

APRIL-MAY 2019

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SEIU 721



## WINNING THE FIGHT FOR THE CALIFORNIA DREAM



### A MESSAGE FROM SEIU 721 PRESIDENT BOB SCHOONOVER

SEIU 721 President Bob Schoonover marches on Los Angeles City Hall with LA City workers.

**A**s president of SEIU Local 721, I have the honor of representing some of the most courageous, resourceful and committed workers in California.

I am writing to share that, on April 2, I was selected by SEIU California's Executive Board to serve as president of the organization. SEIU California is composed of SEIU locals representing more than 700,000 workers across the state, including public employees, caregivers, social workers, janitors, security officers, nurses, education employees, and faculty. This honor belongs to the members of Local 721 because it is a recognition of our union's strong track record of winning for working people in Southern California and beyond.

SEIU 721 members have played a crucial role in the success of the national Fight for \$15 movement by taking on the fights that resulted in increased wages for workers in the City of Los Angeles, the County of Los Angeles, and the State of California. SEIU 721 members have pioneered new models for health care delivery

through their efforts to restructure and reform the Los Angeles Department of Public Health. We've built strong coalitions with community groups, like FixLA, across Southern California that have helped restore public services cut during the economic downturn. And we've delivered good contracts that demonstrate the importance of how preserving middle class jobs, good health care benefits and retirement security lift up entire communities.

SEIU members inspire me every day with their commitment to justice, equity, and opportunity for every person in our state to achieve the California Dream whether they are black, white or brown. I'm proud to lead an organization that empowers diverse voices, takes on the fights that matter to our children's future and creates opportunities for labor union members to lift up all working people.

*Bob Schoonover*





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LA County Works  
BECAUSE WE DO!

### SEIU 721 COPE WELCOMES LA SUPERVISORS HAHN AND BARGER



SEIU 721 COPE hosted Los Angeles Supervisors Janice Hahn and Kathryn Barger in April to recognize their strong support for LA County's working families and to pledge our union's support as they prepare for re-election in 2020.

SEIU 721 Treasurer and LA County CSW David Green introduced Supervisor Barger as a "champion for children," while SEIU 721 President Bob Schoonover praised Supervisor Hahn for her efforts to stop the contracting out of public services to for-profit companies.

"Supervisor Hahn and Supervisor Barger value workers' input and work with us as partners. That's why we pledge our support in 2020."

**"SEIU 721 COPE supports leaders like Supervisor Hahn and Supervisor Barger who lead on the issues important to LA County's working families. They vote to invest in quality public services and the workers who provide them."**

**Linda Dent  
Vice President  
SEIU 721**

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2019

# SEIU 721 ELECTS NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD



**PRESIDENT**  
**Bob Schoonover**



**VICE PRESIDENT**  
**Linda Dent**



**TREASURER**  
**David Green**



**SECRETARY**  
**Lillian Cabral**

### Full list of elected member leaders:

#### OFFICERS AT LARGE

President: Bob Schoonover  
Vice President: Linda Dent  
Treasurer: David Green  
Secretary: Lillian Cabral

#### LA COUNTY REGION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Lydia R. Cabral  
Carolyn Dasher  
Patrick Del Conte  
Kelley E. Dixon  
Valencia L. Garner  
Steven Hova Gimian  
Adolfo Granados  
Arcelia Lopez, RN, MICN  
Alina Mendizabal  
Tony F. Mendoza  
Omar Perez  
Jose Sanchez  
Grace Santillano  
Veryeti Vassel  
Sharonda C. Wade

#### L.A. AND OC CITIES REGION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Joaquin R. Avalos  
Pedro Conde  
Stacey Karnya  
Kesavan S. Korand  
Guillermo Martinez  
Andy Morales  
Victor M. Vasquez  
Simboa A. Wright  
Salvador S. Zambrano

#### TRI COUNTIES REGION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Roberto Camacho  
Rosa Castro  
Jesse Gomez  
Charles Harrington  
Fernando Ortiz  
Liza R. Rocha  
Grace Sepulveda

#### INLAND REGION EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

Cheylynda Barnard  
Miguel (Mike) Beato  
Christi Bell  
Tim Burke  
Oracio Diaz  
Barbara Hunter  
Roger V. Nunez  
Tara Stoddart  
David Warpness

The newly elected executive board of SEIU Local 721 is responsible for representing the interests of its members, and manages the local's affairs including continuing the dynamic worker-led campaigns that have galvanized a pro-working family movement in Southern California.

If you would like further information on the election, including vote tallies, please email the Election Committee at [BoardElection2019@seiu721.org](mailto:BoardElection2019@seiu721.org).



