

Guardian

A Quarterly Newsletter for Members of the Los Angeles Police Relief Association, Inc.

Volume 39, Number 2

December 2020

LAPRA 2020 Fitness Challenge Wrap-up

The COVID-19 pandemic may have shut down countless activities in 2020, but it didn't stop 926 Fitness Challenge participants from losing a total of 9,152 pounds.

The 2020 Fitness Challenge was scheduled to run from January 15 through April 30. However, when the pandemic hit earlier this year, the Challenge was put on hold. It restarted again on July 1 and ran through August 31. Teams were allowed to complete the Challenge with less than 20 participants provided at least 50% of team members were sworn officers.

A total of 46 teams stuck it out to the final weigh-in, and nearly 75% of the teams lost 5% or more of their starting weight. Special Operations Division Team 1, last year's second-place winner, claimed the \$10,000 grand prize this year with a total loss of 16.11%. First-place individual winner Carlos Amaya of Van Nuys Team 1 won \$3,500 for losing 32.27% of his starting weight. Eight others achieved a loss of 20% or more with winnings of \$500 to \$2,500.

Individuals who lost at least 15% of their body weight and kept it off through August 31, 2020 earned a \$350 Keep It Off incentive.

Success Despite Shutdown

Each year, the LAPRA Fitness Challenge brings together hundreds of sworn and civilian employees who form teams in a quest to improve their health and fitness through healthy eating and dedicated exercise. Soon after this year's challenge began, COVID-19 restrictions put a



hard stop to group workouts and gym sessions, adding a new type of challenge to the 12th annual competition as participants strived to keep each other motivated.

Ironically, the virus made weight loss easier for some. Because COVID restrictions shut down restaurants and required people to stay at home, some participants found that being forced to forego dining out and prepare their own meals helped them stick to their diets.

LAPRA Board Member and Commander Ruby Flores congratulated the winners and recognized the determination and resilience of all who participated.

"Challenging seems an inadequate description for this year's event. As you well know, your already difficult assignments were complicated by a once-in-a-hundred-year global pandemic and social change. Between long work hours, gym closures, and panic buying at the stores, you made decisions for healthier foods, portion control, and squeezing in a workout," says Commander Flores. "Beyond our city, we all have people depending on us for safety and security. My hope for the winners and every participant or future participant is to continue to make choices small and large for wellness." ■

2020 Fitness Challenge Key Stats

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------|
| Total teams: | 46 |
| Total participants: | 926 |
| Total pounds lost: | 9,152 |
| Teams with weight loss of 5% or more: | 34 |

Special Operations Division Team 1 Takes Grand Prize

The top team spot for the 2020 Fitness Challenge goes to the Special Operations Division (SOD) Team 1, who together lost 16.11% of their starting weight and earned \$10,000 for their station fund.

SOD has participated in the LAPRA Fitness Challenge since 2008, and Team 1 has won the grand prize several times. After not placing in the top two last year, captain Hugo Gutierrez says the team came back “super motivated” and overcame multiple hurdles.

“We are a unique division in that most of our individuals work in the field as surveillance officers, and maintaining a good diet is very difficult,” says Gutierrez. “Add to that the COVID pandemic and the protests. But they were dedicated to the cause and never lost that commitment.”

Gutierrez and co-captains Adrian Sanabria and Monica Cross kept participants motivated by focusing on the health benefits; even when COVID disrupted the challenge, they encouraged their members to maintain or



With a cumulative weight loss of 16.11%, the Special Operations Division (SOD) Team 1 earned \$10,000 for their station fund.

continue their efforts. One SOD team member took second place in individual weight loss.

The team honed their dieting skills in the office, bringing in healthy meals and snacks and avoiding sweets and soda. Team captains tried to make the challenge as competitive as possible, acknowledging the two “biggest losers” at weigh-ins every two weeks with fun

rewards and emails announcing their success.

