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South Bay Workforce Investment Board

Update Report for October 2025

The South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB) continued to advance its mission in October by strengthening partnerships, expanding apprenticeship opportunities, and connecting residents to high-quality careers. The month concluded with SBWIB's 30th Annual Awards Ceremony, held on October 30 at the Torrance Marriott, where local leaders, employers, and alumni gathered to celebrate success stories and community impact.

The Daily Breeze described the event as “a powerful evening that highlighted how education, training, and collaboration can change lives.” The celebration underscored the importance of partnership in building career pathways that support both workers and employers throughout the South Bay.

El Segundo

For the past six years, SBWIB has upheld a strong partnership with Los Angeles Air Force Base in El Segundo through a formal Memorandum of Understanding that supports workforce development and community engagement efforts. SBWIB is now in active conversations with base leadership to renew and strengthen the MOU so both organizations can continue expanding opportunities for exiting military personnel and their spouses.

SBWIB continued collaboration with leading employers in aerospace and advanced manufacturing to strengthen earn and learn opportunities for students and young adults. Meetings were held with Heart Aerospace to discuss recruitment strategies.

Carson

The SBWIB's Carson One-Stop Business and Career Center remained active in connecting residents with career services and local employers.

SBWIB recently submitted a \$500,000 application to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's FY26 Brownfields Job Training Grant Program and is now awaiting notification of its status. If awarded, the funding will support the recruitment, training, and placement of Carson residents in environmental careers, with plans to train 72 participants, graduate at least 50, and place a minimum of 35 in well-paying jobs that will benefit local families and strengthen the city's economy.

SBWIB is collaborating with California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) on an applied research project focused on AI tools that can improve training and student engagement. Together, the team is developing an AI-powered chatbot and an interactive user interface designed to support and enhance SBWIB's Blueprint for Workplace Success course. This effort aims to make the curriculum more accessible, responsive, and personalized for the participants we serve.

SBWIB also continued its employer engagement efforts to support Carson residents pursuing advanced manufacturing and clean-energy careers. Staff met with FlightWave Aerospace to discuss recruitment needs, upcoming training opportunities, and pathways for connecting Carson job seekers to emerging roles in unmanned systems and electric aviation technologies. These conversations support SBWIB's ongoing work to expand local access to high-growth technical careers and strengthen employer partnerships that benefit the Carson community.

Torrance

Staff met with Robinson Helicopter to plan the next phase of apprenticeship implementation and participated in the Torrance Technology Committee to support ongoing discussions on training and industry alignment. SBWIB's partnership with El Camino College through the California Opportunity Youth Apprenticeship (COYA) grant continued to grow, focusing on dual-enrollment coursework and career pathways in healthcare, manufacturing, and digital technology.

SBWIB continued its outreach in clean energy and sustainable manufacturing by engaging with Arc Boats, a leading employer based in Torrance. Arc Boats recently sponsored an event focused on advancing opportunities for women in clean energy and technology, which helped raise awareness of career pathways in this growing sector. SBWIB's work with Arc Boats supports the expansion of Energy Flex partnerships and strengthens local opportunities for Torrance residents interested in clean technology careers.

The month concluded with the SBWIB's 30th Annual Awards Ceremony at the Torrance Marriott, which honored program graduates, recognized outstanding employers, and thanked the partners who make regional workforce progress possible. The event captured the spirit of collaboration and community impact that defines SBWIB's work across the South Bay.

Hawthorne

SBWIB continued its regional leadership activities from its Hawthorne headquarters, coordinating several initiatives that advance youth apprenticeship and inclusive workforce development. Staff engaged in outreach through the Society of Women Engineers (SWE) and Women in Bio professional networks to strengthen recruitment pipelines for women in aerospace, bioscience, and engineering fields.

SBWIB also participated in the Advancing California Apprenticeship Conference to share lessons learned from regional pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs and to highlight best practices drawn from local initiatives such as Sky-Flex and Bio-Flex that serve youth residents.

Inglewood

SBWIB continued implementation of the Disability Access, Equity, and Inclusion (DAEI) initiative through the Inglewood America's Job Center of California (AJCC), which remains a primary hub for connecting individuals with disabilities to career counseling, paid work experience, and apprenticeship opportunities. The Inglewood AJCC also leads coordination with the California Department of Rehabilitation to expand co-enrollment and ensure residents have equitable access to training and employment services that promote long-term stability and independence.

Staff also met with the new team at the LA Southwest College Career Center to review their workforce and training programs that could benefit South Bay residents and businesses. The discussion focused on identifying shared opportunities for collaboration and aligning educational pathways with local industry needs. These efforts reinforce Inglewood's continued role as a center of innovation and inclusion in regional workforce development.

