

MEDIA RELEASE

SEVEN COUNTY PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS OBTAIN PROFESSIONAL WELDING CERTIFICATION

County and Re-IGNITE Hope Partner to Help Harbor Hills Residents Receive Hands-on Training and Career Development

Lomita, CA, July 9, 2021 – Yesterday, Supervisor Janice Hahn and officials from the Los Angeles County Development Authority (LACDA) celebrated seven Harbor Hills public housing community residents for completing Re-IGNITE Hope’s Vocational Welding and Fabrication Program Certification course, and then received the American Welding Society’s Professional Welding Certification after passing a rigorous test.



“Earning a welding certificate can open doors for people and connect them with reliable, good-paying jobs,” said Supervisor Janice Hahn. “But these programs can be hard to come by and even harder to afford for many people. I am so impressed by this partnership with Pastor Bunyard and Re-Ignite Hope that not only made this certificate program free, but accessible to Harbor Hills residents. Every one of these graduates should be proud of what they accomplished and the investment they made in their future.”



Led by former Rolling Hills Covenant Church Pastor Steve Bunyard, Re-IGNITE Hope provides communities with hands-on career training, using a 51-foot mobile classroom on 18 wheels. Bunyard and Rolling Hills Covenant Church’s local outreach team worked with LACDA staff to ensure the welding school was a good fit for the residents.

Reva Mendez is one of the seven Harbor Hills residents who completed the Vocational Welding and Fabrication Program Certification course and received the certification from the American Welding Society. She joined the course to learn a new trade, start a new career path, and eventually achieve self-sufficiency for her and her family. Reva said, "I joined this program for self-growth and to show that women could also become welders!"

During the event, the mobile classroom was onsite and the students gave a brief demonstration of their welding skills. Additionally, to celebrate the graduates' hard work, the LACDA announced it will provide support to the graduates on securing long-term employment, including connecting with local organizations and unions, offering classes to teach interview skills and resumé building, and \$500 towards equipment, once the graduates secure employment.



Emilio Salas, LACDA Executive Director, said, "It takes a lot of courage to learn a new skill, as well as take the next step to make a career change. These seven residents showed a lot of dedication and determination throughout the course, and I'm so proud of how much they have been able to achieve!"

Re-IGNITE Hope's Vocational Welding and Fabrication Program Certification course will be offered to a new cohort of LACDA's public housing residents in August.

For more information on Harbor Hills Public Housing Community and Re-Ignite Hope Welding Program, please contact Ebony Jones, Resident Services Coordinator, at (626) 233-6414 or ebony.jones@lacda.org. All media may contact Elisa Vásquez, LACDA Public Information Officer, at (626) 586-1762.

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