“We have limited opportunities to fundraise where we work, so we’re always grateful to LAPRA for this event,” says Gutierrez. “Kudos to them for continuing the program even after everything that hit the city and society this year, and kudos to everyone who participated.” ■



Traffic Group took second prize in the 2020 Fitness Challenge and earned \$5,500 for their station fund.

First Place Winners: Mission Division

The Mission Division team refused to let the COVID-19 virus get in their way of taking first place in the 2020 Fitness Challenge, ultimately achieving a cumulative loss of 12.14% despite pandemic-related restrictions.

Team captain Cynthia Salas, who took over when Robert Gasior became injured, said the team got off to a strong start. However, their group workouts were quickly derailed by the virus.

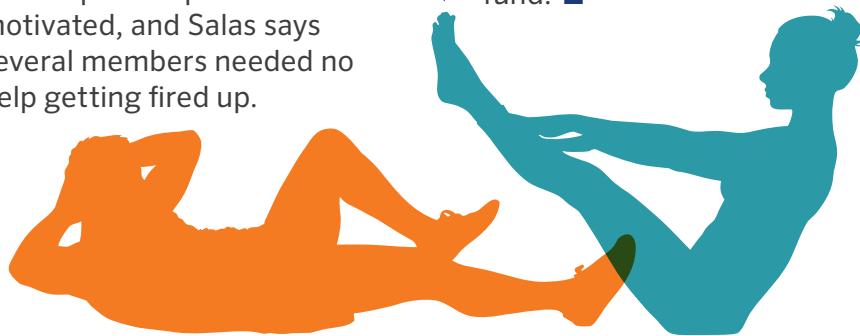
"It was very tough. We started out doing weekly hikes together

to get the ball rolling, but once COVID hit, that fell apart," she says. "I would email everyone to keep them on track and remind them that their participation benefits everyone."

Pep talks during the weigh-ins also helped keep the team motivated, and Salas says several members needed no help getting fired up.

"Some of them were really gung-ho about it, doing laps around the station," she says. "We just weren't giving up because of COVID."

The Mission Division team earned \$7,500 for their station fund. ■



Force Investigation Division (FID) Team 1 Repeats as Third Prize Winner

For the second year in a row, the Force Investigation Division (FID) Team 1 earned third prize in the 2020 Fitness Challenge. The team had a cumulative loss of 12.09% of their starting weight – an increase over last year's loss of 11.46% – and earned \$3,500 for their station fund.

Team captain Dante Palacio says the group started off strong in January, but then COVID struck. He and co-captain Wendy Subt had to reorganize a bit when LAPRA extended the challenge, and they lost a few members who didn't stick with it.

"During the summer COVID had people staying away from vacations and outings that they would normally take, so that helped us stay solid," he says.

Although social distancing requirements kept the team



Force Investigation Division (FID) Team 1 earned third prize for the second year in a row.

from doing group activities at the office or gym this time around, members did a great job of keeping themselves motivated and sharing their progress through email.

"Everyone was doing their own thing at home with their diets, and people really stuck with it," Palacio says. "We had five

people who lost 15% or more, and another eight to 10 with a 10% to 12% loss."

FID Team 1 is an older team compared to other divisions, and Palacio says the team did a really good job staying on top of the challenge. "We'll be back next year." ■

Carlos Amaya: Keto for the Win

For first-place winner Carlos Amaya, it all started with a photograph. “I saw a picture of myself and I didn’t like what I saw,” Amaya says. “I was embarrassed, and I knew I had to do something. It was like something just clicked.”

A work injury reinforced his determination to lose weight, as the excess weight wasn’t helping his recovery. Amaya began losing weight before the challenge even began and continued dropping pounds as part of Van Nuys Team 1. He lost 32.27% of his body weight, surpassing his initial weight loss goal by 50 pounds, and won \$3,500 for the top spot.

