

# ON SITE

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Playa Vista Job Opportunities and Business Services

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## Message from the Executive Director



Ernest Roberts  
Executive Director,  
PVJOBS

According to a recent report from the state attorney general's office, more than 17 million arrests were made in California from 1989 to 1998, and today more prisons are being built than ever before. A new federal report states

that more than 25% of our nation's welfare recipients live in California. In addition, the homeless population in Los Angeles is rapidly growing and drug treatment centers throughout the city are becoming increasingly overcrowded.

Though the scope of these problems is large, we at PVJOBS believe that these problems can be addressed by developing strategic programs that produce positive results. Significant impact requires a collaborative and sincere effort from public benefit corporations, private enterprises, elected officials and public agencies. To that end, PVJOBS is currently working closely with public agencies and private enterprises to expand career opportunities for our job candidates beyond Playa Vista. We hope that you will encourage your local community, businesses and legislative representatives to join PVJOBS in the fight against unemployment and other problems plaguing those at-risk.

## PVJOBS Employment Update

Construction is now underway at the northeast corner of Lincoln and Jefferson Boulevards. The 6,600 square-foot Visitor Center should be completed by late summer. It will feature multimedia displays demonstrating and defining the sustainable design concepts that will characterize Playa Vista. Also, the first 409 units of the Fountain Park Apartments are under construction. Crews are busily installing masonry in the underground parking areas. Street improvements and other infrastructure developments are also underway. In addition to these activities, seven builders are preparing building permit applications in anticipation of beginning construction within the next quarter.

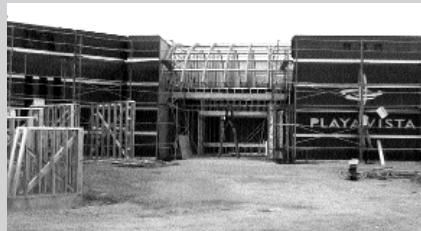
We anticipate a significant growth in employment opportunities in the next quarter as construction activities increase. Our projections indicate that 25 to 35 new positions will be available to PVJOBS through the fourth quarter, and another 35 to 45 positions through the first quarter of 2001. As of late May, there are 554 candidates in our database waiting for an initial referral. Yet, we still need candidates in specific trade areas. Candidates should be encouraged to consider

Construction Trade	Number in Database
Carpenters	299
Flooring/Carpet Layers	21
Concrete Masons/Finishers	32
Electricians*	10
Iron Workers	27
Laborers	279
Tile/Marble/Brick Masons	115
Operating Engineers*	4
Painters	94
Plasterers	24
Plumbers	98
Roofers	48
Sheet Metal Workers*	7

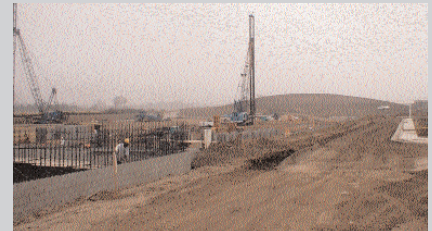
\* Trades Specifically Needed

these trades for possible careers. The chart above lists candidate numbers by general construction trades. The asterisks signify trades that are especially needed.

The PVJOBS selection criteria are based on the candidate's geographical area of residence and the number of at-risk factors present at the time of application. For more information, please call us at (310) 448-4684.



Visitor Center



Fountain Park Apartments



Playa Vista Job Opportunities and Business Services

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# PVJOBS at Work

## HARD WORK PAYS OFF FOR AMBER BIAS



Amber Bias

Twenty-one-year-old Amber Bias may be new to the job market, but no one can tell by watching her work for **Amelco Electric** at the Playa Vista construction site. One of the first female workers hired through PVJOBS, Bias works hard as an electrician at the construction site. "I enjoy working at something I like because it makes me feel better about myself," she said.

