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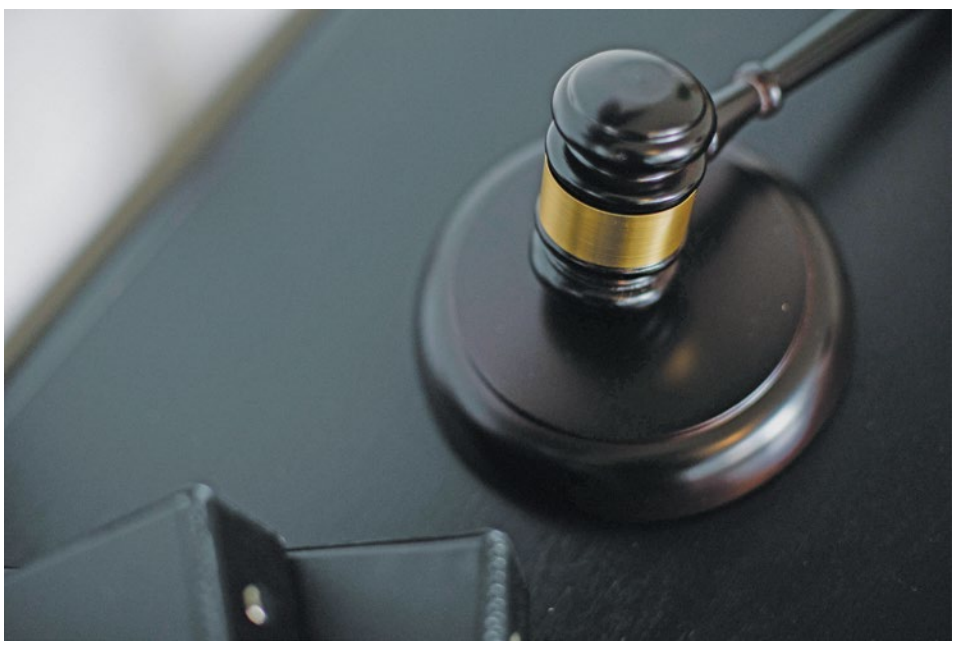
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WHITTIER AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MAR/APR 2024

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE WHITTIER AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VOL. 30 NO. 1

A Look at New California Labor and Employment Laws for 2024



The California Legislature has enacted several new laws that will impact the workplace in 2024. This Holland & Knight alert provides a brief summary of select employment laws that go into effect on Jan. 1, 2024, unless stated otherwise.

Minimum Wage Increases: As of Jan. 1, 2024, the California state minimum wage will increase to $16 per hour for all employers, regardless of employee headcount. This also means that as of Jan. 1, 2024, exempt employees in California must be paid a minimum annual salary of $66,560. "Living wage ordinances" in various locales within the state have been enacted, so local standards should be confirmed to ensure compliance with all governing wage requirements. Covered exempt computer professional employees must be paid a minimum of $55.58 per hour, or $115,763.35 in annual salary. On April 1, 2024, covered fast food restaurant employers will see an increase in minimum wage, as will covered healthcare facility employers on June 1, 2024.

SB 616 (Enhanced California Paid Sick Leave Benefits): SB 616 builds on 10 years of paid sick leave law and is one of the more significant expansions of employers' obligations regarding paid sick leave since the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act of 2014 was enacted. Under SB 616, an employer must either 1) frontload 40 hours/five days of paid sick leave (previously, 24 hours/three days) at the beginning of each year of employment, calendar year or 12-month period (in which case the employer does not need to accrue or carry over unused sick leave), 2) accrue one hour of paid sick leave for every 30 hours worked (in which case the employer must carry over paid sick leave from year to year but can implement an 80-hour/10-day accrual cap (previously, 40 hours/five days) and can limit the employee's use to 40 hours/five days (previously, 24 hours/three days) in each year of employment, calendar year or 12-month period, or 3) use a different accrual method provided that the accrual is on a regular basis so that employees have no less than 24 hours of paid sick leave by their 120th day of employment or each calendar year or in each 12-month period and, as a new requirement, no less than 40 hours of accrued sick leave or paid time off by the 200th calendar day of employment or each calendar year or in each 12-month period.

SB 848 (New Employee Leave Entitlement for Reproductive Loss): This new law requires employers of five or more employees to provide up to five days of protected leave to employees who 1) have worked for the employer for at least 30 days and 2) have suffered a reproductive loss event. A reproductive loss event is defined as the day or, for a multiday event, the final day of a failed adoption, failed surrogacy, miscarriage, stillbirth or an unsuccessful assisted reproduction. The five days of protected leave are not required to be taken consecutively but should be taken within three months of the event. In the event of an employee experiencing more than one reproductive loss event within a 12-month period, the employer is obligated to provide up to 20 days within a 12-month period. The protected leave is not required to be paid leave; however, employees may use other types of leave concurrently. The bill does not require any paperwork or forms from the employee to utilize reproductive loss leave and, since it is protected leave, employers are prohibited from retaliating against employees who exercise their right to take this leave.

Continued on page 5

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WHITTIER AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
8158 Painter Avenue
Whittier, CA 90602

WHITTIER CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES' FORUM

WHITTIER AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

MARCH 6, 2024 • 5:30 P.M.

WHITTIER COMMUNITY THEATRE
7630 WASHINGTON AVE.

Whittier City Council Candidates Forum 2024

Join the Whittier Chamber on Wednesday, March 6th, for an engaging evening featuring the candidates vying for City Council seats in Districts 1 and 3, along with the dynamic contenders in the citywide Mayoral race. Gain valuable insights into their visions for our community and participate in a forum that delves into the key issues shaping the future of Whittier. See Pages 4-5 for more information.

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2023-2024 Board of Directors

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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.

The inclusion of advertising, logos, or paid advertorial, or reference to any products, process, service, trade name, trademark, or manufacturer in this publication is not an endorsement by the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



KAISER PERMANENTE®

Gregg Durkee,
Chair of the Board

It's Goal Setting Season

It's that time of year again when resolutions beckon us to take charge. What steps will you take to ensure 2024 stands out as your best year yet? Whether it's about boosting business, adopting a healthier lifestyle, or hitting the gym, the choices are in your hands.

The Whittier Chamber is here to help you achieve your business and personal goals for the year. If you aim to grow your business, consider participating in the Chamber's numerous networking events throughout the year. To showcase your work, tag the Chamber in your posts (@whittierchamber) and gain more social media visibility. If a healthier diet is your goal, explore Chamber members offering nutritious options like The Bee Hive Market and Deli, Tru Bowl, or Nekter Juice Bar.

Looking to get into shape? Join fitness clubs affiliated with the Chamber, such as MSF Studio, Unstoppable Fitness, Fitness Resolute, Zero Givens, or CrossFit. Or indulge in your artistic side in one of our dance studios like RMH Dance, Uptown School of Dance, Dance Image or Steps of Gold.

You may be looking to improve your financial situation. Seek guidance from trusted financial advisors like Madsen Financial Coaching or Modern Woodmen of America. Navigating the challenges of running a business? Connect with the Whittier Chamber to explore educational seminars and business development opportunities.

While many wait for the beginning of the month or year to make significant changes, many successful individuals implement changes the moment they decide. The New Year starts when you want it to, and the time for change is now.

Best wishes for a successful 2024!

The 110% Club

Thank you to our generous members who have chosen to be part of our 110% Club. Their additional investment of 10% of their dues allows the Chamber to support business growth and strengthen the economic vitality of our region.

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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.

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Modern Woodmen — FRATERNAL FINANCIAL
StateFarm — Cheryl Estep
Madres Brunch

Chamber Brings Community Together to Honor the Whittier Police Department Silver Shield Awards Banquet - February 23

We take immense pride in our enduring support for the dedicated officers of the Whittier Police Department, unwavering in our appreciation for their commitment to safeguarding the communities of Whittier and Santa Fe Springs.

Law enforcement officers are empowered with the amazing responsibility and authority to maintain public order. At the same time, officers have the unique opportunity to engage with citizens, identify and solve problems, and positively affect their communities daily. The Whittier Police Department responds to thousands of calls for service each year. Our officers and civilian personnel all play an important role in defining the quality of life in Whittier and, as a community, we couldn't be more grateful for their service.

The Whittier Chamber celebrated the 24th Anniversary of the Silver Shield Awards Banquet & Appreciation Dinner on February 23 at the at the Pacific Palms Conference Resort in the City of Industry. The occasion serves as a heartfelt tribute to the officers, civilian employees, and volunteers who have sworn to protect and serve our cities. During this special evening, attendees gain a poignant glimpse into the lives and sacrifices made by the men and women who selflessly protect us every day. The event includes stories, recognition for those who exceeded the call of duty, honoring retirees, and fostering a stronger bond between the community and law enforcement.

"It is our honor to organize this very important community event which salutes the officers, civilian employees and volunteers of the Whittier Police Department," stated Silver Shield chair Shannon Hammer from Shannon G's Flowers. "On this very special night, attendees get a small glimpse into the lives and sacrifices of the men and women who protect us daily," she continued. At the event, stories are told, those who went above and beyond the call of duty are honored, retirees are recognized and the connection between community and law enforcement is strengthened.

If you, or a business or organization you know, is interested in getting involved for 2025, please contact the Whittier Chamber at (562) 698-9554 or by emailing McKenna@whittierchamber.com.

Thank You to the 2024 Silver Shield Awards Sponsors

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Whittier Republican Women (2)
Woodruff Properties (2)





CANDIDATES FORUM

All information was submitted by the candidates for your consideration. The Whittier Chamber does not endorse any candidate or candidate statement. Further information on each candidate is also available on the City of Whittier website: www.cityofwhittier.org.

