

P.S.

## POSTSCRIPT

NEWS FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS

JUNE 2018 ■ VOL. 29, NO. 2

## DOING GOOD

## THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

One of the biggest advantages of being employed by the most populous county in the nation is the abundance of departments you can work in and service roles that you can experience while still remaining a part of the larger organization. That world of possibilities extends to volunteers as well. Helping to match citizens, County employees, and County retirees with the public service programs that need their time and talents has been the purview of the Los Angeles County Volunteer Program since 1981. The current Countywide Volunteer Program Relaunch and Awareness campaign aims to bring awareness to this impactful program and encourage employees and the public to take part.

"We promote volunteerism as an opportunity to improve program efficiency, enhance productivity, and engage community involvement," says Countywide Volunteer Program Coordinator Rosa Cervantes, who is helping lead the current relaunch and awareness campaign. "The County Volunteer Program has been around for many years, but not everyone in the community is aware of the extensive volunteer opportunities that are available," she says. "The goal is to invigorate the program through awareness and extensive outreach."

**Why Volunteer?**

For starters, you become part of a long, proud history of neighbors helping neighbors in our country, which dates back to the colonists who banded together to help each other build houses, plant crops, and fight fires.

As a County volunteer, you get the opportunity to make a tangible difference in your community — and you'll also be in good company. Last year, 126,000 individuals donated over two million volunteer hours to County departments. According to the Independent Sector, a national organization for nonprofits, this represents a value of \$54 million.

Additionally, not only are you helping your community when you volunteer, cont'd on pg. 6

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## LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

### BOARD OF RETIREMENT

- **VIVIAN H. GRAY**  
Chair  
Elected by General Members
- **HERMAN B. SANTOS**  
Vice Chair  
Elected by General Members
- **MARVIN ADAMS**  
Secretary  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors
- **ALAN J. BERNSTEIN**  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors
- **JAMES P. HARRIS**  
Alternate Member  
Elected by Retired Members
- **SHAWN R. KEHOE**  
Elected by Safety Members
- **JOSEPH KELLY**  
County Treasurer and Tax Collector  
Ex-Officio Member
- **KEITH KNOX**  
Chief Deputy County Treasurer and Tax Collector  
Alternate Ex-Officio Member
- **WILLIAM R. PRYOR**  
Alternate Member  
Elected by Safety Members
- **LES ROBBINS**  
Elected by Retired Members
- **THOMAS WALSH**  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors
- **GINA ZAPANTA-MURPHY**  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors

### BOARD OF INVESTMENTS

- **DAVID GREEN**  
Chair  
Elected by General Members
- **SHAWN R. KEHOE**  
Vice Chair  
Elected by Safety Members
- **WAYNE MOORE**  
Secretary  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors
- **JOSEPH KELLY**  
County Treasurer and Tax Collector  
Ex-Officio Member
- **KEITH KNOX**  
Chief Deputy County Treasurer and Tax Collector  
Alternate Ex-Officio Member
- **DAVID L. MUIR**  
Elected by Retired Members
- **RONALD A. OKUM**  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors
- **GINA V. SANCHEZ**  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors
- **HERMAN B. SANTOS**  
Elected by General Members
- **MICHAEL SCHNEIDER**  
Appointed by Board of Supervisors

Interim Chief Executive Officer  
**ROBERT R. HILL**

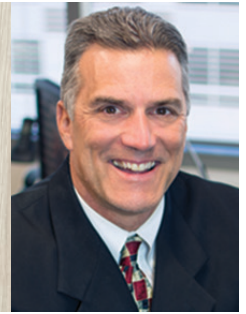
Interim Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
**JAMES BREKK**

Assistant Executive Officer  
**JJ POPOWICH**

Interim Assistant Executive Officer  
**BERNIE BUENAFLO**

# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DESK

ROBERT R. HILL - INTERIM CEO, LACERA



Greetings, LACERA members! As you might have already read in a previous issue of *PostScript*, I'm currently serving as LACERA's interim CEO, but that's only temporary. The search is on for LACERA's next CEO. The Korn Ferry firm, ranked "America's Best Executive Recruiter" for 2017 by *Forbes* magazine, has been retained by LACERA to spearhead this critical recruitment. LACERA's Board of Retirement and Board of Investments have designated the chairs and vice chairs of both boards to serve as their ad hoc search committee to oversee the CEO selection process. LACERA boards will receive monthly updates on the progress of the recruitment by Korn Ferry. While LACERA is in the process of completing this search, I will continue to provide leadership and guidance over LACERA's daily operations.