# Coalition Says #FixUSC Now!



**SEIU 721 AND COMMUNITY COALITION BUILD TENT CITY TO HOLD UNIVERSITY ACCOUNTABLE**



A coalition of students, academics, tenants' rights groups, living wage advocates and clergy joined graduate students from USC Forward and SEIU 721 members in April, building a #FixSC tent city at Jefferson Boulevard and Hoover Street to hold USC leadership accountable for a string of scandals and fiascos. USC has harassed graduate students attempting to organize a union and failed to recognize and bargain with faculty from the Roski School of Art and Design, whose members voted three years ago to form a union.

"USC boasts a \$5.5 billion endowment and more than \$9 billion in assets and charges tuition of \$55,000 a year, rivaling Harvard and Yale,"

said Bob Schoonover, president of SEIU 721. "USC's graduate students are doing the actual teaching and cutting-edge research. Yet, somehow, USC can't afford to pay them a living wage and decent benefits. That's called greed — and that's unacceptable."

After several days of actions, the coalition delivered an official letter to new USC President Dr. Carol Folt with a list of demands, including respect for labor rights of USC graduate students and faculty; a campus free from sexual assault, harassment and violence; affordable housing for existing and displaced residents around USC; and increased accessibility to USC for low-income LAUSD students.



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2019



## OUR COPE DOLLARS AT WORK: SEIU 721 MEMBERS LEAD VITAL SACRAMENTO LOBBYING EFFORTS

**T**he SEIU 721 Committee on Political Education is a powerful tool for members to speak directly to the elected officials who control the budgets that fund the services we provide. Here are just a few examples of where SEIU 721 members are lobbying for quality public services:

### SEIU SOCIAL WORKERS TAKE A STAND FOR CHILDREN

On April 7, SEIU 721 social workers joined forces with the National Association of Social Workers California chapter for a first-ever joint legislative conference and lobbying day to fight for funding for Family Resource Approval, transitional-age youth, and a statewide urgent response system for foster youth and their caretakers.

### NURSE PRACTITIONERS LOBBY FOR COMMON SENSE DUTIES

SEIU 721 LA County Nurse Practitioners, Dr. Ileana Woods Meza Ward, Lucia Diaz and Catherine Dela Cruz Reyes traveled to Sacramento on April 9 to testify in support of Assembly Bill 890 (Wood). The proposed law will allow NPs to practice to the full extent of their education and professional skills.

### COURT WORKERS ADVOCATE FOR CRITICAL FUNDING

LA County court reporter and 721 Executive Board member Carolyn Dasher has led our team on several lobby visits and for budget hearing testimony. Stay tuned for a report on the May 14 Court Lobby Day bus trip to Sacramento. If you're interested in participating, contact Vito Triglia at [vito.triglia@seiu721.org](mailto:vito.triglia@seiu721.org).

### LATINO CAUCUS MEMBERS HEAD TO SACRAMENTO

On April 17 Latino Caucus LA Chair Grace Santillano and Tri-Counties Chair Grace Sepulveda went to Sacramento for a statewide SEIU Immigration Planning meeting and they were joined the next day for a Lobby Day by members Nadine Bixler and E-board member Arcelia Lopez from LA County and Rebecca Albarran representing Tri-Counties. The group lobbied at the Capitol for critical funding to help educate California immigrants about vital services and their rights.

### SEIU RNs LOBBY FOR PATIENT SAFETY

In April, SEIU 721 RNs met with state legislators and testified in the Senate Health Committee, advocating for SB 227 (Leyva), which will create accountability mechanisms, including unannounced inspections and fines for hospitals who are repeatedly found out of compliance with nurse-to-patient ratios. 721 Nurse members Terri Thompson and Garr Wharry are proud of the work we are doing for patient safety. More news to come from our SEIU Nurse Alliance Lobby Days in May.



*All of our lobby efforts are coordinated and staffed by our Political Department staff — Director Pamm Fair and Coordinators Hilda Garcia, Kristian Huling, Lili Oustinovskaya and Vito Triglia — and Research and Policy staff Karen Morris and Ruben Soto.*

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2019



Gold Coast Transit District members and district management came together to host an employee appreciation BBQ on April 4. SEIU 721 Gold Coast Transit member and management have made great strides to improve workplace cooperation and strengthen passenger and bus operator safety by involving workers in decision-making and promoting a culture of mutual respect. "This has not been an easy road, said SEIU 721 President Bob Schoonover, but now we're on the right path. When we work together, we can make great things happen for cities, our families and the communities we serve."