All candidates who qualified for the City Council Elections were invited to participate.

DISTRICT 1



Jessica Martinez

Married 26 years, mother, city council member. Currently serving as a Director for the Puente Hills Habitat Authority, and Trustee for Greater Los Angeles Vector Control, several other boards and ad hoc committees.

Former educator with a Juris Doctorate, master's degrees in Human Rights and Bioethics, BA from Loyola Marymount, AA from ELA Jr. College.

Jessica has also worked for the federal government, and for private industry.



Magdalena "Maggie" Barragnon Moe

My name is Magdalena "Maggie" Barragnon Moe and I am running for Whittier City Council District 1. I was raised in Murphy Ranch and Whittier is my Hometown. I've been involved in Civic Matters since 2016, but I have been an active volunteer in my community for over 45 years.

I have served as an officer/ board member of the following service organizations:

- **Whittier Sunrise Rotary** (President, Board Member)
- **Whittier Regional Symphony** (Vice President)
- **East Whittier Music & Arts Foundation** (Board Member)
- **Whittier for Concerned Citizens** (Founder, President)

Whittier residents say, "Maggie makes things happen!"

The reason they say this is simple- my neighbors have come to rely on me to relay their problems and concerns to the proper Authority. I have become effective at identifying each problem, rallying neighborhood support and bringing a solution to the Agency that can best fix the problem. I have led the fight to repair street lights, the cleanout of storm drains and removal of problematic waste. I have also gone to the length of shutting down my business so that I can help in the effort to combat the pandemic. I was involved in Covid and antibody testing, where we tested over 1400 people with a 40% positive results rate. If I can do this as an average Citizen, imagine what I can do for the entire District when I am your Councilperson.

I have no aspirations for any other Office after this. My vision is to do good work, build relationships, solve problems and leave a positive legacy for future generations.



Mary Ann Pacheco

For over 40 years, Mary Ann Pacheco has been a respected member of the Whittier community and a resident/homeowner in the Uptown area, District Area 1. A daughter of an immigrant working-class family, Mary Ann attended USC and UCLA to dedicate herself as a professor to teach and improve the lives of people seeking a better life through educational opportunities.

Her public service has included a career dedicated to students and staff at Rio Hondo College as a former English professor, union leader, and an elected member of the Board of Trustees. She has long advocated for public education and those whose voice is often not heard or respected as it should be. Mary Ann has been recognized for her service, advocacy, and leadership with several prestigious education and human rights awards. However, her best reward is always witnessing the successes in the lives of those she has helped along the way.

Valuing community service, Mary Ann has enthusiastically volunteered for decades at St. Mary of the Assumption and served on the boards of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Whittier/Pico Rivera, the Hispanic Outreach Taskforce (HOT), and Soroptimist International of Whittier. She continues to be committed to serving families.

MAYORAL CANDIDATES



Rolando Cano

I am a resident of Whittier for over 30 years, spent 20 years as an Aeronautical Engineer and 11 years as a Special Education Advocate for students serving in all Whittier Districts. Served as Chairman on the Whittier City School District BOC, Measure Z, which funded Technological Upgrades in all of WCSD Schools. I am a founding member of Whittier Pride since 2019, and worked in partnership with the City of Whittier, the Uptown Association, the Whittier Museum, local businesses, during COVID and beyond, by generating events for families as additional support to generate revenue for business owners. This support contributed to the overall surplus of over $40 million dollars of sales tax revenue, within two years.

As a candidate for Mayor, I have heard the clear promises made to the people of Whittier and I am concerned with where Whittier currently stands fiscally due to CIPA and our city's managed directive.

Your safety is of the upmost importance. My plan for increased public safety begins with designating Whittier PD officers, 2 officers per patrol, in 3 sectors. 1 in the East, 1 in the West, and 1 in Central Uptown Sector, 3 additional units will support our unincorporated borders of the city. This strategy will increase WPD response times and cover a larger area of Whittier with the safety of our officers in mind, We will enforce the law.

Creation of city run mentorship program for all senior student age participants, including our special needs community. Qualifying Students for job openings in our city and surrounding city's. We will build a roller rink and skatepark for our families to enjoy. We will build a free transit system to connect all of our commercial districts, parks, and schools. I will do more for our children by investing directly in the classroom. My name is Rolando Cano and I need your vote to continue leading our city team for the next two years, In Whittier Cano CAN get the job done.

#whittiercano on FB, INSTA, and Nextdoor



Isaiah Leslie Leon Savage

Occupation: Accounting Bookkeeper

Increase police department to an efficient capacity. Currently Whittier police are sorely understaffed and over worked. I believe there should be an additional 480 police officers. I intend to bring back federal funding, however it can only be done by renouncing "sanctuary city" which is and was the reason federal funding was taken away. Have any and all 835.B's removed from Whittier. Whittier school district is the third largest in southern California which means Whittier has more children than other surrounding cities. We must take our children out of harm's way. I believe a community free of crime and corruption is a possibility. State mental institutions must be reopened, there are people living on the streets with mental disability, we must get these people off the streets and into a place where they can receive proper attention. I believe this will decrease the number of transients living on the streets. Cleaning up our town will take work, however I have faith that we can get it done. Together as a community. Increasing the police department IS IMPORTANT in creating SAFETY for our community. Children, Decent hard working families, deserve to live in a SAFE COMMUNITY.



Joe Vinatieri

It's been my honor to serve as your first directly elected Mayor for the past eight years and I'd like your continued support. I was born and raised in Whittier, attended Whittier schools, married and raised a family in Whittier. My wife and I reopened an Uptown restaurant and I am a partner in a Whittier law firm.

As a candidate I made clear commitments regarding public safety, jobs, fiscal stability, the Nelles property (now "the Groves"), homelessness, Uptown, our library, and we made it happen!

Public safety is our first priority and I am pleased that the WPD is at full complement with the addition of more officers and police body cameras. We have beefed up our fire protection/emergency medical services through the LA CoFD with the addition of paramedic engine 59 in East Whittier as well as paramedic assessment engine 28 in Uptown. And our commitment continues with a new West Whittier station 17 and paramedic squad, now in the planning stages.

Thanks to the people of Whittier and Measure W, your city is fiscally stable. We generated a surplus that we are investing in parks, the hills, youth sports facilities for our kids/grandkids, the future. We extended the GWT to Orange County and are working westward to the San Gabriel River. Converting the blighted CYA Nelles property into the beautiful Groves is almost complete and soon to come, a state-of-the-art food court, Rodeo 72.

We are working hard on homelessness and successfully taking care of our homeless families but homeless single adults continue to be challenging. With the homelessness emergency declaration, we found solutions for those encamped in the parks and we now have a Navigation Center providing housing, jobs and services for those who want help. But we also must be firm with those who don't want help. And the county and state must do their job with the mentally ill.

With Uptown property owners we created the Uptown Improvement District and the City is actively making parking/safety/streetscape improvements to our central core including the beautiful parking pavilion and Promenade. We pulled together our partners from the state/county who brought back your tax dollars to rebuild our Central Library.

I need your vote to continue leading our city team for the next two years. My goal: to make Whittier the best place in Southern California to raise a family!

www.joev4whittier.com • www.facebook.com/joev4whittier



April 9, 2024
Election Day
7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

DISTRICT 3



Monica Sena

- Resident of East Whittier over 30 years
- Middle School Principal in Whittier for 16 years
- Previously Teacher, Coach, Activities and Athletic Director
- Educator for over 30 Years, now retired
- Managed multi-million dollar budgets and supervised more than 75 employees while a principal
- Volunteer as secretary/treasurer for 3green Assistance, a small non-profit organization that gives grants to other non-profits for environmental projects. We have provided grants to local organizations such as the Boys and Girls Club, PIH Health, and the YMCA.
- I have been a foster parent and have been married for over 45 years



Cathy Warner

Having served for 14 years on local school boards, Cathy was first elected to the City Council in 2004 and reelected in 2008, 2012, 2016 and 2020. Cathy's family has been in Whittier since 1920 and she and her husband Dave have seven children, 32 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Cathy attended John Greenleaf Whittier and Longfellow Elementary Schools, Dexter and East Whittier Junior High Schools, and graduated from California High School. She received an A.A. Degree from Fullerton College, a B.S. in Dental Hygiene from the University of Missouri at Kansas City, and a Master of Leadership from the Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California. Cathy and her husband, Dave, maintain a Periodontal and Dental Implant practice in East Whittier. She is also an Adjunct Professor at UMass Global, Department of Business and Professional Studies.

She has previously served on the City's Cultural Arts Commission for 2 years, the East Whittier City School District Governing Board for 2 years, the Whittier Union High School District Board of Trustees for 12 years, and the Tri-Cities ROP Governing Board for 6 years. Cathy is a board member for the Whittier Union High School District Educational Foundation, President and Founding Member of the Tri-Cities ROP Educational Foundation, President and Founding Member of the Clean Water Education Foundation & Chair of the East Whittier City School District Bond Oversight Committee. She also serves as Chair of the Administrative District for the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts.

Cathy Serves on the following City Council Ad Hoc Committees: Town and Gown, Parnell Park Renovation, Whittwood, Fire Station 17's and the Gold Line Light Rail.

For more information on 2024 candidates, please visit www.whittierchamber.com/candidatesforum2024

Continued from front cover -

California Labor & Employment Laws

Additionally, an employer must maintain confidentiality relating to reproductive loss leave.

