Illinois EE Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG)
Equity Subcommittee Meeting

Wednesday, October 28, 2026
9:30 am – 12:00 pm
Teleconference

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Meeting Materials

- October 28 SAG Equity Subcommittee Agenda
- Facilitator Introduction to October 28 SAG Equity Subcommittee Meeting
- Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas Presentation: Market Development Initiative Update
- Ameren Illinois Presentation: Market Development Initiative Update
- ComEd Presentation: Market Development Initiative Update

Attendees

Name	Company or Organization
Celia Johnson	Facilitator (Celia Johnson Consulting)
Zoe Knaus	SAG Facilitation Support (Inova Energy Group)
Abigail Miner	Office of the Illinois Attorney General
Alex Deeb	Ameren Illinois
April Parker	Faith in Place
Billy Davis	Bronzeville Community Development Partnership
Brad Fortson	ICF
Briana Moore	Will County Land Use Department (IQ North Leadership Team)
Bryan Haney	ERTHE Energy Solutions
Carrie Malfeo	Village of Park Forest
Cassidy Kraimer	Community Investment Corp.
Cheryl Watson	Equitable Resilience and Sustainability
Chris Vaughn	Nicor Gas
Courtney Golino	Guidehouse
Dalitso Sulamoyo	Champaign County Regional Planning Commission
Danish Murtaza	Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas
David Kilgore	Ameren Illinois
Derrius Quarles	EcoHealth Strategies

Name	Company or Organization
Dr. Crystal Davis	Walker-Miller Energy Services
Edith Makra	Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
Elder Calderon	ComEd
Elena Savona	ES Consulting (IQ North Facilitation Team)
Elizabeth Horne	ICC Staff
Frank Pettis	Illinois Clinicians for Climate Action (IQ North Facilitation Team)
Irena Acic	E Source
Jamie Capece	Elevate
Jamie Ricks	ComEd
Jane Anderson	Inova Energy Group
Jeff Carroll	DNV
Jon Koliner	Town Good
Jonathan Skarzynski	Nicor Gas
Josalin Wills	Ameren Illinois
Karen Lusson	National Consumer Law Center
Kate Battle	Walker-Miller Energy Services
Katrina Steele	No Organization Identified
Keely Hughes	The JPI Group
Keyla Ward	Ameren Illinois
Kim Swan	ComEd
Kristie Conklin	ComEd
Laticia Holbert	ComEd
Layalee Beirat	Chicago Muslims Green Team
Lee Ringo	Energy Infrastructure Partners
Lisa Miranda	Rebuilding Together
Marsha Belcher	Community Action Partnership of Lake County
Neil Curtis	Guidehouse
Odette Hyatt-Watson	East Central IL Community Action Agency
Omayra Garcia	Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas
Randy Opdyke	Nicor Gas
Sam Stahl	Ameren Illinois
Sara Murillo	Future Energy Enterprises (IQ South Facilitation Team)
Sarra Hinshaw	Kane County
Selena Worster Walde	ERTHE Energy Solutions
Ted Weaver	Dunsky Energy + Climate Advisors, representing Nicor Gas
Theodora Okiro Quarles	EcoHealth Strategies
Tina Grebner	Ameren Illinois
Tori Woolbright	Metropolitan Mayors Caucus
Valencia Roner	The Will Group

Meeting Notes
See red text for follow-up items.

