

What's New in 2022? New Employment Law Changes Present Compliance Challenges for Employers

The California Legislature increased the complexity of employment law by enacting several laws that will take effect in January. Below is a summary of some of the changes:

Minimum Wage Increases

California's minimum wage will increase on January 1, 2022 to \$15 per hour for employers with 26 or more employees, and \$14 for employers with 25 or fewer employees. Please note that many cities and counties in California have their own minimum wage that differs from the California minimum wage. Los Angeles County is one of them. All businesses located in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, or have employees working in the unincorporated areas of L.A. County, should already be paying their employees a minimum of \$15 per hour (regardless of company size).

Wage Theft is Grand Theft (AB 1003)

The intentional deprivation of wages, including gratuities, in an amount greater than \$950 from any one employee, or \$2,350 in the aggregate from two or more employees, by an employer in any consecutive 12-month period is punishable as grand theft. Independent contractors and hiring entities of independent contractors are included within the definitions of "employee" and "employer".

Grand theft is generally punishable either as a misdemeanor by imprisonment in a county jail for up to one year or as a felony by imprisonment for up to three years. Now, wages, gratuities, benefits, or other compensation that are the subject of a prosecution under this law may also be recovered as restitution.



The California Legislature increased e complexity of employment law by **Expanded (SB 331)**

The new law prohibits confidentiality in settlement agreements with respect to factual information related to claims involving acts of workplace harassment or discrimination based on any Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA)protected characteristic or retaliation for reporting same. While employees cannot be prohibited from discussing the underlying facts of the case, employers may still use clauses that prevent the disclosure of the amount paid to settle the claim. The law also now requires any contractual provision that restricts an employee's right to disclose information (such as a non-disparagement provision) to include a statement related to the employee's right to disclose factual information about unlawful acts in the workplace. The statement must set out in substantial form: "Nothing in this agreement prevents you from discussing or disclosing information about unlawful acts in the workplace, such as harassment or discrimination or any other conduct that you have reason to believe is unlawful."

Finally, for employers entering into separation or severance agreements with employees, the employer must now notify the employee that the employee has a right to consult an attorney regarding the agreement and must provide the employee with a reasonable time period of at least five business days to do so.

Warehouse Worker Quotas (AB 701)

Large employers must provide nonexempt employees who work at covered warehouse distribution centers with a written description of any quotas the employee will be required to meet



(including the quantified number of tasks to be performed or materials to be produced or handled, within a defined period, and if applicable, any potential adverse employment actions that could result from failure to meet the quota) at the time of hire (or within 30 days of the law's effective date of Jan. 1, 2022). Employees cannot be required to meet, or be disciplined for failing to meet, a quota that inhibits the use of bathroom facilities or compliance with meal or rest period entitlements or occupational safety and health laws. The time spent on actions taken to comply with health and safety laws must be treated as time-ontask or productive time for purposes of quota tracking or a monitoring system.

Employers cannot take adverse action against an employee who fails to meet a quota that has not been previously disclosed. Moreover, in addition to the disclosure requirements at time of hire, the employer must provide, within 21 calendar days, a written description of each quota the employee is subject to and a copy of their most recent 90 days of personal "work speed data" collected, stored, analyzed, or interpreted relating to an individual employee's performance of a quota upon request by a current or former employee who believes that meeting a quota caused a violation of their right to a meal or rest period or required them to violate any occupational health and safety laws.

Covered warehouse distribution centers include establishments classified under the applicable North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) Codes for General Warehousing and *Continued on page 5*





Local businesses and community members are invited to hit a homerun at the Whittier Chamber's 2022 All-Star Business Expo at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Whittier on

Annual Business Expo to feature nearly 100 local businesses, organizations and restaurants

businesses who have survived the past 2 years and it's a theme that everyone can relate to. This event encourages our members to be at the top of their game and score new leads marketing plan, and take advantage of this unique opportunity to be part of the best that the Whittier area has to offer!

The Business Expo will feature nearly 100 businesses, including a

WHITTIER AREA CHAMBER of commerce

JAN/FEB 2022

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Thursday, January 27, 2022. The event will take place from 4 to 7 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

"The annual Business Expo is a great way to highlight local businesses and bring together members of the community," said Cheryl Estep from State Farm Insurance and this year's Expo Co-Chair. "The All-Star theme seemed appropriate this year. The theme represents our All-Star and customers," added Celia Alvarez from U.S. Bank, the event's other Co-Chair.

Having a booth or table at the Business Expo provides a chance to introduce new products and services, generate new leads, reconnect with existing clients and network with fellow exhibitors. So, don't sit on the sidelines, make participation in the Business Expo part of your 2022 variety of food vendors representing some of the area's finest restaurants, caterers and eateries. Also, business professionals will have the opportunity to take or update their headshot at the Expo as well as gather resources from organizations such as the Small Business Development Center. "The Whittier Chamber's Business Expo is one of the best business development

Continued on page 2





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Whittier Chamber Business Focus **Official Publication of the Whittier Area** Chamber of Commerce

This publication is mailed to 12,000 licensed businesses in the city of Whittier, all Whittier Chamber members, and Whittier residents in selected areas.

We welcome comments, press releases, and community interest stories. The Whittier Chamber reserves the right to approve and edit submitted material.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Setting smart goals in 2022

Happy New Year! Hope your holidays were special and relaxing. e. Plan a time-frame – the time-frame Now, it's time to get back to business!

Now that the holiday season has officially ended, you've probably experienced the resurgence of energy that comes with the start of a new year. If you are like me, I'm happy to put 2021 behind me and focus my energy f. Write it down - keep notes with and attention on a new year filled with hope and new opportunities. For many, a new year also means making a New Year's resolution and committing to g. Treat yourself - your plan should doing things a little differently.

No matter if your goal is to grow your business, lose those extra 10 pounds you packed on from holiday treats and h. Receive support – your support goodies, or cut down on your monthly spending, here are some handy tips to ensure that your resolution is not all but forgotten by February:

- a. Keep it simple we've all been through a lot of changes in the past year and a half. Don't try to i. do it all at once! Focus on one or two of your most important goals.
- b. Choose carefully concentrate on those that will have the greatest impact on your business/ j. happiness/health.
- c. Be realistic the surest way to fall short of your goal is to make it unrealistic and unattainable. Remember the SMART criteria relevant and time-based.
- your goals down into manageable chunks. The more planning you

your goal.

is vital for motivation. This is the way to assess your short-term progress toward the ultimate longterm goal. Plan your actions for the coming weeks or months and decide how often you will evaluate.

