



## LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIVISION

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### **District Attorney Jackie Lacey Presents Courageous Citizen Awards to Four Local Heroes**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey will present an award for courage Wednesday to a good Samaritan savagely beaten and slashed by a gang member when she attempted to stop an attack on another person.

Leanora Powell and three others will be honored at a Courageous Citizen Awards ceremony from 12-1:30 p.m. on June 12 at the Crowne Plaza Los Angeles International Airport Hotel, 5985 West Century Boulevard, Los Angeles. The event is hosted by the Rotary Club of Westchester.

“I extend my gratitude to our four Courageous Citizens,” DA Lacey said. “In each of these cases, the honorees set aside their personal interests for the greater good. These honorees are remarkable people who have helped the District Attorney’s Office achieve justice and have made Los Angeles County a safer place.”

The District Attorney’s Office presents Courageous Citizen Awards several times a year to ordinary citizens who have performed extraordinary acts of valor and selflessness in assisting in criminal prosecution, aiding victims, preventing crime and capturing suspects. The honorees are:

#### **Leanora Powell, 55, of Inglewood / Case NA089353**

On June 20, 2011, Ms. Powell was driving in Long Beach when she saw a gang member battering a man on Long Beach Boulevard. In an effort to help the victim, she stopped her car, got out and yelled: “You guys need to stop or I’ll call the police!”

Suddenly, the suspect turned on her, and when she attempted to get back into her car, he attacked. When she sought refuge in a nearby store, the suspect followed her in and savagely battered her, using a broken hot sauce bottle to slash her repeatedly. The quick action of paramedics saved her life.

Later, Ms. Powell conquered her fear and testified against the defendant, who was convicted of attempted murder, mayhem and other offenses. The defendant was sentenced to 27 years in state prison. The case was investigated by the Long Beach Police Department.

**Omar Solano, 28, of Van Nuys / Case SA082728**

Mr. Solano apprehended an ex-convict who tried to steal an iPhone from a pregnant woman as she dined at a Beverly Hills restaurant.

On Aug. 22, 2012, the victim, a visitor from New York, was speaking on her phone as she waited for her lunch on the restaurant's patio. The suspect leapt from the sidewalk over the rail and grabbed at the victim's phone.

A struggle ensued. Mr. Solano, an employee of the restaurant, ran to the victim's aid and pulled the suspect off her. Mr. Solano pinned the suspect to the ground and physically restrained him until police arrived.

Mr. Solano testified clearly and consistently against the defendant, who was convicted of second-degree robbery. The defendant was sentenced to five years in state prison and was ordered to pay \$25,657 in restitution. The case was investigated by the Beverly Hills Police Department.

**Erik Espinoza, 31, of San Gabriel, and Malik Mack, 29, of Los Angeles / Case BA387144**

After a woman was mugged on the afternoon of July 27, 2011, in Hollywood, Mr. Espinoza and Mr. Mack, on bicycles, located the suspect and secured return of most of the victim's property.

The female suspect ran up behind the victim, grabbed her hair and pushed her to the ground. The suspect fled with the victim's purse, cell phone and keys. The victim sought help from a group of bicyclists.

Mr. Espinoza and Mr. Mack set out on their bikes and found the suspect. Mr. Mack took back the victim's purse. When the victim discovered her keys and phone were still missing, Mr. Espinoza and Mr. Mack again located the suspect, who tried to punch Mr. Mack and stuffed the victim's keys down her pants.

When police arrived, Mr. Espinoza and Mr. Mack identified the suspect. They cooperated with the investigation and prosecution.

The defendant pleaded no contest to second-degree robbery. She was sentenced to 192 days in jail and three years of probation. The case was investigated by the Long Beach Police Department.

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**About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office**

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Annually, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecutes more than 60,000 felonies and 140,000 misdemeanor crimes.