Although barely in her twenties, Bias has for years longed to earn a good living to support herself. Raised in Los Angeles as an only child of a drug-addicted mother, Bias

learned at an early age that she had to fend for herself to survive. When Bias was only 16, her mother abandoned her to move away with a boyfriend. Alone and frightened, Bias was forced to make a living with no job skills, having dropped out of high school at age 14. Out of desperation, Bias turned to her boyfriend, who encouraged her to sell drugs to make a living. The young couple sold and took drugs for three years until they were caught by the police. While serving several months in jail, Bias realized she wanted to turn her life around. "Living in jail is a disgusting lifestyle. I'd see people in jail who sickened me," she said. "I sold drugs because I loved the chase. But I realized that I'd rather chase my dreams by accomplishing something in my life."

After completing her jail sentence, Bias entered a six-month diversion program to get clean from drugs. Concerned about how she was going to support herself after leaving the diversion program, Bias entered a construction apprenticeship program offered by the **Venice Community Housing Corp. (VCHC)**. She became a quick study and earned her GED while enrolled in the one-year apprenticeship program. "Amber demonstrated from the start that she had a desire to learn," said Dennis Hathaway, a construction training manager at VCHC. "There was no problem in motivating her to work – it was slowing her down that was the challenge."

Bias decided early on in the apprenticeship program that she wanted to become an electrician. Even though the trade requires students to master algebra, she wasn't intimidated by the course. She enrolled in a night class to study algebra, and she later passed the electrician's exam on her first try. "Amber is a great example of someone who's had a lot of barriers in her life, but succeeded after getting the right opportunities," said Hathaway.

Soon after graduating from the apprenticeship program, VCHC referred Bias to the PVJOBS program. Within a few short months, she started working as an apprentice electrician at the Playa Vista construction site. "PVJOBS gave me a chance when I need-

*Continued on next page*

## RUDY REYES MAKES HIS DREAMS A REALITY

Not everyone is fortunate enough to land a job where they've dreamed of working, but it happened to PVJOBS worker Rudy Reyes. For more than a year, the 28-year-old Culver City native had been eyeing a job opening at the Playa Vista construction site, and he finally landed a job as a construction worker for **Tru Green Landcare** at the development this past spring. "I've always wanted to work in construction, and now I'm doing it," he said.

While today Reyes is working in his "dream job," a few years ago he often wondered if he'd ever earn a living by working in a career he enjoyed. Raised in a neighborhood exposed to rampant gang activity, Reyes joined a street gang when he was 12 years old. "There weren't any community centers to turn to in my neighborhood, so when my friends from school started joining a gang, I eventually did too," he said. As Reyes grew older, he began spending more time with the gang than in school. Even though he managed to get good grades, he gradually lost interest in education and dropped out of high school during his senior year. Reyes would later regret his decision. "When my little brothers joined a gang, I saw my mom go through the same problems with them that she did with me. It took me two years to realize that I was wasting my time with a gang."



Rudy Reyes

Determined to complete his high school education, Reyes went back to school and received his GED at age 21. He also enrolled in a trade school to learn plumbing, and he later found steady work as a plumber. However, Reyes' good fortune suddenly ended two years later. While attending a party with a friend, a shoot-out erupted between rival gangs. An innocent bystander, Reyes was shot nine times.

After being in a coma for two months, Reyes miraculously recovered from his injuries without any serious permanent physical damage. "My life was almost taken, but I guess it wasn't my time to leave because I didn't die." Following his release from the hospital, Reyes realized he couldn't return to his plumbing job due to chronic back pain caused by the bullet wounds. Struggling to find work, he eventually took a job as a janitor at the **Mar Vista Family Center**, a local community center that provides counseling and resources for local low-income families. Impressed with his hard work, the center eventually offered Reyes a job as a construction worker for their expansion project. "They started noticing that I was a good construction worker, so a counselor told me about PVJOBS," said Reyes. Excited about the prospect of working at Playa Vista, Reyes began asking counselors on almost a weekly basis about job openings at the development. A year later, Reyes received a call from PVJOBS with good news. "I not only got a job at Playa Vista, but I also got my friends on the PVJOBS waiting

