

Mayor Candidate Messina Unveils Plan for Subsidized Technical Training to Build a Stronger Orange County Workforce

County-Funded Program Would Cover Tuition, Tools, and Books – and Pay Trade School Graduates a Bonus for Staying and Working in Central Florida

ORLANDO, FL, UNITED STATES, November 25, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Mayoral candidate and entrepreneur Chris Messina today announced a comprehensive plan to make high-demand vocational and technical training free for all Orange County residents – from high school juniors to adults looking for a career change.

Under Messina's "Orange County Works" initiative, the county would invest approximately \$10 million per year to cover 100% of tuition, fees, books, tools, and required equipment at accredited local institutions including Orange Technical College, Valencia College, and qualified non-profit providers. "Too many of our neighbors are stuck in low-wage jobs or buried in college debt while good-paying trade and technical positions go unfilled," Messina said. "My plan removes every financial barrier so any Orange County resident can train for a career as an electrician, plumber, welder, HVAC technician, auto mechanic, medical technician, or dozens of other in-demand fields – and start earning a family-supporting, wealth-building income right away."

Key features of the Orange County Works program:

- Up to \$10,000 per student in direct payments to approved schools and programs
- Covers all trades and medical technician fields with proven job openings in Central Florida
- Available to every Orange County resident – priority access for recent high school graduates and dual-enrollment for juniors and seniors
- "Stay Local" bonus of up to several thousand dollars paid to graduates who complete one year of full-time employment in their trained field in Orange or adjacent counties (highest bonuses for staying in Orange County)
- Interest-free repayment of only 50% of the county's investment, deducted at just 5% of annual salary over 10 years – creating a self-sustaining fund for future students
- Annual trade and career fairs in every high school and community center featuring local employers ready to hire

Messina projects the program will train up to 1,000 students in its first full year (2026) at an average cost of \$8,000 per student plus a \$2,000 average stay-local bonus. Long-term costs will

be offset by graduate repayments and new business tax revenue from an expanded skilled workforce.

“Orange County ranks dead last—or very nearly last—in median income among America’s 50 largest metro areas. That’s unacceptable. We’re on the verge of becoming the Southeast’s powerhouse for space technology, on-shoring, and advanced manufacturing. These aren’t dreams; they’re opportunities already knocking. But none of it happens without a skilled workforce,” Messina said. “I’ve built successful companies by investing in people first. As your mayor, I’ll do the same for this county: train our residents, raise their wages, and turn Orange County into a place where everyone thrives.”

Messina highlighted Osceola County’s highly successful [Osceola Prosper](#) scholarship program as the blueprint Orange County needs. “Let’s take that proven model, laser-focus it on trade and technical training, and scale it to our much larger population and economy—then the results will be transformational,” he said.

The Orange County Mayor’s race is non-partisan. The primary election is August 18, 2026. A candidate who receives 50% plus one vote in the primary wins outright; otherwise, the top two advance to November.

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For more information about Chris Messina and his vision for a thriving Orange County, visit <https://ChrisMessina.com> ###

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