Amaya’s niece, a nurse practitioner, got him started on the ketogenic (“keto”) diet, a very low-carbohydrate, high-fat diet plan. “She gave me a baseline with simple recipes to start with and I followed that for the first 30 days, then looked for more options and recipes to try online.”

He credits the COVID-19 pandemic with helping him stick to his weight loss plan. “With the shutdown, there wasn’t the temptation of going out to eat,” he says. “I took the negative and made it into a positive.”

Exercise also helped knock off the weight. Amaya started

walking a mile every day, and gradually scaled up to running four to six miles a day. He hit the pavement seven days a week for three months, then cut back to five or six days.

Amaya said his teammates helped him stay on track. “At the station they would post weekly weight totals, and I was motivated just by seeing that,” he says.

Now that the excess weight is off, he’s working on building lean muscle. “I feel great,” he says. “I’m in the best shape of my life.” ■

2020 Keep It Off Incentive Winners

LAPRA awarded a \$350 “Keep It Off” Incentive to 19 participants who lost 15% or more of their body weight and kept it off through the end of the extended 2020 Fitness Challenge (August 31, 2020).

Keep It Off Incentive Winners

(Cumulative Percentage Weight Loss of 15% and Above)

| Individual | Individual |
|------------------------|-----------------|
| Jackie Fowler | Anthony Rheault |
| Genodadiy Danilkevich | Dennis Padgett |
| Jose Torres | Lydia Retana |
| Jim Antenucci | Sandra Platero |
| Guillermo Camarena | Everardo Amaral |
| Stephanie Juarez | Jose Zambada |
| Scott Ohana | Ian Marabe |
| Dennis Diviak | Brianna Brown |
| Brittany Dervin Aragon | Rafael Tobar |
| Alberto Rosa | |

Robert Burke: Breaking the Plateau

Robert Burke walked two-thirds of the way across the United States during the Fitness Challenge – without ever leaving Los Angeles.

According to his Fitbit, the fifth-place winner covered more than 2,000 miles through a combination of twice-daily walks around the station parking structure with his partner before and after end of watch. The walks helped Burke, a member of the Mission team, lose 22.47% of his starting body weight and win \$750.

Burke joined the Challenge for motivation to get and stay healthy and, in the process, overcame one of his biggest obstacles: breaking through a stubborn weight loss plateau.

"In the past I'd hit a plateau that usually happened after about 40 pounds, where I wouldn't gain or lose weight no matter what I did," he says. "I'd eat three slices of pizza and not gain, or exercise more and not lose."



About halfway into the challenge, Burke hit a plateau that lasted 13 weeks – the longest plateau he'd ever experienced – and refused to give up. He stuck it out with exercise and healthy eating, and finally saw more weight start to drop off.

"There was no magic to it," Burke says. "If you put it in your mouth, you have to burn it off. It was about portion control and walking every day."

Burke plans to lose another 35 pounds. He expects it to be difficult, but he is determined. "Everybody is different. My last 35 pounds might be someone else's 10 pounds, and you just have to stick with it," he says. ■

Travis Coyle: Home Cooking for Health

Travis Coyle's motivation to join the Fitness Challenge came from the number of his scale: 315. He decided to get serious about losing weight; by the end of the challenge, the third-place winner had dropped 26.37% of his body weight.

For Coyle, a member of the Foothill team, the COVID-19 lockdown helped him diet by forcing him to eat better. "It was easier with COVID because there was no eating out," he says. "You can order carry out, but by the time you get it home it's cold, and it's just not as good as what you can make at home."