- specific details and pictures of what you're aiming for so you can keep your motivation
- include small rewards and treats you will give yourself at specific milestones.
- network can be critical if you happen to derail. Choose to share your goals with those who are supportive and trustworthy who can get you through if the times get tough.
- slip ups as an excuse to give up. Draw on your inner strength and past achievements to keep going and start again.
- Put yourself in charge while others may counsel and guide you, you are in control of your actions which will lead you to see the results you want.

Of course, the Whittier Chamber when setting goals: make it is here for you and has the resources specific, measurable, attainable, to help you reach your goals, whether they are business or personal. If d. Create bite-sized portions - break you are not a Chamber member, I encourage you to become one. It is an investment in your business do, the more likely you are to reach and in the community in which you

All-Star Business Expo - continued from front page are just \$100 and will feature your Chamber members have the name and logo in a prominent location opportunities are available which can Business Expo sponsors include ACRO Printing, Associated Cabinets, Athens Brookfield Residential.



Sandra Hahn.

do business. We have a convenient payment option which allows you to keep your expenses manageable.

If you are a member, are you utilizing all the benefits of your membership like networking, informative seminars, advertising and more? Have you made it part of your business plan to take advantage of the connection opportunities the Chamber offers with like-minded professionals to share ideas? Remember that even if you are busy working on your business and don't have time to attend events, the Chamber is working on your behalf, providing important information and giving you opportunities to gain leads and referrals all the time! Our goal is to help bring back a strong local economy and we need your support to continue our efforts to do that!

A few important opportunities we Don't give up! - don't use minor have coming up, whether you are a Chamber member or community supporter, include our Business Expo on January 27 from 4-7 at the DoubleTree Hotel Whittier and the 2022 City Council and Mayoral Candidates' Forum on March 9 at the Whittier Community Center at 6:00 p.m. Both of these events are free and open to the public.

Call the Whittier Chamber at (562) 698-9554 or visit our website at www. whittierchamber.com to find out more about our resources, programs and services. Take advantage of the opportunities we have to offer and let the Whittier Chamber help make 2022 your most successful year in business!

Catering by Herach & Ara, Credit Union of Southern California, Crepes & Grapes Café, Kaiser Permanente, MAP Property Management, Rose Hills Memorial Park & Mortuary, The Traveling Traveler and U.S. Bank.

Get serious about being an All-Star business in the new year and don't miss out on the chance to sign up early for your favorite spot! Contact the Chamber at (562) 698-9554 or visit the Chamber's website at www.whittierchamber.com for more information.



tools around. We are excited to bring from \$350 - \$395. If your business this event back to our community this does not want to display products and

year. We expect it to be a sold-out event services on a table or booth, you can once again," said Whittier Chamber still participate by being on our Wall Chair of the Board Sandra Hahn from of Fame! Wall of Fame sponsorships Crepes & Grapes Cafe.

opportunity to showcase their business at the Expo. Additional sponsorship in the Stadium (ballroom), Suite Level (board room), or on the 50 Yard Line really make your business score. (hallway) at the DoubleTree Hotel Whittier. Table prices range from \$195 - \$295 and 10' x 10' booth prices range Services,

Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce 8158 Painter Avenue, Whittier, CA 90602 (562) 698-9554 • (562) 693-2700 FAX www.whittierchamber.com · info@whittierchamber.com 🛛 🚺 🔰 You 📶 @WhittierChamber

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directly on your phone, scan this code!



CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE

The CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE is a dedicated group of influential businesses that help shape our community vision and support the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce's ability to strengthen the regional economy.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Erin Grace, Andrea Jimenez and Lucy Spencer (center) celebrate the grand opening of Laurea Real Estate with Chamber President/CEO Carol Crosby, Aldo Macias Arellano from the LA County Assessor's office, Chamber Chair of the Board Sandra Hahn, Senator Bob Archuleta and former Whittier Uptown Association President Frank Medina



Mayor Joe Vinatieri, Whittier Chamber Board members, Ambassadors and friends celebrated the opening of Uptown Garage located at 12604 Philadelphia St.



Andres Alcala, Maribel Gonzalez and Juan Carlos welcome the Whittier Chamber and community to Alcala Tonsorial, their stylish barbershop located at 12812 Philadelphia St.



State Senator Bob Archuleta, the Whittier Chamber, Santa Fe Springs Chamber, and Pico Rivera Chamber welcome Akeso Occupational Health to the community



The staff from Pacific Palms Resort enjoys a behind the scenes tour of the stadium



Longtime Chamber members get a chance to do the NFL combine and test their skills



Ethan Hoang & Ethan Huynh from Apple RX Pharmacy show their "Ram Pride" at Sofi Stadium







Members of the Whittier Chamber strike a pose on the 50-Yard Line

Lorraine Lopez from Farmers Insurance, Steven Flores from Modern Woodmen of America, Van Broussard & his wife from Farmers Insurance, Patrick Silvis from Starlight Grooming, Humberto Perez from The Guidelines Barbershop and Peter Rodriguez from Valley View Home Loans strike a pose at the endzone



Linda Cooke from the American Cancer Society, Trese Childs from the DoubleTree Hotel, Paul Avila from the Hispanic Outreach Taskforce and civic member Octavio Cesar Martinez enjoy the Holiday Lunchtime Mixer

The Holiday Spirit was present at the DoubleTree Hotel for our annual Holiday Lunchtime Mixer

R.D. McDonnell from R2KS Design + Build, Celia Alvarez from U.S. Bank, Cheryl Estep from State Farm Insurance and LaDonna Munier from Friendly Hills Bank look forward to the Holiday season

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year, Whittier, and welcome to 2022!

holiday season and had a chance to for a new office or retail space, or participate in the Chamber's Shop Home making necessary improvements to for the Holidays contest. The City is your existing location, staff is here proud to sponsor the annual campaign to streamline your permit process and help promote shopping locally, and offer ombudsman services at especially during the busy gift-giving time no cost to you. Call the Business of the year. Thank you to the Whittier Development Manager at (562) 567area businesses that donated prizes and 9351 to schedule an appointment congratulations to all the winners who and speak to someone about local showed us that it pays to shop local!

