



News for the Week of Nov. 2, 2015

BANK CAREER TRAINING PROGRAM MARKS 1,000th GRADUATE AT EXPO CENTER

On Wednesday, the 1000th person to complete the successful BankWork\$ job-training program took part in a graduation ceremony at the Expo Center. The celebration included 14 students from the Boyle Heights Technology YouthSource Center. Lisa Meadows, who wrote the training curriculum, called it a “moment of pride.” “Pride, followed by several days of frenzy,” said Meadows, a BankWork\$ associate director. “We had 25 graduates and now they’re all coming in to do their background checks, interview



with banks and field job offers.” Since its 2006 launch, BankWork\$ has built a sterling track record. Over an eight-week course, instructors teach basic banking skills that prepare participants for a variety of positions, from an entry-level teller to sales. Students must be on time, not miss class and come dressed in business attire. It can be a tough haul—but those who make it to the finish line have an excellent chance of landing a job with one of BankWork\$ partners in the financial services industry. The program has an 85% placement

rate—and 80% of those are still employed after one year. And it’s not just young adults looking for a career, Meadows said. “You’ll have a 20-year-old who’s worked a year at McDonalds sitting next to someone with a bachelor’s degree who got laid off after six years in sales,” she said. The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation started the program in 2006 in Los Angeles. It currently operates in Los Angeles and Seattle and is expanding to other major U.S. cities. The next Los Angeles training sessions begin Dec. 2 at the Boyle Heights Tech Center and the Expo Center.

Contracting made clear: EWDD’s Economic Development Division held a half-day training session titled “Contracting Forms and City Documents for Economic Development Projects.” Economic development projects differ from standard “work-for-hire” contracts and the paperwork can be specialized and complicated. Consequently, Economic Development staff members prepare most documentation themselves when assisting businesses. The training, by EDD contracts expert Teresa Martin, covered two dozen city, state and federal laws that touch upon loan programs administered by EWDD. Seventeen EDD staff member attended.



Forming ties with Tierra del Sol: For 15 years, the Los Angeles Daily News has employed three clerical workers with developmental disabilities. Not only have they become like family, says Bill Van Laningham, the paper’s marketing director, they are among the hardest-working members of his staff.



“I’ve never seen any employee who wanted to be there as much as these three,” he said. Van Laningham’s comments came during a Nov. 3 round table sponsored by Tierra del Sol, a Sunland-based nonprofit that helps people with cognitive, physical, emotional or behavioral challenges achieve their full potential. In some cases, that means finding employment that matches their abilities, said Rebecca Lienhard, Tierra del Sol’s CEO. Staff from WorkSource centers in Hollywood and Pacoima were on hand to establish relationships and help integrate Tierra’s population into job-placement programs. Federal workforce funding sets a 10% hiring goal for special populations, including the developmentally disabled, noted EWDD AGM Robert Sainz, who attended the event along with EWDD GM Jan Perry. “Tierra is a natural fit for us,” he said.

Boyle Heights Tour/Talk: White House and U.S. Department of Labor officials joined youth at Boyle Heights Technology YouthSource Center for a tour and discussion Oct. 29. The youth and officials shared ideas about how L.A.’s workforce system, schools and public agencies can better integrate services for disconnected youth. Los Angeles received a \$700,000 Performance Partnership Pilot grant to map it all out.



“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.