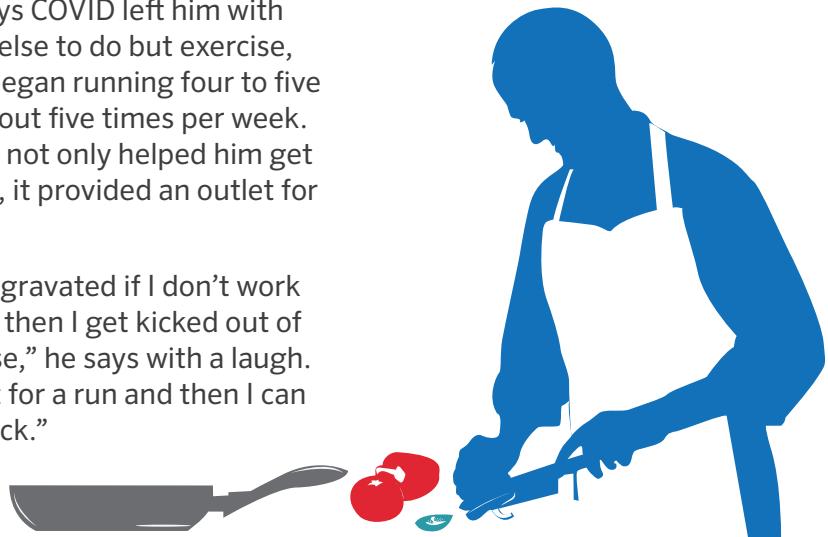
Coyle did a lot of his own cooking, often preparing meals days in

advance so he would have healthy options ready. Among his favorites were chili, chicken tortilla soup and a deconstructed buffalo chicken dish.

Coyle says COVID left him with nothing else to do but exercise, and he began running four to five miles about five times per week. Running not only helped him get in shape, it provided an outlet for stress.

"I get aggravated if I don't work out, and then I get kicked out of the house," he says with a laugh. "I go out for a run and then I can come back."

Coyle won \$1,500 in the challenge and may participate next year. "I have another 20 pounds to go and then I'll focus on maintaining." ■





2020 Fitness Challenge Individual and Team Winners

Congratulations to all 2020 Fitness Challenge participants. Here are the top individuals and top teams that earned a cash award in this year's Challenge.

| 2020 Top Five Individuals | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|-----------------|
| Individual | Team | Prize | Award | Percentage Lost |
| Carlos Amaya | Van Nuys Team 1 | 1st Prize | \$3,500 | 32.27% |
| SO-85 | SOD Team 1 | 2nd Prize | \$2,500 | 30.19% |
| Travis Coyle | Foothill | 3rd Prize | \$1,500 | 26.37% |
| Mark Mahlknecht | Olympic Shredders | 4th Prize | \$1,000 | 23.33% |
| Robert Burke | Mission | 5th Prize | \$750 | 22.47% |

| 2020 Individual Special Recognition | | | | |
|--|------------|-------|-----------------|--|
| (Cumulative Percentage Weight Loss of 20% and Above) | | | | |
| Individual | Team | Award | Percentage Lost | |
| Sal Duarte | GND | \$500 | 21.76% | |
| SO-82 | SOD Team 1 | \$500 | 21.15% | |
| Tamara Momayez | OVB | \$500 | 20.41% | |
| SO-78 | SOD Team 2 | \$500 | 20.00% | |



2020 Top Six Teams

| Team | Prize | Award | Cumulative Percentage Lost |
|---------------|-------------|----------|----------------------------|
| SOD Team 1 | Grand Prize | \$10,000 | 16.11% |
| Mission | 1st Prize | \$7,500 | 12.14% |
| Traffic Group | 2nd Prize | \$5,500 | 12.11% |
| FID Team 1 | 3rd Prize | \$3,500 | 12.09% |
| SOD Team 2 | 4th Prize | \$2,500 | 11.25% |
| OVB | 5th Prize | \$1,500 | 10.99% |