### Interdivisional Compliance Committee

At LACERA, we're always looking for ways to improve services to our members. With this in mind, LACERA management created an interdivisional compliance committee. The purpose of this committee is to establish an enterprise-wide policy development process, and its formation mimics a growing trend in industry — increasingly focused attention on instituting compliance controls to ensure that applicable requirements are met. We believe our LACERA members will ultimately benefit from better standardization in documentation from division to division.

The committee includes representatives from the Executive Office, Administrative Services, Benefits, Communications, Internal Audit, Member Services, Legal, Human Resources, Quality Assurance, and Systems divisions.

### LACERA Recognized

I'm pleased to share that LACERA has again received the Public Pension Coordinating Council's (PPCC) Public Pension Standards 2017 Award in recognition of meeting professional standards for plan design and administration as set forth in the Public Pension Standards. The Public Pension Standards are intended to reflect minimum expectations for public retirement systems' management and administration, and serve as a benchmark by which all defined benefit public plans should be measured. LACERA is a 15-time recipient of this important award.

### March Madness

While the weather heats up in Los Angeles County, things are starting to cool down a little at LACERA. Recently we finished retiring more than 1,600 members during the period we refer to as March Madness, which takes place every year from December through the end of March. These months are popular retirement times for members because those who retire on or before March 31 are eligible for the

From the Executive Desk cont'd

April 1 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA), if a COLA is approved by the Board of Retirement. Our 2018 March Madness tally of 1,600 members is up from around 1,500 last year.

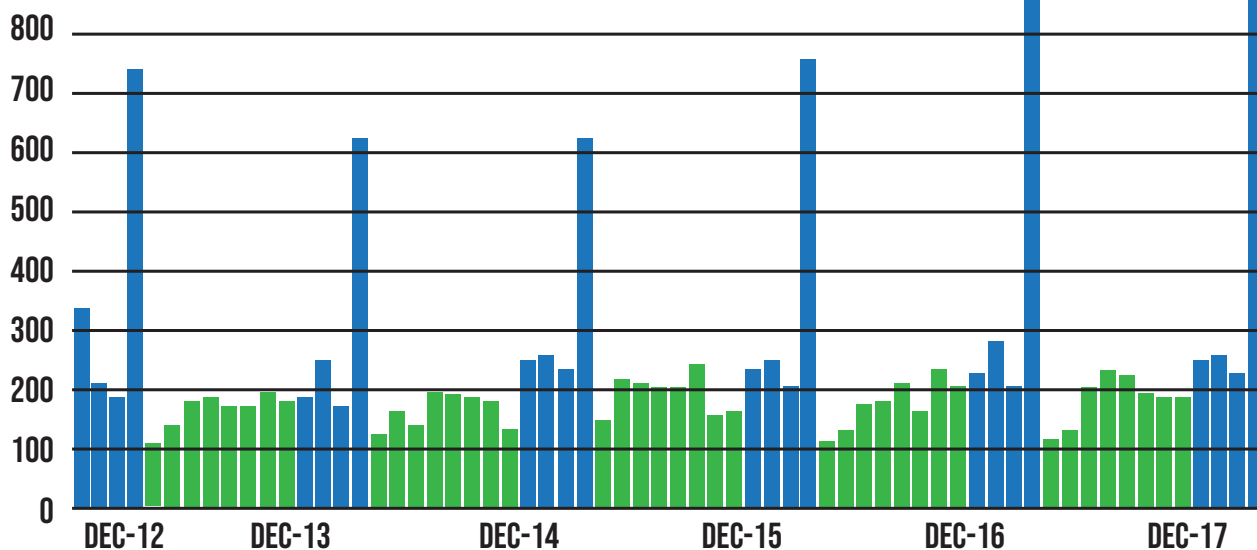
The graph below shows processing statuses for retirement elections over the last five years. The blue bars reflect completed status for the months of December through March, and the green bars reflect completed status for the other eight months.

If you're within five years of retiring, I encourage you to attend one of our pre-retirement workshops

to learn more about how to make the most out of your promised benefits, whether through timing it during March Madness or by taking into consideration other factors unique to you. Our pre-retirement workshop schedule can be found on page 8 of this newsletter. If retirement is still well into your future, you can rest assured that LACERA will still be producing, protecting, and providing your promised benefits when your time to retire arrives.

