

# The Career Plug

## Bridging Students to Careers, Apprenticeships & Opportunity



[www.SoCalReady.com](http://www.SoCalReady.com)

Located at the  
U-SU Theatre

# The Career Plug

Jobs, Trades,  
& Certifications  
You Didn't Know About

The Career Plug is a collaborative event between the Pan African Student Resource Center, SoCal Ready, and the American Job Career Centers designed to bring career access directly to students of color.

This event highlights the many non-traditional & high-demand pathways available today, including apprenticeships, trades, certifications, and workforce development programs that lead to real, stable, well-paid careers.

The graphic is a vertical poster with a blue top half and a yellow bottom half. The title 'The Career Plug' is in large white letters, with a black electrical plug icon integrated into the letter 'g'. Below the title, there's a blue box with white text. The background features illustrations of people: a woman on the left, a man on the right, and a person climbing a ladder on the bottom right. At the bottom, there are logos for 'CAREER READY SoCal' and 'FMWC'.

# Why This Event Matters

*Many students face a critical challenge: **access to information** about real career pathways. Today, we're closing that gap by connecting you with professionals who can show you what's possible beyond traditional college routes.*

## Career Options Beyond College

*Discover apprenticeships, certificate programs, and alternative pathways to stable, meaningful careers*

## What Employers Want

*Learn the skills and qualities that hiring managers actually look for in candidates*

## How to Prepare Now

*Get practical advice on building experience, networking, and positioning yourself for success*



# What You'll Gain Today



## Multiple Career Pathways

*Explore diverse industries and alternative routes to meaningful work*



## Direct Industry Insights

*Hear from professionals about real-world experiences and requirements*



## Networking Opportunities

*Connect with speakers and ask questions about your specific interests*



## Actionable Steps

*Leave with concrete strategies to move forward in your career journey*



# Pathways We're Exploring Today

*There is no single path to success. Our speakers represent different industries and journeys, each with unique perspectives on building a career.*



## Union Trades & Apprenticeships

*Skilled trades with stable, well-paying opportunities and comprehensive training programs*



## Workforce Training Programs

*Certificate programs and on-the-job training that prepare you for immediate employment*



## Nonprofit & Community Careers

*Organizations focused on removing barriers and creating pathways to employment*



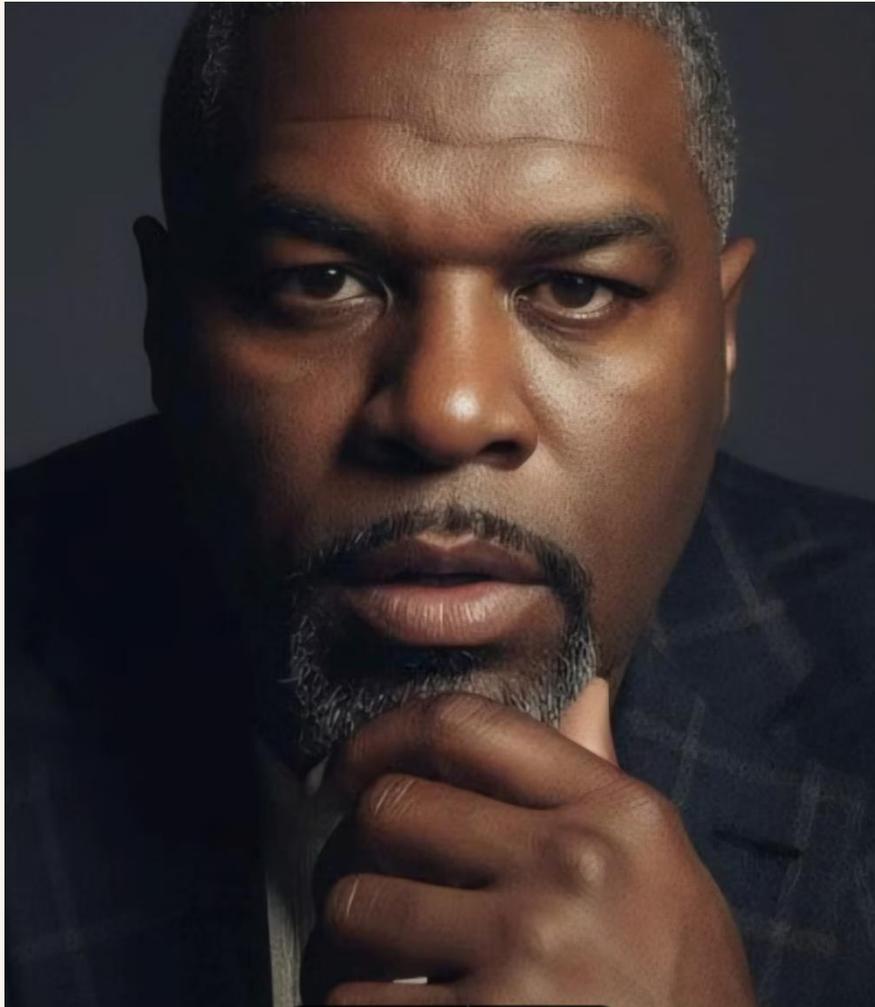
## Business, Technology & Economic Development

