

SEIU 721

PRESIDENT'S REPORT MARCH-APRIL 2024

VICTORY IN RIVERSIDE



SOCIAL WORKERS

HONOR SOCIAL WORKERS BY
GIVING US WHAT WE NEED

HUGE STARBUCKS WIN

STARBUCKS UNITED WORKERS WIN
A PATH TO COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

LA CITY RATIFIES WIN

MEMBERS RATIFY HISTORIC NEW
5-YEAR CONTRACT



I became a social worker to help people. I remain one because I am empowered by my co-workers and a strong union.

People often ask me why I became a social worker.

That's easy. I was inspired by my mother who taught me that every child needs love and that all families should be treated with compassion.

The more difficult question to answer is why I remain one in the face of all the challenges faced by social workers today. Sky-rocketing demand caused by homelessness and opioid addiction has ballooned caseloads, causing stress, burnout and attrition.

Like other social workers, a desire to help others drew me to the profession. Part of what keeps me here and invigorates me after two decades at the LA County Department of

Children and Family Services is the support of my fellow social workers and the optimism of my social work students at Cal State LA, where I'm an adjunct professor. Most of all, it's the empowerment I and other social workers feel knowing a strong union has our backs.

This Social Worker Month, I'm grateful that social workers confronting rising demand, shrinking resources and negative scrutiny from the media have SEIU 721 to fight for us. Our union has led the charge to secure funding to address short-staffing, improve mentoring to slow attrition, reduce caseloads to improve child safety and fight back against scapegoating in the media.

That's the union difference.

David Green

HONOR SOCIAL WORKERS WITH THE REFORMS WE NEED

During Social Worker Month, instead of proclamations and awards, I encourage our political leaders to support social workers by delivering the reforms they need.



Reduce excessive caseloads that hurt clients and workers

- SEIU 721 has warned for years that massive caseloads burn out workers and excessive bureaucratic paperwork requirements rob them of time spent serving clients. Our union has won major reform, but much more remains to be done.



Fix short-staffing by staffing up and reducing attrition

- Everyone agrees that social work is a stressful profession, and the turnover numbers prove it. SEIU 721 has pioneered mentoring programs that help new social workers navigate challenges, reducing employee turnover. Again, we can do a lot more to help social workers cope.



Deliver the funding to address society's biggest problems

- Local governments across the country are declaring a triple-barreled state of emergency over homelessness, rising addiction and untreated mental illness, and social workers are the first-responders. They need the resources to make a difference.



Fight back against media scapegoating of social workers

- The media is slow to recognize social workers for their accomplishments, but quick to blame them when anything goes wrong. Our union works overtime to publicize the truth and remind the media that social workers and their union have been ringing the alarm bell for years about systemic problems that put our clients at risk.

When we fight, we win!

HISTORIC WIN IN RIVERSIDE COUNTY

BIG RIVERSIDE COUNTY TA WIN VALIDATES NEW INLAND STRATEGY

SEIU 721 Riverside County members secured a TA for an historic 3-year contract with a 13% across-the-board raise and a 33% percent increase in employer contributions for family health benefits.

The agreement narrowly averted a strike, coming just days before the February 23 strike authorization deadline.

The new TA, which also delivered reductions in contracting out and a wide range of pay premiums, is a huge win for the SEIU 721 Riverside County members.

The win is a testament to our union's investment in aggressive strategies, beginning with a massive 2022 field campaign that helped elect a pro-worker majority on the Riverside County Board of Supervisors. It's a welcome contrast to our 2017 contract campaign, which generated 40 Unfair Labor Practice charges and a three-day strike. Member leaders say it's just the beginning and are pursuing a dues alignment plan to help deliver more wins for members.

THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE **PE.com**

February 28, 2024

Union tentatively agrees to contract with Riverside County

Proposed three-year deal averts a possible strike

“The tentative contract includes cost-of-living raises of 5% in 2024, 4% in 2025 and 4% in 2026 and bigger subsidies to cover employees' rising health insurance costs...the new deal also calls for a \$54 million reduction in the use of “traveler” or outside nurses at Riverside University Health System [and] caseload goals for social service practitioners with a focus on improving child safety...”



