

Los Angeles Unified School District

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

333 S. Beaudry Ave., 24th floor

Los Angeles, CA 90017

Phone: (213) 241-6766

FAX: (213) 241-8952

www.lausd.net



NEWS RELEASE

January 28, 2009

#08/09-202

For Immediate Release

LAUSD RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD FOR EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE OF ITS WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND DISABILITY MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS

Los Angeles – The Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services yesterday presented the Board of Education with the 2008 Theodore Roosevelt Award, a prestigious national award given annually by *Risk and Insurance Magazine* in recognition of excellence in the administration of workers' compensation and disability management. The award is named in honor of President Theodore Roosevelt, who, in 1908, introduced, promoted, and signed into law the first significant workers' compensation legislation in the country.

LAUSD won the top award in the nonprofit category of the competition among major employers in North America. The runner-up was the Mayo Clinic.

Prior to selecting LAUSD, *Risk and Insurance Magazine* reviewed the performance of the LAUSD Workers' Compensation and Disability Management Programs over the last five years. During that period, the District has seen a 15 percent reduction in the number of workers' compensation claims reported, a 17 percent reduction in employee absences, a 40 percent decrease in lost work days due to work-related injuries, and a 31 percent reduction in workers' compensation payments

Citing that progress, LAUSD Chief Operating Officer David Holmquist said, "We have had a decrease of 60,000 lost days from work-related illnesses. We have saved millions of dollars in absence-related costs such as money spent to pay substitute teachers. Beyond the economics, we know our students benefit most when their regular classroom teacher is consistently present."

In addition to cracking down on workers' comp fraud, Holmquist said, the District has also reduced costs by halving the number of lawsuits filed by employees. As a result, he added, the workers' compensation fund no longer operates at a deficit. "Now," Holmquist said, "there is a surplus of \$71 million which will be used to save jobs."

Dawn Watkins, Director of Integrated Disability Management, a branch of the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services, presented the award to the Board. "This recognition is, of course, the result of the collaborative efforts of District-wide staff, past and present," said Watkins, who accepted the award on behalf of LAUSD at the recent

(more)

2008 National Workers' Compensation and Disability Conference. LAUSD's Office of Environmental Health and Safety, and Sedgwick CMS, were partners in achieving this honor.

In announcing the selection of LAUSD as the nonprofit sector recipient of the Roosevelt Award, *Risk and Insurance Magazine* Editor-in-Chief Jack Roberts said, "The judges were especially impressed with the level of commitment that LAUSD shows in its workers' compensation and disability management programs, especially given the unique challenges that a large school district like yours faces everyday."

The LAUSD Workers' Compensation and Disability Management programs are administered by the Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services. Specific programs include Workers' Compensation, Reasonable Accommodation, Return-to-Work, Absence Management and management of protected leaves, including the Family and Medical Leave Act. The reorganization and improvement of these programs was lead by Holmquist, the District's former Chief Risk Office, from 2003 through 2007.

To read the *Risk and Insurance Magazine* cover article on the LAUSD Workers' Compensation Program or for more information about these programs, please visit the [Integrated Disability Management home](#) page at: lausd.net--Offices--Division of Risk Management and Insurance Services, and click on 2008 Teddy Roosevelt Award.

###