

# Father's Day in the City

■ When dads and their kids work for the City, legacies are made.

Story by Yvonne Liu, Office of Finance; Photos courtesy the subjects

Comedian Chris Rock once spoke up for fathers by saying that, of the two, fathers are by and large the less appreciated parent. For example, children and songwriters have come up with the loveliest music and heart-warming lyrics of how we love our mothers, but rarely do we come across a Father's Day song.

In a 1972 concert at Carnegie Hall, Groucho Marx performed the following song by Harry Ruby:

"Today, Father, is Father's Day  
And we're giving you a tie  
It's not much, we know  
It is just our way of showing you  
We think you're a regular guy  
You say that it was nice of us to bother  
But it really was a pleasure to fuss  
For according to our mother  
You're our father  
And that's good enough for us  
Yes, that's good enough for us."

Here are some stories of City employees  
who grew up with a father who  
is also a City employee.

## Wilken Quon and Irene Gudino

Wilken Quon started in Public Works as a Senior Accountant I in December 1986 and advanced to Senior Accountant II in July 1996. Today he's a Senior Accountant II at Public Works.



Wilken Quon and Irene Gudino

Irene Gudino, a Senior Clerk Typist at the DWP, who was featured in last month's Mother's Day story, shared with us her thoughts on her father. Both of her parents, Aida Quon and Wilken Quon, were role models for her to start a career in the City.

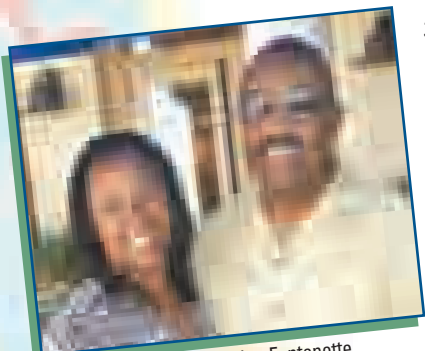
"My parents have been supportive, especially my dad, by keeping me abreast with every exam I could be eligible to take, and also share some study materials to help me prepare for the exams," Irene said. "It has been helpful, and I am thankful for his and my mom's help and continuing support."

Her parents are also wonderful grandparents, and her three boys, from age 5 to infant, love to spend time with them.

Her father's constant support to keep her abreast of available City tests helps her to focus on her career goals of working in the Management series.

## William Todd and Chermaine Fontenette

Chermaine Fontenette, Truck Operator II, Sanitation/Public Works, came to the City less than two years ago.



William Todd and Chermaine Fontenette

It was by a bumpy road that brought Chermaine, 35, to the City as a truck operator.

She worked 10 years as a UPS driver before her next assignment as a full-time mother and wife. After her divorce, she went to truck-driving school and earned a Class A commercial license. She began looking for work that accommodated her babysitter's schedule. After a stint as one of only three female truck drivers at Waste Management in October 2006, she came to the City.

Her father, William Nelson Todd, a patrol officer at LAPD, started in Devonshire Division decades ago. Recently retired, he now works for the studios as security on his police bike.

When asked why she chose the City, she replied,

"My father always told me that if I was in uniform that I would always be able to take care of myself and have a good retirement plan for my future."

As a little girl, Chermaine used to go the Police Academy on a regular basis while he was in training. Some of that pride for LAPD she possessed as a child shines through.

"I loved the fact that my father was a cop [and] he was my hero," she remembered.

"I loved to hear him come home from work on a late night and wake me up and tell me he was home and bring me presents, especially the sweet potato pies from wherever he use to get them. I loved to run in the back yard and wave at him going down the hill to work. He would blow his horn on his bike."

"I was so proud that I had a necklace my daddy gave me on my birthday. It was his

badge with my first diamond in it, and on the back it said 'Love, Daddy.' My father told me [he] became a cop to give me a better life than what he had growing up, and he did just that," she said.

Chermaine would run into her father while on route. Not knowing the driver was his daughter, Officer Todd would say, "Hey! You can't park there! What are you doing?!"

She would park properly, run out and give him a hug.

Chermaine's employment with the City is also a way of reuniting with her father, from whom she had grown apart due to her parents' divorce.

"I lost contact with my dad, but as an adult I gained back the relationship," she said.

She calls her father to ask for advice on what to do for the next promotional exam. They talk extensively about what is happening in the City as far as jobs go. Her father advises her on how the City works, on what her benefits are, and how to invest in the City's retirement plans.

"I [see] that as I am [now] older that having lived the City life my entire life that I someday can say that I was a retired City employee and the City was good to me!" she said.

## Elliott Porter and Sheryl Porter

Sheryl Porter started part time with the City at the Los Angeles Zoo in 1984 as a Recreation Assistant II. Her father, Elliott Porter, was the Personnel Director at the Rec and Parks. She started working full time in 1988 as a Clerk Typist.

