

# EmpowerLA AWARD RECIPIENTS 2015

From the North Valley, the Sylmar Neighborhood Council was a creative leader in the "Make Your Horses Count Event." This event was designed to showcase the equestrian community of Sylmar and help preserve the rural lifestyle of this unique community. As a result of demonstrating the unique lifestyle of this community, The City of Los Angeles has now designated a protected "K" overlay in areas which cannot be broken. This was a tremendous accomplishment and the first of its kind in the entire City of Los Angeles. The Sylmar Neighborhood Council Equestrian Committee joined forces with many other equestrian organizations and horse enthusiasts to sponsor this event and bring attention to the community and advocate for proper zoning for this area. This neighborhood council truly demonstrates how civic engagement based on coalition building can truly make a difference in public policy decision making.

From the South Valley, the North Hollywood North East Neighborhood Council and North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council rallied around the job of improving a very blighted City of Los Angeles property. The property was seriously eroded with sand eroding over the sidewalk, weeds proliferating, and garbage proliferating, and plumbing pipes were exposed. A clean up had to be organized on both sides of Whitsett Avenue. Working with the office of Councilman Paul Krekorian, neighborhood watches and the North Hollywood West Neighborhood Council, an exceptional property upgrade was established. There were clean-up activities, planting projects and mural painting. The unified activities of all organizations involved have transformed a long-time hazardous and blighted area into a water-saving garden and artistic land-mark. The project also helped develop new friendships, and an open awareness how much can be achieved when Neighborhood Councils cooperate with one another.

From Central, the Westlake South Neighborhood Council (WSNC) is a true example of a neighborhood council attempting to integrate itself into the community that it serves. This organization has gone to great lengths to recruit board members that represent all races, ethnicities and points of view. The board is comprised of white, African American, Latino, and Iranian-American members. This neighborhood council has organized events and projects that provide service and empowerment to a community of over 30,000 residents. The WSNC has conducted the free Neighbor-to-Neighbor event in MacArthur Park to connect people to the NC, to city services, and local non-profit services. They have also sponsored an Immigration Legal Fair working with organization that involves themselves in immigration rights. There are also the WSNC Days of Service with the goal of beautifying the community and engaging with community members. The WSNC Health Fair has been very helpful to residents who lack basic health care. Approximately 300 people were helped with basic health care needs. This neighborhood council feels that it has also been very prudent in issuing Neighborhood Purpose Grants to organizations providing essential and valuable assistance to neighborhood residents.

Also from Central, Mid City West Community Council has responded to community constituents requests to create safe routes for bicycling and walking. Mid City West and stakeholders created a comprehensive plan to create two bike routes: one going east-west along Rosewood Ave.; and one going north-south along Formosa and Alta. The support for this plan led to a meeting and bike ride with city staff. Councilman Koretz nominated the project for Metros 2015 Call For Projects. Subsequently the Mid City West Project was recommended for funding in the amount of \$1,806,765 with a city contribution of \$483,629. The project was ranked 7th of 15 bicycle infrastructure projects. This project proves that neighborhood councils can respond to community needs and get big things done through strong and diligent advocacy. Approximately 300 people were helped with basic health care needs. This neighborhood council feels that it has also been very prudent in issuing Neighborhood Purpose Grants to organizations providing essential and valuable assistance to neighborhood residents.

From the West, West Los Angeles Sawtelle Neighborhood Council strikes a balance, working effectively with both stakeholders and developers, to ensure a better quality of life and better projects with the community. WLASNC spends \$30,000 annually on outreach. They work closely with their council office bridging the gap between the CD office and stakeholders. The NC holds 8 free concerts and movie nights to bring the community together. They recently partnered with NIKE to re-open the skate plaza and do a renovation at the civic center plaza. The West L.A. NC was an integral partner in the renaming of the Sawtelle area into the Sawtelle Japan Town area, recognizing the historic Japanese community. The council does an email blast weekly to their stakeholders to keep them informed of NC business and upcoming meetings. This council has been and continues to be 100% in compliance with funding rules, code of conduct, ethics rules, and spends 100% of its funds, with the vastmajority on outreach which helped to increase voter turnout this past year.

