WHO'S WHO IN BLACK LOS ANGELES®

Celebrating African-American Achievements

The Second Edition

Introduction By Elgin Baylor • Foreword By Dr. James Rosser
County of Los Angeles
GOVERNMENT SPOTLIGHT

INTEREST
LIMELIGHT
ATTENTION
PROMINENCE
HIGHLIGHT
CELEBRATE
HEADLINE
FOCUS
RECOGNITION
Los Angeles County has the distinction of being one of the original twenty-seven California counties. It was formed in 1850, the year California became the thirty-first state in the Union.

The jurisdiction of Los Angeles County includes the islands of San Clemente and Santa Catalina. It is bordered on the east by Orange and San Bernardino Counties, on the north by Kern County, on the west by Ventura County, and on the south by the Pacific Ocean. It has a population of more than 10 million — more residents than any other county in the nation, exceeded only by eight states. Within its boundaries are 88 cities. The governing body is the Board of Supervisors, which meets weekly and can be accessed via info@lacounty.gov or through the County website at www.lacounty.gov.

More than 65 percent of the County is unincorporated. For the 1 million people living in those areas, the Board of Supervisors is their “city council” and County departments provide the municipal services. The County is the largest employer in the five-county region. The spectrum of job opportunities — ranging from clerk to truck driver, sanitarian to psychiatrist, scientist to scuba diver, attorney to helicopter pilot, law and justice to health and social services — encompasses nearly every trade and profession, and illustrates the complexity of County government.

County government is charged with providing numerous services that affect the lives of all residents. Traditional mandatory services include law enforcement, property assessment, tax collection, public health protection, animal care and control, public social services and relief to indigents. Among the specialized services are flood control, water conservation, parks and recreation, and many diversified cultural activities.

A resource which has become very valuable to the residents of Los Angeles County is “211 LA County.” This is a private, not-for-profit organization that offers free information and referral services to Los Angeles County residents. People can call 2-1-1 when they need help accessing all kinds of health and human services. Professional community resource advisors help callers with critical issues like health care and substance abuse, domestic violence, shelter, food, legal and financial assistance, children and senior programs and mental health services and much more.

This service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and services are provided in English, Spanish and more than 140 other languages via a tele-interpreting service. Services are also provided for the hearing impaired.

Additionally, the County of Los Angeles has a new emergency mass notification system (Alert LA County) which has been implemented to contact county residents and businesses via recorded phone messages, text messages or e-mail messages. You will be contacted ONLY if your street is part of an emergency disaster. To register your cellular or Voice over IP number or if you would like e-mail notifications, you must register at alert.lacounty.gov.
As director of the Los Angeles County Department of Community and Senior Services, Cynthia Banks directs the department in providing direct and indirect services to Los Angeles County resident senior citizens, and those seeking employment through federal, state and county programs.

Banks maintains a program of effective relations with the Board of Supervisors, representatives of other county departments, governmental agencies, the public and various volunteer bodies. She directs the fiscal operations of the department, and oversees the development of the department's budget by exercising knowledge of federal, state and local statutes.

Additionally, Banks directs the administration of the department's affirmative action plan to ensure that hiring and promotional practices are consistent with the county's equal employment opportunity policy. She also directs the development of changes in the organization, staffing, work processes and management information systems.

Banks holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in behavioral science from California State University, Dominguez Hills. She is associated with numerous professional affiliations and was selected as the YWCA's Woman of Achievement in the area of women's rights in 1995.

Raised on welfare in Watts and Compton, Ronald L. Brown is a graduate of Centennial High School in Compton. In 1976 he attended the University of Southern California and received a bachelor's degree in history. Upon graduation, he was accepted into the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law and graduated with a juris doctorate degree in 1979. He has practiced law with the Los Angeles County Public Defender since his admission to practice law.

Brown presently serves as assistant public defender for branch and area operations of the Los Angeles County Public Defender. Additionally, he is a founding member of the Black Public Defenders Association and serves on its board.

Brown has served on several interagency committees, including the Juror Orientation Committee and the Interagency System Advisory Body (ISAB) Jail Overcrowding Committee. A department liaison with the Los Angeles County sheriff, Brown has received a variety of awards.