*Continued on next page*

## VCHC PARTNERS WITH PVJOBS TO HELP AT-RISK YOUTH BUILD A BETTER FUTURE

While PVJOBS is responsible for hiring at-risk youth and adults for construction jobs at Playa Vista, the job program heavily relies on its partnerships with community-based organizations throughout Los Angeles to train and refer candidates to the program. **The Venice Community Housing Corp. (VCHC)** is one of PVJOBS' strongest partners, as the community-based organization has referred dozens of job candidates to Playa Vista.

In response to local gang violence and a lack of job opportunities for at-risk youth, VCHC in 1995 launched YouthBuild, a construction-training program for 17- to 24-year-old youth who have dropped out of school or are facing other major barriers to finding work. YouthBuild offers courses on general construction trades and enables students to complete their GED. The training program also requires students to work at



Anne Murphy

local construction sites that are owned by VCHC, Habitat for Humanity or other housing organizations. Through the on-the-job training program, students receive an opportunity to master skills in carpentry, painting, electrical work, drywall and plastering. The students are required to work 30 hours a week for up to a year during the training program, and they are paid for their work. Since finding jobs for students helps measure the overall effectiveness of

YouthBuild, VCHC's training counselors concentrate on finding permanent jobs for their graduates. Their hard work is paying off: VCHC recently graduated 19 students, and all but one of the graduates are currently employed. "Once our students are fully trained, job placement is the obvious next step," said Anne Murphy, economic director for VCHC. "Playa Vista is such a responsible corporate citizen in our community, and PVJOBS welcomed us to partner with them and employ our graduates there."

Although VCHC's training counselors focus on teaching marketable trades, they emphasize that leadership is a key component to successfully graduating from YouthBuild. "We're looking for people who are committed to doing what it takes to complete this program," said Murphy. "Students need to recognize what their barriers are and then take the responsibility for

## MATT CONSTRUCTION PUTS PVJOBS CANDIDATES TO WORK



Neil Matt

**Matt Construction**, a building management company specializing in new construction and retrofit development, has supervised the development of Playa Vista's Visitor Center since its con-

struction launch last winter. From the time Matt Construction began working at Playa Vista, the company has ensured that 20% of their workers on the project were hired through PVJOBS – twice the targeted hiring commitment requested by the job program.

"PVJOBS has been a great resource for our company because it gives us a wider exposure to people who want to work in construction," said Neil Matt, co-owner of the construction firm. "You learn in this business that construction workers are people like everyone else. There's really no difference in the performance levels of our construction workers and PVJOBS workers."

Matt believes that the key to PVJOBS' success is its ability to refer job candidates who are prepared to work in

construction. "PVJOBS is great about making sure their workers are capable of doing the job. But PVJOBS leaves it up to the workers to do their best once they get the job."

Hoping that other land use development projects will launch similar job programs, Matt expressed how important it is for construction firms to offer job opportunities to the at-risk population. "Construction companies should be open to hiring those at-risk because it broadens their pool of workers, so both the employers and workers benefit." Matt also feels that it's vital for companies to not discriminate against workers because of their past. "Hiring someone shouldn't be based on a personal thing. What's important is that a worker is qualified for the job and has a good attitude."

AMBER BIAS *continued from page 2*

ed it most," she said. Her new job also has given Bias more confidence in reconnecting with her extended family. "I'm not ashamed to talk to my grandmother anymore because everyone is so proud of me. And that feels good."

RUDY REYES *continued from page 2*

list," he said. Today, Reyes is proud to earn a better living for himself and his two-year-old daughter, Tiffany. "PVJOBS has helped me change the way I look at things. I don't ever want to turn back."

