



NEWS RELEASE

Workforce Development Board

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Creating a climate of countywide growth, prosperity

By Tony Myrell

A recent report in Forbes magazine pegged the Inland Empire as “one of the nation’s fastest-growing economies,” noting that as America’s 13th largest population cluster, the region is now larger than Seattle, San Diego and Denver.

The migration of people and workers from neighboring regions accounts for part only of the story. What’s happening in San Bernardino County and throughout the Inland Empire is a remarkable example of like-minded stakeholders working together to create a climate, an ecosystem, of economic growth, opportunity and prosperity.

In the center of all of this is a commitment to career pathways and workforce development that has positioned our region as a place where businesses are able to find the talent and resources they need to succeed.

We see several examples of this throughout the county – from the heightened emphasis our schools are placing on college *and* careers to emerging public-private partnerships that are aligning workforce training with the actual needs of businesses. In logistics, health care, advanced manufacturing, construction and other growth industries, San Bernardino County and the Inland Empire are creating the talent pool that encourage businesses to locate and expand here.

A recent report commissioned by the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board reaffirmed our advancement in economic development, business growth and employment opportunities. The report, by Chmura Economics & Analytics, projected job growth across all 21 major business sectors in the Inland Empire over the next decade, with the heaviest concentration in healthcare, construction, manufacturing and professional, scientific and technical services.

Manufacturing alone should add 22,000 jobs during the decade, continuing a trend that has seen the Inland Empire increase manufacturing employment at three times the state average – and nearly double the national average – over the past five years.

Part of what’s driving the employment surge is the relative young age of our population,



creating a strong pipeline of workers and trainable job seekers. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the median age in San Bernardino County is 32.5, three years younger than the California average, and five years younger than the national average. More than 16 percent of our County's population is between the ages of 15 and 25 – prime years for beginning to develop workplace skills.

Add in quality-of-life benefits, access to housing and transportation, natural amenities, a lower cost of living, and it becomes clear as to why businesses are finding San Bernardino County a welcoming location for their employees and companies.

Moreover, having effective training and recruitment platforms in place is an essential part of the workforce and economic development ecosystem. Here, too, we have a clear advantage with a County Workforce Development Board that consistently ranks among the highest performing in California.

The WDB, through the Workforce Development Department, offers a variety of programs designed to help youth and adults identify career pathways and get the appropriate training and skills. Programs funded through the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) provide eligible youth, ages 16 to 24, access to a variety of career and educational services designed to help enhance job skills, develop leadership qualities, explore career options, participate in adult and peer mentoring opportunities, and take advantage of work experiences.

In addition, the WDB operates San Bernardino County's three America's Job Centers of California (AJCC). The AJCCs provide individuals with job training, placement and the tools to strengthen their skills to achieve a higher quality of life. The AJCCs also support and provide services to the County's businesses, including employee recruitment and business retention programs.

As Chairman of the Workforce Development Board, I'm proud of the efforts of our dedicated staff of professionals, and look forward to what we can accomplish together as a county and a region.

Tony Myrell is Chairman of the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board. Employers and job seekers who are interested in the Workforce Development Board programs may call: (800) 451-JOBS or visit www.sbcounty.gov/workforce.

About the San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board

The San Bernardino County Workforce Development Board (WDB) is comprised of private business representatives and public partners appointed by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors. The WDB strives to strengthen the skills of the County's workforce through partnerships with business, education and community-based organizations. The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors is committed to providing county resources, which generate jobs and investment in line with the [Countywide Vision](#).

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