

LAABP / LABCAA

Trailblazers Honored

Black employees associations honor those who have made a difference.

Story courtesy LAABP; Photos by Malcolm Ali

More than 125 people came out Feb. 17 for the fourth annual Trailblazers Reception in the Tom Bradley Room at City Hall. The event was sponsored by the Los Angeles Association of Black Personnel (LAABP) and the Los Angeles Association of Black City Attorneys (LABCAA).

"We are pleased to join with LABCAA in recognizing employees who have contributed to the progress of African Americans in City government as well as achieved notable positions in their City careers," said LAABP President Cora Jackson-Fossett, Public Works/Sanitation.

The honorees were Dorothy Alexander, Joe Greenhoward, Olivia Mitchell, Millage Peaks and Earl Thomas.

Among the guests offering salutes to the honorees were Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa; Councilmembers Bernard Parks and Tom LaBonge, Club Member; City Attorney Carmen Trutanich; Deputy Mayor Miriam Long; and Public Works Commissioners Valerie Lynne Shaw and Paula Daniels.

Also attending were Detrich Allen, General Manager, Environmental Affairs; Richard Benbow, General Manager, Community Development; Gary Lee Moore, City Engineer; John Reamer, Inspector of Public Works; Tony Royster, General Manager, General Services; Grace Harper, Assistant General Manager, Building and Safety; Deborah Weintraub, Chief Deputy City Engineer; and Linda Smith, director of the Mayor's Minority Business Opportunity Center, Joseph Rouzan of Community Development, and Jeffery Whitmore, Office of Finance.

Committee members for the event were Chairperson Shelia Brooks-LeFridge, Controller's Office; Carmen Steward, Fire and Police Pensions; Ruby Love, Controller's Office; Sandy Davis, Fire and Police Pensions; Niesha Louis, City Clerk; JoAnn Moss, Public Works/Sanitation; Shawn Magee, Public Works/Sanitation; Alexis Oliver, LAPD; Linda Gillespie, ITA; Sharon Loudd, Controller's Office; Blanche Hill, Controller's Office; Janeshia Robinson, Personnel; Connie Williams, DWP; DeMarlo Sims, DWP; Michael Hollomon, DWP; Regina Young, Controller; DeWanna Sharp, Personnel; Donyale Hall, EMD; Inez Williams, Controller's Office; and Maaliq Elliott of Amadeus Salon, Inglewood.

The LAABP is the official representative for City of Los Angeles employees of African American heritage. Incorporated in 1972, the LAABP advocates equal employment within the City's workforce and increased opportunities for "people of color" to attain management and executive positions. Among the services the organization provides are career development seminars, a mock interview program and networking forums. Since 2003, LAABP has presented more than \$60,000 in scholarships to college-bound students.



LAABP Board, LAABCA Board and elected officials pose with 2010 Trailblazers. Seated, from left: Dorothy Alexander; Joe Greenhoward; Olivia Mitchell; Millage Peaks; and Earl Thomas. Standing: DeMarlo Sims; City Attorney Carmen Trutanich; Capri Maddox; Shelia Brooks-LeFridge; Sharon Loudd; Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa; Carmen Hawkins; Cora Jackson-Fossett; Kimberly Willis; Dewanna Sharp; Terrence Montgomery; and Councilmember Tom LaBonge, Club Member.



At the reception.



From left: Dr. Roslyn Blake, Deputy Mayor Miriam Long and guests of Honoree Dorothy Alexander.



Sharon Loudd, LAABP Treasurer; Terrence Montgomery, LAABP First Vice President; Joe Greenhoward, honoree; and Tony Royster, GM, General Services.



At the reception.



From left: Stacey Anthony, LAABCA Board member, and Monica DeAlba.



Honoree Joe Greenhoward and grandchildren.

DOROTHY ALEXANDER

Senior Construction Inspector, LAX

Dorothy Alexander is the first African American female Senior Construction Inspector at Los Angeles World Airports. She joined the City as an Office Engineering Technician after working at Rockwell International. At Rockwell, she was a member of the flight support team for the first Space Shuttle missions. Dorothy entered the City's Assistant Construction Inspector training program, then was promoted to Construction Inspector and finally to her current position. While climbing upward, she says she learned from other inspectors, but her greatest challenge was learning to work effectively in the male dominated construction industry. Dorothy credits her success to (1) willingness to work hard, (2) being undaunted by difficult assignments, (3) following through, and (4) providing feedback. She said, "A successful worker should always keep their superiors informed." In addition, she counsels others about their careers and participates in the Wings to Fly Mentoring Program, sponsored by Los Angeles World Airports.



