



# DPSS ‘Norwalk Seven’ Support Each Other to Earn Bachelor Degrees

Seven employees from the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) Norwalk District office credit each other for the inspiration and emotional support needed to earn their Bachelor of Arts degrees in Interdisciplinary Studies from California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH).

Gina Plascencia, Grace Estrada, Cynthia Uballe, Gisela Bedolla, Rosie Desales, Heather Mitchell, and Celina Morales recently celebrated their accomplishments by walking together during CSUDH’s 2019 Commencement Ceremony.

“It was so hectic,” said Desales, who plans to pursue a master’s degree in speech pathology to work with children. “We had our moments when we’d cry and then brush ourselves off and push each other again.”

In addition to their full-time jobs and family obligations, the group attended both evening and weekend classes at CSUDH. Several of the graduates finished the two-year program in just one year to save money on tuition and to get back to spending quality time with their loved ones. Bedolla, a 12-year DPSS employee who began working with the department right after high school, found the program difficult on her 11-year-old daughter. Her daughter often had to remain in daycare late hours during the week and watched by others on weekends.



Left to right: Gina Plascencia, Grace Estrada, Cynthia Uballe, Gisela Bedolla, Rosie Desales, Heather Mitchell, and Celina Morales.

Prior to receiving their bachelor’s degrees, the above mentioned employees teamed up to earn their Associate of Arts degrees from Los Angeles Pierce College. The group is now affectionately known by their colleagues as the “Norwalk Seven.” Their incredible journey has not only provided the Norwalk office with bragging rights, it has also inspired many others to consider returning to school to pursue higher education. Despite their sacrifices, all the graduates have expressed an interest in pursuing master’s degrees in the near future.

Mitchell stated that she is optimistic about the new opportunities in her immediate future. “I would see job openings posted at work, but I didn’t have my bachelor’s degree and couldn’t apply,” Mitchell said. “Now, I see more doors opening up, like in the Department of Mental Health, and in our department. I have also been thinking about social work or counseling when I get my master’s degree. It’s a big upgrade in my life.”

### DPSS Training Academy

The Interdisciplinary Studies degree program, with an emphasis in comparative cultures, is a broad-based liberal arts and sciences major that focuses on developing exemplary skills in written and oral communication, textual analysis, critical thinking, and problem solving. The Interdisciplinary Studies major also prepares students for both the workplace and entry into graduate or professional schools. This program is the result of a partnership between the DPSS Training Academy and CSUDH’s Program for Adult College Education (PACE), which provides employees with an opportunity to earn a college degree for career advancement or personal development. The Academy’s Career Development Resource Center (CRDC) schedules regular information sessions with local community colleges and universities. The CRDC also offers information about Countywide job classifications and higher level positions at DPSS and other County departments to students.

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# To: County Employees From: DHR

Take a moment to think about your professional growth.

*What has helped you grow so far?*

*Do you want to continue growing?*

*Could you use a little more help?*

**Udemy for Business** is a widely used and highly reputable online learning platform of over 3,000 on-demand courses, *now available to County employees*. This regularly updated library offers engaging trainings in communication, customer service, data science, information technology, leadership, project management, and other professional development areas. *Udemy for Business* will enhance our workforce by helping all of us to be more effective at our current jobs and better prepared to achieve our career goals.

Los Angeles County University (LACU) is proud to make *Udemy for Business* available to permanent full-time employees. This offering represents a substantial move forward in achieving LACU's vision of "*Learning Reimagined*," which includes opportunities to innovate employee learning and development using online platforms. *Udemy* reinforces this transformation as it enables our workforce to advance its broad spectrum of skills in service to the public.

LACU learning ambassadors sampled some of the trainings and their feedback was encouraging. They said courses offered in-depth and informative content delivered by expert instructors. The learning ambassadors also appreciated the learning supplements (e.g., exercises), which boosted their engagement and offered an opportunity to immediately begin applying what they learned. Overall, learning ambassadors recommended several courses and were enthusiastic about taking additional courses to cultivate their learning needs and curiosities.

To get started, visit the Department of Human Resources Udemy Learning page at <http://employee.hr.lacounty.gov/udemy-learning/>. Discuss your learning plan with your supervisor and review Policy 205: *Online= Training Provided by External Providers*, for relevant guidelines. *Udemy for Business* licenses expire on **June 30, 2020**, so start taking advantage of this development opportunity soon and let others know!



