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OBITUARIES

Deborah Harrell, Sr. Auditor, Remembered as Mentor and Friend

- Services will be held at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, July 7, in the Memorial Chapel of [Forest Lawn in Long Beach](#), located at 1500 East San Antonio Dr.(90807), near the intersection of Del Amo Blvd. and Cherry Ave. Attendees are asked to park in the parking lot and follow signs for Memorial Chapel. Internment will follow the memorial service. Information: 562-424-1631
- A Repast will be held at the [Long Beach Marriott Hotel](#) at 11 a.m., located on the corner of Spring and Lakewood Blvd. Reservation are requested by the family. RSVP by Monday to Dee Roberts robertsd@metro.net.
- [Remembering Deborah Harrell](#). Friends and co-workers pay tribute to the memory of beloved auditor.

(July 2, 2009) Sr. Auditor Deborah Harrell, a longtime and beloved employee who first joined RTD in 1988, is being remembered today as a first-rate professional, caring friend and encouraging mentor with an unforgettable smile.

A collection of office photographs of Deborah Harrell at work and at play in Management Audit Systems Department, on display in a hallway on the 21st floor, reveals the high regard and great affection her co-workers and friends hold for her.

Ms. Harrell, 55, died June 30 at her home in Long Beach following a lingering illness. She had been on medical leave since February.



Deborah Harrell

Born in LaGrange, Georgia, on March 3, 1954, Ms. Harrell relocated to Los Angeles in the late 1980s and accepted a position with RTD, left briefly, and returned permanently in April 1990 as a senior auditor, a position she held for her entire career.

"There is a lot of grieving going on here," said Ruthe Holden, Chief Auditor. "Deborah was well-liked, a great person. She loved auditing, loved doing both internal and operational performance audits. This team has great camaraderie, and she was a big part of that. Hard-working and loyal, she had a great sense of humor. She really will be missed."

Ms. Harrell's boss, Beni Warshawsky, Director of Auditing, had worked with Ms. Harrell for 20 years. "We all owe Deborah a great debt of gratitude," he said. "As a result of her work, things are safer, operations are improved, compliance is diligent. She really, really cared about the safety of the customers and the safety of the employees."

Ms. Harrell was an active member of the [Los Angeles Civic Center Chapter of the Association of Governmental Accountants \(AGA\)](#) and served as the chapter's president in 2003. She and fellow auditor Claudia Casasola won a

national award for the chapter newsletter they co-edited in 2004. A great supporter of the organization's mission to provide vocational classes for auditors and accountants, Ms. Harrell advocated for continuing professional education in the field, said Casasola.

Longtime friend and co-worker Dee Roberts remembers Ms. Harrell as a mentor who encouraged Roberts to return to school and then insisted that she do well. "I had six math classes going back-to-back, and Deborah would say 'You can do it!' She never held her tongue, regardless if she was telling me 'right' or 'wrong.' But, she'd always tell me I could do it."

Ms. Harrell is survived by friends and family members.

--from Gayle Anderson