

Alive!



REMEMBERING
MARTÍN CHAVEZ

~ 1959-2012 ~

Harbor Dept. executive, youth mentor and Club Board Member believed strongly in the City Employees Club. His biography, tributes and photos begin on page 6.



City Employees Club of Los Angeles
120 West 2nd Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012



Martín Chavez

[1959 - 2012]

Human Resources Officer,
Port of Los Angeles
Club Board Member

HARBOR

In Memory of Martín Chavez

[1959 - 2012]

Martín Chavez was a leader with the Port and a great supporter of the Club.

The Club is mourning the loss of Martín Chavez, Human Resources Officer at the Port of Los Angeles, and Club Board Member, who joined the board several years ago and was instrumental in supporting the Club and contributing to *Alive!*

Martín suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage Sept. 18 and passed away Sept. 21.

"Martín's absence is going to be felt far and wide, especially on the Club Board, where he tirelessly helped direct the Club to its current destination," John continued. "We will keep his family in our prayers. We really miss him."

In an autobiography Martín wrote several years ago, he said that he enjoyed "making people happy; playing with my niece, Regi, and nephew, Matthew; buying a gift for my mother; surprising brothers and sisters with things; and sending stuff to people."

Memorial services were held for Martín shortly after his death.

Biography

Martín Chavez was born in Los Angeles in 1959. He graduated from Cal State Dominguez Hills, receiving a Bachelor of science degree in public administration and a Bachelor of arts degree in political science in 1981 and a Master's degree in public administration in 1983.

He began his career in the City Personnel Department in August 1984, moving to the DWP in November 1984, and joining the Harbor Department as a Personnel Analyst in 1994. He was promoted to Sr. Personnel Analyst in 1987.

Martín was the personnel liaison analyst for Port Police, Wharfingers and Risk Management divisions and was the Worker's Compensation liaison working with the Risk Management Division, the City Personnel Department and the City Attorney's office tracking and managing work's compensation issues.

His real strength lay in mentoring the student workers who worked at the department in the past 15 years. During the 2000-01 academic year, Martín created a high school internship program with the Wilmington Banning High School International Trade Education program. The ITEP program places Banning High students in paid summer positions in the department and with local employers involved in international trade so they can develop the skills necessary to succeed in the workforce.

Martín was also the Program Coordinator for the Harbor Department Perfect Attendance program, which recognized employees for their exemplary attendance. Martín acted as the Master of Ceremonies at the annual luncheon and enjoyed handing out the prizes to the winners.

Martín served on the Board of Directors of the Los Angeles City Employees Association (City Employees Club). He was recognized as Employee Club Representative of the Year in 2011 for his work reporting on the accomplishments of Harbor Department employees.

Martín was a proud alumnus of Cal State Dominguez Hills. He was a four-time President of the Cal State Dominguez Hills Alumni Association and served on the Alumni Association Board of Directors for more than 15 years.

He received the prestigious Cesar Chavez Community Service Award from Cal State Dominguez Hills and was recognized by the California State Assembly for his work in the community to improve educational opportunities.

At the time of his death, Martín was President of the Southern California School Personnel Commissioners Association and was Chairperson of the Compton Unified School District Personnel Commission. He had been a member of the National Medical Enterprises Board of Governors, the Compton Latino Chamber of Commerce Executive Board, and served on the Los Angeles Unified School District Superintendent's Committee on the Education and Employment of the Disabled, and on the Minority Engineering Program Advisory Boards at USC, UCLA and UC Irvine.

Family Perspective

Regina Grant, Harbor/Port Police, niece of Martín Chavez, remembered her uncle in this essay written for *Alive!*:

"The biggest hobby my uncle enjoyed was every show or exhibit out there. He collected model cars (never built any) still new in boxes in his garage. He collected coins, buttons, pencils, cassettes, records, DVDs, VHS tapes, CDs, hats, baseball caps, football jerseys, and collectible toys, not to mention anything on a free sample table, including key chains, bumper stickers, pens, and T-shirts. If it were free he would go over to get what he could, then send my younger cousins or me over. This stuff would usually be for someone at the office or elsewhere that he knew would enjoy it.

"He enjoyed the theatre. We went to the Pantages and the Cerritos Center for the Performing Arts. We went to the Ford Amphitheater, the Hollywood Bowl; we saw all of the Cirque du Soleil shows. Went to museums – the Natural History museum, the Getty and the Getty Villa, the Science Center, the La Brea Tar Pits, and the Griffith Observatory. He went to Festival of Arts-Pageant of the Masters. He watched football, especially at Serra High and USC. He read a lot and remembered everything.

"He liked to go shopping. We always went to the Ontario and Lake Elsinore outlets in October for our Christmas shopping. And he would joke that if something cost more than \$5, he wasn't going to get it."

The Club thanks Regina for this essay and contributions to this feature.



