News for the Week of September 11, 2017

EWDD YOUTHSOURCE CENTERS
The City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department (EWDD) oversees 14 YouthSource Centers dedicated to providing educational and career readiness services for youth ages 16-24. On Thursday, September 14th, EWDD’s YouthSource Center partnering agencies are participating in the 9th Annual Student Recovery Day, an event held by the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to re-engage students who have dropped out or not returned to school. This week’s EWDD Weekly Report highlights success stories from the Para Los Niños (PLN), Brotherhood Crusade and Boyle Heights Youth Technology Center YouthSource Centers, representing how EWDD and all the YouthSource Centers provide support every day to disconnected youth, guiding them toward education and career pathways.

P3 AMBASSADOR FEATURED SPEAKER AT LAUSD BOARD MEETING

Para Los Niños graduate Destiny Nguyen (center) received a certificate of recognition from the LAUSD Board after sharing her story of how the PLN YouthSource Center helped her graduate from high school.

P3 Ambassador Destiny Nguyen delivered a presentation at the September 12, 2017 LAUSD Board Meeting to share how the Para Los Niños Youth Source Center contributed to her successfully graduating from high school and placed her on a path toward employment and college. “Not many people realize the struggles or obstacles we have to go through,” she
said in an interview a few days after her speech. “As a disconnected youth, I feel being able to share my story might open the doors for others.” Destiny entered foster care at age 16 and struggled with family issues and a period of homelessness. Last year, a friend referred her to PLN, whose staff helped motivate her to earn her high school diploma. Now 22, Destiny is a Youth Ambassador for the Los Angeles Performance Partnership Pilot (P3) program. In her role, Destiny is sharing her story of how the P3 integrated service model helps students by placing LAUSD pupil service counselors and social services at the City’s Youth Source Centers, creating a one stop shop for youth to find resources to finish high school and successfully transition to college or employment. “Never look down on youth who have a story, who have a tough life,” she said. “Don’t doubt them because you never know what they could become.”

SAVING LIVES, EXPANDING HORIZONS:
BOYLE HEIGHTS YOUTH TECHNOLOGY CENTER STUDENTS SHARE SUCCESS STORIES

Alex Saavedra, 21, had dropped out of high school and said he was on a “bad path” when he met Boyle Heights Youth Technology Center (BHYTC) staff who told him the YouthSource Center could help him get his GED, get an internship and get job ready. “I didn’t think of myself as much when I was younger. I accepted I wasn’t going to do much with my life,” Alex said. At BHYTC, “I realized I could stay as a college student.” Staff at BHYTC helped Alex stay motivated and the students he met became a second family. “They’re the whole reason I did everything,” Alex said. “This place was the guide I needed. I didn’t know where to start. I came here and they went above and beyond for me.” Alex started a medical coding program but switched tracks when he realized he was passionate about cars. Now he is enrolled at the automotive program at East LA College. BHYTC staff helped him navigate the complexities of financial aid and have helped him purchase tools needed for classes. “I don’t know if people understand how important Tech (BHYTC) is,” he said. “I could go as far as saying, its saving lives.”

When Hannaisa Dueñes learned her mother had uterine cancer, she said she “gave up” and dropped out of school to deal with family issues. Hannaisa, 20, credits BHYTC for helping her graduate from high school and continue her studies. “BHYTC has helped me on the path going to college,” she said. It’s “shown me there’s a lot of things in the world instead of being in one place.” BHYTC helped her get an internship working with kids. Hannaisa is currently studying childhood development at LATTC and ultimately hopes to become a special education teacher. Her mom’s health is also better, which helps motivate Hannaisa to graduate from college. “It’s a way to make my mom proud of me,” she said. “It’s a way to make a better future for myself too.”
Paulina Alvarez, 18, was attending high school in Hollywood when she started getting into fights. Her family moved to Boyle Heights and she enrolled at the Five Keys Charter School, the onsite high school at BHYTC. “There are so many more opportunities for me,” she said. “This school, I fell in love with it.” Now, Paulina has put her past behind her. The curriculum at Five Keys allows Paulina to explore her many interests, ranging from government, restorative justice to film and music. At Five Keys, Paulina is studying coding and graphic design. “I take every opportunity I can,” she said. “I make high expectations and make those expectations happen.”

GIVING SUPPORT, FINDING PURPOSE, REFINING SKILLS: BROTHERHOOD CRUSADE YOUTHSOURCE CENTER STUDENTS SHARE SUCCESS STORIES

Jerry McClellan, 22, had served in the U.S. Air Force and was pursuing his dream of working at a TV company when he “hit rock bottom” after not making good choices. He walked into the Brotherhood Crusade YouthSource Center, where staff supported his goals and steered him toward internships and mentoring opportunities. Now Jerry, an aspiring graphic and video game designer, has an internship at a company that produces online shows. “The Brotherhood Crusade gave me a chance to refine my professional skills and learn,” he said. Jerry said the YouthSource Center helped him build his self-esteem and helped him find the motivation to jump start his career. In addition to his internship, Jerry has a weekend job at the Santa Monica Pier and teaches an afterschool coding class for students at the Brotherhood Crusade. “I want to get to a point where I can be a blessing to the staff here like they’ve been to me,” he said.

