



## Upcoming Statewide Events to Expand Illinois Women-Owned Businesses, Future Women Business Owners, & Aspiring Female Entrepreneurs Opportunities as of February 2024

Powered by the [Office of Minority Economic Empowerment \(OMEE\)](#) at the [Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity \(DCEO\)](#)

Below is not a complete list of all the upcoming events and resources being presented throughout Illinois during the national Women's HERstory Month 2024 and throughout the year. The below listed events, programs, and organizations in this guide are not an endorsement of the views, opinions, products, or services of any the below entities. Please note that website addresses/URLs are subject to change as part of organizations' website updates.

### State of Illinois' Women's HERstory Month for Women-Owned Businesses – Future Women Business Owners- Aspiring Female Entrepreneurs

- [DCEO's 2024 Women's HERstory Month](#)

DCEO's Women's HERstory Month webpage features upcoming events for Illinois women-owned businesses, business resource guides, and business directories featuring Illinois women-owned businesses that you can support in March and year-round.

### [More Than March](#), presented by Let's Talk Womxn Chicago

Friday, March 1, 2024 from 4:00-8:00 PM | Moe's Cantina in Chicago

Presented by [Let's Talk Womxn Chicago](#), "More Than March" is Chicago's woman-power celebration of the year. Blends unabashed social & cerebral facets. Tasting stations & diva cocktails by 30+ leading Let's Talk Womxn restaurateurs. DJ, black & bling drag show, dancing, the works. Come in BLACK draped in BLING to revel in our gourmet women power bash. For more event information and to purchase your ticket, click [here](#).



# BLACK AND BLING BASH

@LETSTALKWOMXN

4-8PM MOE'S CANTINA  
AFTERPARTY 8PM ON  
TICKETS \$95 | VIP \$125  
LETSTALKWOMXN.COM

## MARCH IS NOT ENOUGH!

WOMEN ARE: HALF THE VOICE & VOTE | HALF THE WORKFORCE |  
ENTIRE HOMEMAKERS & CARETAKERS | FULL PROPAGATION OF MANKIND

LET'S TALK WOMXN IS AN ACTION-LED MOVEMENT OF 900+ WOMEN RESTAURATEURS & ENTREPRENEURS.  
FOUNDED IN CHICAGO. NOW IN 15 CITIES TWO COUNTRIES. LETSTALKWOMXN.COM | @LETSTALKWOMXN

## [International Women's Day](#), presented by 1871

Thursday, March 7, 2024 from 8:30 AM-1:30 PM | hybrid, with event at 1871 in Chicago

Presented by [1871](#), join them as they #InspireInclusion in our community of innovators, leaders, and allies at 1871's annual International Women's Day event! Build camaraderie and join forces working towards women equality in our half-day of programming, including inspirational keynote, curated workshops, networking, and lunch. For more information and to register for the hybrid event, click [here](#).



## Additional Year-Round Events and Programs Throughout Illinois

### State of Illinois Government

- The Office of Minority Economic Empowerment (OMEE) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- The Office of Regional Economic Development (RED) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- The Office of Entrepreneurship Innovation & Technology (EIT) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
    - includes events presented by the [Illinois Small Business Development Centers \(IL SBDC\)](#), the [Illinois APEX Accelerator](#) (formerly known as PTAC), and the [SBDC International Trade Centers \(ITC\)](#)
- The Office of Trade & Investment (OTI) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- **The Business Enterprise Program (BEP)** (for minority-owned, women-owned, and persons with disabilities-owned businesses certifications) at the Illinois Commission on Equity & Inclusion (CEI) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The Veteran Enterprise Program (VEP)** (for qualified service disabled and veteran-owned businesses certifications) at the Illinois Commission on Equity & Inclusion (CEI) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) program** (an opportunity to participate in transportation contracts for minorities, women and other eligible small businesses) at the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) | [link](#)
- **Illinois Products Events** (for local food companies) powered by the Illinois Department of Agriculture | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Power Agency** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

### Illinois-based website hubs

- **Illinois Biz Hub** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
    - You can also submit your event to be listed on Illinois Biz Hub.
- **Women's Entrepreneurship Hub** | [link](#)  
statewide platform with a focus on women who have an idea, women who need help setting up their businesses, and women managing their business, which is powered by the Illinois-based national non-profit, [Women Employed](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Founders Resource Hub** | [link](#)  
Chicago region with a focus on underrepresented tech founders- powered by [P33-Techrise](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
    - You can share/list your event and/or resources on the Founders Resource Hub by [clicking here](#).
- **For regional resource hubs** including events for businesses such as [ChiBizHub](#) which powered by Allies for Community Business (A4CB), [click here](#) to view the Illinois Local Governments' Guide for Business Resources.

