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For Immediate Release

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South Bay Workforce Investment Host Delegation from Japan

On August 22, 2005, the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) hosted Japanese delegates which included a Japanese government cabinet official, Mr. Kazuhisa Kodama and two researchers, Mr. Osamu Uasuda and Mr. Masaki Ijiri. The purpose of their trip to the United States is to obtain new and valuable insight on Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) so that they can successfully design and implement a training voucher program for the first time in their own country. Currently, the Japanese government is conducting a pilot project at one of their local municipal entities, which will begin delivering vouchers to assist their 35 years and younger population in the summer of 2005. The delegation plans to use this visit experiences to prepare guidelines for day-to-day administration and operation of their new voucher pilot program in Japan.

The delegates began their experience at the SBWIB where they were presented with a multitude of information such as current population, labor market, employment rates, funding sources, grant programs, I-TRAIN (Interstate Training and Resource Network) and on the ITA/Voucher system. This was followed with a question and answer session, of which there were many. The delegates seemed very interested in the information and asked many questions.

Following the visit to the SBWIB the delegates were taken to the South Bay One-Stop Business and Resource Center in Inglewood, where they were given information on One-Stop operations and day-to-day management of activities. Staff was able to answer all the questions that arose from this discussion.