

County DIGEST



NOVEMBER 15, 1995

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Employee of the Month

Helen Williams: "I Just Kept Going"

California is filled with stories of migration of Americans from almost every corner of this nation. Helen Williams is one of those "adopted" Californians who has long called Los Angeles home.

At 15, she accompanied her older sister on a train ride back to the west coast from their native Louisiana and was married just four years later. Her life's tale of struggles raising a large family and working in the Department of Public Social Services' Bureau of Assistance Payments for the past 35 years has made a strong impression on many welfare recipients. Sharing her own story of perseverance has helped many clients turn their own lives around.

Encouraging them to break free from a system of financial dependency is just one of the many reasons that the Board of Supervisors honored her as October County Employee of the Month. On October 17, 1995, the Supervisors expressed their gratitude and recognition for her efforts in a special Board room ceremony.

Williams began County service as a transcriber/typist at the age of 29, at the Department's Adams and Grand Avenue office. But at that young age, she was also quite busy keeping up with the needs of her family -- including her husband and their 10 children.

"At the time, my husband worked nights and I worked days, so we had

'round the clock' childcare," recalls Williams. "I was constantly involved with the children's activities every minute that I wasn't at work."

Two more children and a marriage that ended left Williams feeling overwhelmed with responsibility and challenge, but she decided not to dwell on it too much.



Helen Williams, left, receives her scroll of commendation from Board Chair Gloria Molina.

"I just kept going. I didn't go into a shell and sulk, and I received a lot of encouragement from my family and friends," she explained.

After being promoted to Welfare Assistant in 1967, she began working more closely with the public and meeting the people she used to type up transcripts about in her previous positions. She knew that this was her chance to help

people more.

"I used my own life as an example. One day, a teen mother walked in, and I encouraged her to go back to school while her mother watched the baby during the day. She really listened to me, and eventually graduated with honors from UCLA. Years later, a thank you card from her arrived in my office, and then I knew that I had really gotten through to her," she said.

Williams continued to progress, becoming an Eligibility Supervisor in 1970. In 1979, she joined the El Monte staff and has continued to give of herself to the public she serves, as well as the eight staff members reporting to her.

Some notable accomplishments in her career include her establishment as an outstanding staff trainer. Her ability to organize was highlighted during the seven-month period in 1993 when the District office building was condemned. Williams continued to supervise

employees redeployed to six other sites, developing a generic client service plan allowing the District to continue to serve the public without the accessibility of individual case records. These and other career milestones contributed to her distinction as the Bureau's Employee of the Month in December 1994.

Throughout her career, Williams has

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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:

Children and Family Services: Marilyn A. Colman, John DePhillippo, Diana R. Weekes

Fire: Wayne F. Kading, Leslie E. Lackerman, Ranald R. MacKinnon, John D. McGuire, Ruben Sandoval, Russell B. Nielsen, John E. Roth

Health Services: Joseph L. Daszek, Ora D. Frierson, Martha W. Kawabe, Chester L. Land, Fred W. Lederer, Easter C. Sanders, James Watts, Virginia Wilder

Internal Services: James L. Bush, Gwendolyn M. McDonough

Probation: Diana L. Rodriguez

Public Library: Edward E. Asawa, Charlie Clemons

Public Social Services: George A. Brudvik, Robbie Nelson

Public Works: Robert T. Shitabata, Stormy C. Van Sickle

Sheriff: Floyd G. Autry, Robert G. Devine, Tana D. Koblick, Joseph P. James, Marion D. Warmack

Superior Court: Archille W. Hebert III, Ralph E. Stephens

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

Beaches and Harbors: Gilbert S. Conn
Children and Family Services: Sherry Sims

Fire: John B. Broding, Jr., Norbert K. Kochner, Richard L. Willeford

Health Services: Barbara Bradley, Nell L. Brown, Roland B. Broan, Luella N. Chow, Judy Conn, Peter J. Couchman, Ellview E. Creighton, Evelyn Evans, Rosetta Harvey, Donald B. Hawkins, Michael McSkane, Evelyn A. Mueller, Lucy Nieto-Sanche, Joseph R. Reyes, Francisca Rosario, Freda M. Smith, Inez Threats, Hattie E. Todd, Velma Williams

Internal Services: Andrew Scott

Top Rideshare Prize Winner Named



IT PAYS TO RIDESHARE: Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center employee Shelley Taji displays her top prize (a \$100 gift certificate for Robinsons-May department stores) as she prepares to head to the mall!

Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center employee Shelley Taji was named as the Top Pledge Prize Winner at a prize drawing held on October 19 at the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration. Taji's prize, a \$100 gift certificate for Robinsons-May department stores, was donated by the merchandiser, along with many other generous companies sponsoring the special event to reward ridesharers. The drawing concluded the County's "Rideshare Week," October 2-6.

Congratulations to all County employees who pledged to rideshare and were rewarded with a prize of their own:

Greg Kabealo, Public Works: GTE deluxe telephone;

Muhammad M. Sheikh, Children and Family Services: GTE deluxe telephone;

Yolanda Garcia-Del Valle, Board of

Parks and Recreation: Horst Freyer, Margaret J. Guerrero, Wallace W. Pounds, Donald C. Robinson

Probation: Masaru Hisamune, Darnell Record, William N. Riddle

Public Defender: Leona Anderza, John T. Koteles

Public Library: Rosalie Rellve

Public Social Services: Ora D. Buchanan, Carlie B. Goynes, Edward

Supervisors/CCJCC: \$50 J.C. Penney gift certificate;

Barbara J. Moore, District Attorney: Four passes to Hollywood Park Clubhouse;

Donna Haas, Children and Family Services: \$25 J.C. Penney gift certificate;

Karen Ogg, Superior Court: Two tickets to an L.A. Lakers Game;

Loretta Jones, Community and Senior Services: Dinner for two/Tony Roma's Restaurant;

Virginia Little, Public Social Services: Dinner for two/Palermo Ristorante Italiano;

Hansel Harris-Dieng, Superior Court: Dinner for two/Little Joe's Restaurant;

Joe Cepeda, Health Services: Continental Airlines Travel Bag;

Irma Valdez, Mental Health: Continental Airlines Travel Bag.

L. Guy, Delores Herron

Public Works: Carlton Lyew

Sheriff: Robert H. Belair, Everett E. Fielding, Michael D. Morton, William Mullen, William K. Postmus, Williamett Washington

Many Happy Years of Retirement!

County Honors Top Productivity Winners



A MOMENT OF THANKS: CBS Production Supervisor Alan Takiguchi, far right, receives a bouquet of roses from the Quality and Productivity Commission's Executive Director Rosemary Bandes (second from left) as a token of appreciation from the County for serving as a generous host for this year's event.



GRAND WINNERS: Superior Court receives top honors at the awards celebration for their innovative Juror Services Telephone Center. Accepting the award are (front row, l-r) John Sleeter, Gloria Gomez, and Presiding Judge Gary Klausner; (second row, l-r) Supervisor Mike Antonovich, Al Zaporteza, Judy Mendicina, and Productivity Manager Lou Hernandez; (back row, l-r) "Baywatch" star Michael Newman, Jack Green, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer Sandra Davis, and John Johnston.

On the soundstage of the long-running CBS game show, "The Price is Right," Los Angeles County honored 149 creative County programs that proved during the past year that they were right on the money.

"Quality Works...in Los Angeles County" was celebrated at the County's Ninth Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program on October 30 at CBS Television City. Emmy-Award winning broadcast journalist Mario Machado produced and hosted this year's event at which more than 300 of the County's best attended.

The top 10 winners representing eight of the County's 37 departments were

presented with a special recognition from the Board of Supervisors and the Quality and Productivity Commission. Winning departments included Children and Family Services (two awards); Community Development Commission; District Attorney/Community and Senior Services; Mental Health (two awards); Probation (two awards); Public Library, and the Los Angeles Superior Court.

The grand prize was given to the Los Angeles Superior Court and Administratively Unified Courts for their Juror Services Telephone Center, an automated telephone information system to provide the public with instant general

jury service and court information by dialing 1-800-SRV-JURY. This round-the-clock calling system has already proven itself in improving information requests from an ever-growing number of clients.

