



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH NAMES *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR CENTRAL ILLINOIS

Governor Selects Chamber of Commerce President Julie Moore to Lead Unprecedented Plan to Create Jobs in Twelve-County Area

SPRINGFIELD - Governor Rod Blagojevich today named Decatur and Macon County Chamber of Commerce President Julie Moore as the regional director of the Central region for *Opportunity Returns*, the Governor's comprehensive economic development plan to spur growth and create jobs. Moore, a Central Illinois native who spent eleven years as a local television news anchor and producer prior to her seven-year stint as chamber president, will serve in a dual capacity in her new post. As regional director, she will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of the *Opportunity Returns* plan for the Central region. Additionally, to ensure the seamless execution of the Governor's new initiatives in regional border towns where there is a often a direct economic development impact involving multiple regions, Governor Blagojevich has asked Moore to also serve as the inter-regional coordinator for the West Central, North Central, and East Central regions.

"The Central region is an area of Illinois with a wealth of attributes – the agri-business capital of the country, a highly-skilled workforce, and many great colleges and universities – which makes this part of our state ripe for economic growth. As someone who has spent her professional life working at the grassroots level throughout these communities, Julie Moore brings with her a deep understanding of these inherent attributes, along with the talent and leadership abilities to parlay them into important change and greater prosperity. With Julie in the field, you can rest assured that no stone will be left unturned in our effort to create more jobs and better economic opportunities for the people of the East Central region," Governor Blagojevich said.

The Governor's innovative plan for the Central region will be rolled out later this spring and will target resources to key areas such as business retention, agriculture, education and job training, and improving public infrastructure. The Central region encompasses the twelve counties of Cass, Christian, Greene, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Sangamon, Scott and Shelby.

"Governor Blagojevich has made an outstanding choice in Julie Moore to head up this crucial economic development plan for our region. Julie has an uncanny ability to assess an intricate situation and boil it down to its essential ingredients. She has a strong track record of fighting through the red tape that too often slows

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progress, and finding innovative ways to accomplish ambitious objectives. She is a dynamic individual who will bring a tireless work ethic and positive approach each day to this very important job,” State Senator Vince Demuzio said.

"Julie Moore is very familiar with the economic challenges facing our region. She has worked with all levels of government, along with business and community leaders, while leading Decatur and Macon County's Chamber of Commerce for the past seven years. She has proven to be effective at bringing people from diverse backgrounds together to accomplish a common goal. She will do a great job applying her knowledge and experience to accomplishing the objectives of Governor Blagojevich's plan," State Representative Robert Flider said.

Moore has roots that run deep in the Central Illinois community. Before serving as President of the Chamber of Commerce for Decatur and Macon County, Moore served as a news anchor and producer for fifteen years, the last eleven were at WAND-TV in Decatur. She began her undergraduate studies at Millikin University in Decatur before going on to receive a Bachelor degree in Journalism from the University of Missouri in Colombia. Her professional affiliations include board memberships with the Decatur Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau, the Workforce Investment Board for Macon and Piatt Counties, Partners in Education, and the Illinois Chamber of Commerce.

“The fundamental challenge surrounding economic development in any community is finding ways to improve its education, workforce, transportation, and business capacity. Julie has demonstrated an expertise in improving all of these vital resources at the local level. She is a true problem-solver who will bring a real tenacity with her in tackling the challenges of this job. Julie’s savvy and unyielding commitment to the people of this region will greatly strengthen the resources Governor Blagojevich is dedicating to spark sustained economic growth throughout Central Illinois,” Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director Jack Lavin said.

“I’m very grateful that the Governor has entrusted me to lead this unprecedented initiative for the Central region. Over many years, I have learned a lot about the people of this region and their character - most notably the strong midwestern work ethic they bring with them to their jobs each day. The Governor, along with people throughout Central Illinois, is developing a great plan for this region that is complete with strategic investments to create more economic opportunity for more people. Working together, I know we can execute that plan and help communities in Central Illinois turn those opportunities into greater prosperity,” Moore said.

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. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from. The Governor has already unveiled plans for six of the ten regions – the Northern Stateline, Northwest, Southern, North Central, Southwest and West Central regions.

Interview will be available at www.state.il.us/iisradio/ori.htm

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