

**MONDAY MORNING GROUP OF WESTERN RIVERSIDE COUNTY
ANNUAL ADVOCACY TRIP – WASHINGTON, DC
APRIL 9 – 11, 2024**

INLAND EMPIRE TECHNICAL TRADE CENTER

ISSUE: Despite the Inland Empire having a rich variety of traditional postsecondary institutions offering certificate and degree programs, there are only a handful of highly focused technical training centers. These centers, while offering technical training in a variety of skilled trades, often lack the necessary infrastructure, support systems, and complementary academic offerings that California Community Colleges can holistically provide to the region's traditionally marginalized and underserved populations.

These populations are disproportionately impacted by the region's reliance on low skill, low wage labor in various sectors, including supply chain, logistics, and hospitality. They are also most likely to suffer from climate change impacts caused by the pollution produced by logistics and transportation sectors across inland Southern California. Given the need for education and training that provides residents with good jobs, the Riverside Community College District (RCCD) is working to create the Inland Empire Technical Trade Center (IETTC), an accessible and equitable regional training center that focuses on high skill, high demand, and high paying programs that provide students with opportunities to earn while they learn through registered apprenticeship programs. The IETTC is a response to the urgent need for high qualifying jobs for the region's residents, diversification of the regional economy, and for a locally available educated and skilled workforce for the region's current and future employers.

ACTION: The Monday Morning Group supports RCCD in advocating for financial resources necessary to establish facilities and programs that enable the region's current and future workforce development needs. To date, RCCD has received over \$37.5 million dollars to begin the process of planning, land acquisition, land improvements, and program development. However, early estimates indicate an additional need of approximately \$50 million dollars to site the first building at the proposed location in Jurupa Valley.

BACKGROUND: Government and private sector leaders across Riverside and San Bernardino counties (Inland Empire) agree that local availability of an educated and skilled workforce is critical for competitiveness in the global economy. The Inland Empire, while providing a variety of traditional educational options for students into and through the university level, suffers from persistently low rates of degree attainment and high rates of multi-generational poverty in marginalized communities throughout the region. Approximately 54% of the region's current workforce, or just under 350,000 residents (pre-pandemic statistic), is neither formally trained nor skilled and earns insufficient pay and/or benefits in jobs with no viable career pathway to a good job.

Economic development in the region will be driven by a need to increase the competitiveness and diversity of those sectors of its economy that concentrate on good jobs, including industries that sell goods and services outside the Inland Empire. These industries, including logistics, wholesale, and manufacturing, provide approximately 28% of the region's middle skill "good" jobs and do not require a bachelor's degree with the potential of earning a family-sustaining income within ten years. Advancing the competitiveness of these different industries fosters opportunities for local workers in the region to diversify into other tradeable industries with accessible pathways to good and high-paying jobs.

A vital component of the IETTC will be an integrated "earn and learn" model providing students with industry-based opportunities for apprenticeship, pre-apprenticeship, and other paid work-based learning opportunities. The IETTC is broadly connected to the region's key partners and is well-positioned to offer critical education, training, and supportive services necessary for hindered residents to achieve prosperity. Without this crucial resource, persistent economic and educational gaps will grow as workforce demands of a diversifying and technologically advancing economy will require ever-increasing technical knowledge and skills.