



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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South Bay Workforce Investment Board  
11539 Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 500  
Hawthorne, CA 90250  
Contact: Jan Vogel 310-970-7700

## **WEST LOS ANGELES COLLEGE STUDENTS GRADUATE SOUTH BAY WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD'S BIO-FLEX PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM**

**HAWTHORNE** – The South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) presented a virtual graduation ceremony for West Los Angeles College students in their Biotech 001 class who recently completed the Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship program. Students ranged from individuals just starting out on their career path to those looking to change careers into bioscience.

Over the course of the program, participants completed work readiness training through the SBWIB's Blueprint for Workplace Success work readiness training and attended virtual workshops with employers. They learned how to start a career in bioscience and about the broad range of careers in research and development, including environmental and food science. Participants were also introduced to professional connections in their area of interest to provide them with guidance on their career path.

*"We are extremely proud of the partnership and collaboration West Los Angeles College has forged with us to make these bioscience pre-apprenticeship career exploration pathway programs available to youth throughout our region,"* noted SBWIB Executive Director Jan Vogel.

Participating employers and industries that supported this cohort included: Bachem Americas, Inc. in Torrance; The Aerospace Corporation in El Segundo; Basepaws Inc. in Torrance; BioLabs at the Lundquist Institute in Torrance; BioscienceLA in Culver City; rPlanet Earth in Vernon, and Business Brain Consulting in Los Angeles.

During the virtual graduation ceremony, Keynote Speaker Elizabeth Mendes, a second year PhD candidate at Duke University, shared lessons learned with the graduates from the twists and turns of her bioscience career pathway as a first-generation college student. All students received stackable certificates for completing the program. This cohort is the first students to participate in West Los Angeles College's new Biotechnology program. Funding for this cohort was provided by the Howmet Aerospace Foundation.

Leroy Anderson, West Los Angeles College student and Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship graduate stated, *"Through the program, I saw different types of biotechnology fields and it expanded my mind regarding which way I want to work towards; I thank you for that."*

The SBWIB provides business and employment services for youth and adults at no cost to the public through its four One-Stop Business and Careers Centers serving 11 South Bay cities. It also manages countywide programs and operates two Teen Centers in Hawthorne and Inglewood and a Youthbuild program in Lennox. For more information, please visit [www.sbwib.org/bioflex](http://www.sbwib.org/bioflex) or call (310) 970-7700.



**Photo caption:** West Los Angeles College students graduate South Bay Workforce Investment Board Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship Program.