



Downey Business

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DOWNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

11131 BROOKSHIRE AVENUE • DOWNEY • CALIFORNIA • 90241 | PHONE (562) 923-2191

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DOWNEY BUSINESS HAS IT "MADE"!



Diego Juárez is a currently a Warren High School Student originally from Guatemala. He has been an active member of Warren's IDEAS Club. Diego has also written a few articles in Spanish for the Downey Latino and aspires to be a journalist.

Diego Juárez es actualmente un estudiante de Warren High School originario de Guatemala. Ha sido un miembro activo del Club IDEAS de Warren. Diego también ha escrito algunos artículos en Español para Downey Latino, y quiere ser un periodista en el futuro.

noted that the young person is also placed in a temporary job during the summer in a field related to what they would like to become as an adult. This would benefit them in two ways. The participant would benefit economically for the hours worked during the summer, while still a student, and the work experience gained. Since many people manage to work in an area of their interest, this benefit them in the long term because they already have work experience in an industry of interest.

Students who participate in the MADE program come with greater knowledge of how to successfully apply for a job, coupled with the experience gained in summer work. This not only brings benefits to the student but also to the companies and businesses that operate in Downey. Many employers will have a young, more capable and experienced workforce. Consequently, training will be shorter prior to starting work which translates to less time wasted and more money saved for businesses. Many companies are so interested in the young people who are in the MADE program that they hire them for permanent positions. This is especially true for Hispanic students, since they are primarily bilingual and this allows businesses to serve more clients, while the Hispanic students receive assistance with university expenses. The best thing about the program is that in the end everyone benefits, both companies and students.

Versión en Español/Spanish Version

El programa MADE es una fuente de ayuda para los estudiantes del onceavo grado de la escuela secundaria Warren. En este momento soy un estudiante de dicho grado, por lo cual puedo ver cómo este programa nos ayuda a capacitar, para así prepararnos al momento de aplicar para un trabajo en la vida real. Un claro ejemplo es como nos enseñaron a hacer un currículum vitae y una carta de presentación. A muchos de mis compañeros, dicho programa fue de gran ayuda puesto que les formó considerablemente su conducta evitando comportamientos inapropiados en el área profesional. Personalmente me siento satisfecho, puesto que esto me será de gran ayuda al momento de solicitar una plaza e incrementará las posibilidades de ser aceptado, y por qué no decirlo, tal vez hasta mejor remunerado.

¿Cómo trabaja este programa? A la hora de aplicar para un puesto laboral, se necesita de cierto grado de preparación. Para hacer que los jóvenes dispongan de este conocimiento, el programa MADE los acondiciona por medio de seis seminarios en la primera fase y un simulacro de entrevistas de trabajo más unas orientaciones adicionales en la segunda fase. Aunque la participación en estos eventos beneficia al individuo al momento de entrar al mercado laboral, cabe destacar que el joven puede encontrar un trabajo temporal durante el verano en un ámbito cercano a lo que quisiera profesionalizarse como adulto. Por lo que se beneficiaría en dos maneras, la primera sería que dicha persona obtendría un beneficio económico por las horas trabajadas durante el verano siendo aún un estudiante. El segundo sería la experiencia ganada durante el trabajo. Ya que muchas personas logran trabajar en algo de su interés, esto a largo plazo los beneficia porque ya tienen un cierto tipo de experiencia a la hora de estar en un puesto laboral.

Los estudiantes que participan en el programa MADE al momento de integrarse al mundo laboral llegan con un mayor conocimiento de cómo comportarse al momento de solicitar un empleo, aunado a la experiencia adquirida en el trabajo de verano. Esto no sólo trae beneficios al estudiante sino que también a las compañías y negocios que operan en Downey. Muchos empleadores dispondrán de una fuerza laboral joven, más capacitada y con experiencia. Consecuentemente las capacitaciones serán menores previo a iniciar el trabajo, que se traduce a menos tiempo perdido y más dinero ahorrado para las empresas. También algunas empresas se interesan en los jóvenes que se capacitan en MADE, por el conocimiento que ellos adquieren, y pasa que posteriormente de contar con sus servicios en las vacaciones, los vuelven a emplear para puestos permanentes. Especialmente a los hispanos, ya que en su mayoría son bilingües y esto les permite a los negocios abarcar más clientes. Mientras que los estudiantes hispanos se ayudan económicamente con los gastos de la universidad. Lo mejor del programa es que al final todos salen beneficiados tanto las empresas como los estudiantes.

