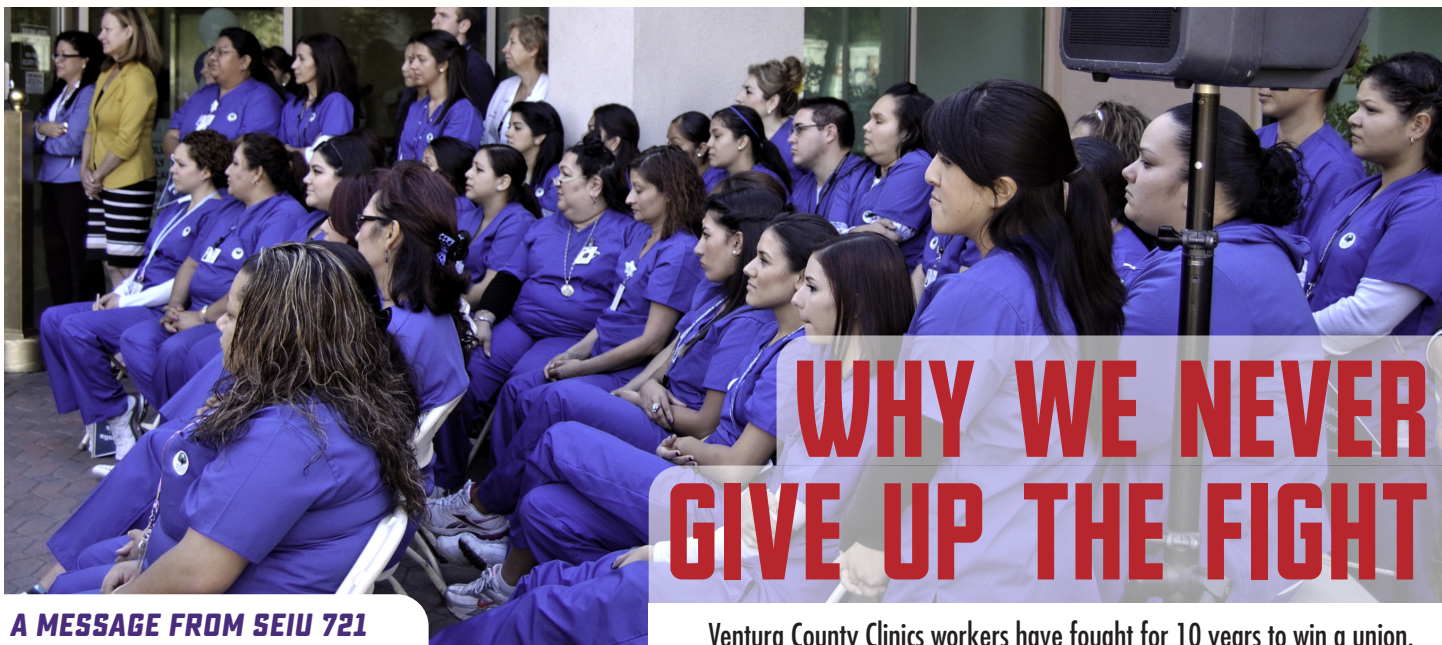


AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2020

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## TO THE MEMBERS OF SEIU 721



**A MESSAGE FROM SEIU 721  
PRESIDENT BOB SCHOONOVER**

Ventura County Clinics workers have fought for 10 years to win a union.

**N**elson Mandela said "A winner is a dreamer who never gives up." Wise words, because the fight for workers' rights these days isn't just hard — more often than not, it's also long. That's why having a strong union is so important, you have to have the resources to stay in the fight for as long as it takes.

Take Ventura County for example. Workers at the County's 13 primary care clinics are the backbone of a safety net health care system that serves huge numbers of low-income patients from the City of Ventura to Thousand Oaks. These workers — X-ray technicians, phlebotomists, medical assistants and a host of other health care professionals and the administrative workers who support them — have been trying to win a union for a decade in the face of organized opposition from county management. And after ten long years of fighting, they are about to join SEIU 721!

It hasn't been easy and it certainly wasn't quick. Clinic workers originally filed for recognition in October 2010. When the County refused to process their petition, SEIU 721 filed an unfair labor practice charge with the state Public Employees Relations Board.

Workers kept organizing.

After an administrative law judge ruled against us in 2015, we appealed.

Workers kept organizing.

Three years later in 2018, PERB sided with us, but the County appealed to the courts.

Workers kept organizing.

