

Photo: Johnny Knox

The LA County Bargaining Team

## LA County Gets Ready to Turn It Up!

**M**ore than 50,000 SEIU Local 721 members who work for LA County are gearing up for contract negotiations. These members haven't had raises in four years—some of them even longer.



County is back on solid financial footing. "You're not going to see the cuts and you're not going to see a deficit like you've seen in the last several years," a County spokesman said recently.

table. Looking around the room and seeing the passion our members brought to the meeting, I thought to myself, this has got to be one of the best Bargaining Teams we've ever assembled.

And when the economic downturn hit the County, our members stepped up and took on extra duties and worked harder than ever to keep the County running and deliver services to the 50,000 people who live here.

So now it's time to **Turn It Up**. As good as our bargaining team is, this fight will be won in the field. On April 16, we expect thousands of members to turn out for a rally at the Board of Supervisors, where we'll tell the Supervisors that we deserve raises.

I'm looking forward to the rally and to bargaining.

Sincerely,

Bob Schoonover  
SEIU 721 President and LA City Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanic

But things are different now. Thanks to our members' hard work in getting Prop 30 passed, the

And last week I attended an LA County Bargaining Team meeting, where members received training on how to approach the negotiating

*I'd like to hear what you think. Send me an email at [presidentschoonover@seiu721.org](mailto:presidentschoonover@seiu721.org)*

## Representing Our Membership News From Around the Local

### LA City Animal Care Techs Win Big

When Los Angeles Animal Care General Manager Brenda Barnette decided to remove animal care technicians from the graveyard shift and replace them with security guards, our members jumped into action. Over 100 people turned out at a vigil at the East Valley Animal Care Center to stop the plan. SEIU 721 members also spoke out at City Council and launched a social media

campaign and online petition to save night care at LA shelters.

I'm proud to announce that, as a result of our members' work, the Council's Budget and Finance Committee approved a motion to add 16 new animal care technician positions. We expect full Council approval any day now. Nice job!

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*SEIU 721 social worker members being recognized by the Ventura County Board of Supervisors for their commitment to the community.*

**Celebrating Social Workers**

March was National Social Worker Month. SEIU Local 721 hosted special celebrations for the thousands of workers who dedicate their lives to social work.

In Ventura, SEIU Local 721 social worker members were treated to cake and coffee at the Ventura County Hall of Administration. Then members joined the Board of Supervisors meeting, where they were presented with a resolution honoring their dedication and commitment to the community.

In Los Angeles County, we celebrated and recognized the important work social workers do to keep children and families safe at a luncheon at the Local.

Four Champions of Children were also honored for their work with children in Los Angeles County: Anthony Bravo, Supervising Children’s Social Worker; Marqueece Dawson-Harris, CEO and President of Community Coalition; Holly J. Mitchell, Honorable State Assemblywoman; Angelica Salas, Executive Director of Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights for Los Angeles.



*SEIU 721 honored Social Workers from DCFS, DPSS, IHSS and ACS by hosting a special celebration for the thousands of Social Workers who dedicate their lives to keeping children and families safe.*

**Riverside County IT Makes Gains**

I’m pleased to write that our members who work for the Riverside County Information Technology Dept. (RCIT) have won some important victories. First, our members challenged the County’s decision to perform background checks on our members. The Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) responded by ruling that the County can conduct background checks, but also said SEIU 721 can argue for the mitigation of the effects of a negative finding on its members.

Based on this ruling, management was forced to return to discussions with the union. After several meetings, an impasse was declared, which allows for fact finding.

Also, as the County moved to consolidate smaller

departments into RCIT, some members had heard that, if they were affected by the move, they’d be put back on probation and lose their seniority status. Thanks to a side letter of agreement that our members negotiated with the County, no one will have to go back on probation and seniority rights will be preserved.

**LA DWP Security Officers Make Major Contract Gains**

On March 27, LA Department of Water and Power Security Officers cleared a major hurdle to winning a signed labor agreement. LA City’s Executive Employee Relations Committee voted to approve the tentative

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agreement between SEIU 721 members and DWP management.

Over the past few months, DWP Security Officers have spoken out at EERC meetings and visited numerous City Council Members to make sure Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa and CAO Miguel Santana would not reject the tentative agreement and ask for healthcare cuts. The work paid off.

We expect the Council to ratify the agreement in the next few weeks.



*SEIU 721 members Leticia Alvarez and Rhea Voll prepare to march with over 1,000 SEIU 721 and community members.*

### Honoring César Chávez

SEIU 721 members and their families joined over 1,000 other community members, activists and families at the César Chávez March for Immigration Reform march in Oxnard on March 24. Members carried signs and banners that called for a clear and comprehensive immigration reform policy.

"I came out here with my daughter to join the march because it's important to support our brothers and sisters in Ventura County who are undocumented and are working to gain a legal status," said Angelica Navarro, who works for the Oxnard Housing Department. I couldn't have said it better.

*About this report: The President's Report covers the President's activities in major areas spelled out in the SEIU 721 bylaws. It is presented each month to the Executive Board.*



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### From the Chief of Staff

Representing our members at their worksites is one of the most important functions of our union. And it's a job that our members do particularly well.

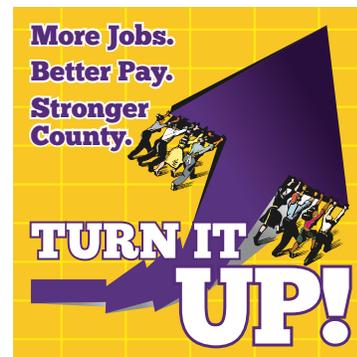


That's because dozens of SEIU 721 stewards are trained to represent their colleagues at their worksites in all kinds of workplace disputes—including disciplinary hearings.

As part of our commitment to Representational Excellence, we've been working hard to train more member stewards and get them the tools they need to do their jobs.

Last weekend, we held a Representational Excellence Forum here at the Local, where dozens of members came together to discuss what we can do better. The input was great. Members brought lots of creative ideas about how to develop more and better stewards.

Do you have ideas for how we can improve representation? Then email me at [chiefstaff@seiu721.org](mailto:chiefstaff@seiu721.org)  
In Unity,



## Rally for Raises!

**Tuesday, April 16**  
**Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration**  
**11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**  
(Buses leave work sites in the morning.)