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Federal grant affords CDL training for veterans in Springfield

Tom Ackerman
 Springfield State Journal-Register
 USA TODAY NETWORK

SPRINGFIELD – Nearly 20 veterans who want to become a truck driver will benefit from a federal grant at Lincoln Land Community College.

A total of \$76,500 was secured through the U.S. Department of Transportation, which means 17 people will be able to earn their commercial drivers license at no cost. The program otherwise can cost \$4,500.

Money is designated for qualifying veterans or their spouse or children.

The college has received this grant four times now.

Congresswoman Nikki Budzinski, D-Springfield announced the funds alongside the president of LLCC, Charlotte Warren, at the college.

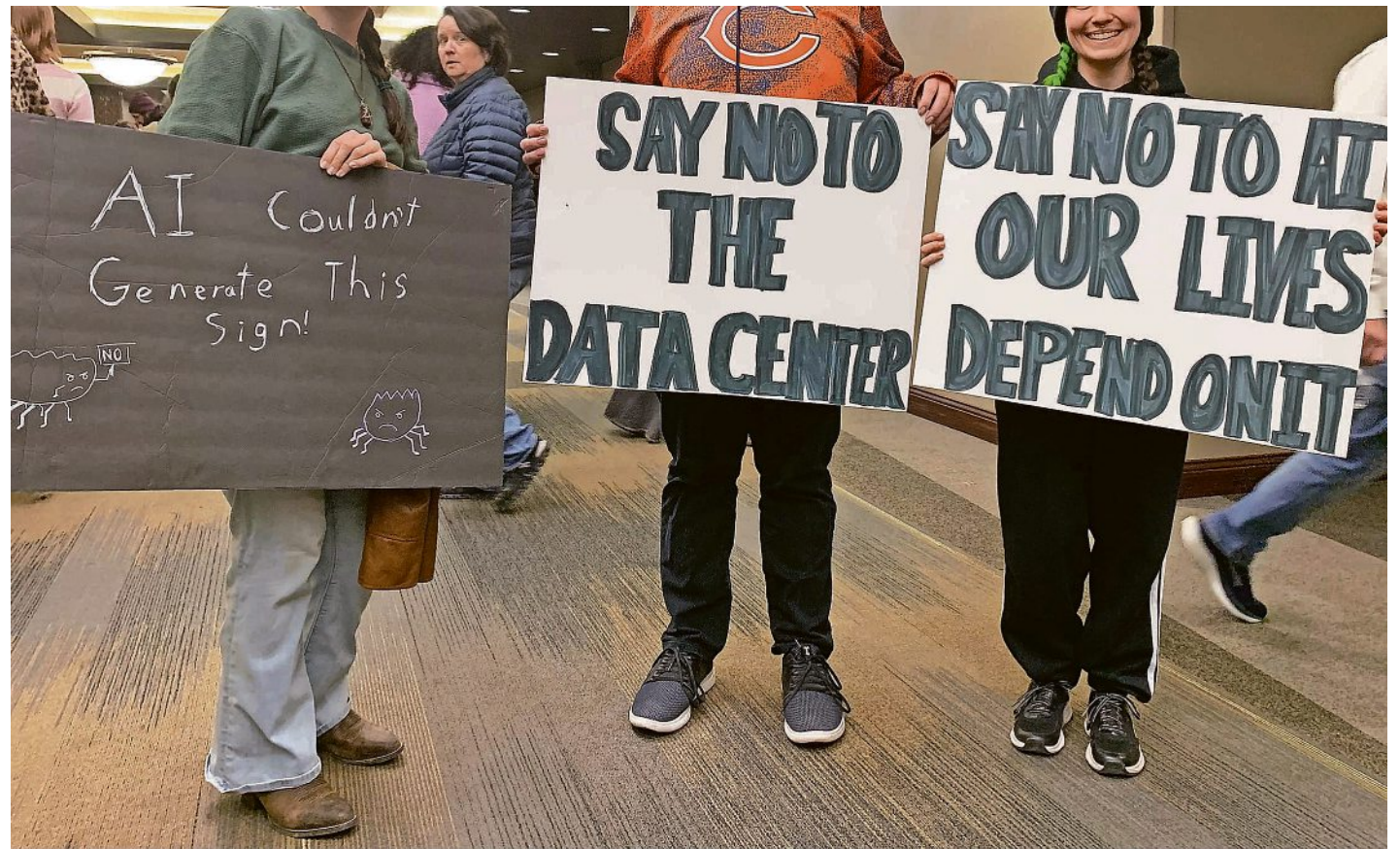
Speakers cited a shortage of truck drivers industry-wide, although the program at the college has grown since its inception, partly thanks to multiple financial-assistance programs, the director of truck driving at the college said.

