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## Catrina's Corner

Catrina Blair Small Business Advocate



## Authority Provides Support for Small Businesses

Hear ye, hear ye! Small businesses, you asked for a helping hand and you got it in the form of our first official supportive services event hosted by the Authority's Small Business Team in October. About 100 people gathered at Bitwise in Fresno to hear from the Authority, prime contractors and subcontractors, who all have one goal in mind – to ensure that small businesses working on the project are successful.

Since heavy construction began in the Central Valley in 2015, our three design-build teams have talked about challenges small businesses face, especially if this is their first time working on a government contract.

“Companies must make sure their payroll program captures all the information they need. Failing to submit certified payrolls can be disastrous.”

Catrina Blair  
Small Business Advocate  
California High-Speed Rail Authority

# Investing in California Small Businesses

**SMALL BUSINESS NEWSLETTER  
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To access and download more information pertaining to the small business program, visit the Small Business Resources webpage at [https://hsr.ca.gov/small\\_business/](https://hsr.ca.gov/small_business/)

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## Catrina's Corner

Catrina Blair Small Business Advocate



According to our design-builders, certified payroll is a major issue.

Each week, small businesses must submit certified payroll forms showing each employee, their wages, hours, type of work performed, withholdings and benefits they're entitled to. The report includes a signed statement saying the report complies with the federal **Davis-Bacon Act**, which was passed in 1931. It requires prime contractors and subcontractors to pay "prevailing" wages. That means laborers' pay (cash and benefits combined) can't be less than what other workers are getting for similar work in the Central Valley.

According to Amanda Craft, Small Business Liaison for Construction Package 4, "Certified payroll can be confusing to small business owners who have no previous experience with it. We recommend that firms assign specific experienced people to handle payroll forms. For small companies, it may mean hiring someone just for that task."

Companies must make sure their payroll

program captures all the information they need. Failing to submit certified payrolls can be disastrous and result in not being paid, being responsible for back pay, contract termination, disbarment from future contracts and lawsuits.

People who attended our supportive services event talked to the Department of General Services, Caltrans, California Infrastructure Economic Development Bank, Fresno Office of Community & Economic Development and the Fresno Metro Black Chamber of Commerce. They learned about obtaining small business certification, improving their chances of winning a state contract, qualifications for bonding, insurance and small business loans.

Representatives from the **California Capital Procurement and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC)** were also on hand. The Authority recently signed an agreement to work with PTAC, which offers small businesses assistance with funding, completing certification forms, finding



Small Business owners from around California came to the Authority's first Small Business Supportive Services Symposium in Fresno. Small Business Advocate Catrina Blair organized the event to teach small businesses about what it takes to win a contract to work on high-speed rail and other government infrastructure projects.

### Small Business Program

The Authority is committed to small businesses playing a major role in building the statewide high-speed rail system. The Small Business Program has an aggressive 30 percent goal for small business participation including Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBEs), Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBES) and Micro-Businesses (MBs).

government contracts and matching them to contract opportunities that fit their skills.

This may seem like information overload, but we want small businesses on the high-speed rail project and those who are interested in government projects to be successful. When small businesses win, California wins. California's **2018 Small Business Profile**, authored by the U.S. Small Business Administration, shows small businesses employ seven million people, nearly half of the state's workforce.

As of September, our contractors have hired over **3,000 construction workers** in the Central Valley. They're just a fraction of the people working on the high-speed rail project statewide. These are good paying jobs that allow people to pay mortgages, go grocery shopping and take their kids to the movies.

And finally, in honor of Veterans Day, November 11, we're celebrating the men and women of the military by featuring veterans working on high-speed rail. Currently, out of 530 Small Businesses (SB) on the project, 56 are certified as Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBE). We salute you and thank you for your service to our country.

Of course, our doors are always open to anyone who wants to hop on board high-speed rail, help connect our major metropolitan areas and make the Golden State shine even brighter.

Catrina Blair

**1.** Information Officer Augie Blancas let small business owners know that of 530 small businesses working on the high-speed rail project, 162 are from the Central Valley.

**2.** The Authority's Chief Operating Officer Joe Hedges told small business owners they will get 30 percent of the high-speed rail work going on around California. The Former U.S. Navy captain explained construction work began in the Central Valley three years ago. When completed, it's estimated the initial operating segments between Madera and Bakersfield will represent an investment of \$4.8 billion.

**3.** High-speed rail design-builders and state agencies talked one-on-one with attendees at the Small Business Supportive Services Symposium in Fresno about upcoming opportunities, qualifications for bonding, insurance and small business loans.



