

AIRPORTS

Farewell to the Chief

Airport Police Chief George Centeno retires.



From left: Airports Deputy Executive Director Arif Alikhan, Airport Police Assistant Chief Brian A. Walker, (Retired) Chief George R. Centeno, Assistant Chief Ethel McGuire, and (new) Chief Michael T. Hyams.

Story by Officer Karla Ortiz, Airport Police;
Photo by Officer Johnny Pan, Airport Police

On Jan. 25, Airport Police Chief George R. Centeno celebrated his retirement from the airport force at a reception held in his honor at the Flight Path Museum at LAX.

He was joined by family, friends, co-workers, and Airports Executive Director Gina Marie Lindsey, Board of Airport Commissioners President Michael A. Lawson, Vice President Valeria C. Valasco, Fernando Torres-Gil, Deputy Executive Director Arif Alikhan, and others.

Chief Centeno started his career at Airports in

February 2007 as Assistant Chief and was appointed the Chief of Police in December 2007. Chief Centeno managed one of the nation's largest aviation law enforcement agencies with more than 1,100 sworn and civilian employees. Under his command, crime statistics at LAX dropped by 27 percent for 2011 and 50 percent during his five-year tenure.

Chief Centeno's career to serve others began in the military with the United States Air Force during the Vietnam War. As a sergeant, he was recognized with several service medals. During his career at Santa Monica Police Department, his dedication to helping others gained him the

Medal of Courage and a Life-Saving Medal.

Chief Centeno not only reached professional achievements, but personal ones as well by pursuing higher education and training. Chief Centeno earned an associate of arts degree, and a bachelor's degree, and he graduated from the Federal Bureau of Investigations National Academy. He retired as the Vice President of the Hispanic Command Officers Association.

At his retirement reception, Chief Centeno was presented with several acknowledgements and recognitions by the Office of Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Los Angeles Airport Police Supervisors Association and the Hispanic Command Officers Association. Airports Executive Director Gina Marie Lindsey expressed her appreciation by thanking Chief Centeno for his extraordinary service to Airports and reminding all in attendance that while the Chief's leadership and work ethic will be missed, he has certainly earned the time he will spend now with his family. Deputy Executive Director Arif Alikhan also spoke about Chief Centeno's commitment to this organization and his influence to the growth of Airport Police by making significant changes.

Chief Centeno expressed his gratitude and described how his commitment to the department has been for the support of its mission.

AIRPORTS, COUNCIL

Council Honors Life Savers

Council recognizes two Airport Police Officers for their quick action.

Story by Officer Karla Ortiz, Airport Police;
Photo by Officer Darius J. Lewis, Airport Police

Two Los Angeles Airport Police officers were recognized by the City Council for saving the life of a female who suffered a heart attack at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) in December. Councilmember Dennis Zine presented the officers with certificates of appreciation during the regularly scheduled council meeting Feb. 10.

On Dec. 30 Airport Police Officers Robert Mosquera, a four-year veteran, and Thi Tran, a two-year veteran, responded to a call for help. Etel Martinez, a resident of Mission Hills was at LAX to drop off her sister who was flying out

when she collapsed on the sidewalk in front of Terminal 2, and her husband helped her back into their vehicle. While the officers gathered information, Martinez suddenly stopped breathing and no longer had a pulse. Officer Mosquera immediately began cardiopulmonary resuscitation, while Officer Tran retrieved an automated external defibrillator from inside the terminal. Together, the two officers worked incessantly until Martinez regained vital signs. Soon after, LAFD paramedics arrived on scene and took Martinez to a local hospital for further treatment. Following up with Martinez and her family, the officers reported, "She is happy and recovering

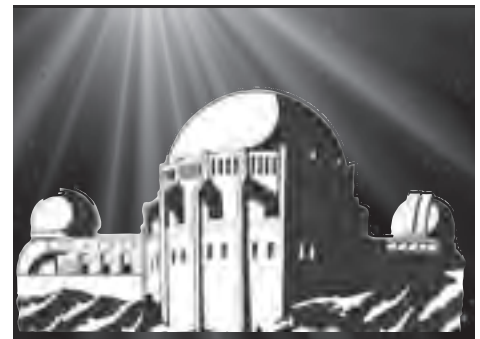
well." To express her gratitude, she offered to make the officers a homemade meal.

In attendance at the City Council meeting was Airports Police Deputy Executive Director of Law Enforcement and Homeland Security & Intelligence Arif Alikhan and Airport Police Chief Michael T. Hyams, as well as the officers' families, friends, and Airport Police colleagues.

Chief Hyams said, "The quick actions of Officers Tran and Mosquera exemplify the most important function of those who work in public safety. There is no greater service than saving the life of another. We are all thankful they were present and prepared to perform this critical task."



From left: Airport Police Chief Hyams; Councilwoman Jan Perry, Club Member; Councilman Bill Rosendahl; Officer Thi Tran; Officer Robert Mosquera; Councilman Dennis Zine; and Fire Chief Brian L. Cummings.



THIS MONTH AT THE

Griffith Observatory

March 19:

Spring Equinox

Come to the Griffith Observatory for a free event celebrating the start of spring! The Spring Equinox is when there is exactly as many daytime hours as nighttime hours.

TIME: 1 and 7 p.m.

COST: **Free!**

Information:
www.griffithobs.org/pcalendar.html