

SEIU 721

PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL 2024

SEIU 721 COPE SCORES BIG ELECTION WINS



WOMEN'S CAUCUS

SEIU 721 CELEBRATES
WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

REPRESENTATIONAL WINS

SEIU 721 FIGHTS FOR MEMBERS AND
WINS MAJOR GRIEVANCE VICTORIES

VICTORY IN WATTS

WORKERS AT WATTS HEALTHCARE
CORPORATION RATIFY CONTRACT



Think your vote or contributing to SEIU 721 COPE doesn't matter? Take a look at how union workers helped power big election wins.

"My vote doesn't matter."

I hear this a lot from workers discouraged by the big-money, negativity and polarization that characterizes much of today's political campaigning.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

The March 2024 election proved two things. First, it showed SEIU 721 members' investment in COPE made the difference in dozens of key races — from congressional and state legislative races to county supervisorial and city council races, and to Prop 1, a statewide ballot measure that will generate \$6.4 billion to fund vital county-level drug and mental health treatment services.

Second, the razor-thin margin of victory in several important races shows that every vote matters.

SEIU 721 members and other union members' COPE contributions and their time spent staffing phonebanks and walking precincts helped Prop 1 win by less than half a percentage point — the narrowest

statewide ballot measure victory in more than 35 years. We also helped Inland candidate Christy Holstege come in first in one of the closest state assembly races in California history.

SEIU 721 members' support helped propel longtime allies like LA County Supervisors Kathryn Barger, Holly Mitchell and Janice Hahn to re-election. They secured the re-election of LA City Council members Marqueece Harris-Dawson and Nithya Raman — helping the latter avoid a costly run-off in a close race.

But the work isn't done. Many of our endorsed candidates — like Adrin Nazarian running for LA City Council and former LA Democratic Party Chair Mark Gonzalez running for Assembly — are facing well-funded challengers in November.

That's why, when we fight, every vote counts.

David Green

SEIU 721 COPE MAKES THE DIFFERENCE IN KEY RACES

In some of California's most important campaigns and several razor-close races, SEIU 721 COPE and members' time spent contacting voters made the difference.



SEIU 721 supports Prop 1 in photo-finish victory

Proposition 1 was the eighth-closest statewide ballot measure race since 1908 and the closest in 35 years, when 1988's Proposition 74 proposing \$1 billion in bonds for improvements to state highways, streets, roads and rail transit was defeated 50.01% to 49.99%.



Kathryn Barger

SEIU 721 powers LA County Supervisor allies to victory

SEIU 721 members are celebrating the re-election of three allies to the LA County Board of Supervisors. SEIU 721 members worked tirelessly in support of Kathryn Barger, Holly Mitchell and Janice Hahn to help them overcome strong challengers.



Nithya Raman

SEIU 721 helps Nithya Raman avoid a costly run-off

SEIU 721 COPE helped allies on the LA Council score impressive wins. They helped elect Marqueece Harris-Dawson and Nithya Raman outright — helping the latter avoid a costly run-off.



Mark Gonzalez

SEIU 721 is working hard to lift our candidates to victory

The work of SEIU 721 isn't done yet. Many of our endorsed candidates — like Adrin Nazarian running for LA City Council and Mark Gonzalez running for Assembly — still face strong, well-funded challengers in the November General Election. We'll keep working hard to lift them to victory in November.

When we fight, we win!

RIVERSIDE COUNTY RATIFIES

Riverside County Members approve historic 3-year deal

County of Riverside members have been fighting hard to build our union power for years, and that work has paid off.

After months of negotiations, countless member actions, a massive downtown march, rolling rallies and a ULP strike authorization, County of Riverside members overwhelmingly voted to ratify our historic TA and to invest in our union through a phased-in dues realignment.

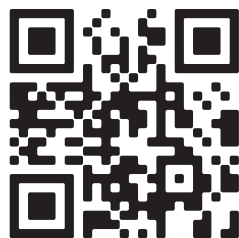
These victories would not have been possible without your hard work and the support of our member-elected SEIU 721 bargaining committee.

Now the TA will go to the Riverside Board of Supervisors for final ratification. Then we'll see the first of our historic raises!