Finally, in November 2019, the State Court of Appeals sided with us and upheld PERB's decision to process the workers' petition. In May, the County met with SEIU 721 and agreed to a card check process to count Ventura Clinic workers' original authorization cards.

The lesson: Never stop dreaming, but more importantly, never stop organizing!

In solidarity,

*Bob Schoonover*



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2020



SEIU 721 broadcasts selfie video messages from front line workers in support of the HEROES Act on huge video screens in front of Arizona Senator Martha McSally's Phoenix office. SEIU 721 targeted Senator McSally because she is in a tight reelection campaign and California's Senators already support the bill.

### SEIU 721 SENDS VIRTUAL DELEGATION TO LOBBY ARIZONA SENATOR ON HEROES ACT

SEIU 721 took the fight for the \$3 trillion HEROES Act to Arizona Senator Martha McSally's front doorstep last month, broadcasting selfie video messages from SEIU 721 members performing essential functions during the COVID-19 pandemic who could be furloughed if Congress fails to pass the vital bailout bill for state and local governments.

Hundreds of SEIU 721 members submitted selfie videos over the past month telling Sen. McSally about their work and explaining why federal relief for states, counties and cities is so critical. SEIU 721 compiled these selfie videos into a video loop broadcast on massive LED screens outside of Sen. McSally's district office in Phoenix and streamed the event live on social media.

Front line service workers in Phoenix hosted our SEIU 721

delegation and shared their own stories, reminding Sen. McSally that HEROES Act dollars would pay for PPE and help the public sector avoid catastrophic cuts to critical services.

SEIU 721 targeted Senator McSally because the House of Representatives already passed the HEROES bill and both California Senators Feinstein and Harris already have indicated their support.

You can still view our HEROES Act selfie video message to Senator McSally on our union's website at [www.seiu721.org](http://www.seiu721.org) or on the SEIU 721 YouTube channel.

SEIU 721 won't stop fighting until our front line heroes receive the recognition and financial support they deserve.



# VICTORY IN VENTURA COUNTY!



## VENTURA COUNTY CLINIC WORKERS WIN LANDMARK ORGANIZING VICTORY

After a decade of worker organizing, health care professionals in Ventura County Health Clinics are moving forward to join SEIU 721. For 10 years, Ventura County has argued that the for-profit medical groups that run the County's 13 clinics were the sole employers of clinic staff. But in the last two years, the state Public Employment Relations Board and an appeals court have ruled against the local government.

Health care professionals in the Ventura Clinics began organizing with SEIU 721 in early 2010 and achieved majority support for a union later that year. But instead of recognizing our union, the County of Ventura mounted a decade-long legal battle to tie workers' organizing victory up in the courts and silence their voices. SEIU 721 filed Unfair Labor Practice charges against the County in December 2010, eventually winning a decision by the Public

Employees Relations Board that county management violated the law. County management appealed the decision in the courts but lost in January 2020, paving the way for a card check to tally workers' original 2010 sign up cards.

"After years of organizing to raise standards and ensure quality care for our patients, I'm excited to join SEIU 721," said Steve Brauer, a Ventura County X-Ray Technician. "Through our union, clinic workers will have a strong, collective voice for ourselves and the patients we serve."

"Now more than ever, it's critical that health care providers like us have a seat at the table when it comes to the decisions affecting our work and our patients," said Lillia Torres, a Ventura County Phlebotomist. "In the face of the COVID-19 crisis, I'm glad we're moving forward to form our union with SEIU 721."

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2020

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## Getting fast food in LA? You could be picking up an unwanted side order.

Hundreds of employees at more than 100 LA fast food restaurants have gone on strike over COVID-19 safety conditions in the fast food industry. It's time for the LA County Board of Supervisors to take immediate action. Keeping fast food workers safe protects customers.



Employees at more than 100 fast food restaurants in the LA area have gone on strike over poor COVID-19 safety conditions in area restaurants.

CALL THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH  
Tell them to make owners of fast food restaurants  
take proper COVID-19 precautions  
Lisa Frias  
Director of Environmental Health Services  
(888)700-9995

CALL THE LA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
Tell them to make fast food corporations  
take immediate action to protect  
workers and customers  
(213) 974-1411

**Call LA County Supervisors and  
the Department of Public Health.  
We deserve safe restaurants!**



## FIGHT FOR \$15 LA WARNS FAST FOOD CUSTOMERS ABOUT POOR COVID-19 SAFETY PRECAUTIONS IN LOS ANGELES AREA QUICK SERVE RESTAURANTS

In the wake of more than 100 strikes and workplace actions protesting insufficient COVID-19 safety precautions at Los Angeles area quick serve restaurants, Fight for 15 LA and SEIU 721 published a full-page ad in the Los Angeles Times calling on the LA County Board of Supervisors and the Department of Public Health to step in to protect workers and diners.