I never thought I'd still be talking about COVID-19 in 2022, but here we are. We have been fortunate to see very low case rates throughout the pandemic here in Whittier, and as we near the twoyear anniversary of this public health crisis, I want to commend everyone for doing their part to keep your families and our community safe.

A silver lining I believe we've all taken away from this experience is learning to do things differently than we're used to, trying new things, and getting out of our comfort zones. For those of you running a business, now is the time to dust off your business plan, identify financial projections, and outline your marketing activities for the coming year. The City is here to support you, whether it's project during an official ribbon cutting helping you grow or relocate an existing later this Spring. The Greenway Trail business or getting your new venture up will connect from Mills Avenue to the

I hope you enjoyed a fun, joyful and running. Whether you're looking business resources and professional development opportunities. Our New Year's resolution is to ensure that Whittier emerges from COVID-19 stronger than ever and continues to thrive in 2022.

There are plenty of great things to look forward to in the coming months, including completion of the Central Library renovation and remodel, as well as the Greenway Trail extension to the east end of town. The Whittier Public Library will boast an entirely redesigned building complete with modern fixtures, upgraded technology, community meeting space, amenities for youth and teens, and an enhanced Veterans Resource Center. We are looking forward to celebrating the Orange County line in La Habra, adding another 2.5 miles to Whittier's beloved biking and walking path that families will get to enjoy for many years to come.

On the other side of town, residents are enjoying the much-anticipated return of Stater Bros. Market now opened at The Groves, as well as Raising Cane's and In-N-Out Burger, and we're excited to see the rest of Whittier's up-and-coming neighborhood come to life. Similarly, City staff is working with applicants on proposals that will transform the 3.4-acre former Alpha Beta site on Comstock Avenue and look to attract new, exciting uses to Uptown. With the approval of a more permanent hybrid Promenade along Greenleaf Avenue, the City is also poised to implementing begin streetscape improvements and beautification inclusive of sidewalk repair, widening of the street, enhanced cleaning, and new lighting among others. Thanks to the City's ongoing partnership with the Whittier Uptown Association and Uptown Whittier Improvement Association, Uptown will continue to offer families and visitors a great experience for shopping and dining.

February marks the start of the City's budget planning process and a mid-year



review, so watch for the City Council to focus largely on strategic objectives and goals that include enhancing the quality of life in Whittier, providing support for public safety, and ensuring long term fiscal sustainability among others. Thanks to Whittier voters, Measure W funding continues to make good on its promise of providing critical funding for current and future projects like necessary infrastructure improvements, disposition and acquisition of development sites, renovation of the Uptown Senior Center, broadband connectivity and accessibility, local park upgrades, and much more. There's plenty of progress to celebrate in 2021 and the year ahead will surely be a productive one. Whittier's on the Move!

As we close the door on yet another year, I extend my gratitude and thanks to all of you for keeping your families healthy and active, tending to your businesses, and looking after each other. Stay smart, stay kind, and together we'll continue to make Whittier a great place to LIVE, WORK and SHOP. Happy New Year to you and your family!

Stay Connected with Whittier 24/7 App

Need to request graffiti removal? Reporting illegal dumping within the City limits? Contact City Hall 24 hours a day, seven days a week with the Whittier 24/7 app! Download the app to your smartphone or go to the Whittier 24/7 link on the City's website here. The app allows residents to easily submit requests or concerns by creating a unique tracking number, automatically sending status reports, and providing notifications once a task has been completed.

Use of the 24/7 app is intended for NON-emergencies only. Speak to a staff member during business hours at (562) 567-9999 or call (562) 567-9200 after hours for help with water or sewer breaks, fallen trees, and others issues that require immediate assistance. For lifethreatening emergencies, always call 9-1-1 or contact the Whittier Police Department directly for time-sensitive requests at (562) 567-9200.





January 11 • 12 P.M. Ribbon Cutting at Friendly Hills Pediatrics

January 13 • 4 P.M. Ribbon Cutting at Fitness Resolute



Protect Yourself from the Latest Scams!

Scammers continue to work hard • Official looking virus pop-up windows and unsolicited phone calls stating your computer has a virus. Don't click, don't call the number, hang up as soon as you hear this information. They want access to your computer to fix something that isn't broken for a fee.

some major \$\$\$. Throw these

to get your money and their scams hit elderly community members the hardest. Here are some of the most popular scams to watch out for:

- · Letters, emails, phone calls about someone having private information about you or your family asking for \$\$\$ to keep quiet. They will threaten to "go public" with the information if they are not paid.
- Letters, emails, phone calls about you or someone in your family having warrants, or owing a debt, or being late on utility bills, IRS debt, student loan, social security/medicare card reissue fees, asking for payment over the phone or Internet to "clear them up".
- Fake online coupons that show up in your social media feed promising free shopping sprees, hundreds of dollars to spend at local stores... just for clicking??? Nope - avoid these as they will lead to other websites connected to scamming operations.
- Pet adoption from distant places usually starts on craigslits, offeup etc. and the scammers will require various payments for various "stages" of the delivery including licensing, immunizations, flight fees, customs, etc - victims will get multiple phone calls asking for more money to complete the "journey" of their desired pet. There is no pet.
- Deposit a check you get in the mail, keep a little for yourself and wire the rest to someone's account??? Nope.... you will deposit a worthless check... wire real money to an offshore scammer and when the bank will tell you in a few days that the check was fake ... you will be out

- types of envelopes away.
- Phone calls, emails, texts from the police department (sometimes showing our station phone number in caller ID) asking for payment for fines, warrants, donations... we do not do this - hang up.
- · Phone calls claiming a family member (usually a grandkid) is in jail and needs \$\$ to bail out mostly targeting seniors in our community. Hang up.
- Dating apps scammers who ask for money to travel to see you... or to help release their fortune that is tied up at the moment - any request for cash or payment via gift cards is likely a scam.