From the East, the Eagle Rock Neighborhood Council is being honored for several reasons. First, this organization has taken a hard look at the structure of their neighborhood council and made some important infrastructure changes. While maybe not useful for all neighborhood councils, the thoughtful consideration put into the structure of their council is highly commendable. They have spent much time disseminating information through their website. Unlike many NCs, Eagle Rock, publishes all agendas and comprehensive minutes from Board and Land Use and Planning meetings. Board resolutions and community impact statements are accessible online. They have a very active Land Use Committee. This committee has submitted written recommendations on every significant Planning Department case and Conditional Use Permit in Eagle Rock. The NC after research by Planning Committee organized against some over-sized developments, against a 7-11 wanting to sell alcohol. They played a major role in amending the Colorado Boulevard Specific Plan. Their CIS have been well researched and thoughtful, including response to the expansion of the Scholl Canyon dump in Glendale. They held a debate between the major candidate in the recent LAUSD School Board race in District 5.

From the Harbor Region, the Harbor Gateway North Neighborhood Council was recognized. On November 8, 2014 the Emergency Preparedness Committee of the Harbor Gateway North NC mobilized 63 block leaders to go door to door in their neighborhoods with small bags of information on how to prepare for a major emergency as part of the NC Emergency Preparedness Neighborhood Survey. A survey was given to residents who were home identifying those who had medical skills, construction skills, and/or own generators or are Ham radio operators. All homes received the bag with information which the Council District 15 staff and the Emergency Management Department helped the NC assemble. 10,000 households received information about the Nov. 8th community walk-through. The surveys given laid the groundwork for sponsoring CERT classes during May and June of this year, the first such classes in ten years. In addition a number of stakeholders began preparing to pass the Ham radio license exam, which was given on July 11th of this year.

From South LA, Empowerment Congress Southwest Area Neighborhood Development Council was recognized. Fulfilling its City Charter mandate to increase civic participation, ECSWANDC made the Council District 8 open seat its mission both alone and in partnership with the South Los Angeles Alliance of Neighborhood Councils (SLAANC). Candidates were featured during its meetings and the final SLAANC Candidates' Forum was held within its boundaries at Washington Prep HS. Its Strategic Plan mission to increase Outreach included a website redo and an increased Social Media Presence while lowering its expenses and functionality for both. It was one of the first SouthLA NCs to use NextDoor and still uses the media in its Agenda and special event announcements.

## NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSIONERS

# EMPOWER LA AWARDS 2016/17



Recognizing The Neighborhood Councils That Best Achieve Their Mission:  
To Engage Their Local Stakeholders With Government  
And Ensure That Their Government Is Responsive To The Needs Of The Community

**EMPOWER YOURSELF • EMPOWER YOUR COMMUNITY**

**EMPOWER LA**



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# EMPOWER LA AWARDS

## CRITERIA AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

*The Board of Neighborhood Commissioners (the Commission) will give EmpowerLA Awards (“Awards”) to Neighborhood Councils (“NC’s”) based on any of the below criteria:*

1. NC’s that have made remarkable achievements in fulfilling their dual mission of:
  - Promoting more citizen participation in City government; and
  - Making City government more responsive to local needs.
2. NC’s that embody the highest ideals of inclusiveness, non-discrimination, transparency, and independence, as detailed in the Plan for a Citywide System of Neighborhood Councils.

The Commission will also use its “Neighborhood Councils Rules and Best Practices Guide” as a source of other relevant criteria, and as a tool for measuring and evaluating NC achievements.

All certified NC’s that are not in exhaustive efforts as of the date of the determination of the Awards by the Commission are eligible.

- Seven Awards will be given annually.
- One NC from each of the seven Los Angeles Planning Regions will be given an award each year.
- The Commission will solicit nominations for NC awardees from NC board members and participants, Department of Neighborhood Empowerment (“the Department”) staff, and all other stakeholders from throughout the City.
- A Committee of the Commission will work with the Department to review all nominations and make recommendations to the Commission, which will make final determinations of awardees.
- The Awards will be given in Spring of 2017.

## EMPOWER LA AWARDS NOMINATION

(submit online at <http://tiny.cc/ela-awards16>)

1. Name of the Neighborhood Council nominated for an EmpowerLA Award

2. Describe the project(s) or initiative(s) that the Neighborhood Council has undertaken which achieve the goals of  
a) promoting more citizen participation in government, and/or b) making government more responsive to local needs.

3. Describe how the Neighborhood Council upholds the ideals of inclusiveness, non-discrimination, transparency, and independence in their operations.

4. Describe how the Neighborhood Council utilizes or embodies any of the best practices outlined in the Neighborhood Council Rules and Best Practices Guide.

5. Provide any additional comments that you feel would be helpful in selecting the Neighborhood Council for an EmpowerLA Award

Your Full Name:

Contact Email:

Contact Number: