



SEIU LOCAL 721  
1545 WILSHIRE BLVD.  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90017

# SEIU 721



# 2020-21

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SEIU 721

## THE PRIVATIZATION BATTLE WE'VE BEEN PREPARING FOR IS HERE

PROFIT-HUNGRY CORPORATIONS ARE PUSHING  
LA COUNTY TO CONTRACT OUT OUR WORK!



# THE JOB-EATERS

A PRIVATIZATION HORROR STORY  
BROUGHT TO YOU BY DELOITTE

SEIU 721 MEMBERS GET READY:  
THE FIGHT IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!

Over the past year, SEIU 721 members' unity, creativity and hard work secured some truly amazing victories — beating back harsh takeaways in the City of LA, securing a landmark 6-month deal in LA County with the largest bonuses in county history, defeating the recall power-grab, and winning a huge victory in court against Prop 22, Lyft and Uber's \$225 million attempt to rob gig workers of fair pay and benefits.

But as we celebrate Halloween and go to press on the President's Annual Report, profit-hungry consulting firms are cooking up a truly scary scheme to go after public employees. Deloitte, the \$168 billion worldwide consulting giant, is sizing up Los Angeles County for a privatization takeover, and they've set their sights on the County's 211 helpline service. Their strategy is nothing new. Promising millions in savings and magical "efficiencies," these global consulting firms milk local governments for fat consulting retainers while proposing the replacement of living wage union jobs with part-time, temporary non-union positions without benefits.

Just ask Riverside County, whose \$35 million contract with consulting giant KPMG resulted in a civil grand jury investigation that concluded the county got little of value after paying millions that could have been used to deliver vital services.

We've been training a new generation of member leaders to spread the truth about how these consulting firms and their schemes to contract out vital safety net services and public safety functions put communities at risk while taking taxpayers to the cleaners.

So take a moment to celebrate the truly great victories SEIU 721 members accomplished over the past year — and get ready to fight next year. We've got some tricks in store for the Job Eaters at the global consulting firms.

Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff

*Gilda Valdez*



# 2020-21 PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SEIU 721



# WORKER POWER IS ON THE RISE

A MESSAGE FROM SEIU 721  
PRESIDENT DAVID GREEN

If there's one silver lining in the hurricane of a worldwide pandemic that has claimed millions of lives and disrupted the global economy, it's that workers are suddenly finding they have the upper hand when it comes to negotiating wages and benefits and the terms of their work.

A record 4.3 million workers quit their jobs in August 2021 — about 2.9 percent of the workforce — according to the U.S. Labor Department. Big employers are whining about a so-called labor shortage, but with more than 10 million jobs vacant, it's become abundantly clear that workers are simply unwilling to endure poor pay, inconvenient hours and substandard conditions. This summer, McDonald's announced that it would raise average hourly wages to \$15, but many stores have had to raise pay to \$22/hour to attract workers.

The pandemic also has brought home the value of union membership. In sectors hard hit by layoffs, union members were far less likely to be furloughed or lose their jobs. Now, union workers are going on the offensive in what has come to be known as #striketober. Workers have launched 185 strikes at 255 locations so far this year, with at least 40 occurring in October, according to the Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations' tracker.

After decades of stagnation, union membership is poised to grow. Despite the billionaire-funded effort to gut union organizing in the wake of the Supreme Court's *Janus* decision, the unionization rate for state and local governments actually increased from 38.7% to 40.3% in 2020, as unions like SEIU 721

focused on sign-up drives. Now private sector workers in fast food and other chain stores may have their own new powerful tool to organize. On October 29, workers at three Buffalo, New York Starbucks stores won a preliminary ruling from the National Labor Relations Board that they could hold a union election among just the employees of those stores instead of requiring a vote among all the employees of all stores in the region, as Starbucks had argued.