Scammers LOVE payment via cash cards or gift cards - hard to trace and you can't get your money back like with most credit card protections. If anyone is asking you or a family member to pay with gift cards or cash cards - you know it's a scam.

January 19 • 7:30 A.M. Wake Up Whittier The Groves in Whittier

January 27 • 4 P.M. All-Star Business Expo DoubleTree Hotel

February

February 4 • 3 P.M. **Ribbon Cutting at Bright Steps Academy**

February 16 • 7:30 A.M.

Wake Up Whittier YMCA Uptown Whittier Co-Hosted by: CAPC, Inc.

For up-to-date calendar information visit www.whittierchamber.com



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Ambassador Chair

2022 New Employment Law Changes - continued from front page

Storage (493110), Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods (423), Merchant Wholesalers, Nondurable Goods (424), and Electronic Shopping and Mail-Order Houses (454110).

Chain Community Pharmacist Quotas (SB 362)

Chain community pharmacies with 75 or more stores in California under the same ownership are now prohibited from establishing quotas related to the duties for which a pharmacist or pharmacy technician license is required, such as quotas related to prescriptions filled, services rendered to patients, programs offered, or revenue obtained. This prohibition extends to communicating quotas to employees, contractors, or other third parties.

Restrictions on Piece Rate Pay for Garment Manufacturers (SB 62)

Employers are prohibited from compensating employees engaged in the performance of garment manufacturing by the piece or unit, or by the piece rate, except as to workplaces covered by a bona fide collective bargaining agreement that contains certain required provisions. Additionally, the law expands the recordkeeping requirements for every employer engaged in the business of garment manufacturing as well as brand guarantors (i.e., any person contracting for the performance of garment manufacturing for the apparel industry).

Food Delivery Platforms and Gratuities (AB 286)

Food delivery platforms are prohibited from retaining any portion of amounts designated as a tip or gratuity. All such amounts paid by a customer for a delivery order must be paid in full to the person making the delivery.

California Family Rights Act Amendments (AB 1033)

The California Family Rights Act has been expanded to permit employees to take family and medical leave to care for a parent-in-law with a serious health condition or other "designated person" with a serious health condition and who has been identified by the employee at the time the employee requests family care and medical leave. The employee may designate a new person every 12 months.

Additionally, with respect to last year's implementation of the smaller employer mediation program (which applies to businesses with 5-19 employees), this year's amendments clarify that participation in the mediation program is prerequisite to filing a civil action if requested by either party. The onus is on the plaintiff-employee to contact the Department of Fair Employment and Housing to state whether or not they desire to mediate, which triggers the Department to notify and seek this information from the defendant-employer. A defendantemployer who does not receive the required notification of the mediation program is entitled to a stay of any pending action until the mediation is complete or deemed unsuccessful.

Workplace Postings Via Email (SB 657)

With respect to any situation in which an employer is required to physically post information at the worksite, an employer also may distribute that information to employees by email with the document or documents attached. Email distribution does not alter an employer's obligation to also physically display the required posting. Accordingly, while the new law clarifies an appropriate mechanism for providing required notices, it does not change the law or an employer's current posting obligations.

Personnel Record Retention Requirements (SB 807)

Currently, the minimum retention period under the FEHA for personnel records is two years. SB 807 extends the retention period to four years from when the records are created, or from the date on which an employment action was taken.

COVID-19 Notice Requirements (AB 654)

Revising last year's AB 685 regarding an employer's COVID-19 reporting obligations to employees and other third parties, the amendment now requires employers to give notice of a COVID-19 outbreak to the applicable local public health agency within the later of 48 hours or one business day, as well as other clarifying changes. The new law also expands the list of employers exempt from the COVID-19 outbreak reporting requirement to include, for example, community clinics, adult day health centers, community care facilities, and child day care facilities. This law became effective as an urgency statute on October 5, 2021

Cal/OSHA's Enforcement Authority Expanded (SB 606)

There is now a rebuttable presumption that a violation committed by an employer with multiple worksites is "enterprise-wide" (and at all worksites) if the employer has a written policy or procedure that violates occupational health and safety laws or there is evidence of a pattern or practice of the same violation committed by that employer at more than one of the worksites. The law also grants Cal/OSHA the power to issue a citation for an "egregious violation" if one of seven criteria are satisfied. Each instance of an employee being exposed to that violation is considered a separate violation for purposes of the issuance of fines and penalties.



Ysenia Guerra – Drain it Plumbing

Ysenia Guerra is the Executive Office Manager of Drain it Plumbing, they are a family-owned plumbing company with 20 years' experience. Drains are their specialty; this is their craft. They are the Drain Experts and Sewer Inspectors. They don't just Drain It, they will also fix it for you.

Ysenia has been a Chamber Member for a little under a year and has taken the opportunity to network herself and her company to the fullest. What she enjoys the most about being an ambassador is being involved with the community of likeminded people. She has enjoyed meeting everyone and having a laugh along the way. "It's all about the relationships you make." Throughout the time that Ysenia has been an ambassador, she believes the best part about being a Chamber Member is all the people you meet. By joining the Whittier Chamber specifically, you open a door full of opportunities. "This chamber is well connected to the city and has so many events and opportunities to meet new people within the Whittier community. For us this became a great opportunity to establish roots in Whittier. I have enjoyed becoming part of this community." As an Ambassador, Ysenia says that "the Chamber has helped me grow personally and I am truly grateful to be a part of this community. My family and I are blessed to be here, to have this opportunity, and to have met the Chamber."

Laurie Perschbacher, MAP Property Management, Inc.

Catherine Badame. The Recognition Place at Action Trophy Alyssa Barrios, Mary Kay John Bogdanov, Telworx Judy Bradt, A Special Event Van Broussard, Farmers Insurance Agency Steve Burns, Steven Burns Photography Steven Flores, Modern Woodmen of America Courtney French, Credit Union of Southern California Mary Garcia, Helpline Youth Counseling Nancy Gomez, Tacos Cabrones Ysenia Guerra, Drain It Plumbing Paul Hernandez, State Farm Insurance Rob Marin, Rob Marin Realty Peter Rodriguez, Valley View Home Loans Lauren Sweeney, Rise Up For You Christy Wyant, Martplan Insurance Agency, Inc.