2020 Team Special Recognition

(Cumulative Percentage Weight Loss of 5% and Above)

| Individual | Cumulative Percentage Lost | Individual | Cumulative Percentage Lost |
|------------------------|----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Van Nuys Team 1 | -9.57% | LAPF/SBHD | -6.63% |
| CSD Metro | -9.33% | Hollywood Team 2 | -6.53% |
| Rampart Team 1 | -8.58% | VTD Team 1 | -6.47% |
| DSVD Team 1 | -8.32% | Van Nuys Team 2 | -6.36% |
| Training Division ARTC | -8.07% | Communications Division | -6.32% |
| Audit Division | -8.05% | FID Team 2 | -6.24% |
| Olympic Patrol | -7.92% | MRD | -6.17% |
| Newton Team 2 | -7.78% | Hollywood Team 1 | -6.09% |
| Foothill | -7.38% | West Valley Station Fund (WVAL) Team A | -6.05% |
| GND | -7.29% | VTD Team 2 | -6.00% |
| Juvenile | -7.25% | STD Team 1 | -5.83% |
| West Traffic WTD | -7.16% | STD Team 2 | -5.72% |
| ITG Team 1 | -7.10% | IAG Station Fund Team A | -5.56% |
| RED | -6.64% | Devonshire Station Fund Team 2 | -5.41% |

Your Support Matters — Especially Now

Since 2007, the Los Angeles Police Relief and Assistance Foundation (LAPRAF) has provided thousands of dollars in assistance to members who have experienced devastating personal crises such as a disabling injury, organ transplant, terminal illness and property destruction due to natural disasters.

Especially now, police officers are at risk. As first responders, our members are on the front line keeping the public safe, despite the serious threats of COVID-19 and social unrest to their health and safety.

You have the opportunity to positively impact your LAPD brothers and sisters who sacrifice so much to keep our communities safe. Please make a donation — big or small — today. ■

Here are a few easy ways to donate

- **Donation by check:** Download and complete a LAPRAF Donation Form from www.lapra.org/lapraf.html. Mail the form to LAPRA along with your check made payable to LAPRAF.
- **One-time or ongoing donation by payroll or pension payment deduction:** Download and complete a LAPRAF Donation Form from www.lapra.org/lapraf.html. Mail the form to LAPRA.
- **One-time credit card donation:** Make a secure credit card donation online. Go to www.lapra.org/lapraf-donation.html.

You can also add the Foundation as a beneficiary to your trust, will or estate plan. For more information, email LAPRAF@lapra.org or call (213) 674-3701.

New LAPRA Retirement Guide Available Online

If you are planning to retire from the LAPD in the next three to six months, be sure to download the LAPRA Guide to Retirement at www.lapra.org/support/documents/lapra-retirement-guide-09-2020.pdf.

The Guide will help answer many of your questions including:

- What benefits am I eligible for as a retiree?
- What do I need to do to ensure I have health coverage after I retire?
- How will the cost of my coverage change?
- How do I stay informed of any benefit changes as a retiree?



We encourage you to plan ahead and contact us at benefits@lapra.org or call (213) 674-3701 about three months prior to your retirement to begin the process. ■

Self-Service Tools on www.LAPRALive.org

You can access the LAPRALive self-service website any time during the year to:

- Update your personal information
- View your current benefits
- Make changes to your benefits (non-Medicare enrollees) due to a qualifying event (such as the birth of a child)
- Update beneficiary designation information
- Access forms and more

To access LAPRALive, go to www.LAPRALive.org and enter user name and password and click on the **LOGIN** button. ■

www.LAPRALive.org



Member Life Insurance Benefit Enhanced for 2021

Life insurance helps protect your loved ones from financial hardship in the event of your death. As part of your LAPRA membership, you automatically receive a life insurance death benefit. The LAPRA Board of Directors has approved an increase to the self-funded death benefit effective January 1, 2021 as follows:

- **Active officers** – death benefit increasing from \$10,000 to \$12,000
- **Retired officers** – death benefit increasing from \$6,000 to \$8,000

Active LAPRA members and recruits who are enrolled to become LAPRA members also receive \$15,000 of Basic

Life and Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) insurance at no cost.

For additional protection, active members can also enroll in Optional Life and AD&D insurance at low group rates. Your cost depends on your age and the coverage amount you select.

