

# SEIU 721

PRESIDENT'S REPORT NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2023

## RILED UP IN RIVERSIDE



### RILED UP IN RIVERSIDE

RIVERSIDE COUNTY WORKERS RALLY TO PROTECT PUBLIC SERVICES AND JOBS FROM PRIVATIZATION

### FED UP IN LA CITY

LA CITY WORKERS VOTING ON ULP STRIKE AFTER DOZENS OF ROLLING RALLIES ACROSS THE CITY

### CHILD SAFETY NOW

CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORKERS WIN CASELOAD REFORM IN LA COUNTY



**THANK YOU TO SEIU 721 MEMBERS FOR YOUR SERVICE AND SOLIDARITY**

‘Thank you’ barely begins to express my gratitude.

Over the past several years, SEIU 721 members and working families across the country and around the world have witnessed — and often endured themselves — a global pandemic, rising inflation, political division and grave injustice.

Yet, you carry on.

You deliver vital services to the people of Southern California. You care for your families, friends and your communities. And you support your fellow union members.

Over the past several years, our union family has won unprecedented victories, like landmark fast food and healthcare minimum wage laws that will lift hundreds of thousands of California workers out of poverty. Our members won historic contract victories with raises and bonuses that helped working families cope with rising inflation — in some cases, literally saving family homes in the face of sky-rocketing

housing costs.

This Thanksgiving and holiday season, I am thankful for our solidarity. It powers the hundreds of Riverside County workers standing up to save vital public services and public workers from privatization. It fuels the perseverance of LA City workers who won national headlines for their historic one-day strike — and are voting to authorize another.

I’m thankful for the commitment of SEIU 721 members, like David Cook, a Wastewater Collection Worker II at LASAN recently honored by the LA City Board of Public Works for his 50 years of service to the city.

Our wins happen because we are together, we are united, we are committed to service and we never give up. Labor power is rising again in America — and our union is at the forefront of the resurgence because of all that you do.

Thank you all again, for your service.

*David Green*

**RECOGNIZING SEIU 721 MEMBERS FOR THEIR SERVICE AND SOLIDARITY**

This holiday season, SEIU 721 President David Green gives thanks for the unity, perseverance and commitment of SEIU 721 members. Our solidarity is our strength — it sustains us in our toughest fights and delivers our biggest victories.



**Riverside County workers stand up for public services**

- On Dec. 2, hundreds of SEIU 721 Riverside County workers took to the streets to defend vital county services and the workers who provide them.
- Over the past five years, Riverside County has contracted out \$1 billion of work to private entities — much of it in functions that could be done by SEIU bargaining units.



**LA City workers turn up the heat and kick off a ULP strike vote**

- Fed up with bad-faith bargaining tactics, labor law violations and disrespect, SEIU 721 City of LA members kicked off a ULP strike vote on November 29.
- If you’re an LA City member in good standing, remember to cast your vote before December 13.



**LA County Children’s Social Workers win caseload reform**

- LA County CSWs reached a new Tentative Agreement with the Department of Children and Family Services with major gains on workloads and caseloads, including updated caseload yardsticks for several key programs.



**City of LA honors David Cook’s 50 years of service at LASAN**

- Wastewater Collection Worker II, David Cook, was recognized by the Board of Public Works 50 years of service with the City of Los Angeles.
- SEIU Local 721 Vice President Simboa Wright and LASAN joined the ceremony honoring David.

**When we fight, we win!**

# TURNING UP THE HEAT IN LA CITY

## CITY OF LA SEIU 721 MEMBERS ANNOUNCE ULP STRIKE VOTE AFTER MONTH OF ROLLING RALLIES ACROSS LOS ANGELES

After dozens of Rolling Rallies from the Harbor to the Valley, SEIU 721 City of LA members are turning up the heat, kicking off a ULP strike vote alongside the Coalition of City Unions on November 29.

