



# CITY OF INGLEWOOD

## PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE



10/25/2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE #102511

**Subject :** Inglewood Partners With UCLA Master's Program

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Inglewood, CA (October 25, 2011) - The City of Inglewood and faculty from UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs team up to present a Community Engagement Project to students pursuing a master's degree in social welfare. The project focuses on the role of social workers in emergency preparedness and disaster response, and the objective is to explore those common areas where social work, government, and the homeland security enterprise intersect.

Assistant City Manager Michael D. Falkow, Inglewood Police Lieutenant James D. Madia, and UCLA faculty member Adrienne Sears introduced the project on September 27<sup>th</sup> and will continue to guide the students throughout the Fall and Winter Quarters. The 26 students will work in teams to evaluate the fundamental areas of emergency preparedness and disaster planning at the community level. They will address the key budgetary obstacles that most communities like Inglewood constantly face, and then focus their attention on how best to recommend that the Inglewood City Council leverage the community's unique needs within the constraints of its limited budgetary resources.

Assistant City Manager Falkow is currently enrolled at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) in Monterey, California, pursuing advanced studies in the field of homeland security. The NPS Center for Homeland Defense & Security (CHDS) has been the nation's premier provider of homeland security graduate and executive level education since 2002. Mr. Falkow brings this project's value into focus when he said, "It's easy to see that working in the field of social welfare makes one uniquely qualified to understand communities from the bottom up, and local, state, and federal government elected and appointed officials are better positioned, possibly, to implement policy from the top down. Somewhere the two must coalesce in a manner that is beneficial, cost-effective, and worthwhile to the community and its residents," he continued.

Lt. Madia, a recent graduate from NPS, sees value in the bi-directional approach to the project when he pointed out that, "Having a cadre of professionals that understands and appreciates the multifaceted role social workers play in virtually all aspects of emergency preparedness and disaster planning is essential. Furthermore, how that role enhances what public safety first responders do will set these graduate students apart from their peers," he added leveraging the knowledge, skills, and abilities he acquired while at CHDS.

Adrienne Sears, the course instructor, who is also an Inglewood resident and founding member of the Inglewood Citizen Police Oversight Commission, had the vision from the inception to incorporate the municipal administration and public safety expertise Mr. Falkow and Lt. Madia bring to the table. "I wanted to bring reality into the classroom," she said. "It's one thing to talk about municipal budget issues, public safety concerns, and citizen needs, but bringing these two experts with their vast knowledge and hands-on experience into the classroom for my students to see what it's like in the real world brings a whole new dimension to the educational experience," Sears added.

Inglewood's Mayor James T. Butts, Jr., is proud to have two of his strongest leaders involved in this endeavor, and he clearly sees the mutual value when he said, "What these two gentlemen are doing clearly shows the caliber of leaders we have in our great City." "I see immense value in this partnership [with UCLA], and I look forward to seeing the results of the students' project because I have no doubt it will be valuable to our community as a whole," he concluded.

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