



home > city hall > press releases

Job Seekers Flock to Perris Job Fair



Hundreds of people wait in line prior to the opening of the April 21 job fair at Harrison Hall, where 50 employers took applications and resumes from prospective employees.

A job fair Thursday (April 21) organized and sponsored by the City of Perris proved wildly successful as 1,000 prospective employees and nearly 50 businesses flocked to Harrison Hall seeking to find each other.

A line of about 500 gathered before the job fair officially opened at 10 a.m. with some people arriving two hours early to grab a spot near the front. Job seekers came from all over western Riverside County and San Bernardino looking to fill out applications, submit resumes or learn the basics from company representatives.

Employers included logistics and distribution centers, heavy construction, public safety agencies, colleges, food services and auto-related industries.

Michael McDermott, Chief Operating Officer of the Community Economic Development Corporation, said he was delighted with the turnout of employers and prospective employees.

"There will be 1,000 jobs available in Perris through Perris employers," McDermott said. "The huge turnout says that people want jobs."

McDermott noted that some of the longest lines formed around representatives of logistics centers, such as General Mills, which will open a major location in Perris in May. Those jobs feature steady employments, opportunities for promotion and benefits including paid vacations and sick time.

McDermott said the City will follow up with employers in a few weeks to gauge the overall success of the job fair.

Perris City Councilwoman Tonya Burke and City Manager Richard Belmudez were among other municipal officials who attended. Burke said the job fair struck particularly close to home for her. Her work entails helping at-risk youth, veterans and other job seekers find employment.

"To see this vision come to life and serve the people of Perris and other communities gives me goose bumps," Burke said. "I love to see people working. It's good for the community, our schools, our country and of course for our residents. I'm not surprised at the number of people here. It shows there is a need and we meeting that need."

City Councilman Mark Yarbrough said elected officials and administrators long ago conceived a plan to make Perris a business-friendly community, confident that the strategy would lead to jobs for resident, which in turn would attract more businesses and commerce and drive the local economy. The success of the job fair shows that strategy is paying off.

"This fair has exceeded expectations," Yarbrough said. "I've heard lots of compliments and those reflect positively on the hard work our City staff has put into making today an unqualified success."



Tom Robles, an ironworker from Los Angeles, makes his pitch to prospective employees during the April 21 job fair.

Workers wanted

Prospective employees streamed past the table of United Facilities, which provides logistical support for General Mills. Corporate human resource manager Renna Bliss said she was prepared to talk to anyone who stopped by seeking information or dropping off a resume. General Mills is seeking forklift operators, packagers, clerical staff and supervisors for its soon-to-open Perris center.

"This is a great opportunity because it exposes us to potential employees who are actively seeking work," Bliss said. "It gives us the ability to see a lot of people in a short time. We are looking for people who want to stay with the company and grow and develop their careers."

Bliss said General Mills offers employees the chance to work their way through the ranks to become shift leaders and managers. She praised McDermott and his staff for organizing the job fair at the Lake Perris Fairgrounds.

"We're really looking forward to being here," she said. "We're really happy with the job fair. We want to be here. We want to give opportunities to residents of Perris."

Tom Robles Sr., an ironworker with nearly 50 years on the job, didn't mince words to the prospective employees who stopped by Ironworkers Local Union 416 booth.

"This is a job that is very demanding, hard and sometimes dangerous," Robles said. "You can't be afraid to come home sweaty, dusty and tired at the end of the day."

The rewards are significant. Apprentices start off at \$17 an hour. Upon completion of the apprentice program, "journeyman" ironworkers earn \$33.50 in wages and another \$28 an hour in benefits.

"If you can make it, you can have a career that lasts 35 or 40 years," Robles said.



Perris City Councilwoman Tonya Burke chats with resident Kris Bourne, who attended the April 21 job fair at Harrison Hall.

First in line

Perris resident Kris Bourne arrived at Harrison Hall at 8 a.m., becoming the first person in a line that stretched from the door to the parking lot. He planned to hit as many job tables as possible. Bourne started out by visiting the General Mills representatives, a natural way to begin as he has previous logistics center experience.

"For the City of Perris to offer this fair is great," Bourne said. "Other cities should mirror this."

Sisters Kim Smith and Latrice Earley came to the job fair hoping to land permanent employment. They have been working temporary jobs that last a few weeks or months and end. They applied for logistics, security and clerical positions.

"It's hard to find a job," Smith said. "The job fair is helping a lot."

Earley summed up her situation succinctly.

"I need a job," she said. "I'm just looking for work. This is a great event. We need more of these."

Laura Rosa, a senior vocational rehabilitation instructor at the State Department of Rehabilitation, brought several visually impaired clients to the job fair. Many of her charges live on government benefits but if they can land jobs, they can become economically self-sufficient.

Two of Rosa's clients, Seth Back and Christopher Arias, said they would like jobs in information technology. Back suffers from a progressive eye disease and is slowly going blind while Arias can only distinguish light and dark. Still, both said they would like the opportunity to gain independence.

Back talked to several employers about possible IT openings.

"It was a little overwhelming but it was good to get out of my comfort zone," he said. "I want a job. I want some life experience."

Arias handed out copies of his resume. The employer who hires him will get "an enthusiastic and motivated workers."

Rosa said the City of Perris should be proud of organizing what she called an "amazing" job fair.

"It's great that they could do this for the community," she said.



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough stopped by the information desk at the Riverside County Sheriff's Department during the April 21 job fair, which drew 1,000 people seeking work.

Media Contact

Joe Vargo
Public Information Officer
951-943-6100
jvargo@cityofperris.org



Perris City Hall
101 N. D Street
Perris, CA 92570

Hours: Mon. - Fri. 8 am - 6pm

Phone: (951) 943-6100
Map to City Hall • Contact us

Get our mobile apps:
Apple • Android

Contact Perris
Call: (951) 943-6100 (available 24 hours/day)

Report a Problem/Ask a Question:

Contact Form

Follow us: [Facebook] [Twitter] [YouTube]

In this website

- ▶ City Hall
- ▶ Government
- ▶ Residents
- ▶ Business
- ▶ Visitors

Translate this site:
Select Language | ▼