Visit <http://hr.lacounty.gov> for information on employment opportunities with the County of Los Angeles



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Submissions to the DIGEST may be edited or otherwise altered for clarity.  
Check out the DIGEST at:  
<http://hr.lacounty.gov/about-the-county/>

# December Calendar of Events

## Los Angeles County Tree Lighting

December 2, 2019, 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The Music Center Plaza

<https://www.musiccenter.org/treelighting>

Kick off the holiday season with the County of Los Angeles' annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. The joyous celebration will feature an address by Fifth District Supervisor Kathryn Barger, performances by Brass Pacifica, and a local school choir. The event is free to the public, and hot cocoa will be served to keep attendees warm!

## Grand Park's Winter Glow

December 6-25, 2019, sunset to 10:00 p.m.

Grand Park

<https://grandparkla.org/event/grand-parks-winter-glow-2019/>

Winter Glow returns for the park's second annual nighttime public art display. L.A.-based artists from across the County, including multimedia artists Cassandra Carillo, Carlos G. Rodas, and Aphidoidea, will design and install magical light attractions for the public to enjoy as they stroll through Grand Park and The Music Center Plaza. Familiar pathways and historic fountains will be transformed into exciting new discoveries with the latest in light and projection technology. Additionally, a community partnership with Kayaman Ng Lahi will feature the work of L.A.-based artists Alfie Numeric Ebojo and Lakan de Leon who will design a "parol," a star-shaped lantern that embellishes homes during the Christmas season in the Philippines. Grand Park will display the parol and address the cultural and artistic practices by hosting a parol-making workshop for all community members on December 7th. More details to be announced.

## Los Angeles County Holiday Celebration

December 24, 2019, 3:00 p.m.

The Music Center's Dorothy Chandler Pavilion

<https://www.musiccenter.org/tickets/events-by-the-music-center/holidaycelebration/>

The 60th annual L.A. County Holiday Celebration, presented by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, is Los Angeles' largest multicultural holiday celebration. The event provides Angelenos of all ages an opportunity to come together during the holidays to experience and honor the dynamic, rich cultures of the County. This three-hour holiday show will feature more than 20 L.A.-based music ensembles, choirs, and dance companies who will showcase their talent, artistry, and traditions on the Music Center's iconic Dorothy Chandler Pavilion stage. Tickets are free and first come, first served. The holiday celebration was founded in 1959 by the late Kenneth Hahn, former Supervisor of the Second District of the County of Los Angeles and advocate for access to the arts. The live production features instrumental music, choral music, and dance performances. The program is broadcast live on PBS SoCal and live-streamed on pbsocal.org and kcet.org. Visit the Music Center's website for re-broadcast information.

## N.Y.E.L.A.

December 31, 2019, 8:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

Grand Park

<https://nyela.grandparkla.org/>

For the eighth year, Grand Park + The Music Center's N.Y.E.L.A. will be the go-to central gathering place in Los Angeles as the West Coast's flagship New Year's celebration! Free for all ages, this unique civic event brings together Angelenos and visitors from around the globe to usher in 2020 at L.A.'s biggest music and dance party. Starring L.A.'s best DJs and bands, Grand Park + The Music Center's N.Y.E.L.A. will also feature its signature 3-D video projection and light show on the west side of the iconic City Hall designed by L.A.-based digital innovation studio yU+co. This year's theme is "Who is LA 2020?" and will feature joyful and timeless images of our beautiful Los Angeles community. There will be two stages of simultaneous performances, including the largest reggaeton party crew Gasolina and Compton based Banda Las Angelinas with more acts to be announced. Party goers will also enjoy an array of food trucks on-site serving up various culinary delights available for purchase, plus pyrotechnics to ring in the New Year!



# LA County is Modernizing the Voting Experience by 2020

LA County's current voting experience is outdated and in critical need of modernization. Voters should be able to vote when, where and how they want. The new voting system under Voting Solutions for All People is an important step to accomplishing these goals.

## CURRENT VS. FUTURE



Limited Voting Experience

Only 1 Day to Vote


Polling Places




Any Voter Can Use

11 Days to Vote


Vote Centers



Voting equipment is outdated and inaccessible to many voters; limited to **1 device** per location



Paper rosters are printed in advance and often require supplemental printing



Voters can vote at **any** vote center throughout the County with full language services and expanded accessibility



\*Electronic Pollbooks (ePollbooks) access data in **real time** and allow for same day registration



Early voting only available at a **limited** number of locations in the County



Voters can only vote at **1 location** on **1 day** between 7:00am and 8:00pm



Fully accessible voting equipment available at **every** vote center



Voting available for **11 days** at vote centers throughout the County

\*The new voting model will move us away from reliance on pre-printed paper rosters and in its place provide real time access to the full voter database at all voting locations that makes same-day voter registration easier.