Standing next to Martín's collection of buttons outside his office at the Harbor are (from left) his sister, Sarah; his niece, Regina Grant, Harbor/Port Police; and his sister, Elsa. The Port of LA gave the wall of buttons to his family.

– Tributes, next page

In Tribute



Martín speaks at the ITEP Awards, August 2011.

Martín was a deeply involved and devoted alumnus of CSU Dominguez Hills. He was loved and cherished by so many on campus. Since his passing I have had many, many people that I had no idea even knew him on campus approach me to share a story how Martín touched their lives and helped them out. His influence and helping nature was felt by so many at CSU Dominguez Hills. From students, to faculty, to staff... he was truly beloved by his *alma mater*.

Personally, I considered Martín a friend and confidant. When I needed help or advice from an unbiased person, my first call was always to Martín. He could see a problem from so many angles that he was able to provide the advice to help me make a hard decision or find a win-win for those involved. He was always able to build bridges and find common ground.

To say he will be missed greatly is an understatement. On behalf of all the stakeholders from his *alma mater*, our thoughts and prayers are with his family and everyone he touched. He was an incredible person.

**- Greg Saks,
Vice President,
University Advancement,
CSU Dominguez Hills**

Martín has been an unassuming force and pillar of professionalism. He was my go-to guy for litigation preparation. It has been a joy to work with Martín throughout my tenure at the Port. He had such a generous spirit and cared deeply about the students he recruited. He left an indelible mark on many who knew him.

I will miss him!

**- Esther Olsen,
Port of LA**

Upon hearing the news of Martín's death, many of those who knew him sent tributes to be printed in *Alive!* Here are their thoughts.

Men's lives are often measured by the tangible things they leave behind. The value of their lives is assessed in terms of money, assets and toys – a net worth of sorts. But the true measure of a man's life is often intangible, invisible to the naked eye. It is not until one looks closely that a man's true worth can be uncovered. The ultimate question to be asked is, "Did he leave this world a better place than he found it?" In my friend Martín's case, the answer is a resounding absolutely! He had the Midas touch when it came to enriching the lives of those around him. I knew him before he ascended through the management ranks. He never changed by becoming too busy or full of self-importance to lend an ear, a smile or share a story over coffee. It came as no surprise that his family and friends, *alma mater*, his neighborhood, his fellow employees and the students he loved showed an outpouring upon hearing of the extinguishing of the bright candle that lit us with his presence. He leaves a legacy of service, dedication and love. I will forever miss him.

**- Dr. Diana Salas,
DWP**



Martín with Phyllis Ninofranco, Harbor, Club Member.



At the ITEP Awards in August 2011 were, from left: Amy Grat, CEO, ITEP; former Banning High School Principal Robert Lopez; Martín Chavez; and Gabriela Perez, former internship coordinator, Harbor.

Martín Chavez was a "founding father" to my organization, International Trade Education Programs (ITEP), providing insightful leadership and passionate advocacy for the

students with whom we work. He was pivotal in the development and ongoing success of the ITEP/Port of Los Angeles Internship Program, which has touched the lives of many young men and women in Wilmington. Working with youths wasn't just a job for Martín, it was a driving motivation for life. He was tough and uncompromising, but he always saw the diamond inside a lump of coal. He helped each of the interns and student workers with whom he worked to see the treasure inside them and do what was necessary to bring forth its sparkle. When I came on board with ITEP, Martín became a good friend and thoughtful mentor to me. He took the long view of things and helped me develop patience — with myself and the people around me. His personal and professional reach was amazing, and few would consider saying no when Martín picked up the phone to make a request.

ITEP was extremely fortunate to have Martín as a constant advocate for our students and our programs. We seek to preserve his legacy through the creation of the Martín D. Chavez Scholarship Fund, which will support the career and college aspirations of the young people to whom he dedicated his life.

Thank you for allowing me to share this remembrance. He is a much loved and much missed member of the ITEP family.

**- Amy L. Grat, CEO,
International Trade Education Programs, Inc. (ITEP)**



Martín presents a "check" at a Harbor perfect attendance event last August. With him are (from left) Mark Weisenberger, LaJuan Kennedy and Frank Rendon, Club Member.

Martín presents certificates to "Outstanding Personal Development" graduates of his esteemed high school internship program in 2006. Pictured, from left: Rafael Juarez, Stephanie Lopez and Marisol Morales.



The Martín Chavez Scholarship

The ITEP/Port of Los Angeles Internship Program, produced in cooperation with the International Trade Education Programs (ITEP), meant a lot to Martín Chavez.

To preserve his legacy, ITEP has announced that it is creating the Martín D. Chavez Scholarship Fund, to support the program, which fosters the career and

college aspirations of the young people in the Harbor area.

