New Academic Programs for Board Consideration

October 9, 2025

Economic Responsiveness

Goal: We will be forward-looking and agile in developing pathways and forging partnerships that unlock transformational career opportunities for City Colleges students and fuel the Chicago workforce with talent that is prepared to meet the needs of the economy.

Year 5 (2025) Priority:

- Continue to expand high-demand programs with strong student success outcomes (e.g., Engineering, Tech, Healthcare) and develop new programs and pathways in emerging industries

New academic program development begins at the colleges.

- A critical strategy for Economic Responsiveness Lever of the Strategic Framework
- Often undertaken with significant support from across colleges and from District Office
- Leveraging internal expertise and industry/partner input through advisory council and BILT (Business and Industry Leadership Team) models
- Evidence of labor market relevance required for all new programs

Background information:
- All colleges offer the Associate of Arts (AA) and Associate of Sciences degrees (AS) that encompass pathways for transfer to baccalaureate institutions.
- When new programs come to the Board for approval, they are designed to lead directly to employment opportunity.
- After Board approval, additional steps are required before launching a new program, including HLC, ICCB, IBHE and in some cases Department of Education approval.
- Actual program launch occurs after these steps are completed and only when colleges demonstrate readiness to deliver a high-quality program.

Ten new programs are coming before the CCC Board for approval.

Program	Degree/Certificate	College(s)	Anticipated Launch	Subject Matter Expert
Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Development	Advanced Certificate (AC) and Associate in Applied Science (AAS)	Districtwide	Fall 2026 (Wright College); other colleges to follow	Gustavo Alatta, Instructor, CIS
Sign Language Interpretation	AAS	Truman College	Fall 2026	Nathan Blair, Associate Dean of Instruction
Data Center Operations Engineering Technology	Basic Certificate (BC), AC, and AAS	Daley College	Fall 2026	David Girzadas, Dean – Advanced Manufacturing
Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technology	AC and AAS	Daley College	Fall 2026	David Girzadas, Dean – Advanced Manufacturing
Electrical Technology	BC	Daley College	Fall 2026	David Girzadas, Dean – Advanced Manufacturing
Industrial Network Engineering Technology	AC and AAS	Daley College	Fall 2026	David Girzadas, Dean – Advanced Manufacturing
Mechanical Engineering Technology	AC and AAS	Daley College	Fall 2026	David Girzadas, Dean – Advanced Manufacturing
Mechatronics Engineering Technology	AC	Wright College	Fall 2026	Billy McFarland, Coordinator – Academic/ Career Programs
Cannabis Dispensary Operations Specialist	BC	Wright College	Fall 2026	Jordan Melendez, Coordinator – Academic/ Career Programs
Licensed Certified Professional Midwifery	AAS	Kennedy-King College	Fall 2026	TS Douglas, Assistant Professor

Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Development (A.A.S. and A.C.)

Artificial intelligence is one of the rapidly growing degrees in the U.S. The demand for professionals in Artificial Intelligence and related fields such as machine learning, neural network, deep learning, and computer vision is growing exponentially. This degree will prepare students not only in Artificial Intelligence, but also as entry level professionals in other areas in computer science. Whereas all colleges will offer the **Associate of Applied Science** degree and advanced certificate in a staggered fashion when they are ready, at Wright College this degree is the first of what will be several programs related to AI that will position the college as a leader in the field.

This **Advanced Certificate** serves as a gateway to sustainable careers in Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning for students new to the field. The Program is an introduction to computer technology and is structured to provide students with the skills necessary to excel in the rapidly field of Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning Development.

This comprehensive program covers multiple topics including Programming fundamentals, basic networking, introduction to Ai, Operating Systems, Databases, Machine Learning and Ethics. Students will engage in both theoretical and hands-on learning, preparing them for a variety of roles in the IT industry. The curriculum is organized to provide a deep understanding of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning.

Introduction to AI

Natural Language Processing

Machine Learning Essentials

Computer Vision and Image Processing

Deep Learning Essentials

Ethics in Technology

Anticipated Launch : Fall 2026 - Wright College

American Sign Language Interpreting (A.A.S.)

