

# MLK Peace Maker Awards recipients announced

By John Canalis, Staff Writer

Posted: 01/05/2010 07:15:20 PM PST

Councilman Dee Andrews, top left, announced the recipients of the Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Maker Awards on Tuesday. **PeaceBuilders**, a group that promotes alternatives to violence, is headed by Michelle Molina, top right. Oil executive Walter Neil, bottom left, and Pastor Wayne Chaney Jr. will also receive awards.

LONG BEACH - A Baptist pastor, an oil executive and a program that promotes alternatives to violence will receive Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Maker Awards, Councilman Dee Andrews announced Tuesday.

The awards, now in their third year, will honor Pastor Wayne Chaney Jr. of Antioch Church of Long Beach; Walter Neil, public and government affairs director for British Petroleum; and **PeaceBuilders**, a program that promotes violence prevention in schools.

Honorees were selected by Andrews, who represents the central area's 6th District, as well as the Long Beach Human Dignity and Weed & Seed programs.

"The Peace Maker Award acknowledges the spirit in which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. demonstrated compassionate, nonviolent strategies toward peace and community building, ideals we value in the city of Long Beach," Andrews said in a news release.

Chaney is a spiritual leader in the city's African-American community. In addition to his work with Antioch, he serves on the executive boards of the California Southern Baptist Convention and is president of the Long Beach Ministerial Alliance, which serves pastors, community organizations and governmental agencies.

Neil has more than 30 years of oil industry work on his resume, having started his career as an operator on a drilling rig in 1978. He and BP have sponsored several Long Beach events, including the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Peace & Unity Parade and Celebration.

**PeaceBuilders**, according to a news release from Andrews, "is a comprehensive program launched in organizations that shifts the entire climate to a peaceful, productive and safe place for children, parents, staff and faculty." The program, which is in many Long Beach schools, targets risk factors considered precursors to youth violence, such as bullying, drug use and smoking.

The for-profit organization is managed by PeacePartners Inc., which is owned and operated by John and Michelle Molina, both of Long Beach. Michelle Molina is president; her husband holds the title of chief financial officer both at **PeaceBuilders** and Long Beach-based Molina Healthcare.

Recipients will be honored at 4 p.m. Tuesday in the Long Beach Council Chambers, 333 W. Ocean Blvd. The awards coincide with "Peace Week," a weeklong celebration leading up to the city's 22nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Peace & Unity Parade Celebration on Jan. 16.

For more information, contact Andrews' 6th District office at 562-570-6816.

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