

Moving Goods: Training Focuses on Logistics Careers

Ever wonder how that shipment of sweaters got from the dock to your favorite boutique? Or, how those gardening tools found their way to your local hardware store. There's an entire industry that specializes in moving goods from one location to another—it's called logistics. The logistics, or goods movement industry plays a significant role in Southern California's economy. It's also an industry projected to grow dramatically in the next few years.

Through funding from the City of Los Angeles Community Development Department (CDD) and the State of California's Employment Development Department (EDD), the Wilshire-Metro WorkSource Center and its community college partners are responding by training workers for careers in logistics.

This month, 25 graduates completed a 5-week pilot Logistics Academy training program. At the graduation ceremony,

Rosie, who has a new job as a Shipping/Receiving Clerk in the food industry, said the industry-specific training built her self-confidence to seek a job in the field. Andra, who aims for a Warehouse Worker / Forklift Operator position, is proud to be moving into an industry where he can move up a career ladder. A Job Fair followed the graduation where hiring managers from VersaCold, Lowe's, Fed Ex, Intertec, Aerotek Staffing, and others interviewed program participants.

Last year CDD's Wilshire-Metro WorkSource Center formed the Logistics Working Group to respond to employer needs. Training partners include LA City, LA Valley and East LA Colleges, and the Literacy Network of Greater LA.

The curriculum addresses logistics employer needs. Students focus on terminology and concepts they need to know on the job. They also learn about warehouse operations, the equipment used, and new technologies needed to move goods more efficiently and accurately.

The course also includes basic math, reading, and computers, all contextualized for the logistics industry. For example, students learn about averages by looking at the number of pallets a worker can assemble per hour, or work on reading skills by describing how goods safely move through a warehouse. Customer service is part of the curriculum as well as employability skills that include resume writing, interview preparation, and job search tools. Throughout the training program, employers made presentations allowing student job seekers to learn about the industry first hand.



Andra receiving his certificate of completion

While jobs in the manufacturing sector are on the decline, particularly in Los Angeles, economists predict there will be more than 1 million jobs in the logistics industry in Southern California by 2030. Careers in logistics offer higher wages on average than many other fields requiring the same set of skills.

The Community Development Department's WorkSource system is responding to this shift by investing in the local workforce – preparing graduates for the jobs of the future, today.