



# Long Beach City College

## NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **COMMERCIAL DRIVING PROGRAM PUTS GRADUATES IN THE DRIVER SEAT WHEN IT COMES TO THEIR CAREERS**

*LBCC's Harbor Driver Training Program Graduates Are Ready for Work*

**LONG BEACH, California** – The Long Beach City College (LBCC)-Harbor Trucking Association (HTA) collaborative training program will graduate its fifth and sixth cohorts on Tuesday, June 24 beginning at 11:30 a.m. at the O Building located at 4900 East Conant Street, Long Beach on the Liberal Arts Campus.

Graduates of the program will earn their Class A driver's license, Hazardous Materials certification and a TWIC card issued through the Maritime Transportation Security Administration (MTSA) allowing for unescorted access to the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles.

"Students come into the program knowing they want to become drivers and start a new career. They graduate after 14-weeks, having been mentored by veteran professionals who are our HTA employer-partners, and are now able to fill the growing need for qualified drivers at the ports" said Marty Alvarado, Director of LBCC's Workforce Development programs. "Our students are trained to meet the demands and standards of the expanding freight industry and are positioned to begin professional careers today."

The LBCC-HTA program is funded through a two-year \$440,000 grant from the California Community College Chancellor's Office and is being offered to address the shortage of trained and licensed short-haul truck-drivers serving local ports. The program was launched in March 2013.

Among the graduates is Christian Puncelles, who recently started working for Golden State Express after completing his training at the end of May. "This is a great program that provides awesome benefits for students, including job placement assistance. At the end of my training, staff sent my resume out to several companies. I was contacted by a few of them with offers and choose the company that I felt was a good fit for me and my needs."

After a week of job training, Christian began his first day as a solo driver for Golden State Express on June 16.

"This is an intense program that focuses on industry standards, safety and professional growth. The caliber of the LBCC-HTA program is such that insurance companies, who generally require



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two-years of driving experience, are willing to insure these new driver graduates,” said Fred Johring, president of Golden State Express Inc. and Chairman of HTA. “Our graduates display excellent knowledge of the ‘right things to do’ from the moment they are hired and it is reflected in their safety records. This attention to detail is normally found in seasoned drivers, which is a testament to the program’s ability to train students at the highest levels.”

The [Port of Long Beach](#) handles more than 6.7 million 20-ft container units per year and saw an 11.9 percent increase of imported containers and 6.3 percent increase in exports in April 2014 over 2013 figures during the same period. According to JOC.com, five years into the U.S. economic recovery, trucking companies say finding and hiring drivers is harder than ever. This driver shortage is a roadblock to expansion, limiting incremental growth in truck capacity.

For more information on the program please call (562) 938-3064.

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### **About Long Beach City College**

Long Beach City College is one of the largest single college districts in the California Community College System. LBCC is a comprehensive college which provides quality educational programs and related student services to nearly 30,000 students pursuing a wide range of degrees, certificates, transfer and other courses of study. LBCC is a driving force in the regional economy as lead host of the Los Angeles Regional Small Business Development Center Network, serving Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties; and, as the Goldman Sachs *10,000 Small Businesses Initiative* site serving Southern California. In 2013, LBCC supported small businesses in creating 2,355 new jobs, increasing client sales by more than \$198 million and helping clients access more than \$100 million in new capital. LBCC’s economic activity generates over \$2.12 million daily in the region’s economy. The College is also in the middle of a \$700 million construction bond program that was approved by local voters.