SB 699/AB 1076 (California's New Nationwide Focus on Noncompetition Agreements): For decades, California has taken arguably the most pro-employee-mobility position on noncompetition and nonsolicitation agreements in the country – generally, post-employment noncompetition and nonsolicitation agreements are outright prohibited. SB 699 adds a new Section 16600.5 to the California Business and Professions Code that boldly provides that "[a]ny contract that is void under this chapter is unenforceable regardless of where and when the contract was signed" (emphasis added). This blanket ban applies "regardless of whether the contract was signed and the employment was maintained outside of California." Additionally, employers are affirmatively prohibited from entering into noncompetition agreements (existing law established that noncompetition agreements were void against public policy, but there was no affirmative prohibition) or from attempting to enforce a noncompetition agreement. Employees have a private right of action to enforce the law and can obtain injunctive relief, actual damages and an award of attorneys' fees if they prevail. AB 1076, a companion bill, requires employers to notify current and former employees (employed after Jan. 1, 2022) in writing by Feb. 14, 2024, that any noncompetition clause or agreement already entered into is void.

AB 2188/SB 700 (Protections for Off-Site, Off-Duty Marijuana Use): AB 2188 and SB 700 amend the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) by adding provisions explicitly protecting a person's off-site, off-duty marijuana use. The new law, effective Jan. 1, 2024, prohibits employers from discriminating against applicants or employees because they have 1) used cannabis off the job and away from the workplace, or 2) were found to have non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites in their hair, blood, urine or other bodily fluids by a drug screening test. However, these new protections do not cover all workers, such as exempting those in the building and construction trades. Employers are also prohibited from requesting information from a job applicant relating to the applicant's prior use of cannabis. Information about prior cannabis use obtained from the person's criminal history is subject to the new protections, unless the employer is permitted to consider or inquire about that information under state or federal law.

Employers may still use scientifically valid drug tests conducted through methods that screen for current impairment, as the new law does not permit employees to possess, be impaired by or use cannabis on the job, even for medicinal purposes. It also does not eliminate an employer's right to maintain a drug- and alcohol-free workplace under current health and safety laws.

AB 636 (Updated Wage Theft Prevention Notice Published by the California Labor Commissioner): California Labor Code Section 2810.5 requires employers to provide each employee with written notice (referred to as a Wage Theft Prevention Notice), at the time of hiring, with the basic terms of employment as set forth in California Labor Code Section 2810.5, such as rate(s) of pay, payday, legal name of the employer and any "doing business as names," address, workers' compensation information and paid sick leave information, among other items. Section 2810.5 allows employers to communicate these items "in the language the employer normally uses to communicate employment-related information to the employee," though the California Labor Commissioner publishes a template Wage Theft Prevention Notice for employer use.

AB 636, among other things, adds a new requirement that the written notice provide information on "the existence of a federal or state emergency or disaster declaration applicable to the county or counties where the employee is to be employed, and that was issued within 30 days before the employee's first day of employment, that may affect their health and safety during their employment." On Dec. 14, 2023, the California Labor Commissioner published an updated Wage Theft Prevention Notice to address this new requirement. Thus, employers who use the Labor Commissioner's template Wage Theft Prevention Notice should update their template notice accordingly.

SB 553 (New Requirement to Develop and Implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Plan): This law adds Section 6401.9 to the California Labor Code, which requires nearly all California employers to establish, implement and maintain an "effective" workplace violence prevention plan by July 1, 2024. Under the new law, a covered employer must establish a workplace violence prevention plan that includes, among other things, the following: 1) the names or job titles of the individuals responsible for implementing the plan, 2) procedures to obtain the active involvement of employees in developing and implementing the plan, including their participation in identifying, evaluating and correcting workplace violence hazards, designing and implementing training, and reporting and investigating workplace violence incidents, 3) procedures for the employer to respond to reports of workplace violence and to prohibit retaliation against the employee who reported the incident, 4) procedures to develop and provide training on the employer's plan, 5) procedures to correct workplace violence hazards in a timely manner, 6) procedures for post-incident response and investigation, and 7) procedures for the employer to review and update the plan for effectiveness at least annually, or when a deficiency is observed, or after an incident of violence. Covered employers must also maintain detailed records regarding the workplace violence hazard identification, evaluation and correction, the employer's investigations and a detailed violent incident log. Given the extensive requirements under Labor Code Section 6401.9 and the assessment of monetary penalties for noncompliance, covered employers should take active steps to ensure they have a compliant workplace violence prevention plan in place before July 1, 2024.

SB 497 (New 90-Day Rebuttable Presumption for Workplace Retaliation): SB 497, also known as the Equal Pay and Anti-Retaliation Protection Act, amends California Labor Code Sections 98.6, 1102.5 and 1197.5 by creating a rebuttable presumption of retaliation in favor of an employee's workplace retaliation claim. The new presumption applies if an employer takes adverse action (such as discharge, discipline, demotion or threat of discharge or demotion) against an employee within 90 days of the employee engaging in certain protected activity. This presumption ultimately makes it easier for employees to establish a prima facie case of retaliation. Under the current law, employees must establish a prima facie case of retaliation by showing: 1) they engaged in a protected activity, 2) their employer took an adverse action against them and 3) there was a casual nexus between the employee's protected activities. Under SB 497, however, if the 90-day presumption applies, the burden shifts to the employer to articulate a legitimate, nonretaliatory reason for the alleged retaliation. If the employer is able to do so, the burden shifts back to the employee to demonstrate that, despite the non-retaliatory justification, the discipline was nonetheless retaliatory in nature. SB 497 further directs civil penalties "to be awarded to the employee … who suffered the violation."

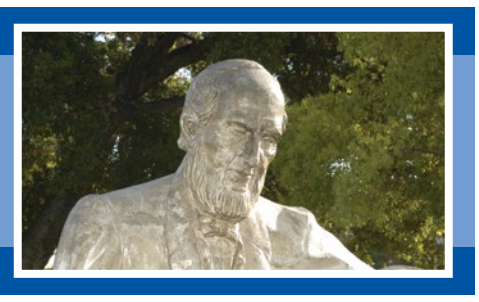
SB 365 (Elimination of Automatic Stay of Litigation Pending Arbitration Appeal): Under current law, trial court proceedings are automatically stayed pending an appeal of an order denying a motion to compel arbitration. However, effective Jan. 1, 2024, such an appeal will no longer automatically stay trial court proceedings. Instead, employers (and others seeking to arbitrate) may have to litigate the merits of the underlying claims while the case is appealed unless the court exercises its discretion to order a stay. As with other recent California laws adverse to arbitration, SB 365 substantially changes existing law and is likely subject to challenge on preemption grounds. SB 365 also conflicts with recent U.S. Supreme Court precedent that held that a district court must stay proceedings pending an interlocutory appeal on the question of arbitration.

AB 594 (Changes to California Labor Code Permits Public Prosecutors to Prosecute Actions for Wage Hour Violations): Until Jan. 1, 2029, this law will authorize a public prosecutor to file an action, either civil or criminal, for a violation of specific provisions of the California Labor Code related to payment of wages to employees and willful misclassifications of individuals as independent contractors. This bill also provides that arbitration agreements that require individual arbitration and limit representative actions shall have no impact on the public prosecutor or the Labor Commissioner to enforce the California Labor Code. If actions brought under this law are successful, recovered wages are prioritized for payments to the affected workers and civil penalties will be paid to California's General Fund. The law also permits public prosecutors to seek injunctive relief and prevailing attorney's fees and costs.

For more information or questions on the new California labor and employment laws and their potential impact on employers and employees, contact the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce.



City Of Whittier UPDATE





MAYOR

Joe Vinatieri

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

Happy 2024, Whittier! I know we are already well into 2024, but I hope you had a wonderful holiday season filled with joy and relaxation. I trust many of you took part in the Chamber's Shop Home for the Holidays contest – a fantastic initiative proudly sponsored by the City. Your enthusiastic participation led to this year's campaign doubling its collection, with Whittier residents collectively spending over $100,000 during the contest. Let's maintain this positive momentum throughout the year by continuing to shop locally in Whittier. Your ongoing support not only boosts our local economy but also directly contributes to vital City programs, including youth activities, park maintenance, public safety, and other essential services. A heartfelt thank you to the generous Whittier area businesses that donated prizes, and congratulations to all the winners who demonstrated the value of shopping local!

I am happy to report that 2023 was good and I expect very good things to follow as we continue to make strides on projects and programming in 2024. The Whittier City Council met for its annual goal-setting workshop and workplan study session before the holidays to review and prioritize local projects for the New Year. Completed and current projects were categorized by the City Council's previously approved strategic goals including public safety, transparency, quality of life, financial stability, and maintaining a strong economic base. Completed 2023 projects deserving of recognition range from additional funding for public safety assistance like police body-worn cameras and staffing of a Mental Health Evaluation Team to studies performed on a proposed People Mover Circular and the Gold Line Eastside Transit Corridor, as well as park improvements at Anaconda, new lighting at the Whittier Community Theatre, establishment of a paramedic engine at Los Angeles County Fire Station 59 on Scott Avenue, operational support for the Whittier Museum, construction of the renovated Whittier Public Library, and the much anticipated 2.8-mile extension of the Greenway Trail to the Orange County line. It was another busy, productive year and there's much to celebrate.