Steven Flores – Modern Woodmen of America

Steven Flores is a Financial Representative for Modern Woodmen of America. He promotes financial freedom and equity for all members of society through the establishment of long-term relationships and trust; leveraging financial instruments and creating customized strategies to help maximize member's financial growth and prosperity.

Steven has been a Whittier Chamber member since the beginning of May, but since he has joined, he has been one of our most active members. Steven believes the best part of being in the Chamber is being able to build meaningful professional relationships and friendships within the Chamber. "Meeting different individuals in their respected fields provides a great opportunity to learn about their careers," says Steven.

in their respected fields provides a great opportunity to learn about their careers," says Steven. Since he became an Ambassador in October, 2021, Steven has enjoyed being able to represent the Whittier Chamber at muti-chamber events, welcome new businesses that join, and visit long time members with our Director of Membership & Member Programs MaryAnn Sourial.

With all the numerous Chamber events taking place throughout the year, Steven makes it a habit to attend all the events and to engage with the entire Whittier community. Steven is setting a personal goal for 2022 to visit with as many families as possible to be able to provide the financial knowledge, tools, and opportunities that his own family didn't have while he was growing up.

PsyLink: Supporting Mental Health Concerns in the Workplace

Whittier Counseling Center offers Mental Health program to local small businesses at no charge for four months

By Luis Orozco, LCSW

- mental health. • Take any threat of suicide seriously.
- Mental illness is a condition that impacts a person's mood, thinking, and behavior. It is estimated that about one in five adults. are currently experiencing a mental health disorder (approximately 43.8 million people in the U.S). These common mental health issues affect every area of life, from social and personal to work and business. Hence, it is important to recognize warning signs that a person struggling with mental illness may display. Below is a list of signs to look out for.
- · Low morale.
- · Easily distracted
- · Lack of cooperation.
- · Reduced productivity.
- Decreased motivation.
- · Poor decision making.
- · Increased irritability or hostility.
- Reduced interaction with co-workers.
- Inability to comprehend instructions.
- Increased absenteeism and/or tardiness.
- Noticeable change in personal appearance.
- Working more slowly and missing deadlines.
- · Concerns about employee's alcohol or drug use.
- · Increased number of accidents in the workplace.
- · Frequent complaints around feeling "achy" and tired.

If you suspect someone at work may need assistance with a mental health issue, it can be challenging to know what to do. When this person is also your employee, it can be even trickier. Here is a list of things you can do.

• Educate yourself on topics related to the full four months.

Whittier Counseling Center

(562) 907-7466 | 12448 Washington Blvd., Whittier www.whittiercounselingcenter.org

· Become familiar with the company's health plan and resources. · If you are a supervisor, document changes in work performance and discuss the documented changes with

- the employee privately and make the appropriate referral. · Learn the warning signs of mental
- illness and think about making those connections when an employee's performance, demeanor, or appearance changes.
- Keep workload manageable.
- · Be flexible when an employee has lost a loved one or has other significant life disruptions.

To learn how to create a mentally healthy workplace environment, please contact us at (562) 907-7466 or check out our PsyLink Employee Assistance Program at PsyLinkCenter. org. Psylink is a branch of Whittier Counseling Center (WCC). Its mission is to provide psychological support to small businesses and nonprofits. WCC believes that small businesses and nonprofits should have access to the same resources larger companies have. WCC knows that every organization can succeed by establishing healthy work environments that promote personal health, job satisfaction, and safety.

If your small business (under 50 employees) is interested in providing the PsyLink program to your employees for four months at no charge, please contact me right away. This is a limited time offer so call right away to take advantage of

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Tax Tips After January 1, 2022

If you think your tax bill is chiseled in stone at the end of the year, think again. Though it's true that most money saving options to defer income or accelerate deductions become much more limited after December 31, there is still a lot you can do to make the tax-filing season cheaper and easier.

Some strategies can help you lower your taxes, sometimes by thousands of dollars. Some help you save time and money when preparing your tax return. Other strategies help you avoid costly penalties and interest on both federal and state taxes. All in all, these 10 steps will lower your blood pressure while keeping more money in your pocket:

1. Contribute to Retirement Accounts

If you haven't already funded your retirement account for 2021, do so by April 15, 2022. That's the deadline for contributions to a traditional IRA, deductible or not, and to a Roth IRA.

For 2021, the maximum IRA contribution you can make is \$5,500 (\$6,500 if you are age 50 or older by the end of the year). For self-employed persons, the maximum annual addition to SEPs and Keoghs for 2021 is \$55,000.

2. Make a Last-Minute Estimated Tax Payment

If you didn't pay enough to the IRS during the year, you may have a big tax bill staring you in the face. Plus, you might owe significant interest and penalties, too.

How could that happen? Withholding on your paycheck may be out of whack, or you may have received a big gain from selling stock. According to IRS rules, you must pay 100% of last year's tax liability or 90% of this year's tax or you will owe an underpayment penalty.

If you make an estimated payment by January 15, though, you can erase any penalty for the fourth quarter, but you still will owe a penalty for earlier quarters if you did not send in any estimated payments back then.

3. Organize Your Records for Tax Time

Good organization may not cut your taxes. But there are other rewards, and some of them are financial. For many, the biggest hassle at tax time is getting all of the documentation together. This includes last year's tax return, this year's W-2s and 1099s, receipts and so on.

4. Find the Right Tax Forms

You won't find all of them at the post office and library. Instead, you can go right to the source online. View and download a large catalog of forms and publications at the Internal Revenue Service Web site or have them sent to you by mail. You can search for documents as far back as 1980 by number or by date.

The IRS also will refer you to a private Web site that lists state government sites where you can pick up state forms and publications.

5. Itemize Your Tax Deductions

It's easier to take the standard deduction, but you may save a bundle

employed, own a home or live in a hightax area.

