



800 West Pacific Coast Highway
Long Beach, CA 90806-5299
Telephone: (562) 435-3411
TTY: (562) 590-8588
FAX: (562) 495-1447

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Contact: Paulette Thornton
562.435.3411, ext. 267
pthornton@goodwillsolac.org

**Build Your Career. Find a Job. Come to Goodwill SOLAC's
May 3 Career Fair for a Jumpstart
*Networking Event to Take Place During Goodwill Industries® Week***

Long Beach, CA — May 2, 2016 — The number of people applying for jobless benefits are the lowest they've been since March 1973, according to a recent report from the U.S. Department of Labor. Although the labor market continues to strengthen despite a sluggish economy, there are still thousands of people looking for jobs and many job openings left unfilled.

While some economists believe that jobless claims are running low and that the economy is creating a lot of jobs, Elise Gould, an economist for the Economic Policy Institute — a think tank affiliated with the labor movement — noted that, "Despite companies adding jobs, in the United States, there are still 14 job seekers for every 10 openings."

The number of job openings compared to workers who are unemployed also varies considerably depending on the industry. For example, there were 1.1 million job openings in professional and business services, compared to 880,000 workers who were unemployed in that industry. At the same time, in construction, there were 150,000 jobs for 600,000 workers who are unemployed — or four workers for every open construction job in a period ending in December 2015. Some have debated that the unfilled jobs are vacant due to a skills gap.

"Closing the skills gap requires a commitment to retraining and educating our workforce and investing in workers of all ages, from students to seniors," said Janet McCarthy, President and CEO of Goodwill, Serving the People of Southern Los Angeles County (SOLAC). "For workers who are unemployed or underemployed that need to gain specific skills, community colleges are a viable option to propel them into new jobs and careers. Goodwill SOLAC is a resource for credentialing and training in the community and has helped connect people to jobs since 1928."

As North America's leading nonprofit provider of job training, employment placement services and other community-based programs, Goodwill® is helping people overcome challenges that prevent them from finding and keeping good jobs.

As part of that ongoing effort, Goodwill SOLAC will join with other Goodwill organizations around the United States and Canada to host career fairs in May as part of Goodwill Industries Week. This year's job fair takes place on Tuesday, May 3 from 9 am to Noon at Goodwill SOLAC's headquarters located at 800 W. PCH in Long Beach. Job opportunities will be available in culinary arts, law enforcement, retail, healthcare and several other industries, and participating employers will include Benihana, California Highway Patrol, dd's Discounts, Molina Healthcare, Panda Express, NBC Universal and UPS.

The sale of donated goods at Goodwill SOLAC stores and online helps fund its job placement and training services. Everyone in the community can do their part by donating things they no longer need to Goodwill SOLAC.

Last year, 6,711 people in Southern Los Angeles County benefited from Goodwill SOLAC's services — an annual increase of nearly 25 percent.

Since 1951, Goodwill Industries Week has taken place the first full week of May. As part of this year's event, Goodwill SOLAC will host events for job seekers as well its shoppers and employees. For more information about Goodwill Industries Week and to find in-person career fairs or to attend a career fair, visit www.ThinkGood.org or <https://goodprospects.goodwill.org/events>.

Goodwill SOLAC is a nonprofit organization that transforms donated goods into job training, education and placement services for individuals with barriers to employment. Goodwill SOLAC serves 22 cities and communities throughout Southern Los Angeles County. Goodwill SOLAC's main facility—located at 800 W. Pacific Coast Highway in Long Beach—houses its administrative offices, training programs, processing operations, transportation fleet, LiNKS Sign Language & Interpreting Services, a retail store and its e-commerce operations. For more information about Goodwill SOLAC, please visit www.ThinkGood.org.

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