

Virginia Enriquez: Jobmaker

Southern California has certainly had its share of disasters in recent years. The 1992 Civil Unrest sparked off a series of headliner events, forever changing the L.A. landscape. But when the flames were extinguished, the earth stopped shaking and the California sun sapped up the last drop of flood channel waters, the worst fallout for survivors was the rampant loss of jobs. Without warning, burned-out and collapsed buildings thrust thousands of working residents into the ranks of the unemployed.

Getting people back on their feet and re-employed after a disaster is what brings Virginia Enriquez to her office each day — everyday, in fact, since she first entered County service in 1972 in the Manpower division of the previous Department of Personnel. After 23 years of helping others obtain job skills and employment, Enriquez was honored for her own job performance on May 16, 1995, by the Board of Supervisors, when she was named as May County Employee of the Month.

Described as a "powerhouse" employee by her coworkers, Enriquez serves as a project supervisor in the Employment and Training Division of the Department of Community and Senior Citizens Services. She and her staff of six have worked vigorously over the past three years to find temporary public service employment for thousands of recent disaster victims. Ironically, much of the employment is disaster-related. Boxing up court records in a Van Nuys courthouse slated for demo-



Enriquez, left, shares the moment with her family (back row, left to right) son Scott, daughter Stephanie and husband Steve, as she is presented with a Board scroll of commendation from Chair Gloria Moline.

lition following the 1994 Northridge earthquake, processing an overflow of food stamp applications for the Department of Public Social Services, or working side by side with Public Works crews on post-quake repairs are just a few examples of temporary work assignments.

Enriquez is credited with the coordination of a \$14 million program to provide temporary employment for over 1,300 participants after the 1992 riots and a seven million dollar Earthquake Recovery Program to assist 600 quake victims. Both of these programs garnered awards from the County's Productivity Commission and the National Association of Counties.

Although the federal grant for the earthquake-related employment project

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Working Safely At Computers

The growing presence of computers and video display terminals, or VDTs, in the work and home environments has generated a variety of health and safety concerns. The most frequently reported problems include physical discomfort from awkward postures and prolonged sitting, visual strain, and the repetitiveness of job tasks. Many of these problems can be minimized by improving your VDT workstation with the following:

- **Modify your workstation.** Adjust your chair to properly support your back; allow your feet to rest flat on the floor, with the position of your arms and hands comfortably on the keyboard; check the screen angle and position of the monitor to minimize glare and reflections; adjust the contrast and brightness level of the screen to permit easy viewing.

- **Take periodic breaks from VDT work to prevent muscle fatigue and reduce stress.** Vary tasks by doing activities that move different muscles; stretch your lower back, roll your shoulders, shake out your hands and reach your arms up over your head; relax whenever possible.

- **Perform the following exercises periodically to avoid eyestrain:** Look away from the VDT screen and focus across the room or out a window to exercise the muscles that focus your eyes; shape your hands into shallow cups and place them over your closed eyes for one minute.

For more information, a brochure is available from the Department of Human Resources Environmental Health and Safety Programs unit at (213) 887-6411.

Public Employees: Working In An Age of Instability

Tales of corporate mergers, acquisitions, plant closures, and rightsizing have dominated headlines in recent years as private industry battles for its share of the new global economy. Although it may be for different reasons than the private sector, government agencies from coast to coast are also struggling with rightsizing. The unprecedented pooling of resources, consolidations and service level reductions in local, state and federal government organizations have been necessary in light of shrinking revenues and increasing demands for services.

As the largest local government in the nation, Los Angeles County is certainly not immune to these changes. And County employees will not be immune to the many changes which will take place during the County's own struggle to continue to serve the local community within a balanced budget. As a County employee, it is important to take more personal responsibility for your own career track. It's part of being an employee in an age of instability.

According to Elwood Chapman, author of Plan B: Converting Change Into Career Opportunity, the first step is to begin to view your career from a different perspective.

"Erase from memory any preconceived ideas you have regarding career growth and job changes," writes Chapman. "A career growth program is far more than a contingency job plan. Rather, it is a thoughtful, broad-based personal growth program that can take you to either a more significant role in your present organization, or lead you to a better position elsewhere."

Having a "Plan B" today is virtually mandatory. A "Plan B" is a comprehensive, detailed and realistic career plan that can be activated within just a few days. Chapman's plan-ahead, seven-step strategy may help you plan your career options.

The Seven Step Strategy:

1. **Commit yourself.** Design a support system to help you complete a

Plan B. Whether you're a self-motivated sort of person or need to openly communicate your plan to important people in your life, make a commitment to accomplish it in the near future.

2. **Do better at your present job.** While working on a Plan B, consider that your "Plan A" is your present position. Increasing your personal productivity on the job increases your professionalism and marketability.

