

**For Immediate Release**

## **Ready to Lead: Illinois School Leader Pipeline Participants Gear Up for Hiring Season**

*Springfield, IL* – The Illinois Principals Association (IPA) is pleased to announce the first cohort of the Illinois School Leader Pipeline Program (ISLPP). This program aims to identify, develop, support, and sustain diverse aspiring school leaders in preparation for leadership roles. Managed by IPA, the Illinois Council of Professors of Educational Administration (ICPEA), and the Black Educational Advocacy Coalition (BEAC), ISLPP is supported by a grant from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE).

ISLPP partnered with principal preparation programs known for producing high-quality school leaders to target eligible candidates to build a diverse and skilled pool of future principals. Participants receive tuition support, mentorship from experienced leaders, and financial assistance for substitutes and professional development. Participants also have access to IPA membership, connecting them to Illinois's largest network of school leaders.

**Martha Fuentes, ISLPP participant attending Roosevelt University** shared, “I am beyond grateful for the opportunity to go back to school with the aim of becoming an administrator. I am a firm believer that our students, especially students of color, need to see themselves in those that serve them. Having the support from the IPA has been instrumental in my leadership journey. Having a mentor has been such an inspiration, listening to those who were once in my shoes and who have become successful leaders is one of the highlights of the program. I have met so many leaders from all over Illinois who are willing to support me when the time comes for me to become a leader. None of this would have been possible without the SLPP program. Thank you for believing in me and the other 99 aspiring leaders!”

**Shaunwell Posely, ISLPP participant attending Governors State University**, shared, “My experience with IPA has been truly remarkable. The program has provided me with immense help and support throughout my journey. From the moment I joined, I have been impressed by the commitment and dedication of the IPA team. They have gone above and beyond to ensure that I have the resources and guidance necessary to succeed in my pursuit of becoming a school principal. The program has equipped me with valuable skills, knowledge, and networks that will undoubtedly shape my future career. I am grateful for the opportunity to be a part of the program, and I highly recommend it to anyone aspiring to make a difference in education leadership.”

**Kerri Young, ISLPP participant attending McKendree University**, shared, “I have always wanted to pursue a degree in school leadership, but the timing was never right, and the additional funds were never available in my budget. This program took

the funding issue away, and it was the perfect opportunity to seek an additional degree. The program is one of the best ways to address the current shortages of school leaders our state is facing. By removing the financial barriers and adding additional support to the students in the program, you are making the goal attainable for many teachers.”

Many participants of the School Leader Pipeline Program have graduated from their programs, or will be graduating soon, and are now seeking administrative positions. To view details about these candidates, including the level of administrative position they are seeking, visit [https://www.ilprincipals.org/recruitment\\_candidates/](https://www.ilprincipals.org/recruitment_candidates/).

**Illinois School Leader Pipeline Program participants include:**

Laura Arias, University of St. Francis  
Justin Barrington, McKendree University  
Leslie Bell, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Damon Belt, Eastern Illinois University  
Charlise Berkel, Northeastern Illinois University  
Andre Bouey, North Central College  
Justin Bozarth, Eastern Illinois University  
Tomas Brandt, Governors State University  
Summer Butler, Roosevelt University  
Lawrence Bynum, DePaul University  
Starr Caldwell, North Park University Chicago  
Breana Calloway, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign  
Sarah Castaneda, Governors State University  
Rosalba (Rosie) Conde, Aurora University  
Heather Crain, McKendree University  
Maribel Diaz, Concordia University  
Kayla Elam, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Brock Friese, Eastern Illinois University  
Martha Fuentes, Roosevelt University  
Ernesto Garza, North Park University  
Lisa Green, Governors State University  
Tami Harwood, Eastern Illinois University  
Samantha Helland, Lewis University  
Beth Horn, McKendree University  
Jamie Howard Breeden, Governors State University  
Robin Hughes, McKendree University  
Janet Hurtado, Aurora University  
Oraia Jaramillo, Governors State University  
Catherine Johnson, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Carla Jones, Loyola University  
Sarah Jordan, Governors State University

Timothy Kolaczkowski, North Central College  
Colleen Kunz, McKendree University  
David Lerch, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Lyndsey Littlejohn, Eastern Illinois University  
Yvonne Luckey, Concordia University  
Brenlin Maple, Governors State University  
Dionicia Martinez, Governors State University  
Laura-Elizabeth McCabe, Concordia University  
Ginny McClure, Governors State University  
Amber Medina, Governors State University  
Heather Miller, McKendree University  
Missy Montgomery, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Maritza Mota, Governors State University  
Dustin Murray, Western Illinois University  
Joseph Oberts, Northeastern Illinois University  
Jasmine Ogunleye, Concordia University  
Erica Parks, Concordia University  
Megan Perschbacher, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Tessa Pietrantoni, McKendree University  
Shaunwell Posely, Governors State University  
Katie Prather, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Saddaf Raheel, Northeastern Illinois University  
Luz Rangel Raymond, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Katelyn Richert, McKendree University  
Silvia Rios, Northeastern Illinois University  
Stephanie Roberson, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
Kimlona Robinson, National Lewis University  
Tarah Rottmann, McKendree University  
Keva Rush, Rockford University  
Sara Schneeberg, Loyola University  
MiKala Thompkins, National Louis University  
Amie Thompson, Concordia University  
Ewa Torres, National Lewis University  
Nicole Trovillion, McKendree University  
Sharon Turner-Wingba, Governors State University  
Esmeralda Velasco, Chicago State University  
Sonia Villarreal-Orson, Concordia University  
Benay Walker, McKendree University  
Janna Walson, Northeastern Illinois University  
Alex Washam, McKendree University  
Casey Welscher, University of Illinois at Springfield  
Ericka Weston, McKendree University  
Christine Wolinski, Lewis University  
Hui-Chun Wu-Szillage, National Lewis University

Rachel Yaw, McKendree University  
Kerri Young, McKendree University  
Shannon Zarobsky, University of St. Francis

*The Illinois Principals Association is a leadership organization serving educational leaders throughout Illinois whose mission is to develop, support, and advocate for innovative educational leaders. For more information about the IPA, please visit [www.ilprincipals.org](http://www.ilprincipals.org).*

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