

Spotlight on retirement

LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION • SEPTEMBER 2015 • VOL. 26, NO. 3



LACERA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

LACERA BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

We congratulate Vivian H. Gray and Herman B. Santos on their successful LACERA Board elections.

Board of Investments member Herman Santos,



who won with 76 percent of the vote, will begin his fifth consecutive term on January 1, 2016. Ms. Gray, who ran unopposed, will begin her second consecutive term on the Board of Retirement.

LACERA Recognizes Trustees' Leadership in the State Association of County Retirement Systems (SACRS)

Board of Retirement member Yves Chery will serve a second term as President of the State Association of County Retirement Systems (SACRS) Board of Directors. First voted in as President in 2014, Mr. Chery was re-elected in May 2015 by the SACRS members in the 20 California county retirement systems created and governed by the 1937 Act. His second term on the Board of Directors continues through Spring of 2016. Additionally, Board of Retirement member Vivian Gray



serves as Chair of the SACRS Bylaws Committee.

LACERA commends Mr. Chery and Ms. Gray on their leadership.

SACRS is a government-sponsored association of 20 California county retirement systems,

spanning from San Diego County to Mendocino County. The association, which collectively represents approximately \$115 billion in funds, was enacted under the County Employees Retirement Law of 1937.

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Los Angeles County Employees Retirement Association

Board of Retirement:

SHAWN R. KEHOE

Chair
Elected by Safety Members

ALAN J. BERNSTEIN

Vice Chair
Appointed by Board of Supervisors

WILLIAM DE LA GARZA

Secretary
Elected by Retired Members

ANTHONY BRAVO

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

YVES CHERY

Elected by General Members

VIVIAN H. GRAY

Elected by General Members

JOSEPH KELLY

County Treasurer & Tax Collector
Ex-Officio Member

KEITH KNOX

Chief Deputy Treasurer & Tax Collector
Alternate Ex-officio Member

DAVID L. MUIR

Alternate Retired Member
Elected by Retired Members

RONALD A. OKUM

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

WILLIAM R. PRYOR

Alternate Member
Elected by Safety Members

LES ROBBINS

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

Board of Investments:

JOHN M. BARGER

Chair
Appointed by Board of Supervisors

DAVID GREEN

Vice Chair
Elected by General Members

JOSEPH KELLY

Secretary
County Treasurer & Tax Collector
Ex-Officio Member

SHAWN R. KEHOE

Elected by Safety Members

KEITH KNOX

Chief Deputy County Treasurer & Tax Collector
Alternate Ex-Officio Member

DIANE A. SANDOVAL

Elected by Retired Members

HERMAN B. SANTOS

Elected by General Members

KENNETH M. SIMRIL

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

ESTEVAN R. VALENZUELA

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

VALERIE ROSE VILLARREAL

Appointed by Board of Supervisors

Chief Executive Officer

GREGG RADEMACHER

Assistant Executive Officer

ROBERT HILL

Assistant Executive Officer

JJ POPOWICH

From the
Executive Desk

Gregg Rademacher – CEO, LACERA



What We Do: Two Key Components

When I think about what we do here at LACERA and how we go about doing it, two things come to mind: **investments and customer service.**

These two components summarize our operation. The County Employees Retirement Law of 1937 promises Los Angeles County employees certain benefits and authorizes LACERA to pay them. To accomplish this, the law directs us to increase and administer the retirement fund.

Investments

As active members, we contribute to our retirement plans. Those contributions go into the Fund, and the Fund finances the benefits we provide. To promote the long-term growth and stability of the Fund, our **Board of Investments** established an Investment Policy Statement that guides the management of the Fund's assets. This prudently planned and executed investment strategy is designed to maximize the continuing strength of the Fund. The policy calls for a diversified portfolio, carefully balanced to minimize risk and maximize the Fund's enduring health and stability. LACERA's Board and **Investment staff** continue to employ solid investment and business strategies designed to serve the best interests of our current and future members, and their beneficiaries. With that in mind, we can all remain confident about the ongoing soundness of the Fund.

Customer Service

Most of you are probably more familiar with our customer service programs than you are with our investment operations. As anyone who has attended our workshops or been assisted by our Call Center or Member Service Center knows, attentive customer service is a key component of our business.

