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Former Fellows Honored for Services to the City



Former Perris City Fellow Lynnley Huey was honored July 31 for her working to create community gardens and a fitness court at Paragon Park. She is pictured with Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Malcolm Corona, City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, Mayor Michael Vargas and City Councilman David Starr Rabb.

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The City of Perris honored two former employees for their commitment to developing programs aimed at helping residents improve their health by exercising and eat healthier.

Lynnley Huey and Maria Marquez both served as City Fellows in the Perris Administrative Services Department.

Isabel Carlos, Administrative Services Director, praised Huey and Marquez for their passion and commitment to expanding the City's ongoing healthy-eating active-living (HEAL) program. The initiative encourages City residents to take control of their overall health by eating more fruits and vegetables, eliminating sugary drinks and high-calorie snacks and by regular exercise.

"The City was very fortunate to have mentored two very excellent Fellows," Carlos said in remarks July 31 to the Perris City Council, who presented the pair with Proclamations and public kudos. "Their passion has left a lasting footprint."

Huey, 31, a doctoral student at Loma Linda University, worked from October 2017 to June in Perris, establishing the groundwork for a future fitness court at Paragon Park.

She also served on the City's Health Fair Committee, helped organize the Mayor's Challenge (to see which school produced the best romaine lettuce salad as determined by Mayor Michael Vargas), assisted efforts to create 30 community gardens in Perris and secured the renewal of the \$25,000 Kaiser Grant to support other health initiatives.

"Working for the City of Perris was a fantastic experience—one that I will cherish for the rest of my life," Huey said. "I loved the people. They have a great team. I appreciate the opportunity to grow as a public-health professional."

Huey worked on the Perris Green City Farm Program, which seeks to establish 30 community gardens from one end of the City to the other. Huey worked with community members, families and children to spread the word about eating healthy.



Maria Marquez, who created the popular "Yoga in the Garden" program as part of her work as a Perris City Fellow, was honored with a Proclamation July 31. She is pictured with Perris Mayor Pro-Tem Malcolm Corona, City Councilwoman Rita Rogers, Mayor Michael Vargas and City Councilman David Starr Rabb.

Upon receiving her PhD in Public Health, Huey said she would like to continue her career in public-health policy at the state or federal level. In her spare time, she enjoys visiting the beach, Pilates and Spinning.

Marquez, 26, is wrapping up a Master's Degree in Public Health at California Baptist University. Marquez worked in Perris from May 2017 to April.

She spent her time with the City coordinating Chef-in-the-Garden activities and implementing a Yoga-in-the Garden program. The Chef-in-the-Garden program has impacted thousands of Perris Elementary school students and their families by allowing youngsters to prepare healthy snacks and meals under the tutelage of a professional chef.

Marquez's love of Yoga prompted her to create that exercise routine. The once-a-month yoga program proved so popular that residents soon demanded weekly sessions.

"This was such a great experience," Marquez said. "I never worked with a group so diverse and so accepting. I was pleased to be part of such a great team."

Rather than accepting the accolades for a job well-done in Perris, Marquez said "I should be thanking the City for the opportunity to work here."

Marquez's Fellowship came from WRCOG (Western Riverside Council of Governments.) The scholarship supports students seeking careers in public policy and local government by gaining meaningful, hands-on experience in cities served by WRCOG, including Perris.

Marquez attended the City Council meeting with her husband, Russell Kelly, and son, Enrique Martinez, 6. In her spare time, she enjoys watching superhero movies and, not surprisingly, taking part in yoga lessons.



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