

County's Demographic Changes

15th Annual Leadership Conference

“Today, we will hear from a dynamic group of speakers, sharing the innovative ways their agencies/organizations are engaging a diverse population,” said Commissioner Shawn Landres, Chair, Quality and Productivity Commission (QPC) and facilitator for the County’s annual Leadership Conference.

The gathering of more than 175 department directors, commissioners, senior executives, division chiefs, supervisors, and productivity managers was held in the Music Center on May 25, 2017.

“The County of Los Angeles is one of the most ethnically diverse counties in the nation, and within the L.A. Unified School District more than 80 different languages are spoken,” said Commissioner Landres. “But today isn’t just about facts and data. It’s about how we can learn effectively and then do what we can with what we learn to enrich lives.”

And with that charge, the 15th annual Leadership Conference commenced under the theme, “Embracing a Changing Demography.” It was jointly sponsored by the Board of Supervisors, the Chief Executive Office, and the QPC.

New Ideas Panel

Members of the capacity audience were riveted by the presentations given by Efrain Escobedo, Vice President, California Community Foundation, and Laura Trejo, General Manager, L.A. City Department of Aging for the New Ideas Panel. Escobedo enlightened the audience on communicating with Generation Z and Millennials. “An app doesn’t make you cool. Information is king,” he said.

Millennials make up 42 percent of the U.S. population and Generation Z is 26 percent, of which 42 percent come from a multicultural background. “This digital generation communicates with a purpose and mission,” said Escobedo. “They expect to learn things themselves and seek help only if they need it. And you can expect feedback.”

Trejo, who has been praised by the U.S. Library of Congress as a force for social change, broadened the audience’s definition of old. “Boomers will change everything. The process of aging is shaped by both genetic givens and a number of psychological, social and environmental factors that accumulate and interact to comprise experience,” she explained.

“No two people age the same way,” she said, adding that “aging is a dynamic process.” In current vernacular, “older adult” refers to the last 40+ years of the lifespan, she said. “The age groups now are 60-64, young old; 65-84, middle



Assistant Chief Deputy Tony Bell, left, visits with Commissioners at the Leadership Conference. He spoke on behalf of Supervisor Kathryn Barger.

old; 85+, oldest old; 100 – centenarians; and 110, super centenarians,” said Trejo. “There will need to be an array of direct services available at the neighborhood level to support older adults and their family caregivers,” she added.

LACMA’s Outreach

Michael Govan, CEO and Director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), highlighted the “Museum’s Community Connections.” Levitated Mass became a major “event” as various communities turned out to see the massive rock travel westward from a quarry in Irwindale to LACMA. The Museum also has collaborated to restore Simon Rodia’s Watts Towers, grow a pilot program designed to diversify the curatorial ranks, and launch LACMA exhibitions in East Los Angeles and at Charles White School in the McArthur Park area of Los Angeles.

Laura Zucker presented findings from a Board-commissioned study that recommended ways to enhance the participation and leadership of underrepresented communities in the arts. Sara Burd-Sharps opened the conference by defining human development and sharing information on societal well-being.

Jeremy Gray, Assistant Executive Officer of the Board of Supervisors, filled in for Executive Officer Lori Glasgow with a rousing recap of the day’s events, and reiterating the Board’s commitment to providing services to a diverse populace.

The Rt. Rev. Diane M. Jardine Bruce, Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, delivered the invocation and Lt. Tom Giandomenico, U.S. Army Veteran, led the Pledge of Allegiance. Lt. Giandomenico is with the Sheriff Department’s Special Enforcement Bureau.

Overall, conference attendees rated the event “excellent,” and agreed that the conference achieved its objective. Nearly 400 people viewed the audience live on the web.