The Chamber would like to focus on one of the great programs that exists in the Downey Unified School District. The MADE program is designed to introduce High School Juniors to the world of business. This program provides qualified interns for your business at no cost to the employer. At the Chamber, we have participated for the last three year and have had remarkable candidates working each summer.

I recently spoke to this year's class of prospective interns and like always, I found them to bright, energetic, and full of questions. At the end of the session, a student, Diego Juárez, came up and had some questions regarding interview demeanor and how he might be perceived since he was someone who had recently moved to this country. He told me about his love of writing and his interest in journalism. I asked him to write an article and since his primary language is Spanish and he is working on his English, I asked him to write his story about MADE in Spanish and English. Below are his efforts and I think the article is terrific...in any language!

If you have any questions about the MADE program, volunteering as a mentor, or placing an intern with your company, please contact Carmen Tovar at The Bayha Group at (858) 633-6191 or email her at carmen@bayhagroup.com.

English Version/Versión en Inglés

The MADE program is a source of help for eleventh grade students at Warren High School. At this moment currently I am in 11th grade, so I can see how this program helps us prepare for applying for a job in the future. A clear example is how we were taught to make a resume and a cover letter. To many of my peers, this program was very helpful since it considerably shaped their behavior and aided then in avoiding inappropriate behaviors in a professional setting. Personally, I feel satisfied since this will be great help to me when applying for a position and will increase the likelihood of being hired and perhaps even better remunerated.

How does this program work? When applying for a job you need a certain degree of preparation. In order to make young people aware of this, the MADE program prepares them through six seminars in the first phase and a series of mock job interviews, plus additional guidance in the second phase. Although participating in these events benefits the individual when entering the labor market, it should be

Downey Business

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Michael Calvert, Executive Director
Sarah Sellers, Administrative Assistant
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DOWNEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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The board of directors meets at the chamber office on the third Monday of each month at 12:00 noon.

Events & Meetings

Wednesday, May 8 @ 11:00 am
Black Bear Diner
Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
7900 Florence Avenue, Downey

Tuesday, May 14 @ 6:30 pm
City Council Meeting
City Hall Council Chamber

Wednesday, May 15 @ 12:00 pm
Ambassador Committee Meeting
Rock & Brew
467 Stonewood St, Downey

Monday, May 20 @ 12:00 pm
Board of Directors Meeting
Downey Chamber of Commerce
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey

Tuesday, May 28 @ 6:30 pm
City Council Meeting
City Hall Council Chamber

Wednesday, May 29 @ 12:00 pm
City of Affairs
Speaker: Monica Lee Copeland,
Chief Development Officer,
Cerritos College Foundation
Downey Chamber of Commerce
11131 Brookshire Ave. Downey

Message from the President



It's a busy time of year here at the Chamber. Tomorrow is the 26th Annual Street Faire, the Golf Tournament is June 19th and we have the annual Installation Luncheon at the end of June. This is also the time of year when we say "good bye" to members of our Board of Directors who term out in June and say a big "Welcome" to our new Board Members. This year the Chamber loses two very active and important members Cindy Kovach of US Bank and Tatiana Paton of the Embassy Suites.

Cindy has been a big part of the success of the Chamber. She has been President, an Executive Board Member, Chairman of

the Parade Committee and a valuable member of the Street Faire and Golf Committees. Tatiana has worked tirelessly as the Chairman on the recently formed Website Committee and is responsible for many of the improvements over the last year. She has also volunteered for many committees and has been instrumental for the successes of our luncheons held at the Embassy Suites. Thank you, Cindy and Tatiana, for all your hard work, you both will be missed over the coming year.

