

APRIL
28



WORKERS'

Memorial Day



WMD Video

On a solemn and meaningful morning, community leaders, safety professionals, educators, and workers gathered to observe Worker Memorial Day 2026—a day dedicated to remembering those who lost their lives on the job and recommitting ourselves to the ongoing pursuit of safer workplaces.

The ceremony opened with a powerful visual: empty seats placed at the front of the room, each representing a worker who did not return home this past year. This simple but profound symbol set the tone for the day—reminding all that behind every statistic is a person, a family, and a story.

This year's remembrance carried both grief and cautious hope. Attendees reflected on the lives lost while also recognizing a significant reduction in workplace fatalities—from 55 the previous year to 19 this year. While this progress is meaningful and reflects the dedication of many organizations and individuals, the message was clear: even one life lost is too many.

The event was made possible through the partnership of OSHA, Three Rivers Manufacturers' Association, and Joliet Junior College. The ceremony included an invocation, presentation of colors by the Joliet Police Department Honor Guard, and the National Anthem, creating a respectful and unified atmosphere of remembrance and resolve.

We were honored to hear remarks from community and government leaders, including Dr. Clyne Namuo, President of Joliet Junior College, Jessica Wimply, representing Senator Rachael Ventura, and Dagmara Avelar, who continues to be a strong advocate for worker rights and safety.

A federal perspective was shared by William J. Donovan, Regional Administrator for OSHA's Chicago Region, who emphasized the importance of proactive safety measures and ongoing vigilance in protecting workers.

A deeply moving portion of the ceremony included the reading of the names of those lost, accompanied by the tolling of a bell after each name. This tribute brought a moment of quiet reflection, allowing attendees to fully grasp the human impact of workplace tragedies.

As the event concluded, participants were reminded that Worker Memorial Day is not only about looking back—but about moving forward with purpose. The call to action was clear:

- Speak up when something isn't safe
- Invest in training and prevention
- Look out for one another
- Refuse to accept that injuries and fatalities are “just part of the job”

The day ended with a renewed sense of commitment—a shared belief that every worker deserves to return home safely, and that through continued vigilance, leadership, and collaboration, that goal is within reach.

Worker Memorial Day 2026 served not only as a tribute to those we have lost, but as a powerful reminder of why the work of safety must continue—every day, for every worker.

For more information, visit [TRMA's Website](#) or [OSHA's Worker Memorial Website](#).