

Community

People in the News

Woodland Hills resident and transgender activist **Michaela Mendelson**, right, is launching the California Trans Work Project to promote a trans positive work climate in California. She plans to first focus on services industries such as restaurants and hotels that have entry level positions and pathways to management. Mendelson is a transgender activist, public speaker and businesswoman with over 40 years of entrepreneurial leadership. She is the CEO of Pollo West Corp - one of the largest franchisees for Pollo West Corp - one of the largest franchisees for El Pollo Loco Western Region. She competed in the Ms. Senior California Pageant and served as a consultant to Jenji Kohn in the development of Laverne Cox's character on "Orange is the New Black." She recently joined the board of the Trevor Project, A national 24-hour, toll free confidential suicide hotline for gay and questioning youth. Her personal mission is to help transwomen find employment, social acceptance and a path to raise families of their own.



Bowling for Boosters, at left are **LAPD Officer Haim, Rickey Gelb and Officer Bocanegra**, at left. The fundraiser April 10 benefited the West Valley Boosters. Bowling was done at the Winnetka Bowl, owned by Gelb and the Gelb Group, a Family of Companies. Other activities included a silent auction, trophies, food, a meet and greet with Councilman Bob Blumenfield and Captain Rafael Ramirez. The mission of the Boosters is to increase the effectiveness and morale of the West Valley LAPD Station by raising money for community services, materials and equipment not generally supplied by the City of Los Angeles.

Hixme, the Agoura-based technology leader in the new era of employee-owned benefits, has announced the appointment of **Chris Pliha**, right, as Regional Vice President of Sales. He will be responsible for recruiting, retaining and expanding Hixme's sales team and lead the strategic effort to introduce the company to key markets across the U.S. A 17-year veteran in the enterprise industry, Pliha lead successful strategic selling efforts at Workday and Oracle, among other enterprise-focused companies. Hixme's flexible, scalable cloud platform leverages data science and analytics to personalize and package employee benefits into logical "bundles," while providing benefit administrators and employees with a simple, easy-to-use portal to select and manage their benefits. Employees set up their individual and family profile with Hixme, then the platform aggregates this information and presents the employee with plan options tailored to their specific needs, preferences and lifestyle. Pliha joins CEO Denny Weinberg, Founder Dan Peate, Founder and VP of Product and Operations Karen Albanese, VP of Finance Erik Wissig, VP of Engineering Amir Pirnia and VP of Client Services Tammy Olson.



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