Honoree Dorothy Alexander.

JOE GREENHOWARD

Maintenance Laborer, General Services

Joe Greenhoward, Maintenance Laborer, General Services, provides arrangements for all events in the Civic Center from heritage programs to press conferences to Lakers celebrations. He began his City career 1983 as an Occupational Trainee during the Mayor Tom Bradley administration. He was promoted to Custodian that same year, then to Maintenance Laborer in 1988. Joe said, "I came to the City because I wanted to make a change in my life by completing a solid goal. My children were my main focus, wanting to be an example in their lives, so I decided this was the path I wanted to take." He added that his success lies in hard work, dedication and having great management and excellent leadership. Joe's philosophy of life is, "Do your job to the best of your ability, and the reward will always be gratifying."



Honoree Joe Greenhoward.



From left: Cora Jackson-Fossett, LAABP President, Joseph Ruzan and Karran Rouzan.



Trailblazers Honored

- Continued



From left: Gary Lee Moore, Grace Harper, Detrich Allen and John Reamer.



CDD employees congratulate Olivia Mitchell.



Olivia Mitchell and Richard Benbow.



Tony Royster, General Manager, General Services.



Richard Benbow, General Manager, Community Development.



Michelle Banks, Maurice Dawkins and Intissar Durham.

OLIVIA MITCHELL

Director of Research, Community Development

Olivia E. Mitchell serves as Director of Research for Community Development, where she manages the Research, Legislation and Resource Development Unit. Her City career started with Mayor Tom Bradley. For 22 years, she directed his Office of Youth Development, providing programs for more than 2,000 young people and creating internship and jobs programs. Under Mayor Riordan, she served as interim director of the Commission of Children, Youth and Families, then 10 years as Assistant Executive Director and Chief Accountant. In 2005, she moved to CDD, managing eight (8) Youth and Family Centers and several special projects before assuming her current position. She serves or has served on many boards, including California Community Foundation, YWCA of Greater Los Angeles, Black Jewish Youth Experience, and currently, national board of the Tavis Smiley Foundation. Olivia has advised others, "Never miss an opportunity to learn, to try new things, to meet new people, to love. Each life is an adventure best spent with joy, good humor and, most importantly, with others."



Honoree Olivia Mitchell.



Deputy Chief Jimmy Hill, and honoree Millage Peaks with his wife.

MILLAGE PEAKS

Fire Chief, LAFD

Fire Chief Millage Peaks is only the second African American to serve in this position. He started his 33 year career as a firefighter and, from there, blazed upward from Recruitment Officer to Captain to Battalion Chief. Throughout his career, he has helped others. In 1996, Chief Peaks assumed command of LAFD's Battalion 18, covering six stations in West Los Angeles. He became a mentor to firefighters under his command, and aided seven of eight to advance to the rank of captain. Special assignments include Employee Relations Officer, Planning Section Commander, and Operations CEO.



Honoree Millage Peaks.



From left: Capri Maddox, LAACBA Board member; Sharon Loudd, LAABP Treasurer; Earl Thomas, Honoree; Carmen Trutanich, City Attorney; and Kimberly Willis, LAABCA Board member.

EARL THOMAS

Chief of the Criminal and Special Litigation Branch, City Attorney's Office

Earl Thomas is Chief of the Criminal and Special Litigation Branch and the highest ranking African American in the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office. In this position, he manages the day-to-day operations of the Safe Neighborhoods Division, Branch and Area Division, Anti-Gang Division, and Special Operations and Litigation Division, responsible for all of the criminal prosecutions, investigations and prosecution related activities of the branch. He began his career as a trial deputy in 1980 and also served as Supervisor, Central Trials Branch and Assistant Chief of Criminal Division before being appointed to his current position.



Honoree Earl Thomas.



Councilmember Bernard Parks.



At the reception.



From left: Kelvin Fossett, Robert Brown and Bob Blake.

