



opportunityreturns

Creating more jobs for today and tomorrow

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Rod R. Blagojevich – Governor

news

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GOVERNOR NAMES ROXANNE NAVA AS THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

SPRINGFIELD – Governor Rod Blagojevich today named Roxanne Nava as the Assistant Director of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO). Nava's chief responsibility will be to oversee the implementation of *Opportunity Returns*, the Governor's comprehensive, regional economic development plan designed to spur economic growth and create jobs throughout the state.

Nava is coming to DCEO from the Department of Financial Institutions, where she used her more than 15 years of banking and financial service experience to excel in her tenure as department head.

"In just a short time at the Department of Financial Institutions, Roxanne's leadership has made an indelible mark on her peers and people across the state. Moreover, through her steadfast involvement with organizations like the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the Eighteenth Street Development Corp., Roxanne has demonstrated the ability to create positive economic change and enhance development at the grassroots level. Her vast experience and keen understanding that job creation and economic growth efforts are most successful when services are delivered at the local level, make her a great fit to help guide *Opportunity Returns*," Governor Blagojevich said.

At her new post, Nava, who will make \$102,784, will join DCEO Director Jack Lavin in leading the day-to-day efforts of administering the most aggressive, innovative approach to creating jobs in Illinois' history. Based on the philosophy that 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. Developed largely from the input of local business, labor and public sector leaders, *Opportunity Returns* contains tangible, specific actions to make each region more accessible, more marketable, more entrepreneurial and more attractive to business.

"A key part of the Governor's plan to revitalizing local economies is helping to strengthen and grow small business by providing them with available and accessible capital," DCEO Director Lavin said. "Roxanne Nava brings with her an understanding of the financing needs of small business and how to use limited resources to produce a maximum impact. She will be a tremendous asset to this agency and to the success of *Opportunity Returns*."

Throughout the past several months, the Governor has been traveling across the state speaking to regional communities and unveiling highly customized economic development plans. To date, the Governor has rolled
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out *Opportunity Returns* in the Northern Stateline, Northwest, Southern, North Central, Southwest, and West Central regions. In each of those six regions, an area team of four DCEO employees, headed by a regional director, will oversee the implementation of the plan's specific initiatives and serve as a direct point of contact to the local communities. The remaining four regional plans (East Central, Central, Southeastern and Northeastern) are currently being designed and will be announced by the Governor in the coming months.

"I'm grateful and honored that Governor Blagojevich has chosen me for this position. I've seen the impact that government resources can make when they are targeted to meet the strengths and needs of local communities. The Governor has chosen an impressive list of individuals to serve as regional directors with credentials as unique and diverse as the local communities they serve. What we share in common is experience in working to create better opportunities for people to live and work, and I'm confident that together we will successfully execute the Governor's bold plan," Nava said.

Before being named director of the Department of Financial Institutions, Nava worked for the Northern Trust Company, where she served as a Vice President and Commercial Banking Relationship Manager of the Logan Square Center. Prior to that, Nava worked for Citibank, Bank One, and The Resurrection Project, a non-profit housing and community development organization. Throughout her career, Nava has focused on providing financial services for individual consumers and small businesses.

Nava grew up in Chicago's Little Village neighborhood. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in finance from DePaul University. She is active in civic and professional organizations, including the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, the Eighteenth Street Development Corporation, The Mexican Folkloric Dance Company of Chicago, and Cordi Marian Women's Auxiliary Board.

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