At Harry S Truman College, we are proud to develop and launch a dynamic and accessible **Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree in American Sign Language Interpreting**, a Deaf-centered, culturally responsive program designed to meet a critical need in Chicago.
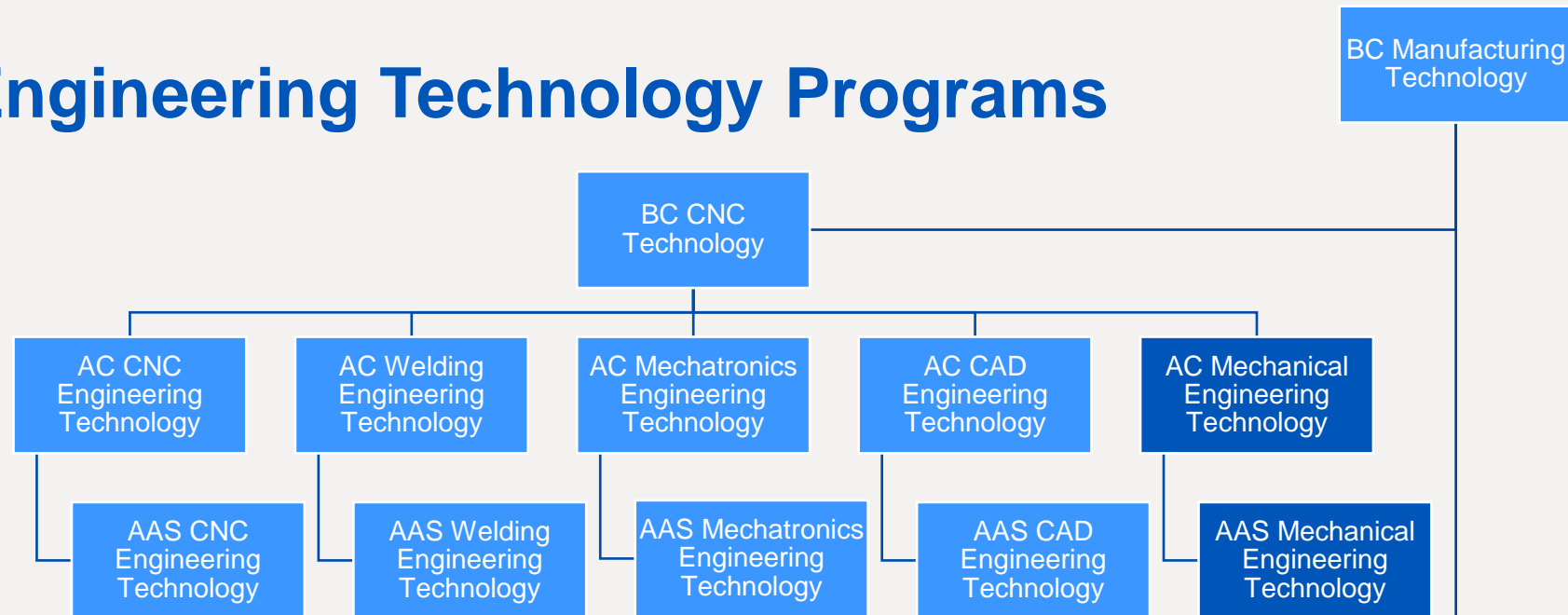
In alignment with our mission to provide high-quality, innovative, and accessible education, and our vision to enrich lives through creative responses to social and global change, this program will empower students to become skilled interpreters who serve diverse communities with excellence and empathy.

Program Highlights

- **Community-Driven Design**: Developed in partnership with the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities and Deaf Community stakeholders.

- **Deaf-Centered Curriculum**: Focused on cultural responsiveness and equity in interpreter education.

- **Licensure Preparation**: Equips students with the skills and knowledge to meet Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission licensure requirements.