6. Don't Shy Away From a Home Office Tax Deduction

The eligibility rules for claiming a home office deduction have been loosened to allow more self-employed files to claim this break. People who have no fixed location for their businesses can claim a home office deduction if they use the space for administrative or management activities, even if they don't meet clients there. Doctors, for example, who consult at various hospitals, or plumbers who make house calls, can now qualify. As always, you must use the space exclusively for business.

7. Provide Dependent Taxpayer IDs on Your Tax Return

Be sure to plug in Taxpayer Identification Numbers (usually Social Security Numbers) for your children and other dependents on your return. Otherwise, the IRS will deny any dependent credits that you might be due.

8. File and Pay On Time

If you can't finish your return on time, make sure you file Form 4868 by April 15, 2022. Form 4868 gives you a sixmonth extension of the filing deadline until October 15, 2022. On the form, you need to make a reasonable estimate of your tax liability for 2021 and pay any balance due with your request.

9. File Electronically

Electronic filing works best if you expect a tax refund. Because the IRS processes electronic returns faster than paper ones, you can expect to get your refund three to six weeks earlier. If you have your refund deposited directly into your bank account or IRA, the waiting time is even less.

10. Need help? We have a Member for That!

While there are multiple ways to prepare your taxes yourself, if you are looking for a qualified tax preparer or CPA, the Whittier Chamber has members who can help!

Ardent Tax & Accounting Solutions (562) 209-6218

> Haas Business Service (562) 698-9538

Hart & Vandenberg, CPAs (562) 945-2821

Harvey & Parmelee, LLP, CPAs (562) 698-9891

Integrity Tax & Notary Services (562) 237-2005

Jere E. McDonald, An Accountancy Corporation (562) 945-1558

> **Tax Solution Center** (562) 261-5744

Uptown Advisors (562) 273-9500

10 New Year Tips for Your Small Business

The decorations may still be up, but the holidays are over and it's time to get back to work and start focusing on your business. While some of you may have already done a lot of work long before the clock struck 12 on December 31, the rest of you can start funneling your energy with this list of 10 New Year tips for your small business.

1. Revisit Your Business Plan

If it has been a while since you examined this critical document, now's the time to get to it. Review it to ensure it's still aligned with your current company goals. Change what needs changing. If you need help with your business plan, remember that the Whittier Chamber offers free business mentoring through SCORE to all businesses. Call (626) 593-1120 to set up your appointment with a retired business expert.

2. Set Your Business Resolutions

New Year's resolutions are not all about losing weight. It is beneficial to lay out what you want for your business in the coming 12 months. But first, review what went right in 2021. Take a moment to celebrate those successes and then see what needs to be improved. If you are setting new goals, make sure they are SMART goals - Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timely. If you are not already a member of the Whittier Chamber, be sure to visit the office to see what we are doing for the business community. We'd love for you to join our efforts in enhancing the quality of life here in Whittier. If you are a member - thank you! Be sure to check in with our friendly staff and let's do a quick refresher on the many opportunities we can help promote and advocate for your business on the local, state and federal levels.

3. Build a Promotions Calendar

Sit down with a calendar and start looking at all the holidays or events you want to build promotions around. This will give you ample time to plan your social media updates, blog posts, advertising campaigns, etc. The Whittier Chamber offers numerous ways to get your word out. Consider us your partner in promoting your business and helping it grow.

4. Reassess Your Online Brand

Google yourself! Is it time for a new headshot or website refresh? What worked for you in terms of marketing this year? This is a great time to tweak your online strategy so that you identify the tools that helped your business grow, and cut back on those that don't. If you need some help in this area, contact the Whittier Chamber or search our online business directory at www.whittierchamber.com– we have a member for that!

5. Consider Your Hiring Needs

If your business is getting increasingly too busy for you to run with a skeleton crew, start planning your hiring strategy for 2022. Consider temps, freelancers, virtual assistants, and part-timers as alternatives to full-time employees if your budget is tight. Be sure to share your job openings with the Whittier Chamber so we can help spread the word for you.

6. Update Your Technology

If you've been putting off that computer or software purchase, now's the time to go ahead with it. You'll be more efficient if you have a computer that doesn't take an hour to load!

7. Learning from Industry Experts

Attending conferences and industry trade shows can be so beneficial for you as a business owner. We invest in staff training every year so we can stay on top of Chamber industry trends and share information. Not only can you meet others in your field (or potential customers) but you also learn from leading experts. Do some digging to see what's available for you in 2022.

8. Get Organized

If you're like a lot of business owners, your desk is cluttered, and so is your desktop. Spend a few hours throwing away and shredding things you don't need and organizing your computer files. It will make things easier to find.

9. Invest in Your Employees

If you do have staff, now's a fantastic time to offer supplementary training to refresh their skills or give them new ones. The Whittier Chamber offers no to low-cost training for you and your staff throughout the year so be sure to check our calendar of events regularly. There have been important changes to the law the past few years which requires employers to provide sexual harassment training to their managers/supervisors (2 hours) and all other employees (1 hour) by 2022. The Whittier Chamber will be offering this training a few times this year so you can stay in compliance. It's a huge fine if you do not do this!

10. Get Smarter

Your employees aren't the only ones who could learn more. Read industry blogs, books, magazines, and anything else you can get your hands on to be on top of the trends in your industry. Be sure to read this newspaper and stay connected with what's happening locally. If you are not receiving the Whittier Chamber's weekly e-newsletter, filled with business and economic development updates, community and networking events and more, send us your address at info@whittierchamber.com and request to be added to our "Chamber At A Glance" and/or "Headlines" e-newsletters.

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AROUND TOWN



CU SoCal Brings Back Saturday Branch Hours

Credit Union of Southern California (CU SoCal) will bring back Saturday branch hours beginning January 8, 2022. "Thank you for your patience while we worked through staffing shortages," said Melissa Manning, VP Business Talent & Development. "We know Saturday hours are important and we are eager to serve our Members."

All branches will be open from 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. on Saturdays except at the locations in Fontana, Ontario, Garden Grove and L.A. San Vicente. Appointments are available for added convenience and minimal wait time. Appointments can be made in advance or same-day.

This past year, CU SoCal's Care to Share Member Referral program generated more than \$30,000 in cash awards to their Members and the friends and family they referred. For more information, visit the Care to Share webpage and invite a friend to join CU SoCal!

