

Skilled Trades Career Fair

The Partnership hosted a Skilled Trades Career Fair from March 22-24, 2022 at McCormick Place Convention Center, Lakeside Center on behalf of Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot and Chicago Public Schools (CPS).

The event exposed over 2,000 CPS students to more than 50 local employers, trade unions, and workforce agencies.

The Skilled Trades Career Fair laid the groundwork for ongoing, high-quality career exposure and programming for young adult job seekers in Chicago, and piloted key initiatives identified as priorities of Mayor Lightfoot.

The Career Fair provided in person, face-to-face engagement for career options, exposing and connecting elementary and high school students with work-based information and tools to explore a profession in the skilled trades. The majority of students who participated in the Career Fair represented residents who are historically underrepresented in the skilled trades and may be at risk of becoming disconnected from work and advanced school. In its outreach, the City prioritized schools from the city's south and west sides to ensure that students living in communities with lower economic opportunity rates have access to skilled trade opportunities. This includes CPS program Choose to Change students, students from Options schools, and well as those from traditional schools. Students participated in work-based learning opportunities throughout the event, including guest speakers, site visits, and potential internship and youth apprenticeship options available after high school graduation.

The event was sponsored by the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS) and the Chicago Community Safety Coordination Center (CSCC) and co-hosted with Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance, Chicago and Cook County Building and Construction Trades Council, Construction Industry Service Corporation (CISCO), and HIRE360.

“Everywhere you look, you can see how the skilled trades and union labor has influenced and built our strong city,” said Mayor Lightfoot. “Skilled trades and their unions are vital to keeping our communities running. Additionally, these well-paying, sustainable careers provide pathways to financial security and job satisfaction. I’m pleased to introduce our CPS students to these opportunities and all the career possibilities that this sector holds.”

