



**Office of the Mayor
City of Los Angeles**

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**MAYOR VILLARAIGOSA CHALLENGES ANGELENOS TO
SERVE LOS ANGELES ONE COMMUNITY AT A TIME**

More than 3,000 volunteers show up at the Day of Service in Watts. Mayor Villaraigosa participates in several of the 60 service projects and thanks volunteers for serving Los Angeles, one community at a time.

(Los Angeles, CA) – Challenging Angelenos to serve the City of Los Angeles one community at a time, Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa participated in several of the 60 beautification and improvement projects that took place at the Day of Service in Watts on Saturday, November 18, 2006.

“We are inviting people from all over the City of Los Angeles to come together to give a little love to Watts,” said Mayor Villaraigosa. “No matter where you live, we are all responsible for the communities that make up the City of Los Angeles. I want to challenge Angelenos to get involved in Day of Service campaigns and clean up the City of Los Angeles – one community at a time.”

On Saturday, the Mayor began the Day of Service by joining Councilwoman Janice Hahn, LAUSD Superintendent David Brewer, KDAY DJs Tha’ Goodfellas, celebrities, volunteers, and business and community leaders for the Kick off at 109th Street Park. Volunteers then disbursed to different locations throughout Watts to began service projects.

LAUSD Superintendent Brewer welcomed Mayor Villaraigosa at Compton Avenue Elementary School, where volunteers from the school, Herbalife employees, and volunteers from the South Bay Boys and Girls Club took part in efforts to beautify the school. Participants took part in the painting of murals and the planting of trees.

Beautifying schools is one of the top priorities for the Day of Service and improvement projects took place at the following schools in addition to Compton Avenue: David Starr Jordan High School, Locke High School, Gompers Middle School, Figueroa Street Elementary, Acorn Elementary, 112th Street Elementary, and Verbum Dei High School.

The Mayor helped put the finishing touches on the Jordan Downs Community Job Portal at the Jordan Downs housing development. The job portal, located at one of the largest housing developments in the City of Los Angeles and where a disproportionate number of residents are unemployed or underemployed, will offer young adults assistance in preparing resumes, filling out computer job applications, including CalJOBS, and taking vocational assessment programs that can assist them in finding jobs. Potential employers attended this opening event, creating a mini job fair for those that attended.

The job portal is a project of the City of Los Angeles' Community Development Department, in partnership with the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles, and was developed in response to the concern that some individuals lack the computer skills to take advantage of the City's traditional one-stop career resource centers located throughout the City. Bringing jobs to residents of South Los Angeles is one of Mayor Villaraigosa's top agenda items.

The Mayor took part in alley cleanups on Wilmington between 103rd and 108th Street. These sites demonstrate the enormous possibilities that exist when people join together from across Los Angeles. In addition to members of the Watts Gang Taskforce, a group local to the area, volunteers from Tarzana, Sepulveda, and Silver Lake participated in the cleanups by sweeping the sidewalks, raking leaves and overgrown vegetation, and throwing bulky items and other debris into dumpsters. The volunteers painted a nearby home and planting flowers in the Grape Street Park.

The Mayor proceeded to the Imperial Courts housing development where he helped create a "healing garden" for residents. Healing gardens are peaceful, calming areas for residents to enjoy that were created in three housing developments throughout Watts on this Day of Service. At Imperial Courts, the Mayor took part in building a memorial to celebrate the life of Anthony Owens, Jr., a young victim of gang violence and the son of Sister Souljah, a community activist who has devoted her life to trying to keep kids off drugs and out of gangs. Volunteers were from Imperial Courts as well as from organizations located in Boyle Heights, Los Angeles' eastside.

The Mayor hosted the grand opening ceremony of the Stanford/Avalon Farm, an urban farm in the heart of Watts. Mayor Villaraigosa and his office helped secure the land here to create a community garden. During the day, volunteers from the surrounding community planted trees, removed trash, debris, and overgrown brush from the area, and did community outreach to the local community about the garden.

The Mayor was joined again by Councilwoman Hahn, KDAY DJs Tha' Goodfellas, and volunteers at 109th Street Park for the day's culminating events. In addition to a free lunch, volunteers were invited to enjoy a program that included raffles for prizes and a performance by Latino rap star Brown Boy.

The Day of Service in Watts involved 60 beautification and improvement projects throughout the Watts area and involved over 50 governmental agencies and community based organizations.

The Day of Service in Watts received generous donations and resources from the Clark Construction Co., Home Depot, Westfield Corporation and Councilwoman Janice Hahn.

This is the 12th Day of Service organized by Villaraigosa. Since 2003, when Villaraigosa was a Councilmember, his Days of Service have attracted the participation of over 46,000 volunteers.

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