Additionally, the City Council moved to prioritize an estimated $62 million dollars in funding for current and soon-to-begin projects including:

- a Parks Master Plan, pickleball overlay at Leffingwell Park, full scale renovation of Parnell Park, and improvements at Kennedy, Broadway, Penn, and Michigan;
- a Broadband Master Plan with improved connectivity;
- a citywide branding initiative featuring new gateway and park signage;
- refurbishment of the Whittier Senior Center opening this month;
- critical upgrades to Los Angeles County Fire Station 17;
- a proposed connection of the Greenway Trail west to the San Gabriel River;
- upgrades to the Whittier Union High School District athletic fields;
- and the long-awaited development and revitalization of the former Alpha Beta shopping center site on Comstock Avenue.

New businesses have also opened at The Groves like Cava and Nyugen's Kitchen, and the much-anticipated Rodeo 72 food hall is set to open this year in an inventive, redesigned space ideal for pop-ups and communal dining. I have seen firsthand the improvements underway, and you will not be disappointed! The City is also gearing up to begin construction along Greenleaf Avenue as part of its long-awaited Uptown Streetscape Beautification project inclusive of sidewalk repair, widening of the street, enhanced cleaning, new lighting, and park space, as well as semi-permanent, uniform outdoor dining enclosures. Thanks to the City's 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 this year and well into the future.

I am grateful to our senior community who have waited patiently for the reopening of the Uptown Senior Center, which closed during the pandemic, and I encourage you to join us for a ribbon cutting on Tuesday, January 23 at 5:00 p.m. to celebrate the finished full-scale remodel and renovation. Also on the to-do list will be the ribbon cutting marking the installation of much-needed lighting fixtures at the Murphy Ranch Little League baseball fields on Friday, January 19 at 5:00 p.m. Earlier that day, the City will join Supervisor Janice Hahn and the LA County Fire Department to cut the ribbon on the new paramedic engine at Fire Station 59. This is an essential and much-appreciated upgrade to the station further ensuring our community receives immediate life-saving services in an emergency.

On an equally exciting note, I'm proud to share Whittier's recent recognition by the American Public Works Association (APWA) with a BEST Project of the Year Award in the category of "Traffic, Mobility, and Beautification" for the successful completion of the 2.8-mile extension of the Greenway Trail. I joined Public Works staff for the luncheon, where Whittier was praised for achieving project goals, delivering on schedule, demonstrating cost-effectiveness, fostering cooperation among partner agencies, consultants, and contractors, and actively engaging the public. Speaking of awards, Whittier also received the Gold Award for the 2023 Gateway Cities Energy Action Awards. I want to recognize my City Council colleagues for our continued investment in energy, cost-saving measures, and support for the Public Works staff working diligently to ensure actions are implemented and the City receives credit for the positive work we are doing. Learn more about the City's green initiatives via the City's website at www.cityofwhittier.org and know that we will continue to look for ways to address our community's carbon footprint and enhance energy efficiency in 2024.

As we gear up for another lively and fruitful year in Whittier, I extend my gratitude and thanks to all of you for your continued partnership with the City. I truly appreciate our engaged residents, organizations, and small business community for the many contributions you make to ensure Whittier remains a unique, inviting, and special place to LIVE, WORK and SHOP. I look forward to seeing you at the annual Silver Shield Awards Banquet on Friday, February 23 honoring our extraordinary Whittier Police Department for their dedication and professionalism. Happy New Year to you and your family – cheers to 2024!

10-4 tips from the WHITTIER POLICE DEPARTMENT



Chief Aviv Bar

Avoid a Crash – Drive Safely

Each year, officers respond to hundreds of traffic collisions where drivers, passengers, bicyclists and pedestrians are seriously injured. Collisions happen when someone involved acts unsafely, violating the many rules of the road. Behavior such as speeding, distracted driving, disobeying posted signs and signals, and driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, increases the likelihood of being involved in a collision. Not using a seatbelt or a properly installed child seat increases the likelihood of serious injuries or death.

Part of our patrol division mission is to reduce traffic collisions and traffic related injuries and deaths in the city. We do this by educating the public about safe driving practices and by taking proactive enforcement steps to change driver behavior. Our officers regularly monitor intersections for red light and stop sign violations and use radar to obtain vehicle speeds on city streets.

Accidents, citations, and the associated court and insurance costs are completely preventable. Red lights, stop signs, other signs and signals are designed to get voluntary compliance from drivers and keep everyone on the road safe. Making the roadways safe is a joint effort between drivers and the police. Please drive safely, be attentive, slow down, and follow all posted signs and signals. Share this reminder with all drivers in your household, especially teen drivers.



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Visiting Angels celebrated 15 years of business in Whittier with an official ribbon cutting joined by Mayor Joe Vinatieri, Councilman Octavio Cesar Martinez, City Manager Brian Saeki, Chamber Board members and Ambassadors



Raising Canes celebrated the grand opening of their Leffingwell location with an official ribbon cutting, generously donated to St. Paul and Cal High schools and gave away 20 gift cards for Cane's for a year!



Unstoppable Fitness celebrated their studio opening with an official ribbon cutting surrounded by Chamber Ambassadors, staff and friends and family



The Whittier Uptown Association celebrated their 69th Annual Uptown Whittier Christmas Parade with a special visit from Santa!



(From left to right) Katie Galvin-Surbatovic, Public Information Officer, Keith Collins, City Attorney, Brian Saeki, City Manager, Cathy Warner, City Councilwoman, Shannon DeLong, Assistant City Manager, and Paymaneh Maghsoudi, Director of Whittier Library Services pose for a photo at the Holiday Lunchtime Mixer



Gregg Durkee, Chair of the Board, speaks to guests at the Annual Holiday Lunchtime Mixer at the DoubleTree Hotel Whittier



Special guests Mr. and Mrs. Claus flew in from the North Pole to celebrate the holiday season with guests at the Holiday Lunchtime Mixer

Congratulations to these other Whittier Chamber Members also celebrated a Ribbon Cutting:

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Speaker Paul Fleck, AALRR partner, provides important employment law updates, developments, and advises on the changes employers will face in 2024 at the HR Forum at the Whittwood Branch Library

Your Medicare Shop Around the Corner



Paul Viveros REBC, RHU Whittier Health Insurance Solutions

Medicare Advantage Open Enrollment Period (OEP) is here. This year, OEP runs for 91 days - January 1, 2024 through March 31, 2024. OEP is for Medicare Advantage beneficiaries, that did not make a change during the Annual Election Period (AEP), which runs October 15th through December 7th.

Medicare Advantage beneficiaries may:

- Switch to a different Medicare Advantage Plan
- Drop their Medicare Advantage Plan and return to Original Medicare
- Sign up for a "Stand Alone Prescription Drug Plan (PDP)" if they return to Original Medicare.

Medicare beneficiaries may not:

- Switch from original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan
- Enroll into a PDP if they are on Original Medicare
- Switch from a Stand Alone PDP to another Stand Alone PDP

If you make a change during OEP, your new plan will take effect on the first day of the following month. Therefore, your effective dates can be February 1, 2024, March 1, 2024, or April 1, 2024.

However, there may be other "Qualifying Events" that may allow you to change your plan outside of AEP and OEP, such as moving, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), declaring a disaster in your area, or qualifying for Medicaid (Medi-Cal in California). You should consult with your trusted advisor or stop into our office, have a cup of coffee, and discuss with any of our trusted agents.

Another great resource is Medicare.gov which will provide 2024 Medicare information.

If you decide to change your Medicare Advantage or Prescription Drug Plan, make sure the plan is suited for your personal needs. Most beneficiaries are living on a fixed income, so it's imperative to find as many $0's as possible such as prescription drugs and access to doctors and hospitals.

Whittier Health Insurance Solutions (WHIS) is a local Medicare Enrollment Resource Center located in the red brick building in Uptown Whittier right under the Social Security Building. We have Senior Health Care Consultants, each with over 25 years of experience and their goal is to help you uncover all available options and make a thoughtful, informed decision about your Medicare coverage.

So don't hesitate to reach out and schedule a consultation today. Let's work together to secure your healthcare future.

WHIS is located at 7200 Greenleaf Ave., Suite 170-C, Whittier, CA 90602.

The following information is for our readers and is not intended to be a marketing or solicitation piece.



