



Alive!

PLAYLA

REC AND PARKS

Olympic-funded program brings huge growth in youth, adaptive sports for equity and inclusion.

— SEE PAGE 10



Rec and Parks' *PlayLA* supervisor team, from left: Anita Meacham Williams, Superintendent/Administrator, Club Member; Caroline Lammers, Recreation Supervisor; Ramon Cerrillos, Principal Recreation Supervisor, Club Member; and Laura Island, Principal Recreation Supervisor, Club Member.

Alive! photo by Dearbhla McNulty (bottom); sports photos courtesy Rec and Parks

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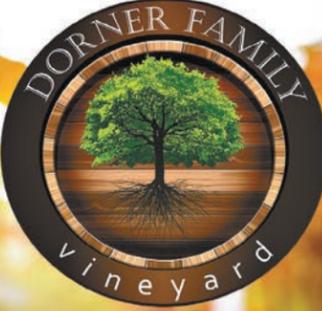
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The Point Is Kids

Perspective helps us see what matters.

That came to mind early last month when I chatted happily with the supervisors who manage one of the most stunning developments in Los Angeles City recreation history: *PlayLA*. The impressive *PlayLA* Youth and Adaptive Sports Initiative has already signed up more than 120,000 young athletes in less

than one year; I am told *PlayLA* is the biggest one-time expansion of sports activities in Rec and Parks history.

Incredible! Last month's event, however, convened for a different reason – to announce the starting and closing dates of the LA Olympics in 2028. That is important information, for sure. Most attendees of the event came away knowing that timeline. That is all fine, of course.

I came away with a different perspective, however, when I met some of *PlayLA*'s young participants and witnessed their relentless energy around me. I saw firsthand how much they loved it. Certainly that is more important, don't you agree? In the past these youths had little to no access to programs due to location, or sport



At the Olympic date announcement event in July were *PlayLA* supervisors (from left) Laura Ireland, Club CEO Robert Larios, Caroline Lammers and Ramon Cerrillos.

ROBERT'S BLOG

by Robert Larios, CEO, The Club



choice, or handicap, or finance. And now they do. Once again we see the City endeavoring to bring a better life to its citizens. (The Club does that, too, every day.)

Our feature this month shines a light on this astounding new program and the City employees who make it happen, including **Anita Meacham Williams, Ramon Cerrillos, Laura Island, Caroline Lammers** and **Melanie Escamilla**. (Thank you, too, to **Rose Watson** and **JuanCarlos Chan** for their assistance.) We also honor the Rec Directors and Instructors Citywide for implementing *PlayLA*, and the Olympic committees for funding it. I recommend you read our story, and I trust you will be as proud of our City as I am.

Worth Considering: Another thought came to me as I intermingled with the young *PlayLA* participants and fed on their joyous energy: to try new things. It's important for all of us to take a risk every now and again, and go for what we want instead of settling for something that will lead us away from our best purpose. Don't be afraid. Run the race. Give it all you have. The courage will find you.

Finally, I wish to remind you to take respite this August, and rest and enjoy life with your friends and loved ones. The busyness of fall will be with us all too soon.

¡Gracias por leer!

CLUB MOBILE TEAM Site Visits Are Back!

Club Mobile Team is ready to visit City worksites safely with gear, tickets, insurance, more. Say hi to the Club ... in person again!

The Club never stopped working for its Members during the pandemic. But now that the coast is clearing, so to speak, it's time to revisit our Members and Members-to-Be at sites and yards.

The Mobile Team is ready to visit your worksite Tuesdays through Thursdays. We can't wait to see everybody again!



For your continued safety:

- The Mobile Team brings and wears safety gear.
- The Mobile Team is accepting only outdoor set-ups for now.

Follow Club social media for Mobile Team site visit dates as they are scheduled.



At a recent Mobile Team site visit.

***Mobile Team site visit dates are subject to change due to the pandemic. Make sure to check with your supervisor to confirm dates and times, up to and including on the scheduled day itself.**

Mobile Team Schedule*

The Mobile Team sets up in the Harbor area the first Wednesday of every month

Aug. 3, Sept. 7, Oct. 5, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Harbor Boys and Girls Club

100 W. Fifth St., San Pedro

OTHER SITE VISITS:

Aug. 10 (tentative)

Rec and Parks Pacific Region

Venice District

Aug. 11, 7 – 8 a.m.

LA Zoo

5333 Zoo Drive, Griffith Park

Aug. 11, Noon – 2 p.m.

RLACEI Picnic

1025 Elysian Park Dr.

Aug. 17, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Lincoln Heights Branch,

LA Public Library

2530 Workman St.

Aug. 25, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Orcutt Ranch, Rec and Parks

23600 Roscoe Blvd., Canoga Park

Schedule A Site Visit

To schedule a site visit, contact **Lupe Lira, Club Store Manager:** (213) 819-0350, or moble@employeesclub.com



COVER STORY:

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**NEW THIS MONTH
ONLINE!**
alive.employeesclub.com

Rest Insured

See the Club's claims paid this month and feel confident in your Club insurance purchase.



Library Top 10

See what your fellow Angelenos are reading, watching and grooving to.



John's Picture Perfect

John's Picture Perfect – all the winners from this month's contest on the theme "vacation."



Cooking with the Club

Chef Larios prepares super-delicious pork tenderloin with Sriracha-apricot sauce, jasmine rice and sautéed green beans with sesame seeds.

— with Chef Larios

On Web *Alive!*

aliveemployeesclub.com/cooking-pork-tenderloin-with-sriracha-apricot-sauce





The Club Is Here to Help

Club staff is dedicated to helping our members receive the maximum benefit from their membership. If you have questions, concerns or suggestions about your Club, our counselors are ready to help.

Contact the Club

if you have an event you want covered in *Alive!* or if you have questions about insurance.

help@employeesclub.com
(800) 464-0452

Physical Club Store Hours:

Monday – Friday

9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

NOTE: The walk-in Club Store is closed every Tuesday from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. for staff meetings.

Alive!

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TELEPHONE: (800) 464-0452
CONTACT US: admin@aliveemployeesclub.com

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Alive! Staff

John Hawkins and Robert Larios,
Managing Editors
John Burnes, *Editor*
David Jamgotchian,
JILA Associates,
Design and Production

LACEA Board

Phillip Chou, *LADWP*
Andrew Virzi III
Manager of Accounts Payable and Taxes, LADWP
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In addition, the Club strives to publish only those elements that are produced by the Club itself, are in the public domain, or whose rights have been negotiated.

Club Members who have questions on these points may write to: alive@employeesclub.com

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We are replacing the Savers Guide Mobile App with the new and improved *My Club Deals* Mobile App to provide you with a better user experience and greater accessibility to everyday discounts and savings in your area. Effective August 1, 2022, all members who currently use the Savers Guide app will need to download the *My Club Deals* app and login with your Club Member username and password. The Savers Guide app will no longer be active after July 31, 2022.



DOWNLOAD THE NEW MOBILE APP

SEARCH FOR *MY CLUB DEALS*



- 1** Before Using Your *My Club Deals* Mobile App
New users will first need to create a Club Member online **User Account** at employeesclub.com/register.
- 2** Once you've registered your Member online User Account, go to <https://employeesclub.com/entertainment>
- 3** Enter your **Zip Code** or **City** to find the nearest discounts in your area or the area you're planning to visit.
- 4** Finally, log into your *My Club Deals* App on your mobile device and start exploring savings in your area.

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Or call: (800) 464-0452

LACEA Insurance Services, Inc. ('Employees Club of California') is a licensed insurance agency offering insurance benefits to qualified Club members. The Club's CA DOI Lic. No. is 0B98000.

To learn more about your insurance options, schedule a visit with the Club's insurance experts:



LAPD

IN MEMORIAM

Officer II Houston Tipping

1990-2022

Devonshire Officer II Houston Tipping died Sunday, May 29, of catastrophic injuries suffered three days before in an on-duty training accident at the LAPD Academy, according to the LAPD.

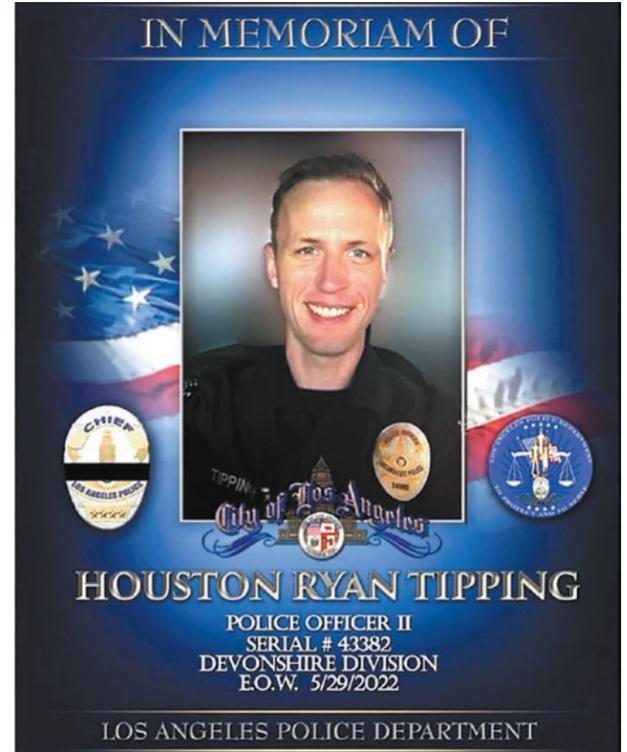
He was 32, with 5 years of City service.

"At the time of the accident, Officer Tipping was a bike instructor engaged in a training scenario involving grappling with another Officer," according to a statement by the LAPD. "During the scenario, Officer Tipping fell to the floor and suffered a catastrophic spinal cord injury. Officers immediately began CPR and summoned an LA Fire rescue, who transported Officer Tipping to USCMC. Despite the extraordinary measures taken by the medical professionals there, Officer Tipping succumbed to his injuries earlier today surrounded by his family."

Officer Tipping was the 238th LAPD officer to die in the line of duty in the department's history.

In his honor, flags at the State Capitol were flown at half-staff.

The Club sends its condolences to the family, friends and fellow law enforcement co-workers of Officer Tipping. ●



Devonshire Officer II Houston Tipping

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2. Speak to Cesilee Castillo (ext. 126) or Genesis Martinez (ext. 226).
3. Wait 72 hours for registration to take effect.
4. You'll receive the contract price or the sale price, whichever is lower.
5. The deal works in-store or online.



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READY FOR RETIREMENT



Resources for Club Retirees or Those About to Retire



STAY CONNECTED FOR YOUR BEST RETIREMENT

ARE YOU RETIRED OR PLANNING TO RETIRE SOON?

Let's keep in touch! It is important that the Club has your personal email address and phone numbers so that you do not miss out on important information regarding your Membership and insurances.

Email info@employeesclub.com or call (800) 464-0452 to speak with a Customer Service Representative to update your current contact information.

The Employees Club of California can assist you in making the retirement process seamless.

If you have insurance benefits with the Club, or are a Club member only, it is important that you speak with a Club Retiree Counselor right away.

The great news is that Club Membership for Retirees can be conveniently deducted from your pension. As a Retiree, you are entitled to group-rated insurance benefits such as life insurance, accidental death and dismemberment, pre-funeral planning, long-term care, and our popular legal plan by MetLife. Enjoy the most of your new beginning by allowing the Club to guide you through the retirement process.

Make an appointment with our Retirement Specialists today! Do not wait! As you age, your health changes and can affect your eligibility for the plan. Lock in your rate today!