Gold Coast Transit District covers Oxnard, Ventura, Port Hueneme and other portions of Ventura County.

## GOLD COAST TRANSIT DISTRICT WORKERS AND MANAGEMENT COME TOGETHER

## PLEASANT VALLEY REC AND PARK WORKERS STAND UP FOR THEIR RIGHTS

Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District members and community leaders stood up at the district's April 3rd board meeting to advocate for a fair contract and denounce management efforts to eliminate workplace protections.

At issue is the district's attempt to hold the tentative agreement hostage by demanding a Lifetime Probation Clause designed to strip employees of workplace protections and bust their union. The district's single-minded focus on union-busting tactics is not only disrespectful to workers, it is exposing the district to additional legal fees and destroying morale.

SEIU 721 Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park employees already have filed an Unfair Labor Practice against the District and are ready to continue fighting. Members and the community are sticking together and will **HOLD THE LINE!**





# PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2019



Riverside County has spent the past few years doing everything they can to bust our union, and we've fought back every step of the way. With a hearing on dozens of unfair labor practice charges pending and two new county supervisors in office, it's more important than ever that we demonstrate our strength and unity. On May 18, all Riverside County members are encouraged to attend the Reclaim Riverside Kick Off, where we will come together to strategize how we escalate our fight and take back the County we serve!

**May 18, 2019**

**March Air Force Base Museum**

**22550 Van Buren Blvd.**

**Riverside, CA 92518**

**RSVP: [bit.ly/reclaimrivco](https://bit.ly/reclaimrivco)**

**SEIU 721 RIVERSIDE COUNTY MEMBERS  
GET READY TO "RECLAIM RIVERSIDE"**

**SEIU 721 MEMBERS LEAD THE SEIU  
AFRICAN AMERICAN CAUCUS**

SEIU International's African American Caucus (AFRAM) held their 2019 Leadership Conference on April 14th in Baltimore, MD under the theme, "When We Fight... We Win." Featured guests included A. Philip Randolph Institute President Clayola Brown and SEIU Secretary Treasurer Jerry Hudson.

Carol Maxey-Ware, secretary of Local 721's AAC, was elected president with overwhelming support from locals across six states. "This moment has been a long time coming," said Carol in her first address. "I am honored and humbled that the locals in my region elevated me to this position. I am truly blessed."

AFRAA also elected Local 721's AAC Sergeant at Arms, DeCovan Henderson, to the WRAAC Executive Board. "I look forward to working with my colleagues on the executive board. I am fired up and ready to get to work," said Henderson.



# SEIU 721: LEADING THE WAY



**"WE DO THESE THINGS NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE EASY BUT BECAUSE THEY ARE HARD"**

**Without Leadership from Union Members, American Workers Will Continue to Fall Behind**

**I**'m proud of our union, SEIU Local 721, because we never shy away from a fight if it means more justice, greater opportunity and a better life for working people and their families.

I'm proud because, instead of just supporting just causes, we lead them. We put our members up front and give them the tools and the resources to go toe-to-toe with the rich and the powerful. We celebrate our diversity and we leverage our unity. When we fight, we win — even if it takes a long time.

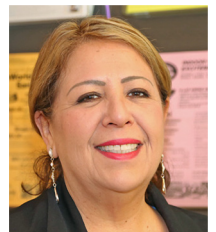
Others in our movement are taking notice. Last month, Bob Schoonover, the president of our local, was chosen by the leaders of the other SEIU locals in California as the President of SEIU California, the umbrella organization representing our state's 700,000 SEIU members. Bob was chosen because of the hard work and unwavering commitment to justice of the members of this union and the landmark victories we've won.

Every successful fight — whether it's the Fight for \$15 or our contract campaigns — begins with a tough road and seemingly insurmountable

odds. But our creativity, our hard work and — above all — the power of our collective voice can move mountains.

That's the spirit that drives USC graduate students to join with our union and community groups to take on the leadership of USC, one of the richest private universities in America, to demand justice for the underpaid and disrespected academics who actually drive innovation at the school. It's the spirit that drives Riverside County workers who won't give up until county management recognizes the contributions of the public employees who keep Riverside moving and bargains a fair contract. It's the spirit of the dozens of SEIU 721 members who ride buses to Sacramento to lobby legislators for funding for safety net hospitals, foster care, immigrant rights and a clean environment.

It's the spirit that drives SEIU 721 to fight the impossible fights — and win.



**Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff**

*Gilda Valdez*

**Want to verify that you are receiving all the benefits and protections of union membership?**

**Call the SEIU Local 721 Membership Department at: 1-877-721-4YOU.**