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# News Release



CONTACT: George McQuade 818.340.5300

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

or 818.340.5300

[PR@MayoCommunications.com](mailto:PR@MayoCommunications.com)

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## **LAEDC Announces Changing of the Guard at Region's Premier Business Organization and at WTCA**

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*LAEDC Board elects William C. Allen as LAEDC's president & CEO and Stephen W. Harper as president of World Trade Center Association Los Angeles-Long Beach.*

**Los Angeles, CA** — The Board of Directors of the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) today elected William C. (Bill) Allen to become president and CEO of the LAEDC succeeding Lee Harrington, who held the position for the past decade and is retiring in June 2006. Harrington will become vice chair of the LAEDC on January 16, 2006 when Bill Allen assumes the position.

“We are excited to have accomplished such a smooth transition of this critically important regional leadership organization,” said LAEDC Chairman and Bank of America Market president Rod Banks. “The LAEDC has come a long way under Lee’s leadership and Bill Allen is the perfect replacement to take the organization to the next level.”

Active in regional economic development for the past decade, Allen was the first chief executive officer of the Economic Alliance of the San Fernando Valley from 1997-2000, and in 2000 was named “*California’s Civic Entrepreneur of the Year*” by the California Center for Regional Leadership. As CEO of the non-profit Economic Alliance, Allen raised more than \$5 million dollars and assembled an unprecedented public-private partnership involving all of the leading cities, colleges and business organizations in the San Fernando Valley. Under his guidance, the Alliance launched programs to expand international trade, improve local education and enhance work force development programs. Viable solutions to regional transportation challenges including three regional transit planning summits in 1997 and 1998, which led to the creation of the recently opened Orange Line in the valley, were also developed.

Allen also personally developed the region's "*Valley of the Stars*" marketing campaign including television commercials, showpiece publications, websites and high profile media events like the nationally-televised *LPGA Valley of the Stars Championship* and the annual *Star of the Valley Awards* which have been hosted by the Walt Disney Company, Universal Studios and Warner Bros.

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## New Leadership at LAEDC 2 of 3

A veteran Hollywood television industry executive, Allen is currently president of Meadowlane Enterprises, Inc., vice chair of the Economic Alliance, and a member of the Boards of Directors of Health Dynamics, Inc., the Rossier School of Education at USC and the Valley Presbyterian Hospital for whom he also co-chairs the “*Shaping Tomorrow*” capital campaign. Allen has served as a trustee of the University of Southern California, chair of the Creative Arts Emmy Awards for the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences, and co-chair of the National Council for Families and Television. He has also served on the Business Advisory Commission to the former California Assembly Speaker Robert Hertzberg, and on the Leadership Council and Board of Directors of the LAEDC.

“I look forward with great anticipation to building on the extraordinary work Lee Harrington and the Board of the LAEDC have done in promoting business growth and the creation of quality jobs throughout Los Angeles County. I truly believe that the vibrant, diverse, and entrepreneurial LA business community has no greater friend or champion than the LAEDC,” said Allen.

Under Harrington’s leadership over the past 10 years, the LAEDC’s *Business Assistance Program* has helped to retain or create more than 100,000 direct jobs in Los Angeles County, with an economic value of more than \$3.5 billion annually and generating more than \$200 million annually in tax revenues for State and local government and schools. The LAEDC’s *Economic Information Program*, headed by Chief Economist Jack Kyser, has become the State’s most respected source of economic insight and trends. The LAEDC’s *Economic and Policy Consulting Group*, headed by Wally Baker, has become a sought-after resource for major land-use and infrastructure projects in Southern California. And the LAEDC’s financial strength, nearing \$30 million, assures its ability to continue to provide the community with critical economic development strategy assistance and leadership with the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

The World Trade Center Association (WTCA) Los Angeles-Long Beach, an LAEDC subsidiary, providing trade facilitation services to growing Southern California companies, also announced the election of Stephen Harper as president, replacing Lee Harrington, who will become vice chair. Harper will report to Allen. WTCA Chairman and Port of Long Beach

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Harbor Commissioner Roy Hearrean said, “Steve’s international business background as a graduate of the USC’s IBEAR (International MBA) program and his years of experience in Asia make him a great candidate to grow the WTCA’s services and overseas business development connections.”

**-MORE-**

## **New Leadership at LAEDC 3 of 3**

The WTCA recently added two experienced trade managers to support job growth through trade facilitation and recently renewed its Long Beach International Trade Office Program supported by the City and Port of Long Beach.

**[Editors: For media interviews or for more information about the LAEDC or the World Trade Center LA-LB, please call Nhien Barros at 213-236-4816 or email to [Nhien.Barros@laedc.org](mailto:Nhien.Barros@laedc.org) or visit [www.laedc.org](http://www.laedc.org) or <http://www.wtcanet.org>.]**

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