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REYES, CITY LEADERS, CELEBRATE NEW HOMEBOY INDUSTRIES HEADQUARTERS IN CHINATOWN—Renowned Gang Prevention Program Opens \$8.5 Million Facility to House Bakery, Café, Job Training

Councilmember Ed P. Reyes joined City dignitaries, community leaders and nearly 1,000 guests today to symbolically “break bread” on the new \$8.5 million headquarters for renowned gang prevention program Homeboy Industries.

“Jobs. That’s what at-risk youth and gang prevention program members tell me they need to help them turn their lives around,” said Reyes, who sits on the City’s Ad Hoc Committee on Gang Violence and Youth Development. In addition to Reyes, other leaders who attended today’s event included Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, L.A. Police Chief William Bratton, Sheriff Lee Baca and various City Councilmembers.

“The Homeboy Industries business gets right to the core of gang problems, providing much-needed jobs, counseling and others services to at-risk youth, while at the same time providing a valuable resource that serves the entire community,” said Reyes. Reyes, whose district includes the new Homeboy headquarters, was instrumental in facilitating the location and construction of the 21,000-square-foot facility at 130 W. Bruno Street in Chinatown. “I am thrilled to have Homeboy Industries in my District.”

The Homeboy facility, called the Fran and Ray Stark Center, will house an expanded Homegirl Café and rebuilt Homeboy Bakery, which burned down in 1999. The headquarters, founded by Father Gregory Boyle, also includes counseling staff and services, tattoo removal rooms, classrooms and a computer lab for educational and job training purposes, and a merchandise store.

In 1998, Father Boyle founded a job placement program for at-risk and gang-involved youth. In 1992, that program morphed into Homeboy Industries, which has served members of more than 1,100 known gangs in Los Angeles County. It was formed to create businesses that provide job, counseling, and most importantly, the opportunity for rival gang members to work side by side. For more information, visit <http://www.homeboy-industries.org>.

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