Our comprehensive services begin the

“It is the women and men of LACERA who have the greatest impact in customer service.”

moment a new hire becomes a LACERA member and continues throughout the member's career to retirement and beyond. After the member is gone, our service continues through benefits we provide to the member's eligible beneficiary. The services we offer take many forms, from printed materials to workshops, to services available by phone and on lacera.com through My LACERA.

Callers to 800-786-6464 receive personalized assistance from well-

From the Executive Desk cont'd

trained, knowledgeable Retirement Benefits Specialists, because that's the level of service our members deserve.

Although technology plays an important role in the scope and format of service options we provide (we continually add online service enhancements), it is the women and men of LACERA who have the greatest impact in customer service.

If you have experienced one-on-one counseling at our Member Service Center, attended one of our regularly scheduled pre-retirement workshops, or placed one of the 120,000+ calls to

Member Services or 41,000+ calls to our **Retiree Healthcare Division**, you know that we provide personalized service.*

Behind the scenes, in our **Benefits Division**, the personal touch is unmistakable. From paying new retirees within one payroll cycle of their retirement date, to making sure benefits are seamlessly processed and paid to eligible new survivors, to assisting active members with plan transfers and purchases of prior government service, our staff is dedicated to providing efficient,

personalized customer service.

It is through the guidance of our boards and our adherence to a strategic investment policy and extensive program of personalized member services that we diligently uphold the promise made to County employees in 1937.

We Produce, Protect, and Provide, the Promised Benefits.

– LACERA's Mission Statement



*Stats as of June 30, 2014.

LACERA Congratulates New Board Members



LACERA ACCOMPLISHMENTS

LOS ANGELES COUNTY EMPLOYEES RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION

We are pleased to introduce two accomplished professionals who have joined LACERA's Boards.



Kenneth M. Simril was appointed by the County Board of Supervisors to the **Board of Investments**. He has an established record of successful venture development, with a career that spans multinationals, start-ups, and private-equity backed ventures. An alumnus of the University of Southern California,

he studied engineering before attending Harvard Business School, where he earned his MBA. We welcome his commitment to safeguarding LACERA's assets for long-term growth, enhancing investments, and steadfast engagement on policy matters that impact employee pension plans.



Keith Knox joins LACERA as the **alternate ex-officio trustee** of LACERA's Board of Retirement and Board of Investments, an extension of his role as the Chief Deputy Treasurer and Tax Collector for the County of Los Angeles. After studying political science at the University of Colorado,

Mr. Knox returned to California to earn his MBA at the University of Southern California, where he currently volunteers in the USC Price Mentor Program. His wealth of experience is a welcome asset to LACERA.

Excellence in Reporting, 25 Years in a Row

For the **25th consecutive year**, LACERA has received the **Government Finance Officers Association's (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting**. Our receipt of this accolade comes for LACERA's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) written for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2014. The prestigious GFOA award represents the highest form of recognition in governmental accounting and financial reporting.



In addition to the CAFR, LACERA publishes a Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), which has earned the GFOA Award for Outstanding Achievement now for the 17th consecutive year.

Congratulations to LACERA staff for their contributions to the annual report and for earning this prestigious award!

LACERA.COM: Brochures & Forms Page

If you need a copy of a LACERA form or brochure, take advantage of the Brochures & Forms page on lacera.com.

- Read the document online
- Print the PDF
- Download a copy of the PDF to your home computer
- Order the document
 - Orders will be processed by the end of the next business day and mailed to you free of charge.

If you don't have access to a computer or you just enjoy the sound of a friendly voice, you can call 1-800-786-6464 to place your order with a Retirement Benefits Specialist in our Call Center.

For Retiree Healthcare materials, check out the RHC Brochures & Forms page.

THE PROCESS

REQUEST, RECEIVE, COMPLETE, AND SECURELY STORED



Additional Service Options Coming Soon...

Adjust and submit changes online on My LACERA. Register today!

If you are currently enrolled in a LACERA-administered group health plan, read on.

DO NOT SIGN UP FOR MEDICARE PART D

need any additional prescription drug insurance. Moreover, signing up for another Medicare Part D plan may jeopardize your LACERA-administered medical plan, and you may not get it back until later.

Companies and organizations sponsoring Medicare prescription drug plans are aggressively conducting marketing campaigns that seek to enroll Medicare-eligible beneficiaries into their Medicare prescription drug programs. We want you to know that you can safely ignore the advertisements of these companies.

