

# The Guardian

Los Angeles Police Relief Association, Inc.



Volume 34, Number 4

Fourth Quarter 2015

## LAPRA 2015 Fitness Challenge: Grand Celebration with New Awards Ceremony Venue

It was a sunny October morning and nearly “show time” at the Friendship Auditorium near Griffith Park in Los Angeles. LAPRA Executive Director Diane Whisnant scanned the crowd while assessing the number of guests as they gathered around banquet tables that filled the room in tidy rows. A slide presentation capturing celebratory moments of past award ceremonies flashed on a screen above the stage, while the appetizing smell of barbecued chicken and sizzling vegetables wafted in through two large open doors. “The room capacity is 433,” Whisnant said. “It will work for this year, but as the event continues to grow, we may have to revisit our location options. It’s a good problem to have,” she added optimistically.

The Los Angeles Police Relief Association (LAPRA) Fitness Challenge has become an important tradition. July 1 of each year, hundreds of LAPD sworn and civilian employees band together in teams to begin this amazing 90-day fitness journey. In those 90 days, team members are challenged to improve their health by eating nutritiously and exercising



LAPRA Executive Director Diane Whisnant (left) and Board Member Ruby Malachi applaud Fitness Challenge participants.

# LAPRA

LOS ANGELES POLICE RELIEF ASSOCIATION, INC.



regularly. Friendships are formed, physical endurance is tested and camaraderie takes on new meaning as team members work together toward the ultimate goal of enhanced health.

Since 2007, more than 8,000 officers and civilians have participated in the competition, resulting in a total weight loss of 80,074 pounds. The number of teams has risen steadily over the years, as has the cumulative percent weight loss among individual team members. For 2015, the total weight loss of all team members in the competition was 11,577 pounds. “The LAPRA staff looks forward to putting on the challenge each year, Whisnant said. “It’s a lot of work, but very rewarding for all of us.” ■

### Annual Holiday Open House 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 Holiday Open House Luncheon**:

**Date:** Thursday, December 3, 2015

**Time:** 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

**Location:** Los Angeles Police Relief Association  
600 North Grand Ave.  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

## MacArthur Links Happiness with Good Health

In her welcoming remarks, Retired Assistant Chief Sandy Jo MacArthur congratulated the 1,074 Fitness Challenge participants on their commitment, perseverance and success in losing a total of 11,577 pounds in this year's competition. "Half of being healthy is being happy," she said, "and it's great to see people coming together and enjoying each other's company at such a worthwhile event. It's also great to see sworn and civilian employees working together toward the common goal of better health."

MacArthur has been a Fitness Challenge advocate since the program began in 2007. She said it's not about the weight one individual may lose, as much as it's about teams working together and supporting each other. "When we started the challenge nine years ago, we had no idea it would become such a team-building event," she said. "As for the awards ceremony, it's like a birthday party with wonderful prizes, and we've replaced the cake with healthier desserts. Everyone's efforts are celebrated."

MacArthur thanked representatives from Anthem Blue Cross, Kaiser Permanente and UnitedHealthcare for generously donating raffle prizes, including fitness club memberships, gift cards, and even a bicycle. All participants received gym bags containing fitness items and health products. A heart-healthy lunch of chicken, salad, grilled vegetables,

fruit and yogurt was served. Anthem Blue Cross, Kaiser Permanente and UnitedHealthcare representatives were available throughout the event to answer benefit-related questions and provide health plan information.

The LAPRA 90-day Fitness Challenge is open to all LAPD sworn and civilian employees each year at no cost. ■



**Retired Assistant Chief Sandy Jo MacArthur congratulated Fitness Challenge participants.**

## Yet Another Grand Prize for Training Division

Cynthia Morales and Sam Gong of the Training Division are no strangers to the winner's circle. Since they began coaching together seven years ago, they've guided teams that have consistently earned top recognition in every Fitness Challenge. Talk about bragging rights. Last year, they dipped slightly under the shadow of the Special Operations Division, but through commitment and accountability they are back on top with this year's grand prize.

Morales said many of this year's team members were veterans who knew the drill. They stayed accountable and aimed for a minimum 10% weight loss goal. Teamwork was essential. "Every person on our team was instrumental in our success," she said. "Every person and every pound mattered." Weekly weigh-ins, prizes for team competitions, weekly statistical reports, and fitness-related articles and resources helped keep the team informed and motivated.

