



PRESS RELEASE

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

South Bay Workforce Investment Board's 22nd Annual Awards Ceremony Celebrates Graduates, Business and Training Providers

TORRANCE – The South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) celebrated its 22nd Annual Awards Ceremony on Thursday, October 12, 2017 at the Torrance Marriott South Bay. The Awards Ceremony honored the SBWIB's dedicated training providers, business partners and graduates of its job and career training programs, including the presentation of the Esther Williams Award of Excellence.

In attendance were Keynote speaker Kevin Demoff, Chief Operating Officer and Executive VP of Football Operations with the Los Angeles Rams and many public officials from the South Bay Area including state senator Steven Bradford, Mayors James T Butts Jr., Alex Vargas, Robert Pullen-Miles, Mayor Patrick Furey and Mayor Pro Tem Tim Goodrich, many city council members, college officials, school board officials, water board officials, from the 11 city South Bay consortium. Also attending were representatives from the office of U.S. Senator Kamala Harris, Congress members Waters and Lieu, state assembly members Burke and Gibson and a representative from County Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas. Mayor Butts, a former Esther Williams Awardee himself, introduced this year's Esther Williams Award of Excellence recipient Gloria D. Gray, Director, West Basin Municipal Water District. This year's Community Services Award was presented to the Friendship Foundation.

Veterans, dislocated workers, young adults and others who benefited from the SBWIB's career services were recognized for successfully completing programs to achieve their career goals; this included youth that went through the SBWIB's newly formed Aero-Flex Engineering Pre-Apprenticeship program. Among the honored were former homeless adults who now have a place to live and jobs. SBWIB's Executive Director Jan Vogel and SBWIB's Chairperson Wayne Spencer presented the awards to 18 individuals, 4 young adults, over 50 training providers and 6 business partners; Global Cardio Care (Inglewood), Hadd-Co Inspection Lab (Torrance), Kiewit Infrastructure West Company, NIX neighborhood Lending (Manhattan Beach), Northrop Grumman and Terranea Resorts.

Louis Ortega, an award recipient who was formerly incarcerated and previously living in a transitional housing program, shared his prior experiences and satisfaction with the employment services he received from the SBWIB's One-Stop Business and Career Centers. He stated, "I was never alone. I did this with the help of people in my life like the staff at the Inglewood One-Stop and their support. Never give up is what I tell myself."



The event included live entertainment from singer Lou Giovannetti, pianist and singer George T. Emerson, and Sheila Heard Newborn, who closed the ceremony singing 'Somewhere over the Rainbow'.

Proceeds generated from the event go towards sustaining and funding various youth-oriented programs and events in the South Bay, including the Hawthorne and Inglewood Teen Center, the Blueprint for Workplace Success program, the South Bay Promise and the Fit for Gold program.

The SBWIB operates four One Stop Business & Careers Centers within the South Bay area providing adult, youth and business services, plus two Teen Centers in Inglewood and Hawthorne. For more information please call (310) 970-7700 or visit SBWIB.org.

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Pictured are Esther Williams Award of Excellence recipient Gloria D. Gray, Director, West Basin Municipal Water District; on the left is Inglewood Mayor, James T. Butts, Jr. and to the right is Jan Vogel, Executive Director for the South Bay Workforce Investment Board