## **Additional Entrepreneur Supporting Organizations (ESOs) & Aligned Multisector Organizations**

- **1871 (Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **2112 (Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **37Oaks (Chicago-based, national program)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Abundance Setting (Chicago)** | [link](#)
- **Allies for Community Business (A4CB) (Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **American Business Immigration Coalition (ABIC) (national with Chicago HQs)** | [link](#)
- **AWARE (Accelerating Women And underRepresented Entrepreneurs)**, a program collaboration among the [Grainger College of Engineering](#), the [Office of Technology Management](#), and the [EnterpriseWorks](#) incubator at the [University of Illinois Research Park \(Champaign\)](#) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Arlington Heights Memorial Library** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Arts Alliance of Illinois (statewide)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Arts + Public Life at the University of Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Black Beauty Collective (hybrid with Chicago location)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Black Women's Lawyers Association of Greater Chicago, Inc.** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **BMO for Black & Latinx Businesses (Chicago region)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Bradley University's Turner School of Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Peoria)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Bunker Labs (nationwide & based in Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- **Business Navigator Alliance of Southcentral & Southeastern Illinois** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **C200 (Chicago)** | [link](#)
- **Centralia Business & Professional Women, Inc. (Centralia)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Champaign Public Library** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago:Blend** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago Business Journal** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago Fashion Incubator** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago Foundation for Women** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago Innovation** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago Minority Supplier Development Council, Inc. (ChicagoMSDC)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago Public Library** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago United** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicago Women in Trades** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Coleman Entrepreneurship Center at DePaul University's Driehaus College of Business (Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- **Community Collective** (*western suburbs outside Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Crain's Chicago Business** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **CREW Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Ed Kaplan Family Institute for Innovation and Tech Entrepreneurship at Illinois Technology** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **EIGERlab** (*Rockford*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Elevate CCIC, Inc.** (*Mattoon*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Ellevate Network Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Entrepreneur and Family Business Council (EFBC) at DePaul University's Driehaus College of Business** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **ETHOs @ The Citadel** (*Marion*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **EO Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Evergreen Climate Innovations** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Family Business Center at Loyola University Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Federation of Women Contractors** (*Chicago region*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Female Strong** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **First Women's Bank** (*national, Chicago-based*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- **Founders First CDC Chicago** (*national with a Chicago office*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Founders Network Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Founding Females** (*central Illinois*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Fountaindale Public Library District** (Bolingbrook) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Future Founders** (*national, with Chicago headquarters*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Gender Equality in Tech (GET) Cities Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Chicago** (*nationwide with Chicago chapter*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Good Food Catalyst** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Gray Matter Experience** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Hustle Mommies** (*Chicago region-Mompreneur Council*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **IC U/Latinas** (*Chicago region*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Agri-Women** (*statewide*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Chamber of Commerce** (*statewide with Chicago & Springfield offices*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Extension** (*statewide*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs** (*statewide*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)