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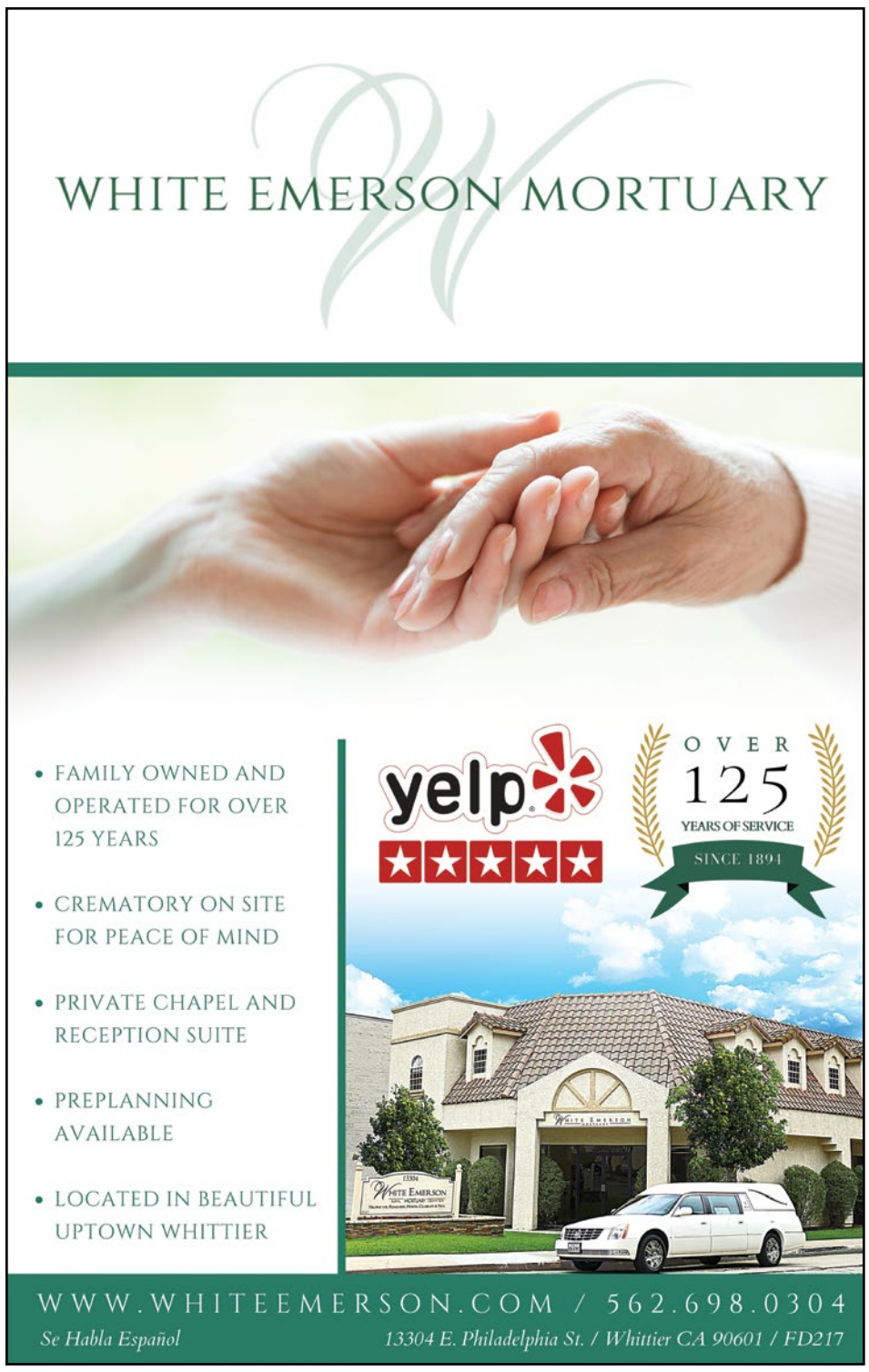
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Ambassador Spotlight: Zimri Gutierrez – AZ Whittier Florist

Zimri Gutierrez is the owner of AZ Whittier Florist, your everyday florist! Zimri creates lovely arrangements for any occasion! From birthdays and anniversaries to your next special event, she does it all. AZ Whittier Florist specializes in weddings, Quinceañeras, Ramos (bouquets), everyday flowers, funerals, and more!

AZ Whittier Florist has been a part of the Whittier Chamber since 2021 and Zimri has been a Chamber Ambassador for two years. When asked what is the best part about being a chamber member, Zimri stated, “The best part is the connections and friendships I have made. The Whittier Chamber is like a second family to me!”

Zimri says what she has enjoyed the most about being an Ambassador is helping and telling people more about the Chamber. She feels that at times people aren’t exactly sure what the Chamber does and how much it can really help a business. She also regularly attends Chamber events like Wake Up Whittier, ribbon cuttings, the Hathaway Golf Classic and Thirsty Thursdays. She mentioned she tries to make it to as many events as possible when she is available.

When asked what some of her 2024 resolutions are, Zimri mentioned she would like to market more through networking and social media channels. “Another new resolution of mine is to create packages with other Chamber members!” exclaimed Zimri. “Also, join the Chamber, at least for one year to experience what it is to be a part of an amazing Chamber family. You will not regret it.”

Ambassador Spotlight: Michelle Calzada – Blue Mar Travel

Michelle Calzada is a passionate travel advisor with Blue Mar Travel and is dedicated to turning your dream vacations into reality. With personalized itineraries and insider knowledge, Michelle will plan a seamless and unforgettable travel experience. At Blue Mar Travel, Michelle will take care of the details so you can focus on creating lifelong memories.

Michelle has been a Chamber member for three years and an Ambassador for two years. “The best part of being a Chamber member is the powerful networking that allows me to connect with fellow business leaders. Collaboration, insight, and support from my community is invaluable,” Michelle stated.

Meeting and welcoming new members and sharing the benefits of the Chamber is what Michelle enjoys most about being an Ambassador. She has also previously volunteered in the Chamber Hathaway Golf Classic and Business Expo committees. Michelle regularly attends Chamber ribbon cuttings, Tasty Tuesdays and Thirsty Thursdays.

When asked what some of her 2024 resolutions are, Michelle expressed she would like to prioritize her physical and mental well-being with exercise, nutrition and mindfulness practices. “Also creating a healthy work-life balance and of course more travel to be able to learn and immerse myself in destinations to share with my clients,” said Michelle, “Let’s embark on your next adventure together!”

CHAMBER CALENDAR

March

2024 Whittier City Candidates Forum
March 6, 2024
Whittier Community Theatre

Wake Up Whittier
March 20, 2024
America’s Job Center of Rio Hondo College

April

2024 Annual Meeting & Installation
April 4, 2024
DoubleTree Hotel Whittier

Wake Up Whittier
April 17, 2024
Whittier City Community Center

Ribbon Cutting Ceremony
April 25, 2024
Global IT

Ambassador Team 2023-2024

Ambassador Chair
John Bogdanov, *TelWorx*

Ambassador Team
Catherine Badame, *Action Trophy*
Alyssa Barrios, *Mary Kay*
Van Broussard, *Farmer’s Insurance*
Michelle Calzada, *Blue Mar Travel*
Marianne Duron, *Say Yay Lawn Signs*
Steven Flores, *Modern Woodmen of America*
Nancy Gomez, *Tacos & Grace*
Ysenia Barrera, *Drain It Plumbing*
Zimri Gutierrez, *AZ Whittier Florist*
Rob Marin, *Rob Marin Realty*
Marie Murillo, *MAP Property Management*
Laurie Perschbacher, *MAP Property Services*
Pete Rodriguez, *Loan Officer*
Steve Rosas, *Ooma*
Robert Rubio, *Rose Hills Memorial Park & Mortuary*
Lucy Spencer, *EXP Realty Whittier*
Christy Wyant, *Martplan Insurance*

AROUND TOWN



PIH Health and OneLegacy host special event to honor the family of donor, Rosanna Manriquez

Rosanna will be honored with a floragraph at the 2024 Rose Parade®

On Wednesday, December 20, PIH Health Whittier Hospital (PHWH) staff and physicians and the family of PIH Health donor patient Rosanna Manriquez gathered in the PIH Health Whittier Hospital Auditorium to witness the unveiling of the floragraph made in her honor at a special floragraph unveiling and rose dedication event hosted by PIH Health in partnership with OneLegacy.

Rosanna passed away on June 25, 2020 at PIH Health Whittier Hospital, but in her passing, gave the gift of life to other individuals through her bone and tissue donation. Her family shared their gratitude to all who were part of Rosanna's care teams at PIH Health for the compassionate care and support they provided.

The floragraph, or floral photograph, of Rosanna's image was made entirely out of organic materials and will be featured on the OneLegacy Donate Life float entitled "Woven Together: The Dance of Life," which will make its public debut in the 135th Rose Parade on January 1, 2024. This float honors millions of people touched by organ, eye and tissue donation, including living donors, donor families, transplant recipients and transplant candidates.

The float will showcase the ceremonial Hopi Butterfly Dance. Native to the American Southwest, the Hopi people celebrated the corn harvest through this dance, paying homage to the butterflies that pollinate the corn, helping the crop prosper. The butterfly has long been a symbol of rebirth and has come to symbolize the power of donation and transplantation. Memorial floragraphs, like Rosanna's, honoring life-giving organ, eye, and tissue donors, will be displayed on woven baskets full of life-giving corn and other fruit.

Additionally, OneLegacy presented PIH Health Chief Nursing Officer Ramona Pratt and PIH Health nurse Marcia Rocha, who was part of Rossana's care team at PIH Health, with a rose each on which they wrote special handwritten dedications on the vials. The two roses representing PIH Health will be placed in the rose dedication garden on the OneLegacy Donate Life float, which will be made up of roses with other dedications celebrating transplant recipients, living donors, and honoring deceased donors and thanking individuals and groups who support and take part in the donation and transplantation community.

"PIH Health is grateful to OneLegacy for the opportunity to honor Rosanna's gift of life and to her family for sharing this honor with us. We also thank the PIH Health care teams that gave such excellent care and support to Rosanna and her family and helped to make this donation possible," says PIH Health Chief Nursing Officer Ramona Pratt. "We are moved to be part of this celebration of life that recognizes the beautiful gift of special donors like Rosanna, and its power to save lives and bring hope to so many."



SHELTER'S RIGHT HAND
Stepping Out Against Domestic Violence
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5K Walk
April 20
2024
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5K Walk in Uptown Whittier to benefit victims of domestic violence

Registration is underway for the Shelter's Right Hand "Stepping Out Against Domestic Violence" 5K Fitness Walk to benefit the Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter. On April 20, 2024, hundreds of community members and Honorary Chairperson, Dave Gunderson, CEO of Credit Union of Southern California will step out in support of survivors and remember victims of domestic violence. Starting at 8 a.m. from Central Park, walkers will follow a 3.1-mile scenic walk through historic residential and business districts of Uptown Whittier.

