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Development  
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Building a Better Illinois

**State of Illinois**  
JB Pritzker, Governor

**Illinois Capital Development Board**  
Tamakia Edwards, Executive Director

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## **Governor Pritzker Announces Construction of Applied Technology Center for Olney Central College**

**Olney** – Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB) announced today construction will begin on the \$3.15 million, 8,000-square-foot Applied Technology Center at Olney Central College (OCC), one of four colleges within Illinois Eastern Community Colleges. Funded through the Rebuild Illinois capital program, the project represents a significant investment in the future of healthcare education and workforce readiness in the region.

“Through Rebuild Illinois, we’re investing in the infrastructure of community colleges to open doors for students and strengthen local communities,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “The Applied Technology Center at Olney Central College will enhance healthcare education in southeastern Illinois, equipping students with state-of-the-art tools and hands-on learning to build a stronger, more resilient healthcare workforce for the region.”

Construction is set to begin in early 2025 and will involve a major addition to Dr. Kent L. Wattleworth Hall, which will house OCC’s radiography and nursing programs. The new facility will feature state-of-the-art classrooms, high-tech simulation and skills labs, faculty office space, a student lounge, laundry facilities, and enhanced storage. Notably, radiography students will benefit from having an energized lab on campus for the first time in the program’s 30-year history.

“The Capital Development Board is proud to partner with Olney Central College to support the growth of healthcare education in Illinois,” **said CDB Executive Director, TJ Edwards**. “This project underscores our commitment to enhancing educational facilities to meet workforce needs, and we are excited to see how this new center will empower students and benefit the community for years to come.”

The Applied Technology Center marks the largest classroom addition at OCC in more than a decade and the most extensive renovation to OCC’s main building since its opening in 1974. The

project includes revamping the existing classrooms (106, 107, and 108) and seamlessly integrating them into the new facility, which is designed by Graham & Hyde Architects, Inc.

“This is really a significant improvement for Wattleworth Hall and a real game-changer for Allied Health,” **said President of Olney Central College, Chris Simpson.** “This construction project will have a huge impact on the OCC Nursing and Radiography programs. It’s exciting to see it finally come to reality, and this is something we really want to celebrate. Allied Health Programs are some of our most successful, creating graduates who are workforce ready. I think this not only helps the college’s efforts to improve, but it will have a far-reaching impact in the community because the graduates we produce will be working within our local healthcare facilities.”

“The Applied Technology Center at Olney Central College represents our commitment to delivering state-of-the-art education through advanced simulation and hands-on learning,” **said Dean of Health Professions, Dr. Alani Frederick.** “Nursing students will be immersed in a realistic hospital environment, allowing them to develop critical clinical judgment in a safe, supervised setting. Radiography students will gain essential experience in our energized lab, where they’ll take X-rays under the guidance of expert faculty to ensure precision. By blending cutting-edge technology with expert instruction, we’re preparing our students to become highly skilled healthcare professionals ready to meet the demands of today’s workforce.”

In addition to serving radiography and nursing students, the new center will support other health programs, including Licensed Practical Nursing (LPN), Massage Therapy, Phlebotomy, and the Basic Nurse Assistant Training Certificate. The facility is designed to meet modern educational standards, including clinical instruction equipment, hand-washing facilities, and specialized laboratories.

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#### ***About Olney Central College***

*Olney Central College is one of four colleges within Illinois Eastern Community Colleges. Located in Olney, Illinois, OCC is committed to providing accessible, high-quality education. OCC offers a wide range of academic and career-focused programs to serve the diverse needs of its students and community. For more information on Olney Central College, visit [www.iecc.edu/occ](http://www.iecc.edu/occ).*

#### ***About the Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB)***

*The Illinois Capital Development Board (CDB) oversees the construction of new state facilities, such as prisons, state parks, mental health institutions, and college and university projects. In addition, CDB is responsible for renovation and rehabilitation projects at over 8,770 state-owned buildings spread over more than 100 million square feet of floor space.*