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South Suburban College Announces Opening of Barber College at South Holland Campus in the Spring

SOUTH HOLLAND, IL – The South Suburban College Board of Trustees approved the hiring of its first ever Barber College faculty Bobby Mattison at its November 12th Board Meeting. Chairman Frank M. Zuccarelli and the SSC Board first announced the establishment program last December. The college subsequently received full approval from the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) this year as well as its licensure from the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulation (IDFPR). Construction for the new, fully equipped barbering facility has already been completed at the college’s Main Campus in South Holland.

Mattison will begin leading the program effective January 4, 2021 as SSC readies to open for the spring semester. A licensed barber and barbering instructor, Mattison was instrumental in growing and licensing a Barbering Program at Statesville Correctional Center, and most recently at Cook County Juvenile Detention Center. He also opened a private business called Legacy Barber College with a partner in Glenwood, IL, for which he was featured on ABC News.

Mattison says he looks forward to creating new opportunities for others to become barbers and is excited to get started in his full-time role at the brand-new barber shop/lab at SSC. “You have to find something you love and would do it for free but find a way to get paid for it,” said Mattison. “Barbering is that for me and I know it can be for so many others.”

The SSC Barbering program was established in part by a Workforce Equity Initiative (WEI) grant the college received through the Illinois Community College Board which included funding for several new in-demand programs. The WEI project is designed to create, support and expand short-term workforce training opportunities in high need areas within SSC District #510. Through expanded access, opportunity, and support services, the project is anticipated to yield impactful outcomes for individuals, families, communities, local businesses.

The Barbering curriculum is a 17-month credit program leading to professional certification. SSC will be offering a 41-hour Barber Technician (BT) Certificate and a 60-hour Associate of Applied Science Degree in Barbering track for students seeking a college degree as a part of the program. Both tracks will include preparation and testing for National Barbering Written Licensing Examination, which is essential to applying for licensure in Illinois.

“South Suburban College’s Barbering Program will be the only active public Barber School in the state,” added Matt Beasland, Dean of Adult & Continuing Education and administrator over the Barber College. “It will provide our constituents with quick access to a career credential that can lead to family sustaining wages.”

According to BLS data, the average salary for a Barber in Illinois is \$42,930, or \$20.64 per hour with an increase in demand of 9% by 2026. In the Southland area, there are currently 286 new job openings for barbers.

For more information about Barber School and the WEI programs at SSC, please call (708) 596-2000, ext. 2413, email workforceequity@ssc.edu or visit www.ssc.edu/wej. *Most SSC courses will continue to be offered through the virtual classroom model during the Spring 2021 Semester, with exceptions for some programs such as Barbering. Social distancing and PPEs will be used as appropriate for in-person classes.*

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