

## LAPRA 2017 Fitness Challenge Celebrates a Record Year

The tenth annual Los Angeles Police Relief Association (LAPRA) Fitness Challenge was one for the record books, with 1,724 participants—the highest number ever—losing a record 17,305 pounds. The October 18 awards celebration, held at the picturesque Police Academy grounds at Elysian Park, was attended by nearly 500 participants, family members, friends and fans. Guests included Chief of Police Charlie Beck, and LAPRA Board members Kevin McCarthy, Ruby Flores, Jules Sohn, Dana Berns, John Shah and Gerald Woodyard. “The LAPD only works if you work,” Chief Beck said. “By sponsoring this event, LAPRA is making an important investment in employee health, which helps us better serve our community. To the 1,724 sworn and civilian employees who participated this year, thank you for caring about each other and yourselves. Spend your winnings well and please continue to make good health a priority.”



*“The LAPD only works if you work,” said Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck in his opening remarks at the 2017 Fitness Challenge Awards Ceremony held October 18 at Elysian Park Academy.*

### 90 Days—73 Teams— 1,724 Participants— 17,305 Pounds!

In her welcoming remarks, Board Member and Captain Ruby Flores thanked LAPRA for continuing a 90-day tradition aimed at keeping everyone healthy and safe on the job. “It is rewarding to hear the many stories of how the Fitness Challenge has changed lives,” Captain Flores said. “All of you are an inspiration and are to be commended for your participation.”

“This year, a total of 73 teams made up of 1,724 sworn officer and civilian team members participated in the challenge, making it the greatest number of teams and participants since the Fitness Challenge began in 2007,”

Captain Flores said. “And this year’s results are more impressive than ever.”

The total weight loss of all teams was a record 17,305 pounds, which is almost 1,500 more pounds than the total weight loss in 2016. The top 20 members from each team lost a combined total of 16,464 pounds, which is the equivalent weight of nine U-Haul trailers! More than half of the teams lost 5 percent or more of their starting weight. Fifty-six participants lost 15% or more of their starting weight and are eligible for the new “Keep It Off” incentive.



*LAPRA Board Member Captain Ruby Flores congratulated the 73 teams that competed in this year’s Fitness Challenge.*

Representatives from Anthem Blue Cross and Kaiser Permanente provided participants with health plan information. Raffle tickets were distributed for a variety of prizes, including a bicycle from Kaiser, and gift cards to Target, Home Depot, Amazon and other great stores. George’s Greek Grill served a fresh and healthy lunch of lemon chicken, turmeric rice with lemon aioli, salad, and hummus. Cucumber limeade, tropical iced tea and water kept everyone hydrated.

Now in its tenth year, the LAPRA Fitness Challenge is a tradition that continues to reach new heights. Each July 1, hundreds of sworn and civilian employees band together in teams to begin a 90-day fitness journey. In those 90 days, team members are challenged to improve their health by eating nutritiously and exercising regularly. Friendships are formed, physical endurance is tested and camaraderie takes on new meaning as teams work together toward positive lifestyle changes and enhanced health. ■

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# Grand Prize Winners, SOD Team 1, Second Straight Year!

Once again, they made it happen. For the second straight year, with a sense of interdependence and shared purpose, the Special Operations Division (SOD) Team 1 won the **grand prize** in the LAPRA Fitness Challenge. They earned \$10,000 for their station fund with a cumulative loss of 15.40%.

The team's highest achiever, a first-time Fitness Challenge participant, heated things up (literally) and proved much can be accomplished through dedication and ingenuity. With hours spent in a surveillance vehicle, SO #75 rigged up a cooking device that could warm vegetables and other healthy edibles. Aside from seasoning the team's success, SO #75 took **first prize** in the individual competition with a cumulative loss of 31.03 percent.

As in past years, the SOD Team 1 was all for one and one for all. It seems this mentality, combined with healthy competition and consistent hard work, is the making of superheroes. "We all motivated each other and took care of each

other," says team member Yvette Holcombe. "Every individual was linked to the team's success. If anyone got lost on the path we would bring them back."

"Three of our team members each had a cumulative loss of more than

30 percent, which is amazing," team co-captain Hugo Gutierrez says. "Although only one made it to the official winner's circle, we celebrated the success of all of them. Their shared commitment and determination motivated everyone to push harder." ■

## NEW "Keep It Off" Incentive

It pays to keep up the good work! LAPRA is offering a new \$350 "Keep It Off" Incentive to the 56 participants who lost 15 percent or more of their body weight in this year's Fitness Challenge. To earn the incentive, you must keep the weight off through April 25, 2018. For more information about the "Keep It Off" incentive visit [www.LAPRA.org](http://www.LAPRA.org).