RIVERSIDE COUNTY RAISE SCHEDULE

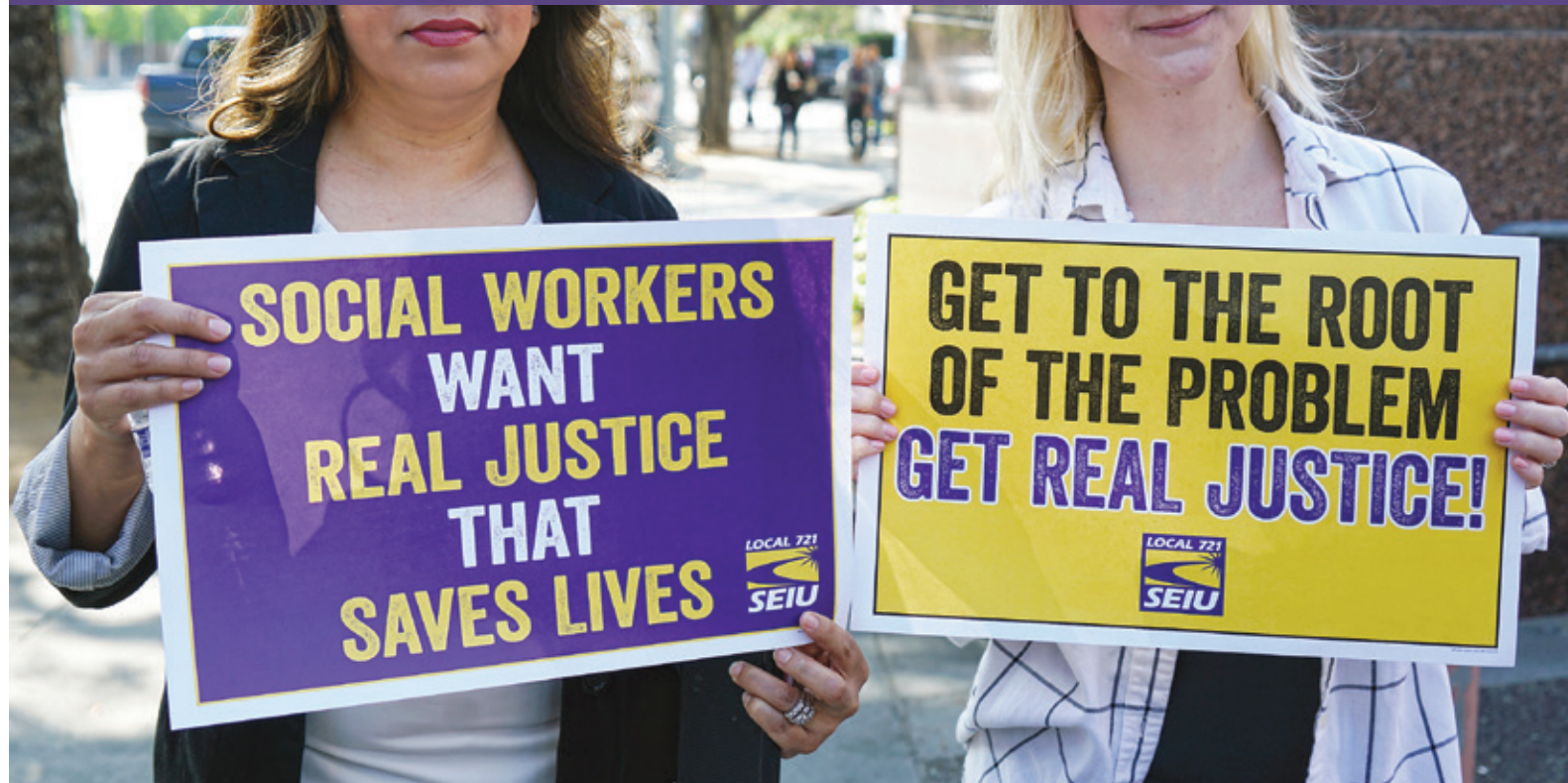
- 5% FIRST PAY PERIOD AFTER COUNTY APPROVAL
- 4% MAY 2025
- 4% MAY 2026
- 13% TOTAL

Want to know more?
Scan here with your
smartphone camera:



SEIU 721 WINS REPRESENTATIONAL VICTORIES

ABOVE ALL, THE JOB OF OUR UNION IS TO PROTECT OUR MEMBERS — NO MATTER HOW BIG OR SMALL THE FIGHT



VICTORY: SEIU 721 SOCIAL WORKER ELYA KAZARYAN REINSTATED WITH FOUR YEARS OF BACK PAY!