For more information, visit [VSAP.lavote.net](http://VSAP.lavote.net)

## Celebrating 100 Years of Women's Suffrage

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles, State of California adopted an order for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution. The bold, courageous, and powerful women who fought for ratification deserve special celebration by the County of Los Angeles, especially the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment ratification on August 18, 2020.

California holds a special place in the history of Women's Suffrage; California women gained the right to vote with the ratification of Amendment Eight to the Constitution of the State of California in 1911, nearly a decade before the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment. The 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment did not guarantee suffrage for all women. Native Americans did not gain the right to vote until they were granted United States citizenship in 1924. Asian Pacific Islander Americans did not gain the right to vote until 1952. African Americans and Latin Americans suffered voter suppression tactics that disenfranchised them until the Voting Rights Acts of 1965 and the 1975 Expansion of the Voting Rights Act.

Los Angeles County has enacted numerous policies to ensure women and girls can thrive here, including the establishment of the Los Angeles County Commission for Women in 1975 and the Women and Girls Initiative in 2016. The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles hereby recognizes the important role that the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the United States Constitution has played in advancing the rights of all women, and declares August 2019 through August 2020 as the official County of Los Angeles period of celebration, commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its ratification.

November is  
National  
Transgender  
Awareness  
Month

## County Employee Youth Mentoring Program

The County Employee Youth Mentoring Program (CEYM) was implemented on January 29, 2019. This program provides County employees an opportunity to mentor youth and make a difference in their lives. As of October 31, 2019, the County has partnered with 32 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that have mentoring opportunities, and a total of 668 County employees have already signed up to become mentors. Moreover, to date, a total of 138 County employee mentors have been paired with agencies. The following is a list of the current 32 CBOs whom have partnered with CEYM:

100 Black Men  
50/50 Leadership  
Ace 4 Youth  
Boys & Girls Club of Antelope Valley  
Boys & Girls Club of Whittier  
Boys & Girls Club – Burbank & Greater East Valley  
Boys & Girls Club – Pacoima & San Fernando Valley  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Metro Los Angeles  
Brotherhood Crusade  
CASA of Los Angeles  
Catholic Big Brothers Big Sisters  
Change Lanes  
EmpowHer Institute  
Flintridge Fund  
Imagine LA  
Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters  
LA Team Mentoring  
Long Beach BLAST  
Los Angeles Boys and Girls Club  
Mentoring and Partnership for Youth  
MOSTe  
Operation Jump Start  
PCS Family Services, Inc. Project Caring & Sharing  
Power 4 Youth  
Rowland USD Family Resource Center  
School on Wheels  
Social Justice Learning Institute  
Spark Los Angeles  
Star Mentoring  
Walk with Sally  
Youth Mentoring Connection

To obtain additional information about the mentoring program, please visit the CEYM webpage at <http://employee.hr.lacounty.gov/county-employee-youth-mentoring/> or contact them via email at [mentoring@hr.lacounty.gov](mailto:mentoring@hr.lacounty.gov).

# Quality and Productivity Commission 33rd Annual Productivity and Quality Awards

The Board of Supervisors, Chief Executive Office, and the Quality and Productivity Commission celebrated the 33rd Annual Productivity and Quality Awards (PQA) program on Wednesday, October 16, 2019, at the Music Center. The Master of Ceremonies was Suzie Suh from CBS2/KCAL9, back for an encore performance.

Since 1987, the PQA program has given deserved recognition by honoring thousands of achievements in service delivery. This year's theme was "Empowering Innovative Solutions." We celebrated innovation, creativity, efficiency, and improvements in County services delivered to our residents. This year the Commission received 70 applications from 30 County departments. These projects represent a commitment to excellence through empowerment, innovation, and quality services to the most vulnerable individuals in our communities.

Supervisor Janice Hahn, Supervisor Sheila Kuehl, and Chief Executive Officer Sachi Hamai, praised the efforts of the 112,000-strong County workforce, and acknowledged their commitment to service excellence, innovation and creativity, and their dedication to empowering solutions to complex problems. Cumulatively, these 70 projects are estimated to generate over \$400 million in financial benefits to the County.

