

County DIGEST



JANUARY 16, 1996

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

"Partnership Above Partisanship"



LEFT: Supervisor Molina welcomes March of Dimes Youth Ambassador Marissa Shaevel to the County's campaign recognition ceremonies in the Boardroom.

BELOW: Supervisor Molina welcomes President Clinton to Los Angeles for the unveiling of the Federal government's \$364 million bailout package to keep the County's Health Services Department operating.



Molina Passes Gavel to Antonovich

Supervisor and outgoing Board Chair Gloria Molina passed the gavel of the Chair to her colleague Mike Antonovich on December 5, 1995, ending perhaps the most difficult year as Chair in recent memory.

"This has been a difficult year to govern, a trying year for all of us at County government, and an especially challenging year to assume the role of Board Chair," said Molina. "I am particularly proud that in these difficult times, times that could have divided us, we have accomplished unprecedented consensus."

The hallmark of Molina's year as Chair was her ability to reach consensus among Board colleagues on virtually every difficult decision that faced the

Board this past year. From health care to the budget, Molina worked collectively to resolve the difficult challenges. Her efforts reached beyond the County to Sacramento and Washington to help curb budget cuts being contemplated at both state and federal levels.

Molina reached her four main goals in less than five months of her tenure as Chair, including the creation of a Budget Committee of the Whole; televising Board meetings; developing a regional approach to problem solving in partnership with city, state and federal officials,

and broadening programs to include other cities.

"Each of us has put partnership above partisanship as we worked to resolve the County's problems," Molina said, referring to many of the important actions brought before the Board.

VISION 2000: Antonovich Takes the Helm



Editor's Note: The following is the speech delivered by Fifth District Supervisor Mike Antonovich on December 5, 1995, on the occasion of his 1996 chairmanship of the Board of Supervisors.

I would like to begin by thanking Supervisor Molina for her leadership as chair of the Board during the past year. In particular, for her efforts to have the Board aggressively involved in the budget process and our lobbying effort.

The 58 counties of California have been plagued by a dysfunctional budget process which enables the State to confiscate local property taxes to balance the State budget.

Counties are caught in a vise between mandates and limited resources. Our ability to plan is hampered by unfunded mandates. This has resulted in crisis management.

The time has come to move beyond crisis management to strategic, long-term planning.

As we are about to enter the 21st century, the recent creation of the blue ribbon budget task force will lay the groundwork to develop such a strategic plan delineating the County's responsibilities in providing services with the available resources.

My goal is to develop a four-year strategic plan, "Vision 2000," which will provide an opportunity to incorporate innovative management methods and legislative proposals. This action will provide a thoughtful opportunity for County "right sizing."

"Vision 2000" presents several challenges. The most pressing of these is the fact that most services provided by the County are mandated by the federal and state governments — who have failed to provide full funding for their

mandates.

The three major areas that "Vision 2000" will address are finance, management and legislation.

Financial Strategy

The financial strategy will include short-term and long-term goals. Our short-term need is to permanently match our expenditures with revenues to achieve a "Triple A" credit rating. This reduction in interest rates will generate additional funds for programs, not bond holders.

Our long-term goal will be to plan for cuts to take place over multiple years rather than resorting to the usual rush to layoffs and across-the-board cuts for quick fix budget solutions. This budget reduction effort

will include the blue ribbon budget task force and our labor organizations.

Management Strategy

To enhance increased productivity and efficiency of County services, our County managers need to reflect on what they do as well as how efficiently they achieve their goals. Innovations for an overall strategy will provide a blueprint for the future and a vision of how County services will be provided with the available revenues.

Legislative Strategy

The final element of our "Vision 2000" will be the development of a legislative strategy to provide clear and concise recommendations to our State and Federal legislative delegations on the needs of the County.

This legislative plan will include:

- Public safety
- Probation camp funding

- Court funding and judicial reform
- Relief from general assistance mandates and all unfunded mandates
- The elimination of red tape to expedite the adoptions process
- Measures addressing illegal immigration

My goals will also emphasize implementing the recommendations from the public hearings held earlier this year on foster care, adoptions and child support; development of an aggressive public-private earthquake preparedness program, and expanding the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Youth Foundation, the Probation Department's Gang Alternative Prevention programs (GAPP), and School Crime Suppression programs.

By implementing "Vision 2000" we will provide the road map for the County to meet its needs and obligations to the people of Los Angeles County in the 21st century.

CALLING ALL ARTISTS

The search for County employee artists is on. The Internal Services Department is holding a contest to create a new look for the cover of the County Directory by soliciting original drawings produced by County employees. A committee will choose the winning drawing. A byline credit for the illustration will be printed in the Directory. To enter, just submit your original illustration on a white, 8 1/2" x 11" poster board no later than February 12, 1996. Colors must be limited to two; pastels are discouraged because the printer cannot guarantee their accuracy of printing. Remember, include your name, department and workplace telephone number. Sorry, entries are not returnable. Send your entry to: Directory Unit, Internal Services Department, 1100 N. Eastern Avenue, G-119, Los Angeles, CA 90063

Employee of the Month

Michael Tormey: Disease Detective

As a County epidemiologist, Michael Tormey, MPH, is responsible for the Countywide surveillance and investigation of various communicable diseases as part of his work with the Acute Communicable Disease Control unit (ACD) in the Department of Health Services Public Health Programs division.

