News for the week of Jan. 18, 2016

HUNDREDS LINE UP TO GET A TASTE OF LOCOL, NEW FAST-FOOD ENTRANT IN WATTS, ASSISTED BY EWDD

Celebrity chef Roy Choi this week unveiled LocoL, his version of fast and healthy food served up with a big helping of enterprise. Hundreds of residents lined up outside the sleek new eatery at 1950 E. 103rd Street for its Jan. 18 grand opening, some waiting as long as two hours to sample Choi and partner Daniel Patterson’s take on hamburgers, chicken sandwiches and something called “foldies,” a tortilla filled with a choice of carnitas, BBQ turkey and more. Choi and Patterson say they are determined to bring healthier fast-food options to neighborhoods that have few of those options. In opening its first location in Watts, LocoL got an assist from EWDD, receiving $275,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) dollars to help purchase restaurant equipment. CDBG funding is targeted to businesses and developments that help revitalize underserved neighborhoods. Choi and his team have hired employees from nearby YouthSource and WorkSource centers, administered by EWDD, and estimate they will create at least 27 jobs. Attending the grand opening on MLK Day were Mayor Eric Garcetti, Choi and Patterson, and EWDD General Manager Jan Perry.

Youth Opportunity & Job Fair: More than 700 youth have signed up for the Feb. 11 Youth Opportunity Fair & Forum in the first week of enrollment. Mayor Eric Garcetti and job fair coordinators have set a goal of bringing 5,000 youth to the all-day event at which more than 30 major national companies will do on-the-spot interviews. Mayor Garcetti’s office also is arranging for 7 buses to transport youths to the event.

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Three Request for Proposals (RFPs) released by EWDD:

*The Westlake Theatre Mixed-Use Project* is seeking proposals for the restoration of the historic Westlake Theatre 1.2 acre mixed-use site. The project includes theatre restoration and reuse principally as a live performance venue which may also accommodate special events such as award ceremonies, film/television shoots, private parties and dinners.

*Reseda Development Sites RFP* is seeking proposals for development of two sites; a 9,000 square foot parcel currently occupied by the abandoned non-historic Reseda Theatre and an 11,000 square foot vacant lot.

*Industry Sector Expert Strategists RFP* is seeking proposals from industry sector experts to develop courses, training, and certification programs in rising high-tech and STEM-related industries which require workers to have specific skills and knowledge. This directed effort is being undertaken to assist workers to qualify for and obtain jobs in these growing industries.

Biz Report:

*Harbor BusinessSource Center* consultants helped their client Artemio Benitez, owner of ‘Portside Truck Sales’ get approved for a $150,000 small business loan through the Valley Economic Development Center.

At the *Hollywood BusinessSource Center*, Jose Roman was approved for a $40,000 SBA loan with EastWest Bank. Jose first met an MCS consultant while attending an access to capital event MCS had sponsored at the Mexican Consulate Office. Jose expressed interest in a $20,000 loan for working capital and new equipment. After reviewing Jose’s financials, MSC determined that he would qualify for a $40,000 SBA backed loan, $20,000 more than Jose was originally seeking.

Helen Youstas was referred to the *Mid City BusinessSource Center* since she needed a small amount of working capital to open her own school for at-risk young adults to learn practical job skills to gain employment. Because MCS is a Kiva Trustee, they were able to endorse Helen as a borrower and help her raise a crowd-funded $5,000 loan to be paid back at 0% interest. In January of 2016 Helen launched ‘Second Chance Adult Academy’ and now is enrolling students for classes. More info about the program can be found at [http://www.ysca.info/](http://www.ysca.info/)

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The South LA BusinessSource Center offered a variety of workshops including how to write a business plan, marketing, business strategy and execution and more. Together the workshops served 65 people.

The Central West BusinessSource Center offered a business startup workshop and basic credit workshop. Together 17 people were served.

**Workforce Metrics:**

JobsLA registrations: 720

WorkSourceCenter Enrollments: 2083

“*Updates*” is produced by Catherine Saillant in EWDD’s communications department. If you have questions, comments or wish to contribute to an upcoming “*Updates*,” please contact Saillant at 213-744-9048 or at Catherine.Saillant@lacity.org.