

ON SITE

Volume 3 Number 2

Playa Vista Job Opportunities and Business Services

Summer 2002

Message from the Executive Director



Ernest Roberts
Executive
Director, PVJOBS

Playa Vista now has residents! Among them are several PVJOBS+ clients who are now living on site at the Fountain Park Apartments. More products, including those for sale, are coming online at a rapid pace. If you are interested in renting

or buying at Playa Vista, I suggest you place yourself on the interest list as soon as possible. You may sign the guest register at www.playavista.com, or call (310) 745-5200 for more information.

Our outreach and expansion efforts continue to be successful. We are experiencing much interest from agencies and other large development projects within and without Southern California. Our new annual report is now posted on our website at www.pvjobs.org.

PVJOBS+ recently held a staff and board retreat in the Malibu hills. One of the most interesting and inspiring findings was our staff's commitment to the population we serve and the cause for which we work. Whatever it takes to get the job done, they are there – even after-hours and on weekends. We are truly blessed. In recognition of their hard work, we will begin periodically profiling some of our staff so you can see what we see – how remarkable they are.

SYLVESTER MATTHEWS: *Working on the Other Side*

PVJOBS Contract Compliance Manager Sylvester Matthews has an important job on his hands. He is responsible for visiting Playa Vista's on site construction managers to ensure that contractors are complying with PVJOBS' hiring requirement of employing 10% of their labor force with workers who are from the at-risk community.

Matthews' work keeps contractors focused on satisfying the job program's at-



Sylvester Matthews

risk hiring goals – the very essence of what PVJOBS was created to carry out. It's a job that Matthews takes seriously because it holds a special meaning for him. Once considered "at-risk" himself, the 46-year-old identifies with the very workers he helps employ. "I was interested in applying for this position because I knew I would be working with at-risk individuals," says Matthews. "I

continued on page 3

PVJOBS Employment Update

Several builders are currently constructing a variety of residential properties both north and south of Jefferson Boulevard. Also under construction is Playa Vista's newest commercial property, Water's Edge, while more commercial construction is slated to begin later this year. As infrastructure activities continue, the Freshwater Marsh has been constructed, with the planting of native vegetation complete and flourishing. As of mid-June, 375 PVJOBS candidates have gained employment, filling more than 525 positions. We expect to fill an additional 150-200 positions this quarter at Playa Vista and elsewhere. Please keep in mind that many candidates listed in the table to the right are already working. We specifically need candidates to fill positions as sheetmetal workers, operating engineers and electricians.

continued on page 3

Construction Trade	Number in Database
Carpenters	694
Flooring/Carpet Layers	35
Concrete Masons/Finishers	109
Electricians*	43
Iron Workers	134
Laborers	993
Tile/Marble/Brick Masons	128
Operating Engineers*	14
Painters	346
Plasterers	90
Plumbers	203
Roofers	144
Sheet Metal Workers*	21

* Trades Specifically Needed



Page 2
PVJOBS at Work

Page 3
W. Adams Baldwin Hills
Job Center

Page 4
Community Partners

PVJOBS at Work

LEVENE HENYARD:

Painting A New Future

Most people feel a certain level of constraint when they're at work. But 33-year-old construction painter Levene Henyard experiences a sense of freedom when she's working at the Playa Vista construction site. "I like the freedom that I feel on my job, especially since I work outdoors," says Henyard, one of the few women working in her job area. "I can finish painting a 40-room floor within an eight-hour day without feeling pressured. And I'm still able to feel feminine in a masculine world."

It's that optimistic attitude that has helped Henyard get her life on the right track. Although she insists that she's always been a positive person, she also admits that she didn't take her life seriously until recently.

Although raised with a large supportive family in Watts, Henyard grew up with few aspirations in life. While she considered herself a "pretty good student," she lacked the motivation to earn her high school diploma, dropping out in her senior year. "I was rebelling. But I didn't know that I was going to hurt myself," she says.

After turning 18, she worked in a series of odd jobs – from mail carrier to child care worker to telemarketer. But instead of using her earnings to move into a place of her own, she opted to live in her parents' home over the next decade. "I believed in living a carefree life, and living at home with my parents allowed me to live that way," says Henyard.

Yet, the protective walls of her family's home didn't keep her from getting mixed up with the wrong people. At age 27, while joining a group of friends on a road trip to Atlanta, Henyard was arrested for drug possession, leading to an 18-month prison sentence.

Following her prison term, Henyard decided to move on in life without feeling embittered or inferior. "I felt like I paid my dues, so I just went on with my life," she says. "I knew I was capable of working. But I wouldn't work for anyone who didn't want to hire me just because of my past." Unfulfilled by working at various temporary jobs, Henyard decided to visit a local job fair, where she met representatives from PVJOBS. "When I realized they hired ex-



Levene Henyard at Playa Vista Construction Site

felons, I knew I needed to meet with them" she says.

Since being hired by PVJOBS last fall, Henyard has received promising reviews from Playa Vista contractor Mazzeo Painting, inspiring her to expand her career. She's currently attending apprenticeship classes, with a goal of becoming a master journeyman within the next three years. Despite her history, Henyard believes that her past has helped shape her into the person she is today. "I've always known that we all go through the good and bad in life," she muses. "But life can be good. It's all in what you make of it."

RICHARD VILLA :

Moving On In Life

Former gang member-turned-laborer Richard Villa has come a long way since PVJOBS hired him for his first "real" job working at the Playa Vista construction site nearly three years ago. After Playa Vista contractor Sally-Miller completed their street curbing and guttering assignment for the development project last October, the contracting firm was so impressed with Villa's work that they hired him to join their team for a similar two-month project for the City of Yorba Linda. "Once PVJOBS got me in the door, I learned how to be a hard worker," says Villa, 25. "As long as I worked hard, I noticed that my job assignments would get longer and longer."

