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PRESS RELEASE

Contact: Jamie Francisco, Communications  
City of Los Angeles Economic and Workforce Development Department  
(EWDD)  
Jamie.Francisco@lacity.org; 213-744-9048 or C: 213-276-9321

Kevin Anderson, Public Information Officer  
County of Los Angeles Workforce Development, Aging and Community  
Services (WDACS) Department  
kanderson@wdacs.lacounty.gov; (213) 738-2593

***INNOVATIVE LA:RISE PROGRAM MODEL EXPANDS COUNTYWIDE,  
CELEBRATES INCREASED JOB TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOMELESS,  
FORMERLY INCARCERATED AND DISCONNECTED YOUTH***



The [Los Angeles Regional Initiative for Social Enterprise](#), also known as LA:RISE, is a five-year program designed to serve the populations hardest to place in jobs, including the homeless, those with histories of past incarcerations and disconnected youth. On Thursday, August 24, 2017, LA:RISE celebrated the program's early successes and the expansion of the successful model into the County of Los Angeles with an event at the historic Kim Sing Theatre in LA's Chinatown recognizing LA:RISE partners, supporters and participants.

"Hard work and determination should be met with opportunity and open arms — not closed doors," said Mayor Eric Garcetti. "With more than 1,000 Angelenos already employed, the success of LA:RISE speaks to an idea that is central to the American character: everyone should have an equal chance to follow their dreams and achieve success."

"Every member of society should have multiple opportunities to access a variety of skills development and sustainable employment," said Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas. "The initial success of LA:RISE highlights the potential to create more partnerships with social enterprises and expand this model's reach in order to broaden employment opportunities throughout the County."

"The success that LA:RISE has seen is inspirational. As a County, we strive to support the partnerships between social enterprises and workforce development that remove employment barriers for individuals. We firmly believe that these efforts will continue to transform lives and create pathways to permanent work," said Hilda L. Solis, Los Angeles County First District Supervisor.

Launched in 2015, the innovative LA:RISE program integrates employment, social enterprise and specialized homeless service providers within the City's Workforce System. Participants are placed in entry level jobs with potential for growth, such as food service, janitorial, street maintenance and office work. Participants also receive personal support services to stabilize their lives to help them maintain employment, such as financial literacy training and healthcare, along with career training services.

Initially funded through a U.S. Department of Labor Workforce Innovation Fund Grant, thanks to its early successes, the LA:RISE model is now a **\$15 million initiative** funded locally by the City of Los Angeles General Fund and Los Angeles County Measure H. **Successes to date include:** nearly 800 individuals in transitional employment and more than 200 individuals in competitive employment. Ten additional social enterprises have recently joined LA:RISE, expanding the model's reach to Venice, South Los Angeles and the San Fernando Valley.

"LA:RISE is an inspiring example of what can happen when the public workforce system partners with social enterprise businesses and employers to tackle one of the most critical challenges facing communities around the country: homelessness," said Carla Javits, REDF President and CEO. "It's a true honor to be part of this innovative collaboration."

LA:RISE is administered by the City of Los Angeles Economic & Workforce Development Department, in partnership with REDF, a venture philanthropy that supports employment social enterprise and the County of Los Angeles Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) Department.

#### **About EWDD:**

EWDD provides a broad range of programs designed to grow and improve Los Angeles' economy while building a well-trained and job-ready workforce. EWDD oversees 16 citywide youth development centers that offer educational and career readiness services for disconnected youth ages 16 to 24 who are neither in school nor working, 17 WorkSource Centers that offer a wide range of quality employment related assistance to job seekers and employers, and nine BusinessSource Centers that provide services including access to capital, business plan development, tax incentives/credits, business courses and training, employee hiring and workforce development to business owners or startups.

#### **About WDACS:**

WDACS is committed to connecting communities and improving the lives of all generations in Los Angeles County. WDACS provides employment services to adults and youth and works with employers in times of hiring and downsizing. They offer mediation services to avoid court filings. They also investigate abuse claims against older adults and the disabled population. WDACS provides nutrition and other life-enhancing services to older adults. WDACS' Human Relations Commission is dedicated to fostering positive inter-group relations.