All of this is good timing as SEIU 721 members prepare to bargain several of our largest contracts — a new LA County contract, a new Ventura County contract and both a wage re-opener in January and new contract later in the year in the City of LA — and fight back against a frightening new effort designed to privatize SEIU members' work and replace us with non-union temporary workers. Cooked up by giant global consulting firms, like Deloitte, these contracting-out schemes threaten vital public services and all the gains we've made in recent years.

Thankfully, we've been preparing for these fights with big investments in steward training, research and organizing, but we're still going to be in for the fight of a lifetime. The good news: We're not alone because workers across the country are finally standing up for what's right and winning.

In solidarity,

*David Green*



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# SEIU 721 FOUGHT FOR FRONTLINE WORKERS IN 2020-21

SEIU 721 FOUGHT FOR FRONTLINE WORKERS IN 2020 AND 2021, WINNING AT THE BARGAINING TABLE, IN THE STREETS, IN THE COURTS, IN THE LEGISLATURE AND ON THE BALLOT IN CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER  
2020



SEIU 721 secures emergency telework order directing managers to allow LA County workers to work from home "to the maximum extent possible" in the face of the COVID-19 surge.

DECEMBER  
2020

With LA County hospitals buckling under the strain of nearly one million COVID-19 infections, SEIU 721 nurses send hundreds of letters to Governor Gavin Newsom, demanding reinforcements from military medical personnel.

SEIU 721 City of Riverside workers reach TA on one-year deal aimed at heading off take-backs on healthcare.

JANUARY  
2021



Linda Dent becomes the first woman and the first Black President of SEIU 721. Linda pioneered the strategy of working with community allies to push LA County to adopt programs to help working-class and poor Angelenos.

FEBRUARY  
2021



Nearly 20,000 SEIU 721 LA County members participate in telephone townhall meetings and endorse a strategy to pursue a short-term contract with Heroes Pay for frontline workers.

MARCH  
2021



Negotiated lump sum payments and new step increases for Riverside County workers kick in. All county employees at the maximum of their salary range receive a \$750 bonus, and max base salaries increase by 2%.

APRIL  
2021



Linda Dent dies after a long battle with pancreatic cancer. The community alliances Linda built helped power some of our union's biggest victories, including the Fight for \$15 and the creation of the City of LA's Targeted Local Hire Program.

MAY  
2021



SEIU 721 Tri-Counties members in the City of Moorpark and the Conejo Recreation and Parks District win strong new contracts with wage increases.

JUNE  
2021



After a campaign of more than 150 actions, SEIU 721 LA County members win a groundbreaking 6-month agreement that includes Heroes Pay for All – the largest general bonuses in the history of LA County – a new Juneteenth paid holiday and other improvements.

JULY  
2021



SEIU members lead the effort to crush the deceptive recall of California Governor Gavin Newsom. SEIU members knocked on more than 400,000 doors, dialed 4.8 million calls and raised \$6 million in the largest California ground campaign since 2012.

AUGUST  
2021



Hundreds of SEIU 721 LA County Department of Public and Social Services workers rally at agency headquarters to protest policy changes that force social workers to shortchange clients in need. DPSS Director Antonia Jimenez agrees to revisit policies.

SEPTEMBER  
2021



Drivers from SEIU 721's Mobile Workers Alliance, We Drive Progress and Gig Workers Rising join Alianza Unidos World Action in Brussels to fight back against global gig company greed.

OCTOBER  
2021



LA City 721 members ratify a two-year agreement that prevents furloughs and layoffs in the face of a \$674 million city deficit.



20 SEIU 721 LA County members working on the frontlines of the pandemic testify before an online session of the LA County Board of Supervisors about their struggles and triumphs during the pandemic and call for Heroes Pay for All.

SEIU 721 City of Riverside members and our union's legal team win reinstatement and \$250,000 in back pay for City of Riverside workers improperly furloughed early in the pandemic.



SEIU 721 organizes effort to fight back against billionaire Charles Koch-funded effort to trick SEIU 721 members into quitting their union.



Bob Schoonover retires from the City of Los Angeles and steps down after 13 years as President of SEIU 721. As President, Bob led some of our union's most historic campaigns, including the Fight for \$15. Schoonover continues as Executive Director.