A 25-year resident of Long Beach, Brown currently resides in Bixby Knolls with his wife, Kathleen Bursely.
Jural J. Garrett is chief deputy director of the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, and has extensive experience working in administration, personnel, and with elected officials. She assists the president of the museum with organizational planning, restructuring, development and implementation of strategic policies.

As chief deputy director, Jural's responsibilities include finance and budgeting, guest services, information technology, human resources, and facilities maintenance. She is the main liaison with the County of Los Angeles, and works with members of the executive and museum staff.

Previously, Jural served as deputy court administrator with the Los Angeles Municipal and Superior Courts, where she worked with elected judicial leadership and served as staff for statewide judicial committees. She assisted in developing and implementing policy change in the state court system, state court funding and trial court unification, working closely with court administrators, judges and legislative staff. In addition, Jural served with the county's chief administrative office, working with department heads and board deputies on fiscal and operational policy issues.

As acting director of the Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources, Lisa Garrett formulates and executes departmental policy in conjunction with the board of supervisors, chief executive officer, county counsel, labor unions and other departments.

In addition to providing oversight for departmental reviews and audits to ensure compliance with the county's charter, civil service rules and other rules and policies, Garrett also manages the executive recruitment process for executive-level positions within the county. She directs and reviews the investigations and resolutions of employee complaints and appeals concerning discretionary and disciplinary actions and Title VII violations. Managing the department's budget of approximately $50 million, she oversees the administration of the county's employee benefits programs and department-specific examinations, and disseminates certification lists of eligible candidates.

In 1983 Garrett received a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology from the University of California, Los Angeles and a juris doctorate degree in 1991 from the Southwestern University School of Law, where she participated in the Moot Court Honors Program. In 1998 Garrett received the American Jurisprudence Book Award.
Lori Howard Glasgow, Ph.D.
Budget Deputy, 5th District
Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles

As budget deputy of the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors 5th District. Dr. Lori Howard Glasgow advises Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich on all fiscal matters concerning the County of Los Angeles. Her other responsibilities have included speech writing, press liaison, budget preparation, development of local public policies, meeting with constituent and interest groups in the supervisor's absence, and managing office personnel.

Additionally, Glasgow's responsibilities include identifying, articulating and overseeing the implementation of the supervisor's policies and directives; acting as a liaison with other justice and public safety agencies throughout Los Angeles County; overseeing staff research on issues pertinent to the justice system; and reviewing the budgets and policies of county justice agencies.

In 1980 Glasgow received a bachelor's degree in social ecology from the University of California, Irvine and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Southern California (USC) in 1981. She completed course work in international relations at the University of London's London School of Economics and Political Science in 1984, and obtained a doctorate degree in public administration from USC in 1994.

Sharon R. Harper
Chieff Deputy
Chief Executive Office
County of Los Angeles

Sharon R. Harper began her career with the County of Los Angeles in 1972 with the Department of Public Social Services. Throughout the years, she has gained valuable experience and knowledge, and was promoted up through the ranks while working for the Internal Services Department, the Sheriff's Department and the Chief Executive Office (CEO).

In her present position, her management responsibilities include assisting Chief Executive Officer William T. Fujioka in overseeing a complex organization of approximately 101,000 employees and an annual budget of $23.6 billion for the most populous county in the United States.

Prior to accepting her current position with the CEO, Sharon served as director of the Administrative Services Division for the Sheriff's Department. In that capacity, she was responsible for the Sheriff's Department's $1.4 billion budget.

Sharon holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Southern California. She resides in Palmdale and is a pastor in her church, where she also teaches Sunday school. Sharon enjoys reading in her spare time.
Vincent Harris has served in a variety of administrative, policy and political capacities throughout the course of his public service career. Previously, he served as the Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas’ chief of staff during his tenure in the state legislature. In his current position, he provides policy continuity and broad understanding of the state’s budgetary and legislative processes to the 2nd District staff. Additionally, his responsibilities include municipal, special district, state and federal issues; local, state and federal elections; labor relations; and census issues.

During the 2008 presidential primary, Harris served as deputy state director of Barack Obama’s California campaign. Prior to serving with Ridley-Thomas, he was deputy chief of staff for California Governor Gray Davis. In addition, he served as senior policy adviser and chief of staff for the late Congresswoman Juanita Millender-McDonald (37th District) when she served in the U.S. House of Representatives and the California State Assembly.