- To keep your LACERA-administered medical coverage, **do not enroll in other non-LACERA-administered Medicare Part D plans.**

Remember the following important information:

- **Do not sign up** for non-LACERA-administered Medicare Part D plans.
- No action is required on your part.
- You currently have a prescription drug plan through your LACERA-administered medical plan that is as good, if not better, than other Medicare Part D plans; you do not

LACERA advises that you do not give out personal or financial information, such as your Medicare ID number or credit card number. If you suspect fraudulent activity, contact Medicare at 800-633-4227, visit medicare.gov, or contact an SAIC Medicare Drug Integrity Contractor (MEDIC) at 877-772-3379.



If you have any questions, contact LACERA Retiree Healthcare at 800-786-6464 and press 1, or email us at healthcare@lacera.com.

3 THINGS Turkey Trivia

THANKSGIVING

It's almost time for turkey, the centerpiece of many Thanksgiving dinners.

While the oven heats up, feast your eyes on these three turkey facts:

- The pilgrims and Wamponoag tribe likely ate venison and seafood at the first Thanksgiving. There was no turkey at the table, and cranberry sauce, mashed potatoes, and green bean casserole became staples of the holiday much later.
- Like the octopus, turkeys change color depending on their emotions. A turkey's head can be red, blue, white, gray, or pink.
- Looking forward to the leftovers? In 1953, Swanson overestimated the demand for Thanksgiving turkeys by 260 tons! A salesman at Swanson put them to good use and created the first TV dinner.

2015 Payday Calendar

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	H	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	M	D			

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	H	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	B	31

November						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	H	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	H	M	28
29	D					

M = Check Mailing Date

D = Direct Deposit Date

H = Holiday

B = Both Mailing and Direct Deposit Date

STAYING HEALTHY TOGETHER

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LIVING LIGHTER IN RETIREMENT

LACERA has a wellness program tailored to our retirees, **Staying Healthy Together**. The program offers interesting

articles on topics such as avoiding food-drug interactions, aging gracefully, and healthy lifestyles. We've included a new article on obesity with steps you can take towards a healthier you.

Obesity is a big problem in the U.S., especially among Baby Boomers. More than one in three is obese, and only one in four gets the recommended amount of aerobic exercise. And obesity can cause chronic illnesses, such as arthritis and diabetes, that impact medical expenses, the ability to get around on your own, and overall quality of life.

The good news is that small changes can contribute to significant weight loss. If you want to slim down, then it's time to begin investing positive action and energy into yourself. Your health and happiness are worth all the efforts you make.

Are your walking shoes laced up yet? Here are a few steps you can take right away:

- 1. Schedule an appointment with your physician.** Your physician may identify an unexpected contributor to unwanted weight that could be fixed with a change to your current medication or by a specialist or specific therapies. You can also talk about exercise and diet strategies that best suit you.
- 2. Write down some realistic goals.** Decide on small goals you're ready to commit to, like reducing your daily fat intake or substituting sparkling water for sugary sodas. Also, set up some long-term objectives, such as getting off of medication for hypertension or registering for a 5K race in one year. The weight you lose in the process of getting there will be a bonus.



3. Move more. Crank up the tunes and let loose. Call a friend to go for a walk. Take your grandkids to the park. Lift hand weights during commercials. Spend a day strolling through a museum. It all adds up.

4. Decide what's worth the weight. Don't deprive yourself of your favorite foods. Instead, consider what dietary changes you can stand to make, such as eating smaller portions, keeping low-sugar snacks on hand, or using Greek yogurt in place of sour cream.

5. Honor every achievement. When you reach a milestone – fitting into your favorite jeans or running longer than you ever expected you could – reward yourself with something meaningful.

As you make these changes, remember to be patient with the process. Eating an entire bag of chips before you know what's happened is not likely to undo all your hard work; just dust off the crumbs and move on. When results seem minimal, remind yourself of the less visible benefits of exercise: longer lifespan, better sleep, disease prevention, better bone health, and reduced risk of falls with improved balance and joint support. Once you get started, you're already on your way to a healthier you.

To recap:

- Obesity affects 31 percent of U.S. citizens aged 45-64.
- Small changes in diet and exercise can make a positive impact.
- It's important to keep your physician in the loop.
- You can live a long, healthy, happy life in retirement!

