

County DIGEST



SEPTEMBER 1998

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

Department of Public Social Services

Focused on its New Mission of Promoting Personal Responsibility and Economic Independence

Since passage of federal welfare reform, the mission of the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) has changed dramatically. This new approach is reflected in the replacement of the Aid to Families with Dependent Children program with Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, which is funded with a federal block grant. DPSS is familiar to most County employees as the agency that provides cash, food stamps and medical benefits to needy people. The department's focus has now shifted from ongoing income maintenance to temporary assistance coupled with expanded services to help individuals and families achieve economic independence. Every individual applying for assistance receives a clear message about self-sufficiency. Simply, the message promotes "A job, a better job, a career."

In California, this employment focused program is known as CalWORKs. Applicants are immediately offered employment services, a "work first" approach which DPSS has been using successfully since 1993. Employment services include Welfare-to-Work (L.A. GAIN) for employable parents and Cal-Learn for teen mothers. Pregnant women or young mothers receive case management and support services along with financial incentives to complete their high school education. Parents facing barriers to employment are offered additional support in the form of mental health, substance abuse and domestic violence services at no cost to the individual. To enable participants to attend GAIN job search

workshops, vocational assessment, remedial, education, vocational training and work experience assignments, funds are provided to cover child care, transportation and other work-related expenses.

A new child care program also



Community job fairs bring DPSS participants together with employers. Sometimes a job offer is made on the spot.

took effect on January 1, 1998 which helps CalWORKs families to access immediate, quality and affordable child care as they move through their welfare-to-work activities toward unsubsidized employment. It promotes parental choice and ensures that families have child care that is stable enough for them to move off cash assistance. The department has contracted with Child Care Resources and Referral agencies who will be available on-site in each CalWORKs office to provide child care information and services to families.

GAIN is moving quickly to double the size of its operation in order to meet the CalWORKs requirement that all current participants are enrolled in welfare-to-work activities by the end of

1998, unless otherwise exempted. This is a major undertaking that calls for unprecedented coordination and collaboration with various public agencies, nonprofit service providers, faith-based organizations, community advocates and private-sector businesses. If you have a job to fill or know of opportunities for employment, contact the DPSS web site at www.co.la.ca.us/dpss for GAIN's free personnel recruitment services. An experienced Job Developer will follow up.

Effective January 1, 1998, the CalWORKs program limits lifetime eligibility for adults to 60 months of cash aid. Commonly referred to as the 5-year time limit, this new requirement reinforces the message that aid is intended to be temporary and that participants need to take advantage of the employment services that are available in order to achieve the goal of self-sufficiency through employment.

Many welfare parents work but do not earn high enough wages to support their families. In response, the GAIN program has stepped up its efforts in the area of post-employment services (e.g., skills upgrade training, monitoring and job retention) that will help each individual maximize his/her potential. To encourage employed parents to remain in the workforce, the State of California enacted Work Pays, an income subsidy which provides an incentive for working even on a part-time basis. As long as the parent has a job and is contributing to the

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family's support, the Work Pays program will be there to supplement limited earnings until such time as the goal of economic independence is achieved. Working parents are encouraged to take advantage of the federal Earned Income Tax Credit to bring into the household as much cash as possible. Medi-Cal, transportation and child care will also be provided on a transitional basis until the income earned is enough to reach self-sufficiency.

In addition to CalWORKs, DPSS also provides cash assistance, employment services and SSI advocacy through its General Relief program to indigent adults who are ineligible for State & federal assistance. As of February 1, 1998, benefits for employable General Relief recipients are also time limited. The DPSS Job Skills Training Program provides basic job search skills (e.g., interviewing techniques, resume preparation, practice interviews) together with a motivational component that emphasizes self-esteem for individuals, many of whom have experienced long-term unemployment. Able bodied recipients who do not locate employment quickly may be assigned to the Workfare Program which provides supervised on-the-job work experience at over 400 public and nonprofit sites. Disabled clients who have not previously qualified for SSI are assisted through the process, including obtaining necessary medical documentation and pursuing appeals of denied applications.