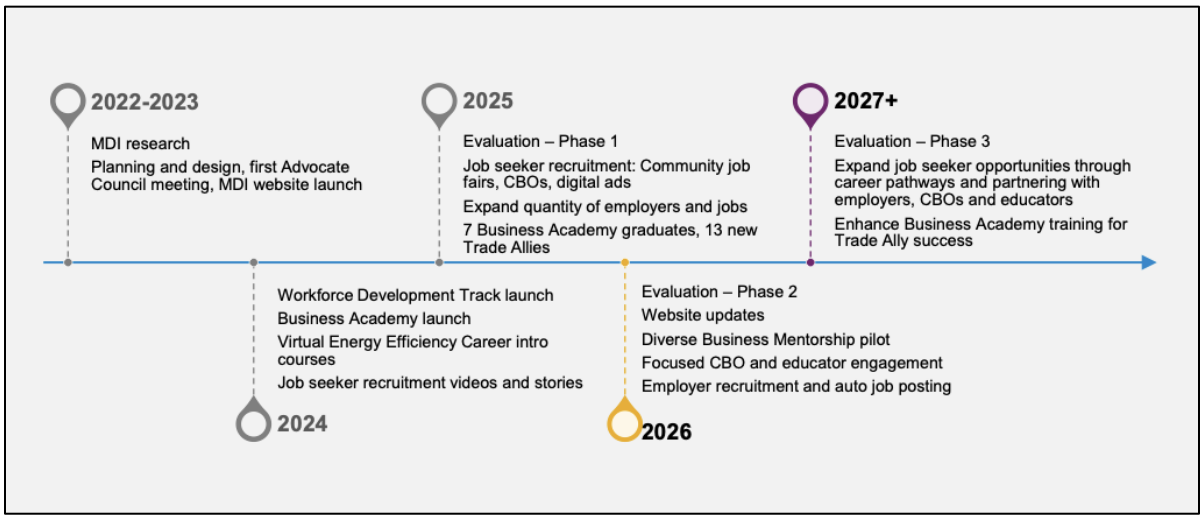
Introduction to October 28 Meeting
Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator

Agenda for October 28th meeting:
1. Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas Market Development Initiative (MDI) Report Out
2. Ameren Illinois MDI Report-out
3. ComEd MDI Report-out

Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas Market Development Initiative (MDI) Report-Out
Omy Garcia, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas; Bryan Haney, ERTHE Energy Solutions

Initiative Objectives
- Improve the transparency of the Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas energy efficiency portfolio opportunities.
- Strengthen the partnership and support for local, small, and diverse business enterprises.
- Prepare local candidates for jobs with contractors and trade allies who install energy efficiency measures at homes and businesses in Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas territory.

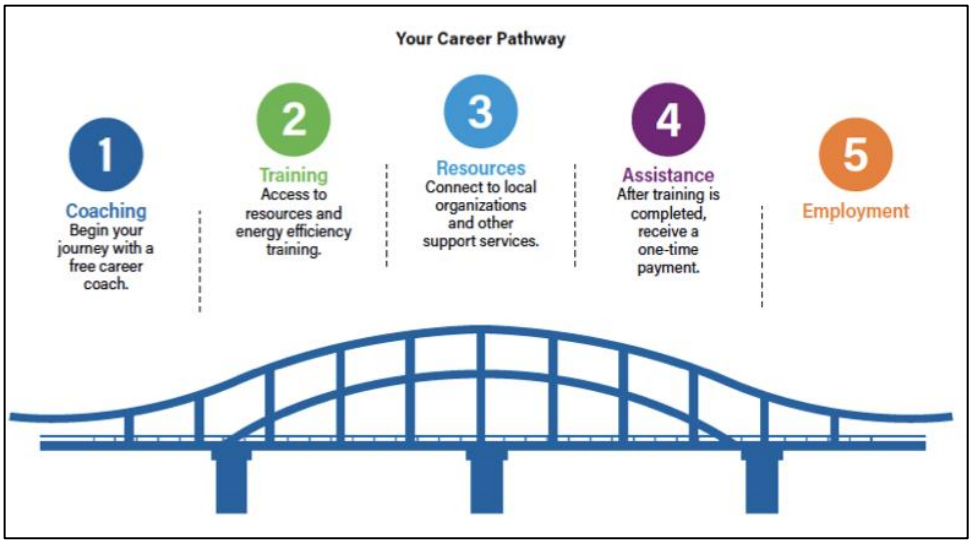
Initiative Progress



Background
- In 2024, we focused on launching Workforce Development activities and the Diverse Business Academy. The goals of these two tracks have been to create a more diverse and thriving energy efficiency workforce.

2026 Updates
- Fuel Your Future
  - Diverse Business Academy
  - Workforce Development
- Fuel Your Future Website

- English and Spanish language pages, videos, and training
- Connect with a coach: Candidates sign up and get connected to a career coach
- Career stories: Hear directly from professionals in the industry about their career journeys and experience in energy efficiency
- Employer resources: Register and post jobs for workforce candidates
- 2026 updates: Refined messaging by audience, updated branding, and added success stories
- Community Partners Toolkit
  - Free print materials ordering
  - Digital files download (PDF and social media templates)



- Job Seeker: Fuel Your Future
  - A priority for the Workforce Development Track is to recruit and prepare job seekers for a career with energy efficiency providers.

