

ON SITE

Volume 3 Number 1

Playa Vista Job Opportunities and Business Services

Spring 2002

Message from the Executive Director



Ernest Roberts
Executive
Director,

It is so exciting to see buildings being constructed from the ground up at Playa Vista. Once an aircraft manufacturing site, Playa Vista will soon transform itself into a state-of-the-art community. What's even more exciting is that the hands of those who once had no

hope are building this spectacular community. The history and future of Playa Vista has much similarity to the personal histories and futures of our hard working and dedicated PVJOBS workers. Like the proverbial Phoenix, they rise again.

As many of you know, there has been a change in leadership at Playa Vista. While serving as Playa Vista's president over the past several years, Peter Denniston's remarkable leadership and vision helped move forward the development project to its current state. We will miss him. As most of you know, former Los Angeles mayoral candidate Steve Soboroff is now Playa Vista's president. Like Peter, Steve also is a remarkable man of vision and leadership. Playa Vista and PVJOBS, by extension, are fortunate to have such continuous expert leadership at the development project's helm.

PVJOBS continues to move forward in our mission to help change the lives of the at-risk community. Won't you join us on our journey? You may find that it is *your* life that is being changed.

PVJOBS Employment Update

Several construction projects are underway at Playa Vista. Housing construction is progressing west of Lincoln Boulevard as well as both north and south of Jefferson Boulevard. Water's Edge, a commercial property at the northeast corner of Jefferson and Lincoln Boulevards, is also under construction. Infrastructure activities continue in the Campus Area at the eastern end of Playa Vista. In addition, the Freshwater Marsh has been constructed and the planting of native vegetation is complete. Occupancy for the Fountain Park Apartments is set to begin in early April, which is expected to bring new life to Playa Vista.

As of mid March, 297 PVJOBS candidates have been placed in more than 350 positions. Next quarter, we expect to fill an additional 150 to 200 positions at Playa Vista and beyond the construction site. Currently, we specifically need candidates to fill positions as **sheet metal workers, operating engineers** and **electricians**. Candidates for these specific trades need to submit an application to the appropriate union and pass the union test before becoming eligible for referral to work through PVJOBS. For details, please call us at (310) 448-4684.



Construction Trade	Number in Database
Carpenters	587
Flooring/Carpet Layers	28
Concrete Masons/Finishers	87
Electricians*	37
Iron Workers	113
Laborers	778
Tile/Marble/Brick Masons	226
Operating Engineers*	12
Painters	279
Plasterers	77
Plumbers	179
Roofers	115
Sheet Metal Workers*	20

* Trades Specifically Needed

Although our job program's admission and referral policy is not based on ethnicity, many have expressed interest in the ethnic composition of PVJOBS candidates employed. The following chart outlines these figures, as of March 2002.

Ethnicity	Number Employed	Percent Employed	Percent In Database (active, available for referral)
Asian	0	0%	0.8%
Black/African American	142	48%	49.9%
Filipino	0	0%	0.4%
Latino	117	39%	35.6%
Native American	3	1%	2.2%
Pacific Islander	0	0%	0.4%
White/Caucasian	35	12%	9.7%



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PVJOBS at Work

THOMAS PALIMINO: Discovering a New World

Building scaffolds may not be the most exciting job, but it's pure enjoyment for Thomas Palamino. The 28-year-old laborer had childhood aspirations of working in the construction industry, and his hopes ultimately materialized when PVJOBS hired him last year to work at the Playa Vista development site. "What's great about working in construction is that you can later look back at a project and take pride in knowing that you took part in building it," he says.

Palamino is not only helping to construct buildings, but he's also reconstructing his life. While growing up in the Los Angeles community of Maywood, Palamino had a close family who lived in one of the area's toughest neighborhoods. Although gang activity was prevalent in the community, Palamino managed to stay away from gangs by playing on a neighborhood football team that his big brother Andy coached. But at age 12, his life took a tragic turn when his older brother suddenly

died from a mysterious stomach illness. "His death affected me a lot because he was my mentor, and I looked up to him," says Palamino. "I felt an emptiness in my life, and I didn't know how to release that anger."

Unsured of how to cope with his brother's death, Palamino sought acceptance from local gang members, deciding to join the gang the following year. Over the next decade, Palamino's gang involvement led his life in a downward spiral – from dropping out of high school to committing a series of robberies. By his mid twenties, Palamino had served several prison terms. After his last prison release, his parole counselor recommended that he learn a trade by joining a firefighter camp. Palamino took his advice, and within a few months, he began working with the camp on two state construction projects.

