

**LAEDC Board of Governors Meeting Minutes****March 26, 2024****9am-11am****Junior Achievement LA****6250 Forest Lawn Dr. Los Angeles, CA 90068**

**[Board of Governors Members in attendance:** Barry Gribbons, Brent Nash, Brett Howroyd, Celine Villegas, David Abel, Eileen Harris, Elsa Wadzinski, Gerard Orozco, James Limbaugh, Janice Levy, Jeff Carr, Jeffrey Forrest, Jermaine Hampton, Jessica Ku Kim, Josaline Cuesta, Kathleen Rawson, Les McCabe, Lilit Zibari, Linden Johnson, Mackenna Dunn, Mariah Adedeji, Mariana Hernandez, Mark Pestrella, Maura O'Connor, Michael Anderson, Michael Banner, Pouria Abbassi, Riccardo Ruffolo, Robert Meyer, Rohit Shukla, Ron Frierson, Scott Somers, Stephen Cheung, Stephen Sawyer, William Powles, Yvette Estrada, Sarah Witlong, Minal Mondkar, Milo Dodson, Barbara Levine, Chioma Agbahiwe, Jose Pelayo, Sonia Estrada, Erik, Seta Zorabian, Juan Salazar, Kendal Turner, Chris Grisham, Charles Pellicane, Halé Behzadi, Joseph Villela, RANDAL HERNANDEZ, Christine Frey, Dave Ford, Fesia Davenport, Jasson Crockett, Melissa Cline, Porsha Cropper, Sandy Sanchez, Sonya Blake

**[LAEDC Staff in attendance:** Stephen Cheung, Kendal Turner, Shannon Sedgwick, Janice Levy, Joseph Chicas, Celine Villegas, Erik Conley, Jermaine Hampton, Josaline Cuesta, Barbara Levine, Linden Johnson,

**CALL TO ORDER**

Halé Behzadi, Chair of LAEDC and North America Head of Citi Private Bank, called the meeting to order at 9:30 AM.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

Ms. Behzadi invited a motion to approve the minutes of the December 6, 2023, Board of Governors meeting.

Motion Moved/Seconded: [Names would be inserted here based on actual motion and second]

Approved: Unanimously

**PROCEEDINGS****Host Welcome**

Les McCabe, President & CEO of Junior Achievement of Southern California, welcomed the attendees and provided a brief history of Junior Achievement.

**New Members Introduction-** Janice Levy, Director of Strategic Relations, introduced new LAEDC members:

- Pouria Abbassi, CEO and Executive Director, Associated Students UCLA
- Sheila Jackson, Director of Workforce Partnerships, Linked Learning Alliance
- Jasson Crockett, Public Policy Manager, Snap Inc.
- Jeff Etherington, Director, Alaska For Business North America
- David Tucker, Managing Director, California Public Affairs, Alaska Airlines
- Minal Mondkar, Founder and CEO of Aura Seating

**Fireside Chat-** Halé Behzadi introduced Fesia Davenport, Chief Executive Officer of Los Angeles County, for a fireside chat with Stephen Cheung, President & CEO of LAEDC & WTCLA. The discussion covered various topics including:

- The County's efforts to address the homelessness crisis and its impact on economic activity
- Strategies implemented by the Department of Economic Opportunity to attract investment and foster job creation
- The importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in driving economic growth
- Addressing challenges in the commercial real estate sector, particularly office space vacancy
- Strategies to support adaptive reuse projects for housing
- Measures to address unemployment and support workforce development
- Lessons learned from the 2023 Hollywood strikes and plans to address ongoing challenges in the entertainment sector

### **CEO Report**

Stephen Cheung provided updates on LAEDC activities and achievements:

- Introduction of new staff members
- Updates on Workforce Development initiatives, including the Microsoft AI Innovation Challenge
- Progress on the California Jobs First Collaborative
- LA DEAL initiatives, including a new partnership with the California Community Foundation
- WTCLA activities, including international engagements and the upcoming Select LA investment summit
- Industry Cluster developments, including the Blue Economy and Climate Action Pathway project
- Business Assistance Program achievements, serving 750 businesses to date
- Recent and upcoming events, including the Future Forum on Sports & Entertainment and the Annual Economic Forecast

### **Update on Digital Divide**

Jermaine Hampton, Vice President of Workforce Development, provided an update on LA DEAL's efforts to address the digital divide in Los Angeles County. Key points included:

- The importance of equitable internet access for all Angelenos
- Promotion of sustainable digital infrastructure development
- Advocacy for public-owned fiber initiatives
- Collaboration with municipalities and community organizations
- Utilization of state funding and philanthropic support to expand broadband access

### **CONCLUSION AND ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Behzadi thanked all speakers and attendees for their participation and adjourned the meeting