



SUSANA A. MENDOZA
ILLINOIS STATE COMPTROLLER

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

SMART BUSINESS AND SMART CONSUMERS
FEBRUARY

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

NATIONAL HERITAGE MONTH: BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In 1976, U.S. President Gerald Ford expanded Black History Week, initially established by Carter G. Woodson, to the entire month of February, to commemorate and celebrate the contributions made by people of African descent.

DID YOU KNOW?

- o Illinois Black History Fact
 - o In 1992 Illinois elected the first African American woman to serve in the U. S. Senate, Carol Moseley-Braun.

PLACES TO VISIT THAT REFLECT THE LEGACY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS

ON THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF ILLINOIS:

- o DuSable Museum of African American History (Chicago)
 - o [The DuSable Black History](#)

[Museum and Education Center \(dusablemuseum.org\)](#)

- o Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum (Springfield)
 - o [Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum - Springfield and Central Illinois African American History Museum \(spiaahm.org\)](#)
- o The African American Museum of Southern Illinois (Carbondale)
 - o [Home - Carbondale African American Museum \(aamsi.org\)](#)

2023 ILLINOIS OFFICE OF COMPTROLLER BLACK HISTORY MONTH HONOREES

Tiffany Hamel Johnson

President & CEO
Chicago United

Britney Robbins

Founder & CEO
The Gray Matter Experience

Timara Pflug

Police Officer/ Springfield Police Department
Founder/ The Dollhouse Project

Dean L. Rogan Sr., RPh

Mayor/ Village of Pulaski
Rogan’s Country Pharmacy

Dr. Shelia E. Boozer

Superintendent
Champaign Unit 4 School District

Preston Jackson

Sculptor, Art Educator, and Gallery Owner
The Side View Gallery

Barbra Montgomery

Track & Field Coach/ Physical Education Teacher
Franklin Middle School

Commissioner

Annette Nance-Holt

Fire Commissioner
City of Chicago

Gilbert Allen

Clinical Director
Shelter

BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION

Hosted by
SUSANA A. MENDOZA
ILLINOIS STATE COMPTROLLER

JOIN US IN AWARDING OUR HONOREES

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2023
AT 12:00 PM
555 W. MONROE
ILLINOIS ROOM (FIRST FLOOR)

The month of February is a time for all of us to honor and celebrate Black History by remembering the individuals and events that have contributed to our history and culture.

As we honor the trailblazers of the past whose impact through grassroots efforts and struggles created opportunities and triumphs of historic proportions, we also must applaud today's visionaries for their ongoing efforts.

Join us as we recognize a distinguished group of individuals that embody the spirit of Black History Month.

SMART Business and SMART Consumers

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

OMEE AND IL SBDC PRESENTS - ADVANCING THE DEVELOPMENT OF MINORITY ENTREPRENEURSHIP (ADME): ROOTS & ACHIEVEMENT - BLACK AGRICULTURE BUSINESS IN ILLINOIS (VIRTUAL EVENT)

Wednesday, February 8, 2023

10am – 11:30am

Black Farmers across the state will discuss the history, challenges, and successes of Black Agriculture Businesses in Illinois alongside a panel with representatives from Southern Illinois University Carbondale, Illinois Small Business Development Center Network and OMEE. Attendees will also learn about financial and technical assistance, and resources available to agriculture businesses in Illinois.

THE STATE OF BLACK BUSINESS: FINDINGS FROM THE ILLINOIS STATEWIDE BLACK BUSINESS SURVEY (IN PERSON EVENT)

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

10:00am – 12:00pm

Chicago Urban League, 4510 S. Michigan Ave, Chicago, IL 60653

In late 2021, DCEO, Chicago State University and Chicago Urban League launched the first of its kind statewide Black business survey to solicit feedback directly from Black-owned businesses. As part of DCEO's 2023 Black History Month programming, these partners are hosting an event to reveal the survey results. During this event, leaders will discuss findings from the survey and identify major take-aways from the research. Panelists will also discuss the tools and resources available to assist the Black business community throughout the state. Participants include DCEO, representatives from the Urban League and Chicago State University.

OPERATION HOPE – 1 MILLION BLACK BUSINESSES (1MBB)

Operation Hope has set out to drive black economic development across the United States, with the goal to start, grow, and scale 1 million Black Businesses by 2030 through building human capital, providing social capital, and ensuring access to equitable capital funding.