# Go, Meet, Greet: Small Business Events

**November 12, 2019**  
**Business Advisory Council Meeting**  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM  
Department of General Services  
707 3rd Street  
West Sacramento, CA 95605

**November 13, 2019**  
**Small Business Basics**  
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM  
California Capital Women's Business Center  
1792 Tribute Rd. #270  
Sacramento, CA 95815

**November 19, 2019**  
**California High-Speed Rail Authority Board Meeting**  
Sacramento, CA  
Time & Location: TBD

**December 10, 2019**  
**California High-Speed Rail Authority Board Meeting**  
Sacramento, CA  
Time & Place: TBD

**January 28, 2020**  
**Construction Network Owner's Outlook**  
5:30 pm – 7:30 pm  
Long Beach Marriott Airport  
4700 Airport Plaza Drive  
Long Beach, CA 90815

**February 2019**  
**Business Advisory Council Meeting**  
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM  
Department of General Services  
707 3rd Street  
West Sacramento, CA 95605

**February 20, 2020**  
**Doing Business with the State of California and Becoming Small Business Certified**  
9:00 am – 12:00 pm  
Sonoma County Economic Development Board  
141 Stony Circle, Ste. 110  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**April 8, 2020**  
**Central Valley Business Diversity Expo**  
12:00 pm – 4:00 pm  
Peerless Building  
1755 Broadway Street  
Fresno, CA 93721



**April 1, 2020**  
**Veteran and Small Business Summit**  
9:30 am – 4:00 pm  
Conference and Recreation Center  
14075 Frederick Street  
Moreno Valley, CA 92553

The **Southwest Veteran Business Resource Center (SWVBRC)** hosts the 9th Annual Veteran and Business Summit. It's an opportunity for small business and job seekers to speak one-on-one with state agencies, companies and other organizations about contracts and whose hiring. Attendance is free.



**January 29, 2020**  
**Annual State Agency Recognition Awards**  
10:00 am – 1:00 pm  
Citrus Heights Community Center  
6300 Fountain Square Dr.  
Citrus Heights, CA 95621

Join the excitement when the Department of General Services announces the State Agency Recognition Awards (SARA). The annual celebration pays homage to state departments, small business (SB), and disabled veteran business enterprise (DVBE) advocates for outstanding outreach efforts and helping California meet and exceed SB and DVBE contract goals.

## Did You Know?

Interested in finding out how money is being spent on California's high-speed rail project? In the spirit of transparency and accountability, the Authority posts payments prime contractors receive for work performed on the project.

Prime contractors include our three design-build teams, who are constructing the first 119 miles of high-speed rail in the Central Valley. It also includes our Rail Delivery Partner, WSP USA, Inc.

Small businesses working on high-speed rail said they wanted access to the information. We also want to keep the public informed about work that's being conducted on their behalf.

Prime contractor payments are updated every month. You can see them under "Resources" on the Small Business Program & Policy page at

[https://hsr.ca.gov/small\\_business/policy\\_program\\_plan.aspx](https://hsr.ca.gov/small_business/policy_program_plan.aspx) or simply go to

[https://www.hsr.ca.gov/docs/programs/small\\_business/Major\\_Contractors\\_Payments.pdf](https://www.hsr.ca.gov/docs/programs/small_business/Major_Contractors_Payments.pdf)



### New Leader for Veterans Business Group:

Daniel Connor has been elected president of the **US Veterans Business Alliance**. He vowed to support local chapters and build stronger bonds with Alliance sponsors. Connor is a decorated combat naval aviator. Before retiring from the U.S. Marine Corps he flew Marine One, the presidential helicopter. He founded **Rams Head Solutions**, a company that provides and operates Unmanned Aerial Systems (drones) for first responders and construction and insurance companies.

(Photo courtesy of Getty Images)



**Amtrak Acela:** There's a speedy way to get from Washington, D.C. to New York. In September, Amtrak launched its new **Acela Nonstop weekday service** between the nation's capital and the Big Apple. The new service takes 2.5 hours and costs between \$130 and \$276. Right now, there's only one train per day going each way but officials say they may add more. Plans call for nonstop service between New York and Boston when they launch faster Acela trains in 2021.

(Photo courtesy of Amtrak)



**Altamont Corridor Express:** Passengers who ride the Altamont Corridor Express can now hop aboard the train on Saturday. Officials said communities along the ACE train corridor have been asking for weekend service. In September, they got their wish when ACE began offering two round trips on Saturday from Stockton to San Jose. Children under five ride free, and fares are half off for kids age 6 to 12. Stops include Great America theme park, Levi's Stadium and the Children's Discovery Museum. (Photo courtesy of ACE Rail)

# Small Business Works to Make Big Impact on High-Speed Rail

**THE LEBAUGH GROUP, INC.**

It's known as a small business, but **The LeBaugh Group, Inc. (TLG)** took on a huge task when it was founded by Chris LeBaugh.

"We were talking and he really wanted to make a difference and I said, 'well let's talk about this environmental thing, maybe we can talk about doing something,'" recalled Andrew Gregg of the firm's origins. Gregg is TLG's Vice President, an environmental attorney and LeBaugh's son-in-law. "Chris really put it out there to get this thing going."