On August 3, the Board of Supervisors approved establishing workers' councils to monitor business efforts to protect employees against the Coronavirus, and to blow the whistle to the Department of Public Health when they don't. However, Fight for \$15 LA says the new rules let fast food restaurants off the hook.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2020



**JUST AS SEIU 721 WARNED, RIVERSIDE COUNTY GOT NOTHING FOR \$43 MILLION SPENT ON KPMG**

**RIDESHARE DRIVERS REFUSE TO BE BULLIED AS COMPANIES THREATEN TO PULL OUT OF STATE**



We told you so! During the last round of contract negotiations, Riverside SEIU 721 members blasted county management's \$43 million contract with KPMG as a symbol of mismanagement. Last month, the Riverside County Civil Grand Jury confirmed their assessment.

"No evidence was provided that the KPMG County Transformation project came close to paying for itself," concluded the report, which was issued August 14.

In a scathing letter to county supervisors published in the Riverside Press Enterprise, SEIU 721 Executive board member and La Quinta resident David Warpness said, "It's fitting that the lasting legacy of county supervisors who tried to squeeze every penny out of hardworking public servants is a \$43 million black hole. At least they have 50,000 pages of useless analysis to occupy them in retirement."

On Thursday, August 20, as Uber and Lyft threatened to pull out of CA and leave thousands of essential workers without income, Mobile Workers Alliance members stood together and fought for their rights.

LA area Uber and Lyft drivers, who are organizing with SEIU 721, joined together at LAX and distributed PPE to their fellow drivers and declared drivers won't be bullied.

Right now, Uber, Lyft, Doordash and other so-called gig platforms are spending more than \$110 million trying to pass Proposition 22, a November ballot proposition that would roll back the workplace protections for gig workers in AB5, which was adopted overwhelmingly by the state legislature. The big tech companies' deceptive proposition would allow them to pay drivers as little as \$5.64 an hour, deny them protections like sick days and employer-provided health insurance and preempt the ability of city and county governments to regulate gig platforms at the local level.

Drivers, passengers and union members across California are uniting to fight back against this flood of Silicon Valley money to spread the word: "Vote NO on Prop 22."



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2020



### PLEASANT VALLEY REC AND PARK WORKERS WIN YEARS-LONG BATTLE OVER UNFAIR PRACTICES

### LA CITY SEPARATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM DEADLINE EXTENDED TO SEPTEMBER 22

SEIU Local 721 members at the Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District won a sweeping victory before the state Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) over bad faith bargaining by district management.

PERB found the District failed to meet and confer in good faith and interfered in the protected rights of its employees through regressive bargaining, purposefully unacceptable offers and other bad faith bargaining tactics.

The main point of contention in bargaining was the District's insistence that all members be treated as "At Will" employees.

"The District's attempt to enforce the "At Will" status in contract bargaining was an attack on fundamental worker rights. We knew we had to fight this all the way," said PVRPD Steward and Executive Board member Jesse Gomez.



The Los Angeles City Council has extended the enrollment deadline for eligible City of Los Angeles employees to take advantage of the new Separation Incentive Program until September 22.

The approved letter of agreement between the Coalition of City Unions and the City of Los Angeles will allow 2,700 retirement eligible city employees an extended period of time to take advantage of this budget savings program. SIP eligible employees can secure cash bonuses equivalent to 2 percent of their salary multiplied by their years of service, up to a maximum of \$80,000.

All retirement eligible employees may apply beginning September 8 through 3 p.m. on September 22nd. The 1,277 employees who applied during the original SIP period and were approved will not need to reapply.

To qualify for the SIP you must be eligible for a normal retirement by January 31, 2021. A normal retirement is defined as age 55 with 30 years of service; or age 60 with at least 10 years of service; or age 70 with any years of service.





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2020



**USC FORWARD DEMANDS AFFORDABLE HOUSING,  
NOT CONDOS, AT BETHUNE LIBRARY SITE**

**COURT DIVISION SECURES WEINGARTEN WIN FOR  
LA COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICTS SHOP STEWARD**



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
SANITATION DISTRICTS**  
*Converting Waste Into Resources*

USC Forward, a project of SEIU 721, joined scores of South Los Angeles residents, clergy, and labor allies in a car caravan through South LA to USC demanding the Los Angeles City Council develop affordable housing at the site of the former Bethune Library, instead of a hotel and luxury condos.

