

News Release

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South County EDC and National City Chamber Celebrate “I’m Ready” Empowerment Program Graduation

South County unemployed or underemployed young adults celebrate the completion of the eight-week career readiness program with graduation ceremony

SOUTH SAN DIEGO COUNTY (August 2, 2019) – South County Economic Development Council (SCEDC) in partnership with the National City Chamber of Commerce celebrated the graduation of the “I’m Ready” Program participants at Southwestern College in National City on Friday, August 2.

The “I’m Ready” Program kicked off in June of 2019 and was created to support career and life readiness by providing training in leadership development, financial planning and workforce skills for unemployed or underemployed youth of National City, Chula Vista, and Logan Heights, ages 18 to 24.

Today, 18 participants successfully completed the eight-week training program, which included accomplishments in leadership academy training, resume building, work experience in a company matching career interests, development of personal financial plan, job readiness and life skills, and an expanded personal and professional network. Participants partook in several workshops held at the National City Chamber of Commerce and unique internships from July 1 to August 1.

“I learned a lot in this internship, including the importance of networking and public speaking skills, and I got a chance to build my resume and grow personally and professionally. I got to see the potential in my community, South San Diego County, and how I can help develop that potential with my new skills,” said Viviana Gonzalez, I’m Ready program graduate. “I am incredibly grateful to everyone involved in this program for giving me this amazing opportunity. As a result, I got into my first full time job, and I am looking forward to continuing to learn and grow in my field.”

“Within the I’m Ready program, I learned a lot about how to prepare myself for life after high school,” said Paola Gastelum, ‘I’m Ready’ program participant and recent high school graduate. “It showed me the importance of networking, how to present my best self to employers, how to manage my finances efficiently, and how to write a good resume. I really enjoyed participating in this program as it has opened doors for me to further pursue my choice of career, and for that I am incredibly thankful.”

Fifteen employers around South County and San Diego County hosted “I’m Ready” interns for the duration of the program with a minimum of 24 hours of internship, assisting as youth mentors and career readiness coaches.

“We’re training our future workforce to help them grow and thrive and, consequently, help develop the potential that exists in South County,” said Cindy Gompper-Graves, President and CEO of SCEDC. “This new program leveraged the talent and knowledge that South County businesses hold and the potential that exists in South County’s young adults to learn from each other and grow. We want to thank the companies that participated in this program for helping them grow as young professionals.”

“I’m Ready” served as a pilot program of the Economic Vitality Work Group, a part of the Live Well San Diego South Region Leadership Team. The program would not have been possible without the help of the project’s partners: ACCION, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Institute for Public Strategies, LISC San Diego, Live Well San Diego, Logan Heights Community Development Corporation, San Diego Workforce Partnership, and South Bay Community Services.

For more information or questions, contact South County EDC by email at SCEDC@SouthCountyEDC.com or by phone at (619) 424-5143.

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ABOUT SCEDC

The South County Economic Development Council (South County EDC or SCEDC) is a non-profit organization formed in 1989 by a group of South San Diego County business and community leaders, to promote education and encourage economic development in the South San Diego County Region. Their member cities include Chula Vista, Coronado, Imperial Beach, National City, San Diego, San Diego County, and the Port of San Diego. They work with their partners in the northern portion of Baja California in the cities of Mexicali, Tijuana, Tecate, Rosarito and Ensenada.

About National City Chamber of Commerce

Since its founding in 1905 as the Board of Trade, the Chamber has functioned continuously as the city’s largest civic organization. Its membership and support is derived from more than 600 dues-paying National City businesses and others throughout the San Diego region who are interested in advancing the commercial, industrial, and civic interests of the community. The Chamber’s mission is to advance the commercial, industrial, and civic interest of National City and vicinity, to promote integrity, good faith, and just and equitable principals in business, and to represent National City in the consideration and decision of state and national issues. The Chamber has continued to play a lead role in civic affairs, from helping to lead the war effort in the 1940s, to working with the city to plan for the future with an updated General Plan for future development in 2012.

Photos:





Paola Gastelum, graphic design intern, with mentor, Jonatan Lopez, Graphic Designer at Brown Marketing Strategies (BMS).