“ I APPRECIATE ALL THE HELP I GOT FROM OUR UNION. I’M GLAD I JOINED THE UNION RIGHT NOW. I’M GLAD SEIU 721 HELPED ME TO SPEAK OUT AND PUSH BACK. ”

DAVID VARGAS, ELECTRICIAN
LA COUNTY SANITATION DISTRICT

Four years ago, one of our own fellow Social Workers – Elya Kazaryan – was unjustly terminated by the LA County Department of Children and Family Services. Kazaryan was a 19-year employee at DCFS with no prior discipline. DCFS claimed she falsified records.

Kazaryan filed a case with the Civil Service Commission and won. Then DCFS appealed their loss in LA Superior Court.

We recently learned that the LA Superior Court sided in Kazaryan’s favor. Judge James C.

Chalfant upheld the Civil Service Commission’s decision, which found that DCFS terminated Kazaryan without just cause and that Kazaryan deserved to be reinstated.

LA County waived its right to testify. As a result, the Court’s decision for Kazaryan is final and she will be reinstated with four years of back pay.

“Thank you for believing in me,” Kazaryan said. “A special Thank You to my union team – David Green and Adriel Peterson – for going above and beyond to help me!”

LA County Sanitation District electrician David Vargas worked with SEIU 721 to fight and win a grievance to reverse a disciplinary charge after he was blamed for a workplace accident that wasn’t his fault.

While on the job in a Sanitation District truck, a pipe slid off a rack — breaking a window and causing Vargas to get in an accident. The District blamed him — punishing him with a one-day suspension and threatening to put the accident on his record. This was a major problem — district

policy is to release any employee with three accidents on his or her record.

Vargas filed a grievance through our union, saying he hadn’t been given the proper equipment to secure the pipe in the first place. The District’s own Health and Safety inspector confirmed that Vargas had been given a ladder rack – not a pipe rack – which caused the accident. This critical evidence helped our union win Vargas’ case during his Skelly hearing.

STUDENTS RISING



Occidental College Student Workers March on Campus President, Demand Union Recognition to Join SEIU 721

Occidental College student workers and allies marched to campus President Harry J. Elam Jr.'s office on Friday, March 22, to demand that he sign a pledge committing the college to voluntarily recognize their union through a card check process.

The student workers — who are resident advisors, tour guides, tutors, photographers, mail clerks, researchers, information technology services technicians and more — have collected hundreds of union authorization cards to join SEIU Local 721 over the past few weeks, gathering support from a clear majority of student workers.

The student workers also filed for a union election with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) — but will still push for the college to recognize the union through card check.



Occidental College students march on the campus president on March 22.



SEIU 721 JOINS FIGHT AGAINST HOMELESSNESS

President David Green and SEIU 721 members kick off signature gathering effort with the LA Labor Federation to qualify homeless service reform measure.

New poll reveals 60% of LA County voters support proposal to reform critical homelessness programs

SEIU 721 members joined an alliance of civic groups to gather signatures to place a measure on the November ballot to reform L.A. County's existing homelessness sales tax to raise more funds for housing, prevention and services.

A new poll by The Angeleno Project found that 60% of voters would support the measure, which would expedite housing for those living on the street and most at risk of falling into homelessness, and increase mental health and substance abuse treatment.

If approved by LA County voters, it would replace Measure H, the quarter-cent sales tax voters approved in 2017.

Proponents estimate it would produce \$1.2 billion annually.

“HOMELESSNESS IN LA COUNTY IS THE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS OF OUR TIME IN THE REGION. THIS MEASURE WILL REFORM HOW WE TREAT ADDICTION AND MENTAL ILLNESS AND HELP VULNERABLE ANGELENOS INTO PERMANENT HOUSING.”

