

SEIU 721

PRESIDENT'S REPORT SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2023

GOVERNOR SIGNS FAST FOOD MINIMUM WAGE AT SEIU 721



LA COUNTY RAISES

NEW RAISES HIT LA COUNTY
MEMBERS' PAYCHECKS

SOLIDARITY SUMMER

SUMMER OF LABOR ACTION
PRODUCES BIG WAGE WINS

CONTRACT WINS

STRONG NEW CONTRACTS AT
LA COUNTY DMH, OCCIDENTAL
AND WHITTIER COLLEGE



AS RAISES HIT LA COUNTY MEMBERS' PAYCHECKS, LET'S CELEBRATE UNION POWER THAT PUTS MORE MONEY IN WORKERS' POCKETS!

LA County members are getting a raise, starting with their October paychecks.

Last year, our union won a new three-year contract that included a 12% raise – the biggest raise in LA County history.

Here's the schedule:

- 5.5% (plus a \$1,275 bonus) in 2022
- 3.25% in 2023, beginning with our October 30 paychecks
- 3.25% in 2024

These are largest one-year salary increases for LA County members since 2006, and they didn't happen by accident — they happened because SEIU 721 members flexed their union power as part of a growing resurgence of the Labor Movement:

- According recent Gallup polls, 2 in 3 Americans support labor unions.
- So far this year, there have been 295 strikes

and major actions in the U.S. — with 104 just in California, according to Cornell University's Labor Action Tracker database. "Solidarity Summer," has captured the imagination of the media and the public — SEIU 721 LA City's members' one-day strike resulted in 5,300 television and print stories across the country.

- UPS drivers, railroad workers, WGA writers in Hollywood, teachers in Los Angeles and SEIU 721 members all used solidarity and direct action to win strong new contracts.
- The Labor Movement is passing landmark legislation, like the historic \$20/Hour fast food minimum wage law signed by Governor Newsom in SEIU 721's offices in September.

Workers are on a roll. So when we open our paychecks in LA County this October, let's remember: When we fight, we win!

David Green

SUMMER OF LABOR ACTION YIELDS BIG WORKER WINS!

Working people around California and across the country are flexing their power. Call it the "Summer of Strikes," "Hot Labor Summer," or our preferred title, "Solidarity Summer," there's no mistaking the growing momentum in the Labor Movement.



LA City workers' strike captures national attention

- 24-hour picket lines at City Hall, LAX, Griffith Observatory, LA Harbor and LA Sanitation yard and worksite actions at dozens of City of LA departments draw 5,000 members.
- One-day strike generates 5,300 media stories.



WGA writers win of summer of 100 strikes and major actions

- So far this year, there have been 295 strikes and major actions in the U.S. — with 104 just in California, according to Cornell University's Labor Action Tracker database.
- UPS drivers, railroad workers, WGA writers, LA teachers and SEIU 721 members all turned direct action into contract wins.



SEIU secures landmark wage wins for workers in Sacramento

- In September, Governor Newsom signs historic \$20/Hour fast food minimum wage bill at SEIU 721 headquarters.
- SEIU 721 and sister locals lead effort to win passage of statewide healthcare minimum wage (SB5 525), law requiring community clinic transparency (SB 779) and other pro-worker bills in California legislature.



Biden becomes first U.S. President to join a picket line

- According recent Gallup polls, 2 in 3 Americans support labor unions. Support rises to 80% among Americans under 30.
- Politicians are taking notice. President Biden became the first U.S. President to join a picket line with Michigan UAW workers on September 26.

When we fight, we win!

BIG WINS FOR WORKERS IN SACRAMENTO

SEIU 721 TAKES LEAD ROLE IN PASSING PRO-WORKER BILLS

Hundreds of lobby visits and several massive Sacramento actions organized by SEIU 721 and its sister locals across the state produced historic victories for healthcare, clinic and fast food workers in this legislative session. The result: raises for more than a million Californians.

