



A representative from Councilwoman Janice Hahn's office presents Kisa Hughes' parents, Ronald and Barbara Hughes, with a certificate.



The family of Kisa Hughes cuts the ribbon to the classroom. The family releases doves at the ceremony.



Kisa Hughes' classroom is open for viewing.



From left: Kendra Musgrove and Scott Lee, Executive Director, Watts Community Development Dept.

# In Memory of Kisa

## ■ Community Development program dedicates a classroom in memory of athlete, former employee Kisa Hughes.

Story courtesy Community Development; Photos by Liz Montes, Club Counselor

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT** — The Los Angeles Youth Opportunity Movement (LAYOM) dedicated a classroom June 22 at its Watts site in honor of Kisa Hughes, a former employee who succumbed to cancer in March. She was 33.

The UCLA alumna and basketball star mentored hundreds of youths in her position as Director of Education, playing an instrumental role in building the infrastructure of LAYOM's college placement services.

"Kisa's dedication to youth and passion for life left a tremendous mark on us all," said Scott Lee, Executive Director of LAYOM's Watts site. "Her amazing spirit and glowing personality had a magnetic effect."

While a member of the UCLA women's basketball team, Hughes averaged 11.5 points and 8.0 rebounds per game in her three-year tenure as a Bruin. Her field-goal percentage still remains ranked second of all-time at UCLA. Hughes went on to play professional women's basketball in China, Germany and Austria before returning to the States to build opportunities for disadvantaged youths.

"Our daughter left an incredible mark in such a brief time," said Hughes' father, Ronald Hughes Sr. "We are honored that LAYOM continues her legacy by dedicating a classroom in her memory."

The classroom will serve as a haven for youths



The family releases doves at the ceremony.

in search of college resources. Visitors will have access to high-speed Internet, college resource manuals and financial aid assistance. Since its inception in the fall of 2000, LAYOM has served more than 7,000 youths in the communities of Watts, Boyle Heights, and Pacoima. Facilitated by the City of Los Angeles Community Development Department, the program assists youths in achieving their personal, educational and career goals.

"It is essential that we honor Kisa, who made such a positive impact within the community," said Richard Benbow, General Manager, Community Development Department (CDD). "The City of Los Angeles thrives because of employees like Kisa, who bring passion to their work."

To continue her memory, LAYOM has established the Kisa Hughes Scholarship Foundation

to raise funds for youths in search of postsecondary education. Hughes, a firm advocate of college education, spent five years of her life placing Watts youths in educational opportunities.

"The Kisa Hughes Scholarship Foundation keeps her dream alive," Lee said. "Every day, youths enter our doors in need of motivation and inspiration. We infuse them with the self-confidence and support needed to excel, just as Kisa did for so many years."



Kisa Hughes' sister donated several pairs of Nike shoes to the center and was presented with a thank-you plaque.



From left: Barbara Hughes; Rosalinda Pantoja, Scholarship Recipient; Ana Galicia, Scholarship Recipient; Noemi Llamas, Scholarship Recipient; and Roland Hughes.