This month, we are highlighting the importance of having **long-term care insurance**. Read below on why it makes so much sense.

Congratulations on your Retirement and be well!



Noelle Kauffman
Director of Sales
CA LICENSE NO: 0H45598

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Call for a FREE insurance benefits consultation with a Member Services Counselor:



Cheryl Martin

(800) 464 -0452,

EXT. 136

Work cell: (213) 819-0794

23 years of insurance experience
CA LICENSE NO: 0C12823



Tiffany Sy

(800) 464-0452,

EXT. 202

Work cell: (213) 440-8270

20 years of insurance experience
CA LICENSE NO: 0D75348

LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE, AND WHY YOU SHOULD HAVE IT

WHAT IS LONG-TERM CARE (LTC) INSURANCE?

Long-term care insurance is designed to pay benefits for some of the expenses you may incur if you need supervision or assistance with basic activities of daily living (ADLs), including bathing, eating, continence, dressing, toileting, ambulating and transferring.

You may need this kind of help following an accident or illness such as a stroke – because of older age and frailty, or because you need supervision due to a cognitive disorder like Alzheimer's disease.

WHY YOU NEED LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE FROM THE CLUB:

- Your premiums are conveniently deducted through your pension
- Affordable Club Member-only group rates
- Group rates are locked in at the age you apply
- Coverage is available to you, your spouse/domestic partner, parents and grandparents
- Available payout benefits range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per month
- Your plan pays a monthly benefit directly to you, as opposed to most other programs that pay out on a reimbursement schedule
- Choose from four plans: 1) long-term care facility; 2) professional home care; 3) total home care, and 4) simple inflation protection.
- Available terms: four-year nursing facility/eight years in home. Also available: 10 year nursing facility/20 year in home* (Home care benefit pays out at 50 percent)

Schedule an appointment today with a Club Retirement Counselor, and be ready for your best retirement.

LACEA Insurance Services, Inc. (Employees Club of California) is a licensed insurance agency offering insurance benefits to qualified Club members. The Club's CA DOI Lic. is #0B98000.

2022 Events

Oct. 1 **Annual Fall Meeting** (LADWP Association)
Canceled/pandemic

Sept. 7 **General Membership Meeting** (LARFPA)
San Antonio Winery
737 Lamar St. (near downtown)

Dec. 17 **Annual Holiday Celebration** (LARFPA)
11 a.m.
Sheraton Universal Hotel
333 Universal Hollywood Dr.
Universal City

RESERVATION LINES:

LADWP Retiree Association
(800) 678-4145, ext. 701

LARFPA: events@larfpa.org

Contact Information

Employees Club of California
Club contact:
help@employeesclub.com

Los Angeles City Employees' Retirement System (LACERS) (City Dept.)
(800) 779-8328
lacers.services@lacers.org

LADWP Retirees Association
Dolores Foley, *President*
(949) 388-1206
vincedolores@gmail.com

Fire and Police Pensions (City Dept.)
(844) 885-2377
pensions@lafpp.com

LA Retired Fire and Police Association (LARFPA)
(888) 288-5073
membership@larfpa.org

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)
See page 16



LOS ANGELES CITY EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM

FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS:

ARE YOU READY FOR RETIREMENT?

HERE ARE SOME CURRENT PROGRAMS TO HELP WITH YOUR PLANNING:

WEBINARS

Learn about your retirement options and benefits at an upcoming Planning for Retirement webinar, hosted by the LACERS Member Engagement team. Register via your MyLACERS account. Upcoming dates include:

Thurs., Aug. 11 **Thurs., Sept. 15**

Thurs., Aug. 18 **Tues., Sept. 20**

Thurs., Aug. 25 (Tier 3) **Sat., Oct. 1**

All webinars begin at 9 a.m.

APPLICATION PORTAL DEMONSTRATION

Take time to learn about LACERS' exciting new Retirement Application Portal (RAP). Visit lacers.org/applying-retirement for more details and sign up for an upcoming RAP Demonstration webinar at 11 a.m. Tues., Aug. 2 via your MyLACERS account at <https://mylacers.lacers.org>.

Don't have time to attend the webinar? Check out a recorded version on the LACERS YouTube channel:
youtube.com/lacersyoutube

APPLYING FOR RETIREMENT ONLINE

Members are encouraged to submit their retirement application 60 days before their retirement date when using LACERS' new Retirement Application Portal (RAP). The RAP is a great asset to LACERS Members that helps to streamline the retirement process. While the filing period is within 30 to 60 days of your retirement date, starting your application early and submitting it on the first day you can at the 60-day-prior mark, will allow for a couple of benefits. These include having ample time to discover any complications and address them without having to move your retirement date, as well as ensuring LACERS staff has time to meet your retirement date request.

For example, if your desired retirement date is Oct. 22, 2022, you would aim to submit your retirement application in the portal on Aug. 23, 2022. For more information, please visit lacers.org/applying-retirement.

CITYWIDE



The new Sixth Street Viaduct

Cutting the Ribbon

THE OPENING OF THE SIXTH STREET VIADUCT IS A TRIBUTE TO THE HUNDREDS OF CITY EMPLOYEES WHO DESIGNED IT AND MANAGED ITS CONSTRUCTION.

Photos courtesy Public Works/Engineering; Councilman Kevin De Leon; Mayor Eric Garcetti's Office; Arthur Gomez, Public Works/Contract Administration; LAPD/Hollenbeck Division; LAPD/Central Area; and Alive!



On July 11, fireworks rang out in the City of LA for the second time in a week, for the Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement, years in the making, opened to connect Boyle Heights on the east side of the LA River, to the Arts District on the west side.



The new viaduct was necessitated by the unexpected deterioration of the iconic previous 1932-era Sixth Street Viaduct, which was demolished in 2016.

The replacement, featuring a national design contest, took a decade to imagine, design and construct and cost an estimated \$588 million.

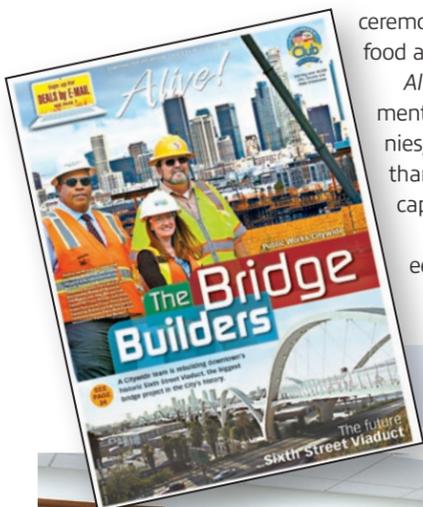
The grand opening weekend – July 8-10 – featured ceremonies, car shows, bike and running events, concerts, food and fireworks.

Alive! compiled photos from many of the City departments and individuals involved in the opening ceremonies, plus a look back from our June 2018 issue. We thank those departments and photographers who captured the moments.

Congratulations to the hundreds of City employees who built a civic icon for the next century. ●



Mayor Eric Garcetti and many others cut the ribbon Friday night, July 8.



From *Alive!* June 2018



Women engineers played a major role in the designing and construction management of the Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement. As pictured in the June 2018 *Alive!*, they are (front row, from left): Eunice Lee, Civil Engineer; Natalie Moore, Civil Engineering Associate II; and Julie Allen, Principal Civil Engineer and Project Manager, Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement Project. Back: Karen Keal, Structural Engineering Associate III; Laura Mojica, Sr. Management Analyst; Julia Moye, Sr. Civil Engineer; and Gary Lam, Sr. Civil Engineer, 17 years. All worked for Public Works/Engineering.



From June 2018: Overseeing the construction of the replacement of the Sixth Street Viaduct were (from left) Roosevelt Bagby II, Principal Construction Inspector, Public Works/Contract Administration, Club Member; Julie Allen, Principal Civil Engineer and Project Manager, Club Member; and Todd Eller, Lead Sr. Construction Inspector, Public Works/Contract Administration, Club Member.



From June 2018: The Sixth Street Viaduct Replacement under construction.

PART 29

Scenes From a Pandemic

Alive! continues its documentation of City employees as they take a multitude of measures to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. Here are entries from the Club and the City Twitter feeds about City Employees and Club Members at work during this trying time.

City Clerk



"Our Outreach Team hard at work this weekend at the Lotus Festival and CICLAVIA events assisting Angelenos with their voter registration forms and providing election information! #LACITYCLERK #ELECTION2022 #LA"

July 12



"@LACityClerk, engaging voters at the first Thrill of Sugar Hill Arts Fair. #voterregistration #ivotela #registertovote"

July 20

AIRPORTS/CULTURAL AFFAIRS

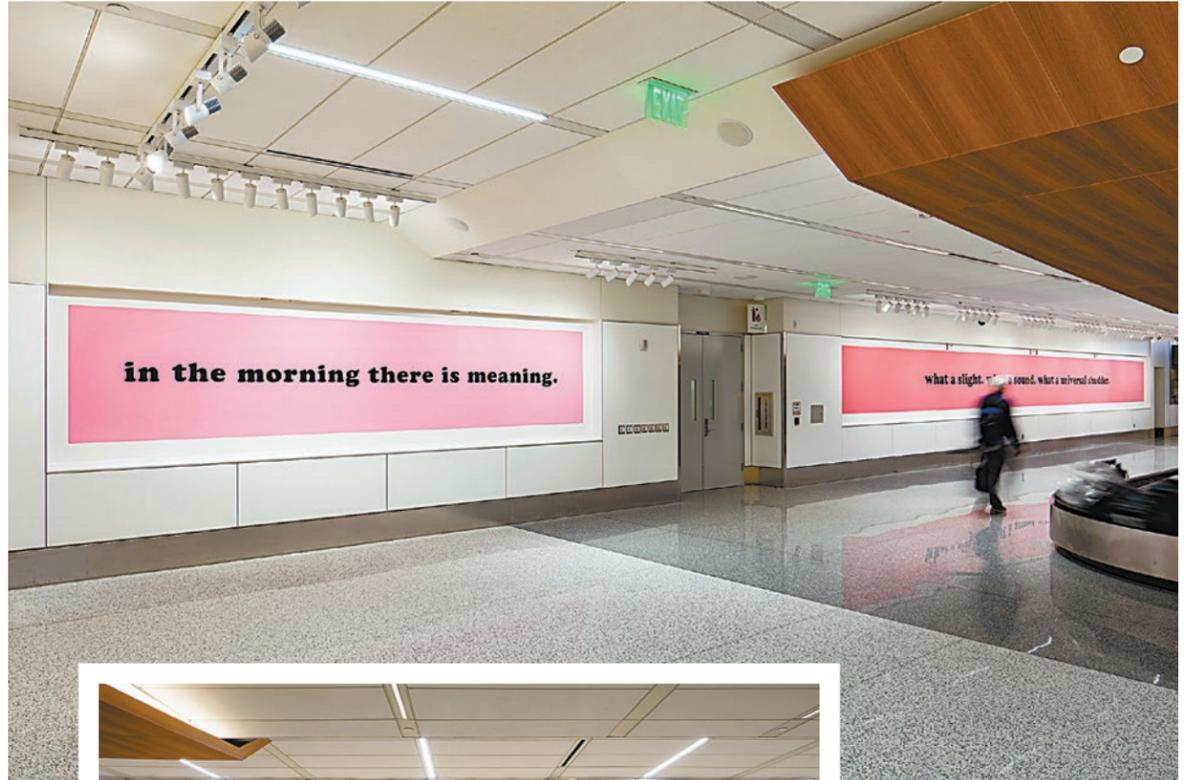
Photos by SKA Studios, LLC, courtesy of Airports and Cultural Affairs

Terminal Modernism

DEPTS. CONTINUE AIRPORT ART PROJECT WITH INSTALLATION AT TERMINAL 2/3.

