



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

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news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES KEY *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* EMPLOYER TRAINING GRANT TO SOUTHERN REGION COMPANY

SPRINGFIELD - Governor Rod Blagojevich announced today a **\$48,000** *Opportunity Returns* Employer Training Investment Program (ETIP) grant to Maytag Herrin Laundry Products for its Herrin facility. Maytag Herrin will use this grant to provide critical workforce training to **100** new employees and **500** existing employees.

“Maytag Herrin has been a major employer in Williamson County for years,” said Governor Blagojevich. “They have made a commitment to remaining and expanding in Southern Illinois by dedicating significant resources to its Herrin facility, and we owe it to Maytag Herrin’s employees to support these efforts. This grant is a small price to pay to help train six hundred employees and keep this company strong right here in Williamson County.”

Maytag Herrin Laundry, a staple in Williamson County since 1986, has committed to a multimillion-dollar capital investment in its facility. As part of this investment, it is upgrading to support a new product line that will require new sheet metal fabricating equipment, injection molding equipment, and a completely new assembly line. Maytag Herrin’s \$48,000 *Opportunity Returns* grant will support operator and maintenance training for these new processes. All 500 current employees, plus 100 newly hired employees, will be trained.

“It says a lot about the people and resources of Southern Illinois that Maytag Herrin is committing to staying here and expanding its facility for the future,” said State Senator Gary Forby (D-Benton). “Thanks in part to this *Opportunity Returns* grant, we’re going to make sure that Maytag Herrin stays right where it is – and continues to prosper and put people to work -- for years and years to come.”

“This grant will help ensure that Maytag Herrin stays right here in Williamson County, and continues to grow and prosper. When you consider the jobs Maytag Herrin is retaining and creating, as well as the valuable workforce skills these six hundred employees will acquire, providing this *Opportunity Returns* grant is a tremendous bargain,” said Jack Lavin, Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.

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

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common economic strengths and needs, and developing a plan with specific actions for each region. This grassroots effort for the Southern region is a product of significant outreach over several months with business, civic and labor leaders, and elected officials. The more than 40 specific projects that the Governor announced in November for Southern Illinois are designed to be flexible and effective. This plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from.

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