

FINANCE

Finance Service Awards

Finance hands out its sixth annual Outstanding Service Awards.

On June 5, the Office of Finance celebrated the top 1.6 percent of its workforce at the department's sixth annual Outstanding Service Awards, held at the Kyoto Grand Hotel and Gardens. Antoinette Christovale, Director of Finance, presented awards to six employees for their exceptional performance and dedication to the job. "It gives me great pleasure to recognize some of our most dedicated, talented and innovative staff who have contributed to the Office of Finance and to the City of Los Angeles."

Christovale and Assistant Director Pamela Mooney closed the proceedings by praising all honorees for their exceptional professionalism and contributions to the office. They also took the opportunity to thank all Office of Finance staff for their service and dedication throughout the year.

Office of Finance was created in 2000 as a result of Charter reform efforts, and collects more than \$2 billion in revenue annually from various sources, including taxes, licenses, fees and permits. This revenue pays for essential municipal services to City residents and businesses.

Congratulations to the winners, and thanks to Andrea Angeles for her assistance in producing this story.

The following six honorees were recognized for their service during fiscal year 2007 – 2008 at levels above and beyond the normal duties of their jobs:

Administration Division

ALICIA VEGA

Tax Compliance Officer III

Alicia was recognized for her dedication to duty and her exemplary work ethic. Alicia began her City career in 1989 as a Clerk Typist with Pensions. She began working in the City Clerk's Office as a Senior Clerk Typist in 1990. She was promoted to a Tax and Permit Field Representative in 1995, became a Management Analyst in 1997 and has been a TCO III since 2003. For essentially 18 years she has worked for the Office of Finance. Some of her assignments over the years have been the Hollywood Public Counter and Hollywood Field Office. Alicia has been a Tax Compliance Officer III for 8 years and is currently supervising the Tax Code Analysis unit. Alicia is a very reliable employee. When new responsibilities were transferred to the unit such as the CPRA coordination and temporary assumption of the Taxpayer Advocate duties, she immediately jumped in and assumed a leadership role in administration of the programs. She organized meetings for information gathering and established data and document tracking processes to comply with legal, as well as internal office timelines. Additionally, she assisted in preparation of the Rate Reduction and Technical Changes to the Los Angeles Municipal Code Reports. Finally, she is the "go-to" person relative

to the many technical aspects of Ordinance application and historical perspectives of relating to the business tax reform program. She is a wealth of knowledge and maintains a positive approach to all assignments.

Citywide Collections Unit

KAREN DEAN

Finance Collection Investigator III

Karen was recognized for her dedication to duty. Karen began her City career in 1980 as a Legal Secretary I with the City Attorney's Office. She has been with the Citywide Collections Unit, which was then known as the Claims and Collection Unit, since 1984. She served as the training coordinator for new investigators and was also the coordinator for the private collection agency as well as the in-house training coordinator for the unit's collection system. Karen's first assignment with the Citywide Collections Unit was as a Legal Assistant, handling workers' compensation subrogation and City vehicle damage claims. She was then promoted to Investigator II, where she handled a significant caseload, including tax, statutory fees and permits, property damage and the often challenging and sensitive City employee salary overpayments. Karen has repeatedly demonstrated dedication to duty, an outstanding work ethic and consistently showed initiative in assuming responsibilities. Approximately two years ago, Karen was promoted to a supervisory role as an Investigator III. In addition to her designated supervisory responsibilities, she continues to maintain oversight and assumes a leadership role over the private agency referral program. With expiration of the original citywide collection contracts, she played an integral part in the setup, reporting and account referral processes with one of the Office's new vendors, Caine and Weiner. And, as a result of her added efforts, suggestions, and tenacity, the Office is implementing more efficient referral and agency monitoring routines.

LATAX Systems Division

MARY MAHER

Tax Compliance Officer III

Mary was recognized for her outstanding contributions and accomplishments. Mary began her City career in 1970 as a Tax and Field Representative. She became a Senior Tax and Field Representative in 1978 supervising the Van Nuys Branch Office until 1984, when she decided to stay at home with her two young children. She returned to the City in 1999 as a Management Assistant with the Tax and Permit Division. She supervised the TAPS Unit during the transition to LATAX and has been with the LATAX Systems Division since 2004. Mary is a key individual in the LATAX group who is solely



2008 Outstanding Service Award honorees and their supervisors.

responsible for a great many things to ensure the day-to-day operation of the system for this department. She coordinated all correspondence items between LATAX and our vendors that print and mail them along with monitoring the results of items generated by LATAX to ensure they are correct in quantity and content and monitoring the processing results and shipments by the vendor to ensure they did get mailed. Approximately 1.5 million correspondence items were generated and mailed by the system over the past year. Mary responded to requests for information and statistics about our tax and permit base and worked with the Office of the City Attorney as to the legal requirements of providing that information. Mary has had to complete these duties and more largely without assistance from other staff, and her dedication and professionalism in performing all these very important duties have greatly benefited Finance in meeting its goals and objectives.