"A Universal Shudder," a series of murals by Eve Fowler on view now at LAX, takes inspiration from the writings of seminal Modernist author Gertrude Stein and the legendary designs of LA's Colby Poster Printing Company (1946-2012). The installation is in Terminal 2/3's baggage claim area.

The artwork is part of the continuing Art at LAX exhibition program, as chronicled this year in *Alive!* The work is presented by Airports and Cultural Affairs.



"A Universal Soldier," Eve Fowler, at LAX Terminal 2/3's baggage claim area.



Sgt. Brian Preston

Information courtesy LAPD Rampart Div.

Goodbye, Sgt. Preston

SGT. BRIAN PRESTON RETIRES AS RAMPART'S WATCH COMMANDER.

Congratulations to LAPD Sgt. Brian Preston, who retired May 31 after 29 years of City service. He retired as Watch Commander of Newton Division. Congratulations, Sgt., from the Club!



The Club...
celebrates the work and lives of California municipal employees.



The Club's online photo contest, organized by Association CEO, John Hawkins

John's Picture Perfect Contest

This month's contest theme: **Fall Colors**



The Club's online photo contest, organized by Association CEO John Hawkins, has a monthly theme. For August, we're looking for images that contain fall colors. Send us something awesome!

Submit your best photos, and be in the running for a prize.

DEADLINE: Aug 15

Submit your photos online here:
alive.employeesclub.com/pictureperfect
Club Members only. Good luck!

PUBLIC WORKS

One of two new plug-in hybrid street sweepers and the solar-powered recharging station at the North Hollywood StreetsLA yard.



Information courtesy StreetsLA

Growing the Green

StreetsLA CONTINUES ITS CLIMATE PUSH WITH ITS FIRST ELECTRIC EXCAVATOR.



In February 2022, Mayor Eric Garcetti opened the new Center for Green Innovation.

On July 13, StreetsLA added the newest tool in its push to use sustainable energy – its first all-electric mini excavator. It’s used to plant trees, which doubles the climate goodness.

It’s one of the first being used in the United States.

StreetsLA’s list of smart equipment is growing. The new electric excavator joins other recently introduced climate-friendly equipment with StreetsLA’s first hybrid street sweepers and hybrid Ford F-650 stake bed trucks. They were introduced in February as part of the department’s Center for Green Innovation at the North Hollywood Yard. ●

Alive! AROUND THE WORLD

Oberammergau, Germany



Pablo Ninofranco, Retired, Harbor, and wife Josie attended the Passion Play 2022.

Letter From Barbados, Pt. 3

Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor, reports from the Caribbean.

George Washington House

Yes, George Washington, the future President, and his half-brother Lawrence took a Caribbean cruise in 1751 from Virginia to the tropical island of Barbados. Lawrence had not been feeling well from tuberculosis when he decided to bring the 19-year-old George along to visit friends and family in the slave capital of the world, Bridgetown, Barbados.



George Washington's House - Barbados

Upon leaving Virginia the brothers had planned to stay with Lawrence’s mother-in-law’s Barbadian family. But four days after arriving they discovered that the family had smallpox. George

returning to Virginia, George joined the British colonial Virginia militia, and later put this knowledge to good use during the rebel’s siege of Boston.

The house claiming to be where George Washington slept was not officially located until 1990, and during its 2007 remodeling, the 1845 second-story addition was not eliminated. So, the house does not look like it did when George and his brother stayed there, but it is more eye pleasing as a two-story ochre-color 18th-century plantation home for the tourists’ photos.

Today the house is furnished with period furniture and set up as a tourist exhibit with a long 30-seat table running from the front to the back of the house. This separates what technically would have been the bedrooms where George and Lawrence slept. A popular tourist feature of the house is the George Washington dinners, with actors dressed in period clothing and a narrator sitting at the table head dressed up like George Washington explaining the history of the house and times. The food is prepared in the restored kitchen behind the main house, built separately so heat and smoke from the open kitchen fire would not affect the guests.



Capt. Barnes at the Barbados Yacht Club.

caught the disease and took a month of treatment by a British doctor before he was well. Once he recovered, he did have immunity from contracting smallpox again.

The Washingtons also had extended family on the island. John Washington, George’s great-grandfather, was the second cousin to a member of the House of Assembly. Through these social connections, he became friends with the garrison’s British military commander, from whom he learned about the placement of canons and the advantage of defense works. Upon

– CONTINUES PAGE 22



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ALIVE! FEATURE

REC AND PARKS

PLAYLA



For more information on *PlayLA* and/or registration, photoscan this QR Code.

Photos by the Club and courtesy JuanCarlos Chan, Rec and Parks

Olympic-funded program brings huge growth in youth, adaptive sports for equity and inclusion.



SOCCER

PlayLA is literally and figuratively a game-changer for the City.

Over the last year, more than 120,000 young LA athletes have said yes to *PlayLA* Youth and Adaptive Sports, Rec and Parks' new program to offer equitable opportunities all City youths. The program represents among the biggest additions of sports programs at one time in the 133-year history of Rec and Parks.

It's designed to provide access to youths and families with the greatest need an opportunity to play sports.

PlayLA Youth and Adaptive Sports is the City's comprehensive new program for able-bodied participants ages 5-15 and children with disabilities ages 5-17.

PlayLA will offer access to more than 40 different sport options (availability subject to season), including golf, judo, surfing, field hockey, flag football, track and field, dance and others, which Rec and Parks had never offered before.

And, most significantly, *PlayLA* brings a whole new dimension to City youth

recreation – adaptive sports, activities for young athletes with disabilities. Adaptive sports offered include sitting volleyball, adaptive swimming, goalball, para-equestrian, para surfing, wheelchair basketball, adaptive athletics, wheelchair tennis, and adaptive skateboarding and blind soccer.

PlayLA brings cost equity, too – the opportunities come at just \$10 per session (scholarships are available, too). That removes a significant barrier for many for private programs that could easily cost in the high hundreds of dollars, if not more. The registration fee includes equipment, too.

Aquatics plays a strong part in *PlayLA*. Aquatics will continue to offer water polo, lifeguard training, swim teams, and free and low-cost swimming lessons.

The *PlayLA* program, introduced last November, is funded by \$160 million secured as part of the 2028 Games Agreement through the International Olympic Committee, negotiated by Mayor Eric Garcetti.

This new program, administrators pledge, is only the beginning of a new era of youth sports programming at Rec and Parks. ●

The Adaptive Team

PlayLA marks the first time adaptive sports are offered by Rec and Parks, and the team building this new opportunity from the ground up deserves a mention. They are **Jacqueline Lopez**, Sr. Recreation Director; **Irving Moreno**, Facility Director; and **Eric Hall**, Recreation Coordinator.

Read all about it in this month's *Alive!* interview.

The Club thanks Rose Watson, Public Information Director, Rec and Parks, Club Member, for her assistance.

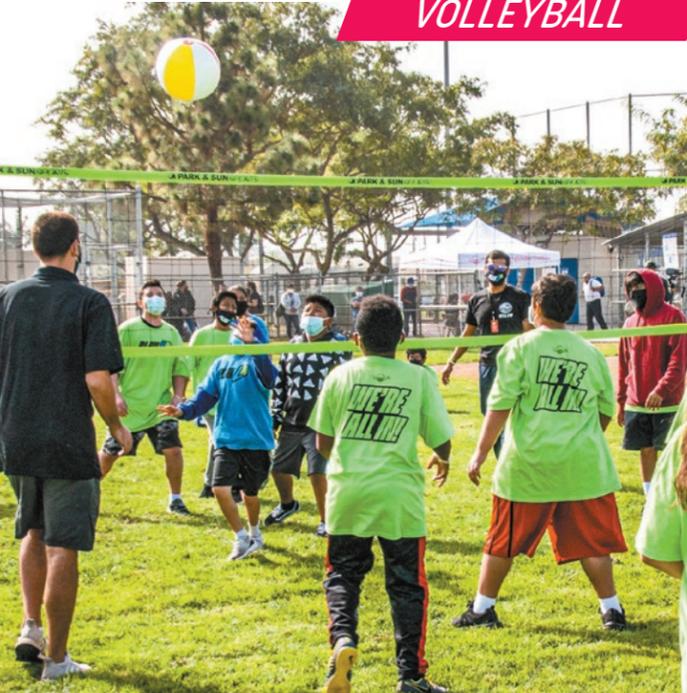
FLAG FOOTBALL



FIELD HOCKEY



VOLLEYBALL



ADAPTIVE BASKETBALL
To come.



ALIVE! INTERVIEW

A New Future for Youth Sports

On June 30, Club CEO Robert Larios and Alive! editor John Burnes interviewed the team of supervisors and managers running the PlayLA Youth and Adaptive Sports initiative. They are: Anita Meacham Williams, Superintendent and Administrator of PlayLA, 33 years of City service, Club Member; Ramon Cerrillos, Principal Records Supervisor, 26 years, Club Member; Laura Island, Principal Recreation Supervisor of Adaptive Sports, 34 years, Club Member; Caroline Lammers, Recreation Supervisor, 27 years; and Melanie Escamilla, Aquatic Director, 15 years, Club Member. The interview took place via Zoom.

Q: Thanks everybody for joining us today to talk about your amazing program, PlayLA, that's a huge expansion of what Rec and Parks is offering the young people of LA. But first, tell us how you got to your current position. What's the career path?

Ramon Cerrillos: I was a recreation major from Cal State Northridge. It was my career path to go into recreation. I started part-time with the City as a Rec Assistant and progressed to every position, ultimately coming here as a Supervisor in the Metro Division. I love it here now. And that led me to be an emergency position Principal over PlayLA.



Laura Island: I began my education at San Diego State University, and I began my career as a Therapeutic Recreation Specialist in San Diego. Eventually, I came to Los Angeles to work as a Recreation Director and I continued my career with RAP, then I worked for probably about ten years in the therapeutic recreation field of the City of Los Angeles. I moved on as a Supervisor, and now, I am the Principal Recreation Supervisor for the West Region and the PlayLA Adaptive Sports Division.



Anita Meacham Williams: My education started at Gilbert Lindsay Park when I was just a kid, and somehow I ended up majoring in recreation and leisure studies. I knew exactly what a kid wants when they come to a park, what they're looking for. I started as a Director at Eagle Rock Recreation Center and moved on to become a Facility Director and Coordinator at Lincoln Heights. Then I was promoted to a Facility Director in the projects at Pueblo Del Rio in South Los Angeles. I just continued to be promoted – I became a Sr. Director, I worked at Queen Anne Rec Center, in municipal sports for gender equity for girls' sports. I became a District Supervisor and then a Principal Supervisor in the Youth Development Division, then a Principal Supervisor overseeing a region in the Valley, and then a Superintendent here in Metro.



Q: You are a product of the Red and Parks athletic programs from when you were growing up.

Anita: If you ask the rest of them here, they probably were park rats as well.

Caroline Lammers: I started out as a CIT at the Westwood Park & Recreation Center. I've been with the department for 27 years full-time, if you include my part-time years, it's 30 years plus. I majored in recreation and leisure studies at Washington State University, and I knew early on that this was what I wanted to do. I worked for a cruise line right after college and that was great, but I came back to my roots working for the City. I've worked in the Pacific & Valley Regions, and now the Metro Region. In April of 2019, I was promoted to Recreation Supervisor (Emergency Appointment) for the PlayLA program, which is great. It's an opportunity like none other, which I think everybody here would agree with. I am definitely a product of the city.



