

# LAPRA Guardian

A Periodic Newsletter for Members of the Los Angeles Police Relief Association, Inc.

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## LAPRA Fitness Challenge 2024

More than 900 participants got moving for the Los Angeles Police Relief Association (LAPRA) Fitness Challenge 2024, which kicked off on February 11 and ended May 4. Now in its 16th year, the Fitness Challenge brings active LAPD sworn officers and civilian employees together for fun, friendly competition to encourage movement and long-term healthy lifestyles.

Participants racked up a total of 435,085 miles in three virtual Activity Challenges—walking, running and cycling. The challenge comprised four three-week segments; individuals tracked and reported their distances with



fitness apps, wearables or manually. LAPRA awarded about \$100,000 to the teams and individuals who tracked the most miles in each challenge category at the end of 12 weeks, along with the individual winners of each segment. Team rankings were determined by the highest average miles overall.

“This year’s LAPRA Fitness Challenge was amazing!” said Luq Watkins, LAPRA Vice President and Fitness Challenge Chair. “We had a greater number of participants and winners. The continued message of ‘just be

active’ is proven effective—LAPRA member empowerment for organizational change is our way forward to promote health and well-being.”

LAPRA announced the winners at the Fitness Challenge Awards Luncheon on June 6. Grace Community Church in Sun Valley, a longtime supporter of LAPD, hosted about 200 attendees in its Family Center. Deputy Chief Ruby Flores, a former LAPRA board member who was instrumental in creating the Fitness Challenge, stopped by to congratulate all participants.

Anthem and Kaiser representatives also attended; Anthem donated gift cards to Starbucks, Target, Amazon, Chevron and Home Depot for the raffles, while Kaiser donated a mountain bike and helmet.

Home State catered lunch, followed by dessert from Yogurtland. ■

2024 Fitness Challenge Key Stats	
Participants	900
Teams	34
Total miles traveled	435,085
Miles walked	242,446
Miles run	44,776
Miles cycled	147,863
Family	\$123.19
Total Prizes Awarded	
Team prizes (66)	\$85,500
Individual prizes (66)	\$14,550



Deputy Chief Ruby Flores congratulates all 2024 Fitness Challenge participants

# West Valley Team 1 Takes Second Place in Running Challenge

West Valley Team 1 sprinted to second place in the 2024 Running Challenge with a total mileage of 3,394.84. The 28-member team averaged 140.89 miles each.

Throughout the event, the team strived to build an enthusiastic rapport and keep motivation high. They created a WhatsApp chat to post pictures of themselves running together, organized running groups and emailed or texted people who might have started to slack off a bit. Everyone understood this was a team effort.”

“Sara and Quyen, who are amazing runners and captains, were rock stars. They sent our messages and were inspirational,” Glaister says. “We were successful because of their leadership and their drive.

West Valley Team 1 won \$5,000 and plans to be back in 2025 with the goal of doing even better. ■



West Valley Team 1 – 2nd place team winner of the Running Challenge

# Internal Affairs Division 1 Team Walks to Second Place

Second place in the 2024 Walking Challenge went to Internal Affairs Division Team 1. The 27-member team walked an average of 125 miles each for a total of 3,374.85. Led by co-captains Tony Garcia and David Mejia, the team started off the challenge with three purposes: individual health, team unity and building the station fund.

“We don’t have the same budget or sources of income as other divisions,” says Garcia. “So, adding to the station



Internal Affairs Division 1– 2nd place team winner of the Walking Challenge

fund was a big part of it, along with positivity, consistent peer support and constant communication.”

The captains continually sent updates and motivational emails and texts. When someone tracked a significant number of miles, the whole team celebrated the extra effort.

“Team captain Dave Mejia was a huge driving force behind our energy and perseverance. He led by example,” says Garcia.

One of the biggest challenges was trying to find the balance between keeping the competition fun and pushing the members too hard.

