



SBWIB Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship Success Story Spotlight by the State of California Employment Development Department



"It's really cool that I get to pull from all the bits and pieces of knowledge that I gathered in college, and now apply it in an actual industry."

This Labor Day, the State of California Employment Development Department (EDD) celebrates those they serve, the workers and employers who contribute to California's strong economy and its workforce development system.

One of the top occupations in the LA region is demonstrated through the SBWIB's Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship program, a cooperative partnership with the EDD Workforce Accelerator Fund, Los Angeles County, **Supervisor Mark Ridley Thomas**, the Los Angeles County Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services Department, educational institutions, associations and many Bioscience employers.

Meet Sesar Juarez, Laboratory and Facilities Technician and the first graduate of the SBWIB Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship Program.

Hard work really does pay off. That was definitely the case for Sesar Juarez, who was accepted into and completed the Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship Program developed

by the South Bay Workforce Investment Board. Because of the training he received from the program, Juarez now has his dream job in the field he studied for—bioscience.



[Click on the video to view](#)

"It's really cool that I get to pull from all the bits and pieces of knowledge that I gathered in college, and now apply it in an actual industry," said Juarez.

The Bio-Flex program enables job seekers interested in bioscience like Juarez to work as paid interns with leading bioscience firms throughout the Los Angeles region.

Juarez completed 120 hours of paid work experience at Pasadena Bio Collaborative and additional training as a Biological Technician funded by Verdugo Workforce Development Board. Together, the work experience and the training program provided Juarez with the skills that led him to his current job as a Laboratory and Facilities Technician with the ag-tech firm, Provivi, Inc.

Located in Santa Monica, Provivi, Inc. is an emerging agricultural tech start-up company that uses insect pheromones to protect crops from pests through a natural process.

"Sesar's been a model employee so far," said Adam Baldwin, Director of HR and Operations for Provivi, Inc. "He works very hard, he has the right skills, he's on a wonderful path, and we think he's going to be a real crucial part of the company going forward."

The bioscience industry is exploding with employment opportunities, especially in the Los Angeles Basin region where laboratory technicians are one of the top in-demand occupations, according to the Employment Development Department (EDD).

Bio-Flex leads to "good paying jobs in an industry that's booming; that's going to continue to boom; that's going to bring so many benefits to the state of California and our local regions," said Jan Vogel, CEO, South Bay Workforce Investment Board.

Apprenticeship is a proven way to connect employers and job seekers to a diverse future workforce. With the assistance from an EDD Accelerator grant, the South Bay Workforce Investment Board was able to create Bio-Flex, an innovative pre-apprenticeship program designed to support a regional network of businesses ensuring that employment opportunities in bioscience are available to the community.

As the hard work continues, Juarez looks forward to the future and the possibilities.

"It's really exciting to know you are a part of it," said Juarez. "I think especially when you're in an entry level position when you get exposed to so many parts of the sciences, it kind of lets you choose which path you want to take further."

[Read the full story and top 5 middle-skill occupations in LA here](#)

The SBWIB operates four One Stop Business & Career Centers within the South Bay service area plus two Teen Centers in Inglewood and Hawthorne, and provides adult, youth and business services. Companies and students interested in being a part of the program or for more information on the Bio-Flex Pre-Apprenticeship, please visit www.sbwib.org or contact Deborah Shepard at dshepard@sbwib.org or call (310) 970-7700.

Visit www.sbwib.org/bioflex for more on the Bio-Flex program.

[Read EDD's News Release here](#)