The Shelter's Right Hand is pleased to announce that Janice Hahn, Supervisor-Fourth district, County of Los Angeles is the presenting sponsor of the Walk. A generous grant from this sponsor makes it possible for all entry fees, sponsorships and individual donations to go directly to the Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter. The members of the Shelter's Right Hand would like to thank all participating businesses, organizations and individuals for generously donating to the Walk and partnering with each other to bring hope for renewed lives of individuals fleeing domestic violence.

For registration and event information, visit the Shelter's Right Hand website at www.sheltersrighthand.org

For more information, call (657) 549-2551. Donations to benefit the Women's and Children's Crisis Shelter are payable to Shelter's Right Hand, P.O. Box 9304, Whittier, CA 90608.

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Overall, hiring CAPC clients can contribute to a positive work culture, drive business outcomes, and foster long-term success for your company. In addition to these benefits, CAPC provides job coaching; wage reimbursement is through the Department of Rehabilitation, and for tax benefits speak with your tax preparing professional.

Contact: Octavio Cesar Martinez, Employment Specialist, CAPC, Inc.
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"A little over five years ago, I bought a business that has been in town for over twenty years and came to Whittier for the first time. How do you make success in a new environment where you don't know anyone? Joining the Whittier Area Chamber of Commerce was the way to go. Professional networking enabled us to double in size and create 40 new jobs for the community. When we needed more space, Chamber members were the architect, the contractors and the phone service provider. Whenever I have need a resource or guidance whether for business, for a client or a personal matter, I can call the Chamber staff and find a vendor or an answer. They don't just sit back and wait for us to need something. There are classes, seminars and workshops where experts provide information to help us grow our business, provide for our employees and stay in compliance with California's ever-changing laws. The Chamber of Commerce is full of people who really care about each other's success. It is one of the strengths of the community which makes Whittier such a special place to live and work."

WHAT'S COOL IN YOUR SCHOOL

Río Hondo College Awarded $2.8 Million to Empower Students Through Hire UP Pilot Program

Río Hondo College will continue its mission to remove barriers to educational opportunity for students, as the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office (CCCCO) selected Río Hondo as one of 10 community colleges statewide to implement the Hire UP Pilot Program.

Hire UP is a five-year pilot program designed by CCCCO to acknowledge and address historic racial inequity and socioeconomic barriers to workforce participation. The CCCCO allocated $2.8 million in funding to Río Hondo College to provide eligible students with stipends to help meet the true cost of college attendance and gain clear access to academic programs and workforce support.

Students who participate in the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) and RISE Scholars Program, along with former foster youth, are eligible to apply for Río Hondo College's Hire UP Program.

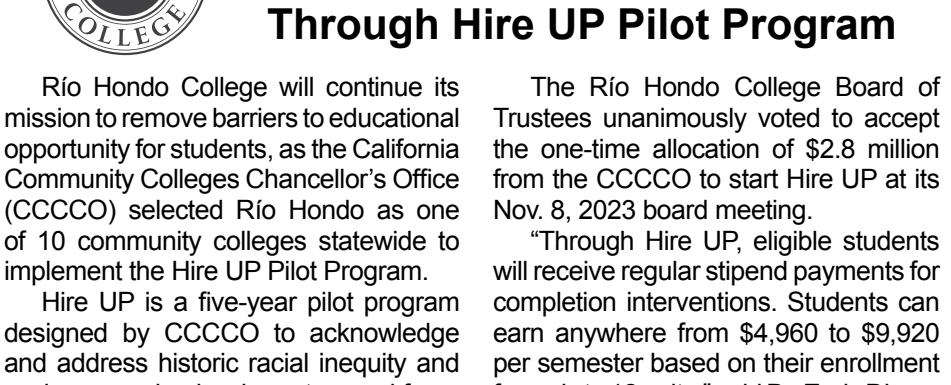
"This is a unique opportunity for our eligible students to get paid to finish their degree or certificate," said Cecilia Rocha, Río Hondo College's Dean of Student Equity and Achievement. "It is an honor to be one of 10 schools in California chosen to lead the way with this program that will have a profound impact on so many."

The Río Hondo College Board of Trustees unanimously voted to accept the one-time allocation of $2.8 million from the CCCCO to start Hire UP at its Nov. 8, 2023 board meeting.

"Through Hire UP, eligible students will receive regular stipend payments for completion interventions. Students can earn anywhere from $4,960 to $9,920 per semester based on their enrollment from six to 12 units," said Dr. Earic Dixon-Peters, Río Hondo's Vice President of Student Services. "Students have the opportunity to gain valuable, employable skills while completing their educational goal through completion intervention opportunities, such as career, job and entrepreneurship seminars."

Applications for Río Hondo College's Hire UP Program will begin during the spring semester. Students can email financialaid@riohondo.edu for more information.

"Hire UP is a perfect fit for us at Río Hondo College and will play a pivotal role in our ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive and equitable educational environment," Río Hondo College Superintendent/President Dr. Marilyn Flores said. "This partnership will help us empower our students as they participate in experiential, hands-on completion interventions towards future employment.



(L-R) Trustees Russell Castañeda Calleros and Jaime López, Board President Gary Mendez, Clerk Irma Rodríguez Moisa and Vice President Josefina E. Canchola at the board's first 2024 meeting on Jan. 16. (Photo courtesy of Whittier Union High School District)

Whittier Union Board of Trustees has new leadership in 2024

Whittier Union High School District Board of Trustees has a new president and vice president for the year.

Trustee Gary Mendez stepped into the role as president and Trustee Josefina Canchola as vice president – ready to continue "prioritizing student success."

The district serves more than 10,000 students each school year, and its mission is to achieve and maintain excellence in providing a comprehensive education for all students.

Board President Gary Mendez graduated from Whittier High School in 1987 and attended Rio Hondo College, where he earned an associate's in paralegal studies and political science. He then transferred to Sacramento State University, and went on to continue his studies.

"I am honored for the opportunity to serve my community as Whittier Union High School District's Board President and lead the Board as we continue to make decisions that will benefit all Whittier Union students and families for generations to come," Mendez said in a statement. "It is a privilege to take on this leadership position after outgoing President Jaime López's outstanding direction this last year."

Board Vice President Josefina Canchola was sworn into the WUHSD Board of Trustees in July 2023. She was unanimously appointed by the board to represent Trustee Area Three. She filled in the empty seat left by former Trustee Ralph Pacheco, the longest-serving Whittier Union school board trustee.

Canchola graduated from Pioneer High School, graduated from UC Riverside with a bachelor's in sociology in 1988, and continued her studies. She has nearly 30 years of expertise in the field of higher education having worked for the UC's Office of the President, UC Riverside, and most recently UC Berkeley, according to the district website.

Currently, Canchola serves as Director of Secondary Program for The Puente Project – an award-winning academic preparation program for underserved, underrepresented students. She oversees the middle and high school programs throughout California, including California High School, Whittier High School, and La Serna High School.

Trustee Irma Rodríguez Moisa was also appointed to serve as the Board Clerk. Outgoing Board president Jaime López and Russell Castañeda Calleros continue their roles serving the community as members.

Under the new roles, members said they will continue to ensure that all Whittier Union High School District students have access to the opportunities and resources that they need to succeed.



(L-R) Río Hondo College Board of Trustees Vice President Oscar Valladares, Student Trustee Alexandra Zuniga, Board Member Kristal Orozco, President Anais Medina Diaz, Board Clerk Rosaelva Lomeli and Superintendent-President Marilyn Flores. (Photo courtesy of Rio Hondo College)

Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees has a New President

Rio Hondo College Board of Trustees has a new president for 2024.

The Board elected Anais Medina Diaz to serve as the new president during its annual reorganization and election of board officers, according to a Rio Hondo press release.

Diaz was first elected to Rio Hondo College's Board in 2021. This will be her first year as president after holding the position of vice president in 2023. The former Rio Hondo College student serves Trustee Area 1, which includes the city of El Monte.

Trustee Oscar Valladares was selected to serve as vice president this year, transitioning from his previous position as board clerk. A board member since 2018, Valladares represents Trustee Area 5 of East Whittier.

Trustee Rosaelva Lomeli will be taking on the role of board clerk. Lomeli has also served on the college's board since 2018 and represents Trustee Area 3, which includes Whittier and South El Monte.

During the reorganization meeting on Dec. 13, Kristal Orozco – who has served on the board since 2020 – was presented with a gift for her leadership and service as board president in 2023.

Leffingwell and Ocean View Elementary Attend National Blue Ribbon Ceremony in Washington D.C

Leffingwell and Ocean View Elementary Schools gathered with the nation's top educational institutions at the National Blue Ribbon ceremony in Washington, D.C., where they were honored by the U.S. Department of Education for their outstanding achievements in education.

The National Blue Ribbon award, the most highly coveted recognition awarded by the U.S. Department of Education, honors schools for their outstanding academic accomplishments and closing achievement gaps. This year, Ocean View and Leffingwell were two of 33 schools in the state of California to receive this award.

Ocean View and Leffingwell Principals Kim Songer and Scott Blackwell represented their schools at the ceremony, alongside EWCSD Board of Education President Armando Urteaga and Superintendent Marc Patterson. This event was a celebration of the excellent students, staff, and families who made this recognition possible and served as a platform to showcase the schools' outstanding dedication and commitment to providing a premier educational experience for students.

As Leffingwell and Ocean View return back to proudly display their National Blue Ribbon awards on campus, it is not only a reminder of the excellence that has been achieved, but it also sets the stage for future success at these two institutions.



