Pritzker Administration Announces The Second Cohort Of The Governor's Office Academy Of Leadership (G.O.A.L.)

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SPRINGFIELD - Today, Governor JB Pritzker and the Department of Central Management Services (CMS) proudly unveil the participants selected for the second cohort of the Governor's Office Academy of Leadership (G.O.A.L.) program. Following the resounding success of the inaugural cohort, this highly competitive program is entering its second year, reaffirming Illinois' commitment to providing a robust

professional development opportunity for the State's mid-level leaders, who play pivotal roles in advancing key initiatives and ensuring optimal operations for the state.

"As Governor, I'm always excited to invest in our future by promoting leadership and community across our state," said Governor JB Pritzker. "Today, I'm proud to announce the next cohort of incredible public servants chosen for the G.O.A.L. program. I have no doubt this diverse group of professionals will advance our shared mission of a stronger Illinois."

The G.O.A.L. program, following the demonstrated success of its inaugural year, continues to prioritize enhancing leadership skillsets, fostering social learning, broadening perspectives, and building long-term networks across agencies. The overwhelmingly positive response to the inaugural cohort underscored the critical need for this initiative, leading to the decision to continue the program into a second year. The rigorous 11-month program is set to formally launch in February 2024, featuring bi-monthly in-person and virtual sessions held alternately in Chicago and Springfield.

"We are honored to spearhead the G.O.A.L. program for the State of Illinois, building on the foundation of success established in the first year," said Raven A. DeVaughn, Acting Director of CMS. "Aligned with our mission as the operational engine of the State, this program not only enhances leadership capabilities but also contributes to our broader goals of providing efficient, timely, and innovative services while fostering an inclusive and diverse workforce. We look forward to witnessing the continued impact of this program on the future leaders of our great state."

The 30-person cohort was selected from hundreds of applicants by a multi-agency evaluator panel and represents a diverse pool of leaders committed to advancing public service in State Government. The 2024 G.O.A.L cohort includes:

- Jakki Alexander, Department of Juvenile Justice
- Melishia Bansa, Department of Healthcare and Family Services
- Freddie Buckingham, Department of Employment Security
- Jose Burgos, Department of Natural Resources
- Jackie Clisham, Illinois Racing Board
- Mary Ann Dyar, Criminal Justice Information Authority
- Noah Franklin, Department of Public Health
- Jeffrey Green, Department of Central Management Services
- Brandy Jones, Department of Children & Family Services
- Tiara Jones, Department of Employment Security
- Kathryn Kaniewski, Guardianship and Advocacy Commission
- Harish Kumar, Department of Innovation and Technology
- Yolanda Lampkin-Diming, Department of Human Services

- Nicole Miceli, Department of Human Services
- Talitha Myers, Department of Human Services
- Rebekah Nichols, Department of Children & Family Services
- Victor Nwankwo, Department of Corrections
- Amorio Parish, Department of Human Services
- Natalie Pine, Office of Governor
- Edith Salinas, Department of Human Services
- Bridget Sheehan, Illinois Commerce Commission
- T'Kira Siler-Wilkerson, Department of Veterans Affairs
- Brian Spencer, Department of Children & Family Services
- George Sweeney, Department of Insurance
- Mary Thompson, Department of Human Services
- Stephany Trejos, Department of Corrections
- Beth Walker, Department of Revenue
- Kit Walsh, Department of Financial and Professional Regulation
- Jeremy Wheeler, Department of Children & Family Services
- Courtney Wick, Department of Human Services

To read more about G.O.A.L., visit www.illinois.gov/goal.