“That, and keeping our members motivated when other teams posted high numbers. We tried to keep the focus on unity among ourselves and not worry about the others,” Garcia says.

The team will put part of the \$8,500 prize toward their Christmas luncheon and buying equipment for the station weight room. The rest will go into reserve for future needs.

“Our people work hard and have a tough job, and we want to be able to reward them,” Garcia says. “We really appreciate LAPRA and are so grateful for what they do for us.” ■



## 1%B3TT3RGBRS Runs Away with First Place

The 2024 Running Activity Challenge winner, who uses her challenge name of 1%B3TT3RGBRS, joined the event to support her REDRUM team and wish farewell to retiring Sergeant II Mark Lormans.

“I wish him a brilliant retirement and a heartfelt ‘thank you’ for reminding me to continue a commitment to a lifetime of fitness,” she says.

Despite a medical condition that causes extreme fatigue and easy weight gain, 1%B3TT3RGBRS refused to be a victim and committed to being “1% better” every day.

She logged 1,249 miles and won a total of \$1,750. Along with long runs, she did shorter trail runs several times a day, guided by the GBRS Group Mobility Performance Heroic app from the GBRS Group, a veteran-owned, tier 1 training and services organization for veterans, public servants, and first responders.

“At the heart of GBRS Group lies the unwavering pursuit of excellence due to their selfless acts of bravery while in service,” she says.

She was motivated throughout the challenge by self-discipline and the support of her husband of 11 years, also a sworn officer.

“As public servants at 16 years into this profession, the goal is to maintain and thrive to a healthy retirement,” she says. “I am extremely thankful for my REDRUM team and to LAPRA for their dedication to wellness. It does not go unnoticed!” ■



*1%B3TT3RGBRS – 1st place individual winner of the Running Challenge*

## Diana Chung Walks to the Top Spot

Driven by her passion for health and fitness, Diana Chung walked her way to first place in the 2024 Walking Challenge, covering 2,455 miles and winning a total of \$1,350.

For Diana, the challenge was a natural extension of her active lifestyle. “The benefits of working out are what motivates me the most,” she says. “I do healthy activities like jogging, hiking and stair-climbing to keep myself fit and that contributed to my success.”

Diana credits her friends and coworkers, including her teammates on the Walkie No Talkie ITB Team, with inspiring her to join the challenge and keeping her motivated.

“I have friends who like to walk, jog, climb stairs and run, and other friends who are into hiking. I always went with them whenever I had the chance.”

She says she feels great after completing the challenge and is

looking forward to doing it again next year. She hopes she has influenced others to join the event, noting it is a fun and challenging experience that is open to anyone.

“I would like to thank the organizers who put together this event and those who participated and took this challenge head on. We are all winners,” she says. “Whatever the next challenge brings, I will be ready for it.” ■

# Bryce Verna Rides to Second Place in Cycling Challenge

After a coworker finally convinced him to do the 2024 Cycling Fitness Challenge, Bryce Verna ended up riding 4,418 miles to second place and winning a total of \$1,250.

Part of the Valley Fit Force Team, Verna hasn't always been an avid exerciser. The self-described "party dude" had a wake-up call when saw a photo of himself and realized how out of shape he'd become. His friends bought him a used recumbent bike, on which he has logged some 35,000 miles over the past six years. He's also had five surgeries on his leg, including Achilles tendon repairs and a tumor removal.

"Riding a recumbent bike has been the one thing I can do given my leg issues," he says.

Verna rode 80-100 miles on his days off and 30-40 on weekdays. During the last week of the challenge, he rode more than 500 miles even though he was "definitely dragging."

Verna was motivated in part by first-place winner Andy Vega and says the two pushed each other to rack up miles throughout the event.

"Andy is an amazing athlete," Verna says. "I was on a recumbent bike, and he's out there riding in traffic on changing elevations. I'm proud to have come in second behind him."

