



**Economic & Workforce
Development Department (EWDD) Weekly Updates**
NEWS FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 6, 2021

Success Stories



EWDD Business Response Unit

LEGACY FAMILY BAKERY RECEIVES RECIPE TO STAY OPEN

Located in the historic Central Avenue corridor in South Los Angeles is the family-owned business 27th Street Bakery. Founded in 1956 by Jeanette Bolden-Pickens' grandparents, the third-generation bakery became a household name for their homemade-style sweet potato pies and has since grown into the largest manufacturer of sweet potato pies on the West Coast. Jeanette, an Olympic gold medalist in the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles, continues to run the family business. In 2019, the building that served as the bakery's longtime home was unexpectedly put up for sale, jeopardizing the future of the legacy bakery.

To save the bakery, Jeanette (above) reached out to the office of Councilmember Curren D. Price, Jr. for guidance on loan options to purchase the building or assistance locating a new venue. Council District 9 staff contacted [EWDD's Business Response Unit \(BRU\)](#) to coordinate assistance. The BRU specializes in helping entrepreneurs navigate the City's bureaucracy by connecting them with the appropriate departments in order to address their business needs. The BRU, in partnership with [EWDD's Loan Section](#) and the [South LA BusinessSource Center](#), presented Jeanette with her best options to continue operations. With their guidance, Jeanette chose a solution that allowed the bakery to continue creating jobs in the 9th district and remain at its longtime location. Today, the bakery remains open. Its sweet potato pies are also available for pick-up and can be ordered via several food delivery apps. The bakery also received a grant from the LA Regional COVID-19 Fund, which provided financial assistance to help local small businesses and non-profits weather the pandemic.

The 27th Street Bakery will also be expanding its reach of clientele within Los Angeles. The bakery was recently selected as a vendor for the [Super Bowl LVI Business Connect](#) program, which provides opportunities for LA businesses to compete for contracts related to Super Bowl LVI. Jeanette said she is appreciative of the opportunity. "The Business Connect program has really opened a lot of doors for us. Once I submitted my application, like all the other vendors, I was invited to do a pitch. I told the story of my grandparents and the love and everything we have in preserving the sweet potato pie." Jeanette adds, "I got an email from the president of the Staples Center where he said that it was so important for Los Angeles to embrace the small and large restaurants and vendors. It was important for me to know that the Staples Center can be a place for 27th Street Bakery."

The [27th Street Bakery](#) is located at 2700 S Central Avenue in LA City Council District 9.



FORMERLY HOMELESS, ENTREPRENEUR LAUNCHES OWN BUSINESS

The South Los Angeles BusinessSource Center (BSC) provided a number of business services to Donza (above), helping him launch his own sidewalk vendor business. Donza recently overcame eight years of homelessness and

earned a degree at Los Angeles City College. He said he was street smart, but he needed help becoming a street vendor.

In 2020, the South Los Angeles BSC team provided Donza guidance to obtain the required permits to sell merchandise on the sidewalks. He officially launched A-1 General Merchandise, his sidewalk vendor business in the middle of the pandemic. Due to COVID-19, sidewalk vendors were placed in a challenging position as they attempted to navigate new health and safety guidelines. With the assistance he received from the South LA BSC, Donza said he no longer felt hopeless. He attended several business workshops, created a business plan, and launched a website for his business. In addition, a business coach helped Donza successfully apply for grants and microloans to grow his business.

Today, Donza celebrates his transformation from homelessness to an entrepreneur who owns his own business and a member of the LA City College Class of 2021.

LINKS to COVID-19 RESOURCES

JOB RESOURCES

LA JOBS PORTAL: jobs.lajobsportal.org

VIRTUAL ORIENTATIONS: bit.ly/LAjoblosshelp

BUSINESS RESOURCES

LA REGIONAL COVID FUND: lacovidfund.org

SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM: ewddlacity.com/index.php/small-business-loans

LA CARES Corps: coronavirus.lacity.org/CARESCorps

BusinessSource Centers: bit.ly/LABusinessSource

WorkSource Centers: bit.ly/EWDDWorkSource

YouthSource Centers: bit.ly/EWDDYouthSource

EWDD Metrics

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

WORKSOURCE CENTER CONTACT PERFORMANCE (COVID-19) August 30, 2021 to September 3, 2021

Number of walk-ins	1,118
Number of walk-ins by appointment	654
Number of call/emails	2,134
Number of calls regarding Unemployment Insurance (UI)	579

YOUTH WORKFORCE DATA FY 20-21 (HIRE LA'S YOUTH) Week ending September 3, 2021

Number of applications	4,539
Number of youth in lottery pool	3,428
Number of youth enrolled	1,301
YouthSource Center (YSC) enrollments	634
YSC enrollment goal	2,100
Percent complete	30.19%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

LOS ANGELES BUSINESSSOURCE CENTERS (LABSCs) METRICS August 30, 2021 to September 3, 2021

LABSCs Reporting: North Valley, West Valley, South Valley, South LA, East LA, Mid City, Central West, Hollywood and Harbor

Microenterprise assisted	98
Microenterprise enrolled	8
Small businesses assisted	22
Small businesses enrolled	2
Number of BSC Clients who attended virtual workshops	26
Sidewalk vendors assisted	21
Sidewalk vendors enrolled	12



The Economic & Workforce Development Department is headquartered in the Garland Building located at 7th street and Garland Ave in downtown Los Angeles.

1200 West 7th Street
Los Angeles CA 90017

213-744-7300
711 for TRS (TTY)

If TTY/TTD is needed to contact us, please use 711 for Telecommunication Relay Services (TRS)

If you have any questions, comments, or wish to have a contribution considered for inclusion in an upcoming "Updates," please feel free to contact Jamie Francisco at (213) 744-9048 or Jamie.Francisco@lacity.org.