*Corporate and community initiatives preparing for the future of work*



# Meet Our Panelists





# Marcus Savage

Founder, Get In The Game Inc. | Owner, Savage Construction

- *20+ years in union construction working on major California infrastructure projects*
- *Experienced workforce trainer and OSHA safety instructor*
- *Dedicated to preparing individuals for careers in the trades*
- *Helps people understand how apprenticeships provide stable, well-paying opportunities*



# John Harriel Jr.

Employment Equity Manager / Superintendent

- *Nearly 30 years in the electrical industry with extensive field experience*
- *Leader in apprenticeship and workforce development programs*
- *Passionate advocate for employment opportunities in underserved communities*
- *Focused on creating pathways for individuals to build long-term careers*





# Alma Lopez

Career Services Manager, Inglewood One-Stop,  
South Bay Workforce Investment Board

- *Over 20 years of experience in workforce development*
- *Specializes in employer partnerships, job-ready training alignment, and removing barriers to employment for underrepresented talent entering the construction and utilities sectors*
- *collaborates closely with contractors, unions, training providers, and community partners to connect businesses with qualified candidates prepared for high-demand, long-term careers*



# Shannon Jones

Founder & Executive Director, Blacks In Motion Community Development



40+

Years of Experience

*In nonprofit leadership and workforce development*

2

Key Focus Areas

*Organizational leadership and removing barriers to employment*

100s

Individuals Helped

*Through community partnerships and job readiness programs*

*Shannon's work focuses on helping individuals overcome employment barriers and creating pathways to stable, meaningful careers through innovative community partnerships and comprehensive job readiness programs.*





# Kedrin Johnson

Founder & CEO, Ways Enterprises

- *Nearly 20 years of leadership experience and is recognized as a self-made multimillionaire*
- *Advocate for underrepresented communities including*
- *A purpose-driven leader known for her ability to build thriving companies, navigate change, create innovative community programs, and collaborate with key stakeholders, focusing on the goals and objectives of her business*



# Amari El Jamii

Partner, Cultivating Hope  
Program Director, Bridges Academic Center of Excellence

- *Over 10 years in the education sector working with underrepresented communities*
- *Experience working with nonprofit organizations, colleges, and universities*
- *Oversees numerous college-bound programs for local students in Carson, Long Beach, South LA, Compton, and the Watts community*





# Pierre Williams

Owner/CEO, Better Way Mechanical Plumbing  
Founder & Director, Each One Reach One Group

- *Extensive experience in leading teams and delivering results in demanding environments*
- *Blends construction know-how with operational leadership*
- *Experience working with nonprofit organizations, colleges, and universities*
- *Recognized for his steady leadership, structured problem-solving, and ability to adapt quickly*



# Meet Our Guest Speakers





# Kevin Harbour

President, BizFed Institute

- *30+ years in business, IT, and telecommunications across corporate and nonprofit sectors*
- *Former corporate executive with deep industry knowledge*
- *Focus on regional economic development and workforce initiatives*
- *Helping organizations and communities prepare for the future of work*



# Quentin D. Strode

Founder and Managing Director of Artifex Capital & Advisory

- *More than 30 years of experience in banking and community development finance*
- *An active civic leader, serving on multiple nonprofit, education, and industry advisory boards focused on entrepreneurship, workforce development, and community wealth-building.*
- *Helps to expand access to capital and ownership opportunities for underserved entrepreneurs*



# What Employers Are Looking For

*One consistent message from today's speakers: employers value **attitude and soft skills** just as much as technical knowledge. Here's what hiring managers prioritize:*

## Reliability & Punctuality

*Showing up on time and following through on commitments*

## Professional Communication

*Clear, respectful communication in all workplace interactions*

## Willingness to Learn

*Openness to feedback and continuous skill development*

## Problem-Solving Ability

*Resourcefulness and adaptability when facing challenges*

-  **Remember:** Preparation for a career starts now. Internships, networking, and mentorship play major roles in opening doors to opportunity.





# Thank You for Attending Stay, Connect, and Ask Questions

01

---

## Build Experience Early

*Seek internships, volunteer work, or part-time jobs in your field of interest*

02

---

## Network and Build Relationships

*Connect with professionals and maintain those relationships over time*

03

---

## Seek Mentors

*Find experienced individuals who can guide your career decisions*

04

---

## Reflect on Your Path

*Ask yourself: What skills am I building? What industries interest me? What steps can I take this year?*

*Opportunities often begin with a conversation. We encourage you to stay, speak with our presenters, and continue these important discussions today.*

