



ALL HANDS--Security Chief Paul Lennon, center, hosts appreciation and awards program for security team. PHOTOS BY SR. SECURITY OFFICER ART GRANT

Security Team Joins Forces for Appreciation Program



DECORATED Above, from left, MTA security officers Mario Carrillo, Richard Nelson, Luis Medrano and Loretta Ferem. Below, officers Marv Jenkins, Manuel Quezada, Shantelle Brown, Belford Gaines, and Rodolfo Ragudo.



By GAYLE ANDERSON

For the first time in the history of MTA Security, all hands were on deck in the MTA Board Room Thursday evening for an appreciation and awards program hosted by the MTA Office of Systems Safety & Security to honor an outstanding security team.

Security Chief Paul Lennon congratulated the men and women of the force, which consists of 94 uniformed officers and a support staff of three, for excellence under pressure during four major deployments in the year 2000.

"Security went through the Y2K, the opening of the Red Line to North Hollywood, the Democratic National Convention and the work stoppage and met each challenge individually and collectively with distinction," said Lennon. Noting how the deployments required 'round-the-clock shifts and

seven-day work schedules, he said, "They consistently exceeded my expectations."

The first-ever "All Hands Meeting" was a deployment in itself, said Pam Murano, security manager of in-house systems. "Security duties had to be covered so that officers could leave their posts to attend the meeting. Others who were off-duty were happy to come into work and bring their families for the special occasion," she said.

During the two-hour program, the familiar faces of security officers manning the desks of the Gateway Building were briefly replaced by Lou Hubaud, Vijay Khawani and Robert Torres. General Services supervisor Phyllis Meng handled the dispatch center and Rick Hittinger and Rita Malone arranged for the gate watch.

Special recognition awards were handed out to officers who worked the Democratic National Convention. All officers who had worked on the team for at least one year were decorated with a distinctive Transit Service Award.

While service continues to be mainstay in priorities, the department's goals for 2001 include a reinvigorated training program of increased capacity and a full staff, said Director Dan Cowden. "It's a small group and they've all done a great job."

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