For months, our elected bargaining teams have negotiated with City officials around the clock to secure a strong new contract that raises wages, addresses understaffing, improves healthcare and protects our retirement security. But city negotiators have offered nothing new. Meanwhile, management has repeatedly violated labor law by withholding information at the bargaining table and surveilling and harassing members for participating in our historic August 1 strike.

We're fed up and we're ready to escalate – and rest assured, any strike by City workers will be even larger and longer than our 1-day strike in August.

“IT'S TIME FOR THE CITY OF LA TO BARGAIN IN GOOD FAITH. A MONTH OF ROLLING RALLIES SHOWS THAT CITY OF LA MEMBERS ARE SICK OF BAD-FAITH BARGAINING AND LIP SERVICE.

IF YOU'RE AN LA CITY MEMBER, CAST YOUR VOTE ON THE ULP STRIKE! ”



SIMBOA WRIGHT  
VICE PRESIDENT  
SEIU 721



From the Harbor to the Valley, SEIU 721 City of LA members are fed up with bad-faith bargaining tactics and disrespect. Voting on a ULP strike is open until December 13.



City of LA members rally at LA Harbor. Because other city workers in the Coalition of City Unions are voting to strike simultaneously with SEIU 721 members, another strike would be even larger than our historic August 1 citywide strike.



City of LA Sanitation workers at one of dozens of lunchtime Rolling Rallies.

### CITY OF LA ULP STRIKE

CITY OF LA MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING: CAST YOUR VOTE ON ULP STRIKE AUTHORIZATION HERE



# FIGHTING FOR PUBLIC SERVICES IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY



## RIVERSIDE COUNTY MEMBERS MARCH TO PROTECT VITAL PUBLIC SERVICES AND JOBS FROM CONTRACTING OUT

On Dec. 2, hundreds of SEIU 721 Riverside County workers took to the streets to defend vital county services and the workers who provide them.

Over the past five years, Riverside County departments have spent more than \$1 billion on private corporations to perform work that should be done by SEIU bargaining units. They've outsourced \$500 million in behavioral health contracts, \$202 million for health services at Riverside University Health System, \$197 million at Riverside TLMA and more.

Meanwhile Riverside County negotiators are trying to short-change county workers with increased health premiums and wage proposals that don't keep pace with sky-rocketing living costs.

Riverside County members have had enough. After a raucous membership meeting at the Riverside Convention Center with SEIU 721 President David Green and Contract Action Team members, hundreds of members marched through Downtown Riverside to the county building.

"The power of our union comes from the unity and action of our membership," said Tara Stoddart, a registered nurse and a member of the CAT. "This gives us the strength we need at the bargaining table."



On December 2, Hundreds of Riverside County workers marched on the Riverside County Building to call out the county's transfer of \$1 billion dollars to outside private contractors over the past 5 years. Meanwhile county negotiators' bargaining proposals short-change public workers delivering vital county services.

# LA COUNTY CSW ACTIONS WIN NEW CASELOAD REFORMS

## CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORKERS AT LA COUNTY DCFS VOTING ON NEW TA WITH CASELOAD REFORM

Our union reached a new Tentative Agreement with the Department of Children and Family Services and all members of Bargaining Unit 723 are encouraged to cast vote YES to lock in significant gains for CSWs.

Our new TA makes serious gains on workloads and caseloads. For instance, it contains updated caseload yardsticks for several key programs.

As a result of the Caseload Accountability Panel — an initiative created by our union contract — average caseload ratios at DCFS Regional Offices already have improved ahead of our union's goals. As of October, Emergency Response had reached 11:1; Continuing Services 14:1, and Dependency Investigations 6.5:1.

Our new TA promises additional improvements and allows us to hold DCFS management accountable. Remember: Lower Caseloads = Child Safety!