A Los Angeles native and raised in the 2nd District, Harris earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in history from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Sylvia Drew Ivie serves as chief of staff to Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, where her responsibilities include policy team coordination and preparation for closed session litigation. Prior to this position, she served as a consultant to The California Endowment, advising on various health matters including the assessment of the King/Drew Medical Center crisis.

Until February of 2005, Sylvia served as executive director of the T.H.E. (To Help Everyone) Clinic, a health clinic providing services to minority and immigrant women and families in South Central and Southwest Los Angeles.

Her legal experiences include serving as deputy city attorney for the City of Los Angeles, assistant counsel for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund in New York, and director of the Office for Civil Rights in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in Washington, D.C., during the Carter administration.

Sylvia is a graduate of Vassar College with a degree in political science and received a law degree from the Howard University School of Law. Additionally, she is the recipient of numerous honors and awards.
Willie J. Miller
Chief, Detective Division
Sheriff’s Department
County of Los Angeles

A 30-year veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Willie J. Miller oversees the operation of the Detective Division. Her career with the Sheriff’s Department began in 1978. After graduating from the training academy as a deputy sheriff, she advanced in rank from deputy to commander, and was responsible for a variety of programs and assignments within the Sheriff’s Department.

Miller was selected by Los Angeles County Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke as the Second District Woman of the Year recipient for the 2008 Annual Commission on Women Awards. She is a member of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives and the Park Hills Community Church board of elders.

Miller received a Bachelor of Arts degree in English from Tougaloo College in Mississippi and a Master of Science degree in journalism from the University of Illinois. She presently resides in Ladera Heights. Her son is a graduate of Howard University in Washington, D.C. In her spare time, Miller enjoys traveling and jazz music.

Daryl L. Osby
Chief Deputy
Los Angeles County Fire Department

Chief Deputy Daryl L. Osby has been a member of the Los Angeles County Fire Department for 25 years, where he has served in several ranks. He is currently responsible for the department’s business operations, which include administrative services, fire prevention, special services, professional performance and employee relations.

Prior to becoming the chief deputy of business operations, Osby was responsible for the department’s emergency operations, and leadership and management of the Air & Wildland Operations, the Command and Control Division, ocean lifeguards, the Risk Management Division and the Technical Services Division. He has been an incident commander on many headlining incidents, including a train derailment, several wildland incidents, major structure fires and an 18-day deployment to areas affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Osby holds a Bachelor of Science degree in organizational leadership from Azusa Pacific University. He is a graduate of the Carl Holmes Executive Development Institute, the Harvard University National Preparedness Leadership Initiative Program and the Harvard University Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program. Osby has received many awards and commendation from local and state entities.
Winston A. Peters is the assistant public defender for Los Angeles County. In this position, he has executive and administrative responsibility for assisting the public defender and chief deputy public defender in the overall administration of the department, including administrative functions such as fiscal, budget, human resources and management of information systems. Additionally, he oversees the Special Operations Bureau.

Recently elected as assistant secretary treasurer of the statewide California Public Defenders Association, Peters also serves as the governor’s appointee on the California State Advisory Committee on Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. He is an advisory board member on the University of California, Berkeley Boalt Hall School of Law’s Juvenile Justice Policymaker Education Project.

Peters received the 2009 American Bar Association’s Livingston Hall Award for outstanding commitment and service in the field of juvenile justice, and has been recognized by the Pacific Juvenile Defender Center and various other organizations. A graduate of the University of California Hastings College of the Law, Peters received a bachelor’s degree in history from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Cecil W. Rhambo Jr. is chief of Field Operations Region II of the Sheriff’s Department. A 27-year veteran of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, Rhambo Jr. is chief of Field Operations Region II. In this position, he oversees the operations of the Century, Carson, Compton, Lennox, Lomita, Marina del Rey and West Hollywood stations, as well as the Community College Bureau, the Community/Law Enforcement Partnership Program (CLEPP), the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Bureau and the Operation Safe Streets Bureau.

Rhambo joined the department in 1981, and worked various assignments, including the Men’s Central Jail, the Biscailuz Center Jail, the Carson and Marina del Rey stations, and the Narcotics Bureau. While serving as sergeant in 1989, he worked on loan with the California Department of Insurance and the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services Safety Police.