In September, Governor Newsom came to SEIU 721 to sign AB 1228, a historic bill by Assemblyman Chris Holden that creates a \$20/Hour minimum wage for fast food workers. On deck awaiting the governor's signature are several other SEIU-backed bills that will create a healthcare minimum wage (SB 525 Durazo), transparency and disclosure for community clinics (SB 779-Stern), stop the outsourcing of public jobs (AB 1484-Zbur), and allow legislative staff to organize (AB 1-McKinnor).

POLITICO

Sept. 15, 2023

Legislative Winners: SEIU California

“The summer of strikes reverberated in Sacramento. Unions ran the board this session, sending a host of worker-friendly bills to Newsom. SEIU California stands out in particular for striking deals with industry to create a \$25 minimum wage for health care workers and another to improve wages for fast food workers. Other labor-related wins backed by SEIU included measures to allow striking workers to receive unemployment benefits and another to let legislative staffers unionize.”



Governor Gavin Newsom joins SEIU President Mary Kay Henry, SEIU 721 President David Green and Vice President Simboa Wright, AB 1228 author Assemblyman Chris Holden and fast food workers to sign the historic \$20/Hour fast food minimum wage at SEIU 721 headquarters.



Members of Community Clinic Workers United celebrate their successful lobbying push for a statewide healthcare minimum wage (SB 525) and clinic transparency and accountability (SB 779). Both bills were approved by the California legislature and await the Governor's signature.



SEIU 721 Political Director Pamm Fair and healthcare workers visit with Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo to lobby for SB 525 and SB 779.

LET'S MAKE HISTORY AND KEEP THE WINS FOR WORKERS ROLLING!

ASK GOVERNOR NEWSOM TO SIGN SB 525 & SB 779 FOR A HEALTHCARE MINIMUM WAGE AND COMMUNITY CLINIC TRANSPARENCY!



UNITED AGAINST KAISER GREED



TWO UNIONS, ONE FIGHT! SEIU 721 AND SEIU-UHW TAKE ON KAISER GREED IN LABOR DAY ACTION

Members of SEIU 721 joined with their union siblings from SEIU United Healthcare Workers-West for a Labor Day show of force to call out healthcare giant Kaiser's outrageous insurance premium increases for policyholders, short staffing in Kaiser hospitals and Unfair Labor Practice violations by management in bargaining with UHW.

SEIU 721 President David Green, Vice President Simboa Wright, and LA County Benefits Administration Committee (BAC) member and Executive Board Member Ruby Dye fired up a rally at Barnsdall Park, slamming Kaiser's outrageous 14.5% premium increase as it reported \$3.2 billion in income. By contrast, the average 2024 rate increase among U.S. plans is 6%.

Thousands of SEIU 721 and UHW members then marched on the front steps of Kaiser's Hollywood offices with a chorus of cowbells, whistles and chants, while 23 healthcare workers were arrested as they linked arms and blocked Sunset Blvd. in an inspiring act of civil disobedience.



SEIU 721 and SEIU UHW members take to the streets in front of Kaiser Hollywood to protest Kaiser's outrageous 14.5% insurance premium increase at a time when the healthcare giant is reporting \$3.2 billion in income. SEIU UHW members, fed up with short-staffing and bad faith bargaining, have announced a ULP strike for October 4-6.

SEIU 721 RALLIES WITH STRIKING FAST FOOD WORKERS

SEIU 721 MEMBERS JOIN FAST FOOD WORKERS AND FIGHT FOR \$15 AT LA CITY HALL RALLY

SEIU 721 members and leaders joined fast food workers with the Fight for \$15 at a rally outside Los Angeles City Hall on September 14, 2023, to protest ongoing issues plaguing their industry – including pervasive wage theft, unsafe workplaces, erratic hours, and irregular incomes.

The workers also made a final successful push for AB 1228 — an Assembly bill passed later that day that will raise the statewide minimum wage for fast-food workers to \$20 per hour next year and gives workers a seat at the table to set minimum industry standards around wages, safety, and training. SEIU 721 members and fast-food workers were joined by City Councilmembers Heather Hutt and Hugo Soto-Martinez, who spoke in support.

