

# TOP OF THE LADDER



Starting as a campus aide at Figueroa Street Elementary right out of high school, Crystal Campbell-Shirley, is climbing the ladder of success with LAUSD. With a mother and sister teaching for LAUSD, it was easy for her to follow in their footsteps.

Graduating from El Camino College with an Associate of Arts degree, Crystal became a Career Ladder member in 1993 when she started working at 186<sup>th</sup> Street School as a Teacher Assistant. She attended California State University, Dominguez Hills (CSUDH) where she finished her Bachelor's degree and credential program. During that time Crystal took advantage of the Career Ladder's Tuition Reimbursement Program. "The money came right on my check and I used that to pay for books, extra materials, and supplies for school."

In addition to the financial assistance, Mrs. Shirley worked with Dr. John McGowan, one of the Career Ladder academic advisors, to stay on track with her educational plan. "He was remarkable," she remembers.

The teachers at 186<sup>th</sup> Street Elementary were always encouraging and offering support in Crystal's pursuit of teaching. Upon graduation from CSUDH in 1997, the principal offered her a teaching position where she taught 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, 5<sup>th</sup> grade and Special Education for K-5<sup>th</sup>. "Teaching is such a joy!"

Mrs. Shirley continued to climb the ladder by obtaining her Masters Degree and Credential in Administration from Pepperdine University in 2003. She found a job as Categorical Coordinator at Manhattan Place in Local District 8. Enjoying the work, she soon returned to 186<sup>th</sup> Street Elementary in the same position. "I am learning so much" in this job: monitoring program expenditures, distributing program materials, assisting with updates for the schools' Single Plan for Student Achievement, coordinating parent workshops, and demonstrating lessons for teachers. Crystal feels all of these duties have prepared her well for her new goal to become an Assistant Principal, Elementary Instructional Specialist. In fact, she was already accepted into the District's Leadership Excellence through Administrator Development (LEAD) program.

Congratulations, Crystal on your continued success in climbing the ladder.

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