Rhambo holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology from Humboldt State University and a master’s degree in organizational leadership from Woodbury University. He resides in San Pedro with his wife, Marygen, and their three children. In his spare time, Rhambo enjoys reading, golfing, running, boxing and weight training, and traveling.
The Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor, 2nd District
Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles

The Honorable Mark Ridley-Thomas is the first African-American male elected to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, where he represents nearly 2.3 million residents of the 2nd District. Prior to his election, he served six years in the legislature.

As a member of the Senate, Ridley-Thomas served as chair of the California Legislative Black Caucus Foundation, Inc. Additionally, he chaired the Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee. In the Assembly, he chaired the Democratic Caucus. Ridley-Thomas served on the Los Angeles City Council for nearly a dozen years, departing as council president pro tempore. As founder of the Empowerment Congress North Area Neighborhood Development Council, he is widely regarded as the region's foremost advocate of neighborhood participation in government decision-making.

Ridley-Thomas earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Immaculate Heart College, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in social ethics and policy analysis from the University of Southern California. He is married to Avis Ridley-Thomas, director of the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office Dispute Resolution Program. They have twin sons, Sebastian and Sinclair, who graduated from historic Morehouse College.

Evangeline Ross
Chief Deputy Affirmative Action Compliance Officer
Office of Affirmative Action Compliance
County of Los Angeles

Evangeline Ross is a career public administrator, appointed as chief deputy affirmative action compliance officer with the Los Angeles County Office of Affirmative Action Compliance. A 36-year veteran with the County of Los Angeles, she began her county career in 1971 as an auditor controller.

A self-proclaimed nonconformist, Evangeline voluntarily resigned in 1989 from the County of Los Angeles as an assistant hospital administrator III to complete undergraduate studies at California State University, Dominguez Hills. She currently holds a master's degree in public administration. She participates in many professional organizations aligned with equal employment opportunity and human resources management.

Evangeline received local and national commendations for her dedicated service to the affairs of the workplace and community that promote inclusion and equality for all. Married, and the mother of three adult children and seven grandchildren, she is a strong advocate for equal rights, both professionally and in the community. Evangeline resides in Inglewood, California, with her husband, Daryl L. Ross.
Sheryl Spiller was appointed chief deputy director for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) in April of 2007. As chief deputy, she is directly involved in the day-to-day planning and direction of all operations for the second-largest Los Angeles County department, and the largest welfare agency in the United States, with an annual budget of approximately $3.2 billion and more than 13,500 employees.

DPSS administers programs that provide a vast array of services to families, children, single adults and the elderly designed to alleviate financial hardship, and promote family health, personal responsibility and economic self-sufficiency. More than 2.2 million participants are served monthly.

Spiller has invested more than 35 years to county service, serving at various levels throughout the organization. Her broad range of program knowledge and management experience has earned her many significant assignments and awards.

Spiller earned a Bachelor of Science degree in organizational behavior and a master’s degree in human resources and organizational behavior from the University of San Francisco.

Dr. Robert G. Splawn was named interim chief medical officer of the Los Angeles County Department of Human Services (DHS) in May of 2008. Prior to his appointment to the county’s top medical post, he served as the department’s senior medical director, overseeing clinical operations, medical school affiliations, pharmacy, quality improvement and risk management divisions, and the EMS Agency.

Prior to joining the DHS, Splawn served as director of the HealthCare Partners Institute, where he oversaw program development and governmental relations. Previously, he served as director of the J. Thomas McCarthy Center for Emergency Services at the California Hospital Medical Center in Los Angeles.

Splawn serves on numerous health policy boards and commissions, and has been recognized for his work on violence prevention and intervention programs. He earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of California, Los Angeles, a medical degree from Boston University, a master’s degree in health policy and management from Harvard University, and completed his emergency medicine residency at the Los Angeles County + University of Southern California Medical Center.
Dr. Jacqueline "Jackie" White is deputy chief executive officer of the Children and Families Well-Being Cluster for Los Angeles County. She has 37 years of experience in Los Angeles County government, having worked for the public social services, treasurer and tax collector, and district attorney departments.

In her current position, White's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, working with board deputies on various policy issues, and handling the day-to-day operations of the cluster by providing direction to staff who are involved in analyzing and making recommendations on budget and hiring requests, and the development and implementation of policies and procedures. She also provides direction to staff with regard to the research and drafting of new policies and policy changes as requested by the Chief Executive Office management or board of supervisors.

