

Biography for Olivia E. Mitchell

OLIVIA E. MITCHELL is currently the Assistant Chief Grants Administrator for the City of Los Angeles Housing and Community Investment Department (HCIDLA). This is a position she has held since 2005 when she joined the staff of the previous Community Development Department. During her tenure at the department she has managed community centers, directed research and legislative advocacy and the management information services branch. She is currently the manager of staff overseeing department's FamilySource, System, Domestic Violence, Child Passenger Safety and federally funded Neighborhood Improvement construction projects including their cash and service payback agreements.

Ms. Mitchell is continually and consistently known for her work with young people. Beginning in 1971, with her work with the District Attorney's Youth Advisory Board, through 1993 with Mayor's Bradley's Youth Advisory Council and serving as the first director of the City of Los Angeles Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families in 1995. She has developed and implemented leadership development programs for the best and brightest youth of our city as well as programs for the disenfranchised including foster and probation youth and gang involved young people. She has directly mentored over 2000 youth and, indirectly, thousands more.

Ms. Mitchell has worked at the program level, administrative level and policy-decision making level to engage youth and to increase the involvement of disenfranchised adults in the decisions affecting their lives; especially government decisions. As important is her commitment to recruit, encourage and mentor staff to provide their best service to an ethnically diverse constituency, especially those living in poverty and without hope.

Her influence reaches across communities to include policy appointments that currently include the County Probation Commission, the California Community Foundation's BLOOM and Thelma Pearl Howard affiliates. Formerly she was also a member of the National Board of the Tavis Smiley Foundation, the YWCA of Greater Los Angeles, the Latino/Black Roundtable, KCET, United Way Board of Directors, and the Rosa Parks Sexual Assault Crisis Center.

We could say that Ms. Mitchell has directly mentored over 2,000 young people through the various youth councils and youth programs she has staffed. In truth, she has really influenced thousands more. She is most famous to the general public as a mentor to a variety of public officials. One is the mayor of the City of Fontana; others are current and former members of the Los Angeles City Council: Paul Koretz, Tom LaBonge, Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, and former Controller Wendy Greuel. Through her other affiliations and works she is also highly respected and admired by Los Angeles City Council President Herb Wesson, Councilmembers Bernard Parks, Gilbert Cedillo, Curren Price, Jose Huizar, Mike Bonin, and former Council member, and former Mayor Antonio Villaragosa, and former City Council President and now Mayor Eric Garcetti.

She has served five Mayors – all of whom consider her their friend.