Non-aided households with limited resources can also apply for Food Stamps and Medi-Cal at DPSS offices. Program eligibility is based on financial need. Legal immigrants can qualify for both Food Stamps and Medi-Cal. DPSS has worked closely with social services advocates, faith-based organizations and leaders in various immigrant communities to help make it clear that legal immigrants are not excluded from DPSS services, even if they have not concluded the citizenship application process.

In 1997, the Board of Supervisors established the Child Medi-Cal Enrollment Project to increase the number of uninsured children receiving medical benefits. The goal is to enroll 100,000 children by September 1999. Through its "Outreach to the Community" efforts,

DPSS staff have taken information about Medi-Cal eligibility to non-traditional sites such as churches, community centers and neighborhood health fairs and made themselves available to take applications in the evenings and on weekends. Promoting access to affordable health care is part of the national agenda and DPSS is collaborating with State agencies, the Department of Health Services and community organizations to simplify and expedite the process.

DPSS serves the community's health care needs with two other programs whose focus is to make it easier for the public. Under the Medi-Cal Outstation Program, eligibility workers take and process Medi-Cal applications on-site at hospitals and clinics throughout the County. The Medi-Cal Long Term Care District provides services to clients residing in skilled nursing facilities.

The department also determines eligibility for In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS), the program that pays for household help to enable elderly and disabled persons to live independently in their own homes, and oversees the Adult Protective Services program that intervenes on behalf of abused or exploited individuals. The County contracts with Info Line to maintain a 24-hour toll-free Elder Abuse Hotline (800) 992-1660. Help with IHSS problems is available from the IHSS Ombudsman at (888) 678-IHSS.

The Board of Supervisors has designated DPSS as one of eight lead disaster response County departments. In the event of a natural disaster, DPSS is responsible for the care and shelter of disaster victims. Staff coordinate their efforts with food banks and other emergency food, shelter and human services agencies. The department maintains an emergency response system to alert, mobilize and assign personnel on a 24-hour basis in response to calls from the CAO, the Sheriff or the American Red Cross.

To ensure that DPSS not only operates its programs effectively and efficiently, but also is in a position to influence the development and implementation of public policies, DPSS Director Lynn Bayer has provided leadership in the County Welfare Directors Association and the National Association of Counties. The department's Strategic Planning and Governmental Relations Division plays a significant role by formulating plans to

ensure that the County remains in the forefront of successful, innovative welfare reform implementation; analyzing significant bills and State/federal regulations and advocating legislation that is advantageous to the County.

Bayer emphasizes the collaborative approach, as evidenced by the strong working relationship between DPSS and the County Office of Education, which has brought high praise to the GAIN Program. The County's accomplishments were recently acknowledged at a Washington, D.C. press conference by Secretary of Health and Human Services Donna E. Shalala. "As we mark the second anniversary of the President's signing of the new welfare law, this report on Los Angeles County gives important early evidence that welfare reform can succeed in large cities," Shalala said.

DPSS has taken some important first steps in implementing welfare reform, but many challenges remain as well as opportunities for growth. Ongoing collaboration with County partners, as well as with the private and nonprofit sectors, is essential for the department to succeed in its commitment to quality service.



Arts organizations in Los Angeles County will be presenting over 100 performances, exhibitions and other cultural events free to the public on Saturday, October 3, as part of the celebration of National Arts and Humanities Month. This fourth annual Los Angeles County-wide Arts Open House, coordinated by the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, will cover a wider geographical area than ever before and for the convenience of patrons has designated 10 areas as centers of activity.

Complete schedules are available through the following: public libraries throughout the County, the Arts Commission website, <http://www.lacountyarts.org> and the Open House 24-hour hotline, (213) 972-3099.

Lloyd W. Pellman

County Counsel

Several hundred County employees ranging from clerks to aides of members of the Board of Supervisors filled Room 140 in the Hall of Administration for the swearing-in of the new County Counsel. The capacity-filled room was evident of the admiration and respect they have for the County's top lawyer.

