

Madison County apprenticeship programs fulfill pivotal role in developing next generation workforce



Matthew Torre, Holly’s House of Hope’s first apprentice in Madison County’s uniquely developed DOL-certified apprenticeship partnership with them and the City of Highland, is learning on the job and proud of his work at the Korte Recreation Center and at the Senior Center in Highland. (Photo courtesy of Holly’s House of Hope)

By MELISSA CROCKETT MESKE

The latest news coming from Madison County’s Employment and Training Department is nothing less than positive and innovative for the future of the region’s workforce.

It was recently announced that MCETD will serve as lead agency on a four-year \$5.8 million grant award from the U.S. Department of Labor to launch the Gateway Registered Apprenticeship Programs Hub.

Bi-state workforce boards will use this grant funding to launch the hub as a part of the Apprenticeship Building America program. This funding will be used for apprenticeships in healthcare, bioscience, and education with key partners, St. Louis County and BioSTL.

“We are thrilled with this announcement from the Department of Labor to be able to launch the Gateway Registered Apprenticeship Programs Hub,” MCETD Director Tony Fuhrmann said.

Fuhrmann said the Gateway Hub includes six local workforce innovation areas: Madison County Employment and Training, St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department, City of St. Louis, St. Louis County, St. Charles County and the Jefferson/Franklin Consortium in Missouri.

“These Local Workforce Innovation Areas serve more than 13 counties and 2.4 million residents across the St. Louis metropolitan region,” said Fuhrmann. “In addition to building capacity and awareness for apprenticeships as an ‘earn-as-you-learn’ model for workforce development, the Gateway Hub will emphasize the inclusion of underserved populations in apprenticeship opportunities.”

He said the target industries are education, healthcare and social assistance and bioscience manufacturing research and development were selected due to alignment with regional comprehensive economic development strategies, strong employment demand and quality of jobs and previous success in collaborating with regional employers in these fields. The Hub project aims to register at least 750 new apprentices across the region.

In addition to workforce and employer partners, the Gateway Hub includes BioSTL, the non-profit innovation hub driving the bioscience sector across the St. Louis region. BioSTL will leverage the BioSTL Coalition, comprised of top business, science, academic, philanthropic, and public sector leaders, to advance registered apprenticeships across the bioscience cluster.

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Row takes on lead role with RASI Board as merger with Gateway appears imminent

2023 slate of officers, directors of REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois recently installed

By MELISSA CROCKETT MESKE

Members of the REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois recently gathered to celebrate the Association and install its new officers and directors for the year ahead.



Row

at the event held on Aug. 25, 2022, at The Abby on Main in Columbia, Ill. Rounding out the Association’s 2022-2023 Board of Directors leadership team installations were President-

Elect Ashley Barud of Coldwell Banker Brown Realty, O’Fallon; Secretary/Treasurer Brad Krueger of Century 21 Advantage, Columbia; Immediate Past-President Karen Sheesley of RE/MAX Preferred, O’Fallon; and Affiliate Director Richard Coolbaugh of First Mid Bank & Trust, Fairview Heights.

The following directors were also installed: Alexandra Anderson of Strano & Associates, Swansea; Jason Buss of RE/MAX Preferred, Belleville; Rob Cole-Dempcy of Judy Dempcy Homes Powered by KW Pinnacle, O’Fallon; Amber Fourman-Duke of Coldwell Banker Brown, Belleville; Naureen Frierdich of Century 21 Advantage, Columbia; John Grissom of Berkshire Hathaway Homeservice, O’Fallon; Carlos Holmes of Coldwell Banker Brown, Belleville; Caleb Marsh of Red Door Realty Group Inc, O’Fallon; and Stan Sieron of Stan Sieron & Co., Belleville.

“I am so proud of our Association and our members,” said Row following the ceremony. “During the Installation, members of the Association collected

over \$1,000 in donations for Human Support Services. We have so much heart, and I know that will continue into 2023 and many years to come.”

Row further noted that the Association’s members “not only work in this community, but we live here too. We are here to help you in the home buying and selling process, as well as help in our community.”

A REALTOR® with Keller Williams Pinnacle, Row has served as a board member of the REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois (RASI) since 2019. In real estate for 15 years now, Row joined RASI in 2007.

Row has been a Designated Managing Broker for Keller Williams Pinnacle for the past two years. He is also licensed in Missouri and holds the designation of Managing Broker there. He and husband Omar have been married for five years and enjoy parenting their three dogs. Row’s hometown is Columbia, Ill., and he currently calls St. Louis home.

The “other” big news to note: What has been a major conversation for many

years throughout the region appears to soon become a reality. With the official decision to be finalized through the outcome of the vote at RASI’s October board meeting, a merger now seems imminent of a merger between the REALTOR® Association of Southwestern Illinois and the Greater Gateway Association Of Realtors.

“We are very excited that this vote is taking place,” said Row. “Both Associations are working diligently to make this work. I feel confident this merger will take place.”

“The pros are continuity, shared services, a more united Southwestern Illinois, a larger voice for our community, more opportunities for greater education, speakers and involvement in our communities. I don’t see any cons at all,” Row said further.

RASI CEO Deb Frazier added, “This is something both Associations have worked on for the past few years. I appreciate all the time that Sam and the other volunteers have spent to make this happen.”

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