

Community Supports Security Officers



SECURED AND BONDED: Local and national African American leaders stand in unity behind newly elected SOULA President Faith Culbreath (center) at Los Angeles Sentinel offices on Tuesday Sept 11.

By KENNETH MILLER

Their positions are prominent at banks, convenience stores and grocery chains, but their entitlement is obscure, something that Security Officers United in Los Angeles (SOULA) President Faith Culbreath vowed to change at a dinner in her honor this week at the Crenshaw Blvd. offices of the Los Angeles Sentinel.

Amid a bevy of many of the community's leaders including Congresswoman Maxine Waters, Los Angeles City Councilmember's Jan Perry (D-9th District) and Bernard Parks (D-10th District), Gardena City Councilman Steve Bradford, Pasadena City Councilwoman Jacquie Robinson and Compton City Councilman and Assembly candidate Isadore Hall, and fellow union leader Tyrone Freeman among many others, Culbreath made an impactful plea for her 10,000 member union.

"It's great that you are honoring me here today," she said to the packed lobby of more than 100, "But what is really important is where will you be when the contracts need to get signed? Will your phones be answered when I call you in need for the security officers?"

The crowd erupted into applause for the newest power hitter in the region, representing a 70 percent African American union. Culbreath, a native of Washington D.C. came to Los Angeles by way of Detroit where she held several positions with the International Union.

Ironically she remembers being in New York one day before the infamous terrorist attacks changed the way of life of the nation, and here she was on the anniversary of that horrific tragedy on Tuesday Sep. 11, six years later.

Wearing a sleek black dinner dress and neatly cropped hair style and sporting square rimmed eye glasses, she could not fight back the tears after receiving yet another certificate of recognition from Waters, after having been presented with similar from the City of Compton, Los Angeles County Democratic Party vice chair Bobbie Jean Anderson, Los Angeles County Supervisor Yvonne Braithwaite Burke.

However, while all of the crab cakes, light wine, fresh fruit and assortment of other edibles were in order for this occasion, her sight was set on the challenge at hand. "The biggest challenge is for people to not lose sight of what happens after the contract," she explained.

Just to ensure people that she meant business she had one of her associates pass out purple leaflets to be signed by all those in attendance to protest Jamison Properties and protest the low standards of Pacwest Security.

Security officers working for Pacwest protect multi-million dollar properties owned by Jamison at such locations as Brunswick Square, Adams Plaza and Cerritos Corporate Tower.

"Major building owners and security contractors are currently working together with us to achieve a playing field that we can truly raise the security standards for the entire commercial real estate industry," Culbreath added.

While security officers are currently being paid low wages, the 33-year old fresh-faced Culbreath is adamant to make their jobs more appealing with medical compensations and educational training programs that will allow them to work in other sectors.