With his parole behind him and two



Thomas Palamino

successful construction projects under his belt, Palamino returned to Los Angeles searching for work. He soon met with **NO GUNS**, a local job program targeting at-risk youth, particularly former gang members. NO GUNS included Palamino's name with 15 other candidates who were lined up to interview with PVJOBS for two job openings at the Playa Vista construction site. Impressed with his work experience and career determination, Palamino won one of the coveted job slots.

"I'm a better person now that I'm open-minded about building a career," says Palamino, who works for **Masino Plastering**, a Playa Vista contractor. "Growing up, the gang was my world. But since I've started my career, I now know that there's a much better side of the world."

AUDREY SCHLUND: Doing Her Best

Twenty-eight-year-old Audrey Schlund is starting off her construction career as a laborer, but if her plans go her way, she won't stay in that position for long. Schlund hopes to one day work as a plumber or inspector in the construction industry. She's already eyeing workers who specialize in these fields so she can decide which trade to study. "I'm learning a lot by watching other workers do what they do," she says.



Audrey Schlund

Excelling in a career while earning a good living affords Schlund a lifestyle that she's never quite known. Before landing her job at the Playa Vista

construction site last year, Schlund worked full-time seven days a week at a beauty supply store for a weekly salary of only \$125. She took the job after discovering that no one else would hire her because of her prison record. "I needed the money and I had nowhere else to go, so I settled for it," she says.

Settling was not necessarily a characteristic that Schlund embodied earlier in her life. While shuttling between Wyoming and Central California to live with her divorced parents, Schlund admits that she often took life for granted during her youth. She didn't enjoy school, so she quit when she was only 16. Instead of looking for work, Schlund spent her days hanging out in the neighborhood and eventually

began experiencing drugs. Over the next decade, she served jail time for several charges – from joy riding to drug use.

Determined to get straight after serving her last prison term, she enrolled in **Chrysalis**, a local sober living program. Once she became sober, she began working at the beauty supply store until she heard about PVJOBS through Chrysalis' One-Stop Center. Within four months of interviewing with the job program, she was hired to work at the Playa Vista construction site.

"PVJOBS was a life saver," says Schlund, who works for **Cal-X**, a Playa Vista contractor. "They gave me responsibility and a job that helped me feel secure." As she aims for her next career move at the construction site, she's now learned that it takes time and hard work to get what she wants. "I realize that I don't know how to do everything. But I just try to do my best."

Father Boyle Helps Homeboys Secure Jobs For A Future

No matter where you go in East Los Angeles, everyone has heard of Father Gregory Boyle. Some know him as the pastor of Delores Mission, one of the poorest but most active Catholic churches in the local community. Others know him for his unique skill in fostering dialogue among rival gangs. But most know him for his intense drive and ability to create job opportunities that help rehabilitate the lives of local at-risk residents.

As the director of two extraordinary employment programs based in Boyle Heights, Father Boyle is one of the most popular public figures in the East Los Angeles community. Since spearheading the launch of **Jobs For A Future** in 1988, the employment referral program has provided nearly 350 jobs annually to former gang members. In response to the 1992 civil unrest in Los Angeles, Father Boyle opened another job program called **Homeboy Industries**, an economic development enterprise that creates jobs through several employment ventures, including Homeboy Bakery, Homeboy Silkscreen and Homeboy Landscaping. The two organizations have since merged to provide job training and employment opportunities for at-risk residents throughout Los Angeles County, especially former gang members.

"One of the things that has plagued our community for years was the need for

jobs," says Father Boyle. "So we decided to create *our own jobs*."

What makes the employment program so special is that it was a movement before it became an organization. In the late 1980s, the Delores Mission community – one of the nation's largest groupings of public housing – grew increasingly concerned about the issue of gang violence. The community eventually organized a march that called on local employers to supply jobs to gang members. The march drew widespread support, leading Father Boyle to help the community form Jobs For A Future. Today, the organization provides job readiness, resume preparation and basic employment orientation. The organization also offers the "New Image" program, which provides free on-site tattoo removal and clothing stipends.

Although Jobs For A Future eventually realized successful job placement numbers, the organization faced a string of challenges during its early years. "Many companies wouldn't hire gang members because of the stigma they carried," says Father Boyle. Frustrated with a lack of employment offerings, Father Boyle creat-



Father Greg Boyle shown with workers at Homeboy

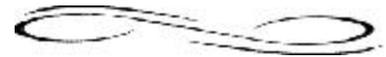
ed Homeboy Industries to enable former gang members to receive job training and develop a strong work ethic.

To expand job opportunities to local residents, Homeboy Industries partnered with PVJOBS in 1999. The partnership has since enabled many at-risk individuals to turn their lives around by pursuing construction careers at the Playa Vista development site.