Now the good part of this transition is that the Chamber is very happy to welcome two new Board Members who will serve for the next three years. Please welcome Ronald Long of Sunrun Energy and Greg Welch of Risher Mortuary. Ron has been very active as a Chamber Ambassador and is current the Co Chairman of this year's Golf Tournament. He was recently named as Co-Ambassador of the Year while volunteering for the Street Faire and Parade Committees. Greg is owner of Risher Mortuary and a long time Chamber member. Risher Mortuary was recently named as the Chamber's Small Business of the Year and Greg has been a volunteer at both Street Faire and the Christmas Parade. Outside of the Chamber, Greg is the President of Downey Rotary, on the Board of YMCA, GOOD (Gangs Out of Downey, and serves as a Chaplain to the Downey Police Department. The Chamber is very excited about these two new additions and look forward to their ongoing leadership contributions.

Hope you are enjoying Spring and I'll see you at the Street Faire!!

-- John F Casillas, President
Downey Chamber of Commerce

Message from the Executive Director



Welcome to May!! As you read this, the Chamber's Annual Street Faire is this weekend just as the Business Directory comes out! I hope you will all join us for a great day in Downey. Crafts, food, and wonderful information will all be available on Brookshire Ave. Come, bring your family and join your neighbors for a great day.

May is also Mother's Day. Downey's retail community will mark the occasion with many tributes to this very important person... your Mother! Now I don't want to diminish the value of a well-researched gift which will always bring a smile to the face of any Mom, but there is a way to honor her with some thinking outside

of the "gift wrapped" box.

As my Mother grew older, she always appreciated me spending time with her. Taking her to a favorite movie theater, grabbing lunch before or dinner after was always a favorite thing for her to do. I might suggest a small souvenir that ties into the occasion that when it sits on the bookcase or kitchen shelf so she will recall a really great day. Now the attractive Mrs. Calvert likes nothing better than to have as many of her children and now grandchildren around so she can cook something Italian and make sure that they eat until, well they can't eat anymore! What I do, and this will not be spoiling any surprises since I've done this routine for about the last 15 years. My job is to get the mother of my children ready for beach season. Which means that I will buy her a swimsuit, sandals and a sun protective hat. She loves the sun and water, but we are smart about sun protection.

Let me wish all our readers, a great time at our 26th Annual Street Faire and to the all our Mothers, the very best Mother's Day possible!! You ladies deserve the very best!

-- Michael Calvert, Executive Director
Downey Chamber of Commerce

MAYOR’S Corner



When I ran for office my purpose was and always will be to serve the residents of Downey. These residents include children. During my time in office I have learned that the need for foster homes continues to grow with Downey and neighboring cities experiencing an increase.

The primary purpose of foster care is to provide a safe and stable environment for a child who cannot be with his or her parents. Downey Cares Collaborative was formed to help children who have been displaced from their homes and need a place where they

can feel safe. The group's mission is to cultivate a public-private coalition to address the needs of children and families in the City of Downey who are affected by child abuse and neglect.

Many of us are unfamiliar with foster care and may wonder why it is so important. Maybe you have even considered becoming a foster parent but weren't sure where to start. By opening your home to these children you will help them learn what a stable home looks like. Oftentimes they have suffered abuse or neglect from their own parents, so they have no idea what a loving home feels like. Foster parents can help them learn what it's like to eat, sleep, and play in a place that is safe and stable.

Statistics have shown that foster kids are 50% more likely to become homeless, develop an addiction, be arrested and not graduate. I believe we are better than that!

Being a foster parent gives you the opportunity to teach a kid how to be a kid. With patience and love, a child can learn to laugh and to act their age. Foster parents help children understand that there are people who care for them and love them. Opening your home offers a safe transition period for the child while the biological family gets their issues resolved. Many times fostering can even lead to adoption. Helping a foster child is an essential component of bringing families together and helping kids to grow up and excel in life regardless of what they have gone through.

