

## **Fact Sheet: Powering Chicago in Brief**

### **MISSION:**

Powering Chicago is an electrical industry labor-management partnership between IBEW Local 134 and the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) of Chicago and Cook County that invests in consistently better construction, better careers and better communities in Chicago and Cook County.

### **HISTORY:**

Since 1900, the ECA and IBEW Local 134 have worked together through a labor-management partnership (LMCC) to encourage communication and cooperation, establish the highest standards of safety, training, reliability and expertise in the electrical industry, and to promote our members in the Chicago metropolitan area. In 2019, the LMCC rebranded as Powering Chicago, which promotes the IBEW Local 134 and ECA workforce as the leading choice for electrical and renewable energy 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 a newly renovated training school, IBEW/NECA Technical Institute (IN-Tech), a state-of-the-art 120,000-square-foot facility consisting of 12 large classrooms, eight extensive laboratories and a full-size residential and commercial mock-up in which apprentices learn the trade.

IN-Tech's 25-acre campus also features one of the first and largest renewable energy training centers in the Midwest to keep electricians at the forefront of clean energy technology. Apprentices learn the latest best practices related to clean energy, including wind and solar energy systems, EV charging infrastructure, and energy storage at one of the leading programs in the nation. This curriculum, as well as the extensive classroom and hands-on training they receive on electrical systems, ensures that each apprentice has a minimum of 8,000 hours of education upon graduation to become an IBEW Local 134 journeyman electrician. This is Powering Chicago's standard to ensure "BETTER CONSTRUCTION" for Chicago while creating life-long, "BETTER CAREERS" for our residents.

Powering Chicago believes in giving back to the communities in which we live and work. Our members take part in more than 100 philanthropic activities each year to help support residents, rebuild Chicago neighborhoods, and give back to create "BETTER COMMUNITIES" for all.

## **Boilerplate**

*Bringing together the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 134 electricians and the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) of Chicago and Cook County, Powering Chicago is an electrical industry labor-management partnership that invests in consistently better construction, better careers and better communities within the metro Chicago region. Employing the latest electrical and renewable energy technology, its 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 that is paving the way for the next generation of skilled electricians. For additional information, visit [poweringchicago.com](http://poweringchicago.com)*

**MEMBERSHIP:**

Powering Chicago members include more than 600 licensed electrical contractors and 12,000 IBEW Local 134 electricians in the City of Chicago and suburban Cook County. We quickly staff any project, anytime, with our strong membership of skilled professionals.

**GOVERNANCE:**

Powering Chicago is governed by a board of Trustees comprised of equal representation of labor and management, and contracts a small team to carry out business operations.

**HOW TO FIND POWERING CHICAGO:**

Five Westbrook Corporate Center, Suite 925 , Westchester, IL 60154

[poweringchicago.com](http://poweringchicago.com)

@PoweringChicago

**ASSETS:**

Powering Chicago logos are accessible [here](#).

## Powering Chicago FAQs

### What is Powering Chicago?

Powering Chicago is an electrical industry labor-management partnership between IBEW Local 134 and the Electrical Contractors' Association (ECA) of Chicago and Cook County that invests in consistently better construction, better careers and better communities in Chicago and Cook County.

### 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 in the electrical industry, and to promote the more than 600 union electrical contractors and 12,000 IBEW 134 electricians that make up the union electrical construction industry in Chicago and Cook County as the best choice for high-quality electrical work completed on-time and on-budget.

### What are Powering Chicago's goals?

- Educate decision-makers about the value and advantages of hiring Powering Chicago electrical contractors.
- Increase awareness of the sophisticated technology driving our industry as well as our expert knowledge of safety mandates, codes and standards, required for successful construction.
- Highlight the capabilities of members to build market opportunities for our industry, increase qualified membership for Local 134 and ECA, and attract talented candidates to the apprenticeship program.

### Who are Powering Chicago's members?

Powering Chicago members include more than 600 licensed electrical contractors and 12,000 IBEW Local 134 electricians in the City of Chicago and suburban Cook County. We quickly staff any project, anytime with our strong membership of talented professionals.

### What does Powering Chicago mean when it says 'better construction, better careers, better communities?'

#### ***Better Construction:***

Members of the unionized electrical industry in Cook County bring an unmatched level of experience, reliability, safety and training to every job. Our workforce is composed of the most highly trained electrical workers in the country, which is a direct result of an intensive apprenticeship program and ongoing opportunities to develop skills throughout their careers.

When a project needs to be completed on time and on budget, with the highest possible quality, the unionized electrical industry delivers. That's what better construction means to us.

### ***Better Careers:***

Better careers reflects the limitless career pathways available to those who enter the unionized electrical industry. Few industries allow you to begin as an apprentice and have a realistic chance of owning your own company, and that's the exact path many in our industry have taken, but it's only one of many possibilities. Powering Chicago invests in continuous training and education opportunities for members to ensure they have the tools they need to find roles in the industry that suit their interests and skills, and to succeed in whatever career path they choose - whether working on job sites or in an office helping ensure better construction. That's better careers.

### ***Better Communities:***

Better communities is a reflection of our commitment to Cook County and its residents. Better communities matter to us because we don't just work here, we live here, too. That's why we participate in more than 100 philanthropic events each year and are always willing to go the extra mile to strengthen neighborhoods and communities across the City of Chicago and suburban Cook County. It's also why we invest in better careers for our members, many of whom play active roles as citizens and leaders in their local communities.

### **What differentiates Powering Chicago's partners from non-union competitors?**

Choosing a unionized electrical contractor with IBEW Local 134 electricians means the project will be completed on time, within budget, and have the highest quality installation available in the market today. In large part, that's the result of our investment in training and education for our workforce. Powering Chicago's members invest in the future of the electrical industry by fully funding the apprenticeship program at the IBEW/NECA Technical Institute. The apprenticeship program builds a sophisticated workforce with limitless career potential, driving ongoing growth and innovation in the industry.

Powering Chicago's contracting partners have access to over 12,000 members and can draw on this expertise to quickly staff any size project, anytime, eliminating weeks it can take for competitors to identify contractors to staff a job.

### **How do Powering Chicago partners provide value to customers?**

Powering Chicago's electrical contractors and IBEW Local 134 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 Powering Chicago partner completes a project, 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, 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."

## Elbert Walters III

### Executive Director, Powering Chicago



A former business representative for IBEW Local 134 and longtime member of the union, Elbert Walters III now serves as the executive 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. While working in the field, Walters served as a journeyman wireman and foreman at several electrical contracting companies in metropolitan Chicago, including Meade Electric, Divane Brothers Electric and MZI Group, Inc.

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 served as a member of the Electrical Joint Arbitration Board, member of Chicago Building Trades Council, member of the Illinois Prevailing Wage Council and served as Secretary of Labor Brothers United (LBU), a group of union officials dedicated to closing the gap between union labor and the community. Walters continues his work with union and serves as the Commander and Adjutant for the American Legion Electrical Post 769 and board member of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus Chicago Chapter.

Walters recently completed DePaul University's Labor Leadership Program, designed to help build the next generation of labor movement leaders. Prior to devoting his professional efforts fully to Chicagoland's unionized electrical industry, Walter served eight years in the Illinois Army National Guard and was honorably discharged in 1998.

**Areas of expertise:** Powering Chicago's business and philanthropic initiatives, Construction, Electrical industry, Union labor