

# Duckworth: Investments in workforce development key to growing good-paying Illinois jobs

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PARK FOREST, IL — U.S. Senator Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) highlighted her efforts to support workforce development programs throughout Illinois at a roundtable today with community leaders from the greater Chicago area. Duckworth discussed her [Community College to Career Fund \(CC2C\) Act](#), which would encourage collaboration between small businesses and community colleges to develop workforce training programs and curricula that reduce the “skills gap” that makes it harder for graduates to find jobs and harder for employers to fill openings. The programs and curricula supported by Duckworth’s *CC2C Act* would better prepare students for careers with employers in their communities in high-demand industries like manufacturing, healthcare, clean energy and information technology. A photo of the roundtable is



available [here](#).

“Every American deserves the chance to get ahead – the chance to get a quality education, build a career and support their family,” said Senator Duckworth. “Yet, far too many Americans struggle to access the training and education they need to secure a good-paying job, which hurts our economy and our country. Fortunately, commonsense legislation like the *CC2C Act* would help change that by creating new opportunities for Americans to get the training they need to work for local businesses in high-demand industries and manufacturers like ImageWorks. I look forward to continuing to do what I can to ensure all Americans have the chance to prepare for a career in the 21st century economy.”

Today’s roundtable included participation from the President and CEO of ImageWorks, a Park Forest manufacturer that specializes in graphic design and the creation of unique marketing pieces. ImageWorks partners with a local community college, Prairie State College, to support the D227 Apprenticeship Program, which helps train young people for careers in the manufacturing industry.

Duckworth’s efforts to support workforce development programs are part of her work to revitalize economies in communities around the state that have been ignored by many for too long. By pushing for investments in infrastructure, education programs and minority- and women-owned businesses, Duckworth seeks to support working families across Illinois, increasing access to jobs and opportunity, and helping provide community wealth that will stabilize neighborhoods struggling for a brighter future.

Senator Duckworth has worked hard to make higher education more accessible and affordable for all Americans. Last Congress, she introduced the *In the Red Act*, which allows borrowers to refinance student loans at lower rates and makes two-year community colleges tuition free for deserving students. She also introduced the *Career and Technical Education (CTE) Opportunity Act* to help reduce the burden of student loan debt while closing the “skills gap” by removing antiquated eligibility restrictions that prevent students enrolled in many CTE programs from receiving federal student aid.