PIH Health Acquires House Clinic Associates

Welcomes New Patients, Physicians and Medical Offices to its Network



PIH Health announced that it has acquired the nationally recognized House Clinic Associates.

With the acquisition, seven physicians of House Clinic Associates are now part of its existing medical

group, PIH Health Physicians.

House Clinic Associates consists of an elite team of audiologists, otolaryngologists, neurotologists and neurosurgeons who are leaders in treating the causes of hearing, balance and skull-base disorders with advanced practices and procedures. The team treats a variety of ear-related disorders such as Meniere's disease, acoustic neuromas, skull-base tumors, neurofibromatosis, and other complex neurological and neurosurgical disorders.

"PIH Health is pleased to be able to bring the expertise of House Clinic Associates to our network," said PIH Health Physicians President Andrew Zwers. "Our primary focus during this time is conducting a smooth transition for patients to PIH Health Physicians. We look forward to being a trusted partner in the health and wellness of our newest patients."

Patients can expect to receive the same excellent quality of care from their primary care physicians and specialists, without interruption. Patients with guestions can call (213) 483-9930 for more information. Patients looking for a physician or specialist can visit PIHHealth. statewide recognition from both the California School org/Find-a-Doctor.



Whittier Union High School **District Superintendent Martin** Plourde will retire in June, 2022

Superintendent Martin J. Plourde to Retire After 40-Year Career in Education

Whittier High School Martin J. Plourde has announced he will retire effective June 30, 2022, bringing to a close a storied 40-year career in education in which he has served in nearly every capacity, beginning as an English

teacher and basketball coach and finishing as top administrator of a diverse and thriving district that taking on the disruptions created by the COVID-19 serves more than 11,000 students.

Hired as Whittier Union Superintendent in 2016. Plourde has overseen a host of successful initiatives, building upon the core values embraced by the District to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education and establishing a culture of success and academic achievement for all students. The high school district consists of five comprehensive high schools, a continuation high school, an independent study high school and an adult school.

"It's been a privilege to lead Whittier Union, and while I will miss the people of this District, I am pretty excited about this next chapter in my life focused on grandchildren and travel with my wife," Plourde said. "These are tremendous times in education and we have done tremendous things in this District to support our students and create a safe, nurturing school district in a pandemic."

he opened magnet schools, implemented a dual

language program, expanded elective and CTE

offerings at the junior high and high school levels,

and partnered with Fullerton College to bring free

college courses for high school students. During

Mason's 6-1/2 years, Brea schools regularly received

Union environment that fosters success and resilience. District Whenever I am asked what makes Whittier Union S u p e r i n t e n d e n t special, my first, last and only response is the people. We have amazing students and the best employees anywhere and I am awed by their dedication to our students; especially in the last two years. Our Board's leadership has been steady and mindful, entirely focused on ensuring we were serving each and every student, wherever they were learning.

Watching our folks do the impossible incredibly well has been nothing short of inspiring."

Plourde's steady hand and guidance helped Whittier Union in meeting its biggest challenge pandemic, which included school closures and an immediate transition to distance learning.

Among Plourde's most notable accomplishments are establishing the Whittier Union Transportation Division, guiding the passage of the \$183 million Measure AA bond, adopting the Latin Honors academic system, unifying the Sierra Education Center campus, overseeing the completion of the Pioneer High School Aquatic Center and guiding the process to establish by-trustee elections.

"Martin has served our students with the faithful stewardship of a father guiding his children," outgoing Board of Trustees President Ralph Pacheco said. "He kept a steady course and provided the socialemotional and technical support students needed to find a new normal, regardless of the hurdles dealt him by the day-to-day challenges of running a high



Dr. Bradley Mason has been named Superintendent of the Whittier City School District

Whittier City School District Welcomes **New Superintendent**

Dr. Bradley Mason has been named the Superintendent of the Whittier City School District. Dr. Mason comes to WCSD after serving as Superintendent of Schools for the Brea Olinda Unified School District for the past 6-1/2years. During his tenure,

Boards Association and the California Department of Education.

Prior to his time with BOUSD, Mason worked for the Redlands Unified School District as a Middle School Principal, Director of Human Resources, and Assistant Superintendent of Business Services. Mason has made a career out of growing opportunities for students and educational programs. Mason stated, "I am honored that the Whittier City School Board selected me to become the Superintendent of the school district. I am anxious to begin my work and immerse myself in the Whittier community.'

Mason has been married to his wife Catrina for 32 years and they have two married adult children each with two young children. He earned his Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Administration from Azusa Pacific University.

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State Farm Insurance -

Cheryl Estep

(562) 693-7788

State Farm Insurance -

Paul Hernandez

(562) 943-2700

Tacos Cabrones

(562) 360-1574

Uptown Garage

(562) 632-1066

Zen's Tea House

(562) 686-9441

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Thank you to our Chamber Members who donated gifts for our 25 Days of Giveaways during our 2021 Shop Home for the Holidays campaign.

> **A Special Event** (562) 695-9570

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AZ Whittier Florist (562) 693-0773

California Grill (562) 907-7017

Crepes & Grapes Cafe (562) 696-3255

Doterra - Leslie Manley (562) 922-5811

MAP Property Management, Inc. (562) 945-3404

Martplan Insurance Agency, Inc. (562) 691-9414

Modern Woodmen of America -**Steven Flores** (626) 260-2589

> **My Auction House** (714) 202-6430

PIH Health (562) 698-0811

Congratulations to our 25 Days of Giveaways winners and the winner of our \$1,000 Grand Prize drawing! It PAYS to SHOP WHITTIER!



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TABLE INFORMATION

JANUARY 27, 2022 • 4 – 7 P.M.