DAVID GREEN
PRESIDENT, SEIU 721



New poll shows 60% of LA County voters support measure to reform and fund homelessness services





COURT REPORTERS SAY AUDIO TAPING BILL THREATENED JUSTICE

Union court reporters defeat state senate bill to replace them with faulty electronic recording and speak out on Fox News 11 about short-staffing

SEIU 721 COURT REPORTERS SAY JUSTICE DEMANDS FULL STAFFING, NOT AUTOMATED AUDIO RECORDING

Union court reporters across California recently defeated SB 662, which would have expanded electronic recording to civil court proceedings. SEIU 721 court reporters say the bill would have put justice at risk by denying litigants the right to an accurate transcript of proceedings — replacing court reporters with notoriously faulty audio recordings that can miss important details when people are talking over each other in the courtroom and are easily manipulated. Court reporters across the state joined with our colleagues to make phone calls, send letters, testify, lobby and rally to defeat the attack on our profession.

Even though SB 662 is no longer a threat, we’re working hard to fill vacant Court Reporter jobs by increasing and publicizing recruitment and retention efforts. SEIU 721 member Diana Van Dyke recently spoke with Fox 11 News reporter Hal Eisner about the importance of professional court reporters and the need to restore retention and recruitment funds to fully staff courtrooms.



“Replacing court reporters with audio recordings puts justice at risk. It takes away any accountability for providing litigants with a true record of what happened in legal proceedings.”

DIANA VAN DYKE
COURT REPORTER AND SEIU 721 MEMBER



SEIU 721 SOCIAL WORKERS LOBBY STATE LEGISLATORS FOR FUNDING

SEIU 721 LA County DPSS Social Workers traveled to Sacramento to lobby legislators to release \$51 million to county human services agencies for IHSS administration to relieve bottlenecks in providing care to elderly and disabled clients.

“I am the bridge to lifesaving care for my IHSS clients, but I have twice as many clients as I can successfully serve,” said Steven Gimian, who is a Social Services Supervisor at LA County DPSS. “That means delays in needed care and vulnerable people suffering. This is not how we should be treating seniors and people with disabilities.”



CLINIC WORKERS SPEAK OUT



CLINIC WORKERS AT ROUNDTABLE SAY UNIONS IMPROVE CARE

Community Clinic Workers United members discuss how building our union can improve patient care

Members of Community Clinic Workers United held a standing-room-only roundtable in Ventura County where they shared stories about how issues like short staffing affect patients. They were joined by SEIU 721 members who shared their experiences fighting for more than a decade to form their union. Elected officials and their representatives were in attendance and heard first-hand how unionized clinic workers are leading the charge for better patient care in our communities.



**KNOW
YOUR
RIGHTS**

A TOOLBOX FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS

Stewards should master a variety of techniques to solve problems

Resolving workplace problems is one of the most common — and most important — duties of SEIU 721 stewards. Knowing the right techniques protects members and helps build our Union.

INFORMAL RESOLUTION

SEIU 721 Stewards try to resolve issues at the lowest level possible. Informal meetings with management that resolve issues before they become grievances are quite common. For some Stewards, informal meetings are required by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), so always read your MOU. In other cases, filing a grievance is preferred because documenting them and how they are resolved can guide future bargaining. The goal is the same: resolving issues before they become big problems.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Our MOUs describe the formal procedure for resolving issues, and we usually file grievances for contract violations. Dig deep for root causes of issues and identify remedies that stop contract violations and win for members.

COLLECTIVE ACTION

When resolving an issue requires collective action, it's time to organize. When members take action together to pressure management to resolve an issue, it demonstrates the power of our union. That's why it's

important to build unity during collective bargaining by winning and ratifying good contracts and enforcing our hard-earned language. If we do this consistently, our members will be prepared for when it's time to take action.

OTHER TOOLS

Political and legislative action, like lobbying in Sacramento for funding.

- Community Organizing: Joining with the customers and clients we serve for better services.
- Unfair Labor Practice: Filing charges when the boss violates labor law.
- Bargaining: Mobilizing members to support proposals for new rights and increased wages.
- Labor-Management Committee: Inviting members to meet regularly with management to raise issues.

Before you try to address an issue, use the steward's guide for investigation. Discover the five W's — what, who, when, where and why? What happened? Who is involved? When and where did it happen? Why did the people involved take a specific course of action? Then ask yourself: Do we have documentation and who has the power to resolve the issue?