**Go to [www.seiu721.org](http://www.seiu721.org) to learn more details about the new TA and to cast your ballot.**

## Los Angeles Daily News

### LA County social workers rally for fewer cases to better protect children

“David Green, SEIU 721 president and longtime county social worker said the rally was...about asking the county to reduce caseloads...so they can process cases more quickly and protect families and children.”



“LA COUNTY CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORKERS: YOUR SOLIDARITY AND COURAGE ARE MAKING A DIFFERENCE ON CASELOAD REFORM AND CHILD SAFETY!”



DAVID GREEN  
PRESIDENT  
SEIU 721

### NEW CASELOAD YARDSTICKS FOR CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORKERS AT LA COUNTY DCFS

Our new TA makes serious gains on workloads and caseloads. For instance, it contains updated yardsticks for the following programs:

- MCMS: 16:1
- RFS: 58:1
- Adoptions MMS: 45:1
- RFA: 24:1
- RFA – Outreach and Recruitment: 45:1

LA COUNTY CHILDREN'S SOCIAL WORKERS:  
GO TO [SEIU721.ORG](http://SEIU721.ORG) TO CAST YOUR BALLOT!

# WE WANT YOU!



**HAVE WHAT IT TAKES TO LEARN CUTTING-EDGE TOOLS TO GROW OUR UNION? SIGN UP TODAY TO BECOME A DIGITAL MEMBER ORGANIZER!**

**JOIN AN EXCLUSIVE GROUP OF SEIU 721 MEMBER LEADERS TRAINED IN THE LATEST TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES.**

SEIU 721 members are leading the way in innovative approaches to strengthening and growing our union - and you're invited to get involved! We're currently seeking applications to join the Digital Member Organizer Bureau (DMOB).

The Digital Member Organizing Bureau is an exclusive group of SEIU 721 member leaders equipped and trained in the latest digital tools and techniques. Being a part of the DMOB means being part of a ground-breaking group that will become the "digital face" of our union. DMOB members will meet regularly to learn and train in:

- Social media content creation
- Ground-breaking digital outreach tools
- Public speaking and media interviews
- Video creation and editing
- And much more

“ ARE YOU READY FOR THE CHALLENGE? USE THE QR CODE BELOW AND FILL OUT YOUR APPLICATION TODAY! ”



**SIMBOA WRIGHT**  
VICE PRESIDENT  
SEIU 721



## **HEALTHRIGHT 360 WORKERS REACH HISTORIC TENTATIVE AGREEMENT WITH 13% WAGE INCREASE AND \$21/HR MINIMUM WAGE**

**HR360 WORKERS AT SEIU LOCALS 721, 221 AND 1021 WILL BE COVERED BY THE NEW AGREEMENT**

We've reached another historic 3-year Tentative Agreement with HealthRIGHT 360! After months of negotiations, SEIU Locals 721, 221 & 1021 have reached a TA that includes across-the-board wage increases, a new increased minimum wage, significant improvement in dependent and family medical benefits, contract language gains & more. The minimum wage for all HR360 employees will now be \$21/hour and everyone will receive a wage increase of at least 13% over the contract. Strong agreements like these are proof of what we can accomplish when we exercise our union power and form strong employer partnerships. Together We Win!

“ CONGRATULATIONS TO HR360 WORKERS AT 721 AND OUR SISTER LOCALS ACROSS CALIFORNIA. THROUGH MONTHS OF CAREFUL NEGOTIATIONS, YOU'VE BARGAINED A STRONG NEW CONTRACT THAT IS A MODEL FOR OTHER COMMUNITY CLINIC WORKERS ACROSS THE STATE. ”



**LILLIAN CABRAL**  
SECRETARY  
SEIU 721



# SEIU 721 TRI-COUNTIES



## VENTURA SUPERIOR COURT LEGACY MEMBERS APPROVE RETIREMENT PROTECTIONS

Deal reached to protect legacy court workers from effects of *Alameda* Decision

SEIU 721 Ventura Superior Court legacy members unanimously voted YES on the Alameda Decision mitigation tentative agreement (TA).