"There are very few intervention programs that provide job opportunities to people who never had a second chance," says Father Boyle. "We focus on helping those who never even received a chance from the start."



IN MEMORY: JUAN TORRES



PVJOBS worker Juan Torres was on a promising path during his last year of life. At only age 18, Torres landed a job at the Playa Vista construction site after leaving a gang and fathering two young girls, whom he adored. But just as Torres got himself back on track, his life was senselessly taken during a random shooting at a neighborhood New Year's Eve party. An innocent bystander, he and two others were killed.

"Juan was on the right road," says Mario Prietto, who counseled Torres at

Homeboy Industries, a local employment center for former gang members. "He left his troubled life behind him, and he got the job on his own merits."

Described by Prietto as "intense and serious," Torres was passionate about turning his life around when he enrolled in PVJOBS last summer. He was excited to get a job building scaffolds at Playa Vista, and he was determined to use the job to help rebuild his life. His father drove him to and from

East Los Angeles every morning so he could work at the construction site. "That showed the commitment he had to his job," says Prietto.

Torres "came into his own" near the end of his life, adds Prietto. Sadly, what began as a fresh start resulted in a tragic end. Yet, the way Torres chose to live the last year of his life will forever serve as his legacy. We, at PVJOBS, offer our sincerest sympathy to his family. We will miss him.

PVJOBS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

LAUSD APPRENTICE PREPARATION PROGRAMS *(open to all)*

African American Unity Center (Mr. Hammond) (323) 789-5656
 Los Angeles Technology Center (Mr. Wilcox, x236) (323) 732-0153

ONE STOP CENTERS

(adults, geographical or other restrictions may apply)

Beach Cities One Stop (Mr. Addo, x3257) (310) 318-0645
 Community Centers One Stop (Mr. Ruvalcaba) (323) 752-2115
 Marina Del Rey One Stop (Ms. Waters, x212) (310)-309-6000
 Urban League One Stop (Mr. Parham) (323) 732-7867
 Wilshire-Koreatown One Stop (Mr. Richard) (213) 736-8567
 WLCAC One Stop (Mr. Williams) (323) 732-7867

YOUTH AND ADULT PROGRAMS

(geographical or other restrictions may apply)

CCTP (Ms. Aguilar) (310) 673-3941
 Community Build (Mr. Bektamba) (323) 789-9950
 Chrysalis, Santa Monica (Ms. Zepeda) (310) 392-4117
 Chrysalis/New Directions (Vets, Ms. Slayton) (310) 914-4045
 Communities in Schools (Mr. Leija) (818) 891-9399
 Jobs for a Future/Homeboy Inds. (Mr. Prieto) (323) 526-1254
 Joint Efforts Inc. (Mr. Brookes, x116) (310) 831-2358
 Housing Authority of L.A. (Mr. Smith) (213) 252-1810
 IAM Cares, Compton (Disabled, Ms. Mitchell) (310) 631-9606
 IAM Cares, L.A. (Disabled, Ms. Gray) (323) 584-9453
 LA Vets (Vets only, Ms. Harris) (310) 348-7600

YOUTH AND ADULT PROGRAMS *(continued)*

Mar Vista Family Center (Ms. Diaz) (310) 390-9607
 NO GUNS (Ex-gang affiliated, Mr. Marroquin) (310) 672-9348
 Radio Sin Fronteras (Mr. Sarabia) (213) 250-3319
 S.M. Barrios Unidos (Mr. Lares) (310) 453-9492
 Save Our Future (Mr. & Mrs. Jordan) (323) 291-6623
 SC PWII/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, Mr. Portillo) (213) 386-3055

YOUTH PROGRAMS *(restrictions may apply)*

Boyle Heights Y.O.M. (Mr. Burks) (323) 260-4796
 CCEO YouthBuild (Mr. Delgado) (310) 225-3060
 Covenant House of California (Mr. Aranda) (323) 957-7455
 Goals for Life (Mr. Berry) (562) 698-1501
 Kulick Youth Opportunities (Ms. Minor) (323) 789-2773
 LA Youth at Work (Ms. Chaipen) (213) 847-1584
 PACE/SIPA YouthBuild (Mr. Leonares) (213) 580-0020
 Peacekeeper ARK (Ms. Adams) (310) 276-9046
 United Friends of the Children (Mr. Ruge) (310) 410-2565
 VCHC YouthBuild (Ms. Murphy, x117) (310) 399-4100
 Walden House Inc. (Mr. Medina) (213) 763-6238
 YES YouthBuild (Mr. Drew) (323) 567-0091

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



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Newsletter designed and produced by the Graphic Design class, Venice Skills Center, Venice, CA