- **Illinois Local (Springfield)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Main Street (statewide with Chicago headquarters)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC) (statewide)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Minority Business Development Agency (IL MBDA) Business Center (statewide & based in Chicago region)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Science & Technology Coalition (ISTC) (statewide, Chicago-based)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Women in Cannabis (statewide, with Chicago office)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Innovate Springfield** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **IWIRE, Industrial Women in Real Estate (Chicago area)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Lake Forest College's Oppenheimer Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (OC) (Chicago region)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Latina Empowering Entrepreneurs Network (LEEN) (Chicago region)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Let's Talk Womxn Chicago (nationwide, with Chicago as first hub)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **LGBT Chamber of Commerce of Illinois (statewide with Chicago HQs)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Lift Women's Foundation (Rock Island & Moline area)** | [link](#)
- **Loyola University's Ignite Lab (Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Make City (Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- **MATTER** (Chicago) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **mHUB** (Chicago) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Minority Business Development Center** (Bloomington and Peoria) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms (NAMWOLF)** (national, with Chicago headquarters) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)-Central Illinois** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)-Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Naturally Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **NextUp** (nationwide & Chicago-based) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Northern Illinois University Office of Innovation** (DeKalb) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Northwestern University's Innovation & New Ventures Office** (Chicago region) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Northwestern University Kellogg School of Management's John L. Ward Center for Family Enterprises** (Evanston) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **P33-Techrise** (Chicago region) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Pilot Project's Brewery Incubator** (Chicago) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Polish Women in Business** (Chicago) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Polsky Center for Entrepreneurship & Innovation at the University of** (Chicago) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- Quincy Chamber of Commerce’s Women Empowered | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Rebuild Foundation (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Refine Collective (*refinecltv*) (*Chicago area*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Richland Community College’s EnRich Minority Mentor Protégé Entrepreneurship Program (*Decatur*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Rockford Women’s Small Business Networking Group | [link](#)
- Schaumburg Public Library | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Skokie Public Library | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Small Business Advocacy Council (SBAC) (*Chicago region*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Small Business Majority (*nationwide with Chicago office*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Springfield Business Journal | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Startup Grind Chicago | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- Techstars Chicago | [link](#)
- Techstars Chicago Powered by J.P. Morgan | [link](#)
- The BOSS “Bringing Out Successful Sisters” Network (*nationwide & Chicago-based*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- The Founding Moms (*global, IL-based platform*) | [link](#)
- The Hatchery (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- The TREP School (*Danville*) | [link](#)

- **University of Illinois Chicago' Entrepreneurial Support Program** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **University of Illinois Extension** (*Urbana*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Gies College of Business's Origin Ventures Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership including Women in Entrepreneurship (WIE Connect)** (*Champaign*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Grainger College of Engineering's Technology Entrepreneur Center** (*Urbana*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The University of Illinois System's Office of the Vice President for Economic Development & Innovation** (*statewide with Chicago & Urbana offices*) | [link](#)
  - [resources](#)
- **Union County Women in Business** (*Union County in southern Illinois*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) – Illinois District office** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **West Side Forward** (*Chicago*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women's Bar Association of Illinois** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women's Business Development Center (WBDC)** (*Midwest region with Chicago headquarters*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women Council of Realtors-Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women Council of Relators- Illinois** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **WomenEmployed (WE)** (*nationwide with Chicago headquarters*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women Empowering Women (WEW)** | [link](#)
  - **Belleville** chapter | [link](#)
  - **Edwardsville** chapter | [link](#)
  - **O'Fallon** chapter | [link](#)

- **Women Entrepreneurs Central Illinois** (*Springfield*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women Entrepreneurs Grow Global** (*national, Chicago-based*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women Entrepreneurs Secret of Success (WESOS)-Chicago area chapters** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events of each chapter](#)
- **Women in Entrepreneurship Institute at DePaul University's Driehaus College of Business** (*Chicago region*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women in Manufacturing-Illinois chapter** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women Tech Founders** (*nationwide, Chicago-based*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **World Business Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **WorldChicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **YWCA Evanston/North Shore** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **YWCA Metropolitan Chicago** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **YWCA Northwestern Illinois** (*Rockford*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **YWCA Quincy** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

## **Outside the Chicago region: Additional Entrepreneur Supporting Organizations (ESOs) & Aligned Multisector Organizations** *(they are also listed above)*