Governor Newsom signed AB 1228 into law at a historic ceremony at the SEIU 721 union hall on September 28, 2023.

Los Angeles Times

Sept. 28, 2023

Higher wages are coming for California's fast-food workers.

“The law Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Thursday has several perks for workers, including a pay increase to \$20 per hour on April 1, which applies to California workers employed by any fast-food chain that has more than 60 locations across the country...Statewide, the increase is estimated to affect more than 500,000 workers.”

FAST FOOD WORKER ACTIONS HELP PUSH LANDMARK \$20/HOUR FAST FOOD MINIMUM WAGE TO VICTORY



“SEIU 721 STANDS WITH YOU ALL THE WAY IN YOUR FIGHT FOR JUSTICE.

WE WILL FIGHT ALONGSIDE YOU, AS WE'VE ALWAYS DONE, UNTIL YOU GET WHAT YOU DESERVE.”

LILLIAN CABRAL
SECRETARY, SEIU 721





SEIU 721 TRI-COUNTIES



SEIU 721 TRI-COUNTIES CELEBRATES ARBITRATION WIN

Our union's advocacy efforts protect the livelihood of a member wrongly accused

In 2021, one of our members at the Ventura County Medical Center's Admitting department, Elizabeth Vazquez, was wrongfully dismissed from her position as a Medical Office Assistant III. Based on her performance evaluations, she was a very competent and reliable employee. She had been working for the County eighteen years without any prior discipline. Unfortunately, she made a mistake that was taken out of context, and she was accused of serious misconduct. With her financial livelihood in jeopardy, our member continued to fight.

Elizabeth's case went to our RAC committee. The majority of the RAC also believed in the member's story and the case was moved to arbitration.

Our attorney Samuel Martinez did an outstanding job during the arbitration hearing and the arbitrator ruled in our favor. We won this case, and our member will be reinstated at the County of Ventura to her previous position with all the benefits and entitlements that she had lost.

This was a huge victory that shows that the job we do can change the lives and livelihood of our members in a positive manner. Elizabeth is very grateful to SEIU 721 and to Esmeralda. There's no doubt that when we fight, we win!



SEIU 721 MEMBERS PURPLE UP FOR LABOR DAY PICNIC

SEIU 721 Executive Board member Grace Sepulveda welcomed Tri-Counties SEIU 721 members and representatives from a dozen other Central Coast unions to a Central Coast Labor Council Labor Day celebration attended by Congresswoman Julia Brownley and representatives from counties, cities, school boards and special districts from around the region.



SEIU 721 BACKS LA STARBUCKS ULP STRIKE

SEIU VICE PRESIDENT SIMBOA WRIGHT CALLS OUT STARBUCKS' UNION BUSTING

SEIU Local 721 members rallied with unionized Starbucks workers during an unfair labor practice strike at a Los Angeles store in Little Tokyo on September 21. Starbucks refuses to treat union workers with respect and dignity. The coffee giant has broken labor law dozens of times as baristas in over 350 stores have voted to unionize over the past few years.

At the Little Tokyo store, Starbucks workers and supporters — including members of the California Gig Workers Union, SEIU Local 99, and Fight for \$15 — picketed outside and asked customers to sign a petition addressed to Starbucks CEO Laxman Narasimhan demanding he “stop stalling, get to the bargaining table, and negotiate a fair contract.”

“It’s time for Starbucks to stop its anti-union behavior and let workers decide without coercion whether they want to organize,” said SEIU 721 Vice President Simboa Wright. “Starbucks must also come to the table with workers in union stores in good faith to negotiate fair contracts.”



“IT’S TIME FOR STARBUCKS TO STOP ITS ANTI-UNION BEHAVIOR AND LET WORKERS DECIDE WITHOUT COERCION WHETHER THEY WANT TO ORGANIZE.”