# Audit Division Team: Dynamics Make the Difference

As **first prize winners** for the second straight year, with a cumulative loss of 14.82 percent, the Audit Division Team has the dynamics that make the difference. The way the team interacts, communicates, and works together has everything to do with its success in meeting its Fitness Challenge goals. Team leaders Sam Gong and Heather Swift strived to set the example and provided encouragement, resources and guidance. "The team camaraderie was amazing," says Swift, who personally had a cumulative loss of 15 percent. "I did a lot of running and stayed a little bit hungry. If you eat until you're full you've already overeaten." The Audit Division team earned \$7,500 for their station fund. ■



Audit Division Team Co-Captain Heather Swift (R) with Patti Sutton and Felix Pena.

## LAPRA 2017 FITNESS CHALLENGE TOP SIX TEAMS

Team	Prize	Award	Cumulative Percentage Lost
Special Operations Division (SOD), Station Fund 1	Grand Prize	\$10,000	15.40%
Audit Division	1st Prize	\$7,500	14.82%
Hollenbeck Division, Team 1	2nd Prize	\$5,500	12.25%
Special Operations Division (SOD), Station Fund 2	3rd Prize	\$3,500	10.35%
Rampart, Team 2	4th Prize	\$2,500	9.63%
Hollenbeck Division, Team 1	5th Prize	\$1,500	9.61%



Grand Prize:  
Special Operations Division, Station Fund 1



First Prize:  
Audit Division



Second Prize:  
Hollenbeck Division Team 1



Third Prize:  
Special Operations Division, Station Fund 2



Fourth Prize:  
Rampart Team 2



Fifth Prize:  
Hollenbeck Division, Team 2

## Monica Espina: Lots to Lose and More to Gain

Monica Espina has her life back. As Fitness Challenge **second prize winner**, with a cumulative loss of 30.43 percent, she is now healthier than ever before and determined to stay that way. Her doctor suggested she join the Fitness Challenge because of health issues that included a liver condition, high blood pressure, diabetes and fibromyalgia. “I had nothing to lose and everything to gain,” Monica explains. “I was on a lot of medication for my problems and my doctor said if I didn’t make changes it could cost me my life.”

So Monica made changes. Under the care of her doctor, she eliminated carbs and sugar from her diet and learned to eat carefully-portioned, nutritious meals of protein and vegetables. “The first month was the worst because I really craved sugar,” she says, “but those cravings eventually passed.”



*Second prize winner Monica Espina*

Monica also started exercising which tipped the scale in her favor and boosted her energy. “I used to be tired all the time,” she says. “Now I feel great and am walking up to an hour a day.”

Monica proudly notes that her dress size has gone from a 22 to a 10, she

feels amazing and she no longer needs all the medications she used to take. She credits her daughters, her doctor and her teammates for supporting her wellness journey. Her \$2,500 prize money will likely be spent on a well-deserved shopping spree. ■

## Felipe Neris: Downhill All the Way

Pursuing wellness goals through Fitness Challenge participation might be an uphill climb for some team members, but that was not the case for Felipe Neris of Central Division Team 2. As **fourth prize winner** with a cumulative loss of 24.29 percent, Neris says once he committed to a healthy diet and regular exercise, it was downhill all the way. “I realized I had to look inside in order to create change on the outside” Neris says. “I identified the bad habits that caused my extra weight, like too much pizza and a daily cocktail, and I replaced those bad habits with better choices.”

Neris says his weight loss approach was disciplined and straightforward, with no gimmicks or fad diets. Once

he established his nutrition plan and exercise routine he did not deviate. Fruits, vegetables, chicken and lean meats, measured amounts of pasta, and two bottles of water with every meal became his recipe for success. On the fitness side, he went to the gym three to five times each week and walked his dog at least one hour every day. “I also had a desk job advantage,” Neris adds. “I could eat my home-prepared foods on schedule and stick to my routine. Plus, I have amazing coworkers in the detective division who were always watching out for me. It made the winning difference.” As fourth prize winner, Neris received a check for \$1,000. ■



*Fourth prize winner Felipe Neris*

## LAPRA 2017 FITNESS CHALLENGE TOP FIVE INDIVIDUALS

Individual	Prize	Award	Percentage Loss
SO #75	1st Prize	\$3,500	31.03%
Monica Espina	2nd Prize	\$1,500	30.43%
Richard Estrada	3rd Prize	\$1,500	26.19%
Felipe Neris	4th Prize	\$1,000	24.29%
Jen An	5th Prize	\$750	23.74%

## Richard Estrada: Never Missed a Workout

Discipline. That’s how Richard Estrada of team Flab-U-Less says he made it to the winner’s circle. “People wanted to know the secret, like it was some mystery,” Estrada says. “There were three simple factors that drove my weight loss success: discipline, nutritious eating, and consistent workouts.”