Retired members can continue Optional Life and AD&D insurance if they were enrolled in coverage as an active member. The coverage amounts available and the costs will vary depending on your age and the Optional Life and AD&D insurance plan you were enrolled in as an active member.

Review Your Beneficiary Designation

Your family depends on you for all kinds of things - including your pay. Make sure to choose the people who should receive your life insurance benefits from LAPRA if you die. You can review your life insurance beneficiary designations and make any updates or changes at LAPRALive.org. First time users must register on the site. Click on **REGISTER** and use **LAPRA** for Company Key. ■

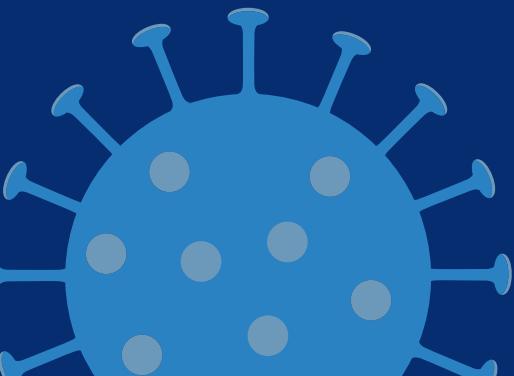
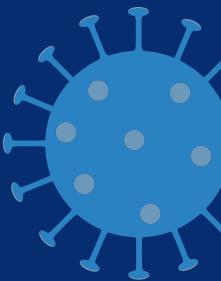


COVID-19 Testing

If you believe you've been exposed to COVID-19, go to <https://corona-virus.la/covid-19-testing> to schedule an appointment for a test. The test is provided and paid for by the City of Los Angeles. You will need to complete a **COVID-19 15.07** report and email it to mlsnotifications@lapd.online.

If you receive a COVID-19 test from a testing center other than a testing center provided by the City of Los Angeles, you must provide the testing center with your medical insurance information. If you do not provide the testing center with your medical insurance information, you may be billed for the test directly. In this case, you will need to contact the testing center and ask them to bill your LAPRA medical insurance plan.

More information is available at www.lapra.org. Click on **COVID-19 testing information** at the bottom of the home page or select COVID-19 Testing Information from the "Find It Fast" dropdown list on the home page. ■



Introducing the 2020 LAPRAF Scholarship Winners

Five winners of the Los Angeles Police Relief and Assistance Foundation (LAPRAF) scholarship program have started their college journeys with extra support from a four-year scholarship. Chosen from a competitive pool of 64 impressive applicants, each of these students received a \$10,000 scholarship based on their academic excellence, leadership and dedication to community service. The winners will each receive \$2,500 per year over four years.



Adam Soto

Adam Soto

Adam is attending Santa Clara University, where he plans to major in business. He graduated from Damien High School and was involved in various school and community activities, including volunteering at the Youth Science Center in Hacienda Heights, assisting teachers in STEM classes, and registering students for the Summer Reading and Discovery program at the public library. Adam also served as president of the school's chapter of KIWIN, an international service organization that strives to make a change in local communities, and as vice president of Christian Leadership. He believes these experiences taught him to be a better leader and helped him grow as an individual.

Adam chose Santa Clara not only for its business school, but also for the opportunity to continue his religious enrichment. He plans to pursue a career that will combine his love of leadership with strategic planning and project execution.



Alyssa Tagliere

Alyssa Tagliere

Alyssa is attending The Master's University, where she will major in nursing. A graduate of Lighthouse Christian Academy, she served as treasurer and vice president of the Student Leadership Team. As a Junior Ambassador for Children's Hospital of Los Angeles (CHLA), Alyssa raised funds and assisted with volunteer opportunities. She also promoted the Make-A-Wish Foundation as a Wish Ambassador and has been an active volunteer with her church. These experiences taught her the value of teamwork and the importance of creating an inclusive, supportive environment.