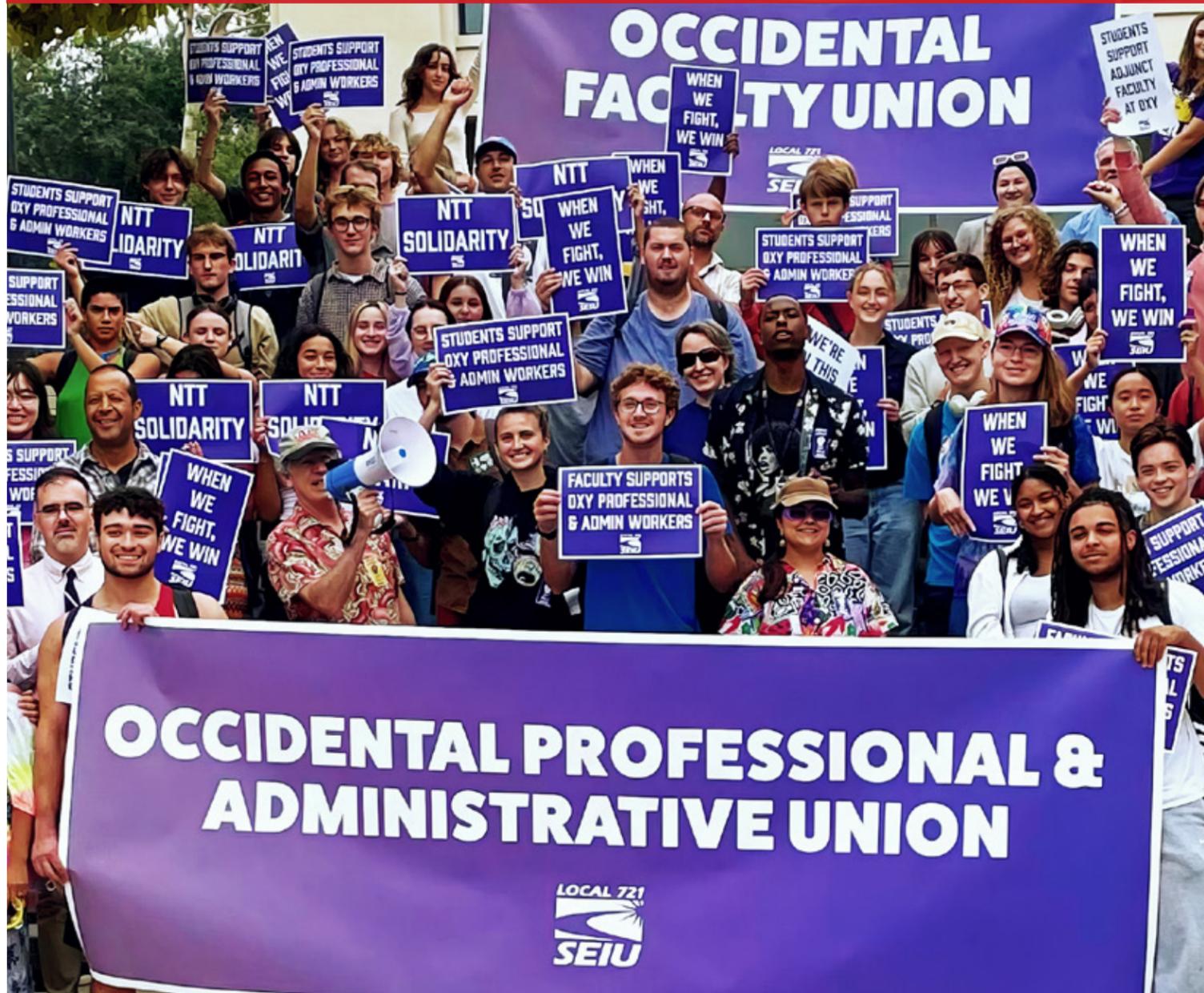


SIMBOA WRIGHT
VICE PRESIDENT
SEIU 721



SEIU 721 HIGHER-ED MEMBERS WIN CONTRACTS

ADJUNCT AND NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY AT OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE AND WHITTIER COLLEGE WIN GOOD NEW CONTRACTS WITH STRONG SUPPORT FROM STUDENTS



Faculty and student activists at Occidental College in Los Angeles' Eagle Rock community and Whittier College in Southeast LA County are celebrating big contract wins.

