

County DIGEST



AUGUST 1998

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles County Office of District Attorney

Dedicated to a Safe and Just Society

Throughout its almost 150-year history, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office has been a trailblazer for prosecution offices around the country. This history continues. But first, here are a few facts about the office:

- the largest local prosecuting office in the world
- more than 3,300 employees, including attorneys, investigators and support staff
- overall conviction rate: 94%
- felony filings: 60,000 to 70,000 a year; misdemeanor filings: 250,000 annually; juvenile petitions: 30,000 annually
- child support collections: \$212,008,763; 5,000 to 6,000 new cases each month

Prosecuting violent crime is the main mission of the District Attorney's Office. To further that end, many new and innovative programs have been launched in the areas of gang crime, family violence, hate crimes and crimes involving stalking.

The most dramatic recent prosecution development in the D.A.'s Office has been its aggressive implementation of the Three Strikes law, which puts criminal recidivists in prison for many years. The Office has also been successful with both gang prosecutions and multi-agency gang prevention programs such as SAGE (Strategy Against Gang Environments) and CLEAR (Community Law Enforcement and Recovery) aimed at kicking back neighborhoods from gangs.

Programs have also been launched to target the root causes of crime: ACT (Abolish Chronic Truancy) has helped more than 30,000 students improve their

school attendance; through Project LEAD (Legal Enrichment and Decision-making) prosecutors volunteer their lunch hour to teach fifth graders about the justice system; and through the RESCUE program the Office matches at-risk youths with County firefighters for mentoring. Through a domestic violence hotline, the Office brings help to women and children who face danger in their homes. Crimes ranging from elder and child abuse to child abduction receive the attention of special units within the D.A.'s Office.

Violent crime is not the D.A.'s only concern. New divisions have made dramatic inroads into automobile and worker's compensation insurance fraud. Protection of the environment and consumers ranks among District Attorney

priorities, along with safety in the workplace.

The anti-fraud work of the Automobile Insurance Division has saved taxpayers more than \$160 million. The Worker's Compensation Fraud Division's efforts have resulted in a sharp drop in insurance premiums and helped keep companies in California.

Millions of dollars in fines paid by environmental polluters have not only gone to clean up our rivers, sea shores and groundwater, but also have sponsored needed environmental scholarships and other projects for students. The Consumer Protection Division celebrated its 25th



District Attorney Gil Garcetti assists in planting a tree at Montebello High School following a scholarship presentation made possible by fines collected from successful environmental prosecutions.

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August Retirees

Congratulations to the following employees who are joining the ranks of the retired after 30 or more years of service to the people of Los Angeles County:

COUNTY COUNSEL: DeWitt Clinton
DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Louise Cooper
FIRE: Wayne J. Brooks, John Lorentzen, Mark J. Manders, Michael J. Minore
HEALTH SERVICES: Pauline F. Campbell, Helen R. Jordan
PARKS & RECREATION: Dolores M. Rodriguez
PROBATION: Michael W. Brown, Emory Harper, Lyle C. Peterson, Raul Solis
PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Linda M. Madrigal, Jestine A. Moore, Gale E. Swensson
PUBLIC WORKS: Burl S. McKelvie, Carlos Najera, Jr., Bill G. Phillips
SHERIFF: Andrew A. Garcia, Benny J. Kirtley, Ronald S. Moe, Louis R. Schumacher, James M. Sears, Larry L. Crum
SUPERIOR COURT: Norma H. Diaz, Edith M. Reid

Congratulations to the following employees who are retiring after serving the people of the County of Los Angeles for more than 25 years:

ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL: Donald S. Kim
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER: Yoshinori Kakihara
CHILDREN'S SERVICES: Asako Miki, Patsy C. Yu
DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Pedro Martinez
FIRE: William L. Byler, James A. Evans II, Harry A. Thy
HEALTH SERVICES: Delores W. Ball, Angie Cabrera, Judy Johnson, Samuel F. Liggins, Corazon L. Lim, Janet R. Lindsey, Jewel L. Turner, Rachel Villasenor, Rosemary D. Leake, Jeremiah J. White
HUMAN RESOURCES: Phillip C. Thomas
PROBATION: Ernest Castro
PUBLIC LIBRARY: Sharon L. Page
PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Karen Dupont, Norma B. Oroz, Jeanie Price, Sophia Willisie
SHERIFF: Felino Y. Domingo, Lawrence J. Rupp
SUPERIOR COURT: William G. Davis, Sapora P. Thomas

Carla Arranaga

Justice for All

Since age 11, Carla Arranaga already dreamed of becoming a lawyer. After receiving a B.A. in Political Science and Chicano Studies from the University of California at Berkeley, she enrolled at Berkeley's Boalt Hall where she earned a J.D. From then on, she has moved to higher grounds and is recognized nationwide as an expert in the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes and the development of criminal justice systems to respond to crimes motivated by hate and bias. Recently another distinction was bestowed on her, namely, the July 1998 County Employee of the Month.

