



City of Arts & Innovation

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Mayor Rusty Bailey Encourages Riverside to Create Value for Future Generations

Mayor uses State of the City address to emphasize triumphs, issue challenges for new year

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Mayor Rusty Bailey emphasized the strength of Riverside’s local economy and encouraged the city’s residents and business owners to make their city stronger for future generations of young people in the 41st annual State of the City address.

Bailey, delivering his sixth such address as Mayor, noted that the region has reached full employment in several job sectors and that the region’s growth in healthcare and educational employment has been more than double the state average. The Milken Institute recently reported that the Riverside/San Bernardino/Ontario metropolitan statistical area jumped 24 spots in the past year to become the 20th best performing region in the country.

Then he asked the more than 1,000 people assembled for the event at the Riverside Convention Center to envision how much good could be accomplished if each person committed to improving Riverside for future leaders by being a mentor, investing in Riverside’s new Innovation District, or helping to reduce homelessness by encouraging the development of additional housing.

“Just think of what that future would mean to our kids, our grandkids, and for our Riverside,” Bailey said. “So dig where you are, plant your roots in this soil, and create value in Riverside for future generations!”

Bailey announced Rose Mayes as the winner of the Dr. Carlos E. Cortés Award for Championing Diversity and Inclusivity. The Chamber presented the Riverside Hero Award to California Baptist University and announced winners of the annual Beautification Awards from Keep Riverside Clean & Beautiful.

Riverside recognizes that much work must be done to reduce the incidence of homelessness in the city, Bailey said. A growing portion of the homeless population is women over the age of 50, and almost 30 percent of the homeless population under the age of 24 are former foster children.

The city recently created an Office of Homeless Solutions to focus local government's efforts on the challenge and the City Council adopted a Housing First approach that calls for stabilizing homeless people with a place to live, while providing service like substance abuse, mental health and employment counseling.

The Mayor's Office has been working with local faith communities for more than a year on a Love Your Neighbor campaign to provide housing for homeless people trying to change their lives. Grove Community Church and La Sierra University Church already are working on projects, and a number of other local faith communities are getting involved as well, he said.

"Riverside is a compassionate city and has provided services for the homeless for decades in the form of shelter, clothing and food programs," Bailey said. "But we can't, and we won't, end homelessness without housing."

Local businesses are working with the Mayor's Office to guarantee job interviews for people going through the Riverside at Work program, which employs people transitioning out of homelessness. Bailey named seven local companies that are participating, including Champion Electric, Gar Labs and Lift Coffee Roasters, and challenged business owners in attendance to join the effort.

"This is the right thing to do, and it's the right time to do it," Bailey said. "Let's end the cycle of homelessness in our city and be a shining example of responsible compassion for the nation to see and replicate."

Rose Mayes, winner of the Dr. Carlos Cortés Award for Championing Diversity and Inclusivity, has been Executive Director of the Fair Housing Council of Riverside County since 1993. Bailey noted that Mayes is passionate about feeding the hungry, housing the homeless, serving the underserved, caring for seniors and mentoring youth.

Mayes has spent years empowering individuals, reaching out to youth, combatting racism and promoting diversity, Mayor Bailey said. Her many accomplishments include the development of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. statue on Main Street Mall in downtown Riverside; the creation of the Grier Pavilion on the 7th floor of City Hall, which celebrates diversity and inclusivity in the city; the naming of a street and school after Dr. King; and the mentorship of hundreds of young people..

Mayes most recently has championed the development of the Mission Heritage Plaza, which will provide 72 affordable homes, community meeting space and also will house the Civil Rights Institute of Inland Southern California and the Fair Housing Council Offices.

The Dr. Carlos E. Cortes Award for Championing Diversity and Inclusivity is named for the UC Riverside professor emeritus of history who is the single most influential force in shaping the City of Riverside's Inclusivity Statement, which guides the City's efforts on this important issue. An internationally-recognized scholar on race and ethnicity, Dr. Cortés' decades of groundbreaking research, writing and consulting work make him one of America's leading voices on diversity.

The Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce presented California Baptist University with the Riverside Hero Award, which goes to a group or individual who has made a significant contribution to promote the community at the state or national level during the past year.

The Chamber chose CBU to recognize the university's track record of high-quality growth, including a new, 153,000-square-foot events center with a 5,050 seat arena that opened in 2017 to showcase many of the university's athletic teams and student activities.

The event center is the latest development on the 160-acre main campus, which includes the 94,800-square foot Eugene and Billie Yeager Center, a high-quality student recreation center, the Jill and

Gordon Bourns College of Engineering, and the JoAnn Hawkins Music building, one of the nation's most advanced music production and recording facilities.

The State of the City event is produced by the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce in partnership with the City of Riverside and is free to the public to attend.