



**ERIC
GARCETTI**

President, Los Angeles City Council
COUNCIL DISTRICT 13



200 N. Spring St. Room 470 • Los Angeles • CA 90012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2008

GARCETTI ANNOUNCES ANTI-GRAFFITI PROGRAM NAMED FINALIST FOR NATIONAL AWARD

UNTAG a finalist for National League of Cities' Award for Municipal Excellence

Los Angeles City Council President Eric Garcetti today announced that the anti-graffiti program he created – Uniting Neighborhoods to Abolish Graffiti (UNTAG) – has been named a finalist for the National League of Cities' Award for Municipal Excellence. The annual award recognizes outstanding programs that have improved the quality of life in their communities.

“UNTAG has engaged more than 300 local residents to clean up their neighborhoods and help keep them safe. We've reduced graffiti by well over 60 percent since we started the program four years ago. It's been a big success in our neighborhoods and it's great that our work has been recognized by the National League of Cities,” said Council President Garcetti. “I want to thank everyone who has volunteered their time to make UNTAG successful.”

Launched in 2004, UNTAG has reduced graffiti by more than 60 percent in Garcetti's council district. UNTAG trains local residents to serve as Block Captains, who agree to monitor one block or hot spot and report graffiti for paint out. The City of Los Angeles Department of Public Works oversees the city's graffiti removal program, which paints out graffiti within 48 hours after it has been reported, and contracts with the Hollywood Beautification Team and the Central City Action Committee to respond to calls in Garcetti's council district. These two non-profit organizations employ dozens of local at-risk youth as part of their graffiti paint-out crews.

The National League of Cities is the nation's oldest and largest organization devoted to strengthening and promoting cities as centers of opportunity, leadership, and governance. In 1989, the League partnered with CH2M HILL to create what is now the Awards for Municipal Excellence program.

“This National League of Cities awards program recognizes the innovative practices underway in our cities, and celebrates their successes,” said Cynthia McCollum, National League of Cities President and City Councilmember in Madison, Alabama.

More information about the UNTAG program is available at www.untagla.com. More information about the Awards for Municipal Excellence is available at www.nlc.org.

###