Melanie Escamilla: Okay. My aquatic career started very similarly, except it was at a pool. I was taught swim lessons, and I had older siblings in the programs, too. I started working part-time when I was 15, and eventually moved up to different careers.



I started my college career in public health education, earned my bachelor's degree, waited for the full-time job opportunity as an Aquatic Facility Manager and applied for it. In the meantime, I went back to school and earned my master's in public health program planning. As soon as our Aquatic Director, emergency-appointed physician opened up, I applied for that and received it. I'm in charge of all of aquatic programs. It's been challenging with COVID and reopening and trying to plan new programs and manage staffing shortages.



Club CEO Robert Larios with the Rec and Parks employees supervising the PlayLA program. They're pictured at EXPO Center at the event when the 2028 Olympic dates were announced publicly. With Robert are Laura Island, Principal Recreation Supervisor of Adaptive Sports, 34 years, Club Member; Ramon Cerrillos, Principal Records Supervisor, 26 years, Club Member; and Caroline Lammers, Recreation Supervisor, 27 years. PlayLA Aquatics Supervisor Melanie Escamilla is pictured in this feature with her surfing program.

All About PlayLA

Q: Please describe what the amazing program, PlayLA, is all about and why it was created.

Ramon: PlayLA was definitely needed in the City to allow all the kids access to recreation. The charge is only \$10, but we can scholarship classes and sports. There are no barriers for the kids to play at the park. This program fully allows access to all kids and is the best thing to happen for kids in my recreation career.

Caroline: It introduces non-traditional sports to youths throughout the City, especially the underserved. One example is field hockey. Field hockey traditionally isn't that popular throughout Los Angeles, so we're bringing it to parks. PlayLA is removing barriers and bringing in non-traditional activities that we may not have had an opportunity to introduce otherwise.

Anita: Equity is very important when we talk about adaptive sports. It's quite a pleasure to resurrect our program for people with disabilities through PlayLA. We are really quite thrilled about having the additional funding to reach out to all of those children who might be a little apprehensive to come to the park, or they aren't sure if programs are for them. We're breaking barriers and introducing a lot of our communities that we don't see at our parks. PlayLA is groundbreaking for the City of Los Angeles – to put this effort in and embrace children of all abilities so they can have lifelong leisure pursuits and can achievement a more equitable quality of life.

Melanie: One of the aquatic programs we're bringing on is surfing. An advantage of the surfing program is that we're taking kids from the pool to the beach. Many have never been to the beach. Even though we are in LA and the beach isn't that far, they haven't had that opportunity. Also, surfing is generally more expensive; we're providing a 20-hour program for these kids and it's only \$10 for them. It's huge for the community.

Q: Is there any way to quantify the size and scope of PlayLA?

Ramon: Since the program launched, over 120,000 have participated in our PlayLA Program, even with COVID and

— continued page 12

'By the 2028 Olympics, we're going to be a household name.'

— Laura Island

ALIVE! FEATURE

REC AND PARKS

PLAYLA

— CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11 **ALIVE! INTERVIEW**

SURFING



With the young surfing athletes during an instructional session at Venice Beach were the following Rec and Parks employees: Alan O'Hara, Open Water Lifeguard I, 9 years of City service; Salvador Rubio III, Open Water Lifeguard I, 3 years; Veronica Lugo, Locker Room Attendant, 8 years; Quincy Jacobs, Open Water Lifeguard I, 16 years; Melanie Escamilla, Aquatic Director, 15 years, Club Member; Leon Aguilar, Seasonal Aquatic Facility Manager III, 15 years; Joanna Marroquin, Seasonal Aquatic Facility Manager III, 20 years, Club Member; and Joseph McCalla, Recreational Instructor, 13 years.

JUDO

Manny Castaneda-Witzgall, 11, a judo participant in the PlayLA judo program, won a bronze medal in the novice-intermediate category. He is believed to be the first Rec and Parks participant to win a national medal in judo. He's pictured here with (left) Mike Verdugo of USA Judo, and Ed Liddie, 1984 Olympic bronze medalist.



TENNIS



ADAPTIVE EQUESTRIAN



DANCE



considering we didn't offer sports in the summer of last year.

Q: 120,000 kids signed up?

Ramon: Correct.

Q: Holy cow. That's unbelievable.

Ramon: That's even with the last summer's restrictions when we didn't play team sports. Aquatics went through, but the rest of the team sports did not.

Q: Incredible. Did this surprise you? It's huge and robust and welcoming to so many young people who really couldn't do it before. Did anybody see this coming or was it a surprise to you?

Anita: It was a surprise. Planning for it started about four and a half years ago with discussions with the International Olympic Committee, the Los Angeles Organizing Committee for the Olympics and Paralympics, LA28. I call it a game changer because no, no one saw it coming; when have we ever had an opportunity like this in the department? Not in the 33 years I've been here. It's going to expose kids to Olympic and Paralympic sports, as well as sports that aren't quite Olympic sports yet. It was a pleasant surprise. By the time we get to 2028, we're looking for those numbers to be doubled, tripled, quadrupled.

Laura: It's only the beginning, really, when you look at it. We're only at the onset of this great movement. By 2028, we're going to be a household name.

Q: When people mention Olympic benefits generally, they talk about economics, arenas, transportation, tourism and other elements. But programs like this aren't often mentioned, at least not yet.

'If you have a dream and then you're afforded an opportunity, pretty much anything can happen. It all starts with the vision, an opportunity and a dream, and with those, youths can thrive.'

— **Caroline Lammers**

going to be doing wheelchair tennis this summer as well, and in the fall, we're doing blind soccer. We have a really interesting set of activities that we're going to be rolling out. Some people know some of these things – wheelchair basketball is pretty widely known, but not too many people know much about goalball. Not too many people have seen a child in a wheelchair on a skateboard ramp. People are going to be able to sign their kids up for these sports. The kids are going to be thrilled to try to do some of this stuff. It's very exciting for our youths throughout the City.

Melanie: The new aquatics program that's funded through PlayLA is our surfing program. We are doing two-week sessions, and the opportunity is huge for the community. In addition, we working on renewing a working relationship with USA Swimming for our swimming programs, and that will come with huge benefits. It comes with a lot of coaching material: They bring out former or current Olympians for the kids to see as role models for what they could achieve. It's about building up people to think they could be an Olympian. That's huge for kids to see.

Laura: If you can imagine a child in a wheelchair seeing a Para-Olympian who has been in the Paralympics, having overcome obstacles, is unbelievable. The relationship that the Para-Olympians have with kids in our program is amazing and unselfish. There is no comparison to that relationship for the young athletes in wheelchairs.

— **CONTINUES PAGE 21**

Elements at Play

Q: What are the elements of PlayLA?

Ramon: On the recreation side, we have signature programs where we deal with national governing boards from the Olympics. For example, we have USA Judo that partners with us, where we're offering programs at 20 sites and the instructors are certified by USA Judo. For tennis, we work with USTA Tennis. We have track and field and are trying to bring equestrian, skateboarding and taekwondo for the upcoming fiscal year.

And then we have traditional sports – basketball, soccer, volleyball and flag football quarterly. This summer, we're offering clinics – introductions to sports – so kids can sign up for them in the fall. That way, they can see if they like it or not.

The last thing is, we've had some PlayLA launches. We had a launch of all our adaptive sports. We had close to 450 kids show up that day at Algin Sutton Rec Center, and then we also offered a launch at three different locations – one in the Valley, one in Metro, and one at Expo – to introduce kids to adaptive sports as well.

Laura: Adaptive sports is a brand new arena that we're moving into for Recreation and Parks. We had a very successful para-equestrian clinic last Saturday, and it was just incredible to see kids with disabilities up on horseback riding in the 100-degree weather; they were troopers. We had a waiting list for that class. We're going to start classes next month, but the clinic was very well received. The parents were thrilled. We're also offering para-surfing coming up this summer, which is also very exciting for us, and we're doing some of the same sports that Ramon is doing but for kids with disabilities, like adaptive skateboarding. We're



At the launch of PlayLA in November 2021.



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LAFD

IN MEMORIAM

Capt. Lee H. Kebler

1922 – 2022

LONGTIME LAFD CAPT., LARFPA HEAD AND *ALIVE!* COLUMNIST, PASSES AWAY. HE WAS 100.

Remembrance by Capt. Jim Finn, Retired, LAFD; President, LAFD Historical Society; and Club Member



Lee Kebler

Retired Capt. Lee Kebler, LAFD; Director, LARFPA; volunteer at the LAFD Historical Society; and former *Alive!* columnist, died June 26 at 100 years old. He had 31 years of City service, and was a Club Member.

Lee began his LAFD service March 18, 1947. He started on the B Platoon. The A Platoon was appointed on March 17. He served in the United States Coast Guard during World War II.

Early in Lee's career, he was assigned to FS 62 in Venice. While there, he learned to drive and pump on their 1922 American LaFrance engine.

After Lee was promoted to Captain, he served in a variety of assignments, including several years at FS 26 (West Adams) and FS 94 (Coliseum). I met Lee in October of 1967 while preparing for the LAFD entrance oral. Roger Gillis and I went and talked to him as part of our preparation. He was then and continued to be a wealth of knowledge.

Lee chose as his last assignment, FS 112, as Captain of Fire Boat 2, the Ralph J. Scott. Lee retired from Boat 2 on June 1, 1978, after 31 years of service to the citizens of Los Angeles. Fire Boat 2 is owned by the LAFD Historical Society and has been fully rehabilitated by our volunteers.



Lee Kebler (undated photo)

His time of service was not over though. Lee and his wife Mary volunteered at the LAFD Historical Society's Museum 27. Lee and Mary were there almost every week. Mary worked in the gift shop and cooked lunch for the volunteers. This went on until Lee was well into his 90s.

Lee concurrently served as a director of the Los Angeles Retired Fire and Police Association for 22 years. He served on the Pensions Committee and attended all meetings of the Pension Commission.

On May 7, Lee celebrated his 100th birthday with family and friends. He was called home June 26, where he will rejoin Mary, who predeceased him. Godspeed, Lee, for a job well done. ●

Larios In the City

BY ROBERT LARIOS, Chief Executive Officer



Congratulations!

Robert Larios, Club President and CEO, honors Club Members with the coveted Club Retirement Plaque.

Debra Verin,
Personnel,
Retired after
36 years of
City service.



Karen Bowie,
Public Works/
Street Services,
Retired after
38 years of
City service.



Roland Manuel,
LADWP, Retired
after 35 years
of City service.



LAFD

Hogan to Chief Deputy

ARMANDO HOGAN RISES TO LEADERSHIP POSITION.



Armando Hogan has been promoted to Chief Deputy and Commander of LAFD's Administrative Operations by Fire Chief Kristin Crowley. Previously he was Battalion Chief and Assistant Chief, and held the ranks of Firefighter, Inspector and Captain.

He has 39 years of City service.

"Because of his tireless dedication, years of service and admirable leadership, I promoted him to Commander of the LAFD's Administrative Operations," Chief Crowley said.

Congratulations, Chief Deputy Hogan from the Club! ●



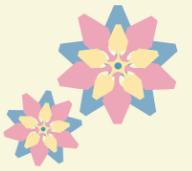
Chief Deputy Armando Hogan



Chief Deputy Armando Hogan speaks at the LAFD Historical Society's tribute to Frank Borden and Tom LaBonge.



Life's Important Moments



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- Births**
- Weddings**
- Graduations**
- Special Achievements**
- Military Service**
- Tell Their Story**

Retirements

View retirements online at: alive.employeesclub.com/retirements-202208

Here's a listing of all those who retired from the City in June 2022. To all we say, welcome to the Best Years!

NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS	NAME	TITLE	DEPT.	YEARS
Abbassi, Pouria	General Manager	Convention Ctr.	20	Galloway, Stephanie F.	Police Service Rep	LAPD	35	Moreno, Arturo	JFB/Facilities	LADWP	N/D
Alexander, Jackie Lynn	Payroll Supervisor	Public Works	35	Garrett-Sims, Berdena A.	Sr. Traffic Supv.	Transportation	34	Morgan, Steve A.	Water Operations	LADWP	N/D
Anders, Dorothy A.	Customer Service	LADWP	N/D	Gibson, Philip M.	Power Supply	LADWP	N/D	Numano Hiura, Christy K.	Deputy City Attorney	City Attorney	20
Antonio, Thomas E.	Rehab Constr, Spec.	Housing	15	Gomez, Severo	Fleet Services	LADWP	N/D	Oh, James	Asst. Park Svcs. Attend.	Rec and Parks	1
Arevalo, William	Storekeeper	Gen. Services	18	Grande, Marta	Special Prog. Assistant	Rec and Parks	9	Olivier, Anne M.	Librarian	Library	18
Balentine, Angela S.	ITS	LADWP	N/D	Hacopian, Susanna	Energy Control	LADWP	N/D	Pakro, Givergiz	Heavy Duty Equip. Mech.	Gen. Services	19
Bernal, Edgardo L.	Env. Chem. Lab	LADWP	N/D	Hammond, Thomas F.	Water Distribution	LADWP	N/D	Pickler, Brian A.	Maintenance Laborer	Public Works	18
Booker, Denard R.	Security Officer	Airports	22	Hance Murphy, Jeanmarie	Council Aide	Council	11	Ramirez, Consuelo	Special Programs Asst.	Rec and Parks	7
Brungard, Terrence A.	Sustainability	LADWP	N/D	Harmon, Sharon R.	Customer Service	LADWP	N/D	Ramirez, Jose E.	Special Programs Asst.	Rec and Parks	7
Calcote, Dane	Crossing Guard	Transportation	5	Harris, Treasa M.	Police Service Rep	LAPD	32	Roland, Steven Marc	Instrument Mechanic	Public Works	3
Casanova, Pastor	Trans. Engr. Assoc.	Transportation	10	Haynes, Bradley E.	JFB/Facilities	LADWP	N/D	Sabourin, Michael J.	Power C&M	LADWP	N/D
Chan, Grace C.	ITS	LADWP	N/D	Hesgard, Lori V.	Accounting	LADWP	N/D	Sargsyan, Agavni	Power Planning	LADWP	N/D
Chastang-Outlaw, Joan M.	Metering Services	LADWP	N/D	Hudson, Julie Charmaine	Administrative Clerk	LAPD	16	Sasaki, Hugh Kinnosuke	Sr. Gardener	Rec and Parks	18
Coleman, Harvey R.	Sergeant	Airport Police	26	Jaegers, John R.	Sr. Building Mech. Insp.	Bldg. & Safety	23	Sherman, James B.	Power C&M	LADWP	N/D
Colvin, Mitchell W.	Water Operations	LADWP	N/D	Jarvis, Tonya V.	Sr. Mgmt. Analyst	Airports	31	Smith, Rhonda R.	Sr. Administrative Clerk	LAPD	30
Coronado, Jaime M.	Fleet Services	LADWP	N/D	Jimenez, Daniel C.	Water Quality	LADWP	N/D	Story, Brian Keith	Refuse Coll. Truck Op.	Public Works	33
Covey, Ronald R.	Power C&M	LADWP	N/D	Jimenez, Maria G.	Airport Guide	Airports	7	Sun, Elia D.	Water Distribution	LADWP	N/D
Crenshaw, De Esta L.	Management Analyst	Airports	23	Jones, Lillie P.	JFB/Facilities	LADWP	N/D	Taylor, James F.	Power Supply	LADWP	N/D
Cumbie, Sean Colin	Sr. Personnel Analyst	Personnel	22	Jones, William V.	Environmental Super.	Public Works	30	Thompson, Yvonne	Sr. Police Service Rep	LAPD	32
Daniels, Juliet A.	Management Analyst	Airports	31	Kaneshiro, Lance H.	Traffic Manager	Harbor	31	Tolentino, Cynthia	Customer Service	LADWP	N/D
De Mase, Joseph J.	Power Supply	LADWP	N/D	Knox, Balinda Maria	Sr. Communications Op.	Airports	20	Torres, Fernando	Power Transmission	LADWP	N/D
Decker, Bruce N.	Env. Chem. Lab	LADWP	N/D	Lawrence, Valerie	Customer Service	LADWP	N/D	Tseng, Paul J.	Contract Administrator	Public Works	22
Diaz, Federico	Fleet Services	LADWP	N/D	Leonard, Tehia L.	Metering Services	LADWP	N/D	Uytiepo, Cynthia G.	Accounting Clerk	City Clerk	22
Dowling, Stephen J.	Power System	LADWP	N/D	Matthews, Demeturius D.	Sr. Administrative Clerk	LAPD	24	Vasquez, Antoinette T.	Management Analyst	LAPD	29
Doyle, Michael A.	Power Supply	LADWP	N/D	McKail, Enriqueta	Police Service Rep	LAPD	34	Yamamoto, Bryan H.	Supply Chain	LADWP	N/D
Duran, Daniel M.	Power Supply	LADWP	N/D	Menoukian, Razmik O.	Water Quality	LADWP	N/D	Yoshida, Kikuma	ITS	LADWP	N/D
Evans, Carmen Annette	Workers Comp. Analyst	Personnel	19	Mendez, Veronica C.	Retirement Plan	LADWP	N/D	Zapata, Joe R.	Power Planning	LADWP	N/D
Fernandez, Teodulo R.	Management Analyst	Airports	32	Miller, Angelo	Street Services Invest.	Public Works	32				
Ferrer, Arsenio Mujer	Env. Compliance Insp.	Public Works	33	Mischlich, Patrick M.	Sr. Building Inspector	Bldg. & Safety	33				
Flores, Israel	Water Operations	LADWP	N/D	Montagna, Steven	Chief Personnel Analyst	Personnel	32				

N/D = not disclosed

Class of 2022 Graduations

Red and Lupe: Proud Grandparents

Club Members Red and Lupe Medina announced the graduations of grandchildren Hannah Franco and Emma Franco. Hannah and Emma are the granddaughters of Red Medina, Construction Inspector, Public Works/Contract Administration, Retired in 2020, and Lupe Medina, longtime Club staff member, Retired several years ago, and the daughters of Kerry Franco and Oscar Franco, Construction Inspector, Public Works/Contract Administration, 5 years of City service.

Congratulations to Hannah and Emma, Oscar and Kerry, and Red and Lupe! The Club wishes Hannah and Emma all the success in the world.

Emma graduated from Mayfield Senior School in Pasadena and plans to attend the University of Washington in the fall to study engineering. Emma was JV Swim Captain, head of Latinas Unidas, and an aspiring engineer and photographer.



Hannah earned a bachelor's degree from the USC Price School of Public Policy and is pursuing a master's degree in public policy at USC.

Kennedy Davis graduated from Grand Canyon University in Arizona with a bachelor's degree in nutritional science. Her future plans include working with professional teams preparing the dietary menus and opening her own business. She's the **daughter of Darlene Fuller, Security Officer, Airports.**



Breann Newsome graduated from the University of California Davis and plans to attend UCLA Medical School. She's the **granddaughter of Sgt. Brian Johnson, Retired, Airport Police.**

Alejandro Matamoros graduated from the University of California Irvine with a bachelor's degree in computer science. He plans to pursue software engineering and development in his career. Alejandro is the **son of Veronica De La Cruz, Public Works/Sanitation and Environment.**



Class of 2022 Graduations

Moises Garcia (middle) with, from left: Yasmine; Frank Duarte, LAPD 911 Operator, 8 years of City service; Moises; and Leonor Garcia, LADWP, 34 years, with her husband, Mike Safaie.



Moises Garcia graduated from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh with a bachelor's degree in theater directing and arts management. He's enrolled in the university's master's degree program and expects to graduate in May 2023. Moises graduated with honors.

He's the son of Leonor Garcia, LADWP, 34 years of City service.

Engagements



James Gonzales and **Elda Bojorquez** are engaged to be married in November. James is a **Maintenance Construction Worker, LADWP**, and also serves as a US Marine. James' parents are **Ricardo Gonzales, Sr. Water Utility Supervisor, LADWP**, and **Socorro Gonzales**. "My wife and I are proud of James and his accomplishments," Ricardo writes to *Alive!* "We look forward to their wedding day. We wish them love and happiness on their special day and always."

In Memoriam

Our thoughts and condolences are with the family and friends of the following current and retired City employees who have passed away.

DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE	DEPARTMENT	YEARS OF SERVICE
ACTIVE			
Biddle, Michelle R.	Rec and Parks 16	Hamac, Deogracias E.	Transportation 11
Crawford, Paris R.	LAPD 1	Handy, James K.	LADWP 31
Gardner, Gary L.	Airports 16	Harrell, Gary D.	Harbor 41
Glaze, Roxanne F.	Rec and Parks 16	Hines, Myrtle N.	N/D N/D
Greer, Lisa A.	LADWP 17	Hobbs, Evelyn A.	N/D N/D
Hickman, Francine	Transportation 7	Humes, Roy A.	Public Works 19
Johnson, Mark A.	LADWP 11	Jackson, Nancy E.	LADWP 19
Ortega, Miguel	Rec and Parks 12	Jenkins, Mark E.	LAPD 20
Payne, Kyle	Airports 16	Kehoe, Bryan	Bldg. & Safety 12
Piontek, Edwin M.	Rec and Parks 16	Keller, Mark T.	LADWP 29
Puga, Robert S.	Public Works 4	Kennedy, Ronald W.	N/D N/D
RETIRED			
Alaan, Sam L.	N/D N/D	Klipness, Gerald R.	Personnel 4
Albelda, Guia P.	LADWP 15	Kovar, Richard B.	LADWP 34
Alvarez, Tony	N/D N/D	Kurtz, Willa	N/D N/D
Anders, David L.	LADWP 29	Larrigan, Gloria L.	LAPD 30
Anglade, Justino	LADWP 25	Lee, Hendon	LAPD 30
Barrett, Arthur R.	N/D N/D	Lee Jr. Leroy M.	LADWP 34
Berlin, Sharon S.	Rec and Parks 25	Liu, An-Kuo	LADWP 24
Bermudes, Rudolph	Gen. Services 24	Lomosad, Vicente	LADWP 30
Bilich, Thomas	LADWP 19	Lopez, George V.	N/D N/D
Bolneo, Augusto A.	LAPD 22	Martin, Millard D.	N/D N/D
Bruno, Albert	N/D N/D	Melara, Jose A.	Rec and Parks 20
Chapman, Marion A.	Public Works 33	Moore, Arthur L.	N/D N/D
Cordova, Alicia	Transportation 30	Murillo, Lino L.	LADWP 30
Croil, Smith J.	N/D N/D	Nardi, Peter A.	LADWP 29
Dalton, Paul E.	LAPD 16	Nesbit, Sherrill	LADWP 39
Dennis, Samuel L.	Public Works 31	Nieto, Richard M.	Rec and Parks 46
Domingo, Concepcion T.	N/D N/D	Oliver, Joseph W.	Gen. Services 22
Donske, David	LADWP 29	Puz, John A.	LADWP 28
Dunlap, Louis	Public Works 24	Ricard, Raphael M.	Harbor 31
Elliott, Lawrence G.	LADWP 34	Richardson, Elizabeth J.	LADWP 2
Feng, Chin H.	Rec and Parks 24	Rocke, John C.	City Attorney 34
Findlay, Helen R.	LADWP 14	Rose, Wanda L.	Airports 25
Flucus, Shirley J.	LAPD 40	Ross, Marvalyn Y.	Airports 35
Franco, John M.	Public Works 40	Scherb, Eva M.	N/D N/D
Gaspar, Kevin C.	LADWP 24	Schneider, Elizabeth	N/D N/D
Gilbert, Robert W.	N/D N/D	Seros, Edith	N/D N/D
Gonzalez, Alice T.	LADWP 24	Smith, Harold R.	LADWP 31
Granoski, Ellen B.	LADWP 3	Tappan, James G.	LADWP 11
Green, Stephen I.	N/D N/D	Tarver, Lee F.	N/D N/D
Hale, Leo	N/D N/D	Thompson, Michael T.	LADWP 31
Hall, Calvert W.	LADWP 27	Touchette, Mary A.	LADWP 16
		Waters, Richard L.	N/D N/D
		Wu, Charles L.	Public Works 23
		Yee, Stephen	Airports 46

N/D = not disclosed

LAPD

Information courtesy LAPD

2 Retire

DISPATCHERS KAREN APONTE, JACKEE FRANKLIN SAY GOODBYE.