RENEWING MEMBERS

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

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2023

Alondra Hot Wings
(562) 236-5300
Member Since: 2023

Ashley French Photography
(562) 833-3627
Member Since: 2012

Assistance League of Whittier
(562) 693-6533
Member Since: 2003

Asurge
(909) 583-5312
Member Since: 2021

Azar Event Center
(562) 464-0220
Member Since: 2019

Bob & Dave's Towing
(562) 693-9596
Member Since: 2014

Boys & Girls Clubs of Whittier
(562) 945-3787
Member Since: 1978

California Arborist
(562) 698-3280
Member Since: 1992

Coby Madison Jewelers
(562) 693-3303
Member Since: 2014

Community Escrow Services, Inc.
(562) 698-2220
Member Since: 2015

Dentist of Whittier General & Cosmetic Dentistry
(562) 414-5025
Member Since: 2023

IET Real Estate – Robert Colangeli
(562) 686-1992
Member Since: 2021

Integrity Independent Financial & Insurance Services
(909) 858-0196
Member Since: 2022

La Posada
(562) 945-2651
Member Since: 1994

Lamont Hyde Real Estate & Loans
(562) 968-7004
Member Since: 2022

Lending Enterprise
(562) 639-1690
Member Since: 2018

Luna Staging & Design
(562) 319-9111
Member Since: 2022

Lupe's Cleaning Service LLC
(562) 652-2228
Member Since: 2022

M & M Glass, Inc.
(562) 945-6212
Member Since: 2014

Ooma Inc.
(213) 277-5660
Member Since: 2019

Ramirez & Ezaki Dentistry
(562) 698-6684
Member Since: 2010

Rob Marin Realty
(562) 688-1873
Member Since: 2016

Santa Fe Kids Co.
(562) 695-8872
Member Since: 2022

Servpro of Whittier
(562) 698-5368
Member Since: 2010

Shepherd of Life
(562) 696-1151
Member Since: 2020

Sir Speedy Printing Center
(562) 698-7513
Member Since: 1988

South Bay Med Spa
(562) 273-3337
Member Since: 2021

Stone, Dr. Barbara S.
Member Since: 1982

Suburban Water Systems
(626) 543-2531
Member Since: 1959

Super Market La Venadita
(562) 693-8989
Member Since: 2012

Tanabe, Theodore A., D.D.S.
(562) 698-0387
Member Since: 1999

The Traveling Traveler
(562) 907-7938
Member Since: 2008

Tidal Commerce
(310) 462-8148
Member Since: 2020

U.S. Bank
(562) 698-2521
Member Since: 2012

Uptown Flooring & Design
(562) 945-4407
Member Since: 1999

Warner, David A., D.D.S., Inc. Periodontics & Dental Implants
(562) 945-7621
Member Since: 2010

West Coast Arborists, Inc.
(714) 991-1900
Member Since: 2018

Whittier Art Association & Gallery
(562) 698-8710
Member Since: 1998

Whittier College
(562) 907-4200
Member Since: 1959

Whittier Hearing Center
(562) 698-0581
Member Since: 1987

Whittier Host Lions Club
(562) 682-6040
Member Since: 1996

Whittier Pride
(626) 376-6700
Member Since: 2022

Whittier Union High School District
(562) 698-8121
Member Since: 1980

Whittwood Town Center (Kimco Realty Corporation)
(949) 252-3873
Member Since: 2018

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2024

A7 Towing, Inc.
(626) 412-2140
Member Since: 2014

Accurate Taxes, LLC
(562) 632-1104
Member Since: 2022

Advanced Benefit Center
(562) 947-0625
Member Since: 1992

Allblack Co., Inc.
(562) 946-2955
Member Since: 2021

Alondra Hot Wings
(562) 236-5300
Member Since: 2023

Auntie's Restaurant
(562) 464-1959
Member Since: 2015

Bewley, Lassleben & Miller, LLP
(562) 698-9771
Member Since: 1914

Blue Mar Travel
(562) 380-3330
Member Since: 2021

Bridge of Faith
(562) 322-5265
Member Since: 2015

California Domestic Water Co.
(562) 947-3811
Member Since: 1984

Candlewood Country Club
(562) 941-1228
Member Since: 2010

Catering By Herach & Ara
(323) 728-0573
Member Since: 2011

Cetera Advisor Networks – Doug Rowan
(562) 945-7787
Member Since: 1995

Chemique Pharmaceuticals
(562) 698-0921
Member Since: 2018

Chick-fil-A
(562) 902-1550
Member Since: 2013

Crosspoint Christian Church
(562) 698-2597
Member Since: 2021

Domis Team – Linda Domis
(562) 884-5373
Member Since: 2004

East Whittier City School District
(562) 907-5900
Member Since: 2019

Elite Vinyl Windows Inc.
(562) 945-7700
Member Since: 2023

Ernest Peralta Photography
(714) 402-4946
Member Since: 2023

Farmers Insurance – Nancy L. Hicks Agency
(562) 943-6721
Member Since: 2018

First Pacific Bank
(562) 947-1920
Member Since: 2006

Forkliftian, Inc.
(562) 484-8643
Member Since: 2019

Garber's Independent BMW & Volvos
(562) 941-9545
Member Since: 2013

GEEA Agency
(562) 665-0293
Member Since: 2022

Hadley Auto Body
(562) 692-3793
Member Since: 1999

Jack's Whittier Restaurant
(562) 693-8713
Member Since: 2019

Law Office of Alex M. Moisa, The
(562) 945-2086
Member Since: 2020

Law Office of Thomas V. Perea, P.C.
(562) 855-1234
Member Since: 2022

LEARN
(562) 945-0150
Member Since: 2010

Lighthouse Sports Center LLC
(562) 991-4375
Member Since: 2023

Lupe's Cleaning Service LLC
(562) 652-2228
Member Since: 2022

Madres Brunch Restaurant
(562) 322-8588
Member Since: 2022

MAP Property Services, Inc.
(562) 945-3404
Member Since: 2015

Mary Kay
(562) 322-2869
Member Since: 2020

Matrix Oil Corporation
(805) 884-9000
Member Since: 2002

Merrill Lynch & Co., Inc.
(714) 257-4481
Member Since: 2006

Michael Seril Fitness Studio
(714) 306-9002
Member Since: 2021

Muhlestein, Jeanne
(562) 698-1809
Member Since: 1997

Nekter Juice Bar
(562) 315-5945
Member Since: 2022

Nekter Juice Bar – The Groves
(562) 203-5508
Member Since: 2022

New York Life Insurance Company – Evelyn Betancourt
(323) 497-7948
Member Since: 2023

Norms Restaurant
(562) 907-2760
Member Since: 2017

Pabst, Kinney & Associates, Inc.
(562) 236-9069
Member Since: 2012

Payroll Ready
(949) 325-6770
Member Since: 2023

PIP Printing & Marketing Services
(562) 921-5188
Member Since: 1968

Poolsaad Family Vision Optometry
(562) 945-7300
Member Since: 2019

R'Gals Properties
(562) 692-5457
Member Since: 2012

Rio Hondo College Foundation
(562) 463-6654
Member Since: 2017

RMH Entertainment
(562) 693-9911
Member Since: 2006

Roberts Real Estate & Property Management
(562) 903-1139
Member Since: 2015

Sacred Space Massage & Bodywork
(562) 267-9931
Member Since: 2022

Shelter's Right Hand
(562) 373-5541
Member Since: 1993v

Skin Room, The
(562) 536-1142
Member Since: 2013

Sprinkler Fitters U.A. Local 709
(562) 698-9909
Member Since: 2017

State Farm Insurance – Clayton Agency
(562) 947-4795
Member Since: 1981

Town House of Whittier
(562) 236-9069
Member Since: 1995

U-Haul of Leffingwell
(562) 943-7294
Member Since: 2017

Uptown Advisors
(562) 273-9500
Member Since: 2020

Uptown School of Dance
(562) 325-5208
Member Since: 2022

Visiting Angels
(562) 947-5390
Member Since: 2009

Whittier Area Community Church
(562) 945-4500
Member Since: 1995

Whittier City School District
(562) 789-3068
Member Since: 1982

Whittier Square Building
(562) 945-5959
Member Since: 1994

Xerox Corporation
(562) 417-6772
Member Since: 2022

Zen's Tea House
(562) 686-9441
Member Since: 2018

Visit these renewing members and *Shop Local!*

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

65 Years
Suburban Water Systems
(626) 543-2531

Whittier College
(562) 907-4200

35 Years
Whittier Elementary Teachers Association
(562) 693-8411

25 Years
Tanabe, Theodore A., D.D.S.
(562) 698-0387

10 Years
M&M Glass, Inc.
(562) 945-6212

Bob & Dave's Towing Inc.
(562) 693-9596

5 Years
Poolsaad Family Vision Optometry
(562) 945-7300

FEBRUARY

25 Years
Uptown Flooring & Design
(562) 945-4407

10 Years
American First Credit Union
(562) 355-6242

5 Years
BMV Construction
(800) 595-3298

Forkliftian, Inc.
(562) 484-8643

MARCH

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

55 Years
Friendly Hills Country Club
(562) 698-0331

40 Years
California Domestic Water Co.
(562) 947-3811

DoubleTree By Hilton – Whittier
(562) 945-8511

30 Years
Whittier Square Building
(562) 945-5959

25 Years
Cetera Advisor Networks, Member SIPC – Christopher George
(562) 945-7787

Hadley Auto Body
(562) 692-3793

20 Years
Domis Team, Linda Domis
(562) 884-5373

Bill & Jim's Auto Repair
(562) 695-0404

Hispanic Outreach Taskforce (HOT)
(562) 789-0550

Harmony Center For Spiritual Living
(562) 508-1314

Crepes & Grapes Café
(562) 696-3255

15 Years
Whittier Community Foundation
(562) 248-6880

San Miguel Apartments
(562) 698-1290

10 Years
Perisho & Associates
(562) 547-6569

UPS Store at The Quad, The
(562) 907-3800

5 Years
East Whittier City School District
(562) 907-5900

APRIL

65 Years
PIH Health
(562) 698-0811

20 Years
Atkinson, Andelson, Loya, Ruud & Romo
(562) 653-3200

10 Years
Friendly Hills Inn
(562) 698-6731

Guerra & Gutierrez Mortuary
(562) 698-9935

5 Years
Navi & Sons Plumbing
(213) 749-1046

Spot On Heating Air & Plumbing
(562) 945-0979

Be sure to visit these Milestone Members

NEW MEMBERS

APARTMENTS

Altura at the Groves
Jennifer Fields .....(562) 542-1821
11821 Skylark Circle, Whittier, CA 90606
www.alturagroveswhittierapartments.com