Verna retired from the LAPD this year but plans to continue logging miles. ■

## 2024 Fitness Challenge Top Teams

Top 3 Teams Walking	
Place	Team
1st	RMLAD 3PEAT
2nd	IAD Team 1
3rd	Walkie No Talkie ITB



*RMLAD 3PEAT - 1st place team winner of the Walking Challenge*

Top 3 Teams Running	
Place	Team
1st	Red Rum
2nd	West Valley Team 1
3rd	Team Foothill



*Red Rum - 1st place team winner of the Running Challenge*

Top 3 Teams Cycling	
Place	Team
1st	Valley Fit Force
2nd	Team Hollywood
3rd	XX Olympians



*Valley Fit Force - 1st place team winner of the Cycling Challenge*

**2024 Fitness Challenge Top Teams** (continued on page 8)

# LAPRAF Scholarship Winners 2024

## Meet the LAPRAF 2024 Scholarship Winners

Congratulations to the winners of the Los Angeles Police Relief and Assistance Foundation (LAPRAF) scholarship program! This year, LAPRAF increased the number of winners from five to seven, awarding each student a \$10,000 college scholarship based on their academic excellence, leadership and dedication to community service. Chosen from a pool of 64 impressive applicants, each winner will receive \$2,500 per year over four years.



*Brooklynne Andreas*

### Brooklynne Andreas

Brooklynne plans to attend the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) and pursue pre-med with the goal of becoming a pediatrician. The Quartz Hill High School graduate took advantage of the school's "double up" program, which allowed students to take college courses in high school career, and served as a mentor and leader to underclassmen.

A volunteer at soup kitchens and Antelope Valley hospitals, Brooklynne also played starting goalie on a competitive club soccer team for most of her high school years, which strengthened her communication, relationship and leadership skills. As a children's gymnastics coach, she loved her students' creativity and energy, which influenced her career choice.

She chose UCSD for its outstanding education and research opportunities and looks forward to being taught by "the best of the best." She was also drawn to the coastal location and beautiful, pristine campus, which she feels represents students' pride in their school and community.

## 2024 Fitness Challenge Top Individuals

### Top 3 Individuals Walking

Place	Team
1st	Diana Chung
2nd	Christine Pham
3rd	Diego Aguilar

### Top 3 Individuals Running

Place	Team
1st	GBRS 1%B3TT3R
2nd	Mark Lormans
3rd	Scott Lankford

### Top 3 Individuals Cycling

Place	Team
1st	Andrew Vergara
2nd	Bryce Verna
3rd	Matthew Bielski



# LAPRAF Scholarship Winners 2024 (continued)



*Leilah Beard*

## Leilah Beard

Leilah attended Serrano High School and plans to study political science and critical gender studies at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) with the goal of learning more about the intricate world of politics and ways to better the world.

Leilah was one of only 10 students in her class of 441 to receive her school's superintendent's award for academic achievement. While maintaining straight As, Leilah was active in the Color Guard/Marching Band program and played flute in the top wind ensemble and County Honor Band. She helped start the Math Mentors program to create a positive learning experience and guide students through problem-solving processes. She also volunteered at her local animal shelter and as an exhibit interpreter at the Aquarium of the Pacific, where she educated visitors, answered questions and enhanced curiosity.

Leilah chose UCSD because it is a highly regarded school with many technological opportunities, renowned resources and faculty, and a beautiful campus.



*Leah Harris*

## Leah Harris

Leah is a graduate of Highland High School and will attend Louisiana State University (LSU), where she plans to study kinesiology, followed by a master's degree in sports medicine. She wants to be a professional sports team trainer and work with special needs youth sports.

From playing AYSO soccer and varsity sports to representing Los Angeles County in LA Chargers flag football, athletics has been Leah's passion. As captain of her varsity soccer and flag football teams, she led her teams on and off the field and assisted teammates both athletically and academically. In addition to playing school sports and travel sports, Leah maintained a rigorous schedule of advanced-level classes and was active in Best Buddies, where she helped students with various needs and abilities and made lasting friendships.