White holds a doctorate degree in political science from Claremont Graduate University in Claremont, California. She is married and has two daughters.

Jacqueline White, Ph.D.
Deputy Chief Executive Officer
Children & Families Well-Being Cluster
Chief Executive Office
County of Los Angeles
A Legacy of Community Pride

A History of Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital

Story provided by the County of Los Angeles

“This will be the finest hospital in the United States and will fulfill the most important need of the community – better health care.”

-County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn
The Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital opened its doors on March 27, 1972, heralding the promise of quality health care for a community torn by civil unrest that rocked a city and a nation. The medical center, through its historic affiliation with the neighboring Charles R. Drew Postgraduate Medical School, would train generations of minority physicians and other health professionals and become a beacon of community pride.

Originally named the Los Angeles County Southeast General Hospital, the facility was conceived and created following the 1965 Watts riots to provide comprehensive health services to residents of South Central Los Angeles and the unincorporated areas of Watts and Willowbrook, which had no local inpatient medical services.

In the wake of the riots, then-California Governor Pat Brown appointed former CIA director John McCone to investigate its causes. The resulting McCone Commission report found that a lack of accessible health care in South Los Angeles was among the root causes of community unrest. At the time, the closest major public hospital was more than ten miles away.

A year later, on a motion by County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, the county’s Department of Hospitals established a task force to develop a full-service community and teaching hospital. The facility would be operated by the county in conjunction with the University of Southern California and UCLA Medical schools and the newly-formed Charles R. Drew Postgraduate Medical School.

In April of 1968, ground was broken for the new Martin Luther King Jr. General Hospital in tribute to the civil rights leader who championed equality and freedom for all people. It would be the county’s seventh public hospital and third teaching hospital. The $26 million construction project set on 40 acres at the intersection of 120th Street and Wilmington Avenue was on the site of the former Palm Lane public housing development—which was the medical evacuation site during the 1965 riots. From the very beginning, the hospital was envisioned as a community and service-driven medical center that would set a model for future medical delivery systems in the nation.

“This will be the finest hospital in the United States and will fulfill the most important need of the community—better health care,” Hahn said. The large-scale project, to serve a population of 347,000,
mirrored even larger opportunities for minority leadership with plans for a predominantly African-American medical staff. In 1970 the county’s 405 African-American physicians were welcome to join the new facility at the ground level.

**A Hospital Opens — A Community Heals**

More than 6,000 people turned out on a rainy Saturday morning in February of 1972, for the dedication that featured entertainment by the Victory Baptist Youth Choir and a program that included remarks by U.S. Senator Alan Cranston, Congressman Augustus Hawkins, County Supervisor Kenneth Hahn, Dr. H. Claude Hudson and First AME Church Pastor Dr. H. Hartford Brookins, among other notables. U.S. Treasurer Romana Acosta Banuelos also attended and brought greetings from President Richard Nixon.

"Unfortunately, some people looked upon the hospital as a panacea that would solve all kinds of problems a hospital cannot reasonably be expected to solve completely."

The following month, the 394-bed facility opened with 1,250 staff prepared to provide needed medical services for more than 100,000 inpatients a year with a planned average daily census of 335 patients. Outpatient visits were projected at 675,000 annually and Emergency Room visits were estimated at 130,000. Staff privileges were extended to the community’s private physicians, and the bright and airy inpatient rooms marked a demonstrable shift from the large, ward-style architecture of ‘Big County’ General Hospital.

Within five months of opening, the hospital had treated nearly 43,000 patients, underscoring the high level of community need for accessible and quality health care. Hahn announced that, “building the hospital fulfilled the No. 1 health recommendation of the Mccone Commission.”

**Care on the Front Lines — A Mission to Reduce Health Disparity**

For the next two decades, the Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital endeavored to improve community health in one of the poorest and most health-deprived communities in Los Angeles County. Health data illustrates that the fetal death rate in the Watts-Willowbrook area was the highest in the county, death by stroke was 30 percent higher, homicides six times the county average, and cirrhosis of the liver, alcoholism, drug abuse, high blood pressure and diabetes were rampant.