Non-Tenure Track (NTT) faculty at Occidental ratified a new contract on September 22, and rallied with students to gear up for the coming Professional and Administration unit contract campaign.

Further south, adjunct faculty at Whittier College ratified a new three-year contract that includes new minimum rates for part-time faculty, increases to course cancellation fees and professional development fund reimbursement, and improved communication between the college and faculty.



“CONGRATULATIONS TO NON-TENURE TRACK AND ADJUNCT FACULTY AT OCCIDENTAL AND WHITTIER, AND STUDENT ACTIVISTS AT BOTH COLLEGES. YOUR HARD WORK IS BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS.”

ADOLFO GRANADOS
TREASURER
SEIU 721





RACIAL JUSTICE REPORT

SEIU 721 EMPOWERS A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS AT 2023 SEIU ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER SUMMIT

TWO-DAY CONFERENCE ATTRACTS 300 API LABOR ACTIVISTS FOR WORKSHOPS

SEIU 721 is working to empower a new generation of Asian/Pacific Islander labor and community activists by playing a leading role at the SEIU Asian Pacific Islander Summit in Las Vegas in September.

Our union sent a 15-member delegation and helped sponsor the two-day conference, which hosted more than 300 attendees for workshops on developing leaders, teaching the latest bargaining strategies and tactics, building caucuses in local unions, civic and community empowerment and getting out the API vote. Sessions explored the link between racial and economic justice in America and how API trade unionists can advance the cause through organizing.

SEIU 721 President David Green joined the opening reception with SEIU President Mary Kay Henry, SEIU Caucus President Maria Castaneda, SEIU EVP Rocio Saenz and local union leaders. The statewide community clinics organizing campaign hosted a booth at the summit's organizing fair staffed by LA LGBT Center member Karen Sanchez and Behavioral Health Services member Stephen Valenciano.



KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE!

SEIU 721 VICE PRESIDENT SIMBOA WRIGHT HONORS MLK ON SOUTHERN CHRISTIAN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE-LA LIVESTREAM

WRIGHT SAYS SEIU 721 AND FIX LA ARE KEEPING MLK'S DREAM ALIVE BY PUSHING FOR ECONOMIC AND RACIAL JUSTICE

SEIU 721 Vice President Simboa Wright urged union members to keep Dr. Martin Luther King's dream of economic and racial justice alive during a livestream event commemorating the 60th anniversary of the historic March on Washington.

Hosted by the LA Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference at the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, the event drew an array of labor leaders, including SEIU-USWW Vice President Anton Farmby, SEIU Local 99 President Max Arias, Writers Guild of America Executive Boardmember Eric Haywood, and others.

"We want to continue the legacy of Dr. King," Wright said at the event, called *Beyond the Dream, How the LA Labor Movement is Fulfilling Dr. King's Dream for Jobs and Freedom*. "We want to continue fighting for civil rights. It doesn't stop."

Wright said SEIU 721 LA City members will keep pushing elected officials to fill city vacancies to address short staffing — prioritizing programs that help Black Angelenos and others from historically underserved communities win good, union jobs. He said that LA workers walked off the job in an Unfair Labor Practice strike earlier this month, in part, to advance this demand.

“WE’RE CONTINUING THE FIGHT FOR JUSTICE THAT DR. KING AND THOSE SANITATION WORKERS IN MEMPHIS WERE WAGING. WE ALL MUST FIGHT TOGETHER FOR A BETTER LA.”



