



NEWS RELEASE

Workforce Development Board

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Manufacturers' summit will examine jobs growth and recruitment strategies in the Inland Empire



Workforce Investment Board encourages companies to attend event in Riverside

SAN BERNARDINO, CA (February 12, 2015) A survey among manufacturing companies in San Bernardino County shows almost a quarter of businesses have seen an increase in sales in the last three months. The good news comes as the region prepares for the annual Inland Empire Manufacturers' Summit which is co-sponsored by the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board.

The event is being held at the Riverside Convention Center on February 19th and is expected to attract more than 500 participants.

"Manufacturing is one of the important industries in our region and we are proud to be supporting this important summit to ensure on-going job creation in this field," said Sandy Harmsen, Executive Director of the San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board.

The annual summit is organized by the Manufacturers' Council of the Inland Empire (MCIE), which helps local manufacturers find solutions to problems like employment training, research, regulation compliance, and import and export issues.

The San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board (WIB) has had a long standing relationship with the Manufacturers' Council and works in partnership to enhance the knowledge and skills of employees in the industry.

"With almost 87,000 people employed in this sector, earning an average of \$50,000, this industry plays a key role in the success of our local economy," said James Ramos, Chair of San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors.

While expansion in the industry is welcome news, analysts also foresee a skills gap in the coming years due to an increase in workers eligible for retirement. Nationally, around two million jobs will be left vacant as many engineers and machinists come to the end of their career.

One local company already seeing the effects of this change is Vista Metals Corp. of Fontana where hiring managers turned to the WIB for help with recruitment.

The company employs 240 staff members at its plant in Fontana, but HR Manager, Sheryl Baez says a large percentage have been with the company for up to 30 years and are beginning to retire.

"We are constantly recruiting to replace these workers with the next generation of skilled manufacturing staff," Baez said.

The company recently hired three production staff through the WIB's On-The-Job Training program which helps businesses offset the cost of training new employees.

"Finding workers with the right skills is always a challenge for us," Baez continued. "The Workforce Investment Board program has been very beneficial to us, but not just from a monetary point of view. The WIB staff work hard to match us with the right employees and support the trainees to ensure they are successful. We will continue to work closely with the WIB and local schools to help us find the employees we need."

Workforce development is one of the key issues under discussion at the upcoming Annual Manufacturing Summit, as well as the impact of new technology and resources for growth.

Manufacturing companies wishing to attend the Summit on February 19th can register on line at <http://mfgcouncilie.com/tickets/>

To learn more about how On-the-Job Training can help your business, please call (800) 451-JOBS or visit www.csb-win.org.

*The WIB's quarterly Business Services Report showed manufacturers in the county recorded a 23 percent increase in sales during the last quarter, while four percent had plans to expand.

**The most recent Economic Report on the Inland Empire by Chmura Economics and Analytics showed 86,544 people in the region are employed in manufacturing, earning an average of \$49,083.