If you are starting a business, need assistance with your business, or mentorship Operation Hope may be able to help you.

For more information: [1 Million Black Businesses \(1MBB\) - Operation HOPE](#)

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CONGRATULATIONS! THANK YOU TO JESSE WHITE, FORMER ILLINOIS SECRETARY OF STATE FOR MANY YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE AND COMMITMENT TO THE STATE OF ILLINOIS.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Jesse White served as Illinois State Secretary of State from January 1999 to January 2023, becoming the longest-serving American to hold the position.

Some of his many accomplishments include the following:

- Jesse White was inducted into the Southwestern Athletic Conference in 1995 for his accomplishments at Alabama State University baseball and basketball programs. In 1999 he was inducted in the Alabama State University Sports Hall of Fame.
- He founded the world-renowned Jesse White Tumbling Team in 1959: a community and youth sports organization that is still active today. More than 18,500 youth have participated in the team traveling across the world.
- Mr. White served in the Illinois National Guard and served in the United States Army's 101st Airborne Division as a paratrooper.
- Served 33 years in Chicago Public Schools as a teacher and administrator.
- Served as a member of the Illinois House of Representatives from 1975-1993.
- Served as Cook County Recorder of Deeds from 1992-1999.



[The Official Website for the Illinois Secretary of State \(ilsos.gov\)](http://ilsos.gov)

ILLINOIS STATE COMPTROLLER SUSANA A. MENDOZA – CULINARY KIDS CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

On December 7th, 2022, Comptroller Mendoza hosted her 8th Annual Culinary Kids Christmas Kitchen Luncheon at Mission of Our Lady of the Angles. Special guest Mr. T joined the party and helped serve lunch to 50 seniors from the neighborhood.



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2023 LUNAR NEW YEAR

Sunday, January 22, 2023, marked the beginning of the Lunar New Year. The Lunar New Year last up to 16 days, with celebrations this year ending February 5 with the 2000-year traditional Lantern Festival. 2023 is the Year of the Rabbit transitioning from 2022's Year of the Tiger. In the Chinese Zodiac the rabbit is associated with attributes such as diplomacy, grace, and sensitivity.

Recent years of the rabbit: 2011, 1999, 1987, 1975, 1963, 1951, 1939.

PLACES TO VISIT THAT REFLECT THE LEGACY OF CHINESE AMERICANS ON THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF ILLINOIS:

- Chinese American Museum of Chicago
 - [Chinese American Museum of Chicago \(ccamuseum.org\)](http://ChineseAmericanMuseumofChicago.org)



FTC: AT&T DATA THROTTLING SETTLEMENT



The Federal Trade Commission found that AT&T throttled their data, slowing down their internet speed after they used a certain amount of data in a billing cycle. Former AT&T customers who had an unlimited data plan between October 2011 and June 2015 who have not received a refund check from AT&T might be eligible for payment. Current AT&T customers who had an unlimited data plan with AT&T during this time period should have received a bill credit from AT&T in early 2020.

To find out if you are eligible and file your claim visit [AT&T Data Throttling Settlement | Federal Trade Commission \(ftc.gov\)](https://www.ftc.gov/AT&T-Data-Throttling-Settlement).

MAY 18TH 2023 IS THE DEADLINE TO FILE A CLAIM.

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SMALL BUSINESS CYBERSECURITY

The Federal Trade Commission, U.S. Small Business Administration, National Institute of Standards and Technology, and the Department of Homeland Security partnered to develop business cybersecurity resources for small businesses. Individuals interested in learning the basics for protecting your business from cyber-attacks can learn more at: [Cybersecurity for Small Business | Federal Trade Commission \(ftc.gov\)](https://www.ftc.gov/learn/small-business/cybersecurity)



U.S. Small Business Administration

BANK ON ILLINOIS ANNUAL REPORT

The Illinois Office of the Comptroller is proud to share the 2020-2021 Bank On Illinois Annual Report. The report identifies the accomplishments of the Bank On Illinois program. It identified that in 2020, 150,000 accounts opened were by new customers (Bank On National Data Hub, 2020). To learn more about Bank On Illinois, please click here [Bank On Illinois Annual Report 2020-21.pdf \(illinoiscomptroller.gov\)](https://illinoiscomptroller.gov/2020-21.pdf)

BANK ON ILLINOIS ROUNDTABLES

The Illinois Office of Comptroller is committed to work with community organizations, financial institutions, and stakeholders to host roundtable sessions that are designed to provide a general overview of the program, highlight key issues for underbanked communities, as well as encourage community organizations to participate in the program to assist individuals to open certified bank accounts that are safe with no fees.