Stewards are most effective when they're armed with a toolbox full of techniques for solving members' problems.



SEIU 721 TRI-COUNTIES

Congratulations to Newly Elected Tri-Counties Bargaining Teams



Newly elected bargaining teams in Santa Barbara County, Ventura County, Ventura County Superior Courts, Gold Coast Transit District, Oxnard Harbor District and Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District are ready to bargain strong contracts and fight for vital services in their communities.

Tri-Counties 2024 Bargaining Teams Ready to Roll

Bargaining Teams in Santa Barbara County, Ventura County and Special Districts Gear Up to Win

Tri-Counties members are gearing up for bargaining. Members at the County of Santa Barbara (the Tri-Counties region's second-largest employer) elected its bargaining team and submitted bargaining surveys and will head to the table soon.

Gold Coast Transit District (GCTD) members elected a new bargaining team and launched their bargaining surveys. Members, who include bus drivers and maintenance workers, will be fighting for equitable pay and reasonable routes.

We kicked off our bargaining campaign at Oxnard Harbor District, where we provide vital services at the Port of Hueneme, one of the country's busiest.

Our Pleasant Valley Recreation and Park District members elected their bargaining team, filled out bargaining surveys and are ready for its first bargaining session.

Ventura Superior Court contract expires at the end of September, and members are ready to fight for a fair contract that delivers justice for workers and the community.



CELEBRATING WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

SEIU 721 hosts LA Mayor Karen Bass to discuss women's empowerment

SEIU 721's Women's Caucus hosted LA Mayor Karen Bass in March to celebrate International Women's Month and discuss how women in the labor movement are changing the game.

We can't talk about International Women's Day without recognizing the contributions of women labor activists. Women recognize that by coming together across racial, ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds, we can fight the systemic injustices that have kept us down for centuries. The women who organized their workplaces and communities advanced gender equality unlike anything before. In the labor movement we organized sectors of the economy historically populated by women, such as the clothing industry and healthcare, and we built a mass movement to tell the world: respect us as workers and as human beings.



WINNING AT WATTS HEALTHCARE



Watts Healthcare Corporation workers ratify new contract with 18% wage increase and \$21/HR minimum wage by overwhelming 99% margin

We did it! After months of negotiations, Watts Healthcare Corporation workers ratified a strong new contract by an overwhelming 99% YES vote! When management started playing games at the table, Watts workers authorized an Unfair Labor Practice strike. The result: we secured a strong contract with an 18% wage increase, new minimum wage of \$21/HR, NO increases to healthcare costs, increased bilingual pay, stronger contract language and more! When we fight, we win!

Clinic Workers: want to improve community clinics?



Join our Clinics Roundtable on April 6
1545 Wilshire Blvd • Los Angeles, CA 90179 • 9a.m. – 11:30a.m.

Hear from workers, patients and allies who are committed to the success of our community clinics. This roundtable event is in partnership with SEIU 721 and CCWU, an organization of clinic workers fighting for policies that will improve patient care in California clinics.

Use your smartphone camera to register at the QR code link:

For more information, contact:
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SEIU 721 CHIEF OF STAFF GILDA VALDEZ

OUR UNION



California's \$20/HR Fast Food Minimum Wage goes into effect on April 1. SEIU 721 members should be proud.

California fast-food workers will begin making a minimum wage of \$20 an hour on Monday, April 1. For many, this means a 25% raise.

The new California fast food minimum wage law, signed by Governor Newsom at SEIU 721 headquarters last September, will boost wages for workers at some of the country's biggest chains, including McDonald's, Starbucks, Subway and Pizza Hut.

It's a huge win for cooks, cashiers and other fast-food workers – some of the lowest-paid jobs in the U.S. — whose wages have stagnated for decades.

It's also a big victory for our union and the culmination of years of organizing, actions and lobbying for a more just economy for all.

California is one of the most expensive states in the nation; about half a million people are estimated to work in fast food here, mostly women, immigrants and people of color. Many live below the poverty line.

This April 1, let's celebrate the power of our union to make a real difference in the lives of California workers.

Gilda Valdez