

COUNTY OF  
SAN BERNARDINO



WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

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## For Immediate Release

### **San Bernardino County Workforce Investment Board's On-The-Job Training Program Relieves Welfare Rolls**

*Local business hires and trains former welfare recipients through County's On-The-Job Training program*

San Bernardino, CA (February 24, 2011) – Through government and business partnerships in San Bernardino County, training programs are helping reduce the number of people on welfare, develop their skills and stimulate businesses growth in spite of a tough economy. The County of San Bernardino Board of Supervisors knows that assisting businesses during these tough times is the key to our local economic recovery and uses funding received through the Workforce Investment Act to provide this assistance.

J & R Fleet Services is a family-owned truck repair center based in Bloomington. The business had experienced steady growth since opening in 1998, but the economic slowdown of the last few years made it difficult to hire additional employees, especially trained workers.

“We begin working on our clients’ repairs within 30 minutes of arrival and no appointment is required,” explained Javier Rodriguez, one of the three brothers who owns and manages J & R Fleet Services. “In order to continue these quick turnaround times that we and our customers expect, we have to maintain enough staff to deliver on our promise of unsurpassed customer service.”

Six employees were hired last month into entry-level positions with J & R Fleet Services through Federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) dollars administered locally by the Workforce Investment Board of San Bernardino County. These federal dollars reimburse employers for the wages paid during a pre-determined training period. In this case, all six employees had been receiving government assistance prior to being hired.

“Nearly 1,000 residents of San Bernardino County have been placed in jobs through federally funded on-the-job training programs reducing government assistance while promoting self-reliance, economic sustainability and self-pride,” said Chair Josie Gonzales, San Bernardino County Fifth District Supervisor. “This is just one of the many ways that federal Workforce Investment Act funding is impacting the lives of our county’s residents.”

“We’re a small business and the On-the-Job Training program made it possible for us to hire nearly ten percent of our workforce, train them in entry-level positions and develop their skills at our company,” Rodriguez said. “We hired all of them into full-time positions and the work ethic and dedication they demonstrated has helped them quickly move up the ranks and earn promotions.”

To qualify for this program, participants must have been receiving government assistance. On-the-Job Training offers a way off the government’s payroll and a chance to develop marketable job skills that make participants a competitive member of the workforce.

“Taking into account the dollars spent to train versus recovery of these funds through federal wage withholding, we average a strong return on investment in less than one year,” said Sandy Harmsen, Executive Director of the Workforce Investment Board. “People get back to work with new skills, are removed from federally-subsidized assistance programs and return as proud and productive members of the community.”

This program allows employers to grow in a difficult economy by obtaining temporary training subsidies. In these ways, federal funding is working successfully to create more job opportunities for our local workforce.

“The benefits from participating in this program are numerous,” Rodriguez said. “We now have six dedicated new members in the J & R Fleet Services family, and we know that our company has helped to improve their lives. It would not have been possible without the federally-funded WIA program.”

For more information, employers and job seekers can inquire through the County’s Employment Resource Centers at (800) 451-JOBS.

### **About the Workforce Investment Board of San Bernardino County**

The Workforce Investment Board of San Bernardino County is comprised of private business representatives and public partners appointed by the County Board of Supervisors. The Board strives to strengthen the skills of the county’s workforce through partnerships with business, education and community-based organizations. The County Board of Supervisors is committed to providing county resources which generate jobs and investment.

The Workforce Investment Board, through the County’s Economic Development Agency and Workforce Development Department, operates the County’s Employment Resource Centers (ERCs) and Business Resource Centers (BRCs). The ERCs provide individuals with job training, placement and the tools to strengthen their skills to achieve a higher quality of life, and the BRCs support and provide services to the county’s businesses including employee recruitment.

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