Arranaga, a 14-year County employee, is a Deputy District Attorney IV with the Hate Crime Suppression Unit of the Office of District Attorney. She is the deputy-in-charge responsible for the investigation and vertical prosecution, the supervision of a case from the investigative stage through trial, of hate crimes throughout the County.

As a prosecutor, she has worked as a trial deputy prosecuting numerous cases including murder, attempted murder, child molestation, domestic violence and robbery. Her stellar performance as a trial attorney led her to the elite "Hardcore Gang Division" where she successfully prosecuted 54 murder cases. Her persuasive skills and honest approach have brought reluctant witnesses to testify. She has also ensured witnesses and survivor families who were impoverished and unfamiliar with the justice system received services due them in a timely manner. Last year alone, her unit filed 31 new cases and obtained 36 convictions of defendants charged with hate crimes.

As deputy-in-charge, Arranaga

was the catalyst behind the vision to make the unit a national prosecution model to investigate, review and vertically prosecute all adult felony hate crimes in the County. She developed procedures and protocols for hate crime prosecution, intervention, prevention and community awareness and protection. She has increased awareness of hate crimes by providing educational training to federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. As a matter of fact, she was a panelist at President Clinton's National Summit on Hate Crimes last year.

In addition to being on-call Countywide she has an average monthly caseload of 16

cases including two high profile murder cases. Furthermore she developed a program to track and monitor filed hate crimes and non-filed hate crime incidents Countywide which has allowed law enforcement to share information and resources leading to a more efficient investigation.

She has forged strong partnerships and has continued to work tirelessly for cooperation between various community-based agencies and government entities. These groups, which historically have not worked together, include the Los Angeles Police Commission Task Force on Hate Crimes, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Task Force on Hate Crimes and the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Arranaga has received awards from the Anti-Defamation League for promoting tolerance among the citizens of Los Angeles County and the Gay and Lesbian Services Center of Los Angeles for outstanding contributions to the community.



Carla Arranaga is flanked by Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite and District Attorney Gil Garcetti.



County of Los Angeles
CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

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Fifth District

August 13, 1998

TO: County Department Heads
County Blood Donor Coordinators

FROM: David E. Janssen
Chief Administrative Officer

Mark Finucane
Director of Health Services

AMERICAN RED CROSS/LOS ANGELES COUNTY BLOOD DRIVE KICKOFF

This is to request your participation in the September 1998 Kick Off of our new initiative to raise County participation in Red Cross blood donor drives. As the article in the June 1998 issue of the *County Digest* pointed out, we have joined with SEIU Local 660 President Alejandro Stephens and the American Red Cross to kickoff a Countywide strategy to ensure the maintenance of an adequate and safe community blood supply.

To accomplish this task, we need to increase County employee participation rates from our current level of 4.5% to our goal of 10% Countywide. This is a daunting task but already the Department of Public Works in Alhambra is running very successful blood drives and is averaging an employee participation rate of 43%! For this department alone, their support has saved over 2,300 lives!

All County offices are being contacted by the Red Cross to either host drives during the month of September or to encourage employees to participate in established drives convenient to their work location. Red Cross Field Representatives will provide support and guidance in creating blood drive opportunities. We strongly urge your support of this life-saving service.

The most effective approach to recruit donors and achieve successful blood drives is to develop a recruitment team comprised of representatives from various departments or divisions within a facility to educate co-workers and sign-up donors. Our Countywide Blood Program/Bone Marrow Registry Coordinator, Mr. Terry Ford, will be happy to assist you in this effort. He may be contacted at (213) 240-8282.

The American Red Cross is providing t-shirts to all County donors who participate in this special kick-off program in September. *Please help your community and give the gift of life—who knows, the life you save may be someone you know!*

Your cooperation and support are sincerely appreciated. Thank you.

DEJ:MF
TEF:ga

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY · AMERICAN RED CROSS
JOINT LABOR-MANAGEMENT BLOOD DONOR INITIATIVE**



CAO David Janssen and SEIU Local 660 President Alejandro Stephens join Red Cross mascot *Buddy Blood Drop* to announce the kickoff of the new labor-management initiative to increase County employee participation in Countywide blood drives.

