Gas



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How to Get Involved

Ameren Illinois

Tim Dickison
Program Supervisor
E: TDickison@ameren.com
P: (618) 210-7453

Nicor Gas

Allison Gregoire
Program Manager, Energy Efficiency
E: Aegregoi@southernco.com
P: (470) 733.2076

ComEd

Bill Quinn
Sr Business Programs Manager
E: William.Quinn2@exeloncorp.com
P: (779) 231-3238

Peoples Gas / North Shore Gas

Omayra Garcia
Manger, Energy Efficiency Programs
E: Omayragarcia@peoplesgasdelivery.com



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Questions?



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Thank You

