

# CITIZEN SOUTH END WEEKLY

**BUSINESS**  
Blue Fox Impact  
Launches Social  
Justice Racial Equity  
Venture Across  
Multiple  
Entertainment Sectors



WEEK OF AUGUST 2, 2023

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**Pretty Dope  
Society Expands  
Launch of Melanin-  
Filled Back to  
School Collection  
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**DEEPLY ROOTED  
LAUNCHES  
\$15.6M CAPITAL  
CAMPAIGN TO  
BUILD DEEPLY  
ROOTED DANCE  
CENTER**

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**U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Don Graves visited Olive-Harvey College.** PHOTO BY TIA CAROL JONES.



**Cheryl Freeman, Dean of College to Careers at Olive-Harvey College, showed U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Don Graves around Olive-Harvey College's Transportation, Distribution and Logistics Center during a tour.** PHOTO BY TIA CAROL JONES.

## DEPUTY SECRETARY OF DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE VISITS OLIVE-HARVEY COLLEGE

On Friday, July 22nd, U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Don Graves visited Olive-Harvey College and participated in a roundtable discussion about workforce development.

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## briefly

### GOV. PRITZKER, AFSCME COUNCIL 31 ANNOUNCE CONTRACT RATIFICATION

CHICAGO — Governor JB Pritzker's administration and AFSCME Council 31—the largest union of frontline Illinois state employees—have announced the ratification of a new contract after membership voted overwhelmingly in favor.

The agreement was tentatively reached by negotiators for the state and the union in the early morning hours of July 1. Over the past two weeks, members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 31 attended local union meetings throughout the state to review and vote on its terms. The four-year agreement is now in effect.

The agreement provides for a 4.0% pay increase retroactive to July 1. In all, base wages will rise 17.95% over four years. Other provisions include expanded parental leave to 12 weeks and new joint efforts to improve workplace safety.

The agreement also includes a number of significant actions to expedite the filling of vacancies and improve strategies to recruit, hire, and retain workers, such as:

Modernizing how vacancies with State agencies are filled by updating the contract language to reflect the state's transition to an electronic hiring process.

A commitment to work together to streamline the State's hiring process to improve the pace at which vacancies are filled.

Increasing hiring and retention of current employees by forming a joint labor-management committee that will meet to identify roadblocks to hiring.

Implementing a pilot program for recruitment bonuses for positions that have high vacancy rates.

Ensuring that employees on Parental Leave may still bid on vacancies during their leave.

AFSCME represents some 35,000 state employees who work to provide the essential public services our communities need in every part of Illinois, every day. They protect children, care for veterans and people with disabilities, help struggling families, keep prisons safe and much more.

### DEADLINE FOR HOMEOWNERS TO APPLY FOR PROPERTY TAX SAVINGS IS AUG. 4

Cook County -- Cook County Assessor Fritz Kaegi announces that the deadline to apply for exemptions is Friday, Aug. 4. Exemptions are property tax savings that contribute to lowering a homeowner's property tax bill. The most common is the Homeowner Exemption, saving a property owner an average of \$950 dollars each year. The savings from exemptions are reflected on a homeowner's second installment property tax bill.

Automatic renewals related to COVID-19 ended this year and homeowners need to resume annual filings for the Low-Income Senior Citizens Assessment Freeze "Senior Freeze" and Veterans with Disabilities Exemptions. Seniors and Veterans that need to reapply were mailed application booklets, however they can still apply online to make the deadline.

New homeowners, first-time applicants, or those that need to reapply can now do so online by visiting, [www.cookcountyassessor.com/exemptions](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/exemptions). Applying online is easy, free, and can be done in under ten minutes.

If homeowners are unsure of their existing exemptions, they can check by reviewing their "Property Details" and review the Exemption History & Status section.

The Assessor's Office is proud to announce that exemption forms are available in Spanish, Polish, and simplified Chinese languages. Applications can be downloaded at [www.cookcountyassessor.com/exemptions](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com/exemptions).

# Deputy Secretary of Department of Commerce Visits Olive-Harvey College

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BY TIA CAROL JONES

Olive-Harvey College is a sub-awardee of the Economic Development Administration's Good Jobs Challenge to Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership (The Partnership). The Good Jobs Challenge is a \$500 million investment in local workforce development, funded by President Joe Biden's American Rescue Plan. Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership was one of 32 recipients. It received \$18.5 million in funding.

