

# Labor Education NEWS

UCLA SCHOOL OF PUBLIC POLICY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH

SPRING 2002

## NEW SCHOOL FOR IMMIGRANT WORKERS

Some of the most exciting organizing in the country has involved immigrant workers, from janitors to hotel workers to home care workers. And some of the most talented and dedicated union activists to emerge in recent years have been immigrants. Yet few programs have been established to meet the needs of this growing workforce.

The UCLA Labor Center is addressing this need.

The Labor Center has recently launched a multi-union, Spanish-language leadership school, "Colegio Liderazgo Laboral." This residential program is the first of its kind in the nation. The first school was held from March 4-8 at UCLA.

Topics included amnesty,



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globalization, and analyzing power in the workplace. Participants increased their own leadership capacity and left determined to identify and develop other leaders within their unions. Speakers at the school included Miguel Contreras of the L.A. County Federation of Labor, Eliseo Medina of SEIU, Maria Elena

Durazo of HERE, and California Assembly member Gilbert Cedillo.

The Colegio Liderazgo Laboral also represents a breakthrough for the University of California. Although Latinos comprise more than 40 percent of the population of Los Angeles, and although California is home to the largest Latino immigrant community

in the country, this is the first time UCLA has opened its doors and provided an educational program for Latino immigrant workers. The Labor Center, in cooperation with HERE and SEIU, has also launched a monthly immigration task force to address immigration reform and to develop a research agenda to organize immigrant workers in Los Angeles. The task force will meet at the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor on the second Wednesday of each month.

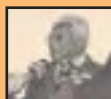
For more information on either program please contact: Stephanie Arellano: 310-267-4357 or Carolina Bank Muñoz: 310-794-5973

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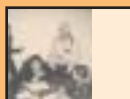
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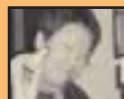
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## QUALITY HOME-CARE CONFERENCE

"Homecare workers pay as much as 4-5 percent of their income to rent a two-bedroom apartment in Los Angeles," UCLA professor Jacqueline Leavitt told attendees at a Quality Homecare Conference on February 8, 2002.

And that doesn't leave much left over.

The Fresno conference brought together more than 150 researchers and representatives from unions, consumer advocacy groups, and county agencies to discuss the circumstances homecare workers face.

Coordinated by Loretta Stevens, Homecare Coordinator for the SEIU Western Region; Linda Delp, Project Director for the UCLA Labor Center; and other representatives from the Quality Homecare Coalition, the conference highlighted groundbreaking research on wages and workforce stability, public authorities, health and safety, and housing. "This conference was an important step in strengthening the coalition to improve the quality of life both for workers and for the elderly and disabled consumers they care

for," Stevens said.

Participants highlighted recent successes, including a wage increase in San Francisco. "The wage increase for homecare workers may have lifted as much as 20 percent of the low-wage immigrant female labor force in San Francisco above the poverty line," researcher Candace Howes said. •



From left: Carol Zabin, UC Berkeley Labor Center; Assemblywoman Dion Aroner, Loretta Stevens, SEIU; Linda Delp, UCLA Labor Center

## REV. LAWSON TEACHES CLASS ON NONVIOLENCE



Rev. Lawson speaks to reporters at the opening session.

Reverend James M. Lawson, a legendary leader of the civil rights movement, is teaching a special class on nonviolence and social change, cosponsored by the UCLA Labor Center and the Chicano Studies Research Center.

The class brings together 60 participants: 30 graduate and undergraduate students, and 30 labor and community leaders.

The two-quarter class begins with an overview of major nonviolent campaigns of the twentieth century, including the suffragist labor, and civil rights movements. The class also draws from the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Mahatma Gandhi.

The second quarter will encourage participants to develop nonviolence workshops in religious, labor, community, and student organizations throughout Los Angeles. Plans are also underway to host a citywide conference on June 1, 2002, and to issue a publication drawing from experiences in nonviolence programs locally and nationally.

"It is critical for courses such as this to be taught at universities," Lawson told UCLA's Daily Bruin. "The students must realize that they have the capacity to join struggles for economic and social justice and to seek their solution through nonviolent means." •

# UNION RESEARCH PROGRAMS

Following a successful Summer Internship Program, the UCLA Labor Center has expanded its strategic research operations, helping unions advocate, organize, and bargain more effectively.

