



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

December 1, 2004

CONTACTS:

Abby Ottenhoff	312/814.3158 (office)
Rebecca Rausch	217/782.7355 (office)
Gerardo Cardenas	312/814.3158 (office)
Andrew Ross	312/814.8193 (Opp. Returns)

GOV. BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES NEARLY \$22,000 IN *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* FUNDING TO SUPPORT RECYCLING EFFORTS AND JOB CREATION IN GALENA

CHICAGO – Gov. Rod Blagojevich today announced that nearly **\$22,000** in *Opportunity Returns* funding has been awarded to a Northwest region organization to support recycling initiatives that will help advance recycling collection and processing efforts throughout the region. Galena Territory Association, Inc. in Jo Daviess County, a not-for-profit owner's organization, will receive nearly \$22,000 to expand its recycling collection efforts by building a permanent recycling drop-off center for residents and vacationing visitors.

"This *Opportunity Returns* grant is an important investment in the Northwest region's environment and economy. By providing funding to the Galena Territory Association to expand the great work it already does, we're supporting business growth and job creation today, while helping ensure the well-being of the environment for future generations," Gov. Blagojevich said.

The recycling grants are administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and come as part of *Opportunity Returns*, Gov. Blagojevich's pro-active, regional economic development plan designed to create jobs and spur growth in the Northwest region and throughout the state.

DCEO finances the program through monies received from the tipping fee surcharge levied at Illinois landfills. Grant awards are determined on a competitive basis, and the grantee is required to provide an applicant investment of at least 50 percent of the funding required for the project.

"Today, the Illinois recycling industry employs more than 23,000 people. Gov. Blagojevich understands the Illinois Recycling Grants Program is a savvy business development tool because it helps expand markets that are creating jobs and strengthening the local economy. This is simply good economic policy with great environmental results," said DCEO Director Jack Lavin.

The *Opportunity Returns* regional economic development plan is the most aggressive, comprehensive approach to creating jobs in Illinois' history. Since a one-size-fits-all approach to economic development just doesn't work, the Governor has divided the state into 10 regions – finding areas with common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. This grassroots effort is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to business.

#####