When Playa Vista requested Sully-Miller to return to the development site to work on a short-term project, the contracting firm again made Villa a part of their team. However, once



Richard Villa at the new Metro Blue Line Project

this assignment ended, Villa found himself out of a job for the first time since he began working at Playa Vista.

Unsure of how to locate another construction job, Villa sought advice from PVJOBS Executive Director Ernest Roberts, who suggested that he notify the Union Hall and be added to the labor union's work list. Within two weeks of being posted on the list, construction giant Kiewit/Washington contacted Villa to work on an MTA project. Today, Villa is a

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

member of the construction firm's railroad track crew for the MTA's Metro Blue Line Extension Project in Downtown Los Angeles. "This is a large project, so I've got a lot more work ahead of me," says Villa. "Kiewit/Washington is such a big company that I see them as a way of keeping long-term employment."

Villa, who served two previous prison sentences for committing burglary, credits PVJOBS for giving him a chance when no other companies seemed to seriously consider him for a job. From the time that he worked in his first construction job at Playa Vista, Villa has since moved into his own apartment and purchased a car. "I've become a more responsible person," says Villa, who aspires to become a foreman one day. "It feels good to spend money on things and know that I worked for them. Once that started happening, I began to feel good about myself."

WEST ADAMS/BALDWIN HILLS WORKFORCE & INDUSTRY CENTER:

Putting Angelenos To Work

As the nation's unemployment rate reaches its highest levels in nearly a decade, the Los Angeles region has valued local job placement centers more than ever. One of these centers is the West Adams/Baldwin Hills Workforce & Industry Center, a busy community resource and employment agency that offers free job placement and training services to anyone seeking work. The center, which prides itself as "the gateway to economic self-sufficiency," provides customers with access to a multitude of technology-based information, job-related services, and skill development activities.

"We help provide gainful employment for anyone seeking a job – from at-risk individuals to white collar professionals," says Earl Parham, the center's manager of employment services. "Through job readiness training and counseling services, we work to empower people to position themselves as marketable job candidates." Although based in the Baldwin Hills area of South Los Angeles, the center provides services to customers throughout Los Angeles County. Serving approximately 2,000 job



Earl Parham

seekers annually, the employment agency offers a diverse array of self-service resources, such as a workforce information and resources area, a vocational skills assessment lab, and an employment library and computer lab. The center also provides practical job-readiness training workshops, such as How to Conduct a Self-Directed Job Search, Dress 4 Success, and Job Survival Skills.

While the center matches candidates with both small businesses and Fortune 500 companies, Parham notes that it's important for

job seekers to pursue creative ways in finding a job with the right company. "There's 800,000 businesses in Los Angeles County. Because there's so many companies, often people come in discouraged because they've had a traditional way of seeking jobs," he says. "But we train people to think 'out-of-the-box' because there's a wide range of ways to find the right position."

The center partnered with PVJOBS in 1998, making it one of the first community partners of the at-risk community job program. "We get quite a few people who walk in just to inquire about PVJOBS," says Parham. "Many employers wouldn't encourage people to get hired if they have a prison record, for example. That's why PVJOBS is such a great program – they deal with people who don't receive the same opportunities as others."

Sylvester Matthews Continued from page 1

could identify with these workers because I've been through everything that they've been through."

Before landing his job last year, Matthews spent the previous three years either unemployed or working in a string of short-lived jobs. He found it difficult to find steady work because of a mark on his past – a previous prison sentence – that threatened to haunt him in his quest to build a better life for himself. But that mark hadn't always been there.

Raised by his grandmother in Monroe, Louisiana, Matthews describes himself as a "good kid" who became a star athlete in high school. In his mid twenties, Matthews joined the Navy and moved to San Diego, where he was stationed to work as a storekeeper. "It was a good position because I was interested in record keeping and working with people," says Matthews. He eventually got married and had two sons during his service. But after working eight years in a department that he felt began to decline, Matthews decided to leave his long-standing job. Unfortunately, within a year, his marriage also ended.

Hoping to start a new life, Matthews moved to Atlanta, where he found work as a clerk for an accounting firm. But he was laid off within a year, spending the next five years barely finding enough work to earn a living. Desperate, he committed bank fraud, for which he was arrested and served 29 months in a federal prison. He says that the experience changed his life. "I vowed never again to commit a crime, no matter how hard the struggle."

After his release, Matthews moved to Los Angeles to live with a

cousin. He managed to find work in several temporary jobs, including a driver for Goodwill Industries, a PVJOBS community partner that informed him about available employment through the job program. When PVJOBS offered him the position, he was ecstatic. "I needed to do something positive – not just for other people, but for myself," he says.

In addition to surveying head counts, Matthews uses his job to ensure that workers are not only functioning in manual labor positions, but are also trained in a variety of trades. "I'm welcomed by PVJOBS workers because they know that we're actually helping them transform their lives," says Matthews, who aims to build a long career with the job program. "I intend to stay here helping these workers as long as PVJOBS is still here."

PVJOBS Employment Update Continued from page 1

Candidates for these specific trades need to submit an application to the applicable union and pass the union test before they are eligible for referral to work through PVJOBS. For details, please call us at (310) 448-4684.

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.



Playa Vista Job Opportunities and Business Services

12555 W. Jefferson Boulevard
 Suite 300
 Los Angeles, CA 90066

BULK RATE
 U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 KES MAIL

F.P.O.
 "UNION BUG"



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