*Paul Hill*

### Rolling Five-year March Madness Trends\*



\*As of March 22, 2018

## LACERA Remembers Richard Wirth



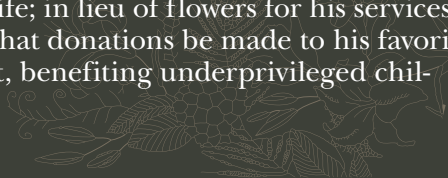
We are sad to share the news that former Board of Retirement member Richard Wirth passed away unexpectedly on March 22. Mr. Wirth was first appointed to the Board by former L.A. County Supervisor Michael Antonovich in the summer of 2001 and served through December 2006.

Mr. Wirth earned his bachelor's degree at Northern Illinois University, followed by graduate work at Southern Illinois University and Interamericana University in Saltillo, Mexico. He also studied law at Santa Clara University.

Mr. Wirth began his career as an Assistant City Manager in Joliet, Illinois, before moving to California. In 1973, he became the Director of Government Affairs for the Building Industry Association of Southern California (BIASC), later serving as Executive Director of the BIASC's Government Council until 1994. Concurrently, in 1985 he founded Wirth & Associates, a

governmental relations firm, and served on numerous boards and commissions throughout his career. These included being the first Chair and Chief Executive Officer of the Los Angeles County Housing Development Corporation; helping found the Public Inebriate Program of Los Angeles and serving as Chair for five years; serving on the Board of Directors of Moss Beach Homes, a major provider of private foster care throughout California; and serving on the Board of Directors of the Mexican-American Opportunity Foundation, where he was honored as Man of the Year for his efforts in establishing day care centers.

Mr. Wirth's commitment to helping young people extends past his life; in lieu of flowers for his services, his family asked that donations be made to his favorite charity, Aspiranet, benefiting underprivileged children and youth.





# NOTICE OF 2018 LACERA ELECTIONS



Elections will be held this summer for the Third Members of the Board of Investments and Board of Retirement, whose terms of office expire on December 31, 2018. Both positions are elected by general members. The newly elected Board members will take office on January 1, 2019, and their terms will continue until December 31, 2021. On Tuesday, March 20, 2018, the Board of Supervisors adopted resolutions establishing the governing procedures for the election. Nomination packets were made available April 16, 2018, and signed nominating petitions were due May 15, 2018.

Official ballots will be mailed beginning on June 18, 2018. Those who do not receive a ballot by June 29, 2018 or who wish to correct a mistake on their original ballot may request a duplicate by notifying their Departmental Election Coordinator before July 5, 2018.

Copies of the election procedures are available from the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk at 12400 Imperial Highway, Norwalk, CA 90650; the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, B1 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration, 500 West Temple Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012; and at the Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors' Election Information website address below.

**Ballots must be received by the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk by 5 p.m. on July 24, 2018 to be eligible for counting.**

For more information, call 213-974-1093 or visit: [bos.lacounty.gov/Services/ConflictOfInterestLobbyist/LACERAelection](http://bos.lacounty.gov/Services/ConflictOfInterestLobbyist/LACERAelection).



## LACERA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Senior Staff Counsel Michael D. Herrera Elected Vice President of NAPPA



In June 2017, LACERA Senior Staff Counsel Michael D. Herrera was elected Vice President (President-elect) of the National Association of Public Pension Attorneys (NAPPA). NAPPA is a professional legal and educational organization whose nearly 700 attorney members represent public pension funds throughout the United States.

Mr. Herrera has served on the NAPPA Executive Board since 2014. As President-elect, Mr. Herrera will become President this June at the Association's Annual Legal Education Conference in Savannah, Georgia. Mr. Herrera joined LACERA in 1999. As a Senior Staff Counsel, Mr. Herrera serves as a legal advisor to the fund, its boards, and staff.

### LACERA Staff, Executives, and Board Members Attend Spring SACRS Conference

LACERA's board members, executive management, and supervisory staff attended the State Association of County Retirement Systems (SACRS) spring conference May 15 through 18 in Anaheim. Representatives from LACERA and 19 other county retirement systems gathered to exchange ideas, get legislative updates, discuss operational procedures and processes, examine pension law issues, and discuss investment strategies in the context of current events.

LACERA representatives participated in the event in several capacities, as follows:

**Ricki Contreras**, Disability Retirement Division Manager, was part of an expert panel that addressed the "Three P's of Disability: Policy, Procedure, and Processability" on May 15. The presentation was aimed at helping participants distinguish between the different terms, understand documentation roles and responsibilities, and learn how information is captured and translated into technology systems.