3. **Learn more from where you are.** Begin to view your current job as a place where you can continue to learn. Overcome psychological blocks to learning new technologies.

4. **Improve your present skills.** As with most athletic contests, one must qualify to compete for recognition and prizes. The same is true in the career race. A person must verify and reach current job skill standards. This applies to technical and human relations skills.

5. **Back to school? Self-instruction time?** Reaching new competency goals in order to maintain market mobility is an important part of career planning. Depending on your own technical field, it could require a return to school, either part-time or full-time.

6. **Creating networking.** Although placement agencies have helped thousands of people, never forget that the best strategy is to depend upon yourself. Think of yourself as your own employment agency. You will probably gain your best results by marketing yourself through creative networking.

7. **Have plan, will travel.** A creative resume that incorporates information about your career up to this point, but also includes information from your Plan B, will create more interest among prospective employers.

Fewer than 10 out of every 100 workers have a well-developed alternative career plan, according to Chapman. Most people just aren't motivated enough to develop one and become too comfortable in their current position. What they fail to see is the fact that having a Plan B will make their current career seem more comfortable.

This Month's Retirees

Congratulations to the following employees who have joined the ranks of the retired, after 30 years of service to the people of Los Angeles County:

Animal Control: Jack W. Cygan

Fire: Patrick J. Gaynor, Lyman D. Goldsmith, Selkirk B. Parazette, Jr.

Health Services: John E. Bergen, Livingston Carey, Geneva Caskey, John Edmondson, Harold E. Harvey, Richard D. Haynes, Doris L. Nixon, Augusta Thomas

Internal Services: Nadine Dennis, Henry Gonzales, Jr.

Probation: Robert L. Bock, Oscar Sanders, Jr.

Public Works: Freddie J. McKinley

Sheriff: William H. Brauberger, Bruce E. Gray, Judith G. Jackson, Donald V. Morgan, James Plummer, James L. Schneeweis, Oliver Taylor, Gene W. Weaver, Alan M. West

Congratulations to the following employees who served the County for 25 years:

Assessor: Sandra T. Garcia

Children and Family Services: Dolores F. Banker, Naomi R. McKinney, Leslie R. Modie

District Attorney: T.K. Herman, Jr., Emma Silva

Fire: Edmund Bell, Jr., Dale R. Cauble, Gerald A. Meehan

Health Services: Joseph A. Angelo, Geneva Best, Shirley A. Harper, Carl M. Harris, Gloria Macheliski, Nancy B. Meaker, John T. Mills, Richard E. Reese, Enrique Renteria, James Richmond, Joanne M. Rojas

Internal Services: John R. Ramsey

Municipal Courts: Selma L. Silvers

Museum of Art: Pratapaditya Pal

Parks and Recreation: Jesse M. Morgan, Huval Ross

Probation: Beverly J. Chew, Ronald W. MacDonald, Juan G. Valenzuela

Public Library: Delma J. Davis

Public Social Services: Patricia A. Fuller, Barbara L. Helgeson, Clotice W. Osby, Velma A. Richman, Charlene Robertson, Ninfa Skidmore, Katherine Wilson

Public Works: Elizabeth J. Beard, Willie F. Davis

Sheriff: Gary D. Flener, Gary M. Hailey, David C. Hoffner, Ronald W. Johnson, Mark A. Lautenschlag, Thomas R. Sargent, Gary L. Stuart

Volunteer Honors

With over 83,000 — almost as many as the County's 85,000-person workforce — the County's multi-talented volunteer corps has become an increasingly valuable County resource. In an age of dwindling County resources and growing demands for service from the public, County volunteers assist County employees to help meet these demands and deadlines. Remarkably, these volunteers donated over four million hours of service during 1994!

The talents and commitment of these individuals were recognized at the County 13th Annual Volunteer Recognition and Awards Luncheon, held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion on April 17, 1995. KNBC-TV weathercaster Christopher Nance hosted the event at which more than 400 County employees gathered to honor their volunteers.

Two special volunteers were given double honors. Pasadena resident **Patricia Curry**, a volunteer attorney in the Superior Court's Child Advocate Office, was named as County Volunteer of the Year. Curry helps abused children by serving as a Court-Appointed Special Advocate for specific children referred by Dependency Court judges. She has volunteered tirelessly since 1989, investigating cases of foster children and reporting back to the court, always advocating for the best interest of each child. With more than 5,000 volunteer hours to her credit, Curry's remarkable efforts to prepare foster youth for emancipation from foster care has resulted in the creation of the Commission for Children and Families' Emancipation Planning Task Force, on which she serves as co-chair of its Implementation Committee.

