



# Inglewood TODAY

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## South Bay Residents Grateful for Jobs

Jobs are among the top things people give thanks for. Recently, more than 300 civic leaders, business operators and graduates of job and career training programs attended the 12th annual South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) Alumni & Awards Recognition Breakfast at the Ayres Hotel in Hawthorne.

The primary focus of the award ceremony was to honor those employers, organizations and individuals who made outstanding contributions within the workforce investment community by educating, training and employing hundreds of people during the past year. It was also an opportunity for job trainees to give thanks for how they have been helped through SBWIB programs.

The SBWIB is a nine-city workforce investment area which includes the cities of Inglewood, Gardena, Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach, Lawndale, El Segundo, Hawthorne and the newly added city of Carson.

The agency has helped more than 57,000 adults and youth. City of Inglewood employee Shiree Chambers



Some of the outstanding businesses and alumni of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board career training and development program during the past year pose with SBWIB President Wayne Spencer (third from left) following the annual awards breakfast, November 9th in Hawthorne.

is one of the many successful graduates of the career training program. Having gone through a rough period of unemployment and homelessness, Chambers joined the work training program in March. It proved to be the turning point she had hoped for. Assigned to the

City's Information Desk, she worked hard and was selected as a candidate for permanent employment.

Within three days of completing her assignment, Chambers was offered a position as an Office Specialist in the Public Works Department. She said without the

help of the Inglewood One Stop Career Center, she does not know where she would be today.

Others who have benefited from One Stop Career Center Programs include Walter Sotello, Thomas Smith and Rashawnda

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Smith.

Walter Sotello and his family emigrated from Peru to the United States this past August in search of the American Dream. He vigorously tried to find steady work, but was unsuccessful due to his limited English-speaking skills. After hearing about the Inglewood Business and Career Center, Sotello was referred to an employer, Advance Paper Box, where he was interviewed and later hired as a machine operator. He is now gainfully employed, has his own car and apartment in Lawndale, and is able to support his family both here and abroad.

Thomas Smith was laid-off from Boeing Satellite Systems in El Segundo after working 11 years as a software project manager at a salary of \$42 per hour plus benefits. After getting trained for a new career as a biomedical device engineer, Smith was dealt with another severe setback with the death of a family member. As he dealt with his loss and continued his job search, he learned that a security clearance was now required for many of the positions within his new career field. He persevered and eventually obtained employment at CDI Corporation earning \$20 more per hour than he made on his previous job.

Hawthorne resident Rashawnda Smith was raised in the foster care sys-

tem since she was 9 months old—constantly moving from place to place with her foster mother and sister. By age 16 she was a mom and a high school dropout. She found her biological mother at age 21 and moved in until problems between them forced her out and on the streets. She continued to work odd jobs supporting her son while going back to school.

Fate stepped in to bring her a new start via the Inglewood One Stop. Today, she works as an administrative assistant. She is thankful for the opportunity to be gainfully employed; thankful that she no longer has to struggle to support her son; and thankful that she no longer relies upon the support of public aid to live.

SBWIB Executive Director Jan Vogel presented the Esther Williams Award for Excellence to Hawthorne Mayor Larry Guidi for his efforts to increase training and vocational opportunities, and to support the agency's scholarship fund.

Wayne Spencer, Chairperson of the SBWIB Board of Directors, served as master of ceremonies. Among the honored employers were: AT&T Government Solutions, The Aerospace Corporation, World Literacy Crusade, R&R Donnelly, Costco Warehouse, Teledyne, Home Town Buffet, Don Harris Insurance Agency, Superior Super Warehouse, the Federal Aviation Administration, Bennecker Industries, Target, and Albertsons.

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