SEIU 721 Occidental College Admin and Professional members ratify first contract with a unanimous vote.



David Green succeeds Linda Dent as President of SEIU 721. A Children's Social Worker and 21-year veteran of LA County DCFS, Green was the architect of landmark child safety reforms, including major reductions in CSW caseloads.



The SEIU 721 Executive Board unanimously approves the selection of Simboa Wright as Vice President and Adolfo Granados as Treasurer of our union.

An Alameda County Superior Court judge rules Prop 22 unconstitutional, after SEIU 721 and four rideshare drivers sue. Lyft and Uber spent an historic \$225 million passing the measure to exempt themselves from paying their workers fair pay and benefits.



Massive union-backed get-out-the-vote program helps power largest voter turnout in US presidential election history, powering Biden-Harris victory.



SEIU 721 nurses successfully pressure state regulators to stop the unsafe practice of using "pandemic waivers" to skirt nurse-to-patient staffing ratios.



SEIU 721 Watts Health Center employees reach a tentative agreement, averting an Unfair Labor Practice strike. Months of organizing by Watts workers helped them beat back severe increases to family healthcare coverage.



Thanks to the advocacy of SEIU 721 members, the City of LA passes an equity-based budget that includes 750 new jobs in the Targeted Local Hire Program and extension of healthcare and retirement benefits to part-time city workers.



Governor Gavin Newsom signs into law SEIU-backed AB 1177 – the California Public Banking Act – a breakthrough in the fight to end predatory and discriminatory financial services targeting low-income workers and communities of color.





# SEIU 721 members fight and win VICTORY IN LOS ANGELES



## LA COUNTY WORKERS

In July, after more than 150 actions by thousands of SEIU 721 across LA County, SEIU 721 LA County members secured a groundbreaking, 6-month tentative agreement with Heroes Pay for All, healthcare cost coverage increases, and a new Juneteenth paid holiday. While other unions simply rolled their contracts over for another year, SEIU 721 members fought tirelessly for a meaningful investment in the vital services we provide – and we won.

### Short 6-Month Agreement (Oct. 1, 2021 – March 31, 2022):

The short agreement makes bonuses more valuable, allows us to negotiate new COLAs and other improvements early next year, and puts us back at the table first, so we can't be undermined by weak, early deals cut with other unions.

**Heroes Pay for All:** Nearly all SEIU 721 members receive Heroes Pay bonuses of between \$1,500 to \$2,150 — the largest general bonuses in the history of LA County.

**More Money for Options Health Benefits:** The Agreement includes additional money for our health benefits – more than enough money to fully cover any premium increases in 2022 with no out-of-pocket costs, regardless of your HMO.

**New Juneteenth Paid Holiday:** Beginning in 2022, we will celebrate Juneteenth as our 13th paid holiday, the second new holiday that we have won in three years!



“SEIU 721 LA County members hit the streets in more than 150 actions and won a landmark victory.”

**Adolfo Granados**  
Treasurer  
SEIU 721



## LA CITY WORKERS

In the midst of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, SEIU 721 LA City members in January ratified the 2020-2022 City of Los Angeles Contract Amendment with an 80% YES vote, closing the door on layoffs and furloughs and securing a strong future for City of LA workers.

### Timeline of the LA City MOU Accord

- COVID shuts LA economy and devastates city revenue collection
- Mayor proposes 26 furlough days in April budget proposal
- SEIU 721 President Bob Schoonover blasts proposal to balance budget on the backs of frontline and essential workers in LA Times
- SEIU 721 negotiates hiring freeze and SIP program as alternatives
- After the second wave, SEIU negotiates two unpaid holidays and delayed sick leave cash outs to close the deal on no layoffs and no furloughs

Thanks to the continued advocacy of SEIU 721 LA City members, the City of LA in June also passed an equity-based budget that included 750 new jobs in the Targeted Local Hire Program and extension of healthcare and retirement benefits to part-time city workers.