AUTOMOBILE DEALER

Alexander Auto Sales Inc.
Alex Ponce .....(562) 696-1222
12421 Whittier Blvd.
Whittier, CA 90602
www.alexanderautoservice.com

AUTOMOTIVE REPAIRS

Alexander Auto Service
Nancy Ponce .....(562) 464-0072
12357 Whittier Blvd., Unit C
Whittier, CA 90602
www.alexanderautoservice.com

Cooks Tires & Service
Andres Cuervo.....(562) 632-1027
14101 Whittier Blvd.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.cookstireandtune.com

BAKERY

Mels Strawberries & Sweet Treats
Melinda Galarza .....(626) 367-2608
6014 Bright Ave.
Whittier, CA 90601
www.instagram.com/melsstrawberriesandsweettreats

BOOKKEEPER

Rebecca L. Montgomery - Bookkeeping
Rebecca Montgomery ..(714) 322-5487
7951 East Bauer Rd.
Anaheim, CA 92808
www.rlmontgomery.com

BRIDAL SHOP

Illusion Bridal
Lourdes Hernandez ..(562) 789-5596
13310 Philadelphia St.
Whittier, CA 90601
www.illusionbridalshop.com

BUSINESS SERVICES

Silegra
Argelis Ortiz.....(323) 505-8663
4140 Workman Mill Rd., Unit #51
Whittier, CA 90601
www.silegra.org

Zen Business
Sallie Clark .....(512) 765-4985
5511 Parkcrest Dr., Suite 103
Austin, TX 78731
www.zenbusiness.com

CIVIC MEMBER

Christina Almaraz
Nicole Ortiz
Michael Smart

CLOTHING BOUTIQUE

Bella Dama Divina
Isabel Mendoza .....(562) 474-7204
9603 Maryknoll Ave.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.instagram.com/belladamadivina

COPIER

IBE Digital
Danica Mendoza.....(562) 921-0202
11266 Monarch St., #B
Garden Grove, CA 92841
www.ibedigital.com

DENTISTS & ORTHODONTISTS

Perfect Smile Dental Group
Michael Yang .....(562) 351-1012
15027 Mulberry Dr.
Whittier, CA 90604
www.perfectsmiledentalgroup.com

ESCROW SERVICES

My Escrow, Inc.
Sandra Pasillas.....(562) 378-8703
6721 Washington Ave.
Whittier, CA 90601
www.myescrowinc.com

FINANCIAL SERVICES

Edward Jones – Jason Clardy
Jason Clardy.....(562) 846-4116
12016 Telegraph Rd., Suite 105
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670
www.edwardjones.com

HEALTH CARE

The Orchard Post Acute Care
Anna Melnikoff.....(562) 693-7701
12385 E. Washington Blvd.
Whittier, CA 90606
www.theorchardpostacute.com

HOSPICE

Life Comfort Care, Inc.
Victor Pekson .....(626) 297-9245
4650 Arrow Hwy., A10
Montclair, CA 91763
www.lifecomfortcare.com

HOSPITALS

City of Hope Blood Donor Center
Kasie Uyeno .....(626) 218-7171
1500 E. Duarte Rd.
Duarte, CA 91010
www.cityofhope.org/give-blood

FITNESS GYM

Unstoppable Fitness Inc.
Veronica Murillo.....(323) 384-7905
7348 Painter Ave.
Whittier, CA 90602
www.instagram.com/unstoppable.fitness23

INSURANCE

Nena Soto Insurance & Financial Services Inc.
Nena Soto.....(562) 869-9000
6738 Bright Ave.
Whittier, CA 90601
www.nenasotosf.com

Aflac
Ashton Potts .....(213) 663-7666
50 West Lemon St.
Whittier, CA 91016
www.aflac.com

JUICE BAR

Fresca Signature Flavors
Rene Pulido .....(562) 287-9831
7114 Vanna Dr.
Paramount, CA 90723
www.instagram.com/fresca_sigflvrs

LAWYERS

Z.A. Lawyers
Gina Zapanta.....(818) 208-4613
12800 Riverside Dr., 2nd Floor
Valley Village, CA 91607
www.zalawyers.com

MASSAGE THERAPY

Flor De Luna
Gabriela Garduno ...(562) 324-4770
5921 Norwalk Blvd.
Whittier, CA 90606
www.massagebook.com/Whittier~Massage~Flordelunamassage

ORGANIZATIONS

DECA
Brycen Woodley .....(703) 860-5000
1908 Association Dr.
Westan, VA 20191
www.californiadeca.org

East Whittier Women's Improvement Club
Lola Armienta.....(818) 731-1717
14148 East 2nd St.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.ewwicevents.wixsite.com/ewwic

Greater Whittier Area AAUW
Nadine Wilcox.....(626) 340-9018
P.O. Box 5333
Whittier, CA 90607
www.whittier-ca.aauw.net

Institute For Public Strategies
Karol Zhang.....(310) 215-9925
5711 S. Slauson., Suite 170
Culver City, CA 90230
www.publicstrategies.org

The Local Wellness Foundation
Brandy Rametta.....(562) 321-7691
7081 Worsham Dr.
Whittier, CA 90602
www.thelocalwellnessfoundation.org

One Heart At A Time
Blanca Moreno .....(323) 313-3420
1135 East 1st. St.
Long Beach, CA 90802
www.oneheartatatime.net

Sudis LA
Sylvia Meza .....(888) 783-4752
5643 Pickering Ave.
Whittier, CA 90601
www.sudisla.org

The Uncuffed Project
Damon Cooke.....(707) 319-7145
7083 Worsham Dr.
Whittier, CA 90602
www.theuncuffedproject.org

Wayfinder Family Services
Andrew Henderson..(562) 236-8200
13020 E. Bailey St.
Whittier, CA 90601
www.wayfinderfamily.org

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Alex Correa Photography
Alex Correa.....(626) 378-7377
9361 Delmare Ave.
Montclair, CA 91763
www.alexcorreafilms.com

Dulce Recuerdos
Dulce Carrillo.....(323) 434-3839
13502 Whittier Blvd., Suite H448
Whittier, CA 90605
www.instagram.com/dulcerecuerdos_

PHOTO BOOTH

Bellas Pix
Isabel Mendoza .....(562) 474-7204
9603 Maryknoll Ave.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.instagram.com/bellas.pix

PRODUCTION COMPANY

Fred Zermeno Productions
Fred Zermeno.....(213) 219-1060
3424 Shadow Creek Ln.
Pico Rivera, CA 90660

REAL ESTATE

Arvanoush Boudaghians Real Estate
Arvanoush Boudaghians ....(818) 397-4751
10914 Laurel Ave.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.explore-homes.com/team/arvanoush-boudaghians

Coldwell Banker Alliance Realtor
Dolores Armienta ....(323) 806-3576
8318 La Sierra Ave.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.coldwellbanker.com/ca/whittier/agents/lola-armienta

RESTAURANTS

Chronic Sushi
Frank Zelaya.....(562) 273-5056
13817 Whittier Blvd.
Whittier, CA 90601
www.chronicsushi.com

Good Fellas Pizza
Robert Drieslein.....(562) 325-5166
13022 Whittier Blvd.
Whittier, CA 90602
www.goodfellaspizza.co

Off The Hook Fish Grill
Frank Zelaya.....(562) 696-6191
12824 Hadley St., Unit 110
Whittier, CA 90603
www.myoffthehook.com

Phlight
Nikomi Arroyo .....(562) 789-0578
6724 Bright Ave., Suite B
Whittier, CA 90631
www.phlightwhittier.com

Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers - Telegraph
Mazin Adassi .....(866) 552-2637
13571 Telegraph Rd.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.raisingcanes.com

The Stand
Zachary Wishengrad .... (562) 781-7878
13815 Whittier Blvd.
Whittier, CA 90605
www.thestand.com

Uptown Provisions
Aaron Melendrez ....(562) 360-1932
12819 Penn St.
Whittier, CA 90602
www.uptownwhittierprovisions.com

Zapien's Salsa Grill
Marco Zapien.....(562) 942-7072
6702 Rosemead Blvd.
Pico Rivera, CA 90660
www.thesalsagrill.com

RESTORATION

Storm Guard Construction
Joshua Cass.....(951) 218-5176
2245 Via Cerro
Riverside, CA 92509
www.yelp.com/biz/storm-guard-construction-menifee

SPA

Whittier Springs Spa
Violet Moran .....(562) 645-2278
6512 Bright Ave.
Whittier, CA 90602
www.instagram.com/missvioletmoran

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