

# SEIU 721

PRESIDENT'S REPORT JULY 2024

## EDUCATORS VOTE UNION YES!



### SACRAMENTO FIGHT

SEIU 721 BEATS BACK  
DEVASTATING BUDGET CUTS

### SPRING INTO POWER

DPSS 2024 SPRING SUMMIT  
UNLOCKS WORKER POWER

### SANTA BARBARA HEAT

COUNTY WORKERS PUT  
MANAGEMENT'S FEET TO THE FIRE



## Why the Unions For All wave is sweeping higher education.

A union wave is sweeping private colleges and universities across America.

In the last month, Non-Tenure Track faculty at Loyola Marymount University and the University of San Diego and nearly 1,000 student workers at Occidental College voted to join SEIU 721. They're part of a growing national movement to make higher education more affordable and force schools and colleges to provide educators with stable work and pay a living wage.

Starting in the 1980s, politicians slashed funding for higher education, kicking off an explosion of private colleges and universities led by highly paid professional managers. They hiked tuition, eliminated tenure track positions and cut faculty pay, while collecting big pay packages.

The result: a tidal wave of union organizing among Non-Tenure Track (NTT) faculty and undergraduate student workers.

Since 2021, at least 31 campuses have added undergraduate student worker unions, according to a 2023 report by the City College of New York.

Organizing among higher ed students at all levels has increased rapidly since the 2020 pandemic, according to William A. Herbert, Executive Director of the National Center for the Study of Collective Bargaining in Higher Education at Hunter College.

Educators and students are demanding change in higher education. It's time for administrators at private universities and colleges to learn a lesson.

In Solidarity,

*David Green*

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT JULY 2024



### LA County Recreation Training

SEIU 721 President David Green joined the LA County Recreation Training Academy Event at Loma Alta Park on June 5th.

More than 200 dedicated members attended, joined by County of Los Angeles Department of Parks & Recreation Director, Norma Edith Garcia.



### SEIU 721 member Yuri Gomez wins member benefits raffle

When SEIU members fight, we win — but sometimes we win even without fighting. Congratulations to SEIU 721 member Yuri Gomez, a Social Services Supervisor II with the County of Santa Barbara, who entered a member benefits raffle at the 2024 SEIU International Convention and won a 6-day, 5-night resort stay at an all-inclusive property in Mexico and the Caribbean. Thanks to our travel partner, Arrivia, for making it possible.

## When we fight, we win!

# INTT FACULTY & STUDENT WORKERS WIN BACK-TO-BACK UNION ELECTIONS

## NTT faculty at LMU and USD and student workers at Occidental College vote to unionize with SEIU 721

In June, Non-Tenure Track (NTT) faculty in three colleges at Loyola Marymount University, NTT faculty at the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of San Diego and nearly 1,000 student workers at Occidental College swept to victory in three separate elections to become members of SEIU 721.

“Our union campaign was very much a grassroots movement,” said Deniz Perin-Coombs, an adjunct instructor in the English Department at University of San Diego. “Now we have the opportunity to negotiate our first contract to improve the working conditions of the many dedicated professors in the bargaining unit.”

“We hope our win inspires higher education workers on other campuses. For too long, many of us have lived with precarity, low pay, and disrespect,” said Bryan Wisch, a Rhetorical Arts instructor at LMU.

Siena Cawrse, a sophomore at Occidental working in donor relations, agrees.

“We’re a movement. Today, workers in higher education demand more, and it’s time for colleges to treat us — faculty, staff, and student workers alike — with dignity.

“The recent surge in organizing on campuses in California and across the country signals that higher-ed workers are frustrated. They love their jobs, but they want job security, a living wage and respect. It’s time for university leaders to listen — and to start bargaining fair contracts.”

DAVID GREEN  
PRESIDENT  
SEIU 721



Student workers at Occidental College in LA's Eagle Rock community.



NTT CAS Faculty at the University of San Diego.



NTT Faculty at Loyola Marymount University's Westchester campus in LA.



Student march at Occidental College.

# UNIONS FOR ALL!

# SEIU 721 FIGHTS DEVASTATING STATE BUDGET CUTS AT CAPITOL

**SEIU 721 Vice President Simboa Wright and hundreds of SEIU members from around California lead June 11 day of action in Sacramento, heading off severe state budget cuts.**

Hundreds of SEIU members — led by SEIU 721 Vice President Simboa Wright and other leaders of our sister SEIU locals from around California — converged on Sacramento on June 11 to rally against state budget cuts.