And then there was family. With his wife and mother helping to prep meals, his children cheering

on the sidelines, and additional encouragement from the sixth and seventh grade girls he coaches for basketball, Estrada had a dream team that kept him eating rabbit food and walking 10 to 12 miles every day, even with two titanium hips. With a cumulative loss of 26.19%, Estrada was the **third prize winner** and received a check for \$1,500. He and his wife celebrated with a trip to San Francisco. ■



Third prize winner Richard Estrada

## Healthy Reminders for Year-Round Wellness

Your health plan offers valuable tools and resources that promote preventive care for year-round wellness. For example, Anthem members have access to a Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) that can help you adopt healthier lifestyle habits and lose a modest amount of weight. The program focuses on healthier eating, increased physical activity, and managing the challenges that are associated with lifestyle change. You do not have to be significantly overweight to participate. Visit [www.anthem.com](http://www.anthem.com) to learn more.

Kaiser Permanente encourages a healthy balance of mind, body and spirit. Free programs can help you lose weight, eat healthier, quit smoking, reduce stress, and more. You can even get free wellness coaching or join a health class. For more information visit [kp.org/healthylifestyles](http://kp.org/healthylifestyles).

# Team Special Recognition

2017 LAPRA Fitness Challenge Team Special Recognition (Cumulative Percentage Weight Loss of 5% and Above)		
Team	Award	Cumulative Percentage Lost
Training (Elysian Park)	\$500	9.18%
Emergency Operations Division	\$500	8.90%
Custody Service Division	\$500	8.47%
Newton Team 2	\$500	8.08%
CGHD Station Fund	\$500	7.79%
Valley Traffic - Team 1	\$500	7.63%
Force Investigation Division - Team B	\$500	7.57%
West Valley	\$500	7.44%
Property Division	\$500	7.44%
Hollywood Team 1	\$500	7.16%
Northeast Detectives Fund	\$500	7.15%
Van Nuys Station	\$500	7.06%
Mission - Team A	\$500	6.96%
Topanga	\$500	6.88%
ITB Team 3	\$500	6.78%
Valley Traffic - Team 2	\$500	6.71%
ITB Team 1	\$500	6.66%
Flab-U-Less	\$500	6.47%
Training (Davis)	\$500	6.42%
Pacific	\$500	6.28%
Foothill	\$500	6.25%
West Traffic Division	\$500	6.19%
Central Team 1	\$500	5.95%
DSDV 2	\$500	5.88%
CCD	\$500	5.84%
Hollywood Team 2	\$500	5.81%
Rampart Team 1	\$500	5.79%
IAG Team A	\$500	5.69%
RACR_COMPSTAT A	\$500	5.38%
ITB Team 2	\$500	5.22%
Wilshire	\$500	5.18%
GND Station Fund	\$500	5.16%
77th St	\$500	5.12%
Legal Affairs	\$500	5.09%



## Individual Special Recognition

**2017 LAPRA Fitness Challenge Individual Special Recognition**  
 (Percentage Weight Loss of 20% and Above)

Name	Award	Percentage Lost
Cindy Chow	\$500	21.93%
Rosalyn Lopez	\$500	21.40%
Susan Hsu	\$500	20.55%
Arnita Brown	\$500	20.41%





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**See inside for 2017  
 LAPRA Fitness  
 Challenge Winners!**

*The GUARDIAN is a quarterly publication for members of the Los Angeles Police Relief Association. All rights reserved. If you have an idea for a future newsletter article, send an email to [benefits@lapra.org](mailto:benefits@lapra.org). Members with specific concerns are urged to contact the appropriate Board member at the number listed below.*

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**Annual Membership  
 Holiday Luncheon**

The Directors and Staff of the Los Angeles Police Relief Association, Los Angeles Police Retirement Benefit & Insurance Association, Inc., and Los Angeles Police Protective League, invite you to join us for our Annual Membership Holiday Luncheon:

**Date:** Wednesday, December 6, 2017  
**Time:** 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Location:** Los Angeles Police Elysian Park Academy  
 1880 Academy Dr.  
 Los Angeles, CA 90012

**Food, fun and prizes!**