A County program that ensures families are receiving child abuse prevention support services (Board of Supervisors, Executive Office-Office of Child Protection); an academy that improves patient care through process improvements (Health Services, LAC+USC Medical Center); and a project that discovered 43 new species living in Los Angeles (Natural History Museum) took home the prestigious Gold, Silver and Bronze Eagle Awards!

County Supervisors, Department Heads, managers, and community partners acknowledged the following "Top 10" projects for being the very best in delivering services to the County's 10 million residents:



**2019 Top 10 Productivity and Quality Award Winners**

1. **Moving Families from the Hotline to a Helpline** (Board of Supervisors, Executive Office - Office of Child Protection with Children and Family Services, County Counsel, Mental Health, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk, and University of Southern California, Suzanne Dworak-Peck School of Social Work)
2. **Family Reunification Housing Subsidy** (Children and Family Services with Chief Executive Office, Los Angeles County Development Authority, Public Social Services, and 211 LA County)
3. **Justice League: Legal Aid & Healthcare Unite** (Health Services, Martin Luther King, Jr., Outpatient Center)
4. **Make it a Movie Night with At-Home Chemotherapy** (Health Services-Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Hematology and Oncology Division, Internal Medicine Department, and LAC+USC Medical Center)
5. **Quality Academy: Building Capacity for Improvement** (Health Services, LAC+USC Medical Center, Quality Management)
6. **Reading Machine: Literacy & STEAM at Preschools** (Public Library)
7. **Community Science: Of, For, and With Los Angeles County** (Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County)
8. **Saving Lives - Drowning Detection System** (Parks and Recreation)
9. **Food Donation and Food Waste Recycling Initiative** (Public Works)
10. **New Freedom Transportation** (Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services, APS Programs & Planning New Freedom Transportation)

*Contributors:*

*Inna Sarac and Keisha Belmaster, PQA Co-Chairs*

*Jackie Guevarra, Executive Director, Quality and Productivity Commission*





County of Los Angeles  
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES



ADOPT-A-FAMILY PROGRAM  
SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2019



## Adopt a Family for the Holiday Season!

*The Department of Public Social Services (DPSS)  
is gearing up for its annual Adopt-A-Family Program!*

**Adopt-A-Family is a unique program that allows individuals or groups the opportunity to sponsor a family in need. Each year, an increasing number of donors have taken part in this worthy DPSS tradition and have helped create a memorable holiday season for families in Los Angeles County.**

New items such as toys, clothing, and household items are but a few of the thoughtful gifts given. The families are grateful for the help and it brings the true meaning of the holidays to the community.

### **Sponsors can choose:**

- Size of the family
- General location of the family
- Number of families they would like to sponsor

**NO GIFT IS TOO SMALL!  
APPLY TO BE A SPONSOR ONLINE TODAY!**

**[dpss.lacounty.gov/dpss/vs/adopt.cfm](http://dpss.lacounty.gov/dpss/vs/adopt.cfm)**



For questions contact **Eryn Aquino**, DPSS Volunteer Coordinator,  
at [AdoptAFamily@dpss.lacounty.gov](mailto:AdoptAFamily@dpss.lacounty.gov).

# Retirees

*Congratulations for your many years of service to the County of Los Angeles!*

## 45+ Years

**HEALTH SERVICES:** Mary Hernandez  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Ramona Reza-Johnson  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Mary E. Torres

## 40+ Years

**HEALTH SERVICES:** Divinia Q. Maramba, Carolyn F. Rhee  
**INTERNAL SERVICES:** Michael Lear  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Anita Flores  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Gretchen Balmaceda  
**PUBLIC WORKS:** Norma J. Aparicio  
**SHERIFF:** Dolores G. Aguirre, Lisa M. Rodriguez, Mirna G. Varela  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Theresa I. Lawrence, Sandra A. Steele

## 35+ Years

**ASSESSOR:** Henry L. Smith  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY:** John M. Hopkins-Lude, Julie Wong  
**FIRE:** Glenn D. Smith  
**HEALTH SERVICES:** Lilia Fernando, Beryl R. Goss, Chueh W. Lu, Cynthia K. O'Donnell, Teri T. Smith  
**INTERNAL SERVICES:** Lydia Avila  
**MENTAL HEALTH:** Priscilla Moore  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Marta G. Ramirez  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Marie A. Alipio, Barbara S. Hardgrove, Rosalyn A. Hunt, Frances E. Michel  
**PUBLIC WORKS:** Elizabeth D. Escobar, Robert Pacheco Jr., James H. Thomas  
**SHERIFF:** Joseph F. Fennell Jr., Robert S. Mackenzie  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Joan N. Hartman, Catalina Regalado