“Despite an unprecedented budget shortfall, SEIU City of LA workers beat back furloughs and layoffs and created new jobs.”

**Simboa Wright**  
Vice President  
SEIU 721



SEIU 721 COPE HELPS CRUSH CALIFORNIA RECALL POWER GRAB

SEIU 721 LEGISLATIVE AND COURT ADVOCACY PROTECTS WORKERS



**We Did It!**  
 We reelected  
**Herman B. Santos  
 & Vivian H. Gray  
 to LACERA**



★ **DEFEATING THE CALIFORNIA RECALL**

In September, a massive campaign mounted by SEIU and other California unions beat back a recall power-grab orchestrated by right wing reactionaries and out-of-state billionaires. More than 62% of California voters voted to reject the recall of Governor Gavin Newsom after a campaign in which SEIU members knocked on more than 412,000 doors — 250,000 of them during the final four days of GOTV — and dialed more than 4.8 million calls. In all, SEIU members collectively contributed more than \$6 million to the anti-recall campaign and field efforts to turn out communities of color.

★ **ELECTING PRO-WORKER CANDIDATES**

SEIU 721 COPE works to elect legislators who understand our work and educate them about threats to vital public services. COPE also supports experienced and knowledgeable candidates for key commissions and boards that protect members' health benefits and retirement security:

- SEIU 721 COPE helped secure the election of David Miller and Jose Luis Pacheco to the board of the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS).
- SEIU 721 COPE led the successful re-election of members Herman Santos and Vivian Gray to LACERA.

★ **CRUSHING PROP 22 IN THE COURTS**

Uber and Lyft spent an astonishing \$225 million on Prop 22 to avoid paying gig workers fair pay and benefits. But as the tech giants took a victory lap around the media and promised to push Prop 22-style legislation in other statehouses, SEIU 721 member leaders and staff huddled with our legal team and our gig worker allies. As Prop 22 was set to take effect, Bob Schoonover, SEIU 721's Executive Director and President of SEIU California, joined with SEIU International and four rideshare drivers to file a lawsuit in California Superior Court challenging the law's constitutionality. On August 20, Judge Frank Roesch found for SEIU and the other plaintiffs and ruled the law unconstitutional.

★ **PASSING PRO-WORKER LEGISLATION**

SEIU 721 members lobbied heavily — including more than 50 lobby visits over Zoom — and won huge legislative and budget victories in the 2020-21 session:

- More than \$300 million in restorations and new funding for state courts to increase transcription fees and fund new hires to ease workloads for courtworkers.
- Hundreds of millions in new funding over the next several years for the state's more than 800 Developmental Disability Centers.
- New legislation to ease nurse-patient staffing ratios (AB 1422), end predatory lending (AB 1177), and reform county elections (AB 428).

# PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

## SEIU 721 LIFTS UP COMMUNITIES BY BARGAINING STRONG CONTRACTS

SEIU 721 members across Southern California won strong new contracts, using bargaining to raise standards, improve working conditions and protect workers despite severe budget shortfalls caused by the worldwide pandemic.



SEIU 721 members in the City of Hemet



SEIU 721 members at Watts Health Center



SEIU 721 members at HealthRIGHT 360



SEIU 721 adjunct faculty at Laguna College of Art and Design

- **December 2020:** SEIU 721 City of Riverside workers reach TA on one-year deal aimed at heading off take-backs on healthcare.
- **January 2021:** LA City 721 members ratify a two-year agreement that prevents furloughs and layoffs in the face of a \$674 million city deficit.
- **February 2021:** City of Riverside Refuse Unit members vote overwhelmingly to approve a new contract that protects refuse unit members from the worst effects of the COVID-19 budget shortfalls while adding strong new language that protects our rights, commits management to a classification study and adds a "me too" clause.
- **February 2021:** SEIU 721 members at Occidental College vote to extend their current contract, which now includes a Joint Labor Management Committee, a grievance and arbitration process and shop stewards.
- **February 2021:** SEIU 721 Ventura Regional Sanitation District (VRSD) members approve a one-year deal that includes a 3% salary increase and guarantees stability for members and their families.
- **February 2021:** SEIU 721 City of Hemet workers win a great new 3-year contract with the across-the-board pay increases totalling 7.5%, a new paid holiday, and increased employer health care contributions.
- **March 2021:** SEIU 721 Occidental College Admin and Professional members unanimously ratify first contract.
- **April 2021:** SEIU 721 Watts Health Center employees reach a tentative agreement, averting an Unfair Labor Practice strike. Months of organizing by Watts workers helped them beat back severe increases to family healthcare.
- **May 2021:** Negotiated lump sum payments and step increases for SEIU 721 Riverside County workers kick in. All county employees at the maximum of their salary range receive a \$750 bonus, and max base salaries increase by 2%.
- **June 2021:** Thanks to the advocacy of SEIU 721 City of LA members, the City of LA passes an equity-based budget that includes 750 new jobs in the Targeted Local Hire Program and extension of healthcare and retirement benefits to part-time city workers.
- **June 2021:** SEIU 721 Tri-Counties members in the City of Moorpark and at the Conejo Recreation and Parks District win strong new contracts with wage increases.
- **July 2021:** After a campaign of more than 150 actions, SEIU 721 LA County members win a groundbreaking 6-month agreement that includes Heroes Pay for All — the largest general bonuses in the history of LA County — a new paid Juneteenth holiday and other improvements.
- **July 2021:** SEIU 721 Nonprofit workers at HealthRIGHT 360 win their first union contract — a strong two-year agreement with significant improvements for workers, including bringing all members to a base wage rate of \$18/hr, a 6% raise for all workers, job security protections, and a paid Juneteenth holiday.
- **July 2021:** SEIU 721 City of Santa Paula members unanimously approve a new TA with an immediate 2% COLA increase. The agreement also includes a one-time lump sum payment equivalent to a 2% base salary increase; a \$500 contribution to employees' deferred compensation account; and an additional 2.5% COLA.
- **July 2021:** SEIU 721 Area Housing Authority members unanimously approve a new contract with Ventura County Area Housing Authority that includes a 10.85% cost of living allowance for all employees.
- **August 2021:** SEIU City of Simi Valley 721 members approve a strong new contract that includes an immediate 2% salary increase and a one-time lump sum payment equivalent to a 2% base salary increase, and an additional 1.75% increase effective the first full pay period commencing on or after July 1, 2022.
- **August 2021:** SEIU 721 adjunct faculty members at Laguna College of Art and Design ratify a new contract with big raises and better union protections.
- **September 2021:** SEIU 721 Superior Courts members in Riverside and San Bernardino vote to lock in strong one-year contracts that protect their wins and set the stage for the future.

# PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



SEIU 721 REPRESENTATIONAL VICTORIES:  
NO FIGHT IS TOO BIG, NO FIGHT IS TOO SMALL

Hundreds of LA County DPSS workers rally at Department headquarters



SEIU 721 fights to help members enforce contracts, ensure they receive all the pay and benefits they earn, and ensure that their workplaces are safe and supportive — no fight is too big and no fight is too small.

Here are just a few examples:

- **Fighting for More Care, Less Stress at LA County DPSS** Hundreds of SEIU 721 LA County DPSS workers rallied at agency headquarters in September and won a review of agency policies that workers say are depriving clients of the personal attention they need.
- **Repealing Pandemic Waivers to Protect Patient Safety** SEIU 721 advocacy efforts convinced Governor Newsom and health regulators to repeal pandemic waivers that allowed hospitals to suspend safe nurse-to-patient ratios during the early phase of the pandemic.

