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500 county youth start work in Workforce Investment Board's Summer Youth Employment Program

Wide variety of businesses recruited to participate and program launches successfully

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (June 15, 2009) – The Workforce Investment Board of San Bernardino County announced today that more than 500 county youth have started jobs in the Summer Youth Employment Program.

This program is designed to teach job skills to the county's youth, ages 14 to 24, while they work at local public and private businesses. Their wages are being paid by American Recovery and Reinvestment Act dollars administered by the Workforce Investment Board.

“The summer is an important time for our county's youth to build job skills,” said Sandy Harmsen, executive director of the Workforce Investment Board. “With such a tight job market, this program opens up more opportunities for young people to hone their job skills, and it also helps support our county's businesses.”

Each youth participant was placed in a job and will be mentored throughout the process by one of the Workforce Investment Board's contract youth service providers. These organizations are responsible for training the students in soft skills, placing them in jobs then supervising the experience to make sure the students learn job skills and contribute effectively to their workplace.

Participants were placed in jobs with a variety of worksites that include local businesses, educational facilities, community organizations, retailers, restaurants, and government and public agencies throughout the county. Most of the student spaces in the program are filled.

Worksite Examples:

- In the east and west valleys, 150 young people in this program started work after being placed by the Career Institute. Employers include Pleasure Point Marina, San Bernardino Forest Service, Mountain High School, County Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt, Victor Valley College, Barstow Community College, and County of San Bernardino Special Districts Department. The Career Institute serves youth between

ages 17 and 21, and plans to launch a second session consisting of 250 youth on June 29.

- Also in the west valley, 50 young people in this program started work after being placed by the Chino Valley Unified School District. Employers include the County Supervisor Gary Ovitt, City of Chino Hills, Anchor Blue, Borders, Carter's, Chaffey College, Chino Auto Tech, Giovanni's Salon and Spa, JoJo's Pizza, Johnny Rockets, Letterbox Station, Party City, Party Kingdom, Petco, Quality One Engineering, Tropical Smoothie Café, and Weinerschnitzel. The Chino Valley Unified School District is serving ages 14 to 24, and will launch its second session on July 6.
- In the high desert, 113 youth started work after being placed by the Hesperia Unified School District. Employers include Walgreen's, Kinari's, City of Hesperia, Hesperia Parks and Recreation, San Bernardino County Behavioral Health, Bosomo Design, Quantum Office Products, Spring Valley Lake Association, Lee and Associates and Little Caesars. Hesperia Unified School District serves youth between ages 16 and 20.
- In the Morongo Basin, 60 youth started work after being placed by the Morongo Unified School District. Employers include Joshua Tree Kids Club, Morongo Basin Counseling, Town of Yucca Valley, Joshua Basin Water District, Hi-Desert Medical Center, Boys & Girls Club, Windermere Realty, Hi-Desert Publishing, Park Café, Copper Mountain College, Hollywood Video, City of 29 Palms, Reach Out Morongo Basin, Yucca Valley Chamber of Commerce, 29 Palms Youth Club, Mentalphysics, Joshua Tree Retreat and 29 Palms Park & Recreation. Morongo Unified School District is serving ages 16 to 21.
- Throughout the county, Goodwill Industries placed 200 youth in jobs with employers that include Marshall's, Registrar of Voters, Goodwill Environmental Services, Pacific Sunwear, Anchor Blue, Islander Backyard, Inc., Oro Grande School District, Mustard Seed Tutorial Center, Aim Mail Center, FootAction and Foot Locker.

About the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board

The San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board is comprised of private business representatives and public partners appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. It strives to create a strong, vibrant economy by developing the county's workforce through partnerships with business, education and community-based organizations.

The Workforce Investment Board, through the county's Economic Development Agency and Workforce Development Department, operates the county's Employment Resource Centers and Business Resource Centers. The Employment Resource Centers provide individuals with job training, placement and the tools to strengthen their skills to achieve a higher quality of life, and the Business Resource Centers support and provide services to the county's businesses including employee recruitment.

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