LeBaugh's tenacity was no surprise to Gregg. LeBaugh is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who eventually lost a leg after he was severely wounded and rescued fellow soldiers in Vietnam – a gallant act that won him a Silver Star and Purple Heart. LeBaugh persevered and, after rehabilitating, had a

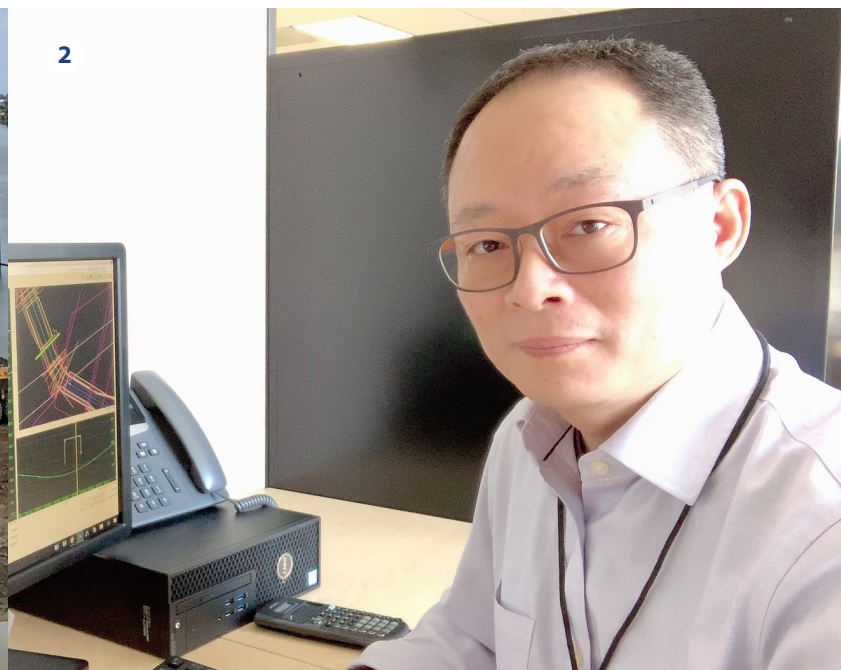
successful career as a commercial airline pilot before retiring relatively young.

In 2006, he launched TLG, a Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) specializing in engineering, environmental consulting and construction management. Gregg explained he currently represents TLG on a project to help create salmon habitat in the Willamette River in Portland, Ore., part of the Portland Harbor superfund site. For the last 11 years, the Signal Hill-based firm has worked with prime contractor STV on high-speed rail's **Los Angeles to Anaheim project section** contributing to environmental and engineering work.

"A lot of companies approach us and they just want to check off the box," Gregg said, lamenting that TLG gets its fair share of

"This thing will outlive all of us and for all the pain we all go through of trying to get this up and going, this will be something that can be around for a long, long time."

Andrew Gregg  
Vice President  
The LeBaugh Group, Inc.



**1.** Former Marine Chris Lebaugh launched The LeBaugh Group (TLG) in 2006. He runs the engineering, environmental and construction management firm with the same tenacity that earned him a Silver Star and Purple Heart during the Vietnam War.

**2.** Engineer Allan Chiang plays a major role for TLG's work on high-speed rail. He helps sort out right-of-way issues associated with grade crossings. It's a complicated process and Chiang must negotiate with multiple municipalities, water districts, utilities and other interests to get the job done.

opportunities because large firms seek out small business DVBE participation. “They say, ‘oh we’ve got to get our 3% so we’ll throw you a few dollars and we’ll be on our way.’”

Neither Gregg nor LeBaugh wanted to play that game.

“Chris actually wanted to do meaningful projects,” Gregg said, recalling early conversations with STV and the appeal of getting involved with the project. That prompted the hiring of Allan Chiang, an engineer brought on to help sort out rights-of-way associated with grade crossings.

Gregg credits Chiang for getting in the trenches and working to become one of the project’s most experienced advisors.

“He’s completely dedicated to that project,” he said, listing challenges like negotiating with multiple municipalities and interests. “It’s just a very complicated process.”

The firm’s contract with STV has yielded more than \$1.3 million and counting, a fact not lost on Gregg.

“It’s been nice to be one of the graybeards in the room at this point on the project. I wish people could take a longer-term view on this,” he said. “This thing will outlive all of us and for all the pain we all go through of trying to get this up and going, this will be something that can be around for a long, long time.”

Micah Flores

**1.** In addition to the work its doing on high-speed rail, The LeBaugh Group is helping create salmon habitat in the Willamette River in Portland, Oregon. The project is part of the Portland Harbor Superfund site.

**2.** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredges a channel in the Portland Harbor to get rid of contaminated mud in the Willamette River. To clean up the water and create a habitat that allows salmon to thrive, The LeBaugh Group must negotiate with government agencies, municipalities, water districts and utility companies.

**3.** An aerial view of the Portland Harbor superfund site, a heavily industrialized stretch of the Willamette River that extends approximately 10 miles. The LeBaugh Group is helping remediate the river which is polluted from decades of industrial use.



# Proud Marine Helps Others Join High-Speed Rail

People can hear the joy in Major Rebecca Robison's voice when she talks about her company, **She Marine Construction Supply (SMCS)**. "It's a platform to continue serving others," Robison explained.

