

Welcome to the Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI) Newsletter!

A MESSAGE FROM CIERRA MORRIS, WEI DIRECTOR:



As I reflect on a successful fall semester, I look forward to an even stronger spring. Our team's dedication to meeting students where they are,

speaks volumes about their passion for student success.

My philosophy? Focus on quality and the quantity will follow. We set high standards because we believe in our students' potential. A strong GPA isn't just a number – it's a stepping stone to career success. Employers seek candidates with technical skills and strong soft skills.

So, I encourage all of you – engage, participate and take advantage of every opportunity. We are here to support you every step of the way!

Let's Power Forward Together!



Successful highlights of our fall 2024 semester include:

Fifty-four students who completed their studies across multiple programs, including:

- Welding: 11 students, with four moving on to Robotic Welding.
- Phlebotomy: 15 students.
- Dental Assistant: 13 students.
- Truck Brake & Suspension: Six students.

Academic Excellence:

- Twenty-six students finished with a 4.0 GPA.
- Twenty-four students earned a 3.0 GPA or higher.

Our students are pushing boundaries and we're here to support them every step of the way!



Welcome Our New Completion and Transition Specialists!

A big WEI welcome to Karina Santos and Jesus Lopez, who are committed to ensuring our students stay above a 2.5 GPA, with a goal of maintaining a 3.0 program-wide average.



Our Goal

Our Goal: 80% of program completers employed within 30 days of finishing their program. To help you get there, we've launched:

- **Workforce Wednesdays** – Master your resume, job-search strategies, and interview skills with in-person and virtual coaching!
- **Table Talk Thursdays** – Join us every Thursday, 10 a.m.-noon in Suite A for workshops and personalized career support – no registration needed!



We've implemented the following support systems to guide students in achieving their academic goals:

- Placing students on academic probation if they fall below 70%.
- Inviting students to sign a student success contract.
- Offering bi-weekly academic progress report.
- Hosting a weekly check-in to keep students on track.



The WEI Buddy Pass Race is On!

This spring, we're making academic success a team sport. Here's how it works:

Students are grouped within their programs and compete for the highest group GPA.

Program-wide competition: Welding vs. Electrical vs. Plumbing – who will win?

Live leaderboard coming soon! Check the next newsletter to see which team is leading the race!

Let's build academic accountability, teamwork and a winning mindset!



Career Readiness and Workforce Success

On Nov. 13, we hosted our inaugural Power Forward Career & Resource Summit:

- Ninety WEI students and 111 community members connected with 42 top employers, including:
 - Chicago Department of Aviation.
 - Loyola Medicine.
 - PACE & Paylocity ...and more!



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