

# NEWS RELEASE from ACTE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Illinois CTE Programs Offers Invaluable Career Training to Illinois Students

Alexandria, VA— Illinois offers invaluable career skills preparation and exploration opportunities to over 50% of all high school students in the state through career and technical education (CTE) programs that match the workforce needs and demands in Illinois and the national economy. On a recent outreach tour held with the [Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education](#) (IACTE) and the [Association for Career and Technical Education](#) (ACTE), a national organization dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers, journalists, industry leaders and state legislature and Congressional staff members had the opportunity to tour eleven schools across the state of Illinois, meet and speak with CTE professionals and students and see firsthand the positive impacts of CTE programs.

CTE programs are preparing Illinois students for success in both college and careers. Illinois' graduation rate for all high school students is 82.3%, however, students enrolled in CTE in the state of Illinois have a graduation rate of 91% according to the most recent data from the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), Department of Education. In almost all CTE programs across Illinois, students graduate and go onto postsecondary education over 90% of the time compared to their peers not enrolled in CTE.

CTE programs in high schools across the state are providing career training in Illinois' most in-demand fields. A recent report by Ernst & Young LLP found that Illinois and the Midwest "are critical contributors to the global biotechnology landscape" and ranks Illinois as a leader in the nation's growing biotechnology industry. Illinois CTE programs offer high school students the only nanotechnology program, located at [Wheeling High School](#) in Wheeling, IL as well as the only photonics program, found in [Lake County High Schools Technology Campus](#) in Grayslake, IL, in the United States.

Partnerships with business and industry leaders are a key component to many Illinois CTE programs and also make the state unique in its offerings to students. In addition to the abundant internship, career shadowing and mentorship opportunities that can be found in Illinois CTE programs, Illinois is home to the only training facility of the [International Union of Operating Engineers](#) (I.O.U.E.); a 342,000 square foot space housing an indoor training area, almost 200 pieces of heavy equipment, 30 classrooms, construction material testing lab and a state of the art welding facility. Local high school seniors can participate in a year-long heavy equipment management program at no tuition cost to the student, just one example of the valuable opportunities through CTE and industry partnerships available to Illinois students.

“Illinois is on trend with the high-quality, workforce-connected career and technical education programs that are educating the country’s future workforce across the nation,” stated Ashley Parker, Media Relations Manager for ACTE, who toured schools from Chicago to Jerseyville with IACTE Consultant Cindy Stover in late April, “We know that all students need to be both college and career-ready to be competitive in the global economy and ready for career success. The programs found in the state of Illinois offer students opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in the career fields that can lead to whatever options work best for them; a job out of high school thanks to an industry-recognized credential they earned, a postsecondary training program at a technical or community college or a four-year university program.”

To learn more about the CTE programs in Illinois, please contact the [Illinois Association for Career and Technical Education](#).

### **About ACTE**

The Association for Career and Technical Education is the largest national association dedicated to the advancement of education that prepares youth and adults for successful careers. For 85 years, we have been committed to enhancing the job performance and satisfaction of our members, to increasing public awareness and appreciation of career and technical programs, and to assuring growth in local, state and federal funding for these programs by communicating and working with legislators and government leaders.