

PROBATION NEWS

INVEST PROGRAM AND CHILD TRAFFICKING AND RESPONSE UNIT WIN AWARDS

On Oct. 12th, the Los Angeles County Probation Department's INVEST Program and Child Trafficking and Response Units were presented the prestigious Silver Eagle and Bronze Eagle awards at the 35th Annual LA County Quality and Productivity Commission ceremony. These awards are designated for programs recognized within the top 10 in the County. This year's theme was *Adapt, Create, Achieve*.

Supervisors Holly Mitchell and Hilda Solis joined CEO Fesia Davenport in also recognizing the department's Forever Friends, College Pathways, and Pretrial Evaluation Programs.

Since 1987, the Quality and Productivity Awards program has honored more than 2,000 individual departmental productivity and quality improvement efforts deserving recognition by the Board of Supervisors, Chief Executive Office, Quality and Productivity Commission, and the public.



Director Martin, Chief Gonzales, Director Guyman

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Department Honors DPO II Paula Lind

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Pink Patch Project 2022

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INVEST PROGRAM AND CHILD TRAFFICKING AND RESPONSE UNIT WIN AWARDS (CONT)

PROGRAMS ARE RECOGNIZED AS TOP 10 IN LA COUNTY

The awards process begins with the Productivity Managers' Network (PMN) evaluating the entries. Commissioners from the Quality and Productivity Commission and Managers from the PMN make site visits to departments that have ranked highest. At the public ceremony, the Board of Supervisors gives special recognition to the Top Ten entries and the Grand Award Winners.

"The amazing team under the CTU is the reason for this acknowledgement," said Michelle Guymon, Director of the Child Trafficking Unit. "Their commitment, dedication, love, and care they give the youth has truly been inspiring. The team supports each other through the tough times, are the youth's biggest cheerleaders, and they show up, even when it's not convenient. Getting this acknowledgement was an honor and a tribute for all the hard work the team has put in over the past 10-years supporting our youth who have been impacted by commercial sexual exploitation.

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Award Winning Child Trafficking and Response Unit

Child Trafficking Identification & Response Team

2010 was the start of a sea change within Los Angeles County's Probation Department. Probation began to recognize a large number of youth within its care who had experienced commercial sexual exploitation. At that point, these youth were typically detained in juvenile hall on prostitution and related charges.

Through training and developing relationships with these young people, the Department began to shift its thinking— and there was a newfound recognition that these youth were victims of child abuse. In response, the Child Trafficking Unit (CTU) was created to provide specialized support and services for youth impacted by commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) and works to address the underlying trauma and abuse that youth have experienced both prior to, and during, their exploitation.

The CTU has implemented weekly multi-disciplinary team (MDT) meetings, provides a rapid response assessment for any youth suspected of/or identified as commercially sexually exploited, a locate process to expeditiously try and recover CSEC youth who go missing, community advocacy and survivor support services, along with additional services and supports for Transition Age Youth.

Through these efforts, the Department has seen much better outcomes for youth impacted by CSE and is leading the nation in thinking differently about how to respond to CSE youth.

- Michelle Guymon, Director of the Child Trafficking Unit

INVEST PROGRAM AND CHILD TRAFFICKING AND RESPONSE UNIT WIN AWARDS (CONT)

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Being recognized with the Silver Eagle award by the County of Los Angeles is a direct result of the efforts of the INVEST staff. The care and hard work our employees display consistently is what makes all the difference. I am just extremely blessed to lead this outstanding team.

– Laurence Martin, Probation Director – INVEST Program

According to INVEST Program Director Laurence Martin, the INVEST program comes at no cost to Los Angeles County. "During the evaluation process, it was revealed that INVEST may be one of very few operations that literally are cost-free to the County," said Martin. "The operating budget for this program is \$5 million a year. But it costs \$100,000 a year to keep a person in State Prison and \$50,000 a year for County Jail. This means if we can show that 50 participants a year avoided prison... or 100 a year avoided county jail, we would be cost-neutral to the County. But also remember that our program is centered on employment. This means our participants are becoming taxpayers who pay into the system now instead of receiving expenditures on services. Many of us believe that we are quietly turning a profit for the County of Los Angeles."

With award-winning programs like INVEST and the Child Trafficking and Response Unit, the Los Angeles County Probation Department continues to be a leader in the field of defendant recovery and rehabilitation. Congratulations to the award recipients!

Probation News

The INVEST Program

The INVEST program assists Probationers in LA County with comprehensive wraparound support services to assist them into career-path employment. This leads to a livable wage.

The lack of gainful employment increases the risk of recidivism, substance abuse and homelessness. INVEST is Probation's solutions to address this barrier to success. The model features co-case management by LA County Probation Officers and staff at the America's Job and Career Centers (AJCC). We seek to include the voice, strengths and perspective of justice involved individuals with the goal of supporting each one in reaching their highest potential.

Since March 2018, over 2300 Adult Probationers have been enrolled and provided with workforce development and support. Over 1100 participants have been successful in securing permanent employment. And just over 400 more are in transitional or other paid employment placements.



The Award-Winning INVEST Team



INVEST Team at the Award Ceremony