Alyssa has always enjoyed caring for others and decided to become a pediatric nurse after her sister survived a very rare brain disease in 2016; she was inspired by the thoughtfulness and care of her sister's nurses at CHLA. She looks forward to beginning her nursing education at The Master's, where she will also have opportunities to continue community service.



Katelyn Fong

Katelyn Fong

Katelyn is attending University of California San Diego (UCSD), where she will study neurobiology. The Arcadia High School graduate was involved in the Student Council Apache Commission (SCAC), which helps improve life on the Apache reservation, and the Kare 4 Kids Club. As a member of the Color Guard, Katelyn competed on her school's World Guard Team. In addition, she has been a Girl Scout for 11 years; for her Gold Award Project in her junior year, she created a children's music center comprising handcrafted instruments made of kitchenware donations. She is also active in her church's ministry worship team, and volunteers at her local hospital.

After learning about how brain signals travel through the body, Katelyn became passionate about neurobiology. She plans to become a physician or surgeon and is excited about UCSD's renowned STEM program. She also feels UCSD has everything she wants: strong academics, various clubs and organizations, Division 1 sports and a beautiful location not too far from home.



Madison Kiefer

Madison Kiefer

Madison is attending University of California Davis (UC Davis) and plans to study political science: public service. She graduated from High Tech High International, where she found the freedom to express her political opinions via the speech and debate club. Having been told that openly discussing politics and the American government was controversial and inappropriate, Madison was thrilled when her teachers encouraged her to become active in debate. She is proud of having maintained straight A's throughout her high school years.

Madison plans to pursue a career in law and politics. She strives to be a strong leader and exemplify honorable qualities, which she has done with her four younger siblings. She chose UC Davis because she felt valued and supported throughout the admission process and looks forward to her academic journey.



Scott Lai

Scott Lai

Scott is attending University of California Los Angeles and plans to study molecular biology. He graduated from Glen A. Wilson High School, where he served in various leadership positions with the service-based club KIWIN and was yearbook editor-in-chief. He also volunteered with school youth sports programs, taught Sunday School at his church and is an Eagle Scout; his Eagle Project encouraged elementary students to find their passions and explore a variety of colleges from community colleges to Ivy League institutions.

Scott feels that the UCLA Life Sciences Program, which offers opportunities to participate in diverse research in a smaller and more intimate setting, will be a good fit for him. He plans to attend dental school and become a pediatric dentist, a profession he chose after needing extensive dental work following an accident as a teenager. Having played varsity basketball and been involved with track and field in high school, Scott also looks forward to playing intramural sports at UCLA. ■

LAPRA

Los Angeles Police Relief Association, Inc.
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Los Angeles, California 90012

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**Look inside to read about
the 2020 Fitness Challenge
winners and the winners of
the 2020 LAPRAF academic
scholarships.**

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|---------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------|-------------|----------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| President | Kevin McCarthy | Vice President & Committee Chairs | Ruby Flores | Retiree Liaison | Jim Materer | Vice President | Lug Walkmins | Secretary | Kristy Brown | Treasurer | Tim McBride, | Finance/Audit | Darius Trugman |
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| Directors/ | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Los Angeles Police Relief Association | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Board of Directors — 2020

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|----------------------|-------------------|
| • Friday, Jan. 1: | Closed |
| • Thursday, Dec. 31: | 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. |
| • Friday, Dec. 25: | Closed |
| • Thursday, Dec. 24: | 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. |
| • Friday, Jan. 1: | Closed |

Holiday Hours

If you are nearing retirement, please call to set up a telephone appointment with a LAPRA Benefits Representative. Any required forms can be completed and submitted via email or regular mail.

As the COVID-19 health crisis continues, LAPRA staff are continuing to work from home and are available during regular business hours (Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.). Please contact us by:

- Email: benefits@lapra.org
- Telephone: 213-674-3701 or 888-252-7721

LAPRA Office Remains Closed