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General Meeting – Wednesday, May 13, 2015

Sebastian Ridley-Thomas

Also Candidates for Director of Region 14 for CDP

President's Message:



Presidential election season is officially underway, and the next Chief Executive - hopefully, a Democrat - will have to deal with

an economy that, while recovering, is still less than stellar. March's jobs report was underwhelming: the federal government stated only 126,000 jobs were created after a year-long streak of monthly job figures north of 200,000. Meanwhile, the situation of the long-term unemployed - people out of work 27 weeks or more - has only slightly improved. Although the numbers in that group have dropped, 2.6 million people are still long-term unemployed, far higher than before the Great Recession began. That's a lot of wasted potential.

Despite all the rhetoric coming from the media and politicians asserting that the U.S. economy is on the upswing, many of our citizens are not feeling it. Wages are still stagnant for those who are working. Most of the gains made from the recovery have gone to the very richest. And the

official employment numbers don't tell the whole story. For instance, the labor force participation rate is 62.7% - the lowest figure in nearly 40 years. Many people are either working part-time and want a full-time job, or have simply given up trying to find a job at all. They are not counted in the official unemployment rate of 5.5%. (Neither are people in prison, for that matter).

I can certainly attest to the problem of long-term unemployment, because I have been suffering bouts of unemployment for years, even before the 2008 financial crash (remember George W. Bush's "jobless recovery?"). For four blissful months last year, I had a full-time job on a state Senate campaign. Since that campaign ended last June, I have yet to land another job, despite continuing to send out resumes and leveraging my network of friends and acquaintances. There are others I know in the same situation. Unfortunately, the stigma of being unemployed for so long runs so deep in our society that some employers are openly discriminating against people who [See President, Page 2]

Monthly General Membership Meeting:  
7:00 PM Wednesday, May 13, 2015  
6:45 PM – Refreshments  
Rotunda Room  
Veterans Memorial Building  
4117 Overland Avenue  
Corner of Overland Ave. and Culver Blvd.

What's Inside?

- President's Message (continued) - Page 2
- Resolution To Be Considered at May Meeting - Page 3
- Club 'Fun'draiser at Ronnie Jayne's Show - Page 3
- About Our Speaker, Sebastian Ridley-Thomas - Page 3
- From the Editor: Time To Stop Printing Our Newsletter on Paper? - Page 3
- Di's Corner - Page 2

Club Notes

Renew your membership! Please use the form on page 4 or to renew online click "Join/Renew" on our web site.

Electronic Newsletter: Submit your email address to Info@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com and ask to get the newsletter by email! Save a tree and save our club the postage!

Comments expressed in the Newsletter are the opinions of the authors and do not necessarily represent the position of the Culver City Democratic Club.

[**President** from Page 1] show long gaps in their employment histories. Then add to that difficulty, the unique challenges that certain groups - women, people of color, the disabled, people over 50 - have when trying to land jobs. For example, blacks, who still face rampant employment discrimination, don't have the same access as whites to the kinds of social networks that connect people to the best and highest paying jobs within the "hidden job market." Decades of institutionalized racism and residential segregation have limited blacks' access to good employment opportunities.

Despite these challenges within American employment, the problem of long-term unemployment is getting little attention, aside from political fights over the length of time for unemployment benefits. I feel that those of us who are still unemployed and want to work are being left to twist in the wind. "Fighting for \$15" minimum wage and talking up the "plight of working families" are great issues, but what about the folks who can only dream of getting a wage at all? This is where the government must come in. When the market fails, it is the

government that must become "the employer of last resort."

Democrats once trumpeted that principle from the days of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who established the famed Works Progress Administration that put thousands to work during the Great Depression. But, today, our party seems too timid to promote "muscular government," and won't effectively push back against the ridiculous idea that "government doesn't create jobs (tell any civil servant that they aren't actually doing a 'job')." That timidity is the result of 40 years of American society being bombarded with bad right-wing economic theories and policies. The WPA was a successful program, and so was another federal jobs program in the 1970s, called the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. CETA trained unemployed people and provided them with jobs in civil service. Other countries have similar programs. CCDC member Darryl Cherness told me about CETA. Eventually, CETA and a subsequent successor were repealed in the 1990s. But we need such a program again. The recalcitrant Republican Congress likely won't implement it, so our California state Legislature should. A state-level CETA is one

### Seeking Submissions

We would like your articles and letters to the editor. Let your voice be heard! Submissions will be published as space allows. Submissions may be edited for length.

