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## MESSAGE FROM THE SHERIFF

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As the 20th Century winds down, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is poised to meet the upcoming challenges facing us in the 21st Century. During this period, the responsibilities of this Department, as well as the public's expectations and scrutiny of our operations, will be greater than ever. I am confident, however, that the men and women who comprise our Department will continue to add to the excellent tradition of service for which they have become known throughout the communities we serve. In the year 2000, our Department will be 150 years old. Our tradition of service is legendary.

In addition to being a year in which we looked forward to the future, 1998 was also a year in which we were reminded of the past. With the tragic loss of our former Sheriff, Sherman Block, we recalled the many achievements this man made to the Department and to our profession. Sheriff Block was a true pioneer in law enforcement, whose vision culminated in the implementation of numerous innovative programs. He was a leader and a friend, and is missed by all.

Looking forward to the beginning of the new millennium, the Department will undergo various shifts in focus necessary to serve the ever-changing needs of the people of Los Angeles County and to maintain our position in the forefront of law enforcement. At the same time, certain existing programs, such as the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) program, will be retained and strengthened, as they have greatly improved the quality of life in the areas in which they have been implemented. We have already seen a sharp reduction in crime, safer streets, and increased public trust through programs such as this one, and hope to build upon the bonds created by this unique interaction between law enforcement and the people it serves.

Some of the goals which I intend to accomplish during my term as Sheriff include cutting the Department's administrative staffing, increasing the number of deputies on patrol, reopening a number of closed jail facilities, and letting the front-line deputies and civilian employees know that they are the most significant part of this Department. While this Year in Review documents some of our major achievements of 1998, much hard work is ahead for all of us. Nevertheless, I know that our personnel are more than up to the tasks ahead, are ready to meet the challenges of the future with a renewed sense of purpose, and will continue to be the foremost law enforcement agency in the world.



Leroy D. Baca, Sheriff

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A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leroy D. Baca".