Two longtime LAPD Dispatchers and Club Members retired over the last few months:

The Club wishes Karen and Jackee great and well-deserved retirements!

Karen Aponte

Karen retired June 2 after an awesome 42 years of City service.



Jackee Franklin

Jackee retired July 13 after a very impressive 33 years of City service (17 years at Newton).



HARBOR

Information courtesy Port of LA

See You, Sgt. See

SGT. EDWIN SEE RETIRES FROM PORT POLICE AFTER 20 YEARS OF CITY SERVICE.

Club Member, who retired July 13 from the Port Police. Earlier he had served for the Airport Police.

Edwin retires with 20 years of City service.

He served his country in the US Marines and the US National Guard, too.

Notably he served the Port Police as Supervisor of the field-training program.

Well done, Sir! Enjoy your retirement, and thank you for your service to the City of Los Angeles. ●

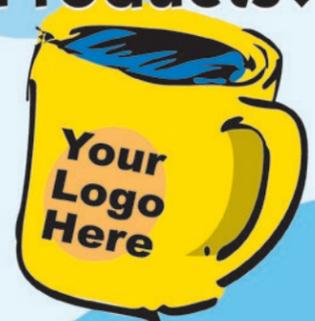


From left: Sgt. Edwin See and Commanding Officer Kevin McCloskey.

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Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc.

RLACEI

For Retired Club Members

CONTACT INFORMATION

Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. (RLACEI)



Ruth B. Perry

Ruth B. Perry, President
Terminal Annex
P.O. Box 86264
Los Angeles, CA 90086
PHONE: (800) 678-4145, ext. 717
EMAIL: Ruth.Perry@RLACEI.org
ON THE WEB: www.RLACEI.org

2022 Executive Board of Directors

- Ruth B. Perry, *President*
- Beverly J. Clark, *First Vice President*
- Mark Blunk, *Second Vice President*
- Loucin (Lucy) Artinian, *Treasurer*
- Verkin (Vicki) Keoseian, *Secretary*

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Dial (800) 678-4145 plus extension

Beverly Anderson, Director	Ext. 702
Loucin (Lucy) Artinian, Treasurer	Ext. 718
Mark Blunk, Audit Chair	Ext. 704
Beverly J. Clark, Publicity Director	Ext. 716
Dennis Harding, Entertainment Director	Ext. 706
Nancy Hammoudian, RLACEI Director	Ext. 705
Verkin (Vicki) Keoseian, Secretary	Ext. 719
Tom Moutes, RLACEI Director	Ext. 710
Ruth B. Perry, Membership Director	Ext. 717
Elizabeth Torres, Director	Ext. 703

RLACEI RETIREE HELPLINE:

(800) 678-4145, Ext. 0

For retirement assistance, call the Retiree Hotline and leave a message. A Director of RLACEI will return your call and assist you with your concerns.

RLACEI WEBSITE

Visit the RLACEI website www.RLACEI.org to find the latest retirement news. Call (800) 678-4145 Ext. 0 to make suggestions.
EMAIL: Contact@RLACEI.org

MAILING ADDRESS:

Retired Los Angeles City Employees Inc.
Terminal Annex
P.O. Box 86264
Los Angeles, CA 90086

Change of Address?

Please notify Ruth B. Perry, Membership Chair, at (800) 678-4145 ext. 717 or Ruth.Perry@RLACEI.org for a change of address or to add or change your email address. Also notify LACERS, ACEBSA, LAPCU, and LAFUCU as applicable.



Beverly J. Clark

Send in your Interesting News Contributions!

Contact: **Beverly J. Clark**, Publicity Director
Email: Beverly.Clark@RLACEI.org
Phone: (800) 678-4145 ext 716

RETIREE EVENTS

- Aug. 11, 2022 Annual Picnic**
11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. *Grace E. Simons Lodge*
1025 Elysian Park Dr.
Location Subject to Change
- Dec. 15, 2022 Annual Holiday Party**
11:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. *Friendship Auditorium*
3201 Riverside Dr.

Reservation Line:
RLACEI events (800) 678-4145, ext. 701

RETIREEES UPDATE

LACERS' Investment Return

by Tom Moutes, RLACEI Director

Email: Tom.Moutes@RLACEI.org



Tom Moutes

One of the most important pieces of information LACERS provides each fiscal year is how its investments fared. For fiscal year 2021-22, it appears the news is not good.

At the June 28 LACERS Board meeting, it was reported that the unaudited return to that date was minus-5.76 percent, and that would be the first negative return year since 2008-09. While the fiscal year did not end until June 30, the market did not perform well the last two days to close out the year. So, we can assume the return will be negative when the audited return numbers come out in the next month or two. LACERS assumes it will make 7 percent per year on average on its investments, so a return of approximately minus-6 percent is really a loss of 13 percent – the 7 percent assumed rate not achieved plus the actual negative return.

So, What Does This Mean?

In and of itself, the investment return in any given fiscal year

doesn't mean much – unless it is hugely positive or negative.

For the fiscal year 2020-21, LACERS reported investment earnings of 29.29 percent (gross of fees) for one of the best investment years in its history. This hugely positive year likely finally finished making up for the last recession. So, the good news is that the portfolio finally made up that ground. The bad news is that we may be staring at another recession – or at least a prolonged market pullback – and we are starting out with a return that, in essence, is approximately minus 13 percent.

Before the last recession, LACERS was funded at 79.8 percent for combined health and retirement based on the actuarial value of assets at the end of fiscal year 2006-07. As of the end of the 2020-21 fiscal year, LACERS was funded at 74.6 percent – or approximately 5 percent lower than leading into the 2008-09 recession.

It will be interesting to see what the coming fiscal years bring in terms of investment returns. One down year by itself does not mean much, but we hope LACERS' asset allocation will fare better as we move forward. ■

Refer a Friend, Get a \$25 Target Gift Card

Let your fellow City Retiree friends know about the great benefits of being an RLACEI member. Encourage them to call (800) 678-4145, ext. 717, or visit the Website at RLACEI.org, to join today! 100 gift cards are available to be won. Once they join RLACEI and mention you, the gift card is yours!

What are you waiting for? Refer a friend today!



RLACEI 2022 Summer Picnic

Open to all Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. members only!

Thursday, Aug. 11, 2022

11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Grace E. Simons Lodge
1025 Elysian Park Dr.
Los Angeles, CA 90027**

Location may be subject to change.





RSVP to (800) 678-4145 EXT. 701

RSVP no later than August 5, 2022.

RLACEI member plus one (1) guest at no cost.

No additional guests allowed at this time due to attendance limitations and social distancing requirements

We look forward to seeing you!

RLACEI Reservation Form

Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Number of Attendees _____

Email to Contact@RLACEI.org or mail to RLACEI, P.O. Box 86264, Los Angeles, CA 90086

Limited to first 100 RSVPs—Free Mask to those in attendance—Only RLACEI members will be eligible to win prizes.



RETIREES ON THE MOVE

Meet Dorothy Tamashiro

By Beverly J. Clark, Publicity Director

Dorothy Tamashiro retired in 2002 after 38 years of City service as a Fiscal Systems Specialist. She began her City career with Recreation and Parks, worked for the LAPD and Retired from the Controller's Office.

Dorothy is a very active Retiree. In her retirement, she enjoys shopping, gambling, reading, crocheting, traveling and theatre. She loves retirement and keeps herself busy by volunteering, loves to exercise, is active at church and enjoys meeting with friends and family.

Dorothy and her husband, Larry, just celebrated their 43rd anniversary. They have two sons Bryan and Andrew, and one daughter, Danielle. Her son Bryan is a City employee with Personnel. Andrew is employed with Los Angeles County Personnel; his wife Akina owns a vintage business. Daughter Danielle currently lives in Fort Worth, Texas, working in a private school, and her spouse, Neel, works for the IRS.

Retirement has given Dorothy the opportunity to travel extensively. She has visited Hawaii, the Holy Land, Australia, New Zealand, England, Switzerland, China, Japan, the Panama Canal, Italy, France, Greece, Germany, Russia, the Netherlands and Hong Kong. She and her husband have taken road trips across the United States and are scheduled to take a few more soon.

Dorothy loves to stay busy and have fun. She participates in the LACERS Well hula classes on Zoom. She attends the RLACEI picnics and holiday parties where she is happy to see other Retirees, and it gives her an opportunity to catch up. She has also taken the safe driving, retirement and auto safety classes sponsored through AARP. Dorothy regularly attends Beatitudes of Our Lord Catholic Church In La Mirada.

She is enrolled in senior exercise classes at her local senior center. Dorothy volunteers at the Chinese American Museum as a Board member. She does volunteer work at her church and has volunteered with the Family Corporation, the Cherry Blossom Festival, Heads Up Youth Foundation Golf Tournament, Nisei Week Baby Contest and E Hula Mau, just to name a few.

This active Retiree boasts that she exercises five to six times a week and is a member of the gym where she loves to Zumba and crunch. She participates on the Nifty After Fifty machines with her hubby and takes classes to work on her core, balance and cardio.

She is also a season ticket holder of the La Mirada Theater for the Performing Arts.



Dorothy Tamashiro

depressing with nothing to do after you've been so active."

What was the smartest thing you did to prepare for retirement, or did you plan on retiring when you did?

"Deferred compensation. And yes, I planned my retirement."

What do you miss or don't miss about your years of service to the City of Los Angeles?

"I miss my co-workers and the many friends I made during my career – some of whom I see at the RLACEI events. Also, the stress of deadlines, completing projects and then celebrating!"

As you reflect on your City career, would you have done anything differently?

"I probably would have broadened my horizon on my career path. There are so many avenues available to employees."

How do you fill your days in retirement?

"I exercise in the morning, have lunch with hubby and/or friends, run errands, bake or work on house and hobbies and planning for our next trip. I meet with a group of 11 ladies every Wednesday morning for breakfast, participate in monthly lunches with various groups of friends, monthly book club meetings, volunteer when needed and when time permits, I catch up with family."

If you could change one thing about retired life, what would that be?

"I would make time to see family more. I come from a very large family, and during the pandemic I was unable to see them all. I missed seeing friends but Zoomed to keep in touch. I don't get bored because there is too much to see and do!" ■

Do you have any words of wisdom for Retirees or those about to retire?

