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[Obituary](#): Brian Soto, General Service leader leaves Gateway legacy.

Remembering

Brian Soto

1962 - 2009



Metro employees share their memories of Brian Soto

- Metro employees and friends are mourning the loss of Brian Soto, DEO of General Services, who died Sunday, March 29, of cancer. MyMetro.net invites you to submit your thoughts and memories here on these pages. The collection of your memories of Brian will be printed and given to the Soto family in commemoration of our friend and co-worker.

[Submit your memory here](#)

Genuine. Honest. Responsive. Professional. Positive. Optimistic. Dedicated. Honorable. Friend.

—*Maya Emsden*

As the Labor representative for all of Brian's employees from 1991 to 2006, I got to deal with Brian on a regular basis for 16 of his supervisory and managerial years. Truly one of the fairest people I had the opportunity to deal with in all of my years.

As lead negotiator for TCU's labor agreement's during those years, I sat across the negotiating table well over 150 times during that same time. Once again, Brian Soto's consideration for other's and desire to achieve a successful and fair contract for his employees made our goals very similar, and allowed us to both achieve our goal while making our bosses happy.

I was on many "committees" over that 16-year period and so was Brian Soto, especially the transition committee. People are right on- his best work was probably - the move to Gateway. A plaque somewhere in that entryway should recognize Brian's commitment to the people and visitors of the LACMTA Gateway complex.

As a casual friend, I had the opportunity to meet Brian at social events and his smile and positive outlook were his trademark. That is what I will miss the most.

—*Raymond Huffer*

I will always remember Brian as a great person to work with. We both go back to the old "RTD" days at 425 S. Main Street. We often looked back and remembered how we both survived the earthquake, the dead bodies and the windowless offices of the old building. Life at 818 West 7th was a great change and life here at Gateway was a special blessing.

Brian always had a positive response to any request or situation. Even when we were working with USG and its problems, Brian was a shining light! He was loved by his staff and all who knew him. He will be truly missed!

—*Velma C. Marshall*

What a wonderful colleague and friend. He was always helpful and had a great sense of humor. He took care of the things that improve your work environment. He understood the "Dilbert" factors and characters in our work life. Brian you were the best concierge at Metro and I will miss you.

—*Diego Cardoso*

In 1994, after working many years in maintenance supervision and student intervention for city and school districts, I heard of an opening for General Services Supervisor at the 'new' MTA. I was ready for a change and applied for the position.

A month or so later, I, along with eighty-five others, tested for the job. After a few weeks, I was called for an interview. Brian Soto and Bob Lewis were my 'panel.' After the interview, Brian walked me to the elevator (818 Building). He asked, if I was selected, when could I start? I stated three weeks. I drove directly to my employment with the City of Cerritos. As I walked into City Hall, I was informed I had a phone message. It was MTA's HR Dept. I'd been offered the job. I accepted.

Brian Soto was the first Metro manager I worked under. The Red Line was new and we were taking over the subway's custodial function. We were placed at Division 20 in a large room with one phone and nothing, and I mean nothing else. We had no equipment and our thirty new employees (custodians) were on their way. Somehow, with Brian at the helm, and with great help from Joe Coleman, we put everything together.

Our paths crossed many times over the years. Each and every time, Brian greeted me with that patented smile and laugh and strong handshake. I'll always remember Brian Soto as an intelligent, quick-witted, honest, tough, funny and driven professional. He loved this place. I thank him for bringing me here. He's one of the best people I've ever known.

—*Ron Trimble*

Just a small memory because it was so characteristic of Brian. Several bicyclists use the showers at Gateway. Some mold was growing in one of them. I told him what I thought it was beginning to look like, so before he ordered it removed he came to see. After snorting at the mold (I lied) he took a look around and said that there could be some improvements made. Very soon there were towel hooks between the showers. No one asked him for them. A small considerate thing. A Brian thing.

Brian was not a bicyclist but he was kind to them. He was not Jewish but the Menorah at Hanukkah was his initiative. And when my fellow recipients of his kindness said he had to turn on an additional light of the Menorah each night of Hanukkah rather than all at once, he consulted a rabbi who said it was not necessary, the thought was enough. But that was not enough for Brian. He determined that it was the custom and he had his staff follow it. In little things you find character. There couldn't be a kinder, more considerate, man.

—*Jesse Simon*

During the Tower attacks in New York, employees in the Gateway were understandably nervous and in need of information to feel calm.

There were some TV rooms made available to us but they were full. Mr. Soto saw us craving for news and he invited a group of Schedule Makers into his office to see first hand as the news unfolded.