SIMBOA WRIGHT
VICE PRESIDENT
SEIU 721



UNION NIGHT AT THE *Dodgers*

SEIU 721 SENDS WINNERS OF TICKET GIVEAWAY TO DODGERS UNION NIGHT

In August, SEIU 721 sent four lucky members and their families to Union Night at the Dodgers to watch our champions extend their winning streak, beating the New York Mets 3-2. Each year, the LA County Federation of Labor hosts a night of solidarity for union members that features a pre-game tribute to workers from across the region and a commemorative T-shirt.

Congratulations to this year's winners: Darvin Quintana, Maricela Quiroz, Mercy Sanchez and Sandra Cardenas!



JOE MARTINEZ IS LEADING THE FIGHT FOR A STRONG UNION AT LAX

When thousands of SEIU 721 members shut down the City of Los Angeles for a one-day strike during the historic 2023 #SolidaritySummer, there was no question where Joe Martinez would be — on the frontlines at LAX/LA World Airports, where he's served as a steward for two decades.

"As a Steward, you teach the contract, but you also fight to protect it," said Martinez, who serves as an SEIU 721 Executive Board member and has represented our union at the LA County Federation of Labor.

"(LAWA) management at one point told us that 85% or more of our members are vocal about the union and demanding respect," Martinez explained. "They were right — 85% or more didn't show up for work and went on strike."

The airport is a growing center of union power, demonstrated by several recent arbitration victories and overwhelming participation in the LA City strike. Recently, Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanics won a group grievance awarding them a 5.5% Promotional Differential including back pay. Soon after, Air Support Garage Attendants

successfully fought for a Biohazard Bonus of 5.5%. They'll get backpay, too.

"We're teaching our members about their rights," Martinez said. "That's a big thing at LAX. Mechanics won a big grievance — the "Heavies." The grievances spiraled from that. We won respect from immediate supervisors. Now, we want it from City Hall."

Martinez prides himself on delivering higher salaries during contract negotiations while fighting hard against privatization — not just at the airport and around LA County, but throughout SEIU 721's turf.

"Stewardship is not just about representing your department," Martinez emphasized. "You are representing your union, too."

He noted that integrity was fundamental to good union stewardship.

"You've got to be honest with people," Martinez said. "It's about being able to work with upper levels so you can get the employee what they deserve."



AFTER 3-DAY ULP STRIKE, SBCERA MEMBERS CONTINUE THEIR FIGHT. SHOW YOUR SUPPORT BY SENDING A MESSAGE TO TRUSTEES!

SBCERA URGES SEIU 721 MEMBERS TO JOIN MESSAGING CAMPAIGN

In the wake of their three-day Unfair Labor Practice strike in August, San Bernardino County Employees' Retirement Association members are urging everyone to send messages of support to SBCERA trustees. SBCERA members have engaged San Bernardino community leaders, who already have sent hundreds of messages to the SBCERA Board of Trustees. They need their union siblings to keep up the pressure.

SBCERA members have been negotiating for two years, where they've been met with rampant bad tactics by management. Management has proposed that employees enroll with a health benefits provider that has not approved enrolling SBCERA workers, delayed bargaining sessions and attempted to subvert the collective bargaining process through back-channel conversations with workers.

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO TELL SBCERA TRUSTEES TO RESPECT WORKERS:

SEIU 721 Latino Caucus Latino Heritage Month Celebration



Last month, SEIU 721 celebrated Latino Heritage Month with a gala celebration. After a presentation by SEIU 721 Chief of Staff Gilda Valdez on the history of the caucus, our union recognized several Latino heroes of our movement. Leadership Award: **Eddie Amparo, Jr.; Theresa Velasco; Floricel Suarez Carbajal and Jesus "Jesse" Gomez.** Guerrero/a Award: **Esmeralda Reynoso; Leo Barrera; Belia Lopez and Salvador Leanos.** Lifetime Achievement Award: **Maribel Castillon.** Congratulations to all!