"Yes, be sure to have a plan; volunteer, get a part-time job to keep yourself productive and active, and exercise. Stay active because it can become



LACERS BOARD UPDATE

LACERS Reports Strong Real Estate Returns

by Michael R. Wilkinson, LACERS Commissioner

Email: MikeWilkinson4LACERS@gmail.com



Michael R. Wilkinson

The LACERS real estate consultant, Townsend, reported strong returns for the period ending Dec. 31, 2021. The returns were: 7.72 percent for the quarter, 22.43 percent for the year, 8.47 percent for three years, 8.20 percent for five years, 9.14 percent for ten years and 6.21 percent since inception. While only the one-year return was greater than the benchmark, the investments made since the 2014 are all outperforming.

As you know, LACERS invests to provide for the needs of the pension plan and the health, vision, and dental plans. There is no one all-weather investment that provides all our needs, so the plan diversifies its investments across those that perform differently in different time periods, seek-

ing investments that are uncorrelated with each other. However, in some bear markets, particularly when all asset classes are declining, diversification may not be as effective.

An important asset class for LACERS is real estate. In 2018, the LACERS Board increased the target allocation to real estate from 5 percent to 7 percent as part of its overall plan to achieve a long-term return of 7 percent on the total portfolio.

Real estate investments help to diversify the overall LACERS portfolio by geography. LACERS invests across the country and has a small number of international properties as well. Within the LACERS real estate portfolio, investments are also diversified by property type: apartment, office, industrial, retail, and hotels. LACERS is careful not to be too heavily weighted on any one property type or geographic area so that if one real estate segment hits

a downturn, the portfolio could be supported by other investments that were not suffering losses.

LACERS' largest real estate concentration is in core properties, which are those in prime locations, characterized by full occupancy and high-quality tenants, and producing good and stable income. Since core properties are in high demand, they are relatively expensive and produce lower returns than non-core properties. LACERS' target is 60 percent core and 40 percent non-core. Non-core properties sometimes need work and carry higher risk. However, for this additional risk there is the potential for higher returns. This is the old saw that there is no "free lunch" in investing. If you seek higher returns, you must accept higher risk. The goal is to get the right combination that provides a reasonable return without risking too much. ■

Follow RLACEI on Facebook



Connect to RLACEI on Facebook, and you'll be eligible to win a \$5 gift card for See's Candies

or Starbucks or one RLACEI reusable cloth bag. Prizes will go to the first 150 to like the RLACEI Facebook page.

YOU COULD WIN!



How to enter

CURRENT RLACEI MEMBERS: Follow us on Facebook

OTHER CITY RETIREES: Join RLACEI and like us on Facebook

June and July Winners

New RLACEI Members –

Welcome!: Laura Cervantes

Danny Domingo

Georgia Fleischer

Thomas Lopez

Betsy Melancon

Himiko Nishiyama

Tracy Page

Following RLACEI Facebook Page:

Corazon Abuay

Tri Nguyen

Referral Winner: Katrina Winkelman

Jill Woo

Thanks for the referral!

Congratulations for joining RLACEI and our Facebook page! Follow RLACEI here: www.facebook.com, and search for "RLACEI"

Become an RLACEI Member

RLACEI is dedicated to advocating for retiree interests. We are over 5,500 strong! Members of the Retired Los Angeles City Employees, Inc. enjoy all RLACEI events such as the golf tournament, member picnic and holiday party with FREE membership to the Employees Club with access to all group benefits (insurance, discounts, etc.).

Call (800) 678-4145 x717, or visit our website at RLACEI.ORG and join today!

CLUB

Club Honors 30 With Mukai Scholarships

CLUB RECOGNIZES SCHOLASTIC ACHIEVEMENT, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND NEED IN HONORING 2022 AWARDEES.

The Club is pleased to announce the winners of the annual Joannie Mukai Scholarship Program for 2022. An elevated total – 30 – of Club Members and their relatives have been awarded stipends. A total of 97 students applied.

The Club's Scholarship program was named for the late Joannie Mukai, the former Club Board Member and Harbor retiree who passed away in 2010. This is the 12th anniversary of her death.

"The Club is delighted to recognize these incredible members of the Club family," said Robert Larios, Club CEO. "The last few years of the pandemic have been hard on students, but these students have excelled.

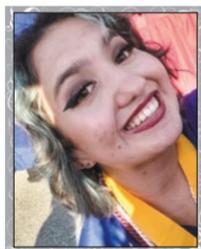
"The Club's scholarship committee and I wish all the success in the world to everyone who applied. Keep achieving ... the future depends on you."

Those eligible included Club Members, their spouses and their children who are in college full-time or will be attending an accredited college or university in Fall 2022. •



ABOUT JOANNIE MUKAI

Joannie Mukai was a pioneer as the LA Port's Director of Construction and Maintenance. A passionate supporter in the Employees Club and longtime Club Insurance Board Member, she died in March 2010. The Club's annual scholarship program was named in her honor. "She believed in education and training, and in preparing for success," Association CEO John Hawkins said. "That's what the Club Scholarship is all about, and we're delighted to name it after her. It's a perfect way to keep her memory alive."



Nalani Dutro
student at Long Beach City College, and granddaughter of Don Piechura, City of Cypress



Madison Fink
student at College of the Canyons, and daughter of Ross Fink, Retired, LADWP, City of Los Angeles



Emma Franco
incoming student at the University of Washington, granddaughter of Adolfo "Red" Medina, Retired, Public Works/Contract Administration, City of Los Angeles



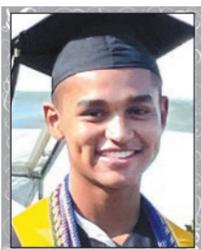
Sequilla Lee
student at Cal State Long Beach, and an employee of the Dept. of Children and Family Services, State of California



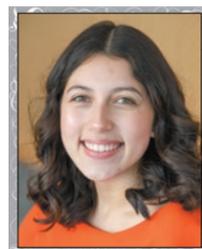
Alissa Luna
incoming student at Allan Hancock Community College in Santa Maria, and niece of Steve Lopez, Los Angeles County Sheriff's Dept



Megan Macias
student at Arizona State University, and daughter of Daniel Macias, Corrections Officer, State of California



Cameron Palacios
incoming student at UCLA, and son of Shirley Palacios, Harbor, City of Los Angeles



Sheccid Rodriguez
student at Tulane University in Louisiana, and daughter of Martin Rodriguez, LAPD, City of Los Angeles



Jocelyn Rosillo
incoming student at Cal State Fullerton, and granddaughter of Maria Guzman, General Services, City of Los Angeles



Cameron Tarr
incoming student at Grand Canyon University, and daughter of Yolanda Tarr, Controller's Office, State of California



Kaliyah Thompson
incoming student at the University of California Santa Cruz, granddaughter of Priscilla Ann Gray, Retired, LACERS, City of Los Angeles, and the late Daniel Gray, Public Works, City of Los Angeles



Samantha Walker
incoming student at DePaul University in Illinois, and daughter of Robert Walker, General Services, City of Los Angeles



Caitlyn Aguillard
incoming student at Prairie View A&M University, Texas, and daughter of Sarita Aguillard, LAPD, City of Los Angeles



Alexis Armstead
incoming student at Howard University, Washington, D.C., and daughter of Det. Camille Armstead, LAPD, City of Los Angeles



Andres Chirino-Segura
incoming student at the University of California Berkeley, son of Marta Segura, Public Works/Climate Emergency Mobilization Office, City of Los Angeles



Antonice Collins
incoming student at Texas Southern University, and dependent of Cynthia Billingslea, LADWP, City of Los Angeles



Kristin Dalrymple
student at Cal State Long Beach, and employee of CAL FIRE, State of California



Jordan Durden
incoming student at the University of Nevada, Reno, and son of Evan Jackson, Public Works/Contract Administration, City of Los Angeles

Read Their Stories

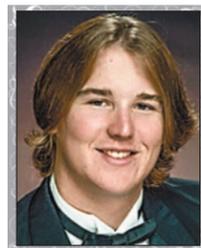
On the *Alive!* Website are brief profiles of the awardees, excerpted from their application materials.

alive.employeesclub.com/scholarshipwinners2022





Angel Hernandez
incoming student at San Jose State University, and son of Vanessa Esquivel Vera, LADWP, City of Los Angeles



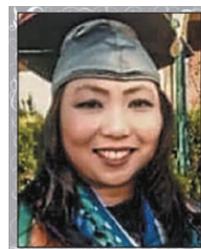
Matthew Jernigan
incoming student at Western Oregon University, and son of Karen Jernigan, Dept. of Managed Health Care, State of California



Naomi Jimenez
incoming student at Cal Poly Pomona, and daughter of Officer Roberto Jimenez, California Highway Patrol, State of California



Mekhi Mackey
incoming student at Jackson State University in Mississippi, son of Eugene Mackey, LADWP, City of Los Angeles



Imelda Mireles
student at Franklin University in Ohio, and wife of John Mireles, LADOT, City of Los Angeles



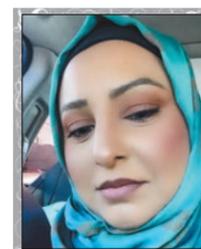
Crystal Nunez
incoming student at UCLA, and daughter of Adriana Reyes, Public Social Services, Los Angeles County



Ariana Ruiz
incoming student at the University of California Riverside, daughter of Hortencia Ruiz, Dept. of Corrections and Rehabilitation, State of California



Nicole Salazar
incoming student at Soka University of America, daughter of Zaida Arroyo, Dept. of Probation, Los Angeles County



Mahwish Siddiqui
student at Pierce College, and employee of the Los Angeles Unified School District



Samantha West
student at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, and daughter of Ryan West, ISD, Los Angeles County



Jesus Wilkins
student at the University of California Berkeley, son of Elizabeth Loza, Dept. of Social Services, Los Angeles County



Brandon Wong
student at the University of Southern California, and employee of the LADOT, City of Los Angeles


Congratulations
 to the awardees and their families, and the Club wishes the best success to all those who applied.

Put your graduation photo in *Alive!*

Club members: Have you had a family member graduate from elementary school... high school... or college? Send us a photo, and we'll publish it in *Alive!*

Make sure you tell us:

- The name of the graduate.
- The school from which they graduated. If a college, tell us their major.
- Their future plans (briefly)
- The name and department of the Club member they're related to, and how they are related



To send a digital photo and your message, go to:
alive.employeesclub.com/graduations



CULTURAL AFFAIRS

Information courtesy Cultural Affairs

IN MEMORIAM

Mary Oliver

LONGTIME CITY ART MUSEUM CURATOR AND MANAGER PASSES AWAY WITH 29 YEARS OF CITY SERVICE.

Mary Oliver, the longest current employee at Cultural Affairs' Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery (LAMAG) and longtime museum curator and manager, passed away. She had 29 years of City service.

She initiated and oversaw numerous programs that made a huge impact on the City.

As the Registrar for the Artist Slide Registry, Mary was instrumental in managing and developing this important resource for artists, curators and cultural institutions. Mary also managed the LAMAG archive whose records date to the Gallery's founding in 1954. Mary's immense knowledge of the gallery's history has been vital in crafting programming, and acted as a resource to local, national and international research endeavors.

As the Curator at Henry P. Rio Bridge Gallery at City Hall, Mary oversaw exhibitions and worked with City Council Offices, various institutions and artists with professionalism and diplomacy. Bridge Gallery exhibitions showcase the work of artists enrolled in City art programs, as well as highlight the City's Heritage Month celebrations. Mary took particular pride in curating the talented artists in the Department on Disability exhibitions.