- **Winning Fair Pay for Mechanics** SEIU 721 won a 16.8% pay increase for LA County Stationary Mechanics after a class transfer cut their wages, and filed a Pay Equity group grievance for Heavy-Duty Equipment Mechanics and Senior Mechanics in the City of LA.
- **Advocating for Telework for Regional Center Workers** In May, SEIU 721 Tri-Counties member leaders helped workers at Tri-Counties Regional Center win the right to work-from-home for 80 hours per month during much of 2021.
- **Winning Back Pay for LA County Jail Health Workers** After a multi-year fight, SEIU 721 members at LA County's Integrated Correctional Health Services in June won a major victory over unpaid weekend bonuses and shift differentials and were awarded back pay.

# PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

SEIU 721 Tri-Counties region was on a roll in 2021, racking up big contract victories, organizing new members and scoring representational wins for workers around the region.

- **Contract Victories** — SEIU 721 Tri-Counties members won strong new contracts in Ventura County, Area Housing Authority, Ventura Regional Sanitation District, the City of Santa Paula, the City of Moorpark and at the Conejo Recreation and Parks District, and others.
- **New Member Organizing** — After a decade of worker organizing, healthcare professionals in Ventura Clinics voted to join SEIU 721.
- **Representational Wins** — SEIU 721 Tri-County members won big workplace safety fights for Ventura Hospital workers and Ventura County Social Workers, work-from-home rights for Tri-Counties Regional Center workers, and bonuses for healthcare workers at Wellpath.



Ventura hospital workers



Area Housing Authority workers

**SEIU 721 TRI-COUNTIES REGION IS ON A ROLL, RACKING UP WINS FOR WORKERS**

**SEIU 721 INLAND REGION IS NOW THE FASTEST-GROWING IN OUR UNION**

SEIU Inland Region has become the fastest-growing in SEIU 721's territory by fighting tirelessly for good contracts, winning group grievances and aggressively organizing new members — oftentimes in communities represented by politicians historically unfriendly to workers.

SEIU Inland Region members in 2020-21:

- Secured a 1-year extension for San Bernardino Courts members with a 2% across-the-board salary increase, improved medical subsidies and two additional leave days.
- Successfully closed a medical subsidy reopener for Riverside County Court members with a 3% increase for employees, a 10% increase for and Employee + 1, and a 12% increase for family coverage.
- Won reinstatement for 136 City of Riverside workers improperly furloughed in 2020 and recovered more than \$250,000 in back pay.
- Organized hundreds of new members in local government in Riverside County, including more than 100 new members at Riverside University Health System alone.



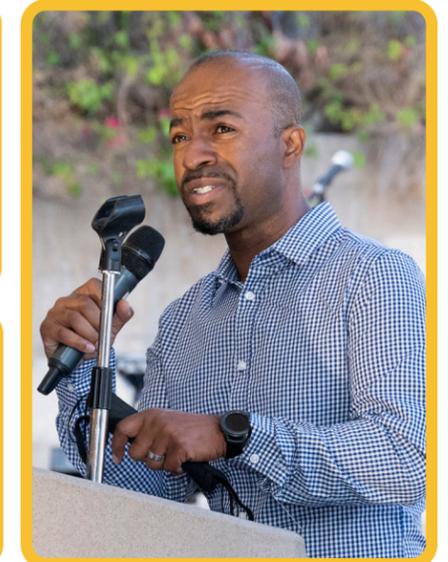
City of Riverside workers



SEIU 721 President David Green with nurses at RUHS new member event.

# PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21

## SEIU 721 CELEBRATES LINDA DENT



“Linda was our conscience and our soul – a living saint with the mouth of a sailor – dedicated to lifting up our community. She was a force of nature – bending the arc of history toward justice by her sheer will.”

Lillian Cabral  
Secretary, SEIU 721

SEIU 721 President David Green and Vice President Simboa Wright and other leaders from our local hosted a July 24th memorial service for SEIU 721 President Linda Dent, who passed away after a battle with cancer. President Dent was eulogized by Pastor William Smart, Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference at a service attended by a host of elected leaders, including LA City Councilmembers Mark Ridley-Thomas and Gil Cedillo, City of Long Beach Vice-Mayor Rex Richardson, CA Assemblyman Reggie Jones-Sawyer and LA County Supervisor Holly Mitchell.