**Carlos Barrios**, Member Services Division Section Head, and Tamara Caldwell, Disability Retirement Specialist/Supervisor, served as moderators for the Ops/Benefits and Disability breakout session on May 16, which covered "What Occupational and Environmental Exposures Can Lead to Disability."

**Johanna Fontenot**, Senior Staff Counsel and member of the SACRS Bylaws Committee, was one of the speakers for the May 16 attorney breakout session that covered the topics "Update on Alternative Investment Fee Transparency, Government Code § 7514.7," "Tax Issues for Public Pension Plans," "Disability Retirement Process — Challenging the Status Quo," "Litigation Update," and "Legislative Developments."

Assistant Executive Officer **JJ Popowich**, who serves on the SACRS Education Committee, was one of the speakers for the May 17

cont'd on page 11



# YOUR SECURITY, OUR CONCERN

## Safely Storing Hazardous Materials in Your Home, Part 2

Many common household items can be hazardous if used or stored improperly, or if they fall into the wrong hands. Of the nearly 2.2 million poison exposures reported in 2015, 93 percent occurred in a residence, so it's important to identify and properly store potentially harmful materials to ensure safety for yourself and others in your home. In our last issue of *PostScript*, we highlighted medications and personal care products. This time we address commonly used chemicals around the home.

### Everyday Dangers

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), nearly every household uses products containing hazardous materials or chemicals. These include cleaning, automotive, and lawn/garden products; hobby supplies; miscellaneous items such as batteries, thermometers, and light bulbs; and fuel products and containers. Below are some tips to help you safely store these items and keep people, pets, and the environment safe.

- Only buy what you need. An easy way to limit the amount of products you have to store is by carefully estimating and purchasing only the amount that you think you will use, or by sharing extra products with neighbors, local businesses or charities.
- Keep chemical products in their original bottles or containers, and never put products in a container (such as a soda bottle) where they could be mistaken for something else. Follow the manufacturer's use instructions, including the recommended amount, to prevent accidental exposures.
- Never mix household chemicals. They could react, ignite or explode. For example, mixing chlorine bleach and ammonia creates a highly toxic gas.
- Lock them up! Keep household chemicals out of the reach of children and pets by storing them up and away, or in a securely locked cabinet if such items present a spill hazard. Your safest option is a locking, fire-resistant, leak-tight chemical cabinet.
- Conduct an inventory of products in your home, including your garage, basement, and storage areas. Check manufacturer's labels and product locations to make sure you are storing the items as instructed and within the recommended temperature range. Check for loose

caps, damaged or corroded containers, out-of-date products, and cleaning and work supplies you no longer need and can dispose of (more on that below). If you can't read a product label, treat it as harmful and discard it.

- The possibility of earthquakes adds a layer of complexity when storing household chemicals. To reduce the likelihood of toxic spills, you may want to build a restraint on open shelves or not store certain chemicals together. For further suggestions, visit the Earthquake Country Alliance's Chemicals page at [www.earthquakecountry.org/step1/chemicals/](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/step1/chemicals/).
- Look for safer alternatives to the products you regularly use. The EPA's Safer Choice program has a list of products meeting the program's standard, as well as a labeling system to help you identify products with less toxic chemical ingredients. See more at [www.epa.gov/saferchoice](http://www.epa.gov/saferchoice).
- Don't toss it! Never dispose of unused household products or pesticides in the garbage, or by pouring them out. L.A. County's Department of Public Works has an extensive program in place to help residents safely dispose of household and electronic waste, with both mobile collection and permanent drop-off centers available. Visit [cleanLA.com](http://cleanLA.com) for more information.

*Sources: National Capital Poison Center, American Association of Poison Control Centers, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Environmental Protection Agency, Earthquake Country Alliance, L.A. County Department of Public Works, California Department of Toxic Substances Control*





## Doing Good cont'd from pg. 1

you're helping yourself. "Studies show that people who volunteer on a regular basis are physically, emotionally, and spiritually healthier than their non-volunteering counterparts," says Cervantes. "They also are more socially engaged and mentally stimulated, which is important in reducing the risk for developing dementia."

For active members, volunteering through the County is a great way to learn a new skill, network with your peers in other departments, and maybe even explore an area of service that you'd like to point your career in the future.

When you retire, donating your time allows you to contribute your valuable experience in a meaningful way or simply try something new while having a positive impact. Participating in the County's Volunteer Program as a retiree can even help you maintain a connection with your prior department and colleagues.

