

# April 12, 2024

## **Ish Herrera**

I want to allow our newest colleague Maria Linares to formally introduce herself, before I turn it over to her let me say it's been just such a relief and a treat to have an additional member to our team who brings a lot of insight, compassion, and knowledge into the work and who is one of your own, raised in Orange County and understands the dynamics of, your geography very well.

## **Maria Linares**

I am honored to serve as the Business Initiatives Manager and I'm really lucky to work under Jesse's leadership. I was raised in Santa Ana and now I reside in Tustin before joining OCBC, I worked at Cal State Fullerton in the Office of Admissions. Before that, I served as a trustee on the California State University Board of Trustees, a position appointed by the California governor, where I oversaw 23 universities. I earned my Master's in Public Administration from Cal State Fullerton and I'm a proud two-time alumni. I'm happy to connect offline. I'm looking forward to collaborating with all of you.

## **Ish Herrera**

Maria has been doing her due diligence and reviewing all the recordings for all the meetings we've had since last year and has gotten a feel for what we've been up to. She has been a quick learner and has ramped right in to provide valuable assistance to our collective efforts. So thank you again. We will now continue with our agenda for today's program related to apprenticeships with our friends at the Orange County Building Trades.

## **Andrew Gonzalez**

I am the Orange County representative for the LA and OC Building and Construction Trades Council. We represent over 150,000 men and women in over 14 trades and 48 different local unions throughout LA and Orange County. We are the largest Building Trades Council probably in the country.

## **Ben Garcia**

I am the executive director of the apprenticeship readiness fund of the LA NOC Building and Construction Trades Council. I currently coordinate 25 active MC3 apprenticeship readiness programs with various community colleges, community-based organizations, and high school districts. We utilize the Multicraft core curriculum, which was a curriculum created by North America's building trades unions. And it is a curriculum that is the only Department of Labor recognized industry-recognized credential that was created by the building trades for the building trades.

## **Andrew Gonzalez**

If you want to start an apprenticeship program, there are tools and resources for your industry to do that. A registered apprenticeship program is an industry-driven career pathway. If there's no industry on the other end to receive the graduates, there is no job at the end. So developing a partnership within an industry is vital to making this occur. There are three pillars of apprenticeship. They are paid jobs,

education, and credentials. Build Your Dreams (BYD) launched an apprenticeship program. What could take years to build, took them 18 months. If anyone knows anything about Palmdale and Lancaster, this is a severely economically disadvantaged community, with a lot of people of color, and they were able to take people with no skills at all, no manufacturing skills at all, and put them through a training and apprenticeship program. The UAE plumbers and pipefitters union offers a comprehensive apprenticeship program covering various trades like pipefitting and welding. Apprentices receive paid training, starting at \$17.26 per hour and increasing to \$36.82 over five years. Upon completion, graduates receive credentials and can expect middle-class wages, with benefits totaling \$57.54 to \$84.16 per hour. Note that this information may be slightly outdated.

## **VIDEO**

Our pre-apprenticeship program at Century High School offers a unique opportunity for students to explore building trades careers. With up to four years of study, it's the first step for those interested in entering the field. As the only school in Orange County offering such a program, we've developed it to meet our community's needs. Graduates receive valuable training, including OSHA certification and hands-on experience in various trades.

## **Ben Garcia**

We currently offer two programs in Orange County: one at Santa Ana College and the other at Century High School. These programs aim to introduce the community to the building trades industry. Our goals include promoting diversity and enhancing retention. By offering exposure to 14 different building trades and partnering with 48 local unions affiliated with the Building Trades Council, we provide numerous opportunities. We collaborate with local unions to provide study materials and sample tests, ensuring that our students are well-prepared for exams.

## **Ben Garcia**

In 2017, the Building Trades Council established the Apprenticeship Readiness Fund to bolster support for program graduates. This initiative aimed to secure workforce funding for existing community programs. We hired placement coordinators to facilitate connections between graduates and contractor signatory unions, as well as apprenticeship coordinators to ensure program success.

## **Andrew Gonzalez**

In Orange County alone in the City of Anaheim. We've got the OC Vibe, which is the new construction around homelessness. That's nine years of construction for new hotels, restaurants, and entertainment facilities, we have Disneyland forward, which is going to kick off, and there's gonna be a 40-year redevelopment plan of Disneyland Park. We're talking about \$2 billion in the first 10 years.

## **Mitchell Frieder**

I noticed in the materials you presented, that there was just one woman in all those photos and videos. Are the employers accepting of your apprentices from more diverse backgrounds?

