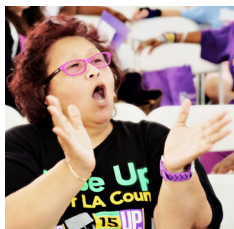
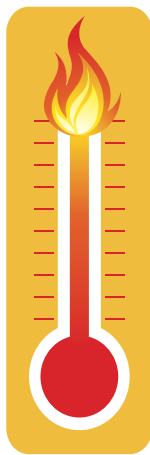


SEIU 721

PRESIDENT'S

AUGUST 2015

REPORT



TURN UP THE HEAT RAISE UP ALL OF LA COUNTY

We're four months into contract negotiations with LA County and county negotiators have yet to present a fair proposal to county workers. Enough is enough—in August, we're going to bring the heat.

Every time our union comes together, hits the streets and demonstrates our unity, we make a difference. That's how we won a \$15 an hour minimum wage for the City of LA and a first-of-its-kind contract for part-time faculty at Whittier College last month. Now it's time to do it in LA County.

Beginning this month, we're encouraging all LA County members to wear their "Raise up ALL of LA County" sweatbands every day on the job. The show of purple will demonstrate to management our unity and our commitment to a contract that invests the workforce and increases services to the communities we serve.

We're going to follow up with a wave of workplace actions and rallies to remind county management

that it's frontline county workers who deliver the vital services LA residents need.

All around Southern California our strategies are working. A new UC Berkeley study predicts the \$15 LA minimum wage law will increase wages for more than 600,000 workers — mostly from communities of color in LA's poorest neighborhoods — over the next four years.

Our effort to organize part-time faculty at private universities around the region is taking hold, as part-time educators at Whittier College ratified a new contract with pay increases, improved job security, a greater say in scheduling and other union protections usually denied by private universities and college in the area.

Now it's time to bring these winning tools and team back to LA County. Let's turn up the heat.

Bob Schoonover, President

Bob Schoonover



PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST 2015

Whittier Adjuncts Ratify Contract

First-of-Its-Kind Agreement in So-Cal Features Pay Increase for Part-Time Faculty



SEIU 721 adjunct professors at Whittier College recently ratified the first of what our union expects will be many new union contracts as part-time faculty organize at private universities and colleges across Southern California. The Whittier contract includes pay increases of between 26 to 35 percent per credit hour over the three-year agreement, greater job security, payments for cancelled courses, "just cause" standards for discipline and termination, and a host of other protections.

SEIU 721's Faculty Forward LA campaign is part of a national effort to help part-time faculty form unions at private colleges. The organizing drive is a response to a new model in higher education that relies on a large workforce of part-time "contingent" educators, who often teach for low pay, with little job security and no clear path to permanent employment. Contingent faculty now comprise the majority of faculty in higher education in the U.S.

SEIU 721 Retirees Celebrate Vital Benefits



*Retired and Active! SEIU 721 Retirees say, "Protect, Improve, Expand!" at the **Medicare Turns 50** event on Thursday, July 30th at LA Trade Tech. As this issue went to press, SEIU 721 retirees also were planning an August 14th event to mark the 80th anniversary of Social Security.*

RIVERSIDE WORKSITE BLITZ

WSOs touch hard-to-reach SEIU 721 members



The Inland Region SEIU 721 staff mounted a six-day, ten-site membership blitz in the City of Riverside during July. The meetings focused on union visibility, answering members' questions and building momentum for the 2016 contract campaign. Armed with coffee, pastries, MOUs and the latest union literature, staff and Riverside City chapter leaders held meetings during non-traditional shifts. This allowed us to contact workers who don't have the opportunity to attend union meetings. Organizers updated 80 memberships and signed up 7 new members.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST 2015

PLEASANT VALLEY REC AND PARK WORKERS WIN A CONTRACT



After a protracted fight, SEIU Local 721 Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District workers won a contract with the district in July. Ratified by an overwhelming majority and approved by the district on July 24th, the new three-year contract includes a 5.5 percent raise over the term of the agreement.

“We had to fight to get here. I'm happy that members will now have a voice in the District to make a positive impact on our community.”

**Jesse Gomez, Groundsman I
Bargaining Team Member**



Stewards and Organizers Score Worksite Wins of the Month for 721 Members

"Our worksite organizers and advocates are unsung heroes – our secret weapon for protecting the workplace rights of SEIU 721 members."

SEIU 721 Vice President Linda Dent



**HANSEL
HARRIS-DIENG**

Advocate successfully recovered \$9,000 pay for additional responsibilities an LA County member performed at a supervisory level.

**PAM
BRISCOE**

Advocate in the Tri-County region successfully argued to have a member's discipline rescinded, averting a 5 percent reduction in pay over 13 pay periods.

**SERGIO
RAMIREZ**

Advocate in LA County prevented the firing of a worker for off-duty misconduct shortly after the end of her probationary period. Ramirez secured a 30-day suspension instead.

**JOSE
MARTINEZ**

Advocate in LA Cities division helped block the termination of a custodian and negotiate it down to a 20-day suspension.

**ARA
VARDANYAN**

Advocate helped highly motivated member contest a "Competent" performance evaluation, ultimately winning a "Very Good" evaluation for the employee.

**MIKE
FORD**

Advocate defended a favorable judgment for an LA Community College District employee all the way through a public College Board meeting, convincing the employer not to go to court.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST 2015



FIGHT FOR 15 CATCHES FIRE

SEIU 721's \$15 LA City Minimum Wage Win Prompts Increases in LA County, UC and New York Fast Food

Our victorious effort to raise LA City's minimum wage to \$15 an hour has ignited a movement! In the span of one week last July, the LA County Board of Supervisors, the University of California and the New York City Wage Board all approved minimum wage increases.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors kicked off that banner week when they took a game-changing vote on July 21st to put unincorporated LA County on track for a \$15 an hour minimum wage by 2020. The very next morning, the University of California announced it would increase the minimum wage for all direct and service contract employees to \$15 an hour over the next three years. Before the ink even dried on the UC announcement, the New York Wage Board moved that afternoon to increase the minimum wage to \$15 an hour for fast food workers in New York City by 2018 and the rest of the state by 2021. What a show of fast food worker and union power!

There's no mistake about it, our local has been the driving force for Fight for \$15 on the West Coast. Three years ago we made the conscious decision to

support the Fight for \$15 because raising the wage floor for all working families provides our union with leverage to negotiate standards for all workers in the region.

Through the bravery of fast food workers and the tireless hard work of the members and staff of this local and other organizations across the region, we've completely shaped the national conversation on the need to end poverty wages. But we've still got a long way to go.

We haven't forgotten our rallying cry: "\$15 and a Union." We're not going to stop until fast food workers in LA exercise their right to join SEIU 721. It looks like fast food workers are wasting no time: McDonald's workers in Leimert Park just walked out on the boss to protest wage theft and push an immediate raise to \$15, and fast food workers are teaming up with SEIU 721 in Pasadena to fight for \$15 and a union there.

The Fight for \$15 is on fire!

Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff

Gilda Valdez