The Labor Center's Campaign Research Advisory Board (CRAB) held its first meeting this fall, bringing together union and community researchers to discuss their work and how they can work together. Participants include researchers from several Service Employees International Union locals; the L.A. County Federation of Labor; the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union; the L.A. Alliance for a New Economy; the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees; the Metropolitan Alliance; the United Farm Workers; and others.

"The CRAB is a great way for researchers from unions and community groups to work together, which is rarely done," said Maya Holmes, a CRAB member and a researcher with the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees Union. "CRAB has helped HERE recruit and train researchers, and develop better relationships with other researchers. It's great that the Labor Center put



Student researchers (from left) Julia Plascencia, Amy Denissen, Robert Herr of the United Farm Workers, Roopa Raman, Charlie Sciammas, Tonantzin Esparza, Flor Barajas, and Rita Davila at a recent STROBE meeting.

this together."

In early 2002, the Labor Center launched a new group called STROBE: Strategic Research for Organizing and Bargaining Effectiveness. STROBE consists of UCLA graduate and undergraduate students from a range of disciplines, including Urban Planning, Public Policy, Law, Sociology, Asian American Studies, and Chicana/o Studies. Members of STROBE assist unions and workers' centers on research, with the long-term goal of helping them develop their own research capacity. Students are currently working with AFSCME, the Utility Workers, LIUNA, SEIU 434B, the Garment Workers Center, CHIRLA, APALA, and the State Building Trades Council.

"The strategic research experience I have had at the UCLA Labor Center has been very valuable for me," said Rita Mercedes Davila, a first-year Urban Planning graduate student. "The rich diversity of the research team, both in terms of social background and educational and work experiences, has made for a particularly rewarding experience. And I appreciate that we are able to balance our focus on the detailed work that needs to get done with an examination of the bigger picture and larger goals."

In collaboration with the L.A. Orange County Organizing Committee, the Labor Center has also launched a series of talks and workshops on research for organizing. The first featured SEIU 399 Organizing Director Amado David on the union's campaign to organize the Catholic Healthcare West hospital system. The next was a workshop featuring IAM Organizer/President Kevin Kucera and the Labor Center's William Kramer on union targets for organizing. •

For more information, contact William Kramer, Project Director for Strategic Research, at 310-267-4353 or [wkramer@ile.ucla.edu](mailto:wkramer@ile.ucla.edu).



## INSTITUTE FOR LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT CALL FOR PROPOSALS for 2002 -2003

The UC Institute for Labor and Employment is pleased to announce another round of competition for research funding on labor and employment issues. The following types of awards are available for the 2002-03 academic year:

- Targeted Research Grants
- Small Faculty Research Grants
- Collaboration and Dissemination Grants for faculty groups, campus units, or departments.
- Fellowships for Graduate Students

For more detailed descriptions of the grant program, application coversheets, budget worksheets, campus procedures and additional information (including a list of previous grantees), consult the

ILE website at <http://www.ucop.edu/ile>

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# LABOR IN THE SCHOOLS

The union wanted a raise, an increase in benefits, and an on-site childcare center. Management was having none of it. A strike was imminent. But, over the course of the day, more than one hundred high school students bargained, negotiated, and strategized their way to agreements in mock collective-bargaining sessions.

The tenth annual Collective Bargaining Institute was held at the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) on December 3, 2001. It was the first time many students had ever learned about the role of unions in the workplace and in workers' lives.

Twenty-five coaches, recruited from the ranks of professional union negotiators, assisted the students throughout the bargaining process, and mediators from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service were available to help students overcome roadblocks along the way. Day Higuchi, vice president of UTLA, and Assembly member Jackie Goldberg welcomed the students and recounted tales of bargaining from the labor relations and political arenas. The day concluded with an exciting series of presentations from each set of teams on the tentative contract agreements they reached.

"It was wonderful," one student wrote in a post-session evaluation. "Everyone should take this course so they can understand the need for unions and have better opportunities."