NEW RIVERSIDE COUNTY RAISES

5%	FIRST PAY PERIOD AFTER COUNTY APPROVAL
4%	MAY, 2025
4%	MAY, 2026
13%	TOTAL

To read more about the new Riverside County Agreement, use your smartphone camera to scan this code:



LA COUNTY LET'S TALK ABOUT SHORT-STAFFING



LA COUNTY WORKERS: TAKE THE SEIU 721 SHORT-STAFFING SURVEY FOR A CHANCE TO WIN

We want to hear from YOU and other LA County members of SEIU 721 about short-staffing and whether it's a problem at your workplace.

Short-staffing reduces the quality of vital public services by burning out the public employees who deliver them — sometimes threatening their mental and physical health.

As we prepare to bargain a new contract in 2025, it's critical that we hear from frontline LA County workers across departments and worksites about how short-staffing affects them and the services they provide.

Take the short-staffing survey today and you'll automatically be registered for a chance to win — either a big screen TV, an iPad or free Disneyland tickets!



LA COUNTY WORKERS: IS SHORT-STAFFING A PROBLEM AT YOUR WORKPLACE? TAKE THE SURVEY!

Take the SEIU 721 short-staffing survey for a chance to win a big screen TV, an iPad or free Disneyland tickets!

Nurses, RNs or
Advanced Practice RNs:
Use your smartphone
to scan this code to
complete your survey



All other LA County
employees:
Use your smartphone
to scan this code to
complete your survey



STARBUCKS WORKERS SCORE HUGE VICTORY

STARBUCKS AGREEMENT PAVES THE WAY FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Baristas in Starbucks Workers United announced on February 27 that they have reached an agreement with Starbucks that paves the way for:

- collective bargaining agreements for workers at represented stores and partners;
- a fair process for workers to organize going forward;
- and the resolution of several lawsuits, including brand litigation.

The announcement sent shockwaves through the Labor movement. Since 2022, Starbucks workers have organized nearly 400 of Starbucks' 9,000 U.S. stores but have been unable to achieve collective bargaining agreements.

The agreement also provides workers at unionized stores with benefits that were granted to non-union workers in 2022, including the ability to receive customer tips from credit card transactions.

 Starbucks Workers United
@SBWorkersUnited · Feb 27

“ Starbucks Workers United and Starbucks have agreed to begin discussions on a foundational framework to achieve collective bargaining agreements for represented stores and partners...and a fair process for workers to organize.

As a sign of good faith, Starbucks has agreed to provide workers represented by Workers United with credit card tipping and benefits announced by the company in May of 2022.”

 THIS IS HUGE. 

STARBUCKS BARISTAS' NEW AGREEMENT DEMONSTRATES
THE POWER OF JOINING TOGETHER IN A UNION.



“ Starbucks baristas are showing all of us the power of joining together in a union.

Thousands and baristas joined together, went on strike and made this happen.

Congratulations on your victory!”



LILLIAN CABRAL
SECRETARY, SEIU 721



SEIU 721 TRI-COUNTIES



Santa Barbara County members score short-staffing win

Santa Barbara County supervisors add 50 SEIU-represented positions at the Department of Human Services

In February, SEIU 721 Santa Barbara County eligibility workers won their two-year battle to reduce short-staffing in the county's Department of Social Services when the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to add 89 new positions — 50 of which will be represented by our union.

County eligibility workers have struggled as food stamp cases skyrocketed and employee attrition and turnover increased.

Adding insult to injury, one high-ranking Santa Barbara County manager recently blamed high employee turnover at DHS on women workers “going off to have babies,” ignoring management’s responsibility for worsening department turnover with its widely criticized unfair promotion practices. In response, SEIU 721 eligibility workers showed up to the next County Board of Supervisors meeting wearing T-shirts that said, “I’m not pregnant but I still might quit.”

Ventura County members celebrate wins with In-N-Out burger bash



SEIU 721 members from the Ventura County Government Center hosted a member appreciation event where more than 600 members were treated to an In-N-Out lunch.

SEIU 721 Ventura County took the opportunity to celebrate the first instalment of their pay increase won in our last contract campaign.

SEIU 721 Executive Board members welcomed County of Ventura, Ventura Superior Court and WellPath (CFMG) workers and special guests Ventura County Supervisors Vianey Lopez and Matt LaVere and District Attorney Erik Nasarenko.