Worker voices made a difference. On June 20, SEIU members from around California announced support for a budget deal that will head off the most severe cuts to vital state and local government services.

“SEIU members rallied at the Capitol, called our

legislators, and told our stories about the value of our work and the safety net programs sustaining the most vulnerable Californians,” said Vice President Wright. “But we need each and every member to continue to fight back against big corporations’ attacks on working people.”

“The agreement announced on June 20 is far stronger because SEIU members and our allies stood together and called for a budget that protects children, struggling families, immigrants, and workers,” said David Huerta, President of SEIU California and SEIU-United Service Workers West.



**SEIU announces support for state budget agreement  
WORKER VOICES MADE A DIFFERENCE**

**“We need each and every one of you to continue to fight back against big corporations’ attacks on working people.”**

**SIMBOA WRIGHT, VICE PRESIDENT, SEIU 721**



# SEIU 721 RETIREES TAKE ACTION



## RETIREES POWER CLOTHING DRIVE TO HELP UNHOUSED

### SEIU 721 Retiree Committee drive collects 50 bags of clothes for Union Rescue Mission

On June 11, members of SEIU 721's Retiree Committee collected 50 bags of quality used clothing for Union Rescue Mission, which the nonprofit agency will sell at its resale store to support its programs for unhoused Angelenos.

Union Rescue Mission is one of the largest missions of its kind in America, offering outreach, emergency services, clinic care and housing to men, women and children experiencing homelessness in Downtown Los Angeles.

The clothing drive is just one of many community-building efforts led by SEIU 721 retirees. If you would like to get involved, contact Joaquin Miramontes at (562) 686-4150 or Gloria Aguilar at (213) 880-5925.



SEIU 721 Retiree Committee member Joaquin Miramontes

# SEIU 721 MEMBERS WIN BIG AT HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER



## Harbor Regional Center workers secure COLA and other gains

Thanks to our union's persistent advocacy and solidarity, we have successfully secured a Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) along with several substantial one-time benefits for workers as part of our Wage Reopener with Harbor Regional Center!

Here's what we've achieved thanks to our union:

- **Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA):** We have locked in a 1.5% COLA to ensure that our wages keep pace with inflation, safeguarding your purchasing power and financial well-being.
- **One-Time "Work From Home" Allowance:** We have secured a one-time \$300 allowance to help offset the challenges and expenses of remote work for all employees who worked on June 21, 2024.
- **One-Time Supplemental Retirement Contribution:** To support our long-term financial security, active employees will receive a one-time supplemental contribution to their retirement plan, amounting to 1% of their regular salary from the past year (26 pay periods).

“CONGRATULATIONS TO HARBOR REGIONAL CENTER WORKERS FOR BRINGING HOME SOME BIG WINS.”

ADOLFO GRANADOS  
TREASURER  
SEIU 721



- **One-Time Lump Sum Payment:** In appreciation of our hard work and dedication, a one-time lump sum payment will be provided to all members. The amount is calculated based on cumulative earnings over the past 26 pay periods (from June 26, 2023, to June 21, 2024) divided by 26, then multiplied by 110%.
- **Vacation Payment In Lieu:** Eligible employees can request a cash payment instead of taking vacation time.

# SEIU 721 DPSS MEMBERS SPRING INTO POWER



## LA County Department of Public and Social Services members convene 2024 Spring Summit

SEIU 721 leaders and LA County Department of Public and Social Services members came together June 8 for the 2024 DPSS Summit to celebrate recent wins and plot strategy to bargain a strong contract in 2025.

**Valerie McCan-Murrell, head of our union's LA County Social Services Division**, welcomed scores of LA County DPSS workers — some from as far away as Lancaster, Palmdale and San Jacinto — to SEIU 721 headquarters near downtown LA for a day of workshops on team building, bargaining and COPE.

“LA County DPSS is in the house today!” McCan-Murrell said to cheers from attendees.

**SEIU 721 President Green** recalled how SEIU 721 members became enraged when DPSS Director Antonia Jimenez “the Menace” ignored our union’s collective bargaining agreement and disrespected frontline workers.