- Energy Efficiency Career Intro Course
  - Three mandatory energy efficiency career intro courses:
    - Your Future in Energy Efficiency
    - Growing Your Skills
    - Practicing Your Skills
  - Four optional trainings for additional learning
- 2026 Workforce Priorities
  - CBO outreach and engagement
    - Targeted CBOs with skills-training programs matched to clean energy job families
    - Updated screening processes to better match candidates to clean energy jobs
    - Simplified candidate referral process for registered and non-registered CBOs
    - Add Virtual Energy Efficiency Career intro course to partner CBO curriculums
  - Employer engagement
    - Outreach Specialist retained to facilitate employer education, hiring, and candidate matching

        - Trade Ally auto opt-in for job posting and candidate matching service
        - Work-based training pilot with College of Lake County
- Spotlight: MDI Career Events

Name	Date
MES Conference – Workforce Scholarships (2)	1/28 – 1/29
Chicago Urban League Employment Pathways Expo	2/25
Careers in Film and Sustainability	2/26
CPS Dunbar HS – Careers in the Park	5/14
College of Lake County (CEJA Hub) Workforce Forward Job Fair	8/28

- 2026 Business Academy Priorities
    - Expanded partner engagement
        - Member education
        - Diverse business recruitment and referral
    - Free BPI training for graduates
        - Building Science Principles
        - Building Analyst – Technician
    - Business mentorship pilot
        - Energy efficiency program training
        - Peer Trade Ally introductions
        - Website review
    - Alumni support
        - Monthly updates – IL contracting opportunities
        - In-person graduate networking
- Spotlight: Diverse Business Graduations

Name	Date
MLP Electric New City Development Gardner & Gardner Consulting	6/18/26
DPY Management New Age Technology Construction Phalyn Enterprise	10/29/26

- Spotlight: Q3 Business Academy Get Together
    - Networking breakfast
    - Informational presentations:
        - National Association of Minority Contractors (NAMC)
        - Energy efficiency implementation contractor (Franklin Energy)
        - Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (IHCC)
        - Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA)
    - Next steps / referrals

        - BPI training
        - Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas supplier registration
        - Additional business training

Looking Forward

- Emerging Opportunities
    - Workforce
        - Employer engagement
            - Job posting availability and timing
            - Education and awareness
            - Skill and qualification mismatch
            - Hiring hesitancy
        - General candidate awareness and interest in energy efficiency jobs
        - Technical skills training
    - Diverse Business Academy
        - Academy graduate business development in energy efficiency
            - Increase contracting opportunity
            - Energy efficiency measure installation training
            - Hiring support
        - Facilitate peer-to-peer networking and support
- Preparing for 2027

Focus	Impact
Improve training diversity	Expand funded options available to businesses and workforce candidates to pursue specific training or certifications.
2026 evaluation	Assess existing tactics and strategies to continue and future program priorities to pursue in current workforce landscape.
Business Academy graduate support	Provide support and training to graduates to increase participation in energy efficiency programs. Continue recruitment for additional business participation.
Enhanced employer support	Boost trade ally and employer hiring benefits and candidate hiring from CBO and CEJA hub training programs. Expand auto opt-in approach to more businesses and increase available job postings.

Karen Lusson (via chat): Can you talk about your work with the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP) and Illinois community action agencies (CAAs) (E.g. CEDA) to train and place job candidates? IHWAP and CAAs in certain locations need additional staff.

- *Bryan Haney: In relation to IHWAP, we have worked to identify and refer Diverse Business Academy graduates for installation and weatherization work. We have ongoing conversations about appropriate timing for referrals. Adding BPI certification support was based on IHWAP program feedback.*

Karen Lusson (via chat): How many people typically receive BPI training annually?

- *Bryan Haney: In 2026, we had 15 available training slots.10 for Building Science Principles and 5 for Building Analyst Technicians. We've had 8 Building Science certifications completed, and one Building Analyst Technician is in progress.*

Elena Savona (via chat): Do you have feedback from employers on hiring hesitancy?

- *Bryan Haney: Most of our feedback is derived from employer outreach specialists. They've reported that hesitancy revolves around making sure employers have the*

pipeline of business to support a new hire, and that the risks surrounding a new hire are supported. On-the-job training and support funding is desired.

Layalee Beirat (via chat): What makes a good candidate?