Robison has a can-do, hard-charging attitude she said comes from her mother, who went to work on the railroad in the 1970s. "She became the first female conductor west of the Mississippi River on any railroad in 1979. After her sixth year of service, she tied for first place when they ranked all the trainmen in the Sacramento Division," Robison recalled. She knew in her heart that "a man's job earning a man's wage" would give her three girls a push up and out of poverty.

Being a United States Marine and combat veteran strengthened Robison's leadership qualities. After earning a Master of Business Administration and retiring from service, Robison opened SMCS, a Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE), in Lake Isabella. She and three staff members have taken it upon themselves to team up with other small businesses to deliver what's needed for

construction on the high-speed rail project.

In 2015, Robison visited a high-speed rail outreach event in Bakersfield. Later, she stopped by the Authority headquarters in Sacramento to learn more about small business opportunities. That background work led to her first contract providing office supplies to Dragados-Flatiron Joint Venture, the design-builder for Construction Package 2-3 which stretches from Fresno County to the Tulare-Kern County line.

Recently, the SMCS team provided nearly 65,000 feet of color-coded and marked conduit and couplings to support utility relocation for telecommunication provider **Level 3 Communications (now known as CenturyLink)** near the future Conejo Avenue high-speed rail structure in Fresno County.

To meet future demand, she hopes to expand her team to 50 to 75 individuals. However, in order to join her, Robison requires all potential employees to do two things. First, she wants them to read and discuss "Message to Garcia," an essay about an American soldier who, through hard work and initiative, delivered a critical message

to Cuban rebel forces during the Spanish American War. Prospective employees must also be familiar with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).

"My staff has to be prepared for the impacts of PTSD. It's chronic and something I manage daily. They can decide if they want to join a team led by a disabled veteran," explained Robison.

PTSD isn't stopping her or SMCS. Aside from working with high-speed rail, Robison has also provided construction supplies for the Rams Stadium in Inglewood, Los Angeles International Airport and Lake Isabella Dam and Spillway. She's an advocate for small businesses and provides others with insight on applying for major construction contracts, including working for high-speed rail.

"Small business inspires at the soul level. It's a playground for the imagination."

Karen Massie/Augie Blancas

"Small business inspires at the soul level. It's a playground for the imagination."

Rebecca Robison  
Owner

She Marine Construction Supply



1. After attending an outreach event in 2015, Rebecca Robison set her sights on winning a high-speed rail contract. Her firm, She Marine Construction Supply, recently provided 65,000 feet of conduit and couplings for high-speed rail utility relocations in Fresno County.

2. Robison counts time in the U.S. Marine Corps and her mother, a train conductor, as reasons for her hard-charging, can-do attitude. She also advises other small businesses on how to obtain construction contracts.



# From the Military to Construction Manager

When you enlist into the United States Marine Corps, you pledge to live by three core values: honor, courage and commitment. For Lloyd Suehiro, he's taken those values and experience as a Marine around the world and back to the Central Valley to work on high-speed rail.

"After high school, I went to junior college and figured out that I needed more worldly experience," said Suehiro. "That led me to join the Marines in 1990."

While in the Marines, he traveled across the U.S. and overseas to Japan and Australia. His time in the service allowed him to see **Shinkansen** high-speed rail train; **Kansai International Airport** on a man-made island in Osaka Bay; **Japanese feudal castles** dating back to the 16th century and the **Hiroshima**

**Peace Memorial (Genbaku Dome)**, the only structure left standing after the U.S. dropped an atomic bomb on the area in 1945. His interest in the design of these structures led him to pursue a degree in civil engineering after four years in the Marines.

"I've always had a passion for building things. Civil engineering was always more interesting because it has a variety of applications that I was able to take into my career," explained Suehiro.

Throughout his career, he's had jobs in several areas including geotechnical engineering, land development, and commercial and residential design. He's served on major Central Valley projects, such as the City of Madera Courthouse and

Cartmill Crossing, a 127-acre development project in Tulare.

Still yearning to do something big, he joined the high-speed rail project. In March 2016, Suehiro came on board as a field engineer. He rose through the ranks to area construction manager and currently provides construction oversight for the southern section of **Construction Package 1** including large structures like the San Joaquin River Viaduct, Fresno Trench and Cedar Viaduct. He also oversees quality assurance of construction sites and works closely with design-builder **Tutor Perini/Zachry/Parsons**.

"Being part of the high-speed rail project isn't easy. It's more than just building a structure - it's a mission. And everyone - whether you're a contractor, a state employee, or working for a small business - is doing their part," added Suehiro. "My experience as a Marine has taught me to always see a mission through until it's complete."

Augie Blancas



"I've always had a passion for building things. Civil engineering was always more interesting."

Lloyd Suehiro  
CP 1 Area Construction Manager  
California High-Speed Rail Authority



After seeing 16th century feudal castles and riding the world's first high-speed rail train in Japan, former Marine Lloyd Suehiro got a civil engineering degree. Today, he's the area construction manager for Construction Package 1. He said the high-speed rail project is "more than just building a structure - it's a mission" that he plans to help complete.