- **AWARE (Accelerating Women And underRepresented Entrepreneurs)**, a program collaboration among the [Grainger College of Engineering](#), the [Office of Technology Management](#), and the [EnterpriseWorks](#) incubator at the [University of Illinois Research Park \(Champaign\)](#) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Bradley University's Turner School of Entrepreneurship and Innovation (Peoria)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Bunker Labs (nationwide & based in Chicago)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Business Navigator Alliance of Southcentral & Southeastern Illinois** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Centralia Business & Professional Women, Inc. (Centralia)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Champaign Public Library** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **EIGERlab (Rockford)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Elevate CCIC, Inc. (Mattoon)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **ETHOs @ The Citadel (Marion)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Founding Females (central Illinois)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Agri-Women (statewide)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Chamber of Commerce (statewide with Chicago & Springfield offices)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Extension (statewide)** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- **Illinois Institute of Rural Affairs** (*statewide, with Macomb office*) | [link](#)
- **Illinois Main Street** (*statewide, with Chicago headquarters*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC)** (*statewide*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Innovate Springfield** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Lift Women's Foundation** (*Rock Island & Moline area*) | [link](#)
- **Minority Business Development Center** (*Bloomington and Peoria*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **National Association of Minority and Women Owned Law Firms (NAMWOLF)** (*national, with Chicago headquarters*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO)-Central Illinois** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Northern Illinois University Office of Innovation** (*DeKalb*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Quincy Chamber of Commerce's Women Empowered** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Richland Community College's EnRich Minority Mentor Protégé Entrepreneurship Program** (*Decatur*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Rockford Women's Small Business Networking Group** | [link](#)
- **Springfield Business Journal** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The TREP School** (*Danville*) | [link](#)
- **University of Illinois Extension** (*Urbana*) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)

- **The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Gies College of Business's Origin Ventures Academy for Entrepreneurial Leadership including Women in Entrepreneurship (WIE Connect)**  
(Champaign) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign's Grainger College of Engineering's Technology Entrepreneur Center**  
(Urbana) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **The University of Illinois System's Office of the Vice President for Economic Development & Innovation** (statewide with Chicago & Urbana offices) | [link](#)
  - [resources](#)
- **Union County Women in Business** (Union County in southern Illinois) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) – Illinois District office** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women Empowering Women (WEW)** | [link](#)
  - Belleville chapter | [link](#)
  - Edwardsville chapter | [link](#)
  - O'Fallon chapter | [link](#)
- **Women Entrepreneurs Central Illinois** (Springfield) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **Women in Manufacturing-Illinois** chapter | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **YWCA Northwestern Illinois** (Rockford) | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)
- **YWCA Quincy** | [link](#)
  - [upcoming events](#)



Please contact us anytime if you're looking for a different business resource. We're here to support-connect-advance Illinois women-owned businesses, future women business owners, and aspiring female entrepreneurs throughout the state!

### [DCEO's Women's HERstory Month 2024 Committee](#)

- [Michelle Lura White](#): Women's Business Development Manager (*Illinois' liaison to women-owned businesses and future women entrepreneurs*), OMEE at DCEO
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- [Anggi Lewis](#): Marketing Data Specialist, OMEE at DCEO
  - [Anggi.Lewis@illinois.gov](mailto:Anggi.Lewis@illinois.gov)
- [Kala Lambert](#): Southeast Region Manager, RED at DCEO
  - [Kala.Lambert@illinois.gov](mailto:Kala.Lambert@illinois.gov) | 217.836.8376
- [Kim Watson](#): Southern Region Manager, RED at DCEO
  - [Kim.Watson@illinois.gov](mailto:Kim.Watson@illinois.gov) | 618.889.6731

### Team OMEE from the [Office of Minority Economic Empowerment \(OMEE\)](#) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO)

The Office of Minority Economic Empowerment (OMEE) is committed to providing minority-, women-, persons with disabilities and veteran-owned small businesses and entrepreneurs across the state with equitable access to opportunities and resources. Through dynamic partnerships, targeted outreach, and tailored programs and initiatives, OMEE aims to create an inclusive business ecosystem for communities that have traditionally faced systemic barriers to entry and growth. This investment spurs local economic development in underserved areas resulting in a revitalized and thriving Illinois economy.

- [Click here](#) to connect with Team OMEE.
- To view upcoming events hosted by Team OMEE, [click here](#).



**Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity**  
OFFICE OF MINORITY ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT  
JB Pritzker, Governor



**Office of Minority Economic Empowerment (OMEE)**

*Serving marginalized communities including minority, women, persons with disabilities, and veteran owned businesses.*

**General Inquiries**  
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**Edwin Tumlos**  
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*Also supports LGBTQIA+, Persons with Disabilities owned businesses*

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**Diana Alfaro**  
Latinx Business Development Manager

*Also supports American Indian (Native American), Arab/MENA owned businesses*

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[diana.alfaro@illinois.gov](mailto:diana.alfaro@illinois.gov)

**Michelle Lura White**  
Women's Business Development Manager

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**Team RED from the [Regional Economic Development \(RED\)](#) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO)**

The Office of Regional Economic Development (Team RED) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO), lives and works in the communities they serve and are charged with facilitating economic development efforts in their regions, in addition to providing communities with front-line access to state programs and services. Team RED serves as an Economic Development Concierge for the State of Illinois. To help provide localized assistance, the State of Illinois is divided into 10 economic development regions.

- As Team RED is located throughout Illinois, [click here](#) to connect with Team RED.
- To view upcoming events hosted by Team RED, [click here](#).

## ***Team EIT from the [Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology \(EIT\)](#)***

The [Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology \(EIT\)](#) supports entrepreneurs, innovators, and small businesses in Illinois by providing concierge services, information, and technical support. Programs and services provided through EIT include:

- [The Illinois Small Business Development Centers \(SBDC\)](#) offers at no cost one-on-one business advising. The IL SBDCs are centers located across the state which offer assistance with business, management, and marketing plans; financial assessment and guidance; in-depth business training and more. The IL SBDCs also provides specialized services in technology, innovation, and entrepreneurial development. Business consultation is available to businesses of all stages/sizes/industries/etc. as well as for future business owners & entrepreneurs and those who have an idea. [Click here](#) to find the nearest IL SBDC by address or zip code. For upcoming IL SBDC events & webinars, [click here](#).
- The [Illinois APEX Accelerator](#) (*formerly known as the Illinois Procurement Technical Assistance Centers "PTAC"*) are a portal for small businesses looking to enter the world of government contracting. The centers provide one-on-one counseling, technical information, marketing assistance and training to existing businesses interested in selling their goods and services to local, state, and/or federal government agencies. The primary mission of the Illinois APEX Accelerator is to serve as the axis for existing and new business to enter and strengthen the Government Industrial Base (GIB) and Defense Industrial Base (DIB), by accelerating innovation, fostering ingenuity, and establishing resilient and diverse supply chains. [Click here](#) to find the nearest IL APEX Accelerator by address or zip code. For upcoming IL APEX Accelerator events & webinars, [click here](#).
- [The First Stop Business Information Center](#) is a single statewide resource for entrepreneurs and businesses to obtain comprehensive regulatory and permitting information. Business specialists provide professional guidance to entrepreneurs by helping them identify and navigate regulatory requirements for their business and link them to state and local resources.
- [The Illinois International Trade Centers](#) provide assistance with international trade and exporting. The centers offer information, counseling and training to existing and new-to-export companies interested in pursuing international trade opportunities.
- The [Small Business Environmental Assistance Program \(SBEAP\)](#) provides free confidential information and services to help small businesses understand and comply with their environmental obligations.

## **Team OTI from the [Office of Trade & Investment \(OTI\)](#) at the Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity (DCEO)**

The Office of Trade & Investment (OTI) at DCEO provides export assistance to companies interested in growing their global footprint. Through a network of trade specialist located in Chicago and in established regional foreign offices, OTI provides businesses with lead generation support and connects companies to foreign governments, chambers of commerce and other strategic partners around the world. Our expert team also leads trade missions, curated overseas tradeshow, and outreach events and seminars.

- As Team OTI is located both in Illinois and abroad, [click here](#) to connect with a team member from the Office of Trade and Investment (OTI).
- To attend upcoming OTI events, [click here](#).

### ***Community Navigators***

Community Navigators support small businesses in Illinois who are identified as underserved including minority, rural, veteran, and women-owned businesses.

- [Click here](#) to find a Community Navigator near you.

**Scan below** to access this **Upcoming Events & Programs for IL Women-Owned Businesses – Future Women Business Owners – Aspiring Female Entrepreneurs Resource Guide on IL DCEO’s Women’s HERstory Month 2024** webpage on your phone, watch, and/or tablet, which will bring you to the monthlong celebration and resources [webpage](#).