FIGHTING FOR FAIRNESS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

NON-TENTURE TRACK FACULTY AT UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO AND LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY FIGHT FOR FAIR WAGES, JOB SECURITY AND A UNION WITH SEIU LOCAL 721



On February 14, Non-Tenure Track (NTT) Faculty in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of San Diego (USD) launched a campaign to join SEIU 721.

The same day, Loyola Marymount University (LMU) students joined Non-Tenure Track (NTT) Faculty at LMU's Wellness Wednesday to learn more about NTT Faculty efforts to form a union with SEIU 721. Hundreds of students signed

a petition supporting calling on LMU leadership to "refrain from resisting or interfering in NTT Faculty's union campaign and agree to recognize the NTT Faculty union via a card check process."

Private universities increasingly are replacing tenure-track positions with contingent, non-tenure track teaching appointments that offer no job security, much lower wages, and limited opportunities for advancement.

“SEIU 721 IS ALL-IN TO HELP NON-TENURE TRACK FACULTY AT UNIVERSITY OF SAN DIEGO AND LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY WIN A UNION AND THE JOB SECURITY, WAGES AND RESPECT THAT THEY DESERVE.”

ADOLFO GRANADOS
TREASURER
SEIU 721





CELEBRATING LUNAR NEW YEAR

SEIU 721 ASIAN PACIFIC ISLANDER CAUCUS DRAWS RECORD-BREAKING ATTENDANCE FOR FEBRUARY 17 LUNAR NEW YEAR CELEBRATION

LUNAR NEW YEAR EVENT CELEBRATES API HERITAGE, PRIDE AND UNION SOLIDARITY

In a dazzling display of cultural pride and solidarity, our SEIU 721 Asian Pacific Islander (API) Caucus hosted an unforgettable Lunar New Year Celebration on Saturday, February 17th, commemorating the Year of the Dragon.

A record-breaking 300 members, allies and guests celebrated community and union solidarity at the Ramada in South El Monte, enjoying captivating performances from the esteemed America Hubei General Union and the mesmerizing Yixin Dance troupe.

The event wove together diverse threads of Asian and Pacific Islander heritage in an energetic tapestry of celebration and pride.

“SEIU 721’s API Caucus hosted a dazzling event that celebrates the rich heritage and diversity of our membership and the power of our solidarity.”



SIMBOA WRIGHT
VICE PRESIDENT, SEIU 721



GET TRAINED AND EMPOWERED

ALL MEMBERS ARE INVITED TO SIGN UP FOR “KNOW YOUR RIGHTS” TRAINING TO GROW A NEW GENERATION OF WORKPLACE LEADERS

MONTHLY TRAININGS BUILD KNOWLEDGE OF UNION RIGHTS AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Every SEIU 721 member should their rights in the workplace. Even if you don’t want to be a shop steward, you should understand basic union rights and protections, how to resolve conflicts and what to do if you rights are violated.

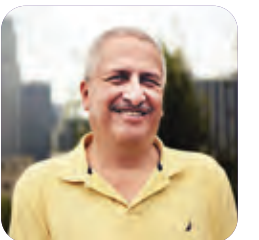
That’s why SEIU 721 is offering regular **Know Your Rights Training** for all members.

Our goal is to provide members the information to become effective and empowered leaders in the worksite:

- **March 4 – Conflict Resolution**
- **March 6 – Weingarten Rights**
- **March 18 – Understanding Your Union Contract**
- **March 27 – Family Medical Leave and other types of leaves**

“ALL SEIU 721 MEMBERS SHOULD KNOW THEIR WORKPLACE RIGHTS. EVEN IF YOU DON’T WANT TO BE A STEWARD, YOU’LL BENEFIT FROM KNOW YOUR RIGHTS TRAINING.”

ADOLFO GRANADOS
TREASURER
SEIU 721



RSVP for trainings at
www.seiu721.org

If you want help with issues at work, talk to a Shop Steward or Worksite Organizer, or call the Member Connection at 877-721-4968.