# High-Speed Rail Receives Top National Sustainability Ranking

California's high-speed rail project has once again received a 5-star rating as one of the top heavy rail projects in North America. The ranking is courtesy of the Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark (GRESB) Infrastructure Assessment, the leading benchmark for environmental, social and governance policies, practices, and performance of real estate and infrastructure investments around the world.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority's announcement is part of its **2019 Sustainability Report: Energizing Economic Revitalization**, released in September. The annual report covers the

Authority's sustainability activities for 2018 in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Standards Core Option – the world's leading and most widely adopted sustainability reporting framework.

"It is great to see California's High-Speed Rail Authority continuing to report to GRESB to benchmark its performance against similar infrastructure projects and assets, and against the entire GRESB dataset annually," said GRESB Infrastructure Director Rick Walters. "This ongoing commitment to sustainability is affirmed further this year by California's project moving back up into the top quintile and therefore receiving a 5-star rating. The



Authority's track record on sustainability, as measured by GRESB, will surely position the asset well when it comes to attracting private sector investment in the future."

As of mid-2018, the project's total investments into the system statewide had created approximately \$7.6 billion in total economic activity across the state.

Elizabeth Scott

# LA Union Station Reaps Benefits of Authority Deal with LA Metro

A new deal between the California High-Speed Rail Authority and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Authority (LA Metro) means a big financial boost for Los Angeles Union Station. In September, **the Authority and the California State Transportation Agency signed an agreement with LA Metro** that steers \$423 million towards a project called **Link Union Station (Link US)**.

Currently, trains enter and exit north of the station, which leaves trains idling for 20 minutes or more. Link US will build "run through" tracks allowing trains, including high-speed rail, to exit on the south side and significantly reduce idling.

"This is further proof that we are committed to bringing high-speed rail to Southern California," said Authority CEO Brian Kelly. "We are actively working with our

partners on projects such as Link US that will bring short-term and long-term benefits to millions of Californians."

Other key components of the Link US project include new rail communications, signals, railyard, platforms and high-speed rail tracks.

"This agreement further demonstrates that we are committed to working together to create a safe, sustainable transportation system for years to come," said CalSTA Secretary David Kim.

Metro CEO Phillip A. Washington added, "Everyone looks forward to the day when someone in Los Angeles can take Metro or Metrolink to Union Station, where they can transfer to high-speed rail for a speedy trip to destinations throughout California."

Money for the deal will come from **Proposition 1A**, the high-speed rail bond



Courtesy LA Metro



measure that California voters approved in 2008.

Los Angeles Union Station is Southern California's largest multi-modal transportation hub that provides rail connections to six counties.

Karen Massie



## Technical Tips for Entering the Government Contracting Arena

“We take great pride in mentoring and supporting small businesses,” declared Kevin Reed, the Operations Manager for **WSP, the Authority’s Rail Delivery Partner (RDP)** for the California high-speed rail program.

He was first on the list of speakers talking to 75 small business owners who attended the WSP Technical Assistance Training event last August at the U.S. Small Business Administration building in Citrus Heights.

WSP is the rail delivery partner that has taken California’s high-speed rail project from planning to construction. That work represents a \$4.8 billion investment in the

Central Valley. With 30 percent staked out for small business, that means \$1.4 billion will go to small businesses. The Authority’s Small Business Advocate Catrina Blair said, “After they get certified, small businesses need to make sure they’re prepared to handle a high-speed rail contract. They need to determine if they have the skills, financial capacity, bonding, licenses and workers to complete the job they’ve agreed to do.”

Reed recommended that small businesses join WSP’s online **Supplier Registration**. There, they can see WSP projects across the nation, contract opportunities and upcoming outreach events.

WSP Small Business Officer Rita Ohaya pointed out the goal of the training session was to strengthen the technical capacity for small (SB), disadvantaged (DBE), veteran (DVBE) and emerging businesses who would like to or are currently working on public works projects such as California high-speed rail. She said, “Ultimately, we want firms to be able to compete in the marketplace outside of the SB, DBE and DVBE program.”

Ohaya suggested small business owners get started in government contracting by attending outreach events and perhaps joining other firms that have the same goals. “They don’t realize the power that teaming has,” she added. “They might not be able to win a contract on their own, but with a partner they can make a bid and win it.”

Karen Massie

## Giving Back by Giving Blood

The California High-Speed Rail Authority team in the Central Valley rolled up their sleeves to give the gift of life this summer at the first High-Speed Rail Blood Drive to benefit the Central California Blood Center. Nearly 30 individuals came out to the Fresno event to help save a life by donating a pint of blood.

“Blood donations are critical in order to meet the need for patients in the Central Valley. But, donations often decrease during the summer months,” said Ersilia R. Lacaze, Director of Marketing and Community Development at the **Central California Blood Center**. “With 22 pints of blood collected, high-speed rail’s contribution has the potential to help save more than 50 lives.”