The Club's Executive Board reserves the right to determine suitability of submissions for inclusion in the newsletter.

idea that can be put forward to Assemblymember Sebastian Ridley-Thomas, who is scheduled to speak at the May General Meeting. Come and address your questions and concerns to Assemblymember Ridley-Thomas about issues facing our beloved great state of California!

"True individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence. People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made."

- Franklin D. Roosevelt

### Di's Corner: By Diane Rosenberg

The Club wishes a speedy recovery for Pat Levinson, our Recording Secretary, who has just had her right knee replaced and is home recuperating.

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On April 11 Herb and I went on vacation to Cancun because we were there before in 2006 and thoroughly enjoyed our stay. This time we picked the Grand Bahia Principe Coba hotel in the Riviera Maya area for our stay. To our amazement the hotel we checked into was the biggest hotel we had seen in our lifetime - six hotels sitting on 200 acres with modern buildings as far as the eye could see. We found the whole experience of living there a delight.

### 2015 Club Officers and Committee Chairs:

**President:** Sylvia Moore  
President@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

**First VP:** Khin Khin Gyi  
FirstVP@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

**Second VP:** Amy Cherness  
SecondVP@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

**Treasurer:** Eric Fine  
Treasurer@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

**Recording Secretary:**  
Patricia Levinson  
Secretary@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

**Corresponding Secretary:**  
Stephen Murray  
CorrespondanceSec@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

**Membership Secretary:**  
Diane Rosenberg  
Membership@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

**Newsletter:** Greg Valtierra  
Newsletter@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

## Resolution To Be Considered at May Meeting

The Club's Executive Board has endorsed the following resolution to be voted on at the May meeting (For more information contact Nyabingi Kuti at (323) 522-1212 or nyakuti@gmail.com):

### RESOLUTION CALLING FOR THE RELEASE OF COUNTY INCARCERATION DIVERSION FUNDS

Whereas, California is reducing its prison and jail populations as a result of the implementation of AB 109 and Proposition 47. This has increased the need for services for those returning home from incarceration;

Whereas, in September 2014 Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved a \$20 million program to divert the mentally ill from incarceration and into community based treatment programs. This amount has recently been increased to \$30 million;

Whereas, the diversion funding allocation has been tied to the release of the DA Jackie Lacey Crime Justice Mental Health Task Force report on mental health diversion from incarceration, which has taken a longer time than anticipated.

Therefore be it resolved that the LA County Democratic Party lobby the BOS to expedite the

process for releasing these funds to community and faith based organizations that deliver services to the formerly incarcerated;

Be it further resolved that the LA County Democratic Party lobby city, county, state and federal officials to develop an interagency approach in partnership with community and faith based organizations to streamline the service delivery process for incarceration diversion.

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### Club 'Fun'draiser at Ronnie Jayne's Show

Our own Ronnie Jayne has a new play called "Loopholes- A Pain In The IRS " playing at the Hudson Mainstage Theatre, 6539 Santa Monica Boulevard in Hollywood. The Club is selling tickets for \$30 for the 7pm show on Sunday, May 17th with proceeds to go to fund the Club's operations. Let's help out the Club, support Ronnie, and have a good time! Please contact Amy Cherness, (310) 839-0953 or [SecondVP@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com](mailto:SecondVP@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com)

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### About Our Speaker, Sebastian Ridley-Thomas

(Excerpted from [asmdc.org](http://asmdc.org))

Sebastian Ridley-Thomas was elected in December 2013 to represent California's 54th Assembly District. Ridley-Thomas previously served as public policy director for State Senator Curren

Price. In this capacity, he advised the senator on economic development, transportation, housing, public safety, and local government issues. Ridley-Thomas also worked as a staff member in the district office, where he was responsible for a caseload of 900,000 residents in Greater Los Angeles.

