

PRESS RELEASE

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**Lake County Workforce Development Board Kicks Off First-of-its-Kind
Apprenticeship Training Initiative for Local Youth-Serving Agencies**

Waukegan, IL – January 22, 2024 – Supported by FHI 360’s National Institute for Work and Learning (NIWL), the Lake County Workforce Development Board (LCWDB) is kicking off Illinois’ first-ever Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeship (YDPA) training initiative.

Employers and job seekers in Lake County will be the first in the State of Illinois to benefit from this initiative. An initial employer training session for youth-serving agencies will occur on January 25-26, 2024. Locally, the participating agencies include Boys and Girls Club of Lake County, Business and Career Services, Inc., Curt’s Café, Lake County Workforce Development, The Community Works, Inc., Youth Conservation Corps, and YouthBuild Lake County.

FHI 360 serves as the supporting partner for the YDPA and will deliver training to apprentices, train-the-trainer style sessions to employers and apprentice supervisors, as well as training materials to ensure a positive and rewarding experience for both the apprentice and the employer. FHI 360 reports directly to the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) on behalf of employer sponsors and coordinates the apprentice’s DOL certification at program completion.

Participating apprentices will commit to 1,000 hours of on-the-job learning, along with 165 hours of related coursework.



Kimberly Wimer, LCWDB Chair, stated, “This is an exciting time to be at the forefront of actively engaging with and supporting the workforce development needs of the youth in our region and state. Young job seekers are one of the hardest to reach segments of the talent pipeline and this training initiative aims to empower our local youth-serving agencies with the tools and resources they need to effectively support the future workforce via valuable apprenticeships.”

Lisa Johnson, MPA, Director of FHI 360’s NIWL, said, “Apprenticeships are a highly successful way for employers to increase in the quality and size of their applicants and cultivate a stable, qualified workforce. FHI 360 is excited to partner with youth-serving organizations to expand apprenticeship opportunities throughout Lake County.”

Following the initial training session, it is anticipated that subsequent trainings will be held with additional Lake County youth-serving agencies as the program grows and expands over the coming year. Agencies interested in participating in the program should contact Jennifer Serino, LCWDB Executive Director, at jserino@lakecountyil.gov.

Funding provided in whole or in part by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

About Lake County Workforce Development Board

The Lake County Workforce Development Board is a workforce development leader in the county, region, and state. The Workforce Board collaborates with key partners and stakeholders to lead performance-driven and innovative strategies that develop, align, and integrate the workforce development system. Visit <https://www.lakecountyworkforce.org/> to learn more about LCWDB.

About FHI 360

FHI 360, a global organization with over 4,000 expert staff members working in more than 60 countries around the world, mobilizes research, resources, and relationships so that people everywhere can access the opportunities they need to lead full, healthy lives. Visit <https://www.fhi360.org/> to learn more about FHI 360.



About National Institute for Work and Learning

The National Institute for Work and Learning, part of FHI 360, has more than 50 years of experience advancing access, equity, and excellence in education and workforce systems by focusing on two key drivers of individual well-being – education and employment – to improve lives. Visit <https://niwl.fhi360.org/> to learn more about NIWL.

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