COUNTYWIDE BLOOD DRIVES IN SEPTEMBER 1998

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Torrance Superior/Municipal Courts	09-02-98
Edmund D. Edelman Children's Court	09-03-98
Civic Center/Hahn Hall of Administration	09-03-98
Carson Sheriffs Station	09-09-98
Department of Public Works (Alhambra)	09-09-98
Compton Courts Building	09-09-98
Van Nuys Superior Courts	09-09-98
Health Services Administration/Public Health	09-10-98
Sheriffs Department HDQRS.	09-14-98
Courthouse/County Library HDQRS. (Downey)	09-15-98
Department of Public Social Services (Industry)	09-17-98
L.A. Education Office (Downey)	09-22-98
King-Drew Medical Center	09-21-98
Rancho Los Amigos Medical Center	09-29-98
LAC+USC Medical Center	09-01-98
Department of Public Social Services (Olympic)	09-02-98
Department of Public Social Services (Canoga Park)	09-11-98
Department of Family and Children's Services	09-17-98

To receive more information about additional sites near you, please call the American Red Cross at (213) 739-5544. Remember, *the life you save may be someone you already know!*. Thank you!!

Department of
Military and Veterans Affairs

Less known among County employees, but a byword in the veterans' community and related state and federal agencies, is the 21-employee Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (DMVA). Often mistaken as the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, DMVA is an advocacy agency for veterans. Its persistence and accomplishments on behalf of veterans are legendary and its influence within that professional sphere is enviable. "Can do" is a way of life and its visionary initiatives to meet a need efficiently, effectively and economically are frequently adopted by others.

Established in 1959 by the Board of Supervisors, the department has two primary missions: 1) to assist veterans, their dependents and survivors in pursuing claims for earned benefits under federal, state and local laws and 2) to operate and maintain Patriotic Hall, the County's veterans memorial building, for use by veterans' organizations and the public.

As the County's Veterans Service Officer, the Director, through the Veterans Services Division, counsels veterans and/or their families in determining eligibility for pensions, compensation, home loans, burial, educational and other benefits available to them as well as assisting them in filing for those benefits. In so doing, the department has been instrumental in obtaining retroactive payments as much as \$88,000 for a single claimant. Last year DMVA processed 7,933 claims which paid a total of \$7,586,068.06 to eligible County veterans or their dependents. When spent, this increase in buying power results in greater tax revenue and gives a stimulus to the County economy. With five field offices, one in each Supervisorial District, the department seeks to provide access to clients who are unable to travel long distances. Additionally, home visits are made to assist the physically impaired in extreme circumstances. Working closely with the Department of Public Social Services, the department processes welfare applicant referrals and Medi-Cal/Long Term Care referrals (for those veterans and widows confined to nursing homes) to obtain federal money for these individuals in lieu of state and County payments. Last year this work produced \$9,728,165.84 in cost avoidance for County taxpayers.

With the County's large homeless veterans' population there are, predictably, deaths among the indigents. Veterans Services Division fulfills both the state and moral mandates to ensure that those indigent veterans who honorably served our country are given a dignified burial. Additionally, the staff assists the families of hundreds of other veterans in answering burial and claims questions.

One of the most popular State veterans' benefits is the College Tuition and Fee Waiver program, which offers a college education to the qualified dependents of deceased or service disabled veterans.

Through an extensive year-long outreach effort, youngsters are contacted at high schools, colleges and churches as well as through their local veterans' organizations. Applications are provided by mail to those calling any department office. Completed applications are reviewed and approved or denied by the Director, and college fee waivers are mailed within two days. Applicants designate the school(s) which they desire to attend within the state's University of California system, California State University system or the Community College system, and a copy of the fee waiver letter is forwarded to that institution.

To further assist the County's veterans population, applications for admission to the State's Veterans Homes in Yountville and Barstow are made available in this office and assistance is given in completing and submitting them to the Homes. Applications for the State's Veterans License Plates are available from the department, as well. These special license plates provide greater recognition for those who served in the Armed Forces and purchasers can affix a logo with the

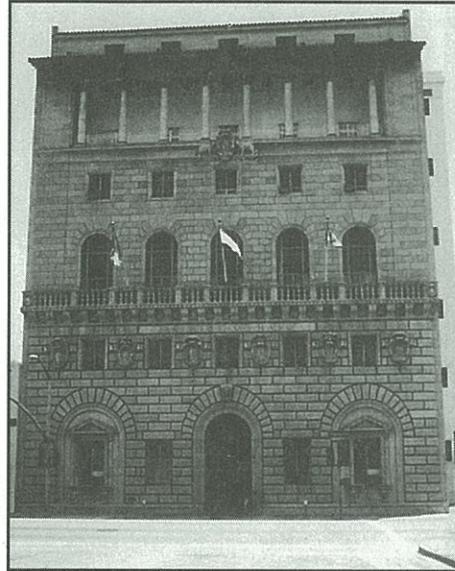
emblem of their service branch or veterans' organization. License proceeds are returned to the Counties' Veterans Service Officers to expand their services to the veterans' community.

