

Skills for Chicago Receives Grant from RLD Foundation to Launch Military-to-Civilian Initiative on Career Highways

Skills for Chicago receives RLD Foundation grant to launch military-to-civilian Career Highways pathways for veterans.

CHICAGO, IL, UNITED STATES, June 17, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Skills for Chicago](#) today

“

Veterans bring exceptional leadership, discipline, and technical expertise, this initiative will build a solution that translates experience into clear career pathways and real employment outcomes.”

Bridget Altenburg, CEO of Skills for Chicago and a U.S. military veteran

announced it has received a \$225,000 grant from the [Richard L Duchossois Foundation](#) (RLD Foundation) to launch the first phase of a military-to-civilian career pathways initiative designed to translate military experience into skills, career pathways, and job opportunities using the [Career Highways](#) platform.

Each year, more than 200,000 service members transition to civilian life, yet a majority struggle to transfer their military experience into language civilian employers understand, many veterans leave their first job within a year due to poor fit. This initiative addresses that gap by combining veteran-focused career coaching, employer engagement, community recruitment and a structured

skills-based technology system that connects military experience to civilian careers with greater precision and scale.

The RLD Foundation is committed to supporting veterans and their successful reintegration into civilian life. This investment enables the initial development and deployment of a scalable, technology-driven solution, with additional phases planned to expand reach and impact as further funding is secured.

Through this initiative, Skills for Chicago will leverage Career Highways to:

- Translate military occupations (MOS/AFSC) into a structured skills framework, capturing both technical and leadership capabilities
- Map veterans to in-demand civilian careers aligned to their skills, interests, and market demand
- Identify skill gaps and deliver targeted upskilling pathways

- Provide job readiness tools, including AI-powered resumes, career path visualization, and interview preparation
- Connect veterans directly to employers seeking skilled, job-ready talent

Skills for Chicago has already demonstrated measurable success using Career Highways to improve hiring outcomes by aligning skills to roles and increasing job fit for both candidates and employers. This initiative extends that model to veterans, where the need for accurate skill translation and career alignment is especially acute.

“Veterans bring exceptional leadership, discipline, and technical expertise, but too often those strengths are not clearly understood in the civilian workforce,” said Bridget Altenburg, CEO of Skills for Chicago and a U.S. military veteran. “This initiative allows us to begin building a solution that translates that experience into clear career pathways and real employment outcomes, with the goal of scaling to reach far more veterans over time.”

By integrating this military-focused capability into its model, Skills for Chicago will expand its services to better support veterans while providing employers with a more reliable way to identify and hire veteran talent.

Career Highways will support the effort by mapping military roles into a structured skills framework, helping veterans better understand how their military experience connects to civilian roles, career pathways, skill gaps, and targeted upskilling opportunities.

“As a veteran, I’ve experienced how difficult it can be to translate military experience into civilian careers,” said Joe Shepherd, Chief Product Officer at Career Highways and a U.S. military veteran. “This first phase establishes the foundation for a scalable system that connects military skills to the workforce—unlocking better outcomes for veterans and stronger talent pipelines for employers.”

The need for more effective veteran workforce solutions remains significant, and this initiative represents an important step toward addressing that gap through structured, skills-based career pathways.

About Skills for Chicago

Skills for Chicago is a nonprofit workforce development organization that connects unemployed and underemployed job seekers with leading employers across the Chicago region using a skills-based hiring approach.

About the Richard L Duchossois Foundation

The Richard L Duchossois Foundation invests in strategic initiatives that support veterans, workforce development, and community impact, with a focus on creating long-term opportunity and economic mobility.

About the Career Highways

Career Highways is a workforce strategy and technology company that helps large, complex organizations design and activate transparent, skills-based career pathways at enterprise scale. The company provides services and tools—including Skills Intelligence—that digitize job architecture, map skills to roles, and translate workforce data into clear pathways for mobility, upskilling, and planning. By combining AI-enabled insight with human expertise, Career Highways supports informed decision-making around talent development, internal movement, and the evolving impact of technology on work. Built for organizations navigating workforce transformation, Career Highways brings rigor, clarity, and structure to career development in the modern enterprise.

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