



# NEWS

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City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department  
1200 West 7th Street, Los Angeles, California 90017

## **LOS ANGELES DEVELOPMENT FUND**

**Sandra Rahimi, manager**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Founders, L.A. Prep, 213-445-5283**

### **L.A. PREP HOLDS RIBBON-CUTTING, WELCOMES ANCHOR TENANT L.A. KITCHEN TO ITS NEW 56,000-S.F. FACILITY FOR ENTERPRISING FOOD MAKERS**

*The innovative facility offers 54 separate commercial kitchens and reduces regulatory and capital costs for food entrepreneurs*

**LOS ANGELES** – Los Angeles dignitaries joined the founders of L.A. Prep in a ribbon-cutting ceremony and welcome of L.A. Kitchen, its new anchor tenant, to its \$18 million, 56,000-square-foot food production facility in a converted warehouse in Lincoln Heights.

Speakers at the 10 a.m. ceremony included Kelli Bernard, Los Angeles Deputy Mayor for Economic Development; 1st District Councilman Gil Cedillo; Jan Perry, general manager of the Los Angeles Economic & Workforce Development Department; and Terri Williams, Dep. Dir. of Environmental Health, L.A. County Dept. of Public Health.

Unlike incubator kitchens, which have grown in popularity in recent years, L.A. Prep provides 54 separate wholesale kitchen spaces with shared access to cold, dry and frozen storage, a test kitchen and an on-site USDA office. About 75% of the units are already leased, two-thirds of them to businesses owned by women, said Mott Smith, who founded L.A. Prep with partner Brian Albert.

“If you’re a startup food company you can come to L.A. Prep and launch production in weeks rather than months,” Smith said. “We cut the red tape and hassle that have hamstrung small food companies’ growth in L.A.”

The biggest tenant, L.A. Kitchen, a nonprofit/social enterprise will take up 20,000 square feet for its food prep and education programs. Run by social activist Robert Egger and modeled after his successful DC Central Kitchen, L.A. Kitchen will source surplus fruits and vegetables and turn them into fresh, healthful and tasty meals for senior centers and other at-risk populations.

L.A. Kitchen will also provide culinary training to former foster youth and men and women coming home from prison in a 15-week hands-on program. Graduates receive a certificate in food handling and help securing positions in Los Angeles’ thriving food production and restaurant industries.

Egger, lauded as a ‘food hero’ for pioneering the community kitchen model at DC Central Kitchen, said the scale of L.A. Kitchen is far bigger than what he did Back East.

“This is the kind of thing cities dream of,” Egger said. “It puts L.A. at the forefront.”

When fully leased, LA Prep will provide up to 300 jobs in the culinary field.

Financing to acquire and renovate the low-slung brick warehouse that houses L.A. Prep came from U.S. Bank, Capital Impact Partners, Los Angeles Development Fund, Urban America and Civic Enterprise Development. Major funding was facilitated by Los Angeles Development Fund, a nonprofit Community Development Entity, through the federal New Markets Tax Credit program.

Perry, EWDD’s general manager, sits on the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles Development Fund.

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