



NEWS ALERT

For Immediate Release

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U.S. Vet, At-Risk Individuals Awarded for Stellar Job Performances While Transforming their Lives through PVJOBS Program

***Hensel Phelps Construction and City of L.A. Director of Contract Administration also Honored
for Advocating Hiring Programs for At-Risk Residents***

Los Angeles—November 19, 2012—A military veteran and three at-risk individuals were recently recognized for their exceptional job performances at the Transforming Lives and Communities awards event. The event was organized by PVJOBS, a nonprofit program that provides construction job opportunities to the at-risk community. Nearly 300 business, labor and community service representatives attended the event, which was held at the Center at Cathedral Plaza in downtown Los Angeles.

Hensel Phelps Construction also was honored as the Contractor of the Year for the company's work in implementing a successful local hiring program while redeveloping the Martin Luther King Jr. Inpatient Tower in Watts. A final award was presented to John Reamer, City of L.A. Director of the Bureau of Contract Administration, for advocating hiring programs that benefit at-risk residents.

"We've all been given second, third, fourth and even more chances in life, including myself," said Reamer, who served as the event's keynote speaker. "We're helping people get new chances in life so they can reach their highest potential."

The award recipients who were recognized for their job performances received perfect scores rated by their construction employers. What makes their awards particularly special is that these positions are the first construction jobs that these workers have ever held. The award recipients were: Shawn Fuller, Veteran of the Year; Christopher Washington, Core Worker of the Year; Da'Quan Thomas-Giles, Positive Pathways Program Worker of the Year; and Anabel Soriano, Intern of the Year.

Fuller, a military veteran who holds a degree in kinesiology and adaptive physical education, sidetracked his life several years ago and was sentenced to serve time in the penal system. After working with the PVJOBS staff, he discovered his interest in drywall, which led to his current drywall union apprentice position with Los Angeles Engineering. Washington is an ex-convict who completed a drug and alcohol program before visiting PVJOBS. Washington, who now works as a laborer for Los Angeles Engineering, was one of only three people who graduated from a laborers union boot camp class of 15 earlier this year.

Thomas-Giles was considered an at-risk youth before visiting PVJOBS, which enrolled him in their Positive Pathways Program that provides career guidance for juvenile offenders. Although he performed well in his first job at a shoe company, he was eventually fired after he was caught stealing merchandise. Despite his offense, he expressed full remorse for his actions and was ultimately given another job opportunity before enrolling in El Camino College to work on earning an associates degree.

Soriano once associated with neighborhood gangs before deciding to make something of her life by pursuing a college degree. As a promising architectural technology student at Los Angeles Harbor College today, Soriano works as a paid intern at the Los Angeles Community College District (LACCD) e7 Architecture Studio. The LACCD Interns Program, which PVJOBS operates, offers paid internships to students while giving them invaluable on-the-job experience.

PVJOBS is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization that works with major construction projects, unions and more than 100 community-based organizations to provide job opportunities to local at-risk youth and adults. These at-risk residents have either come from single-parent homes, have been welfare recipients, did not complete high school, have former gang affiliations, endured homelessness or have been incarcerated. PVJOBS has more than 14,000 active, job-ready candidates in its database. Since its formation in 1998, PVJOBS has filled more than 4,500 positions, maintaining a retention rate of 87%.

Photo #1 Caption: *Pictured at the PVJOBS awards event are (from left) PVJOBS Executive Director Ernest Roberts; Intern of the Year Anabel Soriano; Core Worker of the Year Christopher Washington; Veteran of the Year Shawn Fuller; Positive Pathways Program Worker of the Year Da'Quan Thomas-Giles; and PVJOBS Board President Jim Bickhart.*

Photo #2 Caption: *Pictured at the PVJOBS awards event are (from left) PVJOBS Executive Director Ernest Roberts, Hensel Phelps Outreach Manager Paul Santangelo, and John Reamer, City of L.A. Director of the Bureau of Contract Administration.*

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