LA COUNTY SOCIAL WORKERS DEMAND “LOWER CASELOADS NOW”

WORKERS SAY LA COUNTY CEO FAILED TO HONOR RE-OPENER DEAL

On Wed., Oct. 4, hundreds of Children’s Social Workers held a massive rally outside the LA County Hall of Administration with a clear demand: LOWER CASELOADS NOW. Social workers directed their ire at the county’s Chief Executive Officer, whose representatives have refused to bargain in good faith with our union on caseloads.

After the morning rally, more than 200 social workers held a massive march on the boss – delivering a formal letter to CEO representatives reminding them how we got to this point.

Last year during contract negotiations, we could not codify caseloads ostensibly due to a budget deficit in the Department of Children and Family Services. So, our union made a deal with the CEO: If we successfully lobbied the state for more funding, the county

would reopen our contracts when it came to caseloads.

Our union held up our end of the deal, delivering \$300 million. But the county CEO’s office reneged on its end, even though caseloads are as high as 22 per social worker in some areas, such as RFS, LOC, Adoptions and other specialized services.

“ WE HAVE BEEN TEAM PLAYERS. OUR UNION MET OUR SIDE OF THE DEAL. IT’S TIME FOR THE CEO TO MEET THEIRS AND TO LOWER CASELOADS NOW. ”



DAVID GREEN, CSW
PRESIDENT
SEIU 721

SEIU 721 DMH WORKERS WIN NEW TA WITH SIGNING AND RETENTION BONUSES FOR CURRENT EMPLOYEES AND NEW HIRES

RETENTION AND SIGNING BONUSES WILL HELP REDUCE SHORT STAFFING

We’re excited to announce that we have reached a tentative agreement on hiring and retention bonuses for the Alternative Crisis Response Teams!

The new TA was negotiated by our DMH Healthcare Reform & Integration Committee (HRIC), which is comprised of a diverse set of DMH SEIU 721 member leaders who fought hard to include additional programs and classifications.

As with any negotiation, neither side got everything they wanted but our members are proud of the agreement, which secures up to \$10,000 in retention bonuses and \$2,500 signing bonuses for new county employees hired in covered programs.

Current employees can qualify for the full

\$10,000 retention bonus, and new employees become eligible for the retention bonuses if they remain with DMH for the next two years. Short staffing at DMH is causing serious safety concerns. If we don’t fill them, we are in danger of more contracting out in the department.

Our union will continue to engage the Board of Supervisors, the CEO’s office, and the Department of Mental Health to address staffing shortages and in the run up to our 2025 contract negotiations.



SEIU 721 CHIEF OF STAFF GILDA VALDEZ

OUR UNION



SEIU 721 CHAMPIONS WORKERS IN FAST FOOD, CLINICS AND CALIFORNIA'S OTHER FORGOTTEN INDUSTRIES

On September 28, Governor Newsom made history at SEIU 721 when he signed into law AB 1228, the \$20/Hour minimum wage for California fast food workers.

For our union, the historic \$20/Hour fast food minimum wage victory is the culmination of a California campaign we started in 2014 with the Fight for \$15. We lit the spark with historic minimum wage victories in the City of LA and LA County. We ignited a statewide movement that passed a California minimum wage law that boosted pay for 6.5 million Californians.

This historic fight also is a symbol of our union's commitment to workers in forgotten industries struggling to win rights, respect, a living wage and a union. From fast food to community clinics to app-based gig companies to private colleges and universities, we're fighting to raise wage and

benefit standards that, in turn, benefit our public sector members.

It's why we've led efforts to organize gig workers, win job security and strong contracts for adjunct and Non-Tenure Track faculty at colleges around Southern California and win landmark bonuses and wage increases for community clinic workers.

In addition to SB 1228, we helped drive the passage of the \$25/Hour healthcare minimum wage (SB 525) and transparency and accountability for community clinics (SB 779). We're urging Governor Newsom to sign both. He's welcome to come back to SEIU 721 any time if he needs a place to sign them.

Gilda Valdez