Dierra Blackwell, 21, was hired several years ago to work at Brotherhood Crusade through HIRE LA’s Youth Program and she’s been there ever since. Now a student entering her second year at Tuskegee University in Alabama, Dierra said the YouthSource Center staff helped her boost her confidence. “They helped me to see who I was and conquer my struggles. I was a timid person,” she said. “They were that moral support.” Dierra suffered nerve damage to her right arm during birth and was teased about it while she was growing up, which contributed to her shyness. At the Brotherhood Crusade, YouthSource Center staff coached her in public speaking, a key skill that has helped her college career, she said. “I’ve got confidence to do interviews now,” she said. “They helped me perfect my responses and gave me more experience.”
Thonia Galvin, 18, is entering her second year at California State University, Northridge. College seemed to be a distant dream until a cousin referred her to the Brotherhood Crusade YouthSource Center. “I didn’t ever think I was going to make it to college. High school was hard enough,” she said. The Brotherhood Crusade staff guided her on a path toward higher education, along with moral support. “I gained a new family,” she said. “I got the support I never thought I would get.” Thonia hopes to be an example for her siblings and other family members and thanked the center for showing her that college was a possibility. “Just like they’ve helped me, I’m trying to help others and show there is hope out there,” she said.

HOLLYWOOD BSC HELPS DOWNTOWN PERFUME SHOP GAIN MORE SCENTS

In 1997, Supul Wickramarachchi’s father founded Luxury Perfume at 5th and Broadway and financed the business out of his own pocket, which limited its ability to grow. When Supul took over his family’s business he applied for small business loans from banks but kept getting denied, forcing him to take daily rate loans at high interest rates. Supul was referred to the Hollywood BusinessSource Center, where a consultant helped Supul refinance his high interest rate loans and find working capital to be used for inventory. The consultant also assisted Supul to obtain a Seller’s Permit. On July 29th, 2017, Luxury Perfume was approved for a $250,000 line of credit for inventory as well as a $225,000 refinance of his high interest debt at 4.5% interest rate. The extra cash flow from the refinance has paved the way to create four additional jobs.

LATTC CELEBRATES 25 RE-ENTRY CONSTRUCTION APPRENTICESHIP GRADUATES

On August 29, 2017, Los Angeles Trade Technical College (LATTC) held a graduation ceremony to celebrate approximately 25 re-entry students who finished training to become apprentices in the construction trades. The Vernon Central WorkSource Center, operated by EWDD partner Coalition for Responsible Community Development (CRCD), provided job-readiness workshops and supportive services in the form of boots, tools, and union initiation fees. Among the graduates was Gilbert, a math whiz who is...
entering International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 11. His uncle, actor Danny Trejo was in the audience. Mr. Trejo delivered an inspiring speech to the students about how special the day was for him because after visiting his nephew many times at a state prison, he was now getting to see him and other formerly incarcerated individuals graduate.

FROM POVERTY TO PROSPERITY:

VERNON CENTRAL WORKSOURCE CENTER HELPS PARTICIPANT RESOLVE DEBTS, ENTER NEW CAREER AS ELECTRICIAN

The Vernon Central WorkSource Center recently helped a man get off the streets, resolve his debts and provided financial support to help him achieve his dream of becoming a union electrician. Last year, Santiago Baizan was homeless, out of work and stressed about his credit when he began taking a Financial Empowerment Workshop at the Vernon Central WSC, run by EWDD partner the Coalition for Responsible Community Development (CRCD). A senior financial coach provided Santiago guidance toward resources that helped him address his credit issues, including assistance to delete medical items and tickets from his credit report. Once he fixed his credit issues, Santiago regained his focus and took further steps to turn his life around. He moved back in with his family and determined to make his parents proud, Santiago decided to complete his studies and found a training program to become an electrician. Once he finished his studies, a senior business development officer at Vernon Central WSC provided Santiago with support services to cover the cost of his union dues, tools and boots. Santiago, 31, is now living a dream of being a Union Electrical Worker with International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local Union 11. Last week he received his first paycheck which made him feel good about being able to contribute his family’s rent. He is now starting to save money for his own place and is working to increase his credit score to build his capacity to move forward.

BUSINESS METRICS:

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<th>LABSCs Reporting: North Valley, West Valley, South Valley, South LA, East LA, Mid City, Central West, Hollywood and Harbor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LABSCs Not Reporting: N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Startups Enrolled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pre-Startups Assisted</td>
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<td>Start-ups/Operating Businesses Enrolled</td>
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<tr>
<td>Start-ups/Operating Businesses Assisted</td>
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<tr>
<td>Workshops: Number of Clients Attended</td>
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Building local business. Strengthening our workforce.
WORKFORCE METRICS:
(Arrows indicate weekly trend)

JobsLA  (online and mobile)

- Page Views (Up 31.8%)
- New Visitors (Down 2.3%)
- New Sessions (Up 27.2%)
- Registrations (Down 22%)

WorkSource Centers

- Enrollments (Down 12%)

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