



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Bay Workforce Investment Board
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Construction Job & Resource Fair Creates Pathways for Justice-Involved Adults in Watts

HAWTHORNE – In partnership with Congresswoman Maxine Waters, the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) hosted a Construction Jobs & Resource Fair held at the center within the Imperial Courts Housing Development, that provided justice-involved adults with direct access to union careers, apprenticeship programs, and employers ready to hire.

The event drew a turnout of men and women determined to rebuild their lives, many of the attendees had been previously incarcerated, seeking stable employment and a new start in the construction trades. Congresswoman Waters delivered opening remarks, praising participants for taking steps toward meaningful careers. She thanked the unions and employers for offering second-chance opportunities and personally engaged with job seekers—asking who had brought resumes and even conducting mock interviews to help prepare them for success.

Major employers including HireLAX, LA Metro, Power 2 Workers, and Swinerton Builders participated, with Swinerton hiring several individuals on the spot. Trade partners included Laborers Local 300, Carpenters, Electricians, Flatiron (105 Freeway), Southern California Cement Masons, Plumbers Local 78, and the Painters Union. By the conclusion of the event, eight participants had been approved to join unions.

“Any time we can bring union leaders, contractors, training providers, and job seekers under one roof—and have enthusiastic support from our outstanding Congresswoman—people are going to be successful,” said SBWIB Executive Director Jan Vogel.

A key highlight was the participation of justice-involved adults trained by Career Expansion, Inc., a partner organization providing pre-apprenticeship and career readiness instruction. The timing was ideal, as the students were completing training just the week prior to the event.

Adding to the inspiration, Preston Prince, a Compton resident and former SBWIB/Career Expansion participant, returned to the fair representing his employer, Swinerton Builders. Once living at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation’s GEO Male Community Reentry Program in Long Beach, Preston completed training, was hired as a carpenter, and has since advanced to Project

Engineer. His story of growth and resilience resonated with attendees, demonstrating the power of opportunity and persistence.

The Construction Job & Resource Fair showcased the impact of collaboration between workforce organizations, elected leaders, training providers, unions, and employers in transforming reentry into long-term career success.

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