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## South Suburban College First to Launch Program in South Cook County in Partnership with Pace Bus in Free\* CDL Permit Training

SOUTH HOLLAND, IL– South Suburban College (SSC) and Pace Bus are pleased to announce their partnership to provide a free CDL Class B commercial driver's license permit course for the next generation of professional bus operators in the Chicago Southland region. The college and transportation agency have teamed up to offer a customized two-week period to assist qualified applicants in obtaining their CDL permit. To remove financial barriers for students to pursue and complete the program actively, Pace will cover the costs of tuition, training, books, fees, and other expenses associated with the program. In addition, in partnership with Pace, SSC's Work Equity Initiative will provide additional support and resources to students completing the Pace training.

On January 17, 2023, South Suburban College will host a pre-hire event for job seekers to meet with Pace staff. During the 3-hour event, which begins at 6 pm, applicants will complete a screening process which includes application completion, an assessment questionnaire, and a background check. All candidates must bring a valid Illinois driver's license and a DMV or Secretary of State Motor Vehicle Report (MVR) (also called Driving Record Abstracts in Illinois) with no more than two infractions or tickets in the last five years.

Assessment results will be available 2-4 days after the event, when candidates must complete an Illinois Department of Transportation physical and drug screening. Pace will cover the cost of these screenings. Candidates who pass these screenings will be enrolled in a training course that will take place in February at South Suburban College.

In a meeting on Tuesday, November 22, SSC President Dr. Lynette D. Stokes, SSC Vice President of Academic Services Dr. Tasha Williams, Pace Safety and Training Manager Sharri Pappas, and Pace Chief Operating Officer Lindsey Umek, celebrated the successful partnership between the two entities as it will be the first for the South Suburbs. "I am excited to have SSC be the first in this area to launch an opportunity of this magnitude. At SSC, we are dedicated to providing high-quality education, training, and services for all individuals who can benefit from our programs. In addition, we want to provide accessible and affordable programs to a diverse community of learners in collaboration with local businesses. Our partnership with Pace Bus embodies all of these key tenets," stated SSC President Dr. Stokes.

"Pace offers rewarding careers and a path to success for people who are passionate about public service. We are thrilled to partner with South Suburban College on this effort," said Pace Executive Director Melinda Metzger. "Offering this free course creates a win-win for everyone. Those looking for a new career get access to the free instruction they need, and Pace gets the operators it needs to keep providing the essential service our region relies on."

The program will run through SSC's Continuing Education Program, with classes being offered at its main campus. Dr. Matt Beasland, Executive Director of the Oak Forest Center, stated, "The program is a first in this region, and we are excited to bring this opportunity to the local community. The opportunity will provide jobs and livable wages with minimum pay starting at \$20.00".

Qualified candidates who complete the two-week will transition to a six-week on-the-job training with Pace. For more information about the CDL Class B licensure program with SSC and Pace Bus, please get in touch with SSC's Continuing Education Program at 708-596-2000 ext. 5723.

\* Candidates are responsible for the cost of the MVR, which is \$12.

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*About South Suburban College*

*[South Suburban College](#) (SSC) is a public community college in South Holland, Illinois with a second campus located in Oak Forest, Illinois. The College offers over 100 program options from a wide selection of career education and college transfer credit programs. Additionally, SSC offers non-credit customized training, short-term instruction for business, and dozens of special interest classes. The College has a state-of-the-art Performing Arts Center. A variety of cultural events are sponsored by the College, including plays, comedy acts, special lectures, and concerts, adding to the richness of the performing arts in the south suburbs.*

*About Pace Suburban Bus*

*[Pace Suburban Bus](#) safely and efficiently moves people to work, school, and other regional destinations with its family of public transportation services. Pace offers affordable and environmentally responsible transit options for the residents of 272 municipalities in Cook, Will, DuPage, Kane, Lake and McHenry counties. The backbone of Chicago's suburbs, Pace serves tens of thousands of daily riders. One of the largest bus services in North America, Pace covers 3,677 square miles, an area nearly the size of the state of Connecticut and about 15 times the size of the City of Chicago. Pace's innovative approach to public transportation gives the agency a national reputation as an industry leader.*