Curt Robinson, who is director of truck driver training at LLCC, said he

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U.S. Rep. Nikki Budzinski, D-Springfield, speaks during a press conference at Lincoln Land Community College April 6, announcing a \$76,500 U.S. Department of Transportation grant.
 THOMAS J. TURNEY/STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER



Signs made by protesters against CyrusOne's proposed data center on March 23. CLAIRE GRANT/THE STATE JOURNAL-REGISTER

The latest on a proposed data center in Logan County

Claire Grant
 Springfield State Journal-Register
 USA TODAY NETWORK

While the Sangamon County Board approved a zoning permit for a \$500 million data center, another one could be coming to central Illinois.

Here's what to know about the proposed data center in Logan County.

The Hut 8 data center

Hut 8 is a Miami-based energy infrastructure platform integrating power through digital infrastructure like data centers to support energy-intensive projects. The corporation operates 19 data center sites across the United States and Canada to support cryptocurrency mining, AI and cloud computing according to their website.

Where would the proposed data center be located?

The proposed data center would sit on 200 acres of land in Laenna Township and cost up to \$5 billion to build.

In August of 2025, Hut 8 announced four data center project plans, totaling 1.5 gigawatts. According to the Department of Energy, one gigawatt can power approximately 876,000 households for a year. An Illinois data center called "Project 4" was also proposed at 50 MW in Kane, Illinois.

How many jobs would the proposed data center create?

The data center would create 1,500 temporary construction jobs. If approved and once completed, the data center would have a community presence of at least 15 years according to the company webpage for the site, generate up to \$65 million a year in annual property tax revenue, and create 200 permanent jobs, with some being remote.

What about property taxes?

If estimates are true, Hut 8's data center would generate more than 10

times the property taxes of CyrusOne's proposed \$6 million annually, for centers nearing the same size.

One of many proposals

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Spring Brinkerhoff Market, zoo reopening among things to do

Claire Grant
 Springfield State Journal-Register
 USA TODAY NETWORK

SPRINGFIELD – Spring is in full swing across the capital city, and there are plenty of things to do whether you're looking for comfort or want to try something new.

Consider shopping at one of Springfield's fanciest markets or check out the zoo.

Don't know where to start? Check out these five things to do around town this

weekend.

Zoo opening weekend

What: Get ready for a wild adventure at the Henson Robinson Zoo. The zoo's reopening date is this weekend, after a long winter keeping the animals inside.

When: 10 a.m. Saturday to 5 p.m.
Where: 1100 E Lake Shore Drive, Springfield

More: The cost for adults is \$7.50 per ticket, with seniors and kids age three to 12 discounted to \$5.50.

Spring Brinkerhoff Market

What: The spring market at The Brinkerhoff Mansion returns this weekend. This beloved annual market is suited for all ages and features live music, delicious treats, local shopping from vendors in central Illinois and a fun relaxed atmosphere inside the beautiful Brinkerhoff. Keep an eye out for Pasta Al Dente by Keila, a local Italian food vendor who recently opened up shop on the north side.

When: 9 a.m. Saturday

Where: 1500 N. Fifth St., Springfield
More: For more information, look to thebrinkerhoffmansion.com.

Meet up at the Main Gate

What: Head on down to the Main Gate Bar and Grill this weekend for a show highlighting Black artists, all on the north side. Join host Kennon Penn in a local artist hip-hop show for all ages. With free entry so no worry about cover.

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