Through Good Jobs Chicago, Olive-Harvey College will lead a transportation, distribution, and logistics sector partnership. "The biggest opportunity here is that we're expanding jobs and opportunities for a population of folks who typically wouldn't have been afforded this opportunity," said Olive-Harvey College President Dr. Kimberly Hollingsworth.

Dr. Hollingsworth said Olive-Harvey College was willing to volunteer as the site for the roundtable because given the quality of the College's program and services, it would be an ideal situation. "Our transportation and logistics program is highly respected with our partners, and I think that had a lot to do with it. We've been able to leverage those partnerships and relationships to ensure that our curriculum is current and relevant. I think we were just poised and ready to take on the challenge," Hollingsworth said, adding that Olive-Harvey is excited about the partnership and the opportunity to expand existing programming.

Part of that expansion includes CDL A B and C, which have waitlists, and branching into electric vehicle repairs. Jaime Martinez is a technical trades automotive instructor at Rivian. At Olive-Harvey College, Martinez is one of the instructors that is teaching electric vehicle repairs. The program with Rivian began at the College on May 15th. Since then, the students have learned how to safely work on the high voltage system, remove battery packs, remove drive units, done interi-

or teardowns, remove and replace components, as well as how to do service maintenance.

"Students get that real world exposure. I want to make sure when students graduate here, they hit the floor running. We are giving them the ability to relocate anywhere," Martinez said. "We help with that relocation, as well. I think that's it's very important that in order to launch your career, that we help them and give them that push that they sometimes need."

Graves said the Department of Commerce is trying to identify partners in communities across the country where using the funds from the American Rescue Plan will be an investment that is amplified and create gamechanging training and development for those communities.

"We're putting out hundreds of millions of dollars with this program and we can't do it on our own. We don't know the factors that are going on in an individual community. It's more important to understand what the communities are seeing, what they're dealing with, what the historic challenges of underinvestment, disinvestment and the pathways to the opportunities that are coming," Graves said.

Graves added, because Olive-Harvey College was already working with The Partnership, it made sense to leverage the work that was already going on at the College, and the rest of the City Colleges of Chicago, as well as with the Partnership.

"This investment is going to supercharge what is already happening here. The thousands of people who are anxious to get into the jobs that are here and that are coming but haven't had the pathway," Graves said. "That's what this is all about. The Good Jobs Challenge is about creating stronger pathways, helping people to identify those jobs that are going to be good paying, they're going to be able to sustain their family on the job and to have the type of training that leads to lifelong learning."

For more information about Olive-Harvey College, visit [www.ccc.edu/colleges/olive-harvey](http://www.ccc.edu/colleges/olive-harvey).



Jaime Martinez, Technical Trades Automotive Instructor with Rivian, talks with U.S. Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Don Graves about what students are taught in regards to electric vehicle repairs. PHOTO BY TIA CAROL JONES

## Giannoulas Announces Illinois to Receive Part of \$12.4 Million Settlement from Raymond James Financial Entities

Illinois Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulas announced today that Illinois is part of a \$12.4 million settlement with Raymond James & Associates, Inc. and Raymond James Financial Services, Inc. Illinois is among five other states that discovered Raymond James entities had charged unreasonable commissions on trades that have harmed main street investors, including Illinoisans.

As part of the settlement, Raymond James will pay at least \$8.2 million in refunds to clients nationwide and \$4.2 million in penalties and costs to state securities regulators.

"This case will help ensure that investors are treated fairly by broker-dealers and financial services firms," Giannoulas said. "These companies must comply with protections currently in place. No matter how large or small an investor's transactions are, the

state securities regulators in Illinois will ensure investors are protected."

Giannoulas noted that Illinois customers will receive \$328,000 in restitution. The Secretary of State's Securities Department levied a \$75,000 fine and will receive an additional \$25,000 reimbursement for the cost of the investigation.

An investigation by the state securities regulators from Illinois, Alabama, California, Massachusetts, Montana and Washington concluded that Raymond James charged excessive commissions on over 270,000 low-principal amount equity transactions nationwide. The investigation found that Raymond James' commissions on transactions were more than 5% of the principal value, and Raymond James took up to 100% of proceeds from customer sales. Over five years, this amounted to more than \$8,250,000 of

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