“That was a turning point. You took your anger and turned it into solidarity,” Green said, kicking off a day of workshops and speakers:

- **Oly Moreno, an Eligibility Supervisor at the San Gabriel Valley Family Service Center in El Monte, and Earl Thompson of SEIU 721** led team-building exercises.
- **Yvonne Wheeler, the Executive Director of the LA County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO**, talked about how Labor solidarity has enabled public workers to speak out against racism.
- **Pamela Agustin-Anguiano of the Eastside LEADS Coalition** discussed affordable housing partnerships with our union.
- **Pastor Thembekila Smart of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference — Los Angeles** spoke about the need for emancipation from low-wage work and economic oppression.
- **Steve Koffroth, Director of Collective Bargaining and Research at SEIU Local 721**, gave a crash course on community-based bargaining.
- **Ruby Dye, an Eligibility Supervisor at the Compton District Office and a member of SEIU 721's Executive Board, and Yolanda Floyd, an Eligibility Worker II at the South Central District Office**, encouraged involvement in COPE. “How many people get to pick their own bosses? COPE gives you that power,” Floyd said.





# SEIU 721 TRI-COUNTIES



## Tri-Counties Regional Center Board approves 10% COLA increase SEIU 721 TCRC members advocated for additional agency resources

In July, the Tri-Counties Regional Center board of directors voted to approve a one-time 10% COLA increase for all SEIU 721 represented members! SEIU 721 members are strong advocates for funding for TCRC and other regional centers, regularly lobbying the State Council on Developmental Disabilities (SCDD)

in support of additional resources for services and the workers who provide them.

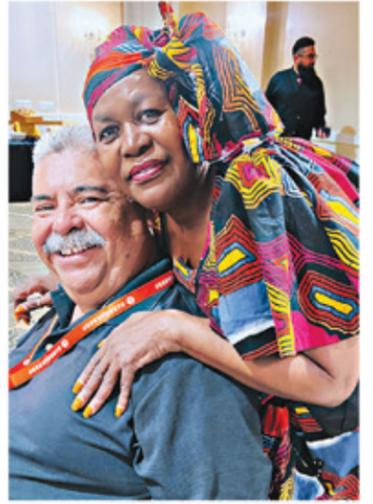
TCRC members recently endorsed the one-time base salary increase, retroactive from January 7, 2024 to June 22, 2024. **For questions, please reach out to Worksite Organizer Revi Levi at [revi.levi@seiu721.org](mailto:revi.levi@seiu721.org), (805) 218-1505.**

## County of Santa Barbara members turn up the heat!



The Central Coast weather is heating up and so is our County of Santa Barbara bargaining campaign! With our contract set to expire soon, Santa Barbara County management is stalling at the bargaining table. So we cranked up the heat with a series of unity rallies — including one at Santa Maria City Hall with 100 members — to send a message that county workers won't settle for a weak contract that hurts workers and vital services.

# SEIU 721 CELEBRATES JUNE TEENTH



The SEIU 721 African American Caucus recognized Juneteenth 2024 at the Proud Bird, where members and guests gathered for a celebratory dinner, dancing and recognition of our union's commitment to racial equity and justice.

Juneteenth, which became a federal holiday in 2021, commemorates the true beginning of emancipation for Black Americans. This year marked our union's first in-person Juneteenth celebration since the pandemic. SEIU 721 AAC is proud to continue this tradition of celebration inaugurated by our beloved President Linda Dent. #Juneteenth #TogetherWeWin



“What a joy for our SEIU 721 family finally to be reunited again to celebrate Juneteenth.”

**SIMBOA WRIGHT  
VICE PRESIDENT, SEIU 721**





# PRIDE IN THE VALLEY

## SEIU 721 President David Green joins SFV Pride in Van Nuys

As part of SEIU 721's celebration of Pride Month, our local sponsored SFV Pride in Van Nuys. SEIU 721 members and President David Green joined a joyful afternoon rally, parade and block party honoring the Valley's amazing LGBTQ+ community.

SEIU 721 stands firmly in support of our LGBTQ+ siblings. It's why our union supports and participates in Pride celebrations. It's why during COPE endorsement interviews we ask candidates seeking our endorsement where they stand on LGBTQ+ issues.

