

Community Corner

South Bay Organization Honored For Prison To Employment Program

The South Bay Workforce Investment Board was recognized for its important work connecting people in the justice system to the workforce.



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REDONDO BEACH, CA — The County's Department Of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services and its partners, including the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, received the 2021 Best in Category Award from the National Association of Counties for the Prison to Employment Program.

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This is the top award in the nation that recognizes only one program in the Criminal Justice and Public Safety Category, due to its exceptional results and unique innovations, officials said.

The program, known as P2E, launched in June 2020 and helps provide a direct pipeline from the criminal justice system to Los Angeles County's network of America's Job Centers of California.

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P2E enables justice-involved residents to seamlessly obtain a range of career and supportive services including paid work experience at social enterprise agencies, mentorship from individuals with lived experience, and case management.

So far, creating the program and developing a direct connection from the justice system to

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pathway after prison, officials said.

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"Initially slated to serve 300 people, P2E has served over 450 people in its first year, which continues to increase to meet demand," officials said.

In addition to the 2021 Best in Category Award, WDACS received 34 additional awards for innovative service delivery during the pandemic. Several recognized successes include the following:

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- **PPE Distribution to Older Adults, Small Businesses, and Frontline Medical Workers:** Distributed 700,000 units of PPE to older adults and more than 25 million units of PPE to 30,000+ small businesses during the pandemic. Trained over 160 youth to assemble more than 104,000 face shields for frontline medical workers. Small businesses can still request PPE at ppeunite.org.
- **Expansion of Home-Delivered Meals for Older Adults:** Increased meal distribution to

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Since March 2020, distributed more than 16 million meals to seniors in collaboration with restaurants, union-operated commercial kitchens, cities, and community-based organizations (CBO). Launched a delivery service to provide groceries, emergency food boxes and other vital necessities to older adults sheltering at home.

- **Connecting Residents to Workforce and Supportive Services:** Provided virtual rapid response services that connected 114 businesses and 7,588 employees experiencing layoffs to benefits and services, including Unemployment Insurance, from July through December 2020. Partnered with the Center for Employment Opportunities to link 650 recently incarcerated individuals to workforce services and over \$1.7 million in financial assistance. In collaboration with AJCCs and CBOs, provided grants of up to \$1,800 to over 1,600 immigrant and displaced workers.
- **L.A. vs. Hate:** This community-centered creative campaign supports all County residents to unite against, report, and resist hate. This first-in-the-nation campaign encourages victims of hate to report hate to 211-LA, where victims are then matched to a network of culturally-competent supportive agencies. During the past year, nearly 1,000 L.A. vs. Hate calls have been received.
- **Drive-Through Food Distribution:** In order to help LA County residents and families combat hunger and poverty during the pandemic, our Community and Senior Centers safely and efficiently distributed over 2.5 million pounds of food and other supplies since February 2020. Nearly 270,000 distributions have been made to families and residents.

Since 1970, NACO's annual awards have honored innovative and effective county government programs that strengthen services for residents. Nationally, awards are given in 18 different categories that reflect the vast, comprehensive services that counties provide. For each category, a single program nationally is recognized as Best in Category.

Learn more about South Bay Workforce Investment Board by [visiting the website](#).

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