Tax and Permit Division

FLORSERFINA AVILA

Tax Auditor II

Florsperfina was recognized for her outstanding dedication to her work. Florsperfina began her City service in 1999 as a Tax Auditor with Tax and Permit Division, and after a year, she was promoted to Tax Auditor II. Florsperfina has consistently been the highest producer in the Office Audit Section, in terms of number of audits completed and revenue generated. Florsperfina was assigned to initiate a pilot project that established an Office Audit presence at the Van Nuys location. She was able to implement a procedure to coordinate and obtain the cooperation and support of other division employees at Van Nuys. Stationed at Van Nuys, Florsperfina worked diligently to make the pilot project a success. As testament to her efforts, Florsperfina was able to exceed her audit goals for three consecutive years. This performance was instrumental in the decision to move the pilot project forward as a significant component of the Office Audit unit. Through Florsperfina's efforts, the Van Nuys' Office Audit unit has provided outstanding customer service to taxpayers located in the Valley. Local businesses selected for a desk audit are able to eliminate travel to the Wilshire office, which saves a significant amount of hours for operation of their business.

Revenue Management Division

FLOYD NEAL

Tax Compliance Aide

Floyd was recognized for his exceptional service to the public. Floyd began his City service in 1995 as a Clerk Typist with the City Clerk's Office. He was promoted to Senior Clerk Typist in 1997 and was again promoted to Tax

Compliance Aide in 2005. Floyd consistently demonstrates initiative and assumes responsibilities above and beyond his job duties and is often relied on for this expertise with classifying difficult accounts and training new employees. He is very ambitious and frequently seeks opportunities to assist where needed, especially when the public counters are significantly impacted and during personnel shortages. Prior to filling the Principal Clerk vacancy, Floyd graciously assumed the responsibilities, on a temporary basis, assisting with the Brinks deposits, public counter coverage and providing backup coverage for the numerous Satellite Offices. Additionally Floyd translates when taxpayers are unable to resolve accounts; he willingly assists making sure that each taxpayer receives excellent customer service. He also assumed the responsibility of picking up the deposit for the seasonal office located at CD-8 Constitute Office. Floyd is hard-working, committed, and very reliable. He takes great pride in his work and does everything within his power to assure that the missions of the department are accomplished.

Revenue Management Division

DEBORAH SLAUGHTER

Principal Clerk

Deborah was recognized for her dedication to duty, her outstanding accomplishments, and her exceptional leadership that earned the designation as the Office of Finance Employee of the Year for 2008. Deborah began her City service in 1981 as a Clerk Typist with Building and Safety. She came to the Office of Finance in 2003 as a Principal Clerk. In Finance, Deborah has worked for the Accounts Receivable section and the Special Desks section. Deborah has consistently shown initiative, assumed responsibilities and exercised persistence in the timely resolution of problems. As the Special Desks Unit supervisor, Deborah prepared comprehensive written desk duties, which included the development of procedures for Oil Well Fire Permits. This required coordination with the Fire Department, the City Attorney, LATAX staff and her own staff. Further, she encouraged her staff to develop a tracking mechanism to efficiently and effectively monitor the inventory of the unit's work items. Deborah consistently performs her duties in an exemplary manner and maintains meticulous work habits. She often is required to provide immediate research and status reports to Executive Management for inquiries referred by elected officials and never falters when tasked to do so. She demonstrates admirable qualities, her strong work ethic, dedication to the job and integrity make her a good role model to all City employees. Her contributions to the City continually surpass her supervisors' expectations, which have consistently contributed to an increase in productivity and employee morale.



The 2008 Outstanding Service Award winners, from left: Director of Finance Antoinette Christovale; Karen Dean; Alicia Vega; Floyd Neal; Mary Maher; Deborah Slaughter; Florsperfina Avila; and Assistant Director Pamela Mooney.