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MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA COMMENDS JVS' BANKWORKS™ *Program Partner Bank of America Presents \$50,000 Grant*

Los Angeles – February 9, 2011 With the unemployment rate hovering above 12% in Los Angeles, Mayor Villaraigosa today attended a graduation ceremony for 18 students of JVS' BankWorks™ to help highlight an exemplary job training program that has prepared over 350 Angelenos to enter the workforce.

Created by non-profit JVS, in partnership with local banks and the City of Los Angeles High Growth Financial Sector Initiative, the program is designed to place people on a career path within the financial sector. Upon completion of the program, nearly 80% of BankWorks™ graduates have secured employment, with more than 75% still employed six months later.

“The BankWorks™ program is an example of public private partnership at its best,” said Mayor Villaraigosa. “This partnership is helping Angelenos from all walks of life overcome barriers to employment and get onto the path of self sufficiency.”

At the event, held at The Expo Center in Los Angeles, JVS program partner Bank of America presented a \$50,000 grant from the Bank of America Charitable Foundation for continued support of BankWorks™ and JVS' other training and mentoring programs.

“Bank of America recognizes that our nation’s economy is dependent upon local job growth for recovery. That is why nonprofits like JVS and its job-preparation programs such as BankWorks™ are so important to help stimulate the local economy and improve the quality of life for Angelenos re-entering the workforce,” said Karla Lee, Business Support Executive, Southwest Region. “Bank of America not only provides funding to JVS for its important job-training programs, but also hires its BankWorks™ graduates to help maximize the program’s effectiveness.”

The BankWorks™ program was developed by JVS in 2006, in partnership with former Wells Fargo Chief Operating Officer Les Biller of The Sheri and Les Biller Family Foundation, along with Bank of America, Citibank, City National Bank, Pacific Western Bank, US Bank, Union Bank, Wells Fargo, the State of California Employment Training Panel and United Way. The eight-week program trains primarily low income inner city participants for jobs as bank tellers, the first step on the career ladder in the banking industry. In addition to job training, BankWorks™ provides job placement assistance and ongoing coaching for retention and career advancement, with starting salaries between \$20,000-\$35,000 plus benefits. To be eligible, clients must be at least 18, speak and write English, and have basic computer and cash handling skills.

“We are enormously grateful to Mayor Villaraigosa for his ongoing support and to Bank of America for their generous donation,” said JVS CEO Vivian B. Seigel. “Without the direct involvement of our partners in every aspect of the program, we would not be seeing the same results in terms of placement and retention. BankWorks™ attracts a wide diversity of people facing barriers to employment and along with JVS' other training programs in the health care and green technology fields, offers the expertise and resources to put people back to work.”

Founded in 1931, JVS has consistently taken the lead on employment issues and last year helped more than 30,000 people from over 30 training and counseling sites located throughout Southern California. For more information, please visit www.jvsla.org.

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