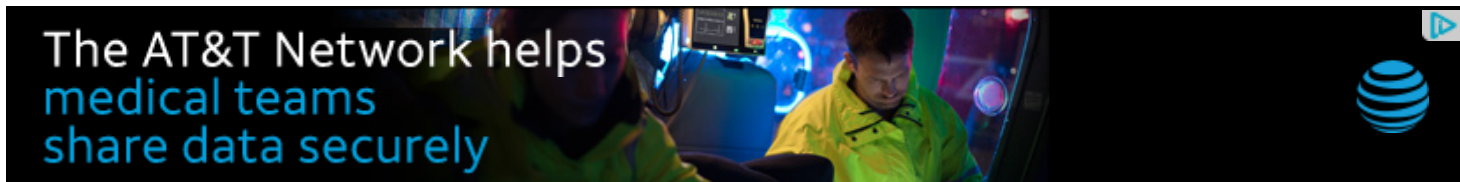


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South Bay Workforce Investment Board, a Gateway to Success

By Khalid Shah Board Member, Stop the Violence Increase the Peace Foundation

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In less than 24 months, the city of Inglewood will be the home of an 80,000 seat, \$2.6 billion dollar NFL Stadium for the Los Angeles Rams, a mix of entertainment, commercial and residential buildings. The Stadium is said by some to be one of the most expensive projects in NFL history and a possible venue for both the upcoming world Olympic Games and major International soccer events.

According to the Los Angeles Times, the new stadium could bring some 22,000 construction jobs to the area with another 12,000 full and part-time jobs. Mayor James Butts and the Inglewood city council negotiated a 30% local set aside to insure that the residence of Inglewood ,many of whom are African American, would benefit from jobs being created.

South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB)

Many of the jobs and other employment opportunities are being funneled through one of the best kept secrets in Los Angeles county, the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, also known as the (SBWIB).

(SBWIB) is an eleven city consortium located in Inglewood, Torrance, Carson, Gardena, and Hawthorne made up of local leaders, non profits, businesses, school districts, and other local stakeholders. Each week clients seeking employment come into the one stops for an initial pre-employment assessment. They are then called back to go over areas of employability where they are directed to sharpen their soft skills, basic comprehension, education and vocal skill levels. If the client scores high enough, many are directed to a pre apprentice program for construction jobs or other preparatory employment programs.

According to the SBWIB transitional Subsidized Employment report, 38% of adult African American, 35.5% of African American Youth, 20% of dislocated African American workers and 37.7 % of African American special dislocated workers received services from the SBWIB last year reflecting the populations who need the service the most.

Transitional Subsidized Employment is a win win for all involved according to one source, it provides wage paid work, jobs skills training and support services for the client while the federal government subsidizes salaries from 30 to 90 days for workers, saving the employer thousands of dollars while hiring those in the community who are unemployed and need additional support services.

I had the privilege to sit down with one of the founding members of the SBWIB, executive director Mr. Jan Vogel who spoke about the unique opportunities that are now available especially in Inglewood and the surrounding cities and the role the SBWIB will play. When I walked into his office building in Hawthorne I was met by a rich diversity of young minority professionals that reflected the surrounding community. The entire office was poised and professional, a place where young people who were part of that same diversity would find a receptive ear.

" It is important to know that there are many upcoming projects in the South Bay area that residents can access per Jan Vogel. The Inglewood Senior Center project, Centinela School District, Hawthorne Mall and Police department renovation projects, as well as the Lawndale Youth Center projects. They all offer employment opportunity and job skill training to the residents of the South Bay." Of course, everyone wants information about how to access new the football stadium and the jobs associated with that project. " According to one of the program manager from the Inglewood One Stop, Robert Chavez, every other Friday, construction job information is available at our office for those without skills and seeking information about construction jobs. For those already members of the unions and ready to work, Wednesday appointments are available to help fast track applications.

Overcoming employment barriers

Just because you've had issues in the past doesn't necessarily disqualify you from employment. There are a number of unions and employers who accept ex felons and those needing training, it's usually on a case by case basis. Some of the unions that except employees with barriers

are painters union, dry-wall, cement, mason, and labor unions. it's not necessarily where you've been, but where you're going that matters".

But it's also important to know that you will have to pass a drug test so if you are currently using medical marijuana or any other controlled substance, you may want to look elsewhere.

One of my heroes in gang intervention and prevention Father Greg Boyle always says nothing stops a bullet like a job. Since 2002, crime has steadily decreased and the city of Inglewood has truly become that light on the hill partially due to the efforts of city leaders, law enforcement, local clergy and the "Peace After The Verdict" movement, which was an effort that I was involved in.

Hats off to the South Bay Work Investment Board and a great team of individuals making it happen for the community.

For more information about jobs available in the South Bay, please call: 310 970 7700

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