



*Move Illinois:
The Illinois Tollway Driving the Future*

NEWS

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY CONGRATULATES FIRMS GRADUATING FROM TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY IHCC

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway will celebrate leaders of nine firms graduating from its Technical Assistance Program administered by the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC) in Chicago.

“Congratulations to the business leaders graduating from the Illinois Tollway Technical Assistance Program; I wish them success as they step up to pursue new project and contract opportunities in Illinois,” said Governor Bruce Rauner. “Working with partners including IHCC, the Tollway’s program is helping to expand the pool of qualified firms throughout the region and their owners skills and tools to grow and succeed.”

As part of the graduation on Wednesday, March 14, IHCC has also organized a LaunchPad Networking Event where the graduates will pitch their businesses to transportation agencies, prime construction contractors and utilities and network to establish new connections and with the goal of building successful teams.

The LaunchPad Networking Event will include prime contractors and past program participants, as well as representatives from transportation agencies CTA, Metra, Pace Suburban Bus, and the Illinois Department of Transportation.

The Technical Assistance Program’s newest graduates include nine Chicago-area firms from various industries, including general construction management, electrical, landscaping, IT services, snow removal, junk removal and steel fabrication and installation. Graduates will be recognized for their accomplishments include:

Julio Arteaga, Arteaga Landscape & Erosion Control, Round Lake Beach
Bhagvanji J. (BJ) Parecha, Buildex Electronics, Wheeling
Allan Velasquez, Greatness Steel Inc., Chicago
Marco Romero, Ibuilders Corporation, Chicago
Hector Caballero Jr., Junkvets Inc., Lansing
Jackie d’Escoto, Maginox, Aurora
Raj Khanna, Market Contracting Services, Chicago
Tom Numbere Jr., PCG Consultant Group, Chicago
Joyce Gye, S & M Plow Corp., Chicago

The Illinois Tollway Technical Assistance Program prepares established firms including disadvantaged, minority- and women-owned firms, as well as veteran-owned and small businesses, to participate as prime contractors and subcontractors on highway and vertical construction contracts, including the Tollway 15-year, \$14 billion *Move Illinois* capital program.

Move Illinois provides contract opportunities for firms of all sizes and types to compete for contracts on Tollway projects. Now in its seventh year, the capital program includes opportunities for both prime

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contractors and subcontractors on major projects, including construction of the new I-490 Tollway Project and reconstruction of the Central Tri-State Tollway (I-294), as well as work to keep the 294-mile Tollway system in a state of good repair and vertical construction projects such as reconstruction of Tollway maintenance sites.

Participants in the Technical Assistance Program receive comprehensive, customized business development assistance to build financial understanding and business plan development for increased business stability and growth in the transportation-related construction industry. Services are customized to the assessed strengths, challenges and needs of participating firms. This includes education, guidance and feedback on general business and construction-specific operations, including strategic planning and assistance with the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) pre-qualification application.

Each participant in the program administered by IHCC must have been in business three years or more and earn annual revenue of at least \$250,000. The cohort-based program included four individual coaching sessions, two group conferences and individual followup meetings as needed. The sessions took place over the course of four months from October 2017 to March 2018.

The Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce is one of seven organizations working in partnership with the Tollway to manage the Technical Assistance Program throughout Northern Illinois. The program is designed to help small businesses gain the experience and expertise to handle more complex projects while increasing the pool of contractors available to perform work on Tollway projects. There are a total of 12 locations providing technical assistance for emerging businesses in Chicago, Aurora, Waukegan, the south suburbs and Rockford.

About the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

IHCC empowers entrepreneurs to start and grow their businesses. With decades of combined business experience, IHCC engages entrepreneurs through community advocacy, networking, and innovative one-on-one training designed to help them be leaders and agents of change in today's world. IHCC contributes to the financial strength of the economy by helping businesses create jobs, increase their revenue and be more profitable.

About the Illinois Tollway

The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 294 miles of roadways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90), the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80) and the Illinois Route 390 Tollway.

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