—*Edward De Hoyos*

I worked for Mr. Soto back in the early 90's as a Lead Mopper Waxer.

His disposition was such that when he asked you to do something, you did it - no question. And once you did it, he would always follow it up with a heartfelt "Thank you". He was a "gentle giant" of sorts, because his position at MTA was of authority, yet he NEVER belittled your ideas and he valued your input as an employee as well as an individual. I do believe that the Gateway building and Brian Soto are synonymous with each other.

In remembrance of Brian, it would be nice if MTA could honor him by a plaque of some sort at the Gateway building.

Is calling it the "Soto Building" going to far?

I will miss him and his smile.

—Paul C. Arndt

Memories of Brian
By Raul Pedroza & the Guys)

INTRODUCTION:

I have known Brian Soto for over 21 years. We met when he was hired in as an RTD General Services Supervisor @ the 425 Bldg. As most of you know, Brian was a very private person. Brian had an aura about him that made him very special. Once you got to know Brian, you found that he was a very special person with a big heart. He would do anything for his friends. If you had a problem, he would try to help you find a solution for your problem & not judge you. I loved Brian like a brother, & I believed that he felt the same. He always had a way of making you feel comfortable & at home around him.

Most people who worked with Brian knew what kind of Businessman he was. He loved his job & the people he worked with @ the RTD & MTA. Brian was one of the Guys. We spent many vacations & special times together. I would like to give you some special personal stories & memories about Brian & his life with my family & our friends (The Guys).

LAKE MEAD TRIP:

There are so many memorable moments we had with Brian. I remember our Lake Mead trip with Brian. It took a bit of convincing, but we finally talked Brian into joining us for a long weekend at Lake Mead (with the Guys). Brian was having a great time until he found that the sun on the lake burned his face. It was the funniest thing to see him placing ice on his face with the ice melting like you placed the ice on a hot skillet. On that same trip, another friend of ours wanted to tow his 27-ft boat home & we took turns driving. Brian looked at me & said "You want me to drive & tow that boat & get that boat home in one piece?" Well as a trooper, Brian did tow the boat, but I never saw a guy place so much attention on his driving. Well needless to say, Brian decided not to go out on the boat again in the middle of summer.

CAR & BOAT SHOWS:

Brian loved to hang out with the guys & go to the Car & Boat Shows on a yearly basis. We very rarely missed the LA or Pomona Boat Shows. We always tried to talk Brian into getting a boat, but he always said "Why would I want to buy a boat if I just need to call you & Louie up to go out on your boat?" He was right. He needed only to say the word & all of the guys would be ready to hit the lake.

LA COUNTY FAIR:

Another yearly trip, was the LA County Fair. Brian loved to go to the LA County Fair with the guys to eat & look at all of the new gadgets. I remember this one year that we went to the Beach Boys Concert with Irma and Brian. Brian was walking around with a turkey leg looking like the King of the Fair giving directions with the turkey leg.

MEETING MY FAMILY:

One thing I remember most of Brian was how he respected other people & their family. I remember when Brian came to our first Family gathering where he met my Mom & Dad. (He would join us on many family gatherings). He gave the utmost respect to my mom & dad that my Mom & Dad would call him Mijo & he would call them Mama & Papa. I feel that my parents also felt that they lost a Son with Brian's passing. Brian left an impression with my kids (Stephanie, CJ, & Raulito) they would always ask on how Brian was doing & what he was up to, because Brian was always up to something & traveling somewhere.

MONDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL, CHRISTMAS PARTIES, BEACH HOUSE, & BBQ'S (with the guys):

One of the things that the guys really enjoyed doing with Brian was having Monday Night Football & BBQ's at my house. Brian really liked the bar atmosphere in the house & boy did he like his Doritos & Louie's BBQ Chicken & Pork Shoulder. When I knew Brian was coming over, I would always buy the biggest bag of Doritos that I could find. He got a lot of the guys hooked on those Doritos.

The Guys would always traditionally get together for a Christmas dinner every year. I remember one Christmas when Louie threw a Christmas Cigar Party for Brian & the Guys at my house. We had steak, lobster, cigars & sampling of tequilas. Brian could not believe that Louie could pull this off, but surprisingly he did & Brian said that was one of the best Christmas parties he had ever attended.

Another yearly tradition was Ray's Beach House in Newport Beach. Brian was always the life of the party. I remember he would sit there in front of the boardwalk (front of the beach house) with a cigar & a beer, watching the people walk & ride their bikes by. I would always try to get Brian to go for a bike ride down the boardwalk, But Brian being Brian, would say, "Why would I want to ride the bike when the people are coming to me?"