The Central California Blood Center provides blood and services to patients across five counties and 30 hospitals in the Central Valley. Nearly 5,000 to 6,000 pints of blood are needed to meet the demand for patients in the area. Blood donors are

encouraged to donate every eight weeks.

Authority team members and design-build contractors across all three construction packages from Madera to Bakersfield participated. As a thank you, each donor received a pint for a pint - a pint of blood for a pint of delicious Baskin-Robbins ice cream.

“This was a great way to bring staff

together,” added blood donor Annette Rodriguez, a contract compliance analyst. “Sometimes we get so caught up with life that we forget there are so many ways to give back to the community. It took less than 15 minutes in the donation chair to make an impact.”

Augie Blancas



Information Officer Toni Tinoco (left), Central Valley Regional Director Diana Gomez (center) and Information Officer Augie Blancas (right) rolled up their sleeves and donated blood at the first High-Speed Rail Blood Drive in the Central Valley. Nearly 30 Authority team members joined the effort. In return, each of them received a pint of Baskin-Robbins ice cream.

# High-Speed Rail Celebrates 3,000 Jobs and Counting

The 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Labor Day coincided with a very special celebration. The California High-Speed Rail Authority announced **more than 3,000 workers** are on the job in the Central Valley constructing 119 miles of high-speed rail.

“We salute the **3,000 men and women** who have worked to construct the most transformative transportation project in the nation,” said Authority CEO Brian Kelly. “We wouldn’t be where we are without our skilled labor force on the ground making high-speed rail a reality.”

There are more than 20 heavy construction sites between Madera and Bakersfield. Eddie Moreno is a carpenter foreman on the Cedar Viaduct in South Fresno. While overseeing a crew install steel rebar for concrete, he admitted he’s glad he’s not working out of town. “I’ve been doing this thirty years. I love Fresno and I love to be at home,” he said.

“I don’t know where I would be if I wasn’t

here doing this,” said Indalecio Osegueda.

The journeyman carpenter was assembling falsework at the San Joaquin Viaduct in North Fresno. “I’ve got an 11-year old, 7-year old and a newborn,” he said. “Every time we drive by here, they tell their friends and they tell me, that’s where daddy works.”

Since construction began, the Authority’s **Community Benefits Agreement** has ensured that disadvantaged workers get jobs. The agreement includes a Targeted Worker Program requiring 30 percent of all project work hours be performed by individuals living in disadvantaged communities where household incomes range from \$32,000 to \$40,000 a year. As of July 31, out of the 3,000 workers dispatched to the project, 121 were from Madera County, 1,134 from Fresno County and 227 from Kern County.

“As work continues to increase and the number of job sites grows, so will the need for a skilled workforce,” said Central

Valley Regional Director Diana Gomez. “As always, our goal is to transform California’s transportation system while creating good paying jobs for those in areas where jobs may be few and far between.”

Karen Massie/Toni Tinoco/Scott Waters

“I don’t know where I would be if I wasn’t here doing this.”

Indalecio Osegueda  
Journeyman Carpenter  
San Joaquin Viaduct

1. The high-speed rail project reached a major milestone on Labor Day, September 2. More than 3,000 construction workers had been dispatched to construction sites in the Central Valley. Journeyman carpenter Indalecio Osegueda’s children are proud of his work on the San Joaquin Viaduct in North Fresno. He said, “Every time we drive by here, they tell their friends and me, that’s where daddy works.”

2. Carpenter foreman Eddie Moreno is glad he’s not working out of town. “I’ve been doing this 30 years. I love to be at home.” Moreno is working on the Cedar Viaduct in South Fresno.



# High-Speed Rail Happenings



1. Crews work on the signature gateway arches which will act as a suspension bridge support on the San Joaquin Viaduct.
2. In North Fresno, crews have worked over the San Joaquin River and made final preparations before pouring concrete for the east archway.
3. Crews have placed rebar for the floor of the box that will carry high-speed trains through the Fresno Trench alongside the Union Pacific lines and under State Route 180 in Fresno.
4. Workers have finished tying rebar on the south abutment of the Cedar Viaduct in South Fresno.
5. In September, Authority Small Business Advocate Catrina Blair spoke at the WSP Technical Assistance Training in Citrus Heights and gave tips on bidding on high-speed rail contracts.
6. WSP Small Business Officer Rita Ohaya said many small businesses can increase chances of winning a contract if they partner with another small business.
7. About three dozen people attended I Will Ride Day in Fresno in October.
8. Authority Information Officer Toni Tinoco told students about progress on construction of the high-speed rail project.

# Vet Moves Small Businesses into State Bidding Arena



He spends 75 percent of his time “on the road” and he’s worn out dozens of pairs of shoes, but Wayne Gross is quick to tell anyone who asks, “I have my dream job. I get to help people every day.”

As an outreach liaison for the **Department of General Services (DGS)**, Gross advises small businesses (SB) and disabled veteran business enterprises (DVBE) on how they can win state contracts. “First of all, they must be certified,” he emphasized. “Once certified, they [should] develop a resume of what they can offer.”