- *Bryan Haney: Most employers are looking for reliable and engaged entry-level candidates who have a means of transportation. A lot of employers require a driver's license and a car. Some HVAC employers require specific skills, but most are looking for interest in the job.*

Elena Savona (via chat): How can interested community members get involved?

- *Bryan Haney: They should start with our website. After they register for the program, our career coach will screen them and recommend next steps.*

Karen Lusson (via chat): Does the MDI program demand increase potential for a larger budget? Does training demand exceed available space?

- *Bryan Haney: Yes, there is always opportunity to do more. The program was designed to build off of what already exists and leverage what other programs can provide. There is an opportunity to support energy efficiency upskilling in 2027.*

Karen Lusson (via chat): Do you provide wrap-around funding (i.e. grants to support applicants' day-to-day needs)?

- *Bryan Haney: The program does not specifically provide wraparound funding, but if candidates express the need for funding, we work with our CBOs to provide this support. Any candidate that completes the three-part introduction course gets a cash payment to assist them with expenses associated with a new job.*
- *Karen Lusson (via chat): Please consider allotting funding for wrap-around services.*

Karen Lusson (via chat): The Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas homepage does not highlight the MDI program or Workforce Hub program. Consider adding promotion to the homepage.

- *Omy Garcia (via chat): That is currently in the works with our Web Development & Communications team.*

Ameren Illinois Market Development Initiative (MDI) Report-Out

Keyla Ward, Ameren Illinois

MDI Expands Participation in Illinois Energy Efficiency (EE)

- Reduce barriers
- Build trusted partnerships
- Invest locally
- Turn needs into action
- Expand opportunity
- MDI expands who participates, who delivers the work, and which communities benefit.

MDI Advances EE Business Objectives Through Inclusive Market Development

- Creating value for customers, suppliers, communities, and the Illinois clean energy economy.
    - Impact Across the 3 Focus Areas – PY 2026
        - Customer Reach
            - 100,000+ customers engaged through outreach, education, and community engagement

        - 300+ program referrals
        - 100+ completed projects
        - Partnering with 27 Community Based Organizations (CBOs) in 2026
        - Trusted community connections
    - Workforce Development
        - 70+ students awarded scholarships to prepare for energy-related careers at local colleges
        - 18 internships funded
        - 25+ job seekers trained or certified
        - 12 participants in Program Ally Incubator and Accelerator
        - Job readiness and career placement
    - Inclusive Vendor Opportunities
        - 1,400,000kWh+ Net Energy Savings achieved through Program Ally Incubator graduates
        - Businesses receive:
            - Technical assistance
            - Certification support
            - Mentorship and business development
            - Job readiness and career placement
        - Business readiness and growth

Customer Reach

- Why CBO Partnerships?
    - Access: Bring program information and pathways closer to customers through organizations rooted in the community.
    - Trust: Use established local relationships to support education, outreach, and customer connections.
    - Impact: Advance energy savings, community engagement and economic growth through sustained partnership.

2026 CBO Partnership

- CBO Quarterly Meetings: We come together with our partners to learn, network, and celebrate the work we do for the community.

2026 CBO Engagement Examples

- Bring the community together to share resources around energy savings, clean energy, and supportive programs that improve quality of life
    - CBO Partner Event: Collaboration with Shawnee Development during June to host a clean energy community event in Anna.
    - Spark 618 Birthday Resource Fair: Collaboration with 3 community organizations to plan a resource fair during July in Carbondale.

Workforce Development

- Expanding the Workforce Pipeline
    - Expanding Access
        - 2-year colleges
        - 4-year colleges & universities
        - Technical & trade schools and training programs
        - High school technical & trade training programs

    - Strengthening career readiness
        - Resume development
        - Interview preparation
        - Professional presentation
        - Mock interviews
    - Connecting the ecosystem by aligning…
        - Employers
        - Schools/Training Programs
        - CEJA Hubs
        - Workforce Hubs
        - Workforce organizations
        - Community partners
    - 2026 Internship program wrapped up on August 5 in Taylorville. Twelve interns were offered jobs after the summer cohort.