In 2020, the California Supreme Court ruled that county retirement systems do not have the discretion to include in-kind/non-cash compensation for purposes of calculating a retirement benefit. This decision negatively impacted Ventura Superior Court legacy members by disqualifying their Flex Credit for purposes of calculating their pension payout.

Bargaining sub-committee members Amy Sagar,

Becky Sebesta, and Lisa Vargus worked long and hard to secure a great TA that includes post-retirement subsidies for current and future retirees.

A big thank you to our vote counters from WellPath, Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District, and the County of Ventura.

To learn more, contact a sub-committee member, Worksite Organizer Esmeralda Reynoso at [esmeralda.reynoso@seiu721.org](mailto:esmeralda.reynoso@seiu721.org), (805) 535-3927; or Chief Negotiator Aram Agdaian at [aram.agdaian@seiu721.org](mailto:aram.agdaian@seiu721.org), (213) 494-8223.



## SEIU 721 CITY OF OXNARD MEMBERS BLOCK CONTRACTING OUT PLAN

In the wake of a concerted lobbying effort by SEIU 721 City of Oxnard members and community allies, like Jeremy Goldberg from the Central Coast Labor Council and Maria Navarro from the community group CAUSE, the Oxnard City Council's Finance and Governance Committee voted unanimously to reject a plan to contract out five customer services positions, saving members' jobs.

## CONGRATULATIONS! 2024 SEIU 721 SANTA BARBARA COUNTY CHAPTER BOARD MEMBERS

					
<b>Yuri Gomez</b> Chair Social Services Supervisor II, DSS Lompoc	<b>Ari Robledo</b> Co-Chair Eligibility Worker III, DSS-Santa Maria Carmen Lane	<b>Clarissa Ornelas</b> Secretary Social Services Worker, Public Defender Santa Maria	<b>Bernie Ruiz</b> At-Large Social Services Supervisor II, DSS Lompoc	<b>Phillip Reyes</b> At-Large Senior Career Employment Specialist, Santa Maria WRC	<b>Steve Hernandez</b> At-Large Senior Career Employment Specialist, Santa Maria WRC

# CONTRACT WIN AT RIVERSIDE LAW LIBRARY



“CONGRATULATIONS TO RIVERSIDE COUNTY LAW LIBRARY WORKERS FOR THE LATEST IN A STRING OF GREAT INLAND VICTORIES.”

SIMBOA WRIGHT  
VICE PRESIDENT, SEIU 721



SEIU 721 members at the Riverside County Law Library ratified a strong new two-year deal in November. Our union strength won a double digit pay increases and a new paid holiday. RCLL members add to the

wave of Inland Region bargaining units who’ve secured big wins in recent contracts. As our union’s fastest growing region, Inland is proving our motto: when we fight, we win!

# UNION YES! AT LMU



“NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY AT LMU ARE JOINING A GROWING MOVEMENT OF EDUCATORS FORMING A UNION TO FIGHT FOR FAIR PAY AND STABLE WORK.”

ADOLFO GRANADOS  
VICE PRESIDENT  
SEIU 721



In early November, Loyola Marymount University’s Non-Tenure Track Faculty (NTT Faculty) launched a campaign to join SEIU Local 721 to gain job security, living wages, and the rights and protections that they deserve.

LMU’s NTT Faculty do most of the teaching at LMU, yet they are treated like short-term contract workers with minimal opportunities to advance at the university, and their wages make it difficult to survive in one of the most expensive regions in the United States — so many take other jobs to pay the bills, limiting

their effectiveness as instructors.

On November 2, NTT Faculty published an open letter to colleagues stating, “Our working conditions affect our students... by limiting what we can realistically do to educate and support them. Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions.” The letter added: “There is a path forward. We are forming a union to gain job security, living wages, and the rights and protections that we deserve. We are forming a union to better serve our students, our institution, and our families.”