Brian would make as many family & friend gatherings as he could which I will always appreciate and never forget because I know how busy he was with his own work & social life.

A cute story about Brian & his truck. We use to tease Brian about driving a cheap economical car for years. We use to say a man of your status should drive a nice cool car. I remember the day that he showed up to a Monday Night Football game with a beautiful fully loaded Black Denali Truck. He said he bought the truck because he liked the chrome rims. We called the truck his "Pimp Truck"!!! Boy did he love his truck!!!!

HAWAII TRIP (Guys' Trip):

The most memorable trip that the guys took with Brian was our "Guys Trip" (Louie, Ricky, Brian & I) to Maui, Hawaii in December of 2000. We had such a great time and experienced several funny & memorable experiences. Brian & I spoke several times over the years about how great & relaxing that trip was. We always said we would have to make another Guys' Trip, but we could never get our schedule coordinated. We did plan almost a year ago a "Guys' Trip" to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico for April of this year. The Guys & I are very sad that Brian will not be able to make the trip. He will be severely missed. We will be dedicating this trip in Brian's honor.

CONCLUSION:

Well I can go on for hours on the great time Brian & I had over the years. But the one thing about Brian that will always stand out to me is how much he Loved his Mom, more than life itself. He was the only guy I know that would openly say that he was a "Mama's Boy". And knowing Brian, you would not question him. He spoke of the great vacations he would take with his Mom and that his greatest pleasure was taking care of his Mom. She would always come first (His number one)!!!!

In conclusion, Brian was more than a great friend. He was like a brother to me. Anyone who knew Brian like I did, would really appreciate all the things he did for his friends & family. He knew how to make you feel very special. I was amazed on how many people he knew all on a first-name basis. He knew everyone by name. This was amazing since I can never remember peoples' names.

It has been an honor & a pleasure being called Brian's Friend. He will be missed & never forgotten!!!!!!!!!!!!

Thank you Brian for being my friend & sharing your life & experiences with me & the Guys.

—Raul Pedroza

From my first time meeting you at Metro, you never failed to greet me with a smile and a kind response. Your job here at Metro and in Life was "Well Done!" I will see you later.

—Carnell Parks

Dear Brian,

Thank you for being such a good man. You were always there for everyone including me. My family and I will always keep you in our thoughts and prayers. We will always remember your generosity and kindness. I am so sad that you are no longer with us. May God continue to Bless you and your family.

Very Truly Yours,

—Robert Calix and Family

Brian was always pleasant and approachable, which can be atypical of someone at his level of management. In his role on the Board of Directors of the NGCU, he gave me advice on the NGCU appeal process. I truly believe that if he had not given me the advice (I won the appeal) - the result of not winning the appeal would have had a detrimental effect on my finances.

Brian was a great example of how one person taking the time to help another person can have a positive influence on the world. Because of his act of kindness and his positive attitude, his example encourages me to help others.

—Susan M. Dove

I worked with Brian Soto for almost 17 years and during that time, I found Brian to be a true professional and a real friend. Brian's easy outgoing attitude will truly be missed. On several occasions, I had the opportunity to work very closely with Brian on facility related projects. I found Brian to be very goal-oriented and very knowledgeable in this area of expertise. Brian will truly be missed.

—Michael Davis

I was very privileged to have the opportunity to work with Brian and to have him as a friend. He was not only a wonderful boss, but a wonderful person; always there and available to listen.

I will miss his positive, happy go-luck personality.

I will miss having Brian come over to my cubicle and looking over the panel to say good morning. He was so tall, but his height could never match his heart in grandness.

I will miss his wonderful laughter.

—Ilda M Licón

I will always remember Brian's smile and kind demeanor. He was a wonderful person.

—Juanita Wright

Dear Friends:

Brian Soto was a wonderful person. He embodied a can-do spirit and always, and I emphasize always, greeted you with a smile. Metro was very fortunate to benefit from Brian's expertise, his dedication, his thoughtful commitment to excellence, and his positive demeanor. I will miss Brian and I know many people here at Metro will do the same. I want to convey to his family that Metro is diminished by the loss of Brian, and the light he brought to work with him each and every day.

—Raffi Haig Hamparian

I have known Brian since our SCRTD days and will always remember him for his outgoing personality, willingness to get the job done and taking pride in his job as Deputy Executive Officer of General Services.

He has definitely left us a legacy.

Brian, you will be missed. A friend and colleague.