# PVJOBS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

## LAUSD APPRENTICE PREPARATION PROGRAMS (open to all)

African American Unity Center (Mr. Hammond) .....(323) 789-5656  
 East Los Angeles Skills Center (Mr. Gomez) .....(323) 227-0018  
 Los Angeles Technology Center (Mr. Wilcox) .....(323) 732-0153  
 Maxine Waters Empl Prep Ctr (Mr. Arunachalam) .....(323) 564-1431  
 North Valley ROC (Mr. Sehvani) .....(818) 365-9645

## ONE STOP CENTERS (adults, geographical or other restrictions may apply)

Beach Cities One Stop (Ms. Fisher) .....(310) 318-0675  
 Community Centers One Stop (Ms. Castillon) .....(323) 752-2115  
 Marina del Rey One Stop (Ms. Waters) .....(310) 309-6000  
 Urban League One Stop (Mr. Parham) .....(323) 292-8111  
 Wilshire-Koreatown One Stop (Mr. Richard) .....(213) 736-8567  
 WLCAC One Stop (Mr. Williams) .....(323) 563-5679

## YOUTH AND ADULT PROGRAMS

(geographical or other restrictions may apply)

Chrysalis/New Directions (Vets, Ms. Slayton) .....(310) 914-4045  
 Chrysalis, Santa Monica (Ms. Condie) .....(310) 392-4117  
 Communities in Schools (Mr. Leija) .....(818) 897-3549  
 Community Build (Mr. Bektamba) .....(323) 789-9950  
 Greater Bethany EDC (Ms. Johnson) .....(323) 753-0884  
 Housing Authority of L.A. (Mr. Smith) .....(213) 252-1810  
 IAM Cares, Compton (Disabled, Ms. Kominski) .....(310) 631-9606  
 IAM Cares, L.A. (Disabled, Ms. Mitchell) .....(323) 584-9453  
 Jobs for a Future/Homeboy Inds. (Mr. Carney) .....(323) 526-1254  
 Joint Efforts Inc. (Mr. Brookes) .....(310) 831-2358

## YOUTH AND ADULT PROGRAMS *continued*

LA Vets (Vets only, Ms. Harris) .....(310) 348-7600  
 Mar Vista Family Center (Ms. Diaz) .....(310) 390-9607  
 NO GUNS (Ex-gang affiliated, Mr. Marroquin) .....(310) 672-9348  
 Radio Sin Fronteras (Mr. Sarabia) .....(626) 255-5306  
 Santa Monica Barrios Unidos (Mr. Lares) .....(310) 655-2007  
 Save Our Future (Mr. & Mrs. Jordan) .....(323) 291-6623  
 SC PWI/SCRS (Ms. Ziegler) .....(310) 345-5713  
 Union Rescue Mission (Mr. Hopkins) .....(213) 347-6300  
 Unity One (Ex-gang affiliated, Mr. Taylor) .....(213) 963-5843  
 The WorkPlace (Parolees, Ms. Beverstock) .....(213) 386-1994

## YOUTH PROGRAMS (restrictions may apply)

CCEO YouthBuild (Mr. Zachary) .....(310) 225-3060  
 Covenant House of California (Mr. Aranda) .....(323) 461-3131  
 Goals for Life (Mr. Berry) .....(310) 462-0039  
 Joint Efforts Inc. (Mr. Brookes) .....(310) 831-2358  
 Kulick Youth Opportunities (Ms. Minor) .....(323) 789-2730  
 LA Free Clinic Project STEP (Mr. Jaime) .....(323) 462-8632  
 LA Youth at Work (Ms. Foggy) .....(213) 847-1584  
 PACE/SIPA YouthBuild (Mr. Leonares) .....(213) 580-0020  
 Peacekeeper ARK (Ms. Adams) .....(310) 276-9046  
 VCHC YouthBuild (Ms. Murphy) .....(310) 399-4100  
 YES YouthBuild (Mr. Drew) .....(323) 567-0091

For more information, call PVJOBS at (310) 448-4684.



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