Mary was instrumental in obtaining a grant for LAMAG's Museum Education and Tours Program (MET) and Community Outreach Art Programs. Mary, with LAMAG Arts Instructor Marta Feinstein and others, taught at Shriners Children's Hospital, middle schools, and after-school programs. At Shriners, the students were children of all ages, many of whom were enduring serious medical treatments.

Mary's steadfast leadership in education was critical in LAMAG's partnership with Occidental College's signature InternLA Summer Program. Since the inception of the program, Mary provided exemplary educational and professional opportunities as a mentor to Oxy students.

The Club sends its condolences to the family, friends and co-workers of Mary Oliver. ●



Mary Oliver



Photos by JuanCarlos Chan and Stephanie Chitica, Rec and Parks

Lotus Festival Returns

POPULAR SUMMER FESTIVAL BLOOMS AGAIN IN PERSON FOR 41ST YEAR.



The Lotus Festival returned after a two-year hiatus due to the pandemic July 9 and 10 at Echo Park Lake. This year's festival honored the people and culture of India.

The Lotus Festival originated in 1972 and is one of the City's largest festivals and a celebration to promote awareness and understanding of the contributions by the Asian and Pacific Islander people to our culture and to the local and surrounding communities.

A variety of entertainment, Asian food and drinks, booths, artwork, handmade crafts, an eco-friendly area, a children's courtyard, and other activities were offered. The event also brought back the widely popular Dragon Boat Races with teams of people paddling across Echo Park Lake. ●



The 2022 Lotus Festival features the culture of India.



The Dragon Boat races are a Lotus Festival highlight.



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including Electronics,
Home Décor, Jewelry,
Furniture and more.



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- Make equal installments over 6 months.
- Payroll deducted. No FICO® score needed.



SHOP NOW

EmployeesClub.com/Zebit

This is a representative example: \$750 is financed over 6 months of equal installments at 0% APR with \$0 down payment.



ALIVE! INTERVIEW

A New Future for Sports

— continued from page 12

Caroline: We have the ability to hire people. We're having job fairs and hiring people in the community. We're reaching out and are able to bring people in as we recruit for instructors. *PlayLA* is a very far-reaching program that has the ability to leave a legacy for generations to come. It's not a one-shot deal.

Anita: Sometimes kids can't participate in these sports because of the cost of the equipment, and we've been able to supply the gear they need. That's an incentive for them to come back and get more instruction.

All told, *PlayLA* develops these kids into resilient youths by teaching them how to be team players, how to be leaders, and how to overcome difficulties. It's an important part of this very unique program.

Staffing

Q: You mentioned staffing. This has to take the effort of everyone.

Ramon: This program does not exist without all the hard work of the Park Directors and the staff at the recreation centers. We rolled out the program. We tell them what to do. We're creating funding. We're doing all that. But every Director is a mirror of their community and asks what the community needs and the program is produced on that information. Without the Park Directors and their staff, HR/finance teams, aquatics, our maintenance and construction team and everything that is required to ensure *PlayLA* is successful, this program would not exist or go forward.

Anita: The other supporting components that make *PlayLA* successful include all of our maintenance and construction and our park planners who get these facilities built. The people behind the scenes like our Data Specialist – every month, she's breaking down all of our financials and expenditures and helping us in all these areas. It's not just us in the field, but it's the support staff that we have.

Equity

Q: How does *PlayLA* address equity in the City of LA?

Ramon: We were already offering the Girls *PlayLA* program, which targets girls to come and play all the sports. But then the equity part of *PlayLA* is being able to afford the program and taking away the barriers that used to hold people back from buying equipment.

Anita: We are happy to tear down this barrier that stops a kid from playing tennis, stops a kid from learning golf, stops a kid from ever getting on a horse. This is equity. This says that all the kids in Los Angeles have an opportunity if they want to learn how to ride a horse when they wouldn't otherwise be able to, or tennis or golf, or learn how to skateboard because guess what? They're going to get a skateboard.

Then it's also the building of our facilities and making sure that the park is accessible in that a family is only a ten-minute walk to a park; that's equity, too. Some of the parks are staffed. Some of the parks aren't staffed, and they're passive parks. They're parks that you can just go and you can sit under a tree or you can sit on a bench or you can walk your dog on a leash. All of that is a part of equity, and that's part of the hopes and dreams of the department.

Laura: Adaptive sports is a big piece to the equity movement. We're recognizing that the field was not equitable, and we're doing something about it. We all know that there are challenges in this world. Through this funding, we're able to do something about it. The fact that we have this funding from LA28 helps us tackle not only sports and the inequities that have existed in the past, but it even goes beyond sports. I've been working on some things that are helping to include youths with disabilities into our

day camp programs. We can attain it. With this funding, it's given us all such a great promise at the end of that rainbow that we can achieve it. At the end of all this funding, things are going to be very different for kids with disabilities and their families. It's not going to be the same Recreation and Parks. We're going to see kids in wheelchairs in all of our programs. It's not going to be unusual. It's going to be common.

Q: Talk about that a little more.

Laura: As we look beyond 2028 and what we can achieve, it's important to realize that our City Council is already very much aware of the trajectory that we are in. Last May, the City Council voted unanimously to expand access to adaptive sports to transitional age youths, which covers 18 to 24, and to adults and seniors. *PlayLA* is the tip of the iceberg. The Council motion was set forth to improve on our infrastructure, and we all know that some of our facilities are decades and decades old and definitely not accessible to people with disabilities. This whole idea of making facilities physically accessible is in the forefront of the Council's minds.

We're going to see a very different Los Angeles, a different Recreation and Parks Dept. at the end of 2028, and it's going to produce a program in the future that we're all going to be very proud to have been a part of.

Anita: We are also looking at our political climate and environment. We just finished our primary for electing the next mayor of Los Angeles. The current mayor was a big part of this happening with the International Olympic Committee and Paralympic Committee. With a new mayor coming in, and we don't know who this person is going to be, we hope that they embrace this whole idea of accessibility for youths to participate in quality sports.

The Olympic Spirit

Q: This all comes with big-time funding from LA28 through the 2028 Games Agreement. That's \$160 million.

Anita: Right. The funding element allows us to offer quality youth sports, fitness, adaptive as well as aquatic activities for \$10. That right there, it tears down that barrier that prevents parents from being able to introduce their kids to more than one sport. Their kid now has an opportunity to try field hockey. They have an opportunity to learn how to skateboard and to get a skateboard. They have the opportunity to learn so many new things. That funding element is truly the key. It creates that equity.

Q: That's a strong Olympic connection of course. The expressed desire here isn't necessarily to produce Olympians, but I imagine you certainly encourage people to hope and dream.

Anita: The connection started with the contract when the International Olympic Committee, the US Olympic and Paralympic Committee and the City of Los Angeles came together, as well as with LA28. The City of Los Angeles was named as the host city. We'll have some athletes who will be Olympians. We don't know who they are, of course – we're starting at the basics. But the vision is that once we go through the basics, we want to have something that takes them to the next level, something more competitive. We want to build a foundation and get these kids the opportunity to see themselves as maybe Olympians in the future. We are trying to create Olympians, but first, we want to create resilient youths. We want youths who can see a bright future for themselves and see sports as a part of that.

Melanie: USA Swimming is really bringing their connections and creating that mentorship. Teaching lifelong skills is the most important thing for us. The cost to get the young athletes to even close to an Olympic level is really expensive. It's a huge barrier; at some point they just can't go any further. We're giving them the opportunity to go further.

Caroline: It doesn't necessarily mean that when you learn field hockey you're going to the Olympics, but learning field hockey could also bring opportunities for high school and collegiate scholarships. If you have a dream and then you're afforded an opportunity, pretty much anything can happen. It all starts with the vision, an opportunity and a dream, and with those, youths can thrive.

Giving Back to Their City

Q: What do you love about what you do?

Laura: In my experience working with children and with parents of children with disabilities, I see so much hope come to life, hope that wasn't there before or they didn't think was achievable. As a parent, I know how proud I am of my kids when they score a basket or throw a football and make a touchdown and all of that. But to see your kid whom you didn't know what their future was going to be when they were born with a disability or after a car accident – you thought maybe there was little hope for them. But then you found something like sports and found something like maybe *PlayLA* and there was hope for you as a parent. There was hope for the child to have a future that they could be proud of and they could be like every other kid that you see. You can have fun. You can play sports. It's inspirational that I can be a small part of a parent's life and child's life that can make them continue to hope and dream and achieve. That's very gratifying to me.

Melanie: It's when I visit one of our pools and see the programming on a hot summer day, seeing a lot of people in the water having fun. It brings me back to my childhood being at a pool. I love having a parent who doesn't even know me approach me and thank us for having a pool being open and enjoying the success of their kids in a program. Seeing that, I feel that what I do does matter.

Caroline: Having a macro impact on the lives of the children. When I left one of my facilities, they said, "We're so sorry to see you go. We love you at the park." I said, "By me taking this step, I'm going to be able to have a macro impact on the lives of many children throughout the entire City of Los Angeles." Nothing can be more gratifying than having a positive impact on youth who participate in our programming. It's great when we're in the field. Knowing that you're having a positive impact on these kids is what drives me.

Anita: I love that what I do increases and improves the quality of life of the families that come to our parks. We're all working toward the same goal – building and designing programs that are going to impact the life of a boy or girl. That is of value to society.

Ramon: I grew up at Hubert Humphrey Park. That area had a tremendous gang problem. We wanted to play sports at the park, but nobody was there to coach us. That became my issue, and I saw the destruction of the property and the wasted talent out there because we didn't have this. With this program, I'm able to bring true recreation to the rec centers at 81 sites that are very similar to the park where I grew up. It's very freeing to see kids be free at a park and play without worrying about gangs and drugs and issues like that. When you have 500 kids playing at a park, all the bad stuff leaves the park. This park brings it in for \$10, or we can scholarship it. We're able to give jobs to kids in the area. We all grew up through the City, and we're able to pass that on. New generations of staff can be a bridge and set up our department as the best in the nation.

Q: Thanks, everybody, for taking the time to talk about *PlayLA*. It's a great advance in what Rec and Parks is offering.

Melanie: Thank you.

Laura: Thank you.

Anita: Thank you.

Ramon: Thank you! ●

Alive! AROUND THE WORLD

Letter From Barbados, Pt. 3

**Capt. Michael Barnes, Retired, Harbor,
reports from the Caribbean.**

– CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

The second story of the building is a museum (air conditioned) where the story of George Washington's time in Barbados is displayed. There are also exhibits about the garrison's daily Caribbean life and slavery in Barbados. In 1719 a windmill was built to provide power to pump water to the bathhouse and drinking water for the stables.

While doing repair work on the building in 2012, a network of 200-year-old drainage tunnels was found below the house and surrounding area. It was built by the British to drain the area of stagnant water and mosquitos. Upon finishing the tour of the house, visitors can walk out of the main gate, turn right, stroll down the hill, and in two minutes will be at the main coastal road. Turn right and cross the road to Shoot Hall, the 1824 quarters for the British Commanding Officer of the Royal Engineers (currently the Barbados Yacht Club).

For those of you who belong to yacht clubs, take your club pennant for exchange. They are very friendly and have a great bar on the beach from where we sat and gazed out over Carlisle Bay at the luxury cruise ship Queen Victoria at anchor while enjoying icy cold adult beverages.

Reminder: Travel today and pay tomorrow. Life is too short to wait for the right time!

This concludes Capt. Barnes' trip report from Barbados. Next: Route 66. ■