The Assemblymember has also served as legislative consultant to the Senate Select Committee on Procurement, where he worked to ensure small business owners in underserved communities received their fair share of state contracts, and as the political director for the nine-member California Legislative Black Caucus.

Ridley-Thomas received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Morehouse College, where he held several leadership positions. A graduate of the CSU Sacramento Capitol Fellows Program, he trained in mediation and conflict resolution at UC Davis Extension and CSU Dominguez Hills. Ridley-Thomas lives in Los Angeles.

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### From the Editor: Time To Stop Printing Our Newsletter on Paper?

Is it time to stop printing and sending our newsletter by snail mail? We currently spend over \$1,200 a year on printing and postage for our newsletter. Most if not all our members probably have email addresses where they could get our newsletter electronically. Please let me know your thoughts on going to an all electronic newsletter by emailing me at [Newsletter@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com](mailto:Newsletter@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com)

### Renew Your Club Membership for 2015!

Our membership chair, Diane Rosenberg, will gladly accept your renewal. You can use the form on Page 4 to update any of your contact information and select the level of membership OR click "Join/Renew" on our web site [CulverCityDemocraticClub.com](http://CulverCityDemocraticClub.com)

Dues are due by January 1, 2015  
For questions please call Membership Secretary  
Diane Rosenberg at (310) 398-5328

**Renew your membership!**

Now collecting dues for 2015.  
Dues for 2015 are due by  
January 1, 2015. Current  
dues must be paid by  
renewing members before a  
vote to get a ballot at the  
general meeting. New and  
lapsed members must have  
paid dues at least 25 days in  
advance to vote at a meeting.

Culver City Democratic Club  
P.O. Box 4254  
Culver City, CA 90231-4254

**Wednesday, May 13, 2015 - Meeting Program:**  
**Sebastian Ridley-Thomas**  
**Also Candidates for**  
**Director of Region 14 for CDP**

**Upcoming Events**

► **Wednesday, May 13**  
**Monthly General Meeting:**  
**Sebastian Ridley-Thomas**  
7:00 PM at the Rotunda Room,  
Veterans Memorial Building.  
Public is welcome. Call Sylvia at  
(323) 384-3457 or email  
President@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

► **Sunday, May 17, 7 PM**  
**Club 'Fun'draiser at Ronnie**  
**Jayne's Show:**  
"Loopholes- A Pain In The IRS "  
playing at the Hudson Mainstage  
Theatre, 6539 Santa Monica  
Boulevard in Hollywood. Tickets  
are \$30 with proceeds to support  
the Club's operations. Everyone is  
welcome. Contact Amy Cherness  
at (310) 839-0953 or  
SecondVP@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

► **Saturday, May 23**  
**Monthly Board Meeting:**  
10:00 AM at the  
Camarella/Jayne's home. All  
members welcome. Call Khin  
Khin at (310) 945-6087 or email  
FirstVP@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

► **Wednesday, June 10**  
**Monthly General Meeting:**  
7:00 PM at the Rotunda Room,  
Veterans Memorial Building.  
Public is welcome. Call Sylvia at  
(323) 384-3457 or email  
President@CulverCityDemocraticClub.com

Culver City Democratic Club  
**Application/Renewal Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I declare that all the individuals listed for membership are registered Democrats.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Dues: Dues may be waived for financial hardship  
 Member \$30  Student \$20  
 Supporting Member \$75  Sustaining Member \$125  
Additional Contribution: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please make your check payable to:  
**Culver City Democratic Club**  
P.O. Box 4254, Culver City, CA 90231-4254  
**OR** Click "Join/Renew" on our web site CulverCityDemocraticClub.com.

For questions please call Membership Secretary Diane Rosenberg at  
(310) 398-5328

**Please renew for 2015 if you haven't already done so.**  
The dues period runs concurrent to the calendar year.  
Renewals are due by January 1, of each year.