—Lynda C. Reed

I met Brian at the 425 RTD building in 1985. He was very warm and friendly and we became quick friends. Brian was always very professional and a very hard worker. I will miss seeing him and hearing his deep voice. He was a wonderful person and will be missed by all who had the pleasure of knowing him. I will always have a special place in my heart for him.

—Frances E. Calzada

Brian Soto what can I say about him:

- always pleasant
- never showed any signs of his difficulties
- always helpful
- always respectful

- always willing to help
- treated everyone with respect
- after talking with Brian you always felt better
- very dependable
- no matter how busy he was he always found time for you
- always listened to you
- he was a role model
- he was a friend

I will miss Brian, I have lost a good friend and co-worker.

—*John McBryan*

I really enjoyed working with Brian Soto. He was very helpful, supportive and very attentive to my requests. I will miss him here on earth dearly!

—*Lisa Rose Martinez*

Dear Soto Family and Friends,

I have two sons and if they could grow up to be like any Metro employee, Brian comes to mind. What a man! It was so obvious that he loved life. Brian exuded confidence without arrogance and he was well respected by everyone, regardless of rank. He will be missed.

God Bless You.

—*Kimberlee Vandenakker*

I first met Brian during the merger when he became my supervisor. We dealt with the merger, two rented facilities, and relocating into an owned, new headquarters building. I was proud to be part of Brian's Gateway team from the first occupancy of the building. We both learned together the joys and issues of operating a high rise headquarters building. Brian was always supportive and trusted me to do the best job I could to support the department's mission. He encouraged and allowed me to grow both professionally and personally. I have lost a friend and a great supervisor. He will be missed. No one will be able to fill his shoes.

—*Phyllis Meng*

In 1990, when I worked at 427 S. Main Street where I initially encountered Brian, the first thing I noticed about him was his big smile. It was always a joy to cross his path his contagious smile was always welcoming of a greeting when I saw him. I hope all the wonderful memories his family has of him will comfort them during this challenging time.

—*Estella (Gail) Ligon*

I never worked much with Brian, but from our limited engagement, I admire him for his openness to listen to new ideas.

He is a very respected gentleman that will surely be missed by all!

—*Cris B. Liban*

I enjoyed working with Brian. He was always willing to accommodate a reasonable business request, because helping you get the job done was most important to him. Our work paths did not cross much in recent years, but whenever I would run into him he had a smile and a laugh ready for me. My deepest sympathy goes to his family and friends and I will miss him.

—*Susan Chapman*

I will truly miss Brian Soto. He was a special and dear friend to me. I will always remember our wonderful lunches we shared. Brian, rest in peace.

—Liz Silva

His Laughter -Brian-

Even though you're not here,
your laughter keeps singing in our ear.
A sound one could only know
as they pass your office door.

We share these things of you today
now that your pain is done.
See, your laughter, is one of our fondest memories
as we remember your days in the sun.

We watched you fight, and you fought hard,
so we summoned the Security Guard.
We fought and prayed with you and hoped
It would see you through.

But there's only one Winner who we knew
Protected, Comforted, and finally Rested you.
He was the One who really saw you through.

This is something no one can ever be ready for,
the last hour, minute, or day through that final door.
We miss you already, from your direct reports,
administrative staff, maintainers, mopper/waxers,
to the custodians on the 15th floor.

We'll truly miss seeing that glow; this is why our
spirits are low.

Our EO said, "We'll get through it 'cause
that's what you expect." He's right.
We haven't let you down yet!

Your laughter -- so robust, so hearty, so jovial, so you!
Left alone, hushed and still, in one small room.
Who would have thought **it** be silenced so soon.

We will always remember you!

—General Services

Brian was such a kind person. He always greeted me with a warm hello. He was always professional, and quickly responded to the needs of the METRO employees at Gateway. He will truly be missed. He was a wonderful person; a true gentleman and a scholar.

—Alicia Walker

I only knew Brian Soto about 10-years and during that time, he was always a person of commitment, dedication and support, not just to me and my staff, but to anyone he could help and he always went out of his way to help you. It was a pleasure knowing him and he will be truly missed.

—Gail M. Harvey

I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest sympathy in the loss of Brian Soto. The Design Studio was in Administration/General Services years ago when I was the Senior Graphic Designer. At that time, his leadership was a very steadying force to us. I know it is a cliché, but his door was always open and his guidance was very instrumental to my development during that period. I remember having an issue that was troubling. I remember sitting in his office and talking it out — I'll never forget his firm handshake, how attentive he was in listening to me and how fair he was in providing a solution.