Lloyd W. Pellman, a 25-year County employee, was sworn in as the new County Counsel by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Patrick T. Meyers and Inglewood Municipal Court Judge Eric C. Taylor. Both judges were chosen by Pellman because they exemplify the high quality of lawyers the Office of County Counsel has produced over the years.

Prior to assuming the Office's top job, Pellman was Senior Assistant County Counsel. His duties included acting as Chief Deputy in the absence of the Chief Deputy and serving as alternate adviser to the Board of Supervisors for planning, zoning and other public hearings. He was also responsible for three divisions of both legal and support staff, to name a few.

Pellman was born in Ohio and received his undergraduate degree in Education from Ohio State University. He moved to California when he signed a contract to teach at the Antelope Valley Union High School in Lancaster where he was an English teacher and yearbook and club adviser. While teaching, he pursued higher education at California State University, Northridge. He received a Juris Doctor from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles where he was a consistent member of the Dean's List.

After his teaching stint, he moved to the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in La

Canada Flintridge as the Public Information Officer and Assistant Administrator for Space Flight Operations Facility Contractor Training where he met and worked for one of the two men he admires and emulates: former director William H. Pickering.

"He was well liked by the staff because he viewed his staff as a team," Pellman said.

That is one of the many reasons Pellman invited County Counsel's entire staff and not just management to his swearing-in.

"We (lawyers) could not do our job without the support staff," he added.

The other person Pellman respects is his late father who despite

limited formal education "knew the value of people and the respect they deserve."

As the County's chief legal adviser, Pellman plans on making communication to the Board of Supervisors and department heads about legal matters a top priority. He also would like to see the Office function as a team and provide legal resources within and outside the Office of County Counsel.

Every Monday to foster team spirit and camaraderie, Pellman, a gourmet cook, a hobby he started a few years ago, brings loaves of bread he baked over the weekend to the office for the staff to sample and enjoy.

Aside from gourmet cooking, Bill, as he is fondly referred to, enjoys participating in charity walks including the AIDS walk and has encouraged his staff to walk with him. He frequents bookstores which is where he met his wife, Kathleen, and reads novels by lawyers such as those by John Grisham.



September 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:

ASSESSOR: David A. Barrios, Lennister K. Williams

CHILDREN'S SERVICES: Sybil Richardson, Jerry L. Watkins

FIRE: John W. Everett, John G. Bennett, Lyle D. Burkhart, Larry J. Kirkham, John L. Selders, Theodore E. Giba, Dominick Sergi

HEALTH SERVICES: Maurice V. Boyd, Annie Butts, Louis Finister, Frank Garza, Winston L. Wade, Robert E. Stuart

INTERNAL SERVICES: Bobby E. Stringer

MENTAL HEALTH: Dolores A. Guirguis, Alicia Montoya

PARKS & RECREATION: Robert Guzman

PROBATION: Samuel Hankerson

PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Noel L. Hochman, Laurel A. Kerr, Charlotte H. Williams

PUBLIC WORKS: Joaquin Ahumada, James A. Cantor, Gary Hughes, Joseph E. Strader, Carl M. Wada

SHERIFF: Freddie E. Bighorse, Jr., David A. Biondi, Howard J. Holts, Robert K. Pettitt, Michael D. Preston, Raymond J. Reyes, Alvin R. Williams, Mary N. Wilson, Robert McLaughlin

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

ASSESSOR: Jon D. Lowe

COMMUNITY & SENIOR SERVICES: Kenneth Naylor

DISTRICT ATTORNEY: Robert L. Hilleary

FIRE: John Y. Gee, Geza Gombos, James Allen

HEALTH SERVICES: Tillie L. Alarcon, Thomas L. Alexander, Jesus G. Cordova, Luis Lancero, Jr., Raymunda G. Miguel, Susan Q. Palomares, Lourdes Ravelo, Beulah Stamps, Arnold Vasquez, Johanna G. Ansari, Charles J. Baker