# PROTECTING PARK AND REC



## SEIU 721 LA COUNTY PARK AND REC WORKERS WIN NEW PROTECTIONS

In response to rising complaints by LA County Park and Rec workers about threatening behavior by park-goers, our union won a new law to protect them.

A new ordinance unanimously approved by the LA County Board of Supervisors in November authorizes county officials to issue "exclusion orders" to people exhibiting dangerous or threatening behavior, barring them from county parks for a month or more.

As our union President David Green told the *Los Angeles Times*, "The status quo is our workers are being harassed and assaulted and spit upon."

A recent safety SEIU 721 safety survey found 40% of LA County Parks and Recreation employees had been threatened, harassed or physically attacked while at work, with nearly half saying such attacks happened at least three times.

## Los Angeles Times

November 22, 2023

### LA Supervisors move to ban threatening park-goers for a month or more

“The Board of Supervisors unanimously approved an ordinance Tuesday allowing staff to temporarily ban unruly people from the county’s green spaces.

The ordinance, passed without discussion, was supported by SEIU 721, the labor union that represents 1,600 parks department employees.”

# 721 FIGHTS BREAST CANCER



“TO HELP THE SEIU 721 WOMEN’S CAUCUS FIGHT BREAST CANCER, GO TO THE LINK BELOW AND ENTER TEAM: **SEIU 721 WOMEN’S CAUCUS-XOXO** TO MAKE YOUR DONATION.”



LILLIAN CABRAL  
SECRETARY, SEIU 721

Members of SEIU 721’s Women’s Caucus joined the American Cancer Society’s Making Strides Against Breast Cancer 5K walk on Saturday, October 21 to raise money for breast cancer research.

Women’s Caucus Chair Theresa Velasco and Co-Chair Kelley Dixon-Turner organized the SEIU 721 team, which included SEIU 721 Political Director Pamm Fair, and raised \$970.00 for ACS.

The American Cancer Society offers programs and services to help the more than 1.4 million cancer patients diagnosed each year in the U.S. **If you want to support the American Cancer Society in the name of the SEIU 721 Women’s Caucus team, fundraising is open until December 31.**

# FOOD, FUN AND FRIENDSHIP AT SEIU 721

WORKING FAMILIES ARE THE HEARTBEAT OF OUR UNION. WE CELEBRATE THEM EVERY YEAR AT SEIU 721'S ASSEMBLY AND FAMILY FUN DAY.



SEIU 721 CHIEF OF STAFF GILDA VALDEZ

# OUR UNION



## LA CITY NEGOTIATORS ARE ABOUT TO GET A WAKE UP CALL FROM CITY WORKERS FED UP WITH UNFAIR LABOR PRACTICES

For months, our elected SEIU 721 City of Los Angeles bargaining teams have negotiated around the clock with city officials to secure a fair contract. Instead of realistic proposals, they've responded with bad faith bargaining tactics and a slew of labor law violations.

It might be time to order up vision and hearing screening tests for the city's negotiators because apparently they missed our historic one-day citywide strike on August 8. Thousands of city workers from the Valley to the Harbor shut down city services and picketed City Hall, LAX and dozens of workplaces actions across the region.

The White House heard us. So did *Good Morning America*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post* and 5,000 other media outlets. But maybe we need to do it louder for city negotiators to take notice.

SEIU 721 City of LA members are voting now to authorize a ULP strike. It will be larger and longer than the one in August. This time, our union siblings in the Coalition of City Unions are voting simultaneously – meaning that any potential strike will cripple city services.

We don't want to strike, but our members are tired of the disrespect. LA City workers have held the city together through the pandemic. They're tasked with tackling the city's dual mental health and homelessness crises while desperately short staffed. They're being crushed by the skyrocketing cost of living in LA.

They deserve a fair contract with competitive wages, affordable healthcare, secure retirement and adequate staffing. And they are willing to fight for it.

*Gilda Valdez*