Our action comes just weeks after a letter signed by more than 20 South LA community organizations was sent to LA City Council members, calling on elected officials to prioritize public land for public good. USC

Forward is fighting the rapid gentrification of South LA. More than 80 percent of families a block North of the site have been displaced over the past decade.



On June 22nd, the Court division filed an Unfair Labor Practice on Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts after management violated the Weingarten Rights of our shop steward Britton Torres.

Britton, who works at the Tulare Lake Facility, was called into a disciplinary meeting with his supervisor, who denied Britton the ability to bring a union representative. Management again denied Britton access to a union rep for a second meeting with his supervisor and a district supervisor.

On August 20, the LACSD agreed to expunge the record of the improperly conducted performance and disciplinary meetings and, instead, create a performance improvement plan. The Court division is proud to secure this representational victory without the need for a hearing.

# SEIU 721 IS POWERING UP THE STEWARD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM



## STRONG STEWARDS ARE THE KEY TO PROTECTING WORKERS

**S**omebody sent me a meme the other day that said “The year 2020 is like looking both ways before you cross the street and then getting hit by an airliner.” Between wildfires, floods, hurricanes, police brutality and political unrest, not to mention COVID-19, this year is challenging workers like no other.

So what’s a strong union to do? We prepare our stewards to do everything in their power to help workers make it through.

The goal of the Steward Development Program is to prepare our union stewards with the skills to provide the best possible representation for members, regardless of the situation. Stewards develop their skills handling informal meetings with management, conducting pre-grievance preparation and post-grievance debrief, coaching members through the grievance process, preparing for Weingarten meetings and internal affairs interviews and supporting members through interactive process meetings.

When the pandemic first hit, many of our support systems for shop stewards

were tested. Because of the leadership of the Regional Stewards Councils, not only were we able to train stewards in our basic curriculum, which includes the History of Unions and SEIU, Employer Retaliation, Internal Affairs Investigations, Progressive Discipline, Performance Evaluations, OSHA and Fit for Duty Exams, we also prepared them to deal with the fallout from COVID-19.

For example, SEIU 721 stewards in LA County are now prepared to help members with COVID-19 leave policy, pandemic-related workers’ compensation and how ongoing budget negotiations will affect workers.

Strong steward training is the key to protecting workers in the ongoing disaster that is 2020.

**Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff**



*Gilda Valdez*

**Digital  
Union  
Voices**

To prevent furloughs and stop layoffs, we need a #Stimulus4Workers bill from Congress NOW!  
To organize during a lockdown, we need Digital Union Voices. Text VOICES to 31996 today!



# UNION!



*Congratulations!*

**SEIU 721 TREASURER**

**DAVID GREEN**

**RE-ELECTED TO**

**LOS ANGELES COUNTY**

**RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION BOARD**

**BY A MARGIN OF 79%**





# SEIU CALIFORNIA VOTER GUIDE

SEIU members have the unique opportunity to vote on statewide initiatives that will greatly impact the lives of working families, including several that will help address structural racism in our state. Measures indicated by ✨ are key racial justice initiatives. This November, stand for economic and racial justice and cast your vote!

## STATEWIDE BALLOT PROPOSITIONS

### ✓ YES on Prop 15

Prop 15 will reclaim billions every year for our schools, community colleges, and essential local services in EVERY county



### ✓ YES on Prop 16

Reverse the state ban on equal opportunity programs to fight systemic racism



### ✓ YES on Prop 17

Allow Californians who have completed their prison terms to fully participate in our democracy by restoring their right to vote.



### ✓ YES on Prop 18

Allow Californians who would be old enough to vote by the November election to vote in March primary elections.



### ✗ NO on Prop 20

Proposition 20 will roll back effective criminal justice reforms and waste tens of millions of taxpayer dollars on prisons.



### ✓ YES on Prop 21

Proposition 21 allows our communities to limit rent increases and preserve affordable housing. It will provide stability for working Californians.



### ✗ NO on Prop 22

Uber, Lyft, and DoorDash spent millions to buy themselves a ballot measure that creates a special exemption in state law to exploit workers.



### ✓ YES on Prop 23

Protects dialysis clinics from closure and improves safety standards, reporting and worker protections.



### ✓ YES on Prop 25 ✨

Ends money bail, a system that wastes \$5 million dollars every day by unfairly forcing people to wait in jail for their day in court—just because they can't afford to buy their freedom.

## REMEMBER TO CAST YOUR VOTE BY MAIL BY NOVEMBER 3

Paid for by Service Employees International Union Local 721 Member Strength Fund.