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A terracotta ceramic plaque commemorating the late Deputy Executive Officer of General Services Brian Soto was quietly installed over the weekend at the entrance to General Services on the 15th floor. Near the help desk and visible to all who enter General Services Department, the plaque hangs as a gentle and permanent marker to honor the contributions and the integral presence of Mr. Soto, who, as head of general services, played a major role in the construction and later the upkeep and maintenance of the 26-story building.

Ceramic Plaque Pays Tribute to the late Brian Soto, General Services DEO who is often thought of as the soul of Gateway

(Sept. 22, 2009) The installation of a ceramic plaque that recalls the heritage of the Gateway Building is a heartfelt tribute to the spirit of the friend and leader who is often considered the soul of the Gateway Building.

From the inception of the building following the merger of the Los Angeles County

Transportation Commission (LACTC) and the Southern California Rapid Transit District (SCRTD) in 1993, until his death on March 29, 2009, Mr. Soto took charge of a demanding and rapidly changing environment that began with the coordination of the big move of nearly 1,900 Metro employees into their new digs.



General Services Manager Irma Licea invites employees and visitors to view the ceramic plaque honoring Brian Soto. The permanent tribute is installed at the entrance to the building services center on the 15th floor.

"Being in this space that I shared with Brian for 10 years is a daily reminder of his absence," said Irma Licea, General Services Manager. "Installing this plaque now is to remind all of us who he was and what importance he has in this building."

The timing of the dedication recalls rings true to two special anniversaries, said Licea. "Brian's birthday was Saturday. He would have been 47 years old on Sept. 19. And, the Gateway Building turned 14 on Sept. 15."

Brian Soto introduces speakers at program he coordinated to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Metro Headquarters building in 2005.

See myMetro report Sept. 16, 2005: [10 years later, Metro Headquarters Builders Look Back with Pride](#)



Licea, always wanting to keep his name alive since Mr. Soto's untimely passing at the age of 46, suggested a commemoration in the form of a plaque. The suggestion was hailed by Board staff member Ray Harris, who backed the recommendation. The project was turned over to Creative Services Director Jorge Pardo.

Pardo chose a composition of clay cast in a tile patterned after an historical and architectural element of the Headquarters Building and the Union Station complex. He worked with the local firm California Pottery and Tile Works to produce the piece.

"Rather than a generic bronze plaque, we looked to something more tailored to his experience with us," said Pardo. The ceramic plaque, which replicates a tile pattern visible in the cafeteria, is a continuum, a detail that's an element of the building, he said. "Brian did a great job of maintaining this lovely facility. I am happy to be working here," said Pardo.

"Brian is a part of the building," said Licea. "Anybody that comes to 15th floor, where the help desk is, can see this token of our fondness for Brian."

—from Gayle Anderson

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