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**Alameda County
Supervisor Keith Carson, Fifth District**

**For Immediate Release
Press Release**

December 18, 2012

**Workforce Development Summit in Berkeley
Hosted by East Bay Economic Development Alliance**



Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson welcomes business leaders, educators, public officials and community organizations to the Workforce development summit at Berkeley City College.

Berkeley, CA—A summit on workforce development and regional business partnerships attracted a group of more than 200 East Bay officials, business leaders, educators and community organizations to Berkeley City College on Tuesday, December 18, 2012.

Building a Vibrant East Bay Economy: Partnerships for Expanding Business, Strengthening the Talent Pool, and Capturing Innovation was designed to highlight nationwide best practices in the areas of job skills training, workforce

development, public-private partnerships and sector-based economic development. A panel of experts from across the country was followed by a discussion led by local business and workforce leaders. The event was organized by East Bay Economic Development Alliance (EDA), the largest business group in the East Bay.

“This is our opportunity to maximize opportunities for partnerships that will lead to workforce development to meet the needs of employers in the East Bay in the next few decades,” said Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson, Chair of East Bay EDA. “This is on our watch to build on the legacy of educational and training programs started during the New Deal, the G.I. Bill in post-war America and the rise of community colleges in the 1950s and 60s.”

Following the welcome, Kevin Pegels of Bayer HealthCare and Matt Lonner of Chevron provided an industry perspective on the “skills gap,” or the mismatch between job candidates’ current skills and the skills needed for the job openings now being offered by area employers.

Through programs like Biotech Partners, which gives high school juniors and seniors coursework and internship experience in the biosciences, Bayer and other regional employers are directly engaging with high school and even elementary school students to ensure that relevant skills and subjects are integrated into curricula. The Biotech Partners program at Berkeley High School, Oakland Technical High School and the Peralta Community College District has been in existence since 1993 and serves more than 100 students each year.

Guest speakers from Ohio and Pennsylvania shared best practices from their regions, emphasizing a cross-sector and collaborative approach to workforce training that employs data on projected priority sectors and in-demand occupations.

In the Cincinnati area, Partners for a Competitive Workforce is a program managed by the United Way that has brought in academics to study growth industries in the region and types of jobs that will offer high wages. Based on the results of the study, a training program has been developed that has served more than 6,000 people and has leveraged millions of dollars from public, private and philanthropic sources.

The East Bay EDA published a similar economic assessment study in October 2011 called *Building on our Assets: Economic Development & Job Creation in the East Bay*. Priority growth areas in the East Bay include Professional, Scientific and Technical Services; Construction; Health Care and Social Services; and Educational Services. The report also identifies challenges to filling positions in those areas: nearly 53 percent of high school graduates in the East Bay do not meet the UC/CSU requirements.

The summit in Berkeley was part of an ongoing series of conversations to develop a region-wide workforce and education plan that ensures the economic vitality and competitiveness of the East Bay well into the future.

The *Building on our Assets* report is available here:

http://eastbayeda.org/research_facts_figures/building_on_our_assets_2011_Report.htm

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Alameda County Supervisor Keith Carson represents the Fifth District, which includes Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Piedmont, and parts of Oakland (North Oakland, Rockridge, Grand Lake, Fruitvale, and Dimond District neighborhoods). For more information about District 5 and Supervisor Keith Carson, please call (510) 272-6695 or visit <http://www.acgov.org/board/district5/>