



# Big things are expected after SCLA's 'down cycle'

Business development director says "We will bring jobs and revenue"

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Grounded on terra firma, numerous airplanes are awaiting a new day when the entire Southern California Logistics Airport fleet will be called into action.

"Now we're in a down cycle," SCLA's director of business development Jim Worsham said during Monday's Hesperia Chamber of Commerce luncheon.

When the economy turns around, however, SCLA will be poised to further make a name for itself in the regional aviation arena.

"We can't be as big as Dallas/Fortworth, but we can be something as big as Ontario Airport," Worsham said.

And for Ontario, that means \$5 billion in annual business, 55,000 jobs and \$246 million in taxes.

"Airports brings business. Airports bring jobs. Airports bring money."

While Ontario Airport's niche is consumer air travel, SCLA is becoming a commercial, cargo and military air travel center. And the airport's proximity to Edwards Air Force Base and Fort Irwin gives it an edge.

"Just north of us is the best flight test center," he said.

SCLA also is used as a development location for military, emergency services and medical flight projects. Projects include the pilotless Hummingbird other aircraft.

Another reason for Worsham's optimism is the SCLA School of Aviation Technology, which trains local candidates to become well-paid aircraft technicians. The Federal Aviation Administration-certified school next week will graduate its first group of students from the initial 16-week section of the 82-week program.

"They work anywhere in the world," he said. "We hope they'll stay here."

Worsham stressed that they are looking for qualified candidates, especially women, who will have a starting salary of about \$40,000 per year. Tuition and tools for the school is about \$6,000, which is a fraction of the \$30,000 for similar training elsewhere, he added.

"Our biggest need is for qualified students," Worsham said. "If you still have kids in school, please get them to take algebra, geometry and trigonometry."

Worsham, who has more than 50 years of experience in aircraft conversions, airport development and marketing, is confident SCLA will be an even bigger player than before.

"We will survive the recession, and we will bring jobs and revenue."