



**News for the Week of Sept. 28, 2015**

**LOAN HELPS LAX-BASED CARGO COMPANY EXPAND BUSINESS, CREATE NEW JOBS**

Julian Keeling was going through tough times at Consolidators International, his cargo-export business, and no banks would lend to him. Global monetary instability and fluctuating fuel prices were hurting the bottom line of the company that he started near LAX in 1992. “It doesn’t matter how long you’ve been in business or how many people you employ,” Keeling said. “They just look at the balance sheets and if it doesn’t hit a certain ratio, forget it.” That’s where EWDD’s Economic Development team stepped in. Working with partnering agency Los Angeles Economic Development Corp., EWDD’s staff on Sept. 24 helped Keeling close on a \$280,000 small business loan that will



provide needed working capital. In return, Keeling agreed to add eight workers to the 30 already on his payroll, with at least five hires to come from low- and moderate-income populations. Headquartered in LA, the company has other offices in New York, Atlanta, and Chicago. Their main focus is cargo delivery by air and ocean to New Zealand, Australia and the South Pacific Islands. In the last several years, he has gone out of his way to hire and train veterans and the chronically unemployed, some of whom have grown into higher positions in the company and some, with their new experience and knowledge, have moved on to other higher-paying jobs. Keeling pays a \$16 starting wage, and offers all workers health coverage and retirement plans. “I’m proud of creating jobs in LA,” Keeling said. “And my reward is this loan.”

**Metro MOU:** EWDD and Metro on Sept. 21 agreed to begin planning multiple stations along the Crenshaw Line, with a focus on City and Metro-owned properties at Leimert Park. Station construction is aimed at spurring nearby transit-oriented development and other community assets.

**LARCA Year-End Banquet:** The Los Angeles Reconnections Career Academy (LARCA) celebrated this year's successes at a Sept. 30 banquet held in Monterey Park. Funded through federal workforce grants, LARCA helps youth ages 17 to 24 years return to school and find jobs. To date, the program has returned 1,300 participants to school, with 400 of those earning a high school diploma. Counselors at Boyle Heights Technology YouthSource Center and Southeast Los Angeles YouthSource Center, both EWDD partners, also helped 358 participants enroll in college and another 342 in occupational training. About 300 have found jobs in the growing healthcare, technology and construction fields.

**Pathways to Success:** More than 200 high-school and college-aged youth came to Los Angeles TradeTech College Sept. 25 for a career fair. Under a pitched tent, community college reps handed out information and answered questions, while employers manned tables nearby hoping to recruit the young adults for more than 600 job vacancies. The participating employer-partners were: The Home Depot, Jiffy Lube, LA Care, LinkedIn, LeadersUp, Metro, Pacific Park, UPS and the Cheesecake Factory. The fair included mini-workshops on careers in the healthcare field, how to use social media in the workplace and a jobs-pitch session titled "How to Tell Your Story During Your Job Search." The class, led by Brad Pollak, was so popular that the third session was standing-room only. Pathways to Success was the final event for this year's Hire LA's Youth 2015 summer youth employment program, which ended Sept. 30.



**Chris Paul visits Brotherhood Crusade:** NBA star Chris Paul spoke to a rapt audience of youth to during a Sept. 22 visit to the Brotherhood Crusade, operator of an EWDD YouthSource Center in South Los Angeles.



Paul and his sponsors in "Exist to Assist," a community assistance program, chose Brotherhood Crusade as its first event in what is expected to series of stops in cities across the county. The organization is helping the Brotherhood Crusade refurbish a technology center at the site. The Clippers point guard talked about the importance of education and also of keeping up to date on the latest technology. He told the youth:

"Whatever it is, be the best *you* that you can be." Click here for a [video](#) of the visit.

**South LA BusinessSource Center helps secure two loans:** EWDD's BusinessSource Center contractor, VSEDC, helped two clients in South LA secure microloans. F & M Donuts & Café received technical assistance and a \$20,000 equipment loan, which will be used to increase productivity, increase sales and expand its workforce. A second \$20,000 loan was approved for The Fashion Driven Truck to

purchase a mobile retail truck. VSEDC staff helped the owner with loan packaging and access to capital. The loan will expand the owner's business operations and increase sales.

**Other economy-building events:**

- **The North Valley BusinessSource Center**, operated by VEDC, held a *Strategies for Business Survival* workshop on Sept. 19. The topics included business valuations and managing the sale of a business.
- **The West Valley BusinessSource Center**, operated by VEDC, held its *Permits, Licenses & Legal Structure* workshop on Sept. 24. Topics included business structures and the required licenses and permits needed to operate them.
- **The South LA BusinessSource Center**, operated by VSEDC, held its *Business Plan Writing Course Level II* on Sept. 22. Topics included market research, what type of data needs to be collected, research strategies and techniques, and designing a survey.
- **The South LA BusinessSource Center**, operated by VSEDC, hosted a FreshWorks loan orientation and health discussion on Sept. 23. The workshop was targeted to food truck operators and small startups interested in providing fresh and healthy nutritious food options.
- **The South LA BusinessSource Center**, operated by VSEDC, held its *Business Plan Writing Course Level II* on Sept. 24. The training was held at the Urban League's EDD site and focused on researching the feasibility of a business, market research strategies and designing a survey.

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