



For Immediate Release
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Press Release

South Bay Workforce Investment Board Hosts 11th Annual Alumni & Awards Breakfast

Overcoming Obstacles

The South Bay Workforce Investment Board hosted its 11th Annual Alumni & Awards Breakfast in recognition of outstanding job training program alumni, employers, and training providers. This year's theme was "***Overcoming Obstacles.***" Jan Vogel, Executive Director of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) offered opening remarks and welcome. Congresswoman Maxine Waters praised the work done by the SBWIB, its staff, and Executive Director Jan Vogel in improving the economic and employment vitality of the South Bay. Hawthorne Mayor, Larry Guidi, also welcomed everyone and congratulated the South Bay WIB on another successful year. Other dignitaries included Hawthorne Mayor Pro Tem, Pablo Catano, Inglewood Council member Ralph Franklin, Lawndale City Council member Robert Pullin-Miles, and West Basin Water District Directors Don Dear and Ed Little.

Keynote speaker, Francisco J. Uribe, Director of Government and External Affairs at Verizon, and Alumni award recipients Ryan McDonald and Mary Uchiyama movingly spoke of the obstacles they overcame to reach their current level of success. Master of Ceremony and SBWIB Chairman, Wayne Spencer, introduced the employers, organizations and individuals that made a difference through their contributions within the community, by educating, training, and employing thousands of people during the year.

The SBWIB 'Esther Williams' Award of Excellence was given to Andrew J. Natker Senior Vice-President of Development of the Haagen Company. Andrew Natker and the Haagen company in partnership with the SBWIB have been instrumental in hiring local residents for the Inglewood shopping center The Village at Century. As Mr. Natker noted, "Many of the national chain stores wanted to do their own recruitment, but when they saw the phenomenal success and cost savings experienced by Chili's restaurant in working with the SBWIB, they came on board, achieved their own success, and would like to take a similar approach for other stores across the nation."

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