

## LA Sparks Score Big With Students at MTA's Safety Event

By LISA HUYNH

(June 12, 2003) MTA teamed up with the Los Angeles Sparks of the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), June 11, to kick off the second annual program to promote safety around the Metro Rail and Metro Bus systems.

"We chose the Sparks because they are the two-time defending champions," says Deputy CEO John Catoe. "We want MTA to be perceived as a winning team. Who better to emphasize safety with us?"

Approximately 50 students from Watts' Markham Middle School and South Los Angeles' Edison Middle School were invited to Staples Center to participate in the countywide safety program.



L.A. Sparks team members, above, and Deputy CEO John Catoe, below, bring Metro safety message to students from Markham Middle School and Edison Middle School at special presentation at Staples Center on Wednesday.



PHOTOS BY ADRIENNE FIGUEROA

Sparks representatives raffled team basketball jerseys and tickets to watch the Sparks in action against the Indiana Fever, at 7:30 p.m., tonight, at Staples Center.

Eleven-year-old Oscar Riley, who was among those who won four tickets to see tonight's game, also couldn't pass up the opportunity to make a buck. "I sold two tickets to my friend for a dollar."

Students got to eat lunch in the Chick Hearn pressroom and were later taken to the locker rooms, which the LA Lakers and Sparks share. They also got front row seats to watch the Sparks practice and some even had a chance to shoot baskets with the team.

Forward/Center Jennifer Gillom and Guard Nikki Teasley stuck around after practice to answer questions from the students.

"Our relationship with MTA has been great," says Cindy Jarvis, community relations director for the Sparks. "We've been able to put some advertisements up on the trains and buses."

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