



WILL COUNTY, ILLINOIS

NEWSLETTER

JULY 2025



**JENNIFER
BERTINO-TARRANT**
WILL COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Dear Residents,

Since taking office, I have worked to modernize county government to maximize efficiency and ensure that we are making a positive impact with our annual budget. With that in mind, we have worked to enhance our approach to budgeting, including by implementing long-term planning initiatives and utilizing the latest digital tools for financial management.

This has included creating a digital system for preparing and publishing the county budget, which I'm proud to say contributed to the county receiving a "Distinguished Budget Presentation Award" from the Government Finance Officers Association (pictured below). The award recognized the hard work of our Finance Department in creating a fiscally responsible, stable, and transparent budget that prepares us for the future.

This recognition follows last year's announcement by Moody's that Will County is maintaining an "excellent" credit position due to our strong financial management practices. An example of those practices was recently approved at the July County Board meeting, as my office is refinancing over \$200 million in county bonds. This step could save the county up to \$6 million and reflects our continued efforts to budget responsibly.

I look forward to continuing these steps as my office prepares the draft budget for next year. While there are many uncertainties on the national level that might impact us locally, the steps we have taken over the last few years have prepared us to be resilient in the face of potential changes.

Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant | Will County Executive



INCREASED NUMBER OF DEPUTIES



Will County Sheriff's Office Increases Number of Deputies in 2025

Will County leaders are spotlighting the recent approval of a new Sheriff's Office deputy hire to serve as a School Resource Office at the Summit Hill School District. The hire coincides with the first increase in the Sheriff's Office deputy county in 25 years that occurred in late 2024.

The County Board approved the new hire at their July meeting, setting the new number of Will County Sheriff's Office deputies at 234. The new deputy will serve as a full-time School Resource Officer for the Frankfort-based school district.

"I'm extremely pleased that the Will County Sheriff's Office will be partnering with Summit Hill School District 161 to add a dedicated School Resource Officer. Ensuring the safety of our schools remains one of our highest priorities...I commend the Will County Board for their continued support and foresight in prioritizing public safety and the well-being of our communities and Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant for her exceptional leadership."

– Sheriff Mike Kelley

The new hire coincides with the Will County FY2025 Budget including 10 additional deputies to address traffic enforcement for overweight trucks throughout the county. Since the workforce increase in November, the Sheriff's Office has been empowered to stop 2,567 trucks and cite 1,613 for overweight violations. The increase in overweight truck enforcement supports overall driver safety on local roads, as well as preventing damage to local roads.



**Mills-Cherry
Hill Study**

PUBLIC INFO MEETING

**Tuesday, August 5
4:30 PM -7:30 PM**

Nowell Park Rec. Center

Cherry Hill/Mills Road Study Public Information Meeting – August 5

The Will County Division of Transportation will host a Public Information Meeting to present an identified improvement option for the Mills Road-Cherry Hill Road Phase I Study from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 5 at the Nowell Park Recreation Center, 199 Mills Road, Joliet.

The meeting will present and obtain public feedback on the proposed improvements that address safety and mobility concerns, reconstruct pavement, improve drainage, and enhance the bicycle and pedestrian connectivity along the road. The meeting will be conducted in an open-house style format with project displays and other information available for viewing. Project team members will also be available to explain the project, discuss the preferred alternative, answer questions, and record comments.

Those who are unable to attend the meeting in person but are interested in following the project's development can view all meeting materials on the project website.

Learn More:www.millscherryhillstudy.com



EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

County Executive Bertino-Tarrant Selected as CED Chair

Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant has been selected to serve as Chair for the Will County Center for Economic Development (CED). In this role, she will lead the center's Board of Directors and Executive Committee in driving countywide efforts to expand economic opportunities, strengthen the local business environment, and attract new residents.

Bertino-Tarrant is the first Will County CED Chair from the public sector, demonstrating an increased level of engagement between the CED and local governmental partners to accomplish regional economic development goals. Since taking office as Will County Executive in 2021, Bertino-Tarrant has prioritized collaboration between local governments and the CED to increase job opportunities for residents and to foster a welcoming environment for businesses of all sizes.

The selection comes as Will County continues to serve as a national and regional leader in economic development, with the fastest-growing population in the state (recently surpassing 700,000 residents) and ranking first in statewide job creation and single-family home building.

Bertino-Tarrant aims to work closely with local leaders to strengthen local economies throughout the county and support existing businesses. She also plans on shining a spotlight on Will County's talent pool, which serves as one of its strongest economic assets. This includes an increased focus on the CED's youth development opportunities to support the local workforce pipeline, such as the Internship Program, which helped provide more than 70 summer jobs for Will County high school students in 2025, and the countywide initiative to bring Dolly Parton's Imagination Library to Will County to focus on early childhood education.

[Learn More: willcountyced.com](https://willcountyced.com)

WILL COUNTY HEROES

Governors State University

Joliet Junior College

"The Heroes Scholarship gave me the **opportunity** and **confidence** to keep pushing forward."

ARPA HEROES Spotlight

The Will County HEROES Teaching & Nursing Scholarship is igniting a new generation of heroes by providing \$10 million in funding for teaching and nursing students who live in Will County and expect to work at Will County education or health care institutions after graduation.

Utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, Will County provided \$2.5 Million to each higher education partner for the scholarship program: Governors State University, University of St. Francis, Lewis University, and Joliet Junior College. This month we're spotlighting two of those partners!

PAID TRAINING FOR TRADES AND CONSTRUCTION CAREER OPPORTUNITIES!



PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

ENROLL BY AUGUST 15!

Sponsored By

Enrollment Open for Will County Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Applications are being accepted for the second round of classes for the paid construction pre-apprenticeship training program being hosted through a partnership between Hire360 and Will County Executive Jennifer Bertino-Tarrant. Will County is hosting the partnership to boost the local workforce and ensure local residents have access to the historical level of infrastructure and capital investments in the region.

The 9-week class prepares students interested in entering the construction trades, offering apprenticeship site tours, test preparation classes, industry-recognized curriculum, job readiness workshops, and credentials such as First Aid/CPR and OSHA 10. The program is funded in part by the Illinois Works Jobs Program Act, created as a result of Governor Pritzker's historic \$45 billion capital plan and his commitment to expanding equity in Illinois' construction workforce.

Eligible applicants must be an Illinois resident, 18 years of age or older, and have a high school diploma, GED, or HISTE. The program is being hosted at the Will County Courthouse in Joliet.

[Learn More: willcountyced.com](https://willcountyced.com)

Governors State University

Governors State University has awarded \$508,956 in Will County HEROES scholarships to 141 nursing and teaching students, ensuring that they can pursue these impactful careers in local communities!

"This grant allowed me the financial flexibility to take more classes each term, in turn, finishing earlier and getting into the workforce sooner."

- Collin Lippe, GovState Teaching Student

[Learn More: willcountyillinois.org/governors-state-university-2025](https://willcountyillinois.org/governors-state-university-2025)

Joliet Junior College

Joliet Junior College (JJC) has been making a strong impact in the lives of Will County students with the HEROES Scholarship, awarding \$2,500,000 to 926 students. As of June 2025, 166 students graduated with associates degrees and 310 students graduated with certificates.

"If it wasn't for the Will County Heroes Grant, I wouldn't have been able to continue my education in the JJC nursing program...I am so grateful for this program!"

- Amy, JJC Nursing Student

[Learn More: willcountyillinois.org/joliet-junior-college-2025](https://willcountyillinois.org/joliet-junior-college-2025)