Whatever your age or working situation, the Volunteer Program is ready to steer you in the right direction and get you connected with a department that aligns with your availability, interests, and even location. The program offers a great deal of scheduling flexibility and accommodates different time commitments as well. "The County has one-time volunteer positions for staffing large events and working the election polls, part-time and full-time opportunities, as well as seasonal work," says Cervantes. The program can even bring your family together by recommending activities that you can all participate in as a group.

County volunteer opportunities include tutoring youth, acting as a museum docent, serving as a reserve officer or firefighter, visiting the elderly in nursing homes, advocating for children, caring for animals, helping raise funds, being a member of a youth explorer post, and much more. "The possibilities are extensive," says Cervantes. (Be sure to read the accompanying volunteer profiles for

inspiration and to get an inside look at how our active and retired members contribute their talents.)

In addition to its matchmaking function, the County Volunteer Program makes sure that volunteers are fully supported along the way and acknowledged for their efforts. The program provides tips and guidelines to help departments manage and recognize their own volunteers, as well as hosts an annual countywide volunteer awards luncheon.

## Getting Started

Exploring County volunteer opportunities is easy. See A World of Possibilities below for department links with descriptions about specific volunteer positions, as well as contact information or application forms. *PostScript* also frequently includes County volunteer opportunities (see page 7).

Whether you need a little more guidance or know what you want to do and would like to sign up, the Volunteer Program wants to hear from you. "The most gratifying part of my work is having the distinguished privilege of working with different members of the community who want to give back in a meaningful way," says Cervantes.

## Contacting the Volunteer Program

To volunteer or get additional information, call Rosa Cervantes at 213-974-2760 or email [RCervantes@hr.lacounty.gov](mailto:RCervantes@hr.lacounty.gov).

## A World of Possibilities

To access a full list of departments and direct links to their volunteer opportunities, click on the June 2018 issue of *PostScript* at [www.lacera.com/communications/postscript.html](http://www.lacera.com/communications/postscript.html), then click on County Department Volunteer Opportunities in the bulleted list on the right.



*L.A. County volunteers are recognized at an annual luncheon by the Board of Supervisors.*

Doing Good cont'd

**Volunteer Profile: Carlos Avila****Department of Consumer and Business Affairs**

A retired member of the L.A. County Sheriff's Department and volunteer mediator with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs since July 2017, Carlos Avila is a perfect example of how you can transfer skills used on the job to a volunteer position.



"When I retired, my focus was to detach from law enforcement yet keep open to some volunteer work in areas that would challenge me, coincide with my work abilities and characteristics, and

maybe even help me flourish more," he says. "It was important to me to still have a fixed area in my life of obligation, service, and purpose, yet not something that involved a lot of stress and/or a lot of time."

The mediation program helps over 400,000 consumers per year and is a particularly good volunteer opportunity for active members, as honing the skills required for successful mediation — such as interviewing, investigating, facilitating and problem solving — can be a real career boost. "Many professionals, retired or not retired, especially those involved in the legal realm, become mediators to advance in the field," says Avila.

Avila currently volunteers once a week handling everything from consumer to landlord-tenant to neighbor disputes, some with pending court dates. Avila's goal as a volunteer is to try to reach an agreement on both sides. "I get the case and look to mediate between both parties with different approaches, such as over the phone, in person, or even by the County's online mediation program," he says. "All of this is tracked in an easy-to-use, up-to-date online system."

Avila notes that the observation, conflict resolution,

and people skills he developed over his years in law enforcement have helped him succeed in the program and establish his credibility in mediation situations.

"I have always found that one of the greatest things we can do for others in life, whether in our professional lives or personal lives, is to truly listen," he says.

"It's rewarding to hear people — especially those who feel they were wronged and started out angry — conclude with an improved outlook on the dispute and compliment me on the service they received in a professional and patient manner."

*It was important to me to still have a fixed area in my life of obligation, service, and purpose.*

He likes the structure that the program provides him, while still allowing time for other activities: "I also enjoy it because it flows into my social life. I still have many friends that work, and I coincide it with social meetups and/or activities that are available throughout downtown L.A."

He's even developing new skills on the job. "In the near future, I plan to switch to what I view as a more fast-paced 'on the spot' court mediation, and I'm not too far off from earning a certificate in mediation. This volunteer position is a positive piece that complements my retirement life by keeping me sharp, energetic, and driven, and even may open up other professional avenues."

cont'd on pg. 10

**Public Service Announcement****Volunteer with the Department of Public Social Services**

Your help is needed. The Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS), Volunteer Services Section, is seeking volunteers to provide clerical support on a variety of short- and long-term assignments. Volunteers are also invited to various outreach events countywide, and the time required each week generally ranges from 20 to 40 hours. Volunteers must complete fingerprinting. DPSS serves an ethnically and culturally diverse community through programs designed to alleviate hardship and promote health, personal responsibility, and economic independence.