To learn more about this initiative or if you are interested in hosting a roundtable for your church, school, workplace, or clients, please click here: <https://forms.office.com/g/D5fL0RsAYH>

A flyer for the Bank On Illinois program. At the top right is the name 'SUSANA A. MENDOZA ILLINOIS STATE COMPTROLLER' with a small seal. The main title is 'BECOME FINANCIALLY EMPOWERED THROUGH Bank On Illinois'. Below this, it says 'The Illinois Office of Comptroller is committed to work with' followed by three icons: 'COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS' (two people), 'FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS' (a bank building with a dollar sign), and 'AND STAKEHOLDERS' (a puzzle piece). A magnifying glass icon is next to the text: 'to host roundtable sessions that are designed to provide a general overview of the program, highlight key issues for unbanked and underbanked communities, as well as encourage community organizations to participate in the program to assist individuals to open certified bank accounts that are SAFE WITH NO FEES.' Below this is a QR code and the text: 'To learn more about this initiative or if you are interested in hosting a roundtable for your church, school, workplace, or clients, please click here: https://forms.office.com/g/D5fL0RsAYH, or scan:'. At the bottom, a blue box contains the text: 'Studies show that the average household without a traditional banking account will pay over \$2,000 a year in ATM, maintenance fees and services. As part of an effort to reach people who remain outside the banking system, Bank On Illinois is a financial empowerment program designed to resolve the primary reasons individuals cite for not having a bank account.'

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2023 CHICAGO LATINA MAGAZINE SMALL BUSINESS EXPO

Chicago Latina Magazine will be hosting a 2023 Small Business Diversity & Opportunity Business 2 Business Expo at Rivers Casino on May 18, 2023, from 4-8 P.M.



GRANTS/LOANS

- Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants in Illinois - The program provides guaranteed loan financing and grant funding to agricultural producers and rural small businesses for renewable energy systems or to make energy efficiency improvements. Agricultural producers may also apply for new energy efficient equipment and new system loans for agricultural production and processing.
 - Deadline: March 31, 2023
 - [Rural Energy for America Program Renewable Energy Systems & Energy Efficiency Improvement Guaranteed Loans & Grants | Rural Development \(usda.gov\)](#)
- Made in Illinois Grant - The Governor's economic plan calls for a manufacturing innovation voucher program to manufacturing companies that develop and execute detailed and strategic plans to make investments that will make their operations more efficient, productive, and competitive. Grant funds under this program will be awarded to an administering entity.
 - Deadline: February 28, 2023
 - [AmpliFund - Details](#)

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THE CONSTITUENT AFFAIRS TEAM

**all email addresses @illinoiscomptroller.gov*

LOUISA KEEFE

Director

Email louisa.keefe

Oversees the daily duties of the Constituent Affairs division. Louisa provides assistance to constituents who have requests and questions about our programs and initiatives.

BOLA DELANO

Deputy Director

Email bola.delano

Develops plans and strategy for the unit as well as oversees daily duties of staff. Bola is able to assist in responding to questions regarding Bank On Illinois small business and Local government finance.

JULIE AYRES

Office Associate

Email julie.ayres

Julie is responsible for scheduling virtual webinars for SMART Business and SMART Consumers as well as other events.

WESLEY KOSLA

Program Manager

Polish Language Support

Email wesley.kosla

Wes consults and guides constituents through the procurement and certification process and helps companies register to do business in the state of Illinois. Wes can also help businesses owners navigate the Bid Buy and IPG websites.

SAMANTHA ALONSO

Program Manager

Spanish Language Support

Email samantha.alonso

Samantha is responsible for producing publications in Spanish as well as hosting workshops in both English and Spanish, hosting Cafecitos. Samantha responds to questions and concerns of constituents. Staff support for the Bank On Illinois Financial Products Subcommittee.

YAW KESSE

Program Manager

Email yaw.kesse

Yaw hosts SMART Business and SMART Consumer presentations and responds to constituents' questions and concerns. Staff support for the Bank On Illinois Financial Empowerment Subcommittee.



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