



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR BLAGOJEVICH ANNOUNCES \$500,000 IN *OPPORTUNITY RETURNS* FINANCING TO BRING NEW KAPLAN, INC. SUPPORT CENTER AND MORE THAN 300 NEW JOBS TO CHICAGO

SPRINGFIELD – As a part of his historic, regional plan to spur economic growth and create jobs throughout the Northeast region known as *Opportunity Returns*, Governor Rod Blagojevich today announced that Kaplan, Inc. will receive **\$500,000** in grant funding to open a new support center in Chicago's Loop that will result in the creation of more than **300 new jobs**. Kaplan, one of the nation's leading providers of lifelong education and career services, is opening the center at 550 West Van Buren to support operations for Kaplan College.

"Chicago is home to some of the most dynamic and successfully-run companies in the world. Kaplan is a nationally respected corporation known for its leadership in the field of education. Its decision to locate a new support center in Chicago will only enhance this area's reputation as one of the most attractive places in the world to do business and will continue to fuel economic growth throughout the region," Governor Blagojevich said.

Kaplan's new venture in Chicago will support Kaplan College, a regionally accredited institution based in Davenport, Iowa that serves more than 16,000 online and campus-based students. The support center operations will include admissions, academic advising, financial aid, human resources, administrative, and technology personnel. The company has leased 42,000 square feet of office space and started operations in mid-July. Kaplan's existing operations in the Chicago area include headquarters for two of its business units, Kaplan Professional and SCORE! Educational Centers.

"Chicago has become an increasingly important market for Kaplan. Our long-term presence in the city will be strengthened by this expansion, which will bring over 300 new jobs to Chicago over the next two years," said Andrew S. Rosen, President and Chief Operating Officer, Kaplan, Inc. and President, Kaplan College.

"Chicago's attractive labor pool and economic incentives were important factors in our decision to locate additional operations there."

"I'm thrilled to learn that Kaplan will be opening another facility in Chicago. It's proof positive that Governor Blagojevich's plan to provide businesses with the tools and resources they need to compete and thrive in the 21st Century economy is achieving its goals," State Senator Rickey Hendon (D-Chicago) said.

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The funding for Kaplan's new support center will be provided and administered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). DCEO will make available **\$500,000** in Large Business Development Program (LBDP) funds.

"As Governor Blagojevich always says, the name of the game in Illinois is job creation. By taking a pro-active approach to business development and responding with a timely incentive package, the Governor has ensured that more than 300 new jobs will be added to the local economy. Kaplan's long-term commitment is a great investment in the economic vitality of Chicago," State Representative Arthur Turner (D-Chicago) said.

"The goal of Governor Blagojevich's *Opportunity Returns* plan is to expand opportunities for businesses to grow and thrive. By providing this key funding to Kaplan, we're helping an already successful company grow its operation, which means more jobs for workers in Chicago and a more robust regional economy," DCEO Director Jack Lavin said.

Kaplan College, based in Davenport, Iowa, (www.kaplancollege.edu) is regionally accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA) and was one of the first participants in the Department of Education's Distance Education Demonstration Program, enabling students in its online degree programs to apply for Title IV funding. Kaplan College currently serves more than 16,000 students.

Kaplan College is part of the higher education division of Kaplan, Inc., which includes 68 campus-based schools in 16 states, as well as online programs toward numerous degrees. Kaplan Higher Education offers career-oriented certificate, bachelor and associate degree programs designed to provide students with the skills necessary to qualify them for employment in the fields of healthcare, business, information technology, technology, fashion and design. Kaplan, Inc., which has been helping people achieve their educational and professional goals for 66 years, provides educational and career services to students, schools, professionals, and businesses worldwide. Kaplan is a wholly owned subsidiary of The Washington Post Company (NYSE: WPO). With \$838 million in 2003 revenue, Kaplan is the largest revenue producer within The Washington Post Company. For more information about Kaplan, please visit www.kaplan.com.

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. Each plan is tailored to deliver real results that local businesses will see, feel, and, hopefully, profit from. Governor Blagojevich will announce his plan for the Northeast region in the coming months.

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