The department provides benefits and services to low-income residents of Los Angeles County, including temporary financial assistance, free and low-cost healthcare insurance, and food benefits for families. For more information, call Anthony Leoni, DPSS Volunteer Coordinator, at 213-744-4590, or email him at [DPSSvolunteers@dpss.lacounty.gov](mailto:DPSSvolunteers@dpss.lacounty.gov).

## Pre-Retirement Workshop Schedule

### JUNE 2018

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	G/S*
3	4	S	6	7	8	9
10	11	G	13	14	15	16
17	18	G	20	21	22	23
24	25	G	27	28	29	30

### JULY 2018

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	H	5	6	7
8	9	G	11	12	13	G/S*
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	G	25	26	27	28
29	30	G				

### AUGUST 2018

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	G/S*
5	6	S	8	9	10	11
12	13	G	15	16	17	18
19	20	G	22	23	24	25
26	27	G	29	30	31	

G = General Members  
S = Safety Members  
H = Holiday

Unless otherwise indicated, workshops are held at LACERA from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Empower Retirement will offer a 45-minute overview of Horizons (457) and Savings (401[k]) plans; LACERA will give a 2.5-hour presentation.

Reservations are required; access the Appointment System on [lacera.com](http://lacera.com) or call 800-786-6464 to reserve a seat.

\*Held at LACERA from 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

## Please Review Your Annual Benefit Statement

Each year, on the 15th day of the month following your birthday, LACERA prepares your individualized annual benefit statement. The information presented in this statement includes your contribution account balance, beneficiary designation(s), and amount of service credit earned. This data is automatically generated, has not been audited, and is not binding.

When you receive your annual benefit statement, we ask that you review your personal information and inform LACERA if anything is out of date or inaccurate. To make corrections, you can edit the printed statement and mail the page to LACERA, or you can sign in to your My LACERA account to submit changes. My LACERA contains your current and past annual benefit statements. Note that updates or corrections to your name, date of birth, employee number, and Social Security number should be reported to LACERA and your department's personnel office. Updates to your mailing address should be reported to your department's personnel office only; LACERA uses the County payroll system's list of addresses to send you important information.

## Pull Up a Chair With Retiree Healthcare



Welcome to LACERA's Retiree Healthcare (RHC) Division. We're a team of around 20 employees working to administer the Retiree Healthcare Benefits Program for LACERA members and their eligible beneficiaries. Our division's mission is to provide a healthcare program of the highest quality at an affordable cost.



Cassandra Smith, Director  
of Retiree Healthcare

One way we do this is by remaining aware of the general healthcare landscape and how it can affect the program. Additionally, we are responsible for understanding and implementing the many complex changes in federal and state programs such as the Affordable Care Act, Medicare, and Social Security as they relate to LACERA's Retiree Healthcare Benefits Program.



## LACERA Employees Take Their Daughters and Sons to Work



On April 26, LACERA's work force took on a decidedly more youthful appearance as, once again, a group of employees' children took part in the annual Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day. A nonprofit educational program now in its 26th year, Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work aims to show children the value of education, encourage them to envision their futures and explore career possibilities, and help them begin steps toward their end goals. Plus, it's just a lot of fun!

"It's not every day that the employee gets to bring their kids to work and show them exactly what they do and where they sit," says Admin Services' Andrea Ellison, who, along with colleague Cathy Lumpkin, has helped coordinate this event since 2006. "It's great to see the kids excited about their parents' place of business, and I just love watching all the little faces when they learn something new about their parents' jobs."

This year, Ellison and Lumpkin, along with enthusiastic team members Bonnie Nolley, Stephanie Ashley, Lauren Decoudreaux, Michelle Yanes, and student worker Kyle Jacosky, made sure that LACERA's 39 young guests, ages 8 to 12, had a fun-packed agenda built around the theme "Service Force: Agents of Positive Change."

After a morning welcome by Assistant Executive Officer JJ Popowich, the group began their tour

of LACERA. Their first stop was Communications Division, where they were provided with materials to explore their artistic sides and have their contributions published in a booklet to take home. Next, they headed to Systems, where they saw what the inside of a computer looks like, learned tips about staying safe online, and played a bingo game related to internet safety. After lunch and ice cream, it was time to visit the Financial and Accounting Services Division for an accounting-themed bingo game with prizes, as well as snacks, take-home goodie bags, pencils, and calculators. The last divisional visit was Benefits and Member Services, where they not only learned all about LACERA through a PowerPoint presentation, sing-along, and games, but also won more prizes and enjoyed snacks and drinks. To burn off some of those afternoon treats, the children finished the day with exercises led by visiting YMCA instructors.

