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## **San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board approves funding to train workers**

*Recruitment opens this week for heavy mobile mechanic training program, to build skilled workforce for more than 100 new high-wage, technical positions in the region*

**SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (March 12, 2009)** --The San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board has approved \$34,600 in funding to train workers to fill more than 100 new positions at military installations throughout the region. These positions include heavy mobile mechanics, welders and painters with an entry-level wage of more than \$16 per hour.

Recruitment just opened for the initial training course, heavy mobile mechanic training. The Employment Resource Centers in Hesperia and Barstow are seeking 25 residents for the 8-week training program, to begin in March at Barstow Community College.

Graduates of this course will have the necessary qualifications to apply for jobs including Heavy Equipment Mechanic Helper level WG-5, Repairer Level WG-8 or Journeymen Level WG-10, depending on previous work experience. Jobs will be available at military maintenance facilities that handle the rebuilding, overhaul, repair and modernizing of vehicles and equipment.

The pre-requisites to entering this first training course include basics, such as the applicant must be a resident of San Bernardino County with valid identification and social security documentation. Males entering the program must have registered for Selective Service. All candidates must meet the minimum requirements for employment at a military facility, including proof of U.S. citizenship and completion of a background investigation and a drug screen.

“This is a great opportunity for our local residents to build skills for one of our area’s key occupations that is seeking employees,” said Mike Holtz, workforce development specialist. “It is an especially good opportunity for any recently separated veterans, since they are more likely to have the clearances needed to work on a military base.”

This training is funded by the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board, in partnership with Barstow Community College and the Maintenance Center Barstow. The curriculum was developed by Barstow Community College and the Maintenance Center Barstow.

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## **Mechanic training program**

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“In a challenging economy, it is more important than ever that we find opportunities to help our residents build the skills they need to obtain employment,” said Sandy Harmsen, executive director of the Workforce Investment Board. “This is a great example of how we can help various employers so that they can focus on what they do best. We are looking for more employers that we can help in the same way.”

Barstow Community College will provide other training courses to follow this initial program, which may include Diesel Fundamentals, Diesel Truck Starting, Charging and Electrical Systems and Basic Workplace Skills Training.

Those interested in more information about the training program may contact the Hesperia Employment Resource Center at (760) 949-8526. They may also contact the department’s satellite office in Barstow at (760) 252-8625.

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

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