



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR  
PAT QUINN

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## **Governor Quinn Announces Illinois Awarded Grant to Bolster STEM Programs**

### *Three Illinois Higher Ed Institutions to Receive Expert Technical Assistance to Prepare Students for 21st Century Careers*

CHICAGO – Governor Pat Quinn today announced that Illinois has been awarded a technical assistance grant to help three institutions of higher learning bolster their Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) programs. The non-monetary grant will provide assistance and guidance to the University of Illinois at Chicago, Southern Illinois University Carbondale and City Colleges of Chicago, and complements the ongoing work in this area for Illinois. Today's announcement is part of Governor Quinn's agenda to prepare every student for college, career and beyond.

"This grant will help three of our finest institutions produce more graduates who are prepared for 21st century careers," Governor Quinn said. "STEM education opens more doors for the students of Illinois and gives them the opportunity to participate in today's competitive job market. On behalf of one of only five states in the nation to receive this grant, I want to thank the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust for seeing the promise in Illinois' future graduates."

Illinois is one of five states to receive a Complete College of America Award from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust to help select schools bolster their STEM degree programs. The University of Illinois at Chicago, Southern Illinois University Carbondale and the City Colleges of Chicago will receive training to help them strengthen their STEM programs and design pathways to ensure students who sign up

for these programs can get into the required courses, graduate on time and receive assistance in finding employment in their fields upon graduation.

“This award speaks to the visionary leadership of Governor Quinn and the Illinois Board of Higher Education, as well as their unwavering commitment to college completion,” Complete College America President Stan Jones said. “This ambitious plan will lead to more high-skilled, high-wage Illinois jobs by dramatically increasing the number of students with valuable STEM degrees. I’m confident that these efforts will serve as a blueprint for the rest of the country.”

A 2011 report from the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce shows that Illinois will have an estimated 319,000 STEM-related job openings by 2018. About 93 percent of those jobs will require post-secondary education or training.

“We are thrilled Illinois has committed to help develop a set of high-impact, evidenced-based strategies to improve STEM instruction and opportunities for its college students,” Helmsley Charitable Trust’s Education Program Director Rich McKeon said. “Working with CCA, these three higher education institutions in Illinois, as well as several additional universities and colleges across the other states involved in this initiative, will build vital frameworks for states throughout the country to address our nation’s urgent and increasing demand for skilled STEM graduates.”

During the two year grant period, the three campuses will develop STEM completion goals and analyze local STEM labor markets. This will contribute to state level plans for improving college training needed to support Illinois’ workforce development in these fields. The Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) will serve as the project’s coordinating agency. Through training institutes, technical assistance from the grant also will be shared statewide with other Illinois colleges and universities including use of the analyses of the state’s labor market projections for STEM careers.

“The three campuses selected are led by chancellors who are establishing reforms to improve student achievement in STEM fields, and are primed to maximize the in-depth technical assistance provided by this grant,” IBHE Executive Director Dr. Harry J. Berman said. “I want to thank City Colleges of Chicago Chancellor Cheryl Hyman, SIUC Chancellor Rita Cheng, and UIC Chancellor Paula Allen-Meares for their partnership.”

In early 2012, Governor Quinn launched the Illinois Pathways Initiative, an innovative public-private partnership between Illinois’ public education institutions and the business community to foster STEM learning. The Complete College of America Award announced today will complement the progress already made through the initiative.

Complete College of America (CCA) is a national nonprofit organization working with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees. Illinois is an alliance member state of the CCA. The grant announced today is made possible through funding support to CCA from the Leona M. and Harry B. Helmsley Charitable Trust.

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