"These programs represent the best and most creative use of County resources as we seek every means to keep County services flowing to the public where they are critically needed," says Supervisor Mike Antonovich, who established the County's Quality and Productivity Commission 14 years ago.

Free County Holiday Celebration



For the 36th year in a row, the Los Angeles County Music and Performing Arts Commission will sponsor the Annual Los Angeles County Holiday Celebration in the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion on Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24, 1995, from 3-9 p.m. The new, expanded length program will feature professional and community choirs, orchestras and dance compa-

nies, in a six-hour live musical special - free to the community. Underground parking at the Music Center is also free and reservations are not necessary. For a complete schedule of events, call (213) 974-1396.

This annual musical extravaganza begins with a performance from United Children Chorus, and includes the following groups: The Children of the

World Choir, Bob Baker Marionette Theatre, Valley Children's Chorus, Kid Power, Jazz Tap Ensemble, All Korean Children's Choir, Church of Scientology Choir, Danza Floricanto/USA, The Angel City Chorale, Melodia Sinica, Pasadena & San Gabriel Valley Barbershop Choruses, The Joffrey Ballet of Chicago, University of Judaism Concert Singers, and the Gay Men's Chorus.

Things to See and Do

Have a Happy "Museum of Art" Thanksgiving

Are you tired of sitting around eating every Thanksgiving weekend? Do you usually feel like the stuffed bird himself by the time you return to work on Monday? Try having an active, "County" Thanksgiving celebration by treating yourself and your family to one of the many activities happening at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art:

• **"The American Discovery of Ancient Egypt,"** running from November 5 until January 21, 1996. Co-organized with the American Research Center in Egypt, this exhibition traces the remarkable sequence of contributions by American scholars towards the understanding of the cultural record of ancient Egypt. More than 200 objects in the exhibit, representing key American discoveries, span the period of roughly four and a half millennia, from about 4,000 B.C. to the end of the Roman occupation of Egypt in A.D. 395. Highlights include an eight-ton Ptolemaic gateway, a figurine repre-

senting the pharaoh Akhenaten, jewelry from the tomb of Princess Mayet, and the elaborate sarcophagus of a 26th dynasty official.



• **On Friday, November 24, 5:30 - 8:30 p.m., is the Museum's free Friday Night Jazz,** an evening featuring the Fritz Wise Quartet. Meet friends for an evening of jazz, a light supper, and the music of L.A.'s finest jazz artists. As a bonus, the galleries and the Museum Shop are open until 9 p.m. For more information, call (213) 857-6010.

• **On Sunday, November 26, 12:30 p.m.,** the Museum's Family Tour, **"America: Then and Now,"** will celebrate Thanks-

giving with a docent tour specially designed for children and their families. The tour examines American art from colonial times to the present. Tours meet at the information desk in Times Mirror Central Court. For more information, call (213) 857-6108.

Williams

(continued from page one)

received numerous letters of appreciation and commendation for her efforts to enhance operations and public service. At 64, she's set her eyes on retirement from the County, but not from life. She plans to return to college, this time for a masters degree in business administration. She also plans to volunteer in agencies serving drug-ad-

dicted, pregnant teenagers -- once again vowing to help youngsters find the right path to a successful future.

"Children are my weakness, because I'll do anything I can for a child," admits Williams. "It's the parent in me."

Philharmonic Concert Giveaway

Want to start 1996 with a bang...and a round of applause? Just be the lucky winner of the County DIGEST's latest giveaway: **two tickets** to the St. Petersburg Philharmonic on Monday, January 22, 1996, 8 p.m., at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. This exciting concert is a special performance of the 1995-1996 Los Angeles Philharmonic season, so don't miss your chance to win this entertaining gift.

To enter, just send a postcard with your name, County department, work address and telephone number, to: Philharmonic Giveaway, c/o Kristina Hajjar, County DIGEST, 500 W. Temple Street, Room 588, Los Angeles, CA 90012. One entry per County employee, please. **Entries must be post-marked by November 30 to be eligible.** The winner will be announced in the December issue of the DIGEST. Good luck!

County DIGEST

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