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MUNICIPAL COURTS: Shirley M. Stephenson
PROBATION: James H. Hawley
PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES: Yvonne G. Hale, Constance Rickel, Rita J. Spencer
PUBLIC WORKS: Peter Blinn, Armen G. Johnson
SHERIFF: James E. Kozak, DeWayne K. Beckner, Dorothy M. Moses
SUPERIOR COURT: Florine B. Bradley



The Family Music Festival returns to Bonelli Regional Park on Saturday, October 17, with the legendary Righteous Brothers in their only Southern California appearance. Presented by Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich and the Department of Parks and Recreation, the event marks eight years of musical extravaganza which runs from 11 a.m. through 7 p.m.

The festival will feature musical performances, a classic car exhibit and food, crafts and vendor booths. A children's stage will provide continuous entertainment including a magician and a play area with numerous kiddy rides.

Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$15 at the gate and \$25 for reserved seats in advance and \$30 at the gate. Children under 12 years of age are free with general admission only. County employees can purchase admission tickets at \$15 or \$5 off each reserved seat (applies to mail orders or advance purchase only). Proof of employment is required.

All proceeds will benefit the Department's Junior Lifeguard Program for Participating Youth.

The park is located at 120 Via Verde in San Dimas next to Raging Waters where the San Bernardino (10) and the Foothill (210) Freeways meet.

For more information, call (909) 599-8411 extension 2002.

Dennis L. Slavin, Jr.

Employee of the Month

"Receiving an award for doing this work well is like icing on the cake," said Dennis L. Slavin, Jr., August 1998 County Employee of the Month. The honoree received the award from Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman Pro Tem, on behalf of Supervisor Burke.

The 11-year County employee works for the Department of Regional Planning as a Principal Regional Planning Assistant with the Advance Planning/Information Systems division. He is assigned to the General Plan Section which is responsible for completing comprehensive updates on the County's General Plan. He holds a B.S. in Natural Resource Planning from Humboldt State University.

Slavin, Jr. was manager for two major projects and introduced the desktop Geographic Information Systems which enabled easier management of selected planning and mapping efforts. After learning Web-page programming on his own time during weekends, he developed a departmental home page and launched the department's Internet Project to provide Internet access to departmental staff. The project has had a tremendous productivity improvement by providing research and communication capabilities to staff while making selected departmental services available to the public 24-hours a day, seven days a week.

"I enjoy exploring the Internet. But my real fascination lies on how technology changes people's lives," the honoree said.

Cooperation among County departments has made services readily available and information accessible to the public and interested County employees in a timely manner. He was co-project manager of the Multi-Family Housing Inspection Tracking System, a state-of-the-art software application providing easy-to-use interface for monitoring the status of planning, building and health provisions at multi-family housing properties Countywide. The purpose of this effort was to combat slum housing through improved communication between the Departments of Health Services (Environmental Health), Public Works and Regional Planning. This is the first of its kind in Los Angeles County government.



In his spare time, Slavin, Jr. volunteers with the Homicide Bureau of the Sheriff's Department, is a Reserve Police Officer for the City of South Pasadena and co-founded the Scent Evidence Canine Team, an organization providing scent evidence investigative services free of charge to law enforcement agencies in Southern California.

With him in his quest to "make this world a better place for all of us," is his dog TinkerBelle. The dynamic duo has been instrumental in solving numerous murder cases as well as searching for missing persons and suspects-at-large and performing other scent-related investigations.

Dennis L. Slavin, Jr., his wife and TinkerBelle reside in South Pasadena.

Members of the Board

Yvonne Brathwaite Burke
Chair
Second District

Gloria Molina
First District

Zev Yaroslavsky
Third District

Don Knabe
Fourth District

Michael D. Antonovich
Fifth District

Michael J. Henry
Director of Personnel

Sandra A. Hoodye
Ombudsman/Community Liaison

John S. Mina
Staff