As team grand prize winner with a cumulative loss of 12.97%, the Training Division team earned \$10,000 for their station fund. ■



**Training Division Co-Captain Cynthia Morales (right) credits her veteran team for staying accountable.**

**LAPRA 2015 FITNESS CHALLENGE TOP SIX TEAMS**

Team	Prize	Award	Cumulative Percentage Lost
Training Division—Elysian Park	Grand Prize	\$10,000	12.97%
Valley Traffic Division (VTD)	1st Prize	\$7,500	11.24%
Special Operations Division (SOD)	2nd Prize	\$5,500	10.09%
Hollenbeck Division	3rd Prize	\$3,500	10.02%
Commercial Crimes Division (CCT)	4th Prize	\$2,500	9.75%
Professional Standards Bureau	5th Prize	\$1,500	9.38%



**Grand Prize:  
Training Division**



**First Prize:  
Valley Traffic Division (VTD)**



**Second Prize:  
Special Operations Division (SOD)**



**Third Prize:  
Hollenbeck Division**



**Fourth Prize:  
Commercial Crimes Division (CCD)**



**Fifth Prize:  
Professional Standards Bureau**

## Competing with Grace

First place winner Christy Grace loves to compete. Self-motivated and disciplined, she understands that success is a process of continuous improvement and that competition can motivate an individual to perform at his or her best. Competition can also build camaraderie and contribute to team success, especially when everyone aims to achieve the same goal. “Incentives and prizes help,” she said, but you need the inner drive to work hard and give it your all.”

Grace participated in the Fitness Challenge several times before, but this year was different. Initially, it was a process more than a destination. She cut carbs and sugars and gradually ramped up her fitness routine on the treadmill and elliptical. As the weeks passed, she continued to build strength and endurance while resisting temptations like French fries, burgers and bread. She managed her diet by



**ITB team member Christy Grace, first prize winner, with LAPRA Board Members Ruby Malachi and Sandy Jo MacArthur.**

eating smaller, healthier portions more frequently. She says her eating habits have definitely changed for the better. When dining out, Grace now opts for chicken and vegetables rather than higher calorie foods like pizza.

Supportive friends and teammates helped keep her motivated. Her

advice to anyone joining the Fitness Challenge is to set a goal, work hard, remain optimistic and be patient for results. Grace was patient and never gave up. As a member of the ITB Team, she earned first prize with a cumulative loss of 31.13 percent. ■

## Second Prize Winner Tate Lai Kept His Cool

What a difference a year makes. Like many cities across the U.S., Los Angeles experienced sweltering weather conditions from August through September 2015 compared to August through September 2014, and ITB team member Tate Lai took note. Lai had three words to describe his Fitness Challenge experience: Hot, hot, hot!

“We had incredible heat waves in August and September,” Lai explains. “And when it’s sizzling hot outside your body craves water and does not want to exercise.” Lai believes that consistently hot

temperatures were the reason the cumulative percent loss of all Fitness Challenge participants was slightly lower than it has been in past years. He was thrilled and surprised to earn second prize with a cumulative loss of 28.72 percent.

Despite the heat, Lai kept his cool and his eyes on the prize. He ate nutritiously and exercised on the treadmill or elliptical for 30 to 40 minutes every day. In his younger days he was a runner and he says the Fitness Challenge rekindled that passion. The Los Angeles Marathon may be next on his bucket list. There

are no immediate plans for his prize money. He gave the check to his wife for safe keeping. ■



**ITB team member Tate Lai, second prize winner, with Board Members Ruby Malachi and Sandy Jo MacArthur.**

**LAPRA 2015 FITNESS CHALLENGE TOP FIVE INDIVIDUALS**

Individual	Prize	Award	Cumulative Percentage Lost
Christy Grace—ITB Team 1	1st Prize	\$5,000	31.13%
Tate Lai—ITB Team 1	2nd Prize	\$4,000	28.72%
Angela Stewart—Topanga Area	3rd Prize	\$3,000	27.95%
Remy Craig—PSB/IAG	4th Prize	\$2,000	23.08%
Randy Zepeda—Detective Bureau	5th Prize	\$1,000	21.91%