LA CITY MEMBERS RATIFY HISTORIC WIN

LA CITY RATIFIES HISTORIC 5-YEAR CONTRACT WITH 22% RAISE AFTER FIRST CITYWIDE STRIKE IN 40 YEARS CAPTURES NATIONAL ATTENTION

VOTE TALLY LOCKS IN AN UNPRECEDENTED WIN AFTER A CONTRACT FIGHT FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS

With the conclusion of LAPMA's vote count, we're proud to announce that SEIU 721 LA City members have overwhelmingly ratified our LA City successor contract.

The vote concludes an historic contract fight. LA City members walked off the job in the first citywide strike in 40 years, capturing the attention of the New York Times, Good Morning America and 5,300 other stories from media outlets across the country — we even received a call of support from the White House. An 11th-hour negotiation session personally attended by Mayor Bass narrowly averted a second strike.

LA City members voted in record numbers through our web portal, mail-in ballots and worksite polling places to ratify the historic 5-year deal.

Ratification locks in 22% raises over the life of the contract, including 6% this year.

All that remains is an anticipated vote of approval from the LA City Council to seal the deal. Stay tuned for updates.



APS MEMBERS: "WE NEED MORE STAFF NOW!"

LA COUNTY ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES WORKERS ASK LA SUPERVISORS TO FIX SHORT-STAFFING

Braving a rain storm, LA County Adult Protective Services workers poured into the February 6 LA County Board of Supervisors' meeting to sound the alarm on short-staffing. APS workers testified that they are vital to LA County's response to the homelessness crisis but they are hobbled by severe understaffing.

- Dinisha Arkadie of the Lancaster APS Office reminded supervisors that the elderly are LA County's fastest-growing homeless population.

- Marlo Morgan-Williams of the San Pedro Field Office said the department's high vacancy rate reduces their ability help vulnerable clients on the verge of living on the street.
- Jose Melendez of the Whittier Mobile Unit said APS workers know best how to serve elders and encouraged supervisors to listen to their frontline workforce.

The weather was cloudy but our message was clear: Listen to frontline workers and staff up to save LA County's most vulnerable elders from homelessness.



SEIU 721 President David Green urges California to implement CalAccount as an alternative to high-cost payday lenders

LOW-WAGE WORKERS LACK ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE BANKING

SEIU 721 President David Green delivered a message at California Treasurer Fiona Ma's February 23 CalAccount Town Hall in DTLA: SEIU 721 members and other union workers around the state want CalAccount as an alternative to high-fee payday lenders and check-cashing stores.

CalAccount would offer a voluntary, zero-fee, zero-penalty, federally insured transaction account to working people through the California Public Banking Option Act. Customers could access their accounts in person at post offices, rather than at bank branches.

California has one of the highest concentrations of unbanked families in the nation, according to the Federal Reserve. Workers earning less than \$15 per hour make up 81% of unbanked individuals in the state, according to their study.



RETIRING SOON?

JOIN THE SEIU 721 RETIREE COMMITTEE



Retiring from full-time employment doesn't mean you have to leave your union!

Join the Retiree Committee to stay active and informed and preserve some key benefits.

Call the Member Connection:
877-721-4YOU (4968)

RETIRED
and **ACTIVE**
SEIU LOCAL 721

OUR UNION



BIG WIN IN RIVERSIDE

RIVERSIDE COUNTY WORKERS SECURED A LANDMARK TENTATIVE AGREEMENT. IT DIDN'T HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT.

Riverside County workers just TA'ed a great new 3-year contract.

It was no accident.

After a protracted contract fight in 2017 that generated 40 Unfair Labor Practice charges and culminated in a three-day strike, SEIU 721 Riverside County members developed new strategies and invested in building organizational strength and enhanced political power. They joined a massive SEIU 721 Inland Area field campaign in the 2022 election cycle that yielded a pro-worker majority on the Riverside County Board of Supervisors.

The contract victory is a testament to

Riverside County members' hard work and validation of their chapter's new strategies. Still, they aren't taking anything for granted. SEIU 721 Riverside County has proposed a dues alignment plan to expand the programs that delivered a 13% raise and a 33% increase in employer contributions to members' health care benefits.

This is a smart move and an example of how members' investment in COPE, time spent on field actions and careful strategic planning produces policy change, better services for communities and real dollars in working families' pockets.

Gilda Valdez