- **Career Pathways**: Creates a pipeline of interpreters for education and community settings.
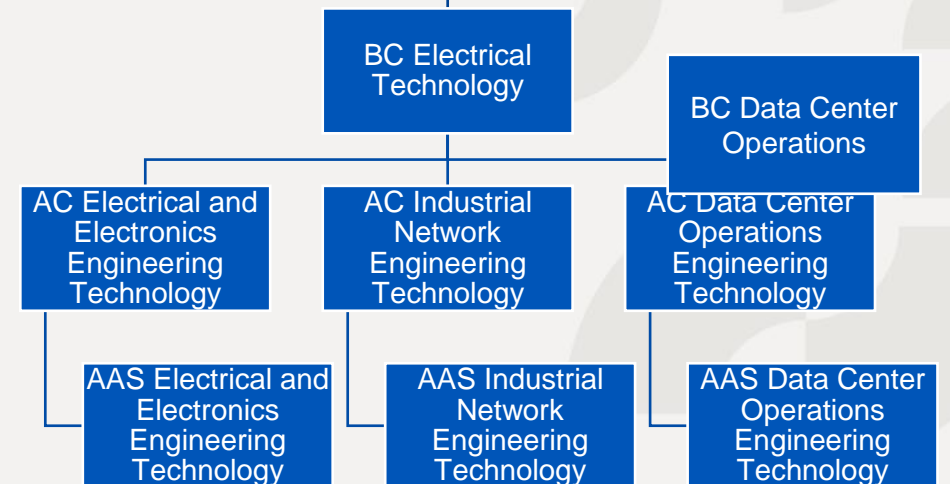
Anticipated launch in **Fall 2026**

Daley Engineering Technology Programs

BC Manufacturing Technology

BC CNC Technology

- AC CNC Engineering Technology
  - AAS CNC Engineering Technology
- AC Welding Engineering Technology
  - AAS Welding Engineering Technology
- AC Mechatronics Engineering Technology
  - AAS Mechatronics Engineering Technology
- AC CAD Engineering Technology
  - AAS CAD Engineering Technology
- AC Mechanical Engineering Technology
  - AAS Mechanical Engineering Technology

BC Electrical Technology

BC Data Center Operations

- AC Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technology
  - AAS Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technology
- AC Industrial Network Engineering Technology
  - AAS Industrial Network Engineering Technology
- AC Data Center Operations Engineering Technology
  - AAS Data Center Operations Engineering Technology

Proposed New Programs (Dark Blue)

- 2 New Basic Certificates
- 4 New Advanced Certificates
- 4 New AAS Programs
- 9 New Daley Engineering Technology Classes
- Sharing 4 CIS Classes
- Sharing 1 AirCon Class
- Lab Equipment purchased through grants
- Advisory Committee input including visits to Data Centers
- Stackable with multiple access and employment points including transfer
- Basis for further growth and additional new programs
- New programs will launch in Fall 2026

Daley Engineering Technology Programs

Meeting the evolving needs of industry

Data Center Operations Engineering Technology
- Installation, maintenance and repair of all building facilities and equipment to support the computer servers and back up systems in a data center including mechanical, electrical, refrigeration and contractor management.

Electrical and Electronics Engineering Technology
- Opportunities from manufacturing to modern power systems including EV and solar, to microelectronics and repair of electrical and electronic equipment in a broad range of industries requiring in depth electrical knowledge.

Industrial Network Engineering Technology
- Industrial Internet of Things and AI is rapidly interconnecting manufacturing and supply chain equipment including shop floor data to improve operations increasing information security risks and requiring increased knowledge to set up these networks of equipment, sensors and information systems to drive manufacturing efficiencies and increased interconnectedness of equipment.

Mechanical Engineering Technology
- In depth skills in mechanisms, fluid power and industrial maintenance processes for a broad range of career opportunities in installation, maintenance and repair of mechanical systems related to manufacturing. Local employers have job code structures and union requirements looking for training programs in this field.

Mechatronics Engineering Technology Advanced Certificate (AC)

The Mechatronics Engineering Technology program directly supports Wright College's institutional priorities of workforce The Mechatronics Engineering Technology program directly supports Wright College's priorities of workforce readiness and aligns with Daley College Advanced Manufacturing curriculum.

➢ **Strengthen dual enrollment and high school-to-career pipelines.**

➢ **Build regional partnerships** with employers.

➢ Support **strategic goals** tied to ICCB's "Taking Back the Trades" initiative and Chicago's **regional manufacturing workforce plan**, emphasizing equity, industry-recognized credentials, and economic revitalization.