“I have never seen so many sick people, we never catch up,” said Dr. David D. Ulmer, chief of the Department of Medicine in a March 23, 1975 Los Angeles Times article. “The people are deprived in the worst degree in health education. They wait too long. They come in 25 percent sicker than patients in most hospitals.”

Despite early hopes that the hospital would cut death rates, end area unemployment, and solve a host of social and political ills, physicians were confronted with the daunting realities of a complex patient population with myriad health needs. Nonetheless, hospital faculty and staff remained buoyed by the opportunity to build a health system from scratch that would give low-income residents quality health care.

"Unfortunately, some people looked upon the hospital as a panacea that would solve all kinds of problems a hospital cannot reasonably be expected to solve completely,” said Dr. Sherman Mellinkoff, dean of the UCLA Medical School and a member of the Mccone Commission.
more than 160,000 specialty-care outpatient visits annually. The hospital’s trauma center became a site utilized by the U.S. military for training in the treatment of severe gunshot wounds.

**Hospital Under Regulatory Scrutiny**

From January of 2004 to August of 2007, the hospital faced a series of severe regulatory actions stemming from well-documented problems in areas of nursing, oversight of doctor-trainees, and the failure to identify and correct mistakes; indeed, the founding passions to be the “best-run hospital on earth” seemed to be diminishing.

In early 2004, the U.S. Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the federal agency which controls Medicare and Medicaid funding, released a report linking negligence to a series of patient deaths at the hospital, and threatened to pull more than $200 million in federal funding. The hospital’s celebrated Trauma Unit was also cited for lapses in patient care and closed to devote more resources to other areas of the hospital. The Board of Supervisors, the hospital’s governing board, also hired teams of management consultants to operate and reform the facility to meet patient care standards.

Despite reform efforts and reprieves from regulators, inpatient and emergency services were ultimately closed in August of 2007, and the facility was converted to a Multiservice Ambulatory Care Center, or MACC, which is part of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services’ “Metro Care” health system. That network includes Harbor-UCLA Medical Center and the coastal and southwest cluster health facilities, such as the Hubert H. Humphrey and Dollarhide Comprehensive Health centers, and community-based primary care clinics.

The current outpatient complex, known as the MLK-MACC, encompasses an Urgent Care Center, serving adult and pediatric patients needing non-emergent medical care, and approximately 70 clinics spanning multiple specialty care services. After decades of planning, a Women’s Health Center was opened in 2005, a new OASIS HIV/AIDS Clinic building opened in 2007 to accommodate up to 2,000 patients per month, and an Ambulatory Surgery Center and Geriatrics Clinic opened in 2008.

**Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital: Renewing the Dream...Restoring the Promise**

Efforts to restore the promise of the original King Hospital and renew the health care dream of a community were launched by the Board of Supervisors shortly after the hospital’s closure. The Board of Supervisors directed Los Angeles County CEO William T. Fujioka to enter into discussions and negotiations with University of
California (UC) and state officials to pursue the possibility of reopening the hospital to fully serve residents of South Los Angeles.

Discussions with top officials from the State of California and UC—from Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to UC President Mark G. Yudof, and to their respective appointees and senior staff—led to a series of new and positive developments. Those efforts picked up momentum with the election of Mark Ridley-Thomas to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

In the span of 12 months, the County of Los Angeles made considerable progress on a proposed plan that would lead to the eventual opening of a new Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital in Willowbrook in late 2012. The plan involves UC and the State of California, and when executed successfully, will lead to the opening of a new, seismically safe 120-bed hospital. The hospital would again serve as a safety-net provider treating a high volume of Medi-Cal and uninsured patients, be integrated with the county’s existing network of specialty and primary care ambulatory clinics, and optimize public and private resources to fund services.

When all the necessary local and state approvals are obtained, the new hospital will open as an independent, nonprofit hospital corporation with an appointed governing board. This board will have full authority over the hospital’s operations and accountability for the patient care provided.

A new Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital represents a significant positive development for the residents of the South Los Angeles community, and for the people of the County of Los Angeles. Its development is happening against the backdrop of a national discussion about health care reform, universal health care access, health information technology, cost containment, disease management and preventive care. Many believe this moment can be transformative in ways that will contribute to the economic and social health of the region.

A new Martin Luther King Jr. Hospital represents a significant positive development for the residents of the South Los Angeles community, and for the people of the County of Los Angeles.