If this sounds like something you would be interested in doing or would simply like more information, please join us on Saturday, May 4th from 10 am to 1 pm at New Seasons Church in Downey. Representatives from the Los Angeles County Department of Children and Family Services will be on hand, along with other organizations, to answer questions and give information. Knowing that there are children here in our city that need a home truly is heartbreaking. Please join me and Downey Cares Collaborative in helping our local kids.

Rick Rodriguez, Mayor
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Lets Do Lunch

The Downey Chamber of Commerce held it's monthly "Let's Do Lunch," on April 4th at Buffalo Wild Wings at the Stonewood Mall. After placing our lunch orders, the Chamber raffled off tickets kindly donated by the Downey Symphonic Society. The tickets were for their weekend event a "Night of Gershwin." Buffalo Wild Wings raffled off a gift basket, well more of a gift bucket with the proceeds going to support TLC. We'd like to thank the amazing staff at Buffalo Wild Wings for not only hosting us on their great outdoor patio, but also providing wonderful service.

Buffalo Wild Wings is located on 193 Stonewood Ct. Downey CA 90241. If you are interested in attending or perhaps hosting a future Let's Do Lunch please contact The Downey Chamber of Commerce at blake@downeychamber.com.



Ron Long of Sunrun gets a moment to share with our members what's happening with the Golf Tournament coming up June 19th at Rio Hondo Golf Course. He also mentioned the benefits of solar power.



A BIG "Thank You" to the great staff at Buffalo Wild Wings! They did a great job of taking care of our group and made the afternoon fun and delicious!!

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Ambassadors of the Month | LINDA GOMEZ



This month's Ambassador Profile is Linda Gomez who works for MR and Associates. The company is located at 10802 Downey Ave. Their major service is Real Estate and Linda has been working there for over 5 years. Linda's background is in customer service and she has devoted over 40 years in private industry, the State of California and the County of Los Angeles. Not only is Linda a great Chamber Ambassador, but

she is a member of the Greater Downey Association of Realtors and is the Corresponding Secretary at the Women's Club of Downey.

Gomez has been married for 35 years and has a son who is a Chef and a daughter who works for the California Highway Patrol. She was born in El Paso Texas and is a lover of travel especially going on cruises. In the future she would prefer to stay in the US, maybe returning to her home town of El Paso. Her favorite movie is Gone With the Wind and her favorite book is Gone With the Wind! She must really like that story.

Linda has been a Chamber member for several years and a member of our Ambassador Group for almost two years. Meeting the many diverse people in our community is a highlight of Linda's time with the Chamber. If she won the Lotto, securing her children's future, giving money to charities and travel, travel and even more travel would be her priority. Gomez attributes her success to her parents. They taught her the importance of integrity and a good work ethic. What's important to her is seeing both of her children succeeding in their lives and their careers. She also believes that true love and friendship do not cost anything. "Better Late than Never" are her words to live by and we at the Chamber would have to agreed that whether late or on time, it's always great to work with Linda.

Ambassador Lunch



Almost everyone "got the memo" about showing off the Chamber's new polos. Still looking great are Jazmin Gomez of the Downey Patriot, Rain Neg of Eipros, Sonia Delgado of MR and Associates, Joanna Peterson of Gallatin Dental, Alex Hanks of Ocean Breeze Salon, Daniel Andrade of Beautiful Homes Realty, Linda Gomez also of MR and Associates, and Paula Mejia of C & N Capital.

April 17th was the date for April's Ambassador Luncheon. Once again, everyone's attention was directed to the upcoming Street Faire. Almost everyone in attendance volunteers to help with this important Chamber Event. Thank you everyone who stepped up will make the 26th Street Faire the best. Please mark your calendars for May 15th as our monthly Ambassador meeting with have Mayor Rick Rodriguez as our special guest and Co-Chairs Monica and Joanna have some special surprises!! The location will be at Rock n Brew in the Stonewood Center. We look forward to seeing you there.

