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Fact Sheet: Powering Chicago in Brief

MISSION:

Bringing together the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 134 electricians and the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) of the City of Chicago, Powering Chicago is an electrical industry labor-management partnership (LMCC) that invests in consistently better construction, better careers and better communities within the metro Chicago region.

HISTORY:

Since 1900, the ECA and IBEW Local 134 have worked together through the LMCC to encourage communication and cooperation between labor and management, establish the highest standards of safety, training, reliability and expertise in the electrical industry, and to promote the union electrical industry in the Chicago metropolitan area. In 2019, the LMCC rebranded as Powering Chicago, which promotes the IBEW Local 134 and ECA workforce as the only choice for electrical construction in the Chicago metro area.

WHAT WE DO:

Employing the latest technology, Powering Chicago's members are elevating industry performance through their commitment to safety, level of experience and reliability, while also investing in the future of skilled labor through an innovative apprenticeship program.

In 2007, ECA Chicago and IBEW Local 134 opened the newly renovated IBEW/NECA Technical Institute, a state-of-the-art 120,000-square-foot building consisting of 12 large classrooms, eight extensive laboratories and a full-size residential and commercial mock-up in which apprentices learn the trade. The institute also features the first solar electricity training facility in Illinois, providing apprentices with the opportunity to learn the latest best practices related to renewable energy. Apprentices take part in a rigorous five-year program that prepares them to uphold Powering Chicago's commitment to the highest standards in electrical construction, while also securing lifelong career opportunities.

Powering Chicago takes part in more than 100 charitable activities each year and plays a major role in rebuilding Chicago neighborhoods and giving back to the communities in which its members live and work.

MEMBERSHIP:

Powering Chicago members include more than 700 licensed electrical contractors and 17,000 IBEW Local 134 journeymen and women in metropolitan Chicago.

GOVERNANCE:

Powering Chicago employs two full-time staff and is governed by a committee composed of members from ECA and IBEW Local 134.

HOW TO FIND POWERING CHICAGO:

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**ASSETS:**

Powering Chicago logos, photos and videos are accessible [here](#).



Powering Chicago FAQs

What is Powering Chicago?

Bringing together the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 134 electricians and the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) of the City of Chicago, Powering Chicago is an electrical industry labor-management partnership (LMCC) that invests in consistently better construction, better careers and better communities within the metro Chicago region.

What does Powering Chicago do?

Powering Chicago works to encourage communication and cooperation between labor and management, establish the highest standards of safety, reliability and training, and to promote the union electrical industry in the Chicago region.

How does Powering Chicago create better construction?

Employing the latest technology, our members are elevating industry performance through their commitment to safety, level of experience and reliability. The foundation of Powering Chicago's commitment to better construction is an innovative apprenticeship program based at the IBEW/NECA Technical Institute in Alsip, IL. Funded by our members, who invest in the future of skilled labor, the institute is a state-of-the-art 120,000-square-foot building consisting of 12 large classrooms, eight extensive laboratories and a full-size residential and commercial mock-up in which apprentices learn the trade. The institute also features the first solar electricity training facility in Illinois, providing apprentices with the opportunity to learn the latest best practices related to renewable energy.

Apprentices take part in a rigorous five-year program during which they attend day school for 40 hours per week. During the first three years of the paid program, apprentices are provided with instruction that combines classroom learning with the development of hands-on skills. The final two years of the program are flexible, and apprentices have the opportunity to participate in seminars on specific topics that will best serve them in the field. By the conclusion of the program, each apprentice has completed a minimum of 8,000 hours of training, effectively preparing them to advance the industry to ever-higher standards and performance.

How does Powering Chicago create better careers?

Becoming a union electrician means gaining the stability needed to better oneself, one's family and one's community. Whether seeking to become a journeyman or woman electrician, foreman, project manager, electrical estimator, CAD/BIM designer, or any other position within

the industry, our members have access to the resources and support needed to develop their skills and advance their careers.

How does Powering Chicago create better communities?

Powering Chicago takes part in more than 100 charitable activities each year and plays a major role in rebuilding Chicago neighborhoods and giving back to the communities in which its members live and work.

How is the unionized electrical industry in Chicago different than the non-unionized electrical industry?

Choosing a union electrician means the project will be completed on time, within budget, and have the highest quality installation available in the market today.

Aren't union electricians more expensive than non-union electricians?

Union electricians have been trained extensively in the latest techniques, bring invaluable experience to every job site, and adhere to the highest standards of safety, day after day and year after year. When a project is completed by a union electrician, it will be on time and within budget, and will not need to be corrected later. For those making a choice between union and non-union labor, the question should be, "how much is it worth to me to know that my project will be completed the right way the first time, without delay?"

