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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **Graduation Ceremony for Public Safety Youth Career Program to Prepare Youth from Underrepresented Populations for Public Service Careers**

Today, the County of Los Angeles Community and Senior Services and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, in coordination with Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, hosted a graduation ceremony at the Hall of Justice for the successful Public Safety Youth Career Program. This Program was created to prepare youth from underrepresented populations for entry-level positions and careers with the County of Los Angeles, especially in public safety. The program spawned from the My Brother's Keeper Initiative (MBK), and has now led to 56 young people graduating today with their hearts set on making a difference in public service for the present and future of the County.

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas has been a champion in supporting the Public Safety Youth Career Program since the Program's establishment in 2015 and continues to be a leader in creating more funding opportunities for the County's underrepresented youth population.

"I applaud these young men and women for their interest in and commitment to learning about a future in public safety," Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas said. "It is my hope that this wonderful program might encourage these graduates to embark on a career right here in Los Angeles County and serve in the very same communities where they grew up."

Today's graduation reinforces the County's ongoing commitment to provide life-changing employment opportunities to prepare the County's youth for future careers, including those seeking to make a positive influential difference through public service careers.

“The Los Angeles County Public Safety Career Youth Program is a tremendous example of what happens when the County comes together to develop innovative programs that benefit our region’s youth,” stated Cynthia D. Banks, Director of Los Angeles County Community and Senior Services.

The Public Safety Career Youth Program provides classes led by either the County Sheriff’s or Fire Departments and participants were recruited throughout Los Angeles County. Within one calendar year, 139 participants have passed through the Public Safety Youth Career Program. All participants are enrolled in the L.A. County Youth Jobs Program, where they earn an hourly wage for their participation in the Public Safety Youth Career Program.

"The Sheriff's Youth Mentoring Program develops valuable life skills for our future leaders, while strengthening the relationship between law enforcement and the community," stated Chief James J. Hellmold, Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department.

Los Angeles County Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas, Director of Los Angeles County Community and Senior Services, Cynthia D. Banks, Los Angeles County Sheriff Jim McDonnell, and Chief James J. Hellmold of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department were participants in today’s graduation ceremony.

### **About Community and Senior Services**

Community and Senior Services (CSS) is committed to providing services which have positive impacts on the lives of the citizens of Los Angeles County. We provide employment services to adults and youth. We work with employers in times of hiring and downsizing. We offer mediation services to avoid court filings. We investigate abuse claims against our older adult and disabled population. We provide nutrition and other life-enhancing services to older adults. Our Human Relations Commission is dedicated to fostering positive inter-group relations.

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