General Updates

Throughout October, SBWIB remained engaged in regional and statewide efforts to expand apprenticeship and workforce access. Staff attended the Southern California Bio (SoCalBio) conference to maintain Bio Flex visibility and continued working with Capitol

Impact in Sacramento to expand Bio Flex Registered Apprenticeships.

SBWIB participated in several regional events including the 88 Cities Summit, BizFed Workforce Conference, and meetings with the Los Angeles Cleantech Incubator (LACI) Green Jobs Regional Partnership to support electric vehicle and clean technology career development. The organization also continued participation in the Los Angeles Regional Consortium (LARC) Apprenticeship Network and presented at Constitution Lab in Simi Valley to promote new Apprenticeship Building America (ABA) and ETP opportunities.

Finally, SBWIB formalized a new step in bioscience apprenticeship development with the signing of the Blue Nalu Bio Production Technician Registered Apprenticeship Program, further strengthening the region's leadership in advanced manufacturing and biotechnology.

THE BEACH REPORTER

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COMMUNITY



Ray Shortridge, a lifelong Redondo Beach resident, celebrated his 90th birthday Saturday. PHOTOS BY GIL CASTRO-PETRES

Lifelong Redondo Beach resident, 90, wants to live there 'forever'

By Tyler Shaun Evains
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Ray Shortridge remembers when Redondo Beach was dirt roads, and fishermen lined what's now the King Harbor.

He's a lifelong Redondo Beach resident, who celebrated his 90th birthday on Saturday.

South Redondo has always been his home, and he doesn't plan on that ever changing. He pulled a tissue out of the box on his chair-side table and dabbed his eyes as he recalled decades of memories.

Shortridge was hired by the post office as a teenager before being drafted to the Army in his early 20s.

On Veterans' Day, on Tuesday, he will see a brick in his honor put into the city's Veterans' Memorial, said his wife, Kathleen Crowley Shortridge.

He was part of the 2nd Armored Division, dubbed "Hell on Wheels," Shortridge said.

"Elvis had just left" that same division, Shortridge said, right before he entered.



See RESIDENT on Page A13 Ray Shortridge and his wife Kathleen.

PETS

Residents launch effort for dog park

By Michael Hixon
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A group of residents are joining forces in the hopes of bringing a dog park to Hermosa Beach.

The "Bark for a Park" organizers' goal is to raise more than \$300,000 to build the park, which they hope will open in 2026, if approved by the city.

Supporters of the Hermosa Beach Dog Park met at a fundraiser at The Deck on Oct. 28, to gather more support from the community and lay the groundwork for the movement.

Communications chair Tara Gerow said she was inspired by the "sense of community" in Hermosa Beach.

"My dog is 2-years-old and I enjoy hanging out with these people and having a do-good experience," Gerow said.

Chair Carla Buck said a signature writing campaign took place beginning in January and they gathered nearly 1,400 signatures supporting a dog park.

Buck said they have identified 12 potential locations for the off-leash dog park. But Valley Park, the largest park in the city, looks like the more viable location, she said.

One area at the east side of Valley Park, Buck said, could potentially be the location for a 10,000-square-foot dog park. The area is shaded and not near neighbors.

The vision of the dog park, according to their website hermosabeachdogpark.com, is that it will have anti-microbial artificial

See DOG on Page A13



Efforts are underway to bring a dog park to Hermosa Beach. Pictured are organizers and supporters with their furry friends at The Deck in Hermosa Beach on Oct. 28. MICHAEL HIXON — STAFF

Inside

Biz awards: The South Bay Workforce Investment Board recently held its 30th annual awards ceremony to recognize the contributions of businesses and community partners. Page 5



Champs celebrate: The Dodgers celebrated their 2025 World Series win, their second in a row, with a parade. Page 8



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SCAN ME

BUSINESS

SBWIB holds 30th annual awards ceremony

By Madeline Armstrong
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The South Bay Workforce Investment Board held its 30th annual awards ceremony Oct. 30 to recognize the contributions of businesses and community partners in addition to honoring 16 individuals who have achieved success in the workforce by utilizing one of SBWIB's One-Stop Business and Career Centers.

Around 500 people from all 11 cities that SBWIB serves filled the courtyard and banquet room at the Torrance Marriott South Bay on Oct. 30 to acknowledge the award recipients, mingle with fellow community leaders and enjoy entertainment from jazz singer Brenna Whitaker.

While this was the 30th awards ceremony, SBWIB has been serving the South Bay for 43 years, creating "an unmatched portfolio of no-cost services and training and support opportunities for adults, youth, job seekers and dislocated workers throughout our service area which includes the communities of Carson, El Segundo, Gardena, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach and Torrance," SBWIB Chief Executive Officer Jan Vogel said in a written statement.