The Martín D. Chavez Scholarship Fund will support career and educational aspirations for seniors and alumni who have participated in ITEP's programs. Martín was a key member of ITEP's Scholarship

Committee and was adamant that the "whole" student be considered, not just their GPA. Thus, the scholarship will be awarded based on a broad view of the applicant's academic ability, potential, professional interest, character, dedication to the community and career commitment.



Martín with the 2010 graduates of the Port/ITEP summer intern program.

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Martín with Arlene Herrero, Club Products Manager, and John Hawkins, Club CEO, at a Harbor event in 2006.

From the Club

I met Martín about 10 years ago, and from the very first day, he always made sure everyone (including myself) was attended to and well informed.

He always greeted everyone with a smile and was the first person to stand by your side if you needed any additional help. I will miss him and our talks about work and life outside the job. We would discuss very complex work procedures, and then the next minute start talking about simple observations about our turtles and their eating habits.

Martín will be missed.
Rest in peace, my friend.

**- Angel Gomez,
Member Services
Manager**

"Much education today is monumentally ineffective. All too often we are giving young people cut flowers when we should be teaching them to grow their own plants."

- John Gardner

Martín lit a fire amongst many of us. He caringly passed on much knowledge. I attended the Port Internship ceremony the past two years and witnessed as each intern presented a speech, which always ended by giving thanks to Martín for transforming them into responsible, well-spoken teenagers. He taught us all to "grow our own plants." He has made a difference in the life of far too many to count. My heart is saddened to have lost such a great man. May he rest in Paradise!

**- Jackie Causillas,
Club Counselor**

Martín was always so nice and made everyone's day better.

**- Megan DeBolt,
Club Store Services
Coordinator**



Martín with Jackie Causillas, Club Counselor, and Angel Gomez, Club Member Services Manager, at a Harbor Health Fair last month.

I had the honor of meeting Martín while working an event at the Harbor. I recall how he went out of his way to accommodate the Club in setting up our booth and checked on us when he could. Martín genuinely cared about the wellbeing of others. Martín's passing is a great loss to us all.

**- Tiffany Sy,
Club Counselor In-House**

I've known Martín for more than 10 years and am privileged to be able to call him a friend.

We would share stories about dogs: my two and his one. I'm sad that I can't just pick up the phone and call him to run ideas over or even show him the video of my dog walking on the treadmill. Despite knowing him for many years, he still spelled my name wrong, but he chalked it up to my parents spelling my name incorrectly and he was spelling it the right way. I miss his friendship every day.

**- Arlene Herrero,
Club Products Manager**

Martín will always be a part of our Club family. I remember his friendly demeanor the very first time I shook his hand at a Board meeting. May the God of all comfort surround Martín's family with his tenderness and love as they go through this difficult time.

**- Trinh Pham, Sr.
Accountant**



Martín taking the oath of the Club Board at the Club's annual meeting last February. With him were (from left) Terry Carter, Vas Singh and Andrew Virzi.

The focus Martín had for those around him was remarkable. He was concerned with the development of all people, particularly his co-workers as human beings and as contributors to the City of Los Angeles, devoting his life for that pursuit.

Martín's departure has rattled the foundation of the Club and all who knew him as I am witness to the effect of his death at the Harbor Department and the City of Los Angeles. May his family be comforted by the presence of all who knew him.

**- Robert Larios,
Vice President of
Operations**

Martín was a great asset to the Club and the Club's Board — I will miss him greatly.

**- Marilyn
Holley,
LACEA
Insurance
Services
Board
Member**

I am deeply shocked to hear about the passing away of Martín, a friend and a colleague at the Club Board, and I extend my sincere condolences to his family.

Martín was a very kind, affectionate and truly a good person. He was very friendly and cordial whenever we met at the Club Board meetings.

I pray to God to grant peace and blessings to Martín's soul and give courage to his family to go through this tragic time to bear the loss of Martín in their lives.

**- Vas Singh,
Club Board
Member**

Martín, speaking at a Harbor Perfect Attendance event in July 2011.



Martín Chavez at a ClubFest in 2006.



Martín's passion for professionalism and effective communication will be upheld in the requirement of an essay, a strong record of community service/work experience, as well as recommendations and transcript.

ITEP has already received one \$10,000 gift to endow this scholarship. ITEP welcomes contributions of any amount to build the number of opportunities for young people to achieve their career and college dreams. Donations may be made online at www.itepinc.org (indicate "Martín Chavez Scholarship" in "Restricted Gift" box) or send checks to International Trade Education Programs, Inc.,

3786 La Crescenta Ave, Suite 103, Glendale, CA 91208. Checks should be made out to "ITEP" with Martín Chavez Scholarship noted in the memo section. Any questions, please contact Amy Grät at amygrat@itepinc.org or (818) 421-4843.

ITEP intends to award one (or possibly more) of these scholarships at its 2013 Annual Scholarship Dinner, to be held March 20. ■

Martín brought members of his extended family to ClubFest 2007, from left: Regina, Joseph, Sarina and Cochise.