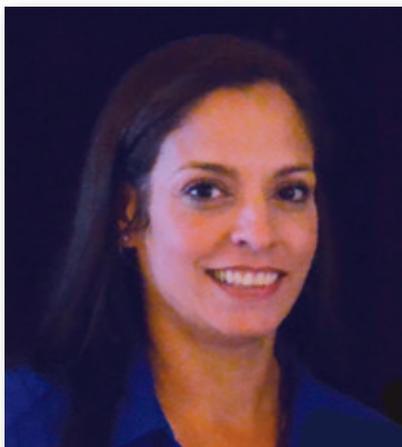
**Second Prize Individual:  
Tate Lai**



**First Prize Individual:  
Christy Grace**



**Third Prize Individual:  
Angela Stewart**



**Fourth Prize Individual:  
Remy Craig**



**Fifth Prize Individual:  
Randy Zepeda**

# Team Special Recognition

## 2015 LAPRA Fitness Challenge Team Special Recognition (Cumulative Percentage Weight Loss of 5% and Above)

Team	Award	Cumulative Percentage Loss
Information Technology Bureau (ITB) - Team 1	\$500	9.13%
Detective Support And Vice Division (DSVD)	\$500	8.63%
Rampart Division - Team 1	\$500	8.51%
Detective Bureau	\$500	7.55%
Topanga Area	\$500	7.49%
Major Crimes Division - "The Slimsons"	\$500	7.05%
West Valley Area - Team "A"	\$500	6.94%
Major Crimes Division - "Finer Than Frog Hair"	\$500	6.77%
Gang And Narcotics Division (GND)	\$500	6.72%
Security Services Division (SSD) - Team 1	\$500	6.58%
Training Division - Davis	\$500	6.11%
Juvenile Division	\$500	6.08%
Central Area - Team 2	\$500	6.01%
Hollywood Division - Team 1	\$500	5.99%
Legal Affairs Division (LAD) - Team 1	\$500	5.79%
Police Commission	\$500	5.70%
Hollywood Division - Team 2	\$500	5.68%
Force Investigation Division (FID) - Team 2	\$500	5.68%
Information Technology Bureau (ITB) - Team 3	\$500	5.43%
Hollywood Division - Team 3	\$500	5.30%
77th Division - Team 2	\$500	5.24%
Emergency Operations Division (EOD)	\$500	5.22%
Information Technology Bureau (ITB) - Team 2	\$500	5.17%
Force Investigation Division (FID) - Team 1	\$500	5.02%



# Angela Stewart Feeling Better than Ever

Sometimes a simple visit to the doctor can put one's life on a whole new course. That was the case for third prize winner, Angela Stewart. Stewart had participated in the Fitness Challenge several times before, but not with the same grit and determination. "It took a long time for me to gain the weight that I did," she explained, "and I knew losing it in a healthful way wouldn't be easy. I was ready to do the work and set one very strict rule for myself: Absolutely no cheating!" This meant a healthy, portion-controlled

diet of fish, vegetables, and lots of water. "It was difficult because I gave up foods that I love, but by staying course and walking a brisk 40 minutes each day, the weight just dropped. At 20 pounds, friends and family started to notice, which gave me a boost of motivation to keep going." Stewart says she has never felt better and plans to keep the weight off by walking every day and enjoying everything in moderation. She earned third prize and a check for \$3,000 for her cumulative loss of 27.95%. ■



Topanga Area team member Angela Stewart, third prize winner.

## Individual Special Recognition

### 2015 LAPRA Fitness Challenge Individual Special Recognition (Cumulative Percentage Weight Loss of 20% and Above)

Name	Award	Cumulative Percentage Loss
Ken Amerson	\$500	24.18%
Robert Hernandez	\$500	21.66%
Pedro Zaleta	\$500	21.27%
Cynthia Morales	\$500	21.25%
Karla Gomez	\$500	21.14%
Rafael Acosta	\$500	21.05%
Wayne Lightfoot	\$500	20.69%
Gabriel Suarez	\$500	20.62%
Beatriz Avila	\$500	20.47%
Mark Sommer	\$500	20.43%
Manny Ortega	\$500	20.43%
Elia Fernandez	\$500	20.39%
VC 74	\$500	20.00%
Gabriel Martinez	\$500	20.00%
Sharen Stallworth	\$500	20.00%





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See inside for  
 2015 LAPRA Fitness  
 Challenge Results!

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 Take Care of Our Own**

The Los Angeles Police Relief and Assistance Foundation (LAPRAF) provides financial assistance and other support to active and retired officers and family members in need. Help the foundation take care of its own by making a donation today. For information on how you can make a donation, please call (213) 674-3724.

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