

Mayor's Appointees Are a Diverse Group

By Patrick McGreevy, Times Staff Writer

Tapping a combination of political supporters, City Hall veterans and newcomers to government, Los Angeles Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa announced 42 appointments Tuesday to panels including the planning, fire and animal services commissions.

More than half of the appointees are women, and nearly two-thirds are African Americans, Latinos, Asians or Pacific Islanders.

"Their expertise and commitment to public service will serve our city well," Villaraigosa said. "These leaders represent the diversity of America's most diverse city."

The appointees include Robin Hughes, executive director of the nonprofit L.A. Community Design Center, to the City Planning Commission.

The mayor named to the Library Commission Robert Chick, vice chairman of the Lawyers Mutual Insurance Co. and former husband of Controller Laura Chick. Barbara Yaroslavsky, a community activist and the wife of Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, was appointed to the Commission for Children, Youth and Their Families, along with UCLA pediatrics professor Mark Schuster and Bravo High School senior Rubina Tran Hyder.

Under pressure from animal rights activists to improve the city Animal Services Department, the mayor is sending to the agency's board Maria Atake, president of a marketing consulting firm and chief executive officer of the nonprofit Forte Animal Rescue.

Other appointments include:

- Investment banker Stewart Kim to the Affordable Housing Commission.
- Architect Pedro Birba to the Board of Building and Safety Commissioners.
- Retired health official Prosy de la Cruz to the Board of Civil Service Commissioners.
- Cal State University system administrator Marsha Nakanishi to the Board of Information Technology Commissioners.

- Families in Schools President Maria Casillas to the Board of Recreation and Park Commissioners.
- Retired LAPD Cmdr. Paul Kim to the Board of Transportation Commissioners.
- Housing developer Dalila Sotelo to the Fire Commission.
- Former city cultural affairs general manager Adolfo Nodal and L.A. Community College District trustee Kelly Candaele to the Los Angeles City Employee Retirement System board.

Villaraigosa also filled vacancies on the Board of Neighborhood Commissioners by appointing Raul Estrada, executive director of El Centro de Ayuda, as well as labor attorney Diane Middleton and Tsilah Berman, executive director of L.A. Neighborhood Land Trust.

The appointees are subject to City Council confirmation.