## **Ben Garcia**

Our registered apprenticeship program has seen a 19% placement rate for women, a significant improvement compared to the national average of around 2% and the state average of 5-6%. To further

attract women to the industry, we've partnered with Metro in Los Angeles for the Women Breaking Ground initiative, dedicated to increasing female representation in construction. Additionally, we've secured funding from the state Division of Apprenticeship Standards, including \$1.5 million to support apprentices and pre-apprentices with childcare assistance, aiming to remove barriers to employment for both men and women.

**Katharyn Muniz**

What are the basic literacy and numeracy rates that you will take into your programs?

**Ben Garcia**

Various entrance exams with different levels of skill are required, we typically look at about a 10th-grade level, maybe a ninth-grade level. But there's a level of algebra, you know, mechanical reasoning, spatial awareness, that's required. Our programs have additional tutoring and additional assistance for folks who are a little bit below those thresholds.

**Katharyn Muniz**

So like a pre-apprenticechip?

**Ben Garcia**

Yeah, that's what our MC3 program does. We get them into the trade of their choosing for long term retention.

**Katharyn Muniz**

I run the Orange County Conservation Corps, with a lot of young people 18 to 30. I would love to talk to you more about perhaps establishing a partnership.

**Luis Sarmiento**

I also just want to call out the organizing work that labor also has represented historically and then the second part of my question is also just how are these programs funded?

**Andrew Gonzalez**

Our apprenticeships are completely funded by the members themselves. We take no state or federal dollars. A portion of every dollar that a member makes, funds the apprenticeship program. As a private organization, our main request when engaging with municipalities is simply for work opportunities. We're committed to our apprenticeship programs, the quality of our work, and the creation of middle-class careers. Given that many municipalities already pay prevailing wage for contracts, we believe it's a win-win proposition.

**Adine Foreman**

We want to thank Andrew and Ben for the work they are doing. Our organization is different from Building Trades in that we partner with Unite Here Local 11. Hospitality Training Academy (HTA) trains the hospitality, food, service, leisure, and tourism workforce in Southern California.

**Adrinh Terantonian**

We're excited to share and talk about our work in the hospitality training academy and introduce you to the work that we're doing.

**Mitchell Frieder**

So, we have a lot of different partners, we partner with many of the hotels, and we're at 167 partners at the moment. We're talking about some of the most major hotels throughout the Los Angeles and Orange to Orange County region JW, Marriott and the Bonaventure, hotel Sheraton, we also work with all the entertainment venues, with levy restaurants at Dodgers at the convention center, and all the employees at the airport as well.

**Adrinh Terantonian**

We never lose touch with the participants as many of them remain in our alumni group. Oftentimes hotels are coming in, they want to hire a higher level Executive Chef or chef. So we always look at the students that we already placed so we can move them to the next career step.

**Mitchell Frieder**

Our apprenticeships are 100% free, this includes class materials.

**Adrinh Terantonian**

We understand the barriers that many of the students may face while attending training. So we often partner with workforce development programs to provide additional wraparound services to our participants. This includes childcare and potentially rental assistance.

**Mitchell Frieder**

Yeah, a lot is going on throughout the Los Angeles, Orange County region, booming industry right now we've got a bunch of hotels being built, a lot of jobs are going unfilled at the moment, and we're trying to fill as many as we can. But we also have the FIFA World Cup coming in and the Olympics coming in with 100 new hotels that are under development 1000s of jobs are being created. Our programs are only eight weeks long. USC for example, waives a written entrance exam for cooks and also waives a practical examination where normally an applicant would have to go in and cook for them before they get into the job. Our students do not have to go through that, because USC understands what our students know. And we will not graduate somebody who is not ready for the job.

**Adrinh Terantonian**

The negotiations by our unions are increasing the wages constantly. Some of the hotels pay \$28 or \$30 an hour to cook, in a negotiation that increases to \$45 or \$50. Some of our instructors speak Spanish.

**Mitchell Frieder**

The employers are finding that our students are their favorite employees. We had one cohort where three students were justice impacted, they were still in ankle monitors in our class. While they still had ankle monitors they were hired. One of them is at USC and the executive chef says that he is their best cook.

**Iosefa Alofaituli**

My question is kind of in parallel with questions that were asked to the previous presenters. One is, what's the business model? Or are all of those employers funding these apprenticeships? And then so they pay those apprentices directly? The second is, are there more jobs out there than there are apprenticeships, or is it the other way around?

