

For Immediate Release:

February 3, 2015

Contact:

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Mayor Sam Liccardo Announces First Steps for San José After-School and Youth Jobs Initiatives

SAN JOSE—With a goal of addressing the critical challenges of economic disparity and public safety, Mayor Sam Liccardo today took first steps in launching two signature initiatives, SJ Learns and SJ Works, announcing the co-chairs and initial meeting dates of the working groups for both. The working groups will bring together experts from the community, education, philanthropy, labor, and business to tackle these challenges in a spirit of collaboration.

“We can arm every teenager with a job and a path to college, or we can let the gangs arm them with a gun and a burglar’s crowbar,” said Mayor Liccardo. “It’s critical for San José’s future that we reach our kids first.”

SJ Learns: After School Program

SJ Learns proposes to expand after-school programs for children in Kindergarten through grade 5. Emmett Carson of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, and Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco, will co-chair the SJ Learns Working Group, which will hold its first meeting on Monday, February 23 from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. in the Room 118, City Hall Wing.

“Investing in our children is an investment in our collective future. By expanding high-quality after-school programs for elementary school children we can set them on track for future success,” Carson said.

“All of San José’s children deserve the opportunity to access quality academic and enrichment programs that provide a strong foundation for achievement,” Councilmember Carrasco said.

The SJ Learns Working Group will have 20 to 30 members with backgrounds in education and youth development including school superintendents, school board members, as well as representatives from foundations, nonprofits, and universities, including Councilmembers Carrasco and Donald Rocha. The Working Group will develop a roadmap that identifies best practices within after-school programs, and potential private investors to leverage an initial City investment and expand the number of high-quality after-school programs for students in grades K-5.

SJ Works: Youth Employment

SJ Works has a goal of increasing youth employment and expanding access to job training for at risk youth/young adults. The co-chairs of the SJ Works Working Group are Josue Garcia, CEO of the Santa Clara & San Benito Counties Construction & Building Trades Council, and Matthew Mahood, President & CEO of the San José Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce.

“Despite our growing economy, youth unemployment continues to be over 20 percent. By working together, we can build opportunities for at-risk youth to develop skills so they can compete in the workforce and have success in life,” Mahood said.

“Often that first job experience makes all the difference for a teen, giving them the confidence they need to pursue further training or education. I’m looking forward to partnering to expand opportunities to get San José youth into the workforce,” Garcia said.

The SJ Works Working Group will hold its first meeting on Wednesday, March 4th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Roosevelt Community Center. Membership will include 20 to 30 representatives, including Vice Mayor Rose Herrera and Councilmember Johnny Khamis.

An early task for the SJ Works Working Group will be connecting youth with summer jobs through existing partnerships and nonprofits, such as Work2Future Summer Youth Employment Program, and TeenForce.

Mayor Liccardo will announce a push for funding for 500 youth summer jobs in his March Budget Message. Tomorrow, the County Board of Supervisors will vote on whether to provide funding for employment for summer jobs for 300 to 500 youth. The nonprofit Work2Future will be the contractor with the County.

There will be opportunities for teens to sign up and learn more about the summer jobs program at the upcoming Mayor’s Gang Prevention Task Force Annual Crime and Gang Summit on Saturday, Feb. 28, and at the State of the City Celebration’s Resource Fair on Saturday, March 14.

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Dave Cortese, President
Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors
County Government Center
70 West Hedding Street, 10th Floor
San José, CA 95110
RE: Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting
February 10, 2015 Agenda Item #16 (ID#74837)

February 9, 2015

Dear President Cortese,

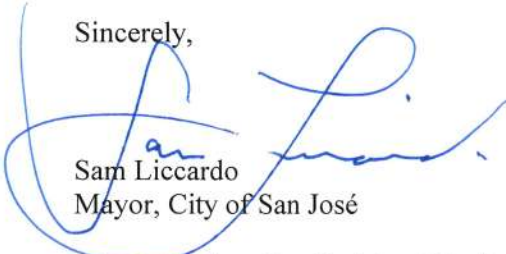
I write to express my appreciation and thanks for your support of the Work2Future Summer Youth Employment Program (County Board of Supervisors February 10 Agenda, Item 16/ ID#74837). I encourage you to consider recommendation 16.b and fund \$1,020,226 to the Work2Future program to provide youth job training and placement services for 500 youth.

To that end, I am prepared to propose that the City of San José match the County of Santa Clara funding with an equal dollar amount, to support this collaboration as well as creating youth employment program capacity within the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force.

The City of San José Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force is in the process of finalizing the 2015-2017 workplan on strategies and objectives for reducing crime and violence among our young population. Community meetings that were held to gather input in the workplan noted that opportunities for "job and college preparation services" were consistently ranked as one of the highest priorities. While the San José Metro Area is enjoying a relatively low unemployment rate, we are aware that youth unemployment is still at well over 20%, and a contributing factor to why some of our young people are being drawn to crime and anti-social behavior.

Your proposal seeks to activate our youth through employment and job training opportunities, and offers a way out of a negative lifestyle. I fully support this proposal and look forward to matching County funds with City funding as we collaborate on this effort.

Sincerely,


Sam Liccardo
Mayor, City of San José

CC: Supervisor Joe Simitian, District 5, Vice President
Supervisor Mike Wasserman, District 1
Supervisor Cindy Chavez, District 3
Supervisor Ken Yeager, District 4