## 30+ Years

**ASSESSOR:** Landi Ho  
**BEACHES & HARBORS:** Concepcion Silva  
**DISTRICT ATTORNEY:** Mark Batsford, Clarissa M. Paige  
**FIRE:** David A. Enriquez, Blair Wein  
**HEALTH SERVICES:** Ma Asuncion D. Dollente, Elvira Marquez  
**HUMAN RESOURCES:** Norma M. Bueno  
**INTERNAL SERVICES:** Dalah V. Anthony, Robert J. Lai  
**MENTAL HEALTH:** Eva Carrera, Shirley Stovitz  
**PARKS & RECREATION:** Deborah K. Garcia  
**PROBATION:** Carlos H. Fernandez, Jose E. Jimenez, Carrie E. Petronis, Diana J. Henry

**PUBLIC DEFENDER:** Charles E. Mack  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Jeanne K. Biehler, John E. Kaddis  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Sonia Juarez, Oscar Lopez  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Jeanne K. Biehler, John E. Kaddis  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Sonia Juarez, Oscar Lopez  
**PUBLIC WORKS:** Bola Akinpelu, Carl L. Grissom, Ghassan N. Nakhoul, Lana C. Radle, Carlos Villalobos  
**SHERIFF:** Gilbert Y. Arakawa, Elsa Avila, Scott C. Harper, Kevin E. Hebert, Hanna G. Issa, Michael A. O'Shea, Robert J. Wagner, Elva Perez  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Debra Stein

## 25+ Years

**ALTERNATE PUBLIC DEFENDER:** William C. Maestas  
**FIRE:** Steven P. Mueller  
**HEALTH SERVICES:** Emilia V. Bassig, Petra G. Jimenez, Ruth Samuel, Ma Annelie A. Tomoling Big, Juanita Miller  
**MENTAL HEALTH:** Veronica I. Dale  
**PARKS & RECREATION:** Rudy P. Valenzuela  
**PROBATION:** Helena Mc Crimmon, David W. Hairston II  
**PUBLIC HEALTH:** Lisa S. Lee  
**PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES:** Sarkis Arabian, Emad L. Lofty, Melanie Car Planas, Milton Planas, Marlene F. Smith, Susan L. Walker  
**SHERIFF:** John L. Clark, Steven J. Marella, Robert S. Wellendorf, David P. Wessol  
**SUPERIOR COURT:** Jan Chaja, Ankin Timourian, Angela K. Yeung

November is  
 National  
 Native American  
 Heritage  
 Awareness  
 Month

# Need a **hard worker?** Choose one who's overcome adversity.

## Learn why Fair Chance hiring is good business.

Everyone deserves a second chance. Justice-involved individuals are resilient, creative, dedicated workers who are grateful for the opportunity to reenter the workforce. They'll repay you with hard work and loyalty—as you help them rebuild their lives.

The Fair Chance Act is a California law meant to ensure that job seekers with a criminal record are fairly considered for employment. As of January 1, 2018, California employers with more than five employees can no longer inquire about conviction history until a conditional offer of employment is made.

### Reentry workers

- Stay longer
- Work harder
- Get promoted faster than employees with no criminal record

### Fair Chance Employers can get these bottom-line benefits:

- **50%** reimbursement of training wages
- **40%** tax credit on first-year wages
- **15%** bid price preference through LA County Target Hire programs
- **\$15,000** in federal bonding to protect employers

"I believe in supporting people who are seeking to reenter as they are genuinely some of the hardest-working employees I have."

- **Carmen Kernek**  
AMS Fulfillment,  
Fair Chance Employer

"By giving the second chance they deserve, employers will find that this population of people will go above and beyond to prove that the mistakes they made do not define them."

- **Vincent Bragg**  
Founder & CEO, ConCreates  
Justice-Involved Individual  
Fair Chance Employer



FPO UNION  
BUG



**fairchance**  
hire outside **the box.**

[fairchance.lacounty.gov](http://fairchance.lacounty.gov)