As with previous events, Ellison says the team received lots of positive feedback from the parents about how much their kids loved all the activities put on by the divisions. "The kids always say they can't wait until next year, and it's the same for us," she says. "We bond a lot with the kids, and are glad to be part of their educational journey, so we look forward to welcoming them back year after year."

## Volunteer Profile: Bianca Garcia

### Downey Animal Care Center

In addition to working as a Children's Social Worker III with the Department of Children and Family Services, Bianca Garcia has been contributing to the County as a volunteer at the Animal Care Center in Downey for about three years.

She started volunteering because she saw a need. "I went to my local animal shelter looking to add a dog to my family," she says. "After spending time at different shelters and seeing the animals that are in cages all day, I became interested in being able to go to the shelter to spend time and interact with animals — dogs in particular — that may not get as much attention."

Work at the Downey facility varies widely. A few of the volunteer duties include helping to get the



dogs veterinary exams and clearance for last-minute transport to other shelters, socializing dogs through play groups, laundering bedding, helping with photoshoots for the center's Facebook page,

and much more. Garcia works with a variety of other critters, too. "There are always different types of animals at the shelter," she says, "not only cats and dogs, but rabbits, roosters, chickens, snakes, guinea pigs, hamsters, tortoises, etc."

Additionally, Garcia has applied her professional skills to help train and assess new volunteers, and

will soon be testing for a driving clearance to help with transporting animals and conducting offsite adoption events.

Although Garcia admits that volunteering at the shelter can be emotionally difficult — as “unfortunately, not every animal who comes into the shelter will leave out the front door with a new family” — giving the animals as much care and attention as possible is what counts.

“Volunteers are able to ensure that during the time the animal spent in the shelter, the animal was provided with treats, pets, belly rubs, one-on-one time, and toys, and was able to run around in a play yard or romp with other dogs in the shelter-run play groups,” she says.

Garcia finds the human contact worthwhile, too. “When volunteering at a department that you have an interest in, you will meet other like-minded people, and strong bonds and friendships are formed with other volunteers as well as with Department staff,” she says. “Seeing the passion and dedication of other volunteers who have been doing it much longer than me (10-plus years) is motivating, because volunteers do make a difference — especially in the life of a shelter animal.”

*Volunteers do make a difference, especially in the life of a shelter animal.*

## 3 THINGS THE SUN



Summer solstice is June 21 this year in the Northern Hemisphere, the day when the North Pole is tipped more toward the sun than on any other day of the year, giving us the most hours of light (don't forget your sunscreen!). In honor of the life-giving G dwarf star at the center of our solar system, here are some fun sun facts.



The sun is a nearly perfect sphere of gas made up almost entirely of hydrogen atoms (91.2 percent) and helium atoms (7.8 percent), burning at about 27 million degrees Fahrenheit in its nuclear core.



The sun makes up 99.8 percent of the mass of the entire solar system. If they were squished, 1,300,000 earths could fit inside the sun.



The sun is middle-aged. At about 4.5 billion years old, it has burned through about half of its hydrogen. In about 5 billion years, it will start burning helium, expanding into a giant red star about 100 times its current size before collapsing into a white dwarf star about the size of earth.