Ameren and Nicor 2026 Partnership

- One Pipeline, Shared Opportunity
    - A joint initiative introducing underserved residents to entry-level clean energy careers.
        - Partnered with Nicor Gas to co-host training in energy efficiency, weatherization, and electrification
        - Combined classroom learning with hands-on experience and employer connections
        - Reached participants across both Ameren and Nicor territories through community partnerships
        - Provided wraparound services like transportation and job-readiness coaching
        - Trained and certified 11 participants
        - 7 industry certifications

Inclusive Vendor Opportunities

- The Program Ally Incubator and Accelerator builds readiness, capacity, and delivery. The goal is not only to open the door. It is to help businesses build the capacity to walk through it and succeed.
    - Identify emerging and existing businesses with growth potential
    - Prepare mentorship, technical assistance, certification, and business support
    - Connect relationships with the program and business-support network
    - Deliver projects, energy savings, and stronger market capacity
    - Impact on Ameren EE Programs
        - 2023 cohort: 73 -> 387 projects post-graduation
        - 2024 cohort: 27 -> 197 projects post-graduation
        - Graduates deliver 5-7x more EE projects after the Incubator
        - 21 graduates completed the Incubator (2023-2024)
    - Impact on Contractor Business
        - 100% attracted new customers
        - 4 of 5 surveyed reported revenue increases (2 over 50%)
        - Some hiring growth despite labor constraints
        - Gained business systems, marketing skills, and EE certifications
        - Greater confidence navigating Ameren programs
- Contractor Concierge and Market Access Hub
    - Interest & Intake

        - Assess contractor interest for participation and walk through the intake process to enroll for participation.
    - Readiness Assessment
        - Assess contractor's level of readiness for clean energy project completion and program participation.
    - Individualized Support
        - Provide individualized plans for resource connection and support.
    - Partner & Resource Connection
        - Facilitate connections to trusted resource partners for capital, clean energy programs, business development, technical assistance, and more.
    - Follow Up & Success Outcomes
        - Ensure overall success through continued coordinated service model execution, progress tracking and impact measurement.
- Grant Writing
    - What it Enables
        - Expands EE workforce beyond utility funding
        - Builds CBO capacity
        - Extends Ameren EE reach into priority communities
    - 2023-2025 Results
        - 14 grant applications submitted
        - 5 awards secured
        - $9.7M awarded
    - Aligned Funding Areas
        - Workforce development
        - Contractor growth
        - Underserved community services

What Integrated Success Looks Like

- Workforce Development
    - Talent Pipeline
    - Scholarships
    - Internships
- Procurement Advancement and Transformation (PATH)
    - Program Ally Incubator
    - Vendor Procurement
- CBO Management
    - Grant Writing Support
    - EE Program Referrals

Karen Lusson (via chat): The Ameren homepage does not promote the MDI program or Workforce Hubs. Consider adding promotion to the homepage.

- *Keyla Ward: Our MDI program is linked under the Ameren Savings page.*
- *Sam Stahl (via chat): https://amerenillinoissavings.com/*

Layalee Beirat (via chat): Are the grant workshops limited to certain locations?

- *Keyla Ward: No, we aim to move it around in our territory and be intentional about increasing reach.*

Karen Lusson (via chat): Do you offer wrap-around service funding in the MDI budget?

- *Keyla Ward: Yes, we have funds allocated to wrap-around services under our Workforce Development pillar.*

ComEd Market Development Initiative (MDI) Report-Out

Jamie Ricks, Kristie Conklin and Laticia Holbert, ComEd

Agenda

- Program Design and Overview
    - Training and Development
    - Energy Efficiency Service Providers
    - Vendor Resources
    - Community Collaboration

ComEd Energy Efficiency Market Development Initiative

- Reducing barriers and expanding the pipeline for small and local EE contractors, service providers, and workers | Building a stronger small and local energy efficiency supplier network
- Program Purpose
    - Equips local entrepreneurs, businesses, and individuals with the skills and certifications to participate in the clean energy ecosystem
- EE MDI Objectives
    - Expand contracting opportunities for contractors and CBOs — and build their capabilities to deliver services for the EE Portfolio
    - Grow the participation of small and local suppliers across ComEd's EE supplier network
    - Develop a certified energy efficiency talent pipeline to meet industry workforce needs
- Four Areas of Focus
    - Training and Development
        - Trains and develops new and experienced energy efficiency professionals
    - Energy Efficiency Service Providers
        - Builds a pipeline of small and local suppliers from which to procure EE products and services
    - Resources for Service Providers
        - Grows the pool of small and local EE service providers and deepens engagement with those already involved
    - Community Collaboration
        - Partners with CBOs, faith-based organizations, and non-profits to support program delivery and drive participation