Our union fights for human rights and dignity for all workers — and when we fight, we win.



*David Green joined members of SEIU 721's Lavender Caucus for San Fernando Valley Pride's march and block party in Van Nuys on June 29.*



# CONGRATULATIONS NEW SEIU 721 SHOP STEWARDS!

## 2024 STEWARD CERTIFICATION GRADUATES

In this month's Stewards' Corner, we are acknowledging all our new Shop Stewards that committed to their education and development by undergoing the rigorous Steward Certification Training program. Congratulations to our newly certified Shop Stewards from January 2024 to June 2024!

- |  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Joycette Herndon</b><br>Bus Operator                  | <b>Cesar Hurtado</b><br>Children's Social Worker III     | <b>Michelle Montero</b><br>Court Reporter-Real Time      | <b>Charneisha Thompson-Nickerson</b><br>Court Services Assistant II |
| <b>Angela Ragusa</b><br>Civil Engineer                   | <b>Janelle Jelks</b><br>Clinic Licensed Vocational Nurse | <b>Heshima Myles</b><br>Administrative Assistant II      | <b>Stacey Trinidad-Alfaro</b><br>Social Worker                      |
| <b>Ramiro Vasquez</b><br>Equipment Mechanic              | <b>Noel Johnson</b><br>Intermediate Typist Clerk         | <b>Lawanda Payton-Davis</b><br>Intermediate Typist Clerk | <b>Nelva Valle</b><br>Eligibility Supervisor                        |
| <b>Giovanni Zesati Enciso</b><br>Auto Body Bldr/Repairer | <b>Shiva Khatami</b><br>Children's Social Worker III     | <b>Deepa Rajwani</b><br>Radiologic Technologist          | <b>James Walters</b><br>Community Health Worker                     |
| <b>Yadira Alfaro</b><br>Eligibility Worker II            | <b>Jung Mi Kim</b><br>Registered Nurse II                | <b>Teresa Ramirez</b><br>Eligibility Worker II           | <b>Lorrie Brown</b><br>Administrative Assistant II                  |
| <b>Nelson Better</b><br>Eligibility Worker II            | <b>Paul Kim</b><br>Eligibility Worker II                 | <b>Elfega Reyes-Castro</b><br>Medical Case Worker II     | <b>Gilbert Youenes</b><br>Analyst, Facility Standards               |
| <b>Katty Chang</b><br>Social Worker                      | <b>Dawn Long</b><br>Court Services Assistant III         | <b>Karen Roberts</b><br>Eligibility Worker II            | <b>Jeannette Jessup</b><br>Court Reporter                           |
| <b>Fernando Corona</b><br>Court Services Assistant III   | <b>Violeta Lopez</b><br>Intermediate Typist Clerk        | <b>Lanise Robertson</b><br>Eligibility Worker II         | <b>Hazel Murillo</b><br>Court Reporter                              |
| <b>Julio Flores</b><br>Intermediate Typist Clerk         | <b>Franklin Luu</b><br>Eligibility Worker II             | <b>Claire Stewart</b><br>Substance Abuse Counselor       | <b>Malena Muyaalde</b><br>Service Coordinator 2                     |
| <b>Ana Guerrero</b><br>Inmate Crew Leader                | <b>Asia Marshall</b><br>Social Worker Trainee            | <b>James Summers</b><br>Eligibility Worker II            | <b>Crystal Olney</b><br>Service Coordinator 2                       |
| <b>Elsa Harmon</b><br>Public Health Nurse                | <b>Erik Medellin-Alfaro</b><br>Custodian                 | <b>Bernadette Tashjian</b><br>Eligibility Worker II      | <b>Sydney Phillips</b><br>Lead SC II                                |

If you are a newly recruited steward, or if you are veteran steward who wants to nurture new stewards, there is no better time to train! To register for Steward Trainings, visit [www.seiu721.org](http://www.seiu721.org) and click on the calendar to find a class and RSVP. If you need assistance representing a member, call the Member Connection at 877-721-4968.

# SEIU 721 LA COUNTY BARGAINING TEAM VOTING BEGINS

## Eligible LA County members can vote through July 21

Voting for new 2025 SEIU 721 LA County Bargaining Teams is underway. Our elected Bargaining Team is responsible for advocating on our behalf at the bargaining table and negotiating the details of our next contract. Make sure your voice is heard. Vote now!

