

## **Pacific Gateway Workforce Development Board – Local Plan Modification**

### **Developing Strategies to Strengthen Services to English Language Learners, Foreign Born Individuals and Refugees Local Planning Session**

Location: The Guidance Center

1301 Pine Avenue

Long Beach, CA 90813

Date: November 15, 2018

Time: 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm

#### **Discussion Notes**

### **1. What are the major barriers for English-Language Learners, Immigrant and Refugee Communities in Long Beach/Signal Hill?**

- Places where they can access services and information on what they need.
  - One-stop resource center
- Lack of bilingual instructors
- Social/emotional support
  - Need for transition/support groups
- Bilingual trainers at worksites
- Language/cultural barrier, cultural sensitivity
- The translation of “English Only” work documents
- Someone at the AJCC to coordinate access to social services
- Lack of trust with government agencies
- Limited resources for CBOs to do this work
  - Training/resources at CBOs
  - Additional funding for CBOs to do WIOA work
- Language barrier - limited access to good paying jobs because not proficient in English
  - A job right away to meet needs now - earning immediately
  - Jobs other than physical labor
  - Earn and Learn, pathways

- Training in home/native languages
- English language instruction w/ work jargon, VESL
- Opportunities beyond regular hours, center open on weekends, after-hours
- Language support groups
- Bilingual teachers in adult education/job training
- Information about living and working in the US (ex: sex harassment)
- Job postings/marketing in other languages
- Access to healthcare, often dependent on good jobs
- Transitions/re-certifications for individuals with education/certifications in native countries
  - A class to help transition/translate information
- Work experience/paid internships for ELLs
- Bias/perception about true skill level due to speaking skills
- Difficulty describing work history/work experience to employers

## **2. What kinds of services or support would help these jobseekers access living-wage employment?**

- Funding for navigators/case managers
- Access to incentives/supportive services
- Access and streamlining of services, less hoops and more help
- Childcare/child support (affordable)
- Funding/resources for children with special needs
- Legal services, Right-to-work, immigration services, connection to AJCC services and social services
- Pipelines to union/hourly wage jobs
- Communication to/for workers about labor laws
  - How to report abuse
  - How to get information and support
- Education/training on labor laws/worker rights
- No Assistance for businesses who have a bad record of respecting or abusing worker rights
- Better monitoring of posting of labor laws/worker rights
- Training/exams offered in different languages and formats
- "Customized" ESL/VESL/IET (Integrated Education Training)
- Integration of immigrants into our communities, civic involvement
- Educate employers on the benefits of hiring immigrants and the investment. Valued appreciation of immigrants.
- Immigration resource center (Welcoming cities - LA County)

### **3. What kinds of partnerships should Pacific Gateway develop to ensure these jobseekers have full access to pathway programs?**

- Everyone, all staff should be informed/trained about what's available, full referrals to service.
- Ethnic community-based organizations
  - CAA
  - UCC
  - Centro CHA
  - Immigrant Rights Org.
  - Thriving Filipino Federation
  - Samoan
- Stronger relationships and trust with CBOs, better communication
- Neighboring cities, centers of employment
- School system
- Small businesses, minority-owned businesses
- Coalitions:
  - Language Access
  - Local Hire
  - Economic Inclusion

### **4. In what other ways should the local workforce system support English-Language Learners, Immigrant, and Refugee Communities?**

- Community representation on the Board, community members who can speak on experiences
- Youth on the Board who can speak on their barriers and experiences
- Regular, structured community input and dialogue
  - Host different cultural events at AJCC
- Present in the community, actual people, not just CBOs
- Advisory of youth and immigrants developing best practices
- Be proactive, not reactive
- Immigrants highlighted as positive models, success stories
- Engage the community, don't just rely on the CBOs. Don't want to be treated as token organizations.
- Strong local hire policy beyond construction
  - Incentivize employers
- Cultural competency training for staff and Board
- Educate Board on cultural diversity, community challenges

- Transparency of leadership within Cambodian community
  - Unity among all groups
- Information/resource guide for newly arrived immigrants
- Jobs that match evolving English skills
  - Jobs that can be accessed with skills they have now
- Control/single source of information for this work