Sources: NASA, National Geographic

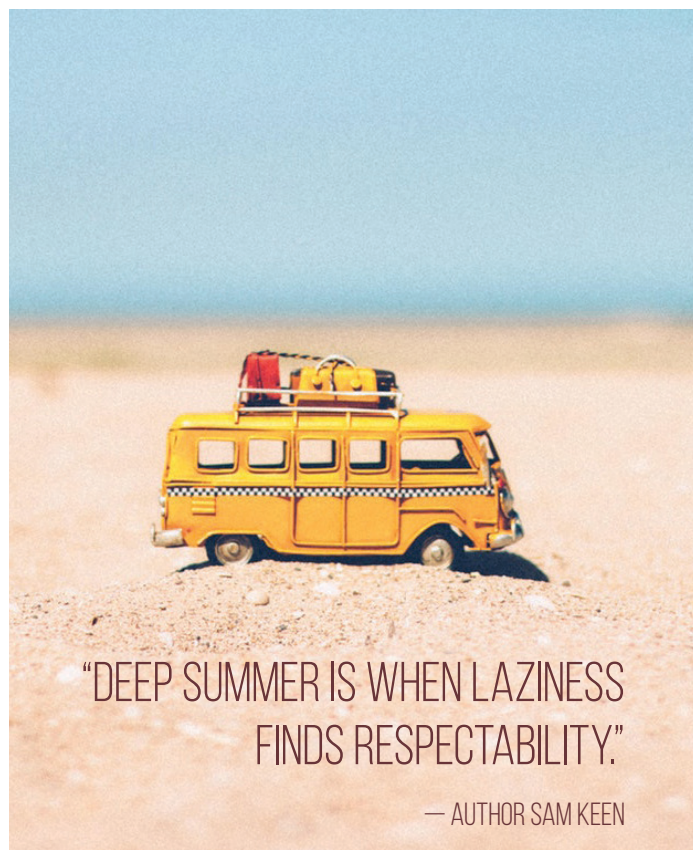


**Spring SACRS Conference** cont'd from pg. 4

"Regulation to Operation" session, which covered what systems are doing to comply operationally with recent legislative changes or case law.

**Gina Sanchez**, Member of the Board of Investments, was a speaker for the May 17 General Session presentation "Is Goldilocks in for Some Cold Porridge?" The global market discussion explored investor strategy in the face of increased volatility with the tightening of central banks' stimulus policies.

SACRS is an association of 20 California county retirement systems enacted under the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937.

**Thinking of Retiring?**

**L**ACERA recommends that you attend a pre-retirement workshop three to five years before your desired retirement date. At a pre-retirement workshop, you can review your retirement options, obtain an estimate for how much your monthly allowance will be, learn how retiree healthcare works and which medical plans are offered, and get answers to any questions you might have. See the pre-retirement workshop schedule on page 8 of this newsletter to find a date that works for you.

**Inside My LACERA**

**D**id you know that My LACERA offers 24-hour on-line access to your LACERA retirement account information? As an active member, you can:

- Add or update your beneficiary information;
- Add or update a mailing address;
- Add or update up to three phone numbers;
- View your retirement plan information, history of LACERA interactions, contributions on deposit, first date you're eligible to retire, and annual benefit statement; and
- Generate a personalized retirement benefit estimate.

Perhaps one of the most useful features for active members is the retirement benefit estimate calculator, which automatically retrieves your personal data on file to calculate an estimate of your monthly retirement allowance. This interactive resource allows you to adjust your amount of service credit, pensionable earnings, and other information to see how your monthly retirement allowance and your survivor's continuing benefit would be affected by these factors. The calculator displays a retirement benefit estimate for each of the six retirement options available to you. If you haven't registered on My LACERA yet, don't hesitate. It's easy. Just follow these simple steps:


- 1 Go to [lacera.com](http://lacera.com) and click on the My LACERA logo at the bottom right of the page.
- 2 Select Register Now.
- 3 Enter your name, birth date, last four digits of your Social Security number, and your email address.
- 4 Answer two personalized security questions.
- 5 My LACERA will email you an account activation link.
- 6 Click the activation link to complete registration and create your password.

**Connect With Us**

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 **Call**  
800-786-6464

 **Visit**  
300 N. Lake Ave.  
Pasadena, CA 91101



# FRAUD ALERTS FROM THE D.A.'S OFFICE

## Don't Get Scammed!

Twice a month, the L.A. County District Attorney's Office releases a public service announcement (PSA) called the Friday Fraud Alert to warn the community about current financial scams (some perennial; some seasonal or tied to current events). The alerts are posted at [da.lacounty.gov/community/fraud-alerts](http://da.lacounty.gov/community/fraud-alerts), and you can get updates via Twitter or Instagram by following @LADAOOffice.

The PSAs include videos with District Attorney staff, and many focus on scams targeted specifically toward older adults. According to the D.A., one in five seniors has been the victim of financial fraud. The Elder Abuse section of the website includes a Financial Fraud page that lists the warning signs of many common scams in order to help seniors recognize cons and avoid becoming victims. Visit [da.lacounty.gov/seniors/financial-fraud](http://da.lacounty.gov/seniors/financial-fraud) to learn more.

### Editor's Note:

PostScript is published by the staff of LACERA. Consult with professional advisors regarding legal, tax, and/or medical matters; LACERA does not offer legal, tax, or medical advice.

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## UPCOMING HOLIDAYS



### LACERA WILL BE CLOSED:

WEDNESDAY, JULY 4  
INDEPENDENCE DAY

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 3  
LABOR DAY