### **Adine Foreman**

In our business model, contributing employers negotiate a portion of their workers' wages into a training fund, typically ranging from three to 15 cents per hour worked. This generates about 1.3 to 1.5 million annually. Additionally, we receive funding from various sources, including the US Department of Labor, the State of California, local governments, and private philanthropy. Despite having more job opportunities than apprentices, certain industries like hospitality face challenges in attracting candidates. To address this, we partner with organizations like the building trades and SEIU, broadening our reach beyond hospitality. Our apprenticeship program requires a ninth-grade reading level and is offered in both English and Spanish. However, we aim to diversify our candidate pool by attracting individuals proficient in other languages, ultimately increasing representation in management positions.

### **Jesse Ben Ron**

Moving on to the next item on the agenda. We originally selected our industry priorities. We've received feedback indicating a need for more specific direction in our work. The current scope feels too broad for effective organization and decision-making. We're discussing refining our focus, potentially using three-digit NAICS codes. No final decisions will be made today, but we aim to revisit and decide on a more defined approach in our next meeting. Dr. Rob will provide further details on the NAICS codes, and I'll outline the next steps.

### **Wallace Walrod**

Jesse, Ben Palmer, and I have compiled a decision-making tool using NAICS codes to help narrow our focus. We've provided tabs for two-digit, three-digit, and four-digit codes. These tabs offer detailed descriptions of industry sectors, workforce statistics, and job types. We've also included employment data for 2023, wage levels, and location quotients to gauge employment concentration. Additionally, we've applied criteria such as employment concentration above 2, over 20,000 jobs, and a wage level exceeding \$38,370, which aligns with the UCI labor center's definition of a good job. This tool highlights sectors meeting these conditions, aiding the HR TC in decision-making. We're open to adjustments based on your input. Let's address any questions or suggestions.

### **Jesse Ben Ron**

The state has emphasized the need for specificity in our selections, though they haven't provided a specific number. We recognize the importance of prioritization, as it affects inclusivity. While the current list aligns with your previous votes on two-digit NAICS codes, we acknowledge that some adjustments may be necessary. One exception we propose is food services and drinking places due to their significant job volume, despite meeting only one of our criteria. As a decision-making tool, we invite discussion on whether to accept these industries as our focus or to revisit the selection process. We can explore options such as debating each industry or conducting another survey to determine the final

list and the maximum number of selections. Your input on this matter will guide our next steps. Any questions or suggestions are welcome.

**Christopher Duarte**

Regarding food service, the wages listed in the spreadsheet may not reflect current trends. There's been a notable increase in wages in the food industry, attributed to the efforts of labor unions.

**Jesse Ben Ron**

Any other questions about what you saw in the spreadsheet? We want to preview things in preparation for the meeting in two weeks from now.

**Jesse Ben Ron**

Can we designate a spokesperson from each subgroup to streamline communication? This person wouldn't have more authority but would provide context during discussions. We'll compile and share notes on subgroup strategies for review and potential approval. As for the execution timeline, we'll gather feedback and work on assembling all subgroup notes into one document. This will aid in strategy ratification. Any questions or clarifications needed? No decisions are required today, but we aim to keep everyone informed. Keeping in mind that there's only 75 million this time around, there'll be hopefully, if all goes well in the budget 100 million in the next fiscal year, and then 100 million after that. And also, just generally do we want to wait for the final state solicitation for proposal before issuing our own? So if we wait until they issue it in September, the window will already be open to receive funds.

**Andrew Gonzalez**

About how soon do we start making some hard hardball decisions here?

**Jesse Ben Ron**

Alright, let's streamline this. Any questions aside from the one Andrew raised? Because that's crucial. Now, moving forward, here's my recommendation: we need to finalize the regional plan, part one, and make some updates based on state input. We also need to finalize our strategies and determine priority industries by the end of August. The sooner we do this, the better, as it allows for clearer communication with the community and potential project identification. Regarding Catalyst, we'll aim to have strategy approval and RFQ drafting done by the end of June, with industry sector decisions made by the next meeting. We'll also review the theory of change and logic model. By August, we'll draft our own SFP to complement the state's. Finally, we'll launch a public forum in September to share our findings and engage the broader community. This might seem like a lot, but it's the roadmap for the next few months. Any questions or edits, please send them my way. Once the heavy lifting is done, our meetings will likely become less frequent as we move into the traditional Catalyst phase. So, any questions? Feel free to review this and email me if needed. Today, no decisions are being made; we're just previewing what's ahead.

**Ish Herrera**

See you all at the April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting and then monthly after that. That's good.