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Sponsors Athens Services Stadium Sponsor	STADILIM BOOTH 10' x 10' booth space, Prime Location in the Ballroom, 2 FREE electricity **Participate on the Scoreboard map for an additional \$50	
usbank.	STADILIM TABLE Prime Location in the Ballroom, 6-foot covered table, 2 chairs, s **Participate on the Scoreboard map for an additional \$50	
ROSE B HILLS WINDAM FRAME & BOTTAMAR Another (WA Dig Homes) Tanak 50 Yand Line Spansor	SUITE LEVEL BOOTH 8' x 10' booth space in the Boardroom, 2 classroom-size tables **Participate on the Scoreboard map for an additional \$50	
Brookfield Residential	SUITE LEVEL TABLE 6- foot covered table, 2 chairs, basic signage in the Boardroor **Electricity available for an additional \$15	



Electricity available for an additional \$15 **Participate on the Scoreboard map for an additional \$50

50 YARD LINE TABLE......(Hallway) - \$195

6- foot covered table, 2 chairs, basic signage in the Hallway **Participate as a Scoreboard map for an additional \$50

SCOREBOARD PARTICIPATION \$50

Direct people to your table by participating on the Scoreboard map. Display your logo on the Scoreboard map that is handed out to every expo attendee. Expo goers will be asked to visit each table on the Scoreboard and have their map stamped. Each completed Scoreboard will be eligible for the grand prize drawing.

WALL OF FAME.....\$100 Become famous on our Wall of Fame! Whether you are participating in the Business Expo with a table or not you can market your business with your company name and logo on the Wall of Fame. All Wall of Fame participants will get extra exposure in Chamber communications.

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Email:

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RENEWING MEMBERS

Thanks to the following members for renewing their Chamber membership and for supporting our efforts to build a strong local economy

NOVEMBER

Ashley French Photography (562) 833-3627

Osos, One Stop Office Solutions (562) 464-9600

Calvary Baptist Church (562) 698-8058

Piña Reading Academy (562) 698-7323

Community Escrow Services, Inc. (562) 698-2220

Crooked Gaff Kitchen & Oyster Bar (562) 632-1162

Dr. Barbara S. Stone

Energy Control HVAC (562) 945-6966

> **Four Bricks** (562) 693-6100

GM Properties (562) 697-5000

La Casa Del Cocinero (562) 273-5772

Lending Enterprise (562) 639-1690

Michaels Furniture (562) 696-2999

Oakmont of Whittier (562) 693-8222

Rose Hills Memorial Park & Mortuary (562) 699-0921

(562) 943-7125

Servpro of Whittier (562) 698-5368

Clothing Boutique (562) 789-5808

(626) 543-2531

(213) 324-5731

Periodontics & Dental Implants (562) 945-7621

Wilkinson Barneson Insurance Agency (562) 789-5704

Congratulations to our Milestone Members this month!

Thank you to the following businesses that have been longstanding partners with the Whittier Chamber in helping to support our thriving economy.

January

20 Years

The Rotary Club of Whittier

(562) 756-3231

15 Years

Chorale Bel Canto

(888) 460-9222

10 Years

Urteaga Chiropractic &

Sports Medicine

(562) 274-7771

Super Market La Venadita

(562) 693-8989

5 Years

Norms Restaurant

(562) 907-2760

Dr. Lili Mirtorabi & Associates

(562) 325-5404

Exclusively Imports, Inc. (562) 945-3867

Hart & Vandenberg, CPAs

(562) 945-2821

February

20 Years

Matrix Oil Corporation (805) 884-9000

10 Years

Gateway Management Company (562) 696-6900

> **R'Gal Properties** (562) 692-5457

Pabst, Kinney & Associates, Inc. (562) 236-9069

5 Years

Telcog Communications (844) 548-8647

Rio Hondo College Foundation (562) 908-3489

> Johnson Mauro Group -**Compass Realty** (310) 367-5927



DECEMBER

Advanced Benefit Center (562) 947-0625

> Auntie's Restaurant (562) 464-1959

> > **Bridge of Faith** (562) 322-5265

Chick-Fil-A (562) 902-1550

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James Hardware Company (562) 691-1711

Shelter's Right Hand - Auxiliary to the Women's & Children's Crisis Shelter (562) 373-5541

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La Posada (562) 945-2651

M & M Glass Inc. (562) 945-6212

Merchant Bancard Processing (213) 334-4930

> **Norms Restaurant** (562) 907-2760

Roberts Real Estate & Property Management (562) 903-1139

U.S. Bank (562) 698-2521

Valladares, Oscar

West Coast Arborists, Inc. (714) 991-1900

Whittier Art **Association & Gallery** (562) 698-8710

> Whittier College (562) 907-4200

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66 When I opened my office in October 2020, I knew that membership in the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce is a must if you are business owner.

The primary reason I joined the Chamber was to expand the visibility of my business through networking and engagement with the Whittier community.

When I was fortunate to have my ribbon cutting ceremony on October 1, 2021, I saw immediately how much the Chamber, the city and the community supports each other. I enjoyed the event and I was grateful to have Mayor Vinatieri welcome me to the Whittier community. The Chamber has helped me market my business and increased my visibility by asking me to become an Ambassador. Since becoming an

TESTIMONIAL

Ambassador I have been fortunate to also help welcome other new businesses to our community. Connections I have made at the Chamber's Wake Up Whittier networking events and the Hathaway Golf Classic, and the exposure I got by participating in the Door 2 Door flyer program, have all helped me grow my business. Being in the Insurance industry is all about making great connections to your clients. Having vetted relationships such as Plumbing services, and Real Estate professionals, has allowed me to, not just be a great Insurance agent but a trustworthy resource for my clients! I am extremely grateful to the Whittier Chamber of Commerce for all their encouragement and support. This is truly the best business organization around! フフ



Big 5 • Blaze Fast Fire'd Pizza • Burlington • Chili's • China Wok • Dollar Tree

Don Roberto's Jewelers • Famous Footwear • Fantastic Sam's • Fashion Q • Five Below GameStop • GNC • H&R Block • Hawaiian Island BBQ • Hear USA • La Michoacana Maki Yaki Japanese Grill • Marshalls • Michaels • Natalie's Nails & Spa • Petco • Rite Aid Ross Dress for Less • Rubi's Frosty Freeze • Sally Beauty Supply Schoolsfirst Federal Credit Union • Staples • Subway • T-Mobile • The Olive Garden The Quad Cleaners • The UPS Store • TJ Maxx • Vallarta Supermarkets Weight Watchers • Yogurtland

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