DGS certifies hundreds of small businesses every year. When certification workshops are held, quite often, Gross is there, leading business representatives through the process. The state wants 25 percent of its contracts to go to small businesses and 3 percent to go to firms owned by disabled veterans. Gross always shares tips on how companies can win

bids. He explained, “They must update their profiles so that state agencies can find them. They need to market themselves and become professional “stalkers.” He added, “It is not what you know, it is who you know!”

Gross began working for the state as an office technician about 15 years ago and

worked his way up to his current job. He took a similar path with the United States Postal Service and the military.

He spent 22 years with the post office starting out as a machine operator sorting letters on a machine for 8 to 10 hours a night. He was promoted to supervisor and then worked five years as the Postmaster in the Amador County town of Sutter Creek.

Prior to that, he spent 9 years in the U.S. Air Force after graduating from **Westminster College** in Pennsylvania. The military took him to Thailand, Australia, Germany and Iran. When he transferred to Mather Air Force Base in Sacramento County, he became an instructor navigator. “I trained approximately 600 students in map reading and over-water navigation,” Gross explained. “Some of my students were the first female navigators in the Air Force.”

On the C141A Starlifter cargo jet, he

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“I have my dream job. I get to help people every day.”

Wayne Gross  
Outreach Liaison  
Department of General Services

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**1.** Department of General Services (DGS) outreach liaison Wayne Gross is a familiar face at small business outreach events around the state. He advises small business owners on how they can help California meet its participation goal of 25 percent for small businesses and 3 percent for disabled veteran-owned firms.

**2.** Wayne Gross has won numerous awards for his work with small businesses. In 2016, the San Diego district office of the U.S. Small Business Administration tapped him as the Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year. He’s also been honored by his employer, the Department of General Services, which hands out annual State Agency Recognition Awards. He’s taken home the Advocate Support Award and the Secretary’s Special Achievement Award.

navigated the plane over “drop zones” for troops or equipment on low level missions. Gross was one of nine navigators who had a special rating. He said, “I could navigate a C141A [transport plane] 50 feet above the ground with a maximum of 23 other C141As following me.”

Gross said what he learned in the Air Force still serves him today. “You are NEVER late for an appointment. You always call ahead if you are going to be late. Your word is gold, so don’t abuse it,” he said.

Over the years, his passion for his work has earned him numerous awards. In 2016, the San Diego Small Business Development Center recognized him as the Veteran Small Business Champion of the Year. He’s been honored at the annual **DGS State Agency Recognition Award** ceremony with the Advocate Support Award and the Secretary’s Special Achievement Award.

People who know him aren’t sure when he sleeps. He’s also a realtor, Uber and Lyft driver and a massage therapist. When he retires, he’s thinking about getting a job that helps veterans. He added, “Anything is possible. I may do some traveling, but rest assure, I will not be sitting down for very long.”

Karen Massie

**1.** Former Air Force instructor navigator Wayne Gross is a hard worker but admits he turns into a softie during his time off when he spends time with his grandchildren. Emory (left) and Cayce (right) were all smiles when Grandpa Gross came to their school, which pays tribute to veterans on Memorial Day.

**2.** Wayne Gross tells small business owners they need to get certified with the state and develop a resume of what they have to offer. DGS certifies hundreds of small businesses each year and, quite often, Gross leads those workshops.

**3.** Wayne Gross and his coworkers spend hours staffing exhibit tables and sitting on panels telling small businesses how bidding on state contracts can help improve their bottom line. Gross gets other state agencies, including the California High-Speed Rail Authority, to attend those outreach events and improve small business participation numbers.



# Military Vet's Vow: Leave No Other Vets Behind

Every year, hundreds of military veterans flock to the annual business summit hosted by the **Southwest Veterans' Business Resource Center (SWVBRC)**. They've come to get leads on jobs and contracts with a variety of government agencies and companies. Watching the hub of activity with a sense of pride is another veteran Albert Renteria, who founded SWVBRC after 26 years in the U.S. Marine Corps.

"If I had not enlisted, I would have never reached the age of 18," Renteria recalled. "My appreciation of this fact is part of what fuels me in giving back."

In 1974, Renteria was 17 when he joined the Marines after being raised with eight siblings in Chicago. He became a gunnery sergeant and a warrant officer. That's when he began working on a massive project to move the Marines from paper to computers. "During the 1991 Gulf War, we established a system to electronically track all deployed Marines enabling us to report a fatality within 8 hours of learning of the deceased,"

he explained. "For the first time, we used technology that wasn't available on the battlefield."

Renteria's work took him around the world and he was on the maiden voyage of the USS Essex, sailing twice to combat areas. Along the way, he earned a degree in computer science. In 2000, he retired from the military when he heard that the **Veterans Entrepreneurship and Small Business Act of 1999** provides veteran-owned firms with technical and financial assistance. He launched **ARRC, an online company** that provides marketing, advertising, video production and web development.