Elliott encouraged her to get in the City while she was trying to figure out what to do with her life.

"I've been here ever since, and am currently employed at the DWP as a Customer Service Representative. My dad actually spent several years working in the same division I am now. He still calls the [John Ferrero Building] 'the new building' because he remembers when it was built," Sheryl said.

"I was able to watch my dad succeed at work for many years before I started, and that was only one of the many great examples he provided for me growing up."

For Sheryl, it's enjoyable working in the public sector. She shows up every day and does the best job she can. She feels that her father had set a great example for her.

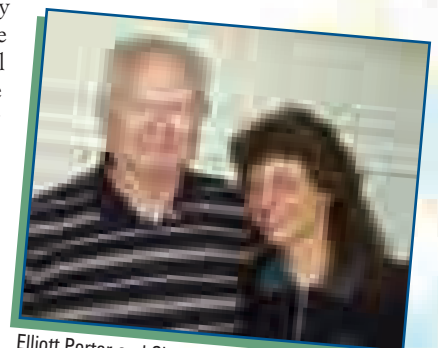
"One fortunate thing about following him to the City is that anytime I have a question regarding rules or procedures, I can ask my dad. He always knows the right answer, or where to find it. He's the master at helping people prepare for interviews, and as difficult as interviews are for me, he's helped tremendously," she said.

"Throughout the years I've met many people who know him, and it's a joy to see how many people's lives he's touched deeply. He's personable, knowledgeable and fun, and when people talk about him, I see [their eyes] light up."

Sheryl explained that her parents divorced when she was eight, and her father had custody of her.

"We had the greatest time together, and started attending baseball games almost every night. We also share a hobby of collecting autographed baseballs, and the oldest ball my dad has is signed by Steve Bilko, his all-time favorite player from the Pacific Coast League days before the Dodgers moved to Los Angeles."

"Working for the City hasn't made us closer. We've been close my whole life," she said.



Elliott Porter and Sheryl Porter



Here are the personal messages sent to *Alive!* by some very loving and grateful children who wanted to pay tribute to their DAD.

**Enjoy!**

# Happy Father's Day!



Happy Father's Day to the best dad ever. I love you!

- Love, Jake (son of Dan Hibma, LAFD FS 6)



"I would like to thank you for encouraging me to reach for success in everything I do and for giving me the Real facts of life. I just want to say you've been such an inspiration in my life and I love you... Happy Father's Day, Pa! (George Edison 1, Public Works 38 Years)

- Love, Wendy Edison, SCT 11 Years



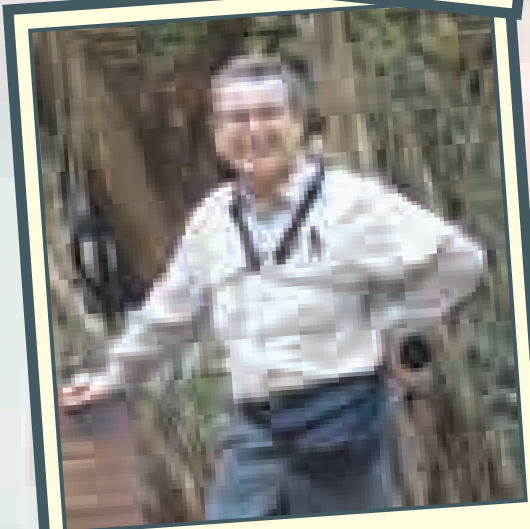
Happy Father's Day, Dad-E-O! Thank you for everything you have been to us! We love you!

- Love, Tracy and Kara



Happy Father's Day from your girls.

- Love, Julie and Emily (the daughters of Dan Hibma, LAFD FS 6)



To the person who gave me a sense of adventure...and the gift of learning to enjoy life and all it has to offer us. I love you, Dad!

- John Hawkins



Dad! I am so proud of your for achieving 25 years with the DWP and want you to know how much I love you! You are the best father anyone could ask for, and I know both Rob and I feel blessed to call you Dad.

- Love you, Marcy

(Pictured from left: Juan [the father] and Gigi Guevara; Jen and Rob Guevara; and Marcy Guevara)



Happy Father's Day, Daddy! We want to thank you for being such an awesome father. We love you. You're the greatest!

- With Love, Mikesha and Trez'Jah Mingo (daughters of Timothy Mingo, DWP)



To the best Daddy in the world -- Don Serrano. Happy Father's Day! We love you very much.

- Love, Guia, Edbert and Guian. (Mom Josephine Serrano, Club Member, works for the Convention Center)

From all of us  
at the Club,  
to all the Fathers,

**HAVE A  
GREAT DAY!**



Happy Father's Day to the best dad in the world! Thank you for always being there for us, and thank you for your support. We love you so much.

- Love, Darly, Vanessa and Andres. (the family of Martin Lovato)