



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
CITY OF CHICAGO



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 6, 2016

**CONTACT:**

Mayor's Press Office

312.744.3334

[press@cityofchicago.org](mailto:press@cityofchicago.org)

Skills for Chicagoland's Future

James Chase

312-573-5476, [james\\_chase@jtpr.com](mailto:james_chase@jtpr.com)

**MAYOR EMANUEL AND SKILLS FOR CHICAGOLAND'S FUTURE ANNOUNCE MORE THAN 1,000 UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED PLACED IN JOBS IN 2015**

*Partnership with City Will Place More Than 1,100 This Year and 5,000 by 2018;  
More Than 40 Percent are from Neighborhoods with High Unemployment*

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Skills for Chicagoland's Future (Skills) today announced that 1,000 unemployed and underemployed Chicagoland residents have been connected with jobs in 2015, and they plan to place more than 1,100 this year. Since Skills was launched, funding from the city of Chicago has supported more than 60 percent of job placements. More than 40 percent of the placed job-seekers came from neighborhoods experiencing unemployment rates higher than 20 percent.

"Skills for Chicagoland's Future is a key city partner that reaches deep into communities to connect Chicagoans with economic opportunity through employment," Mayor Emanuel said. "The impact of each of these placements extends well beyond the job seeker to their family and into their community. I commend each of the businesses for making this important commitment and impacting our neighborhoods, and look forward to working alongside Skills to provide even more opportunities for Chicagoans to succeed and prosper."

"Despite an improving economic climate, there are neighborhoods and populations such as youth that are still disproportionately affected by unemployment. By connecting qualified, motivated job seekers from these communities to corporations with current hiring needs, Skills acts as a 'zip code equalizer' for job seekers who may not be identified through traditional hiring practices," said Marie Trzupke Lynch, president and CEO. "Skills is connecting our employer partners, such as Rush University Medical Center, Yelp, Freedman Seating Corporation and more than 40 other Chicago-area businesses to the neighborhoods and populations most affected by unemployment."

- In 2015, Skills placed more than 1,000 unemployed and underemployed job seekers into positions with more than 40 employers, generating an additional \$11.4 million in wages that stimulate economic growth and provide income tax revenue.
- Forty-three percent of job seekers placed by Skills came from communities with unemployment rates averaging above 20 percent, including Chatham/Avalon Park, South Shore, Auburn Gresham, South Chicago, Austin and Humboldt Park, among others.

- Additionally, approximately 58 percent of the candidates Skills placed in 2015 were considered long-term unemployed with an average unemployment duration of 18 months. Nearly 30 percent of placed candidates were youth ages 17-24.
- So far in 2016, the organization has already placed over 170 Chicagoland residents into jobs, with a goal of placing more than 1,100 by the end of the year and 5,000 by 2018.

Since its founding in September 2012 and with support from the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership, Skills has placed more than 2,400 unemployed and underemployed job seekers into positions with more than 50 companies.

The announcement event was hosted by Rush University Medical Center (RUMC), which has partnered with Skills since 2013 to fill positions such as certified medical assistants and patient care technicians, as well as additional positions in hospital operations. RUMC hired 38 job seekers through Skills in 2015 and has committed to hiring 50 in 2016. The majority of those hired in 2015 came from neighborhoods with unemployment rates approaching fifteen percent and higher.

“Many of the highly motivated, diverse and dedicated individuals we’ve hired through Skills came to us with a history of long-term unemployment and might not have been identified through traditional hiring practices. The relationship between Rush University Medical Center and Skills for Chicagoland’s Future is more than just a partnership—it’s a shared commitment to making a difference in people’s lives by connecting members of our community with meaningful opportunities to build a rewarding career,” RUMC CEO Larry Goodman said. “We expect to almost double the number of employees we hire through Skills in 2016, and encourage other Chicago and Cook County employers to build their workforce by partnering with Skills to help get even more un- and underemployed Chicagoans back to work.”

“As a single mother, the experience of being unemployed was stressful and frustrating. It didn’t matter how many applications I sent out or how well the job lined up with my experience, I would never get a response,” Juwana Dorsey, successfully placed Skills candidate at RUMC said. “After I connected with Skills and applied for the position at RUMC, my Skills recruiter prepared me for my interviews and stayed in touch throughout the hiring process until the day I got my job offer. I finally feel like my life is back on track.”

Unemployed and underemployed Chicago and Cook County residents who have a legal right to work in the United States are encouraged to visit the Skills website at [www.scfjobs.com](http://www.scfjobs.com) to create a job seeker profile, search and apply for open positions, and register to receive a weekly e-newsletter that details immediate and train-to-hire opportunities.

Employers seeking to partner with Skills in addressing their immediate and long-term hiring needs by tapping into a new pool of immediately available, diverse candidates and flexible incentive programs are encouraged to contact one of the organization’s client service managers at 312-906-7200 or [biz@skillsforchicagoland.com](mailto:biz@skillsforchicagoland.com).

###