After earning a master's degree in e-commerce, Renteria leveraged his military benefits to build his firm. Today, his wife, daughter and two sons work with him. "We have grown substantially, have a large network and global clients," Renteria said. "We rarely pursue clients, clients find us, affording me more time to give back."

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"We have grown substantially, have a large network and global clients. We rarely pursue clients, clients find us, affording me more time to give back."

Albert Renteria  
Founder  
TheARRC.com/  
Southwest Veterans' Business Resource Center

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In 2008, Renteria established SWVBRC. He donates part of his earnings to the non-profit which educates veterans, active duty military members and their families about benefits and services available to them. Special emphasis is put on jobs and being an



**1.** Albert Renteria (right) spent 26 years in the U.S. Marine Corps. During that time, he worked on a massive project to set up a computer network for the Marines. He said, "During the 1991 Gulf War, we established a system to electronically track all deployed Marines enabling us to report a fatality within 8 hours of learning of the deceased." It was technology that wasn't available before then.

**2.** Hundreds of veterans attend the annual summit hosted by the Southwest Veterans' Business Resource Center. The agency, founded by Albert Renteria, helps veterans get leads on jobs and contracts with government agencies and a variety of companies. On April 1, 2020, the summit will be held in Moreno Valley.



entrepreneur.

Renteria tells veterans certifying their companies as small businesses can lead to lucrative contracts. This year, he's holding 60 "Skin in the Game" workshops around the country, making sure veterans are prepared to bid on contracts. He said, "Business is not for the meek. It's a calculated risk, so they learn from mistakes."

Staffing those workshops are volunteers who belong to another entity Renteria founded called **OPPS4VETS**. All of them are veteran business owners willing to help fellow veterans transition to civilian life. Renteria called their work invaluable, "They volunteer with SWVBRC to make all of this possible without the burden of [getting funds from] donors or taxpayers."

In the military, Renteria won two Meritorious Medals for designing a network of computers and providing training to fellow Marines. His greatest reward now is hearing from someone sharing the value of what they learned from him. His mission is ongoing. He said, "My purpose is to eradicate the notion of a homeless veteran by 2035." He invites anyone willing to help to get on board.

Karen Massie



**TheARRC.com**

Veterans revision

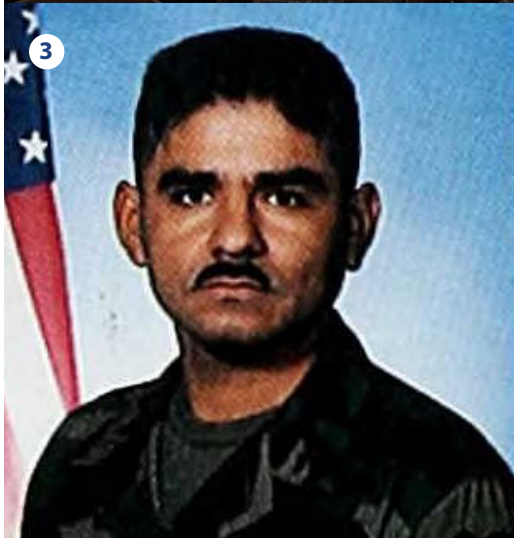
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1. In 2018, Barbara Carson, the Small Business Administration's (SBA) Deputy Associate Administrator for Government Contracting and Business Development, was among the presenters at the small business summit hosted by Albert Renteria and the Southwest Veterans' Business Resource Center.

2. In 2019, a group of volunteers joined Opps4Vets to help Albert Renteria with 60 "Skin in the Game" outreach events leading up to Renteria's annual small business summit. The pre-summit events help small businesses prepare to bid on government contracts.

3. Albert Renteria was 17 years old when he joined the U.S. Marine Corps in 1974. After serving in the military, Renteria launched ARRC, an online company that provides clients with marketing, advertising, video production and web development services. Renteria also founded Opps4Vets and Southwest Veteran's Business Resource Center to assist other veterans.

4. Friends can't miss Albert Renteria with his long beard and signature hat. Renteria has vowed to let his hair grow until his non-profit, Southwest Veteran's Business Resource Center eradicates the notion of homeless veterans. Renteria said he wants to reach that goal by 2035.



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## SAN JOAQUIN RIVER VIADUCT

Work is progressing on the signature “gateway arch” on the San Joaquin River Viaduct marking the border of Madera and Fresno Counties. When complete, the viaduct will stretch more than three-quarters of a mile.



### Interested in doing business with High-Speed Rail?

Visit  
[www.ConnectHSR.com](http://www.ConnectHSR.com)

### SMALL BUSINESS PARTICIPATION AS OF JUNE 30, 2019

**530** Certified Small Businesses  
working on the high-speed  
rail program statewide

**172** Certified Disadvantaged Business Enterprises  
**56** Certified Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA:

**188** Certified  
Small  
Businesses

CENTRAL VALLEY:

**162** Certified  
Small  
Businesses

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA:

**164** Certified  
Small  
Businesses

OUTSIDE OF CALIFORNIA:

**16** Certified  
Small  
Businesses

