



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOV. BLAGOJEVICH COMBATS GALESBURG MAYTAG LAYOFFS WITH SUITE OF SERVICES DESIGNED TO CREATE NEW OPPORTUNITIES AND JOBS FOR WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES

CHICAGO – In light of another round of layoffs at the Maytag refrigeration plant in Galesburg, Governor Rod R. Blagojevich announced today that state is continuing its efforts to ensure that quality employment opportunities promptly return to the 2,000 men and women losing their jobs by providing a comprehensive suite of services that are acting as a dynamic resource for the displaced workers and their families in their transition back to work. Those services are conveniently concentrated under one roof at a new center called *Galesburg Works*, located at 292 East Simmons in Galesburg. *Galesburg Works*, formerly know as the Galesburg Transition Training Center, had been operating at another location since April.

“While the layoffs are an enormous disappointment for these workers who have invested so much into their jobs, they have long since started looking ahead to the next opportunity in their careers and the chance to build a better future for their families. It is our job to help these workers seize those opportunities and realize that future. One worker at a time and one job at a time, we can reinvigorate the local economy of Galesburg and strengthen its foundation for future growth,” Governor Blagojevich said.

While opening a training center to address the needs of unemployed workers is not a new concept, *Galesburg Works*, which the Governor is supporting with up to \$1.5 million in funding, houses a component that is unprecedented. This center, along with a satellite outreach center in Monmouth, is the first-ever initiative in Illinois to establish a comprehensive and dedicated community-based center to address the transition needs of entire families, not just the workers losing their jobs through plant closings. The formation of **Family Matters**, a Galesburg agency network comprised of 40 organizations in the area, is dedicated to supporting the family focused transition training center, the plan the center is employing to identify and address the needs of families as a whole, as well as that of each and every member individually. Since opening in April, *Galesburg Works* has already assisted approximately 300 people.

The center continues to fulfill the Governor’s *Opportunity Returns* promise he made in January to the people of Galesburg that there would be no greater priority than helping get these workers back on their feet. *Opportunity Returns*, designed to create jobs and spur economic growth throughout the West Central region, includes a multi-faceted approach to supporting Galesburg, including the Governor’s directive that every relevant state agency pool its expertise and resources to identify viable new businesses to occupy the plant once its vacated, as well as the sponsoring of a reverse trade mission, which will help develop relationships between local manufacturers and foreign trade representatives to encourage direct investment.

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“*Galesburg Works* is the most important resource we can provide to restore employment opportunity to the displaced workers and their families. Moreover, the critical partnerships Governor Blagojevich has forged ensure that the effort to get these workers back on their feet will be working on all fronts. What we’re seeing is a specialized plan designed that offers effective strategies to deliver real results, and that’s a recipe for success,” said State Senator Dale Risinger (R-Peoria).

“What is so unique about this center is that it offers a comprehensive support network that lessens the burden on the displaced worker and works to provide a springboard to the next job. This is why employing an economic development plan that defines and delivers services at the grassroots level is so critical. This is another strong indication that Governor Blagojevich cares and is deeply committed to helping families throughout the region during this difficult period. We are all greatly appreciative of his unwavering support,” State Representative Donald Moffitt (R-Galesburg) said.

The local Workforce Investment Board of Western Illinois, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) and the Illinois Department of Employment Security are partnering together to provide this comprehensive suite of services, including assessment and counseling, employment and job search assistance, as well as customized education and training programs for displaced workers and their spouses. The center is also working with community-based organizations to provide work support services, such as childcare, as well as individual and family counseling and social services like substance abuse, stress management and financial management. Other key partners in this effort include Carl Sandburg College, Adult Education, the Illinois Department of Human Services, the Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services, Experience Works, and the Western Illinois Area Agency on Aging.

Additional unique services provided by *Galesburg Works* includes: family transition assessment & planning, tutoring for adults and youth, spousal training, referral services, health & medical services, transportation services, center website, outreach services, elder services, and family & youth activities. An advisory committee comprised of dislocated workers will also be appointed to ensure that deliverable services are making the maximum possible impact.

“We know that layoffs don’t simply affect the worker alone, but his or her family as well. We know that simply providing workers with a list of job openings doesn’t help them get new jobs. Instead, we are offering a comprehensive set of services for entire families, all under one roof, and all designed to get workers back in quality jobs and the local economy back in motion,” DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

Governor Blagojevich’s *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 throughout each region, with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials.

Galesburg Works is located at 292 East Simmons. For more information, call **309-344-4085**.

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