



New Head of Dept. of Aging

Aging

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Trejo, who assumed her new position in late December, intends to focus on developing more collaborative relationships with other agencies and organizations to improve and expand the City's programs for older residents.



Seniors are encouraged to stay active and to get involved in the community.

One such effort involves a relatively new initiative called the National Family Caregivers Support Program, established by the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2000 to assist the aging network in developing caregiver support both for family members who look after older individuals, and for seniors who take on responsibility for their grandchildren or other youth. Using federal funding, and working with the state-funded Los Angeles Caregiver Resource Center, Trejo wants to create a support network for family caregivers and develop resources in areas such as caregiver education and adult day care services.

"This is an area where we're going to be able to make a huge difference," she noted.

The Department already makes a difference with its 16 multipurpose senior centers and more than 110 dining sites throughout the City. The centers serve as community focal points for a variety of free senior services, including in-home living assistance, housing options, transportation services, legal aid, employment training for low-income seniors, health screenings, social and recreational activities, and more. Seniors can find the service centers online at www.lacity.org/doa, or by calling (800) 834-4777.

Trejo said, "I strongly encourage City retirees to locate their nearest center and get to know the services provided there. The centers can provide support to live healthier and happier lives."

Trejo believes that the

Department of Aging can serve as a forum not only to assist seniors, but to tap into the older population's tremendous skills, knowledge and life experience. For example, through Los Angeles Neighborhood Councils and the Department's advisory Council on Aging, she hopes to increase "the participation and visibility of older people not only as recipients of services but as contributors to the well being of the City. I'm very much aware of how much older people contribute."

In addition, Trejo intends to work more closely with the Los Angeles Unified School District on existing skill-building training programs for older adults who want to work. "These are very willing learners," she noted. "It's very important to provide them with those resources if they're already available."

Trejo, who spent 17 years as the clinical district chief for the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health, Countywide Older Adult Programs, added that working with the very unique older population—ranging from the still-employed and active "young old" around age 60 to two-generation senior households with adult children in their 60s and parents in their 80s—provides a wonderful opportunity. "You get insight into yourself, including who you want to become and how you want to experience your own aging," she explained.

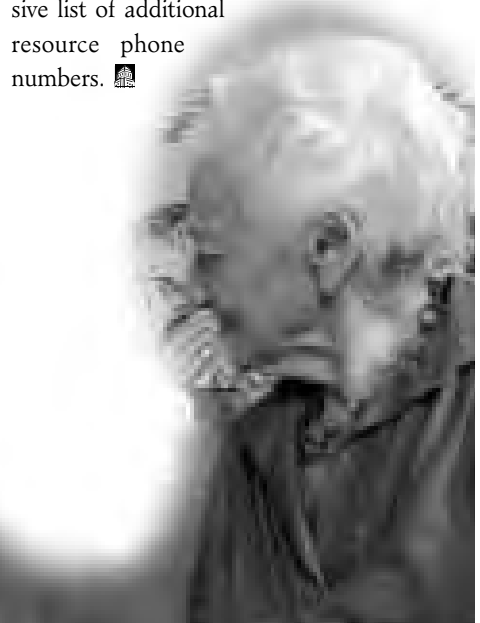
Besides her extensive work experience with older individuals, Trejo holds a Master's degree in gerontology (the study of aging) from the USC, plus a Master's degree in public administration, a graduate certificate in long-term care administration, and a bachelor's degree in psychology, all also from USC.

Upon appointing her to head the Department, Mayor James K. Hahn said, "Laura Trejo has the leadership, managerial abilities and enthusiasm to successfully lead the Department of Aging. She shares my commitment to keeping our residents safe, healthy and enthusiastic by providing them vibrant and innovative programs."

Find out more about the Department of Aging by calling its information hotline at (800) 834-4777 or by visiting www.lacity.org/doa.

Other important numbers to remember are the Info-Line for City and County Human Services at (800) 339-6993, and the Elder Care Locator number at (800) 677-1116.

See the Department's Website for an extensive list of additional resource phone numbers. ☎



TeamWork LA Brings Together City Depts. to Help Neighborhoods

by Mayor James K. Hahn

To all City employees, thank you for your continued support and commitment to the City of Los Angeles.

We are working together to make government more efficient and more neighborhood-based through my new "TeamWork LA" initiative.

"TeamWork LA" brings together City department representatives to meet as part of seven geographically based Neighborhood Service Cabinets. I am proud to announce that each Neighborhood Service Cabinet has already met twice to address the city's recent

spike in gang crime and other issues important to their area.

I strongly believe that when we coordinate our efforts, we will find innovative ways to improve the delivery of city services that directly impact neighborhoods, such as street resurfacing, tree trimming, bulky item pick up, and services provided to individuals, which include bill payment and building permits.

I look forward to working with you to make "TeamWork LA" a success throughout our city! ☎



City Schools Benefit When We Work Together to Help Them

by Jack Weiss
Councilmember, Fifth District

At Los Angeles schools, vandalism and graffiti are constant problems. Outside many schools, commuters compete with parents for space on the road, risking accidents and injury to kids trying to get to school.

Unfortunately, too often, principals and teachers don't even ask for help with problems like these that interfere with their ability to educate students. The schools are overseen by an independent governmental entity, the L.A. Unified School District, and they rarely ask the City for help although there is much the City could do to help them.

When I took office, I learned that the City often fails to forge relationships between the schools and City services and departments. There has been little history of Council offices actively aiding the schools in their districts.

To respond to the needs of schools in my Valley and Westside district, I decided to treat the schools as if they were the squeakiest wheels – as if they were the most demanding constituents who repeatedly requested action in their neighborhoods. To make it happen, I created our "Schoolmates" program.

Now, my office checks in regularly with each

of the schools in my district. We don't wait for the schools to call us. We ask the principals what neighborhood issues are affecting their schools, and then we work with the school and City departments to take care of the problems that are interfering with kids' ability to feel safe and learn.

For example, at several schools, we have worked to reduce hazards at pick-up and drop-off times when children often darted into harm's way trying to get to their school. Working with the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the Police Department's Traffic Division, we help create pick-up and drop-off zones to keep students safe.

The "Schoolmates" program is just one example of a new way of approaching the challenges facing our schools. Although the school district and the City will likely remain separate governmental entities for the foreseeable future, the bureaucratic attitudes that prevent us from helping our schools succeed need not continue. ☎

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