CHAMBER on the town

The second quarterly meeting of the Downey Business Watch was held April 11th at the City Hall Chambers. Mayor Rick Rodriguez resurrected the Business Watch concept at the beginning of his Mayoral term in December. Bringing together City Government, Law Enforcement and the Downey Chamber of Commerce allows for local businesses to operate in a safer, encaged and more informed atmosphere. Much like "Neighborhood Watch" that has been so successful in our residential streets, Business Watch is looking to do the same in our Business Neighborhoods. Topics involving vandalism, theft, break ins, employee security and cyber fraud have been discussed with the business owners in attendance walking away with valuable techniques and information. Next quarter's meeting will be held at the City Hall Chambers on July 11th at 9 am. The topic will be Identity Theft and Fraud. Please come join us and you can RSVP on our website or email blake@downeychamber.com.



Photo by Claudia Gomez
Mayor Rick Rodriguez welcomes the business leaders who attended April's Business Watch. Downey PD presented an excellent program regarding break ins and theft.



At a recent City Council Meeting Mayor Rick Rodriguez, Council Member Claudia Frometa, Alex Saab and Sean Ashton recognized many volunteers in the Community. Receiving Certificates of Recognition were Chamber Board Members Sheila Tetango-Bartolone of Financial Partners Credit Union and Mary Fernandez of Sunrise Reality.

CITY Affairs



It's a bird, it's a plane...no it is the Southern California Gas Company Drone!!! It was an outdoor venue in the parking lot of Stonewood Mall where the Chamber learned about the new technology at So Cal Gas. The drone is programed to detect gas leaks from above. In the event of a natural disaster, the drone will be able to find leaking gas faster, and in a larger area thus saving extensive damage and maybe lives. The demonstration included an example of leaking gas (in the parking lot) and was able to give the position and the amount of gas leaking. Thank you, Julia Emerson, who arrange the demonstration and provided a wonderful picnic lunch for our attendees.

Congratulations and Thank You!

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Celebrating Ribbon Cuttings

Evolution Hair Salon

April 28th marked the re-opening of Evolution Hair Salon located at 8276 Firestone Blvd, Downey in the Gateway Shopping District. Though the salon has been opened for nearly 10 years, owners Beatriz Regalado and Roberto Alvarez have relocated their business from a location at Downey Ave. and Stewart and Gray to an expanded and very glamorous location at Downey Ave. and Firestone. The facilities look very high tech and up to date and the staff is very friendly and professional. Beatriz has been truly devoted to the details of the new salon along with making sure her clients are comfortable and serviced well! Welcome Beatriz and Roberto to the Downey Chamber and your new neighborhood!



Look at all that lovely hair! Well, not including our Chamber President, John Casillas!! (Standing in the back, in the front the Evolution sign). Welcoming owners Beatriz and Roberto who are holding the Chamber’s scissors, is Chamber Ambassador Paula Mejia from C & E Capital.

Crossroads Animal Emergency

April 3rd was the date for a joint Ribbon Cutting honoring a new member of both the Downey and Norwalk Chambers of Commerce. Crossroads Animal Emergency is a unique facility that caters to the type of treatments that occurs to animals after normal business hours. Crossroads is located at 11057 Rosecrans Ave. in Norwalk, but the hospital has many clients in the Downey Market. Thank you to Caren Spilsbury and the Norwalk Directors, Ambassadors, and Members who along with the Downey Group made the ribbon cutting a lot of fun. The hospital is open between the hours of 6 pm to 8 am and a full 24 hours Saturday, Sunday and Holidays. Should your pet require emergency care, Crossroads is the answer.



Crossroads is very focused on the care of animals. One of the thoughtful touches at the ribbon cutting were dog and cat swag bags!! All who attended took a fun surprise home to their four legged friends!



Receiving the Chamber Certificate from Chamber President John Casillas (of Farmers and Merchants Bank) is (far left) Julie Ledesma Guest Relations Manger for Crossroads and Kevin Hergert, Practice Manager.



It was a joint effort between the Norwalk and Downey Chambers of Commerce to welcome Crossroads Animal Emergency as a member. Ambassadors and Directors of both Chambers assist with the scissors and the cutting of the ribbon.