Of the 16 individuals who were honored as Outstanding Alumni, two people spoke about the impact SBWIB had on their lives.

"I had a 40-year career working in aerospace and in 2024 found myself being laid off," said Pete Freeland from Redondo Beach. These were programs and opportunities that I and my peers had no idea even existed. I mean we would never look, right?"

Freeland was able to participate in SBWIB's Rapid Response Program for dislocated workers and earn his instrument and commercial pilot ratings at Sling Pilot Academy. He now performs as an air show pilot and leads STEM outreach programs, encouraging youth to pursue careers in aerospace and aviation.

Majesty Goodlow from Carson spoke about her experiences overcoming domestic violence, homelessness and trauma and the role SBWIB played in that.

"I survived domestic violence that tragically took the life of my daughter," Goodlow told the crowd. "My special needs son and I were left homeless, broken and unsure of where to turn. Just when I thought things couldn't get worse, we were involved in a horrible hit and run car accident. Our car flew off the 91 freeway and flipped over seven times. By the grace of God, we survived, but I felt completely lost. Then came the South Bay Workforce."

Goodlow visited the South Bay One-Stop Business & Career Center in Carson where she was able to receive housing assistance, counseling, childcare and career services.

"Today, I am proud to say that I'm employed and no longer homeless," she continued. "I graduated from Compton College with five social arts degrees and six certificates."

Goodlow is now working on her bachelor's at Cal State Long Beach University.

"I stand here today, not just for myself, but for every person out there who needs a second chance," she said. "Please continue to fund and support the South Bay Work-

force Program. You have no idea how many lives you are saving, how many futures you are changing and how much hope you are restoring.

"Thank you for believing in people like me. Thank you for giving me and my son a chance to dream."

The other Outstanding Alumni award winners were Uriel Gutierrez from Torrance, Lesly Leon from Carson, William Yoon from Carson, James Camper from El Segundo, Hernan Villanueva from Gardena, Luis Vizcaino from Hawthorne, Carter Fortunato from Hermosa Beach, Jeremiah Richardson from Inglewood, Yasmine Brown from Inglewood, Daniel Olivares from Inglewood, Valeria Villalpando Goytia from Lawndale, Esmia Saldivar from Lomita, Tonya Haynes from Manhattan Beach and Margaret Liu from Redondo Beach.

Additionally, El Camino College President Brenda Thames received the Esther Williams Award of Excellence. Esther Williams was the first SBWIB chairperson in 1982 and this award named after her is awarded to individuals "who epitomize her record of service and commitment to the lofty ideals of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, and who strive to improve the quality of life in our communities through their professionalism and lasting contributions," reads the description.

Thames has more than 25 years of experience in instruction and education, and is a hands-on member of the SBWIB Youth Development Council, bolstering youth programs.

"In the spirit of Esther Williams... Dr. Thames has exemplified the same unwavering dedication to uplifting youth, advancing educational equity and building strong community partnerships," reads a written statement from SBWIB. "Her leadership has directly supported pathways for young people to access high-quality education, workforce training and meaningful career opportunities."

In a surprise addition to the program, the SBWIB Board of Directors took the stage to honor Vogel and award him the Lifetime Achievement Award.

"Under Jan's leadership, the South Bay Workforce Investment Board is growing into a national model of innovation, collaboration and results," said Glenn Mitchell, chair of SBWIB. "He's guided us through challenges, inspired us to change (and) to build an organization that has touched lives in every corner of the South Bay."

Other awards were handed out for Outstanding Partner and Outstanding Businesses.

The recipient of the Outstanding Partner Award was the Centinela Valley Union High School District for their work with SBWIB to offer internship and pre-apprenticeship opportunities to students.

Recipients of the Outstanding Business Awards were Robinson Helicopter Company in Torrance, Centinela Hospital Medical Center in Inglewood and ByFusion Global Inc. in Gardena.

All net proceeds from Thursday's event will benefit youth-focused programs such as Inglewood and Hawthorne Teen Centers and the Blueprint for Workplace Success Program.



Executive Director of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board Jan Vogel, middle right, is honored with an award for his decades of service at the South Bay Workforce Investment Board's 30th annual awards ceremony in Torrance. PHOTOS BY GIL CASTRO-PETRES



The South Bay Workforce Investment Board's 30th annual awards ceremony recognized the contributions of businesses and community partners.



Hundreds of people gather at the South Bay Workforce Investment Board's 30th annual awards ceremony Oct. 30 in Torrance.

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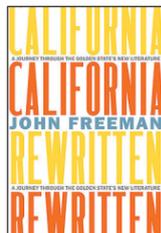




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