Says Curry, "It is important to me that L.A. is a place we all feel is safe and a place we are proud to live in. If we help these children, we help all of Los Angeles."

Inglewood resident **Martin Hernandez**, a volunteer in the Sheriff's



Adult Volunteer of the Year Patricia Curry (second from left) proudly displays her commendation scroll from the Board of Supervisors with (l-r) KNBC-TV weathercaster Christopher Nance, and Supervisors Mike Antonovich and Yvonne Brathwaite Burke.



Sheriff Sherman Block (standing, left) and Supervisor Mike Antonovich display pride in this year's Youth Volunteer Martin Hernandez (center) as he receives personal accolades for his courage and dedication to the Sheriff's Department from KNBC-TV's Christopher Nance.

Department Explorer Program, was named as County Youth Volunteer of the Year. Hernandez, 20, began volunteering in the Explorer Program three years ago, with the hope of someday becoming a Deputy Sheriff. That dream was shattered in 1993 when he became the innocent victim of a drive-by shooting. Although his injuries left him paralyzed from the chest down, he refused to give up his zest for life. After his rehabilitation, Hernandez returned to the Explorer Program at the Sheriff's Lennox Station, where he continues to be an active Explorer Scout. His volunteer time is spent recruiting youth from the community to involve themselves in the program and educating teens about gang violence. He is also a full-time speech communications student at El Camino College, working toward another one of his dreams — to become a producer or broadcaster.

Says Hernandez, "The Explorer Program gave me a better understanding about the career I was interested in. Working with the community has been the best part."

DIGEST Giveaway News

Ticket Giveaway Winner - Mary Foote, an employee at the County Arboretum, is the lucky winner of tickets for four to her choice of performances during the John Anson Ford Theater's Summer Series. This special contest was announced in the February issue of the DIGEST. Congratulations, Mary!

Win Family Pass to the Museum of Art -

So you didn't win the tickets to the Ford. Here's another shot at your luck! Be one of 20 lucky County employees to win a Family Pass to the Los Angeles

County Museum of Art. This entitles each of the 20 winners to bring their family (two adults and up to three children under the age of 18) to one day of free admission to the Museum! Passes must be used by December 31, 1995. To enter, just mail a postcard with your name, department, work address, daytime and evening telephone numbers to: DIGEST Museum Giveaway, c/o Kristina Balian, DIGEST Editor, 588 Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012. Winners will be notified by phone. **Entries must be received in the DIGEST office by July 15.** Good luck!



June Is Toy Loan Month

If spring cleaning has left you with boxes of toys in search of a good home, the County's Department of Public Social Services has a home for them. It's their Toy Loan Program, a unique program that lends toys, books and games to disadvantaged youngsters at 32 locations across the County. Much like a library, the lending program helps children build character and develop a sense of responsibility, self-esteem and positive attitudes.

June is their official Toy Loan fundraising month, during which increased donations of **new** and **used** toys are needed. The program also supplies toys to publicly-funded classes, Headstart facilities, children's centers, treatment facilities and homeless shelters.

Donations are tax-deductible and pick-up is available. For more information, contact Pamela Woulard, Toy Loan Coordinator, at (213) 226-6286.

Join The Museum of Art!

First it was the Arboretum, then the Natural History Museum. Now, the County's Museum of Art is jumping on the membership bandwagon by offering County employees a 15 percent discount on membership.

In celebration of LACMA's 30th birthday, employees are invited to join the Museum and enjoy art from the ancient world as well as the most recent achievements in contemporary art. LACMA's permanent collections consist of approximately 150,000 works of art and an equally impressive exhibition schedule.

Discounted memberships include:
Active: \$46.75 (reg. \$55)
Contributing: \$76.50 (reg. \$90)



Patron: \$127.50 (reg. \$150)

Members are entitled to unlimited admission for two adults and children under the age of 18; discounts at the Museum shops, discounted admission to the countless year-round films, concerts, lectures and classes; a subscription to At The Museum, the members-only magazine; free docent tours of special exhibitions and permanent collections, and more!

To join, just call the Membership Office at (213)

857-6151 or mail your selected membership level dues to LACMA Membership, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90036. Be sure to mention that you're a County employee and this DIGEST offer if you visit the Museum and decide to join.

Enriquez *(continued from page one)*

ends this month, it's no time to rest, says Enriquez.

"Just when I think that our work is finished, another disaster happens and we're back in business. In fact, we're getting ready to launch Joblinks, a FEMA repair project, which will take us into 1998," she explains.

Being in the people business, Enriquez strongly believes in being accessible to the public. Daily, she and her staff are on the phone with program participants to answer questions and relieve anticipation about job placements and needed skills.

"We don't mind giving out our names and phone numbers to the public. We want the public to know that we're here to help them," she says.

County DIGEST

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