His kind and gentle manner was always on display despite what must be daily challenges in maintaining our buildings and leading such a large team. My experience with everyone in

General Services have always been positive and it must be a reflection of Brian. *I will miss him very much.*

—Joe A. Simpson, Jr

Even though I'm retired now, I'm going to miss Brian. It's a shock to hear that he's gone. He was such a great guy and so very responsive to whatever needed to be done at Gateway. I always referred to him as "The Illusive Brian Soto," because he would turn up on our floor or drop by my office when I least expected it. His team of custodians and other employees also were always friendly and helpful, and I attribute that to Brian's leadership and bright, sunny personality. What a nice man. He'll be missed.

—Bill Heard

Brian is one of my hero's. In his position of responsibility and authority, he gave "heart" to the people and the world around him. He added human warmth to professional treatment, he added charm and care to the ordinary handshake and honesty to his daily smiles. One knew about Brian in any engagement, there would be no mischief or malicious undertones coming forth from him. Brian sincerely gave from the heart. I will always be grateful for what he did for me.

—Ferrol J. Yeakle

So, how long does a man live after all?
And how much does he live while he lives?
We fret and ask so many questions -
then when it comes to us
the answer is so simple after all.

A man lives for as long as we carry him inside us,
for as long as we carry the harvest of his dreams,
for as long as we ourselves live,
holding memories in common, a man lives.

By Brian Patten – "So Many Different Lengths of Time"

I will miss his hearty laugh and smiling face.

—Mercedes Meneses

Brian Soto was my first boss in General Services at 425 S. Main. I thank him for his guidance, wonderful demeanor and patience through my learning process. I'm deeply saddened that his contagious smile will no longer be with us. Brian, your smile and generosity will never be forgotten. I, for one, am glad to have had the opportunity to work with Brian.

—Jessica Acosta

I will miss Brian's great smile and sunny disposition - thanks for sharing your light with us.

—Renita Anderson

I know I could always count on whenever I met up face to face with Brian he would always flash that fabulous smile and say "hello Edith, how are you?" Well, from that point on, my day was bound to be a good day! Brian was a wonderful person to everyone and the Metro family was blessed to have had the opportunity to share a smile with him.

—Edith A. Goff-Youngblood

Ever since 1990, whenever I would see Brian, he always had a pleasant smile and greeting. He had a calmness and easy-going way of doing business. A true professional – Brian will be missed greatly. God bless his family and friends.

—*Dixie Dorsett*

I found Brian to be a present person. Always smiling...also spoke to everyone in the hallways, elevators, etc. A great guy with a big heart, I'm sure.

—*Barbara A. Gatewood*

My name is Robert Ketring, I'm the only one left of the original General Service staff from 425 S. Main St. I have worked with Mr. Soto from day one

Mr. Soto was my Boss on the job and my friend off the job, my Mother always said Bobby there will come a day in your life that you will meet someone that will change your life forever. That person was Mr. Brian Soto. I will never forget Mr. Soto and I know in my heart that we will meet again.

May he rest in piece; I will truly, truly miss him and the times we had together on the job and off.

—*Robert Ketring*

As a former employee of Brian Soto, The Gentle Giant, I extend my deepest sympathy to the family. Peace unto you.

—*Martha Williams*

Angels must be on short supply in Heaven. We will all miss you Brian.

—*Dana L. Williams*

I remember the first time Brian came back from the beginning phase of his illness. I nearly ran to give him a big hug, but I wasn't sure how strong he was. So, I held back and asked, "Can I give you a hug, because I'm so glad you're back." He leaned down and said, "Sure!" I gave him a firm, but gentle hug to welcome him back. I wish I could do that again.

—*Wadree Daniels-Smith*

It's impossible to put into words what he meant to me and me to him. I will never have a better friend, boss, colleague, big brother, partner in crime, confidant –

Brian and I worked together for ten great years. They were great because we had each other to rely on, trust, lean on and laugh with. Coming into this space, everyday, knowing he'll never walk through my office door again is almost unbearable. I will see you in my dreams, my dear friend, and carry you in my heart always. Travel well and may your journey be spectacular.

—*Irma L. Licea*
Manager, General Services

Dear Mrs. Soto and Family,

I had the unique opportunity of being located in-between Brian and Irma for seven years. The level of professionalism, camaraderie and respect I had the rare opportunity of experiencing, was a gift. The pleasure was all mine.

Brian, I will remember your gift of laughter. I will remember your gift of expecting the best from me every day. I will never forget how you supported Irma, therefore supported me.

Coming into work with Brian's office next to me vacant is something I never thought I'd experience. Brian is General Services and he is this building. Rest in peace, Brian. Your spirit lives on in us.

—Melinda Perrier

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