



# The State Of Illinois Officially Makes February Career And Technical Education Month

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ALTON - On February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 the Illinois Senate adopted Senate Resolution 983 declaring February as Career and Technical Education Month in the State of Illinois. This resolution brings awareness to the Career and Technical Education (CTE) that directly prepares students for high-wage, high-demand careers. CTE covers many different fields, including healthcare, information technology, manufacturing, hospitality, and many more. CTE encompasses many types of education from classroom learning to certification programs to work-based learning opportunities outside of the classroom.

“I have prioritized creating a skilled workforce in Illinois, and it depends on giving students the opportunity to attend high-quality trade schools in our state. We need to be encouraging success from outside a traditional classroom,” State Senator Rachelle Crowe said. “This resolution works to bring awareness to the vital contributions labor workers provide in economic development efforts. Technical, vocational and trade education strengthens the Metro East at its core.”

Career and Technical Education delivers real options for students pursuing college and rewarding careers; it delivers real-world skills to students, and it delivers a real high school experience with more value. Parents and students both want their children or themselves to pursue a career they are passionate about. CTE lets students explore careers and find out what they want, or don't want to do after high school. CTE makes the future more affordable by helping families save money and invest their time wisely. CTE students can earn a paycheck, marketable certifications and even earn college credits while in high school, which can lead to better opportunities whether they pursue college or a career. There are a growing number of scholarships designed to help CTE students.

“Each year, it’s important to recognize the accomplishments and opportunities coming from the world of Career and Technical Education. With career opportunities increase for those with trade and technical skills, the state of Illinois needs to let students and business owners know that the state will continue promoting and investing in these careers,” State Representative Monica Bristow said. “As a member of both the Higher Education Committee and the Economic Development Committee, I recognize that CTE is an incredible avenue to meaningful and lucrative careers. I am happy to support February as CTE Month to recognize the work being done in the field and increase awareness about the opportunities for those entering the field.”

Career and Technical Education provides learners with the knowledge and skills they need to be prepared for college and careers. CTE gives purpose to learning by emphasizing real-world skills and practical knowledge within a selected career focus. Students in CTE programs take specialized courses, in addition to required courses, and often have the opportunity to participate in internships, engage with mentors and practice what they are learning through hands-on projects. Students can participate in CTE at the middle school or high school level and at postsecondary institutions.

“Career and Technical Education creates meaningful pathways for students that allows them to learn through real-world application, explore career fields, and learn technical & employability skills that will last them a lifetime. One important element of CTE is that it doesn’t limit a student's future career options, it expands them. Students who utilize CTE programs can follow a path that leads to an industry credential, an associate’s degree, a bachelor's degree, or beyond. Going through a CTE program really does help a student find who they are and what they want to be and send a student down a path that leads to a meaningful career,” said Kaleb Smith, Madison County CTE Director.

To learn more about Career and Technical Education in Madison County Illinois visit [www.madisoncountyste.com](http://www.madisoncountyste.com). Madison County Career & Technical Education System encourages local industry and community organizations to get involved and support local programs such as classroom presentations, company tours, scholarships, apprenticeships/internships, job shadowing, or by sponsoring equipment or programs. Madison County Career & Technical Education system can be reached by phone at 618-656-0415. They are located at 6161 Center Grove Rd. Edwardsville, Illinois 62025.