Leah looks forward to studying and working in LSU's highly ranked athletic department and exploring its research and job placement opportunities.



*Kai Munoz*

## Kai Munoz

A graduate of South Pasadena High School, Kai will attend Boston University and plans to major in aerospace engineering with a minor in comparative literature.

Kai was recognized by the National Hispanic Recognition Program for his academic achievements. He also served as officer of TASSEL, an English-language teaching service for rural Cambodian communities, and co-founded his school's chapter of The Hidden Opponent, a nonprofit group that raises awareness of mental health issues within athletics. In addition, he played and coached varsity volleyball.

An active community volunteer, Kai spent one summer in Florida working with other teens on projects including mentoring underprivileged kids and transforming a neglected house into a home for foster youth.

Kai's choice of Boston University was driven by three factors: location, academics and culture. He looks forward to Boston's urban ambiance and changing seasons, as well as the diverse opportunities for experiential knowledge on campus, in the Boston community and through study abroad programs.



*Keira Perez*

## Keira Perez

Keira will attend the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and is proud to be the first in her family to attend college. A graduate of Phineas Banning High School, she discovered a love of science and plans to major in biology and become a veterinarian. She was inspired to choose this path by her uncle and grandfather, who worked at equestrian stables and cared for horses.

Keira was active in softball, cross country and Jiu-Jitsu and has completed five marathons and dozens of other races through Students Run Los Angeles, where she mentored and coached younger runners. She has built strong leadership skills as a volunteer and project manager with multiple community events and organizations, including cultural awareness fairs, food banks and youth reading circles.

Attending UCLA has been Keira's dream since age five. She looks forward to pursuing her education at a prestigious university, empowering her younger sisters to achieve their own dreams, and contributing to her family's well-being.



*Logan Rheault*

## Logan Rheault

Logan graduated from Tesoro High School and will attend the University of California, Berkeley, where he will study molecular and cell biology. He plans to become an endocrinologist due to its mix of biology and chemistry as well as its diverse patient mix.

As a sophomore, Logan cofounded the Tesoro STEM Olympiad Club, collaborating with science teachers to present lectures on biology, chemistry and anatomy and prepare for national science competitions. He attended COSMOS at UC Irvine, a rigorous four-week pre-college program for STEM research, where he studied lab-grown skin for burn victims and experienced the often-harsh realities of research and the satisfaction of a successful project. His experience as an auxiliary volunteer at Providence Mission Hospital strengthened his leadership and communication skills.

Logan has a personal connection to UC Berkeley—it's where his parents first met and his sister is currently enrolled. He is excited about the academic, professional and personal opportunities the school offers for pre-med students.



## Gabriella Moya

Gabriella graduated from Colony High School and will attend Boston University. She plans to put her passion for answering questions—which earned her the nickname of “Hey Gabby”—toward a career in scientific research and help others discover answers to their questions. As one of just a few female students in her AP Physics class, Gabriella felt she was treated differently than her male classmates and aims to help women feel empowered in science or whatever field they choose to pursue.

Gabriella's leadership experience includes serving as president of Renaissance, a student leadership program designed to recognize student achievement and staff appreciation; she represented the school in districtwide events and led events on campus. She was also president of the Red Cross club and active in the San Bernadino Red Cross Youth Advisory Council, Key Club, and volunteer camp counseling.

Gabriella chose Boston University for its outstanding education and diverse cultural environment. She looks forward to meeting students from all backgrounds. ■



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Look inside to see the winners of the LAPRA Fitness Challenge 2024 and the winning high school seniors of a 2024 LAPRAF Academic Scholarship.

Los Angeles Police Relief Association  
Board of Directors — 2024

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2024 Fitness Challenge Top Teams (continued from page 4)



Team Football - 3rd place team winner of the Running Challenge

Walkie No Talkie ITB - 3rd place team winner of the Walking Challenge