"We're the guardians to the County's overall health — trying to keep the general public healthy from communicable diseases," he says.

During his 19 years of service to the County, Tormey has investigated numerous communicable disease outbreaks. His outstanding work performance in investigating and controlling major outbreaks led to his confirmation as December 1995 County Employee of the Month. On December 19, newly installed Chairman of the Board Mike Antonovich led the Supervisors' ceremony honoring Tormey for his many contributions to the public's health.

Tormey began his career in Health Services in 1976 with the Immunization Project as a student professional worker and joined ACD in 1977 as an epidemiology analyst. He became an epidemiologist in 1980 — a new job classification he helped to define. He asserts that when it comes to the variety of disease investigations, L.A. is the place.

"L.A. County is a mecca for epidemiology. The world is here," he says, citing the fact that L.A. County is diverse both ethnically and culturally and would rank as a large state in terms of population.

Tormey's investigative work is a team effort between ACD and the County's corps of public health physicians, nurses, laboratory workers, public health investigators and office staff.

"We're like medical detectives, trying to solve a mystery. Once the data is collected, we try to find patterns that might indicate the source of a disease

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Michael Tormey, left, receives a scroll of commendation from Chairman of the Board Mike Antonovich.

Employee Night At The Opera: Update

Tickets for the Saturday, February 24, 1996, dress rehearsal of COSI FAN TUTTE by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart are still available. For just \$10, County employees can join the L.A. Opera

County Employees Club and receive one ticket to this 7:30 p.m. fully staged rehearsal at the Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. By joining, County employees can save over 90% off the regular ticket price. Members also enjoy a 20%

discount to performances of the comic opera THE ELIXIR OF LOVE.

COSI FAN TUTTE is the story of two young officers who test the fidelity of their betrothed, wagering that as

soon as they are off to war, the next suitors to come along will easily have their hearts. A charade to test their lovers' fidelity is arranged by the young men, who disguise themselves and

tempt the flirtatious women. This Mozart opera is filled with wit, insight and beautiful music and remains one of Mozart's beloved operas. COSI FAN TUTTE is sung in Italian with English super-titles, the English translations projected above



A scene from Mozart's COSI FAN TUTTE, to be performed by the L.A. Music Center Opera, (l-r) actors Rodney Gilfry, Richard Stilwell, and Jonathan Mack.

the stage.

For more information, call (213) 972-7219 and ask for the County Employees Club.

County Creates Diversity Ordinance

In a department head briefing held November 30, 1995, in the Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, Supervisor Gloria Molina announced to department heads and senior County managers that the County had approved an Ordinance creating a County Policy on Diversity. At the meeting, Molina instructed all department heads to implement the Diversity Policy and program initiatives developed by the County's Interdepartmental Diversity Team.

The new policy is an outgrowth of the cooperative effort of the Diversity Team, consisting of several County departments, including the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance, the Human Relations Commission, the Department of Human Resources and the Commission for Women. The group was brought together in April 1995 to begin its work toward the creation of a Countywide policy on this important issue affecting the nation's largest county workforce and client base.

"We want to demonstrate to our workforce that we are very committed to this policy," said Molina. "Only now can we begin to appropriately address and deal with the issues."

Affirmative Action Compliance Officer John Hill called Molina "a model of diversity," as a woman, Hispanic, and a working mother in a non-traditional occupation.

The new policy fosters an inclusive workplace environment in which County employees and clients are appreciated and respected, where diversity is understood and valued, and where all employees can reach their full potential.

A model diversity plan will soon be piloted in three County departments, including Probation, Public Works and

the Department of Health Services.

To read more about the new Diversity Policy, contact your departmental Affirmative Action Coordinator.



Supervisor Molina addresses the County's top management on the new Diversity Policy, stressing that Affirmative Action "only opened the doors of opportunity, but didn't tell us how to work together."



Affirmative Action Compliance Officer John Hill commended Supervisor Molina for her leadership role in promoting the County's diversity efforts during her tenure last year as chair of the Board, crediting her with opening the processes of County government to all its residents.

Tormey

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outbreak," Tormey explains. "The collected information about the outbreak and the people involved helps to determine how to break the chain of transmission."

He is credited with bringing the ACD unit into the computer age. "When I first came to the department, we really didn't have any computers to speak of," he says, recalling the manual documentation process. "Initially, we purchased some IBM XT's during the late 1970's, but over time we acquired newer, faster computers to improve the efficiency of our office."

A native Angeleno, Tormey admits that he was "always interested in science and public health," excelling in the dual aspects of math and statistics.

His growing list of publications on cases and outbreaks of many communicable diseases is a continuing testament to his knowledge and expertise — and contributions to the County's public health.

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Kristina T. Hajjar
Managing Editor
Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street, Room 588
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 974-2449