Video Message

- ComEd's video message is available here: https://vimeo.com/1197825635/0f68c61839?fl=pl&fe=ti

Training and Development

- Newcomer Cohorts
    - Cohort Outcomes
        - 2 Cohorts

        - 26 Participants Enrolled
        - 24 Cohort Graduates
        - 20 Building Analyst Technician (BAT) Certifications Earned
        - 20 Building Science Principles (BSP) Certifications Earned
    - On-the-Job Training (OJT)
        - 20 Graduates Participating in OJT
        - 11 Graduates Hired Full-Time in EE or pursuing additional education (Cohorts 1 & 2)
        - 83% Graduates Received Hands-On Experience
        - 55% Graduates Employed Full-time in EE or pursuing education and training within 30 Days (Cohorts 1 & 2)
- Skilled Cohort
    - Cohort Outcomes
        - 1 Cohort
        - 11 Participants Enrolled
        - 11 Cohort Graduates
        - 9 Building Analyst Technician Certifications Earned
        - 7 Building Analyst Professional Certifications Earned
    - Continued Participation in MDI
        - 3 Graduates
        - Completed the EESP Incubator
        - Entered the DVR Database
        - Applied to the EESP Network
- Continued Upskilling Opportunities
    - Building Performance Analyst (BA-P) Upskilled Course
        - 1 week intensive offering the Building Analyst Professional (BA-P) certification
        - Focused on upskilling those already working in EE
        - Certification needed to enter the EESP Network
- Training and Development Spotlight
    - In September 2026, Yandel Garcia, a graduate of the Elgin Newcomer Cohort (Cohort 2), was the first MDI alum to be hired for a full-time position with UES. Yandel Garcia completed the full eight-week cohort and earned BPI credentials, OSHA 10 and CPR/First Aid training before transitioning into employment with UES.

Energy Efficiency Service Providers

- EESP Incubator – Business Development
    - Program Overview
        - 17 Businesses Enrolled
            - 8 Electrical
            - 6 HVAC
            - 2 Refrigeration
            - 1 Other
        - 17 Businesses Completed
        - 33 Wrap-Around Services Provided
            - 11 Marketing
            - 10 Tax Prep
            - 12 Certifications

    - Participants may access multiple wraparound services based on the recommendations identified through the review of their Business Growth Plan
- EESP Incubator Participant Spotlight

Vendor Resources
- Wrap Around Services – Utilizing Local Businesses
    - 250+ Businesses in the Database
    - Chicago Business Opportunity Forum
        - This event connected business owners, procurement professionals, utilities, and SMBs to explore wealth creation, business valuation, and succession planning. Through networking and outreach, 75+ individuals and businesses engaged with our team and connected with local suppliers and buyers.
    - $457,555 Total IL Small and Local Spend

Karen Lusson (via chat): Can you discuss how you work with CEDA and other CAAs to align with weatherization employment needs?
- *Jaime Ricks: Our network of contractors is integrated into the CEDA network. If they have a demand for weatherization contractors, we can provide that information.*

Community Collaboration
- Community Partnerships – Engagement
    - 13 Formal Community Partnerships
    - Allies for Community Business (A4CB)
        - A4CB provided financial-assistance workshops for the EESP incubator cohort and helped one participating business secure equipment financing to expand its project capacity. This partnership demonstrates how coordinated community support can directly strengthen small business growth and readiness.
    - 30 Events Attended, Facilitated or Hosted
    - Q1: 9 Active CBOs
    - Q2: 12 Active CBOs
    - Q3: 13 Active CBOs
- Outreach and Engagement
    - Launched the MDI Newsletter
        - Quarterly distribution to over 1600 individuals
        - Visit ComEd.com/MDI to sign up

Karen Lusson (via chat): This program needs to be promoted on the ComEd homepage. Utilities should also promote low-income discount rates on their homepages, as these programs significantly improve affordability.

Closing and Next Steps
Celia Johnson, SAG Facilitator

Next Steps
- Please reach out with any suggested topics for the SAG Equity Subcommittee in 2027 – quarterly meetings are anticipated.
- Draft SAG Plan for 2027 will be presented to the SAG Steering Committee on December 15, and to the Large Group SAG on January 6, with an opportunity for feedback.