Celebrating Ribbon Cuttings

Crimson Coward

It was a “Hot” time for the Chamber! A Ribbon Cutting was held for the popular Crimson Coward Restaurant. Located at 10405 Lakewood Blvd this family style location is known for their spicy chicken and amazing customer service. Ali Hijazi, the CEO for the restaurant along with their staff is looking forward to serving Downey and making Crimson Coward into a Downey tradition. Thank you to Kim Tachiki Chin from Congresswoman Lucille Roybal-Allard’s office and Chad Oberly, representing Assemblywoman Christina Garcia’s office for attending and presenting Certificates of Recognition. A big “Thank you” goes out to those members of the Chamber that attended; President John Casillas of Farmers and Merchants Bank, Immediate Past President Joanna Peterson of Gallatin Dental, Chamber Board Director and former Mayor David Gafin, Ambassador Linda Gomez, and Alex Hanks of Ocean Breeze.



Everyone is on hand to wish Ali Hijazi and his staff the best of luck on the opening of Crimson Coward. Thank you to the members of the Miss Downey Court who attended the event.

Meal Period Violations can Eat Your Company’s Lunch: how to Avoid Costly Mistakes



Litigation can be a significant cost of doing business and create substantial disruptions, as many California employers know from bitter experience. Employers have seemingly endless requirements to understand and follow and, therefore, many opportunities to be sued by current and former employees. One apparently triviality can cost employers millions: meal periods.

The Law:

Companies must understand the law before they can implement compliant policies. Therefore, a quick overview of the requirements is necessary.

California requires that non-exempt employees who work more than five hours in a day receive a 30 minute unpaid and uninterrupted meal period that must start no later than the end of the first five hours worked. Employees working more than ten hours in a day are entitled to a second 30 minute uninterrupted meal period starting no later than the end of the tenth hour worked.

Employees can waive their first meal period if they work no more than six hours that day. A second meal period waiver is allowed as well. To be valid, the employee must have taken the first meal period and worked no more than 12 hours total that day.

On duty meal periods, where an employee eats lunch while working, are allowed in limited circumstances. The business’s nature must prevent the employee from being fully relieved of duty (for example, the employee works in a safety sensitive position he cannot leave). On duty meal periods are paid and the company and employee must agree to the on duty meal period in a writing that can be revoked by the employee at any time.

A company owes an employee one hour of “premium pay” per violation. Premium pay is set at the employee’s normal rate of pay. The company cannot owe more than one hour of premium pay per day, even if there were multiple violations. Companies could potentially have to pay violations going back three years.

Compliance Best Practices

While these requirements seem straightforward, violations can be easy to commit. For example, the California Supreme Court upheld a \$90 million class action verdict brought by security guards who argued that they were not fully relieved of duty because they were required to have their radios turned on during rest breaks.

Fortunately, there are several steps companies can take to help avoid a costly fate.

Companies should use payroll software that requires employees to clock out and clock in for each meal period taken. These records should be audited regularly to ensure compliance. It is far better for an employer to catch a few violations early instead of facing a multimillion dollar class action lawsuit later.

Employee handbooks should have a robust and compliant meal period policy. The policy should clearly state that the company is providing employees the opportunity to take a meal break in accordance with law and that the employee is required to do so. Disciplining employees who fail to follow the meal period policy is also recommended to show that the company takes meal period compliance seriously. Supervisors must also be instructed to not interrupt employees during their meal periods.

Finally, all waivers should be in writing and signed by the employee. These waivers should be retained in the employee’s file for at least three years. Saving meal period waivers could prove decisive in any future litigation.

California employers have a lot to worry about. It could be easy to overlook something like meal periods. However, failing to follow the law can, and often has, result in crippling damages. Implementing the easy steps outlined in this article will help safeguard employers against meal period violations eating the company’s lunch.

Colin P. Calvert is a partner in the Irvine, California office of the labor and employment law firm Fisher & Phillips LLP. Please do not hesitate to contact him if you have any questions or seek additional information. Mr. Calvert may be reached at (949) 798-2160.

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