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From: **Jenifer Jayme** <Jenifer.Jayme@npower.org>

Date: Thu, May 11, 2023, 12:41 PM

Subject: Comments on EWDD 23-24 Plan

To: ewdd.planning@lacity.org <ewdd.planning@lacity.org>

Dear EWDD –

Greetings from NPower. We are a national 501c3 nonprofit organization focused on tech workforce training for underrepresented people and underserved communities. We have staff and programs in Los Angeles, and are writing to provide comments on the City of Los Angeles Workforce Development Board's Draft 2024 Plan. In addition to all of the fine work you have listed, we thought you might want to include mentioned of the following activities. Hope you find this helpful. I would be happy to meet with a representative from EWDD to discuss these and our related work:

- **Los Angeles Tech Career Accelerator (Strategic Initiatives 2, 3, 4, 5):** In January 2023, in partnership with the LA Workforce Development Board and LA Economic Development Corp, NPower launched a Los Angeles Tech Career Accelerator designed to upskill racially marginalized and economically disadvantaged Los Angeles residents to start new IT careers. Funded by an AB628 Breaking Barriers To Employment grant from the California Workforce Development Board, the NPower Los Angeles Tech Career Accelerator will engage 150+ diverse low-income young adults (18-26), veterans and military spouses in a free six-month training and job placement program that provides comprehensive support to start new upwardly-mobile IT careers. The program leads to multiple industry-recognized certifications, and will enrich the Los Angeles workforce with skilled IT and cybersecurity talent to fill in-demand jobs in every industry from entertainment to transportation logistics.
- **Education and/or Employment Outcomes for Disconnected Youth (Strategic Initiative 2):** The LA Tech Career Accelerator will specifically engage Disconnected Youth ages 18-26 in a proven six-month tech workforce training program that leads to industry certification, and fast-tracks them into a new career. In addition to securing placement in an upwardly-mobile tech-industry job, many trainees will use this experience as a springboard to pursue a 2-year or 4-year degree.
- **Gender Equity / Women In Non-Traditional Employment Sectors (Strategic Initiative 5):** The IT industry has struggled with an enduring lack of diversity in its workforce, and is one of the sectors in which women are underrepresented. The LA Tech Career Accelerator has a special mandate to ensure at least 40% of trainees are women, and features special outreach efforts to engage more women with emphasis on women of color.
- **The 'Internet For All' Digital New Deal (Strategic Initiative 4):** Through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act approved in 2022, the US has authorized an historic multi-billion-dollar investment in the country's infrastructure which will directly benefit Los Angeles businesses and residents in 2023-24. The Covid Pandemic exposed stunning disparities in access to broadband service and digital skills. High speed internet access and basic navigation skills are now essential for people to access education, health, employment, and other vital services and opportunities, yet thousands of Los Angeles residents still lack adequate broadband service or the devices and skills to use it. This lack of Digital Equity only perpetuates other disadvantages. California has organized statewide efforts to close the 'Digital Divide' under the Broadband For All banner, and is now engaging stakeholders from every city to formulate new plans for Digital Equity, which will be backed by unprecedented funding on the scale of FDR's "New Deal" that once transformed the country. Historic investments in infrastructure will fund business opportunities, job training and jobs in a variety of fields - from construction teams needed to lay the fiberoptic cable that brings internet connectivity to underserved communities, to entry-level Digital Navigators who can help people sign up for the Affordable Connectivity Program, to advanced Help Desk Analysts and Cybersecurity specialists. Los Angeles is prepared to capitalize on these investments, aligning our plans with Broadband For All initiatives wherever possible. (All who represent workers and businesses on the 'wrong side of the Digital Divide' are encouraged to stay abreast of developments and forthcoming RFPs by exploring the Broadband For All site and attending Outcome Area Working Group meetings.)

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*book a time with Jen*