What benefits does Powering Chicago offer its members?

In addition to a stable career that will allow members to provide for their families and communities, Powering Chicago offers ongoing training, education and career development opportunities. Powering Chicago will invest in any member willing to invest in themselves.

John Donahue
Executive Director, Powering Chicago



As the Executive Director of Powering Chicago, John brings nearly 40 years of experience in the field to his work to promote the union electrical industry in the Chicago region.

As the Executive Director, John is responsible for raising awareness of the value of skilled electrical work and encouraging communication and cooperation between labor and management, which comprise Powering Chicago's membership. Under John's leadership, the organization underwent a rebranding campaign in 2018 to enhance its ability to promote better construction, better careers and better communities.

Prior to becoming the leader of Powering Chicago, John served as the Director of the IBEW/NECA Technical Institute in Alsip, IL. Funded by Powering Chicago's members, the Technical Institute is a state-of-the-art 120,000-square-foot facility in which electrical apprentices gain the skills needed to advance the union electrical industry to ever-higher standards and performance. During 26 years at the helm of the Technical Institute, John was responsible for the education and training of thousands of apprentices and journey workers in the Chicago area.

John began his career as an IBEW Local 134 electrical apprentice and worked as a journeyman electrician in the field before leading the Technical Institute.

He holds a bachelor's degree from St. Xavier University, a Juris Doctor degree from The John Marshall Law School, and a doctorate in education from Roosevelt University.

Areas of expertise: Electrical industry, Construction industry, Apprenticeship, Skilled labor shortage, Powering Chicago's business and philanthropic initiatives

On camera: [Crain's Chicago Business: 5 Keys to Launching a Skilled Trade Career](#)

Elbert Walters III Director, Powering Chicago



A former business representative for IBEW Local 134 and longtime member of the union, Elbert Walters III now serves as the Director for Powering Chicago, leading the organization's 100+ philanthropic and community impact initiatives each year and playing a key role in its daily operations. Walters brings to the position a deep understanding of the unionized electrical industry's commitment to better construction, better careers and better communities.

In his previous role at IBEW Local 134, Walters worked with colleagues to represent the interests of more than 13,000 electricians in metro Chicago. A Local 134 electrician himself, Walters began his career in the trades as an electrical apprentice at the IBEW/NECA Technical Institute, where he received the Apprentice of the Year award during his final year in the program before becoming a journeyman electrician.

Throughout his career, Walters has dedicated himself to strengthening communities. His achievements include establishing and hosting the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Breakfast and coordinating union electrical volunteers for the annual Rebuilding Together Metro Chicago day of service, which provides needed upgrades to disadvantaged communities throughout the Chicagoland area.

Within IBEW, Walters serves as a member of the Electrical Joint Arbitration Board, Adjutant for the American Legion Electrical Post 769 and member of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus. He is also an active member of Chicago Building Trades Council, a newly appointed member of the Illinois Prevailing Wage Council and serves as Secretary of Labor Brothers United (LBU), a group of union officials dedicated to closing the gap between union labor and the community.

Walters is currently enrolled in DePaul University's Labor Leadership Program, designed to help build the next generation of labor movement leaders.

Areas of expertise: Powering Chicago's business and philanthropic initiatives

In the media: [Chicago Sun-Times: Why these Chicagoans left other careers to work in 'boots and jeans and ... with my hands'](#)

Steve Doty
Communications Director, Powering Chicago



A former broadcast journalist, Steve Doty oversees all branding and communications initiatives for Powering Chicago. Since joining Powering Chicago in 2018, he has been instrumental in rebranding the organization and positioning it to deliver on its promise to promote better construction, better careers and better communities in the Chicago region.

Prior to joining Powering Chicago, Steve served as the Director of Media Relations for the American Gaming Association. Responsible for elevating the profile of the association and advocating for policies and regulations beneficial to the casino industry, Steve routinely secured media coverage in publications like The New York Times, Wall Street Journal and Associated Press, among others.

Steve began his career as a reporter and anchor at WILX-TV, the NBC affiliate in the Lansing, Michigan area. He later held several positions at the Washington Examiner, including a tenure as a senior video journalist. In this role, he oversaw, developed and executed the Examiner's web video strategy while covering national politics, campaigns and the White House.

He holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from Arizona State University and a master's degree in professional studies, public relations, advertising, and corporate communications from Georgetown University.

Areas of expertise: Powering Chicago's business and philanthropic initiatives

On camera: [Powering Chicago Donates Space for Annual Blood Drive](#)