



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Bay Workforce Investment Board
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**California Apprenticeship Initiative Grant
will Train Underserved Populations for Critical Healthcare Occupations**

HAWTHORNE – A innovative Healthcare apprenticeship program will be created to provide opportunities to underserved individuals with employment barriers to gain training and fill urgently needed positions including dental and nursing assistant occupations in the greater South Bay area over the next two years. Thanks to the awarding of a California Apprenticeship Initiative grant of \$500,000 to West Los Angeles College, a partnership will be formed that will include the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) and El Camino College.

The Health-Flex apprenticeship program, modeled after the highly successful Aero-Flex apprentice program for aerospace manufacturing, will connect future workers to employers sooner than after college graduation. Built on commonly accepted core skills defined by healthcare employers, Health-Flex will allow employers to tailor the curriculum and on-the-job experiences of each apprentice to prepare them for their chosen occupation.

“There is an urgent need for qualified workers in these high demand middle – skill occupations,” noted SBWIB Executive Director Jan Vogel. “The goal of our Health-Flex apprentice model is to bring new populations into apprenticeships that will prepare them for entry into high-wage high-skill employment,” he continued.

West Los Angeles College (WLAC) and El Camino College (ECC) are the primary health training partners. WLAC has a dental assistant and certified nursing assistant program with partners willing to host apprentices and provide them paid apprenticeships. ECC has a nursing program as well as respiratory care and radiologic technician programs, providing Health-Flex with tremendous capability to meet the needs of employers.

The SBWIB’s involvement includes operating an online portal so Los Angeles County community college students can apply for paid apprenticeships while completing their certificate or degree. The SBWIB will also recruit and outreach to participants and employers utilizing its network of career service providers, America’s Job Centers, co-located partners, agency partners and other community-based partners to perform outreach and recruitments.

The SBWIB provides no-cost business services, job search and employment preparation support to job seekers at its four One-Stop Business and Career Centers serving 11 South Bay communities and operates two teen centers in Hawthorne and Inglewood. For more information call (310) 970-7700 or visit www.sbwib.org.