Beyond the predictable patriotic holidays, DMVA participates in numerous veterans' events. By assisting local communities in planning, mobilizing resources and implementing functions, its small staff multiplies its effectiveness. Annual Stand Downs to assist homeless veterans, the dedication of veterans' memorials and establishing a veterans' services booth at fairs, expos and care days are but some of the examples. As strong veterans' advocates,

DMVA works closely with all branches of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the California Department of Veterans Affairs in pursuing veterans' issues. With 37% of the County's veterans 65 years or older, the department has been in the forefront of health care planning to obtain both adequate and accessible medical service.

The County's Veterans Advisory Commission, whose members are appointed by the Board of Supervisors, is supported by DMVA in its advocacy role on issues of concern to veterans. Through the efforts of the commission, food service conditions at the V.A. Medical Centers have improved and the Board of Supervisors has taken strong positions on legislation or other subjects where veterans' benefits have been threatened.

At venerable Patriotic Hall, the 73-year-old veterans' building, the DMVA offers a charming ambiance in which veterans' organizations, as well as the general public, can meet and entertain at affordable costs. Memorabilia from U.S.



The 73-year-old Patriotic Hall on South Figueroa in Los Angeles.

Election News

The terms of office for the Safety Members of the Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association (LACERA), the Fourth Member of the Board of Investments and the Seventh Member of the Board of Retirement will expire on December 31, 1998. Elections for these offices will be held on Tuesday, December 15, 1998.

Safety Members interested in running for these offices need to obtain

nomination packets from the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk's office in Norwalk starting August 17. Nominating petitions must be signed by at least 50 County employees who are Safety Members (as of July 1, 1998). Petitions must be filed with the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk before 5:00 p.m. on Monday, September 14, 1998.

For more information, call (213) 974-1748.



DA

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anniversary in 1996 by reaching two milestones - its 500th civil judgement and \$30 million in total monetary relief. Official misconduct is a continuing concern and has resulted in the prosecution of former and current city and County officials, as well as peace officers.

The D.A.'s Bureau of Family Support Operations administers a child support program that is larger than that of 42 states. The Bureau employs about 1,200 people, including over 100 prosecutors. Along with a major increase in collections due to automation, the Bureau has instituted new programs that go far beyond collections. The Parents Fair Share program involves job training and peer counseling to help unemployed parents find jobs. Con Los Padres provides

counseling, education and job training for unmarried teen parents. The Paternity Opportunity Program helps establish paternity for children of unmarried parents.

The D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation, composed of 208 investigators and 73 support personnel, provides investigative assistance to every area of the Office.

From Three Strikes cases to Paternity Opportunity, the District Attorney's Office provides a remarkable variety of services to the citizens of Los Angeles County. By the same token, the array of employment opportunities provides both unlimited challenges and opportunities to the employees of the Office and those who seek employment.

Veterans Affairs

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conflicts dating back to the Civil War are on display and several large murals depict historic military events. An adaptable venue, the Hall hosts a wide variety of events from patriotic or memorial ceremonies to public hearings, press conferences, training seminars and theatrical performances. Two dining rooms and five large meeting rooms serve banquets, receptions and other parties, while the gymnasium is the site for basketball, volleyball, martial arts and a myriad of other functions. Room rentals involve over 100,000 attendees annually and provide revenue for about half of the building's operating costs.

Departmental headquarters are located at the hall, which also provides daily office space for a number of veterans' organizations, a Veterans Administration medical program for veterans and two high school special education classes.

As Patriotic Hall meets the needs of today it is also planning for the future. These plans include interior decorating, renovated elevators and a 700-car vertical parking structure. These developments will make the Hall self-sufficient in the twenty-first century and a prime candidate for the National Registry of Historic Buildings.



Savings Bonds

Are you tired of just making ends meet? Are you looking for an easy and painless way to save a little? Look no further! Participate in the County's U.S. Savings Bonds Campaign. Now is your chance to sign up and start building for the future.

This year's Campaign will conclude on August 28, 1998. Employees are urged to take this opportunity to purchase U.S. Savings Bonds through either a payroll deduction or by making a one-time only purchase. For those with an existing payroll deduction, consider increasing your current deduction to boost your savings even more. U.S. Savings Bonds are great for your savings portfolio, are an innovative alternative when buying gifts and are great incentives or prizes for your County or community projects.

There's more! To culminate this year's Campaign, a Los Angeles Dodgers U.S. Savings Bonds Night will be held on September 25, 1998 when the Dodgers take on the Milwaukee Brewers. For more information on the Campaign or the Dodgers Night, contact your departmental savings bonds coordinator or call Craig Hirakawa, the Countywide Savings Bonds Program Manager, at (213) 974-2523. See you at the ballpark!

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