Students were able to attend the Institute thanks to the support of local unions throughout the Los Angeles area, which sponsored them a

cost of \$50 per student. The United Teachers of Los Angeles generously contributed their facility for the day.

The event itself was sponsored by the UCLA



CBI director Linda Tubach and coach Pete Goodman of CWA guide students through the negotiation process.



Labor Center, the LAUSD Collective Bargaining Education Project, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, the United Teachers of Los Angeles, and the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

# COMMUNITY SCHOLARS AND THE IMPACT OF 9/11

The nation's leaders are declaring the war in Afghanistan a "victory." At the recent World Economic Forum, New Yorkers told BBC reporters their city was getting "back on its feet."

But for low-income and working poor communities throughout the United States, the economic and social fallout from the events of September 11, 2001, remain a day-to-day reality.

This year's Community Scholars program—a labor-community initiative of the UCLA Labor Center and the Department of Urban Planning—will examine the relationship between international policy, domestic life, and the development of labor-community coalitions and organizing strategies. Over the winter and spring quarters, scholars will undertake research projects that address the immediate and long-term challenges facing organizers in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11. Topics will include immigrant rights, the economic impact in low-wage and immigrant communities, civil society, movement building, and organizing.

The Community Scholars Program has a long history of strengthening coalitions and building bridges between the university and the community. Past Community Scholars projects have tackled issues of economic justice and have produced research on tourism, manufacturing, banking, job creation, and immigration. Last year the scholars program worked closely with the Homecare Workers Union (SEIU Local 434B) to tackle key aspects of housing, transportation, and job training facing low-wage and immigrant workers, particularly those employed in homecare. The research, findings, and recommendations are com-

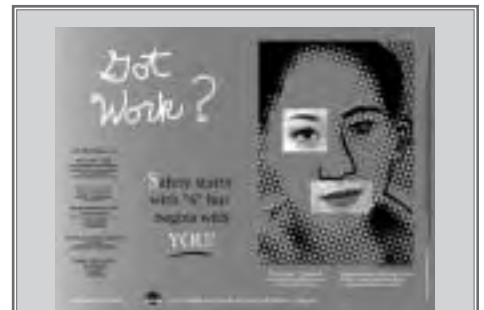
piled in a final report titled, "Care in Organizing: Building Coalitions in Los Angeles," which includes recommendations regarding the development of a housing trust fund, the establishment and expansion of job training and education opportunities, increasing transit and care access, and building coalitions to create long-lasting social change in Los Angeles.

In addition to the UCLA students enrolled in the class, thirteen community and labor leaders were selected to participate in the Community Scholars Class of 2002.

This year's scholars are:

- Soo Sun Choe, Advocacy Director, Korean Resource Center
- Irina Contreras, Education Resource Specialist, ARTSCorp LA
- Luu Doan, Labor Organizer, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Local 3299
- Shane Goldsmith, Assistant Coordinator, California, National Campaign for Jobs and Income Support
- Javier Gonzalez, Political Director, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), Local 1877
- Cory Jong, Youth Training Coordinator, ARTSCorp LA
- Joann Lo, Organizer/Case Manager, Garment Workers Center
- Soraya Medina, Community Partner Developer, ARTSCorp LA
- Nelson Motto, Site Coordinator, Downtown Community Job Center/Day Laborer Project, Institute of Popular Education of Southern California (IDEPSCA)
- Marlon Portillo, Program Coordinator, Day Laborer Project, Institute of Popular Education of Southern California (IDEPSCA)
- Carlos Preza, Lead Organizer, Institute of Popular Education of Southern California (IDEPSCA)

- Brian Rudiger, Organizer, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), Local 3299
- Mark Wilson, Community Development Director, Dunbar Economic Development Corporation



## 'Safety Begins with YOU'

by Laurie Kominiski

Every six minutes, an American teenager is rushed to the emergency room with a workplace injury. With this startling statistic in mind, the Labor Occupational Safety and Health (LOSH) Program's Youth Project has designed a colorful 16- by 22-inch poster, "Got Work? Safety Starts with 'S' but begins with YOU!" to promote, educate, and advocate for the health and safety of young workers. Providing contact numbers and web site addresses for Southern California health and safety resources, the poster can be used in school and community training facility classrooms, career centers, public libraries, and community centers or it can be used as a fun and attractive book cover.

