



Dunne Secures Grant to Strengthen Technology Pipeline in Illinois

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Dr. [Maureen Dunne](#), candidate for College of DuPage Board of Trustees, today announced her proposal, the “[Autism and Innovation Initiative](#),” was funded in the first round of highly-competitive seed grants funded by the [Discovery Partners Institute](#) (DPI).

Discovery Partners Institute, led by the University of Illinois System, and its three universities and partners, is a collaborative research institute focused on building prosperity and growing the state of Illinois’ workforce by creating solutions to grand challenges.

The Institute recognized Dr. Dunne’s initiative as one proposal to help revitalize Illinois’ economy by harnessing the power of the research university through interdisciplinary public-private partnerships to aggressively drive technology-based economic growth.

The Autism and Innovation Initiative, in which Dr. Dunne is the Principal Investigator and Director, will help ramp-up the technology and innovation talent pipeline in Illinois by including people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). The program will take a strength-based approach to training, entrepreneurship and workforce development to help individuals with ASD identify and land relevant jobs in this market sector.

As reported in the Champaign News-Gazette, the project would include a "Code for Autism" training boot camp and hackathon, a faculty workshop, courses and seminars on autism and technology, and a bridge program for College of DuPage students who plan to transfer to the University of Illinois-Chicago.

A number of individual private donors have also fully committed to providing further financial support to expand this project into a statewide initiative to strengthen the technology and innovation pipeline in Illinois.

Dr. Dunne, in her capacity as Adjunct Assistant Professor at the University of Illinois Chicago’s Department of Disability and Human Development, led this grant proposal team because she feels it is important to equip those with autism with needed tools to help find meaningful jobs and career pathways to success, eventually leading to independent and fulfilled lives. She is also fully committed to strengthening the technology talent pipeline and encouraging entrepreneurship in the state of Illinois.

In announcing the grant, Maureen Dunne stated, “The Initiative is yet another clear example of my dedication to improve Illinois by increasing access to opportunity through improved education for all, while also underscoring my record of committed achievement into fostering private-sector partnerships with public institutions to control spending. It is also why I say I am the only candidate in the COD race who is currently saving tax-payer dollars.”

In addition to a professional life dedicated to channeling her talents and energy into the private sector, Maureen has also worked to endow the Dr. Maureen N. Dunne Autism Student Success Scholarship and the Transistion2Success Project – both programs designed to assist people in pursuit of their educational or professional goals.

Dr. Dunne also championed and hosted the Code DuPage Bootcamp, which took place this week, from March 26-28 at Downers Grove South High School, where a number of District 99 high schoolers participated in an interactive coding, technology, and entrepreneurship workshop in partnership with Chamber 630 and Microsoft.

Maureen Dunne's principled leadership and innovative thinking in delivering high-quality education in the most cost-effective way is why she has earned the endorsement of the Daily Herald, the College of DuPage Faculty, and leading citizens in the community; and it is one of many reasons you should support her with your vote on Tuesday, April 2 for College of DuPage Trustee.

Learn More

To read about these groundbreaking initiatives, please visit:

- <https://news.uillinois.edu/view/7815/767169>
- <http://www.news-gazette.com/news/local/2019-03-28/first-9-recipients-discovery-partners-institute-seed-grants-announced.html>

To read about the Discovery Partners Institute, please visit:

- <https://dpi.uillinois.edu/about>

To Read the Daily Herald endorsement, go here:

<https://www.dailyherald.com/discuss/20190318/endorsements-dunne-incrocci-for-college-of-dupage-board-of-trustees>

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DPI backed Technology Initiative

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