ACEBSA’S VALUE DAYS!
July 29-31 are Member Appreciation Days!
For every ticket that you purchase, receive a $1 discount!

Profiles in Leadership
1

Hope For Firefighters
12

The LAPD Badge
13

Brenton Guy: A Profile in Leadership
By David Dorion

It is no use saying, ‘We are doing our best.’ You have got to succeed in doing what is necessary. –Winston Churchill.

Doing what is necessary: if ever there was a fair example of this in a man, it is found in Brenton Guy.

Brenton is undoubtedly on the fast track. Of his three years with the City, he has been promoted to a second level supervisor of 14 Truck Operators, and assists in supervising of nine Storekeepers and 7 Warehouse Workers within the DCG (Distribution Center Group) of General Services, Supply Services Division. Brenton is also a recent graduate of the University of Southern California, earning a Bachelors of Science degree in Industrial and Systems Engineering.

These accomplishments suggest that with strength, dedication and honor, one can lead not just a team of workers, but as importantly, lead themselves personally. Brenton Guy is

Carla Sanger
–A Leader for Our Children

To ask Carla Sanger how she became President & CEO of L.A.’s BEST her answer might invariably be that she fell into it. Initially, Ms. Sanger planned to be the head of the citywide after school enrichment program no longer than one year. Well, one year has now evolved to 20 years.

And in that time span, Ms. Sanger has brought LA’s BEST into the spotlight as one of the highest nationally recognized programs of its kind in the country.

To date, LA’s BEST serves more than 28,000 children between 5 and 12
El Pueblo | July 2009

FROM THE COVER

Brenton Guy: A Profile in Leadership (continued from cover)

proof positive of that.

But there are aspects of Brenton’s story which also frame a hard and uneasy road. Those aspects entail a painful journey that many of us would not emerge from unscathed. Yet in Brenton’s case, those events have served to create a conscious need to overcome adversity, and forge ahead to become a successful and well-rounded individual.

By his own admission, Brenton certainly did not come away from his travails unaffected. But that isn’t to say his tribulations were for naught. No, Brenton Guy is much stronger now than he ever was in his lifetime.

A Major (in) History

As a native of Los Angeles, Brenton attended Crenshaw High School, where he graduated in 1994. The year afterward, he was accepted to UC Davis. In the summer of his sophomore year, Brenton interned with Hewlett-Packard. His roommate at the time introduced Brenton to DeShaun Hill, a Harvard undergraduate and intern at Intel.

It was the 4th of July weekend. Harvard Stevens, a friend of DeShaun’s who at the time interned with Microsoft, flew down from Redmond, Washington to accompany Brenton and DeShaun on a road trip to Los Angeles. Their trip, however, was to end abruptly and tragically with a head-on collision.

“The accident occurred on a notorious stretch of road in Salinas, California called ‘Blood Alley,”’ Brenton explains. “This stretch of road has claimed many lives, including James Dean. The accident was very violent. The impact was reported to be equivalent to driving over 120 mph into a brick wall.”

Brenton, who was the lone survivor, suffered severe injuries including multiple breaks in both legs, a fractured hip and a shattered left ankle.

Four months of hospitalization and numerous surgeries were needed as well as rigorous physical therapy sessions where Brenton had to relearn basic functionality, including how to walk and dress.

Giving himself very little time to process the death of his friends, Brenton immediately began the transfer process from UC Davis to USC, particularly so he could enroll in the University’s renown engineering department. But unbeknownst to him, Brenton did not realize he was in no way equipped physically, emotionally or mentally for such a transformation – at least not yet.

Walking Wounded

1998 would prove to be one of the most devastating years in Brenton’s life. Schoolwork, coupled with his recovery from the auto accident, made physical efforts such as walking from classroom to classroom as demanding as if he were running a marathon.

Brenton could not stand for longer than thirty minutes, which made cross-campus travel nearly impossible. And that was with just his afternoon classes. Brenton’s morning classes increasingly suffered because the medication and nightmares he experienced resulted in very little sleep.

Years of Recovery

There was much to draw on toward Brenton’s recovery. After all, when one looks at his resume, they will see experience that ranges from warehouse worker to owner/operator of his own business.

And these are achievements that someone twice Brenton’s age has yet to experience.

When speaking of his role with the City, Brenton says of his past:

“My experience has a two-fold effect on my leadership: First, attacking the moment, facing then overcoming adversity forced me to think about what I had accomplished and more important what I want to accomplish and how to manifest these accomplishments. Human nature has a complacent component that limits an individual’s full potential. Now, I attack life with the passion that today, this week, this year might be my last, and I spread this philosophy to my team, encouraging them to do their best in work, in family, and in all other aspects of life.

“Second, is the human component; at times we can boss rather than lead team members. My past has taught me that human life is invaluable and each interaction with a person can add value to that person’s life by leading them along the right path. As supervisors (or parents) we can often boss rather than lead, this habit is easy to fall into because development of a team takes an extreme amount of time, energy, and discipline. While this process produces slow results initially, over time those results grow exponentially.”

Recovery Realized

After three years of both full time work and school, Brenton suggests graduate school looms on the horizon.

“I’ll begin studying for entrance exams this summer and apply for fall 2010. My plans are to acquire a Masters in Industrial Engineering and an MBA. There is a dual degree program at USC. I’ll also apply to other schools.”

Even with that, there is also the option for Brenton to stay on with the City.

And why not?

Los Angeles enjoys toughness in its leaders. Their resilience, endurance, and ability to pick themselves up is never looked lightly upon.

“My immediate plans,” Brenton offers, “are to use the techniques I’ve learned at USC to help the City of Los Angeles improve its processes, thus helping to navigate through this difficult financial crisis.”

Spoken like a true leader.