Input for the poster, including its colors and slogan, was provided by a class at Jefferson High School on occupational and environmental health and safety, peer education, and leadership skills developed by LOSH. Single copies are available free of charge; multiple copies are \$1.00 apiece, plus shipping, handling, and tax. For more information on Youth Project materials or activities, contact Laurie Kominiski, Director, Youth Project at 310 794-5992 or laurie@ucla.edu.

# POPULAR EDUCATORS CONVENE IN L.A.

In the 1950s and 60s, civil rights activists and union organizers, both black and white, gathered at the Highlander Center in Tennessee to share their experiences of the Jim Crow South and to mobilize for change. Out of those democratic beginnings, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement was born. More recently, union organizers have used similar popular education methods to educate Los Angeles janitors about the commercial real estate market, help Las Vegas hotel workers organize for health and safety protections, and help workers on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border recognize the effects of globalization in their everyday lives.

From December 6-8, 2001, labor and popular educators gathered in Los Angeles to share their experiences and to discuss plans for an upcoming publication, which will illustrate the role popular education played in the campaigns above, and in union organizing, leadership development, and labor-community alliances.

The meeting was held at our local popular education center, Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE). The discussion focused on an educational approach that starts with workers' experiences and leads to union organizing.

At the conference, Jim Sessions, formerly Highlander Director and now with the AFL-CIO Labor Community Fund, described education sessions at Highlander. "They didn't know they were popular educators," Sessions said. "The term is not important to us. It's not just a methodology but it's a political way of working with people that has to do with building democ-



Labor Center Director Kent Wong (left) and Loretta Stevens, Homecare Organizing Coordinator with SEIU, dress as peasants in a popular education exercise designed to illustrate global inequalities.

racy and fighting social and economic inequities. It could be called education, it could be called organizing, it could be called lots of different things but it's a way of working with people that promotes democracy."

Canadian labor educators D'Arcy Martin and Barb Thomas shared information about the development of the Québec Labor College and the role of popular education in promoting critical thinking and respectful dialogue within the labor movement. "Too often," Martin said, "the labor movement has trouble with respectful dialogue; we get involved in debate where our goal is to prove the other side wrong. Our aim is to create a safe space to challenge ourselves and each other."

Finally, Just Economics, a coalition founded to improve the wages and working conditions of low-income people, demonstrated lively exercises to teach workers about globalization.

A Labor Center publication, to be co-published with the George Meany Center, will provide a historic and international overview and will highlight the role of popular education in important labor campaigns such as the Avondale Shipyard workers, the Justice for

Janitors campaign, and the fight for a living wage. Contributors will describe how popular education is used in leadership development, health and safety, and participatory research.

For more information about the publication, or to join the popular education listserve, contact Linda Delp at [ldelp@ucla.edu](mailto:ldelp@ucla.edu) or Angeles Sancho at 310/206-0812.

## GLOBALIZATION RAP

the third world's in debt  
they could never pay  
so they ask the world bank  
for a well lit way

they say we'll help you out  
if you take our advice  
grow coffee and sugar  
instead of beans and rice

privatize the land  
minimize the salary  
but the GNP  
can't feed a family

*CHORUS*  
(call and response 2X)

It's called...  
Laissez faire but not fair for  
the people  
Laissez faire but not fair for  
the people

*Jeremy Blasi*  
*UC Berkely Labor Center*

# Teaching for Change

## Popular Education and the Labor Movement

**T**eaching for Change: Popular Education in the Labor Movement is the first book to capture the stories and experiences of popular educators in the U.S. labor movement. From the Highlander Center in Tennessee to the Justice for Janitors campaign in Los Angeles, from the National Labor College in Maryland to the Avondale Shipyard workers of Mississippi, popular education has played a critical role in organizing workers, developing new leaders, and strengthening labor and community alliances. While drawing from the rich history of popular educators nationally and internationally, popular educators today are forging a new path based on the changing needs and changing conditions of workers and unions today.



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### Featuring essays by

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