Online voting closes on Sunday, July 21, 2024 at 11:59 PM. To vote online, go to:

[bit.ly/2025LACBargainingTeam](https://bit.ly/2025LACBargainingTeam)

Ballots also will be sent by mail. They'll need to be returned no later than Monday, July 22, 2024 by 5 PM.

“Our elected LA County Bargaining Team will advocate on our behalf at the table in 2025. Vote now to make sure your voice is heard!”

**LILLIAN CABRAL**  
SECRETARY  
SEIU 721



## CONGRATULATIONS TO LA COUNTY BARGAINING TEAM CANDIDATES WHO WON AUTOMATIC SELECTION

Congratulations to the following new LA County Bargaining Team members who won automatic election for their bargaining units because the total number of candidates running did not exceed the number of open seats. All other bargaining unit elections will be tallied July 22.

### BU 112 – Supervisory Clerical and Office Services

Lillian Cabral  
Rochelle Cloyd  
Eric Flores  
Cari Kenny  
Martha Miramontes Garcia

### BU 122 – Supervisory Administrative & Technical

Janet Perez  
Martin Rascon

### BU 201 – Building Custodians

Jason Calixto  
Ana Guerrero  
Alicia Hill  
Samuel Torres  
Ronald Welch

### BU 222 – Supervisory Paramedical Health Employees

Shawndell Brown  
Jose Duarte De La Torre  
Marcony Fernandez  
Manjri Peer

### BU 311 – Registered Nurses

Lisa Escamilla  
Cynthia Carreon  
Teri Salmon  
Cynthia Tellez

### BU 341 – Health Science Professionals

Kathrine Berberian  
Evelen Bermudez  
Patricia Brown  
Joselyn Castro  
Brenda Covarrubias  
Monica Engbuonu  
Frank Guy  
Gabriel Montano  
Anthony Ramirez  
Raquel Saunders  
Tiffany Yonemoto

### BU 342 – Supervisory Health Science Professionals

Chad Anderson  
Sarah Church-Williams  
Patrick Del Conte  
Aaron Karpman  
Richard Lavin  
Ralph Lingad  
Julio Ramirez  
Kyle Yetter

### BU 729 – Health Financial Support Services Representatives

Peter Amador  
Judy Archie  
Darra Bryant  
Lydia Cabral  
Miguel Cooper  
Carla Martinez  
Alina Mendizabal  
Angelica Ramirez  
Theresa Velasco

### BU 811 – Librarians

Thomas Cornicelli  
Alejandra Garcia  
Sarah Harper  
Walter Stokes, Jr.



# OUR UNION



## Unlock your union power! Four lessons from the SEIU 721 DPSS “Spring Into Power” summit that will help us win.

LA County DPSS workers came together on June 8 for the “Spring Into Power” summit to workshop strategies for building worker power and win a strong contract in the face of California’s budget crisis. In one day, a heavyweight roster of speakers delivered practical advice for workers seeking to unlock their union power — from organizing our workplaces to advocating in our communities to building coalitions to harnessing political power.

### **Organize your workplace and community**

Steve Koffroth, Director of Collective Bargaining and Research at SEIU Local 721, told participants that winning a good contract begins with connecting with others — our co-workers, our neighbors, our churches — to explain how our fight benefits them. How saving good middle-class jobs, fixing short staffing and funding quality services makes their lives better.

### **Build coalitions for the common good**

Pamela Agustin-Anguiano of the Eastside LEADS

Coalition works with SEIU 721 on housing justice. “There is power in collaboration and building consensus,” she said. “Political leaders listen to SEIU because they respect collective power.” She encouraged the union to join with community groups to bargain for initiatives that help everybody in the community — like affordable housing and access to good jobs — because it attracts allies willing to help pressure politicians to approve good contracts.

### **Become a Contract Action Team leader**

“Knowledge, education and solidarity are the roots of our power,” said SEIU 721 President David Green. “And this summit is about growing all three.”

Green emphasized that the lifeblood of a contract campaign is the Contract Action Team. “Becoming a CAT leader is how you put that power into practice.”

Bottom line: Workers can’t expect LA County to give us anything without a fight. To win, we need to unlock our union power.

*Gilda Valdez*