➢ **Anticipated launch: FALL 2026**

➢ Completers of the Advanced Certificate in Mechatronics Engineering Technology will be prepared for **high-demand technician roles** in Cook County's manufacturing and industrial automation sectors. Job titles include:

❖ **Mechatronics Technician**

❖ **Electro-Mechanical Technician (SOC 17-3024.00)**

❖ **Robotics Technician (SOC 17-3024.01)**

❖ **Automation Specialist**

❖ **Controls Technician / PLC Technician**

❖ **Industrial Maintenance Technician (SOC 49-9043)**

❖ **Field Service Technician**

❖ **Production Support and Calibration Technician**

WILBUR WRIGHT COLLEGE

Cannabis Dispensary Operations Specialist, Basic Certificate

The Cannabis Dispensary Operations Specialist, Basic Certificate (BC):

- Compliments Wright College's (WR) current cannabis course offerings and aligns with Olive-Harvey College offerings, supporting priorities of equity, workforce alignment, and student success.
- Opens accessible pathways for underrepresented populations into the regulated cannabis industry.
- Blends legal, business, and customer service skills, aligning with District goals of preparing students for in-demand careers or continued academic pursuit.
- Equips students with vocational, hands-on competencies that match employer needs.
- Reinforces WR Strategic Enrollment Plan (SEM) plan focusing on enrollment growth, retention, and community responsiveness, advancing CCC's system-wide mission to close equity gaps and strengthen Chicago's workforce pipeline.

As of 9/24/25, there are **263 operational adult-use dispensaries in Illinois**, with **hundreds more** to become operational.

Job	Job Description
Senior Managers	• Primary oversight of all dispensary operations. Possesses agent-in-charge (AIC) designation. • Oversees AIC and is responsible for approving payroll, agent training, analyzing P&L, maintaining all files subject to audit or inspection. • Position achieved after significant industry experience.
Supervisors / Middle Managers (Agents-in-Charge (AIC))	• Primary oversight of the inventory verification system, and point-of-sale system. • Conducts daily inventory reconciliation documenting and balancing cannabis inventory. • Promoted from budtender.
Budtender / Dispensary Agent (Frontline Employee)	• Priorities include answering questions about state cannabis regulations, engaging in community events, and handling all FOH and BOH duties such as reception, sales, cashiering, receiving, and product organization. • Entry-level role. Must be 21 years of age or older.
Transporter Agent	• Works for organization or business that is licensed by the IL Department of Agriculture to transport cannabis or cannabis-infused product on behalf of a cannabis business establishment or a community college licensed under the Community College Cannabis Vocational Training Pilot Program. • Entry-level role.

Jordan Meléndez
Coordinator-Academic/Career Programs: Cannabis Studies
Wilbur Wright College / Wright College - Humboldt Park
Inaugural semester: Fall 2026

Licensed Certified Professional Midwife (LCPM)
72CH AAS Degree | Expected Launch: Fall 2026

The LCPM program will:

- advance a culturally-congruent care model to improve maternal health outcomes for women on the South Side of Chicago, and
- increase opportunities for entry-level positions in an under-resourced field.

This educational pathway does not require prior nursing training and can occur at the Associate Degree level.

This will be the only accredited LCPM education program in Illinois. Nationally: Only 2nd in a Public 2-Year Institution

Salary Outlook
CPM average annual Income (National): $93,000
CPS average annual income (Illinois): $140,000

Specialized Accreditation & Certification
Midwifery Education Accreditation Council (MEAC)
North American Registry of Midwives (NARM)

- OB unit closures, creating maternity care deserts
- Shortage of providers
- Narrowed pipelines to education

Workforce Need

- Rise in demand for community birth (homebirth and birth center care)
- Began in pandemic, but didn't abate

Community Need

Key Partners and Collaborators

External Partner: Black Midwifery Collective
Curriculum Development, Accreditation Support, Clinical Site Affiliations, Advisory Support, Stakeholder Buy-in

Biological Sciences Faculty Leads: TS Douglas, Ramon Castro, Arlicia Corley

KENNEDY-KING COLLEGE
CITY COLLEGES OF CHICAGO