Sources: Mayo Clinic; National Senior Games Association

Why It's Easy to Forget

You start talking about a movie you just saw and can't remember the title. You're giving directions to your house and blank on a familiar street name. You find yourself

standing in the middle of the kitchen wondering why you went in there. If you're finding it easier to forget things, you're not alone. Half of people over age 50 report memory problems, and experts say that mild memory loss is normal as we age.

The two most common causes of memory problems are stress/anxiety and depression.

cont'd on next pg.

Why It's Easy to Forget cont'd

That's because these conditions make it hard to pay attention. An unfocused brain can't properly store, let alone retrieve, information. Other causes of memory loss include:

- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)
- Metabolic diseases such as thyroid gland diseases; diabetes; and lung, liver, or kidney failure
- Alcoholism
- Vitamin B-12 deficiency
- Infections
- Prescription and over-the-counter drugs

When to Get Help

We've all misplaced keys, blanked on an acquaintance's name, or forgotten a phone number. And while it's frustrating, normal memory loss has little effect on your ability to do what you want to do. On the other hand, more serious memory conditions could disrupt your work, hobbies, social activities, and relationships. Talk to a medical professional if you or a family member experiences one or more of these symptoms:

- Difficulty performing simple tasks (paying bills, dressing appropriately, bathing); forgetting how to do things you've done many times
- Inability to recall or describe specific instances where memory loss caused problems

- Getting lost or disoriented even in familiar places; inability to follow directions
- Frequently forgetting, misusing, or garbling words; repeating phrases and stories in the same conversation
- Trouble making choices; showing poor judgment or behaving in socially inappropriate ways

In keeping with our Staying Healthy Together theme of Aging Gracefully, we have an additional article on aging, at lacera.com/retireehealthcare.



Staying Healthy Together Workshops to Be Held in October

We are finalizing preparations for our Staying Healthy Together half-day workshops, which we encourage you to attend this October. The workshops, part of our Retiree Wellness Program, are a fun opportunity to learn ways to improve your health, win great raffle prizes, visit with our carriers, and reconnect with your fellow County retirees over tasty, healthy snacks.

Watch your mailbox and lacera.com in early October for details about this popular and fun event. Stay tuned!

Eight Ways to Keep Your Mind Sharp

Director of the Memory and Aging Research Center at the UCLA psychiatric institute and author of *The Memory Bible: An innovative Strategy for Keeping Your Brain Young*, Gary Small, MD, recommends eight strategies to keep your brain young:

- 1. Stay mentally active:** Read, challenge yourself to learn new things, take up hobbies, and stay socially engaged.
- 2. Exercise:** It helps improve overall health and reduces stress.
- 3. Reduce stress:** Stress interferes with memory processing.
- 4. Eat a healthy diet:** Good nutrition helps avoid high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and other conditions that increase the

risk of stroke.

- 5. Focus:** Slow down and focus on the task at hand. Multitasking and not paying attention are some of the biggest causes of forgetfulness.



- 6. Get sufficient sleep:**

Fatigue can affect memory and concentration in any age group.

- 7. Create structure:**

Keep track of events and tasks using a calendar, lists, notes, a daily planner, or an electronic organizer. Keep easy-to-lose items in the same place each time after using them.

- 8. Repeat as needed:** When introduced to a new person, repeat his or her name several times.



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Public Service Announcement

Volunteer for the Department of Public Social Services

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services Volunteer Section is seeking volunteers, ages 16 and older, who are interested in dedicating their time for the betterment of Los Angeles-area families and the community.

A variety of short-term and long-term assignments are available.

For more information, contact Erica Moya, DPSS Volunteer Coordinator, at: (213) 744-4348 or dpssvolunteers@dpss.lacounty.gov.



Upcoming Holidays

LACERA will be closed on:

- **Monday, September 7,** in observance of Labor Day.
- **Monday, October 12,** in observance of Columbus Day.
- **Wednesday, November 11,** in observance of Veterans Day.
- **Thursday-Friday, November 26-27,** for Thanksgiving.

“The privilege of a lifetime is being who you are.”

– Joseph Campbell

Email: welcome@lacera.com

Editor’s Note: *Spotlight on Retirement* is published by the staff of LACERA and is for general informational purposes only. Consult with professional advisors regarding legal, tax, and/or medical matters; LACERA does not offer legal, tax, or medical advice.