



## Garment and Domestic Worker Parents Navigate Work, Schools, and Community Resources for their Children's Success

### MISSION

The Parent Worker Project empowers low-wage parent workers in Los Angeles to advocate for their children's education. Research demonstrates that parent involvement in childhood education fosters student academic achievement that positively impacts families – even future generations.

This innovative program brings together workers, community organizations, schools, and policy stakeholders to promote the academic success of all students.

### BACKGROUND

The project's first iteration successfully trained janitor parents where they spent most of their time – at work and in their union. The current initiative engages garment and domestic workers and their children in partnership with worker-led organizations: the Garment Worker Center (GWC) and IDEPSCA (Instituto de Educación Popular del Sur de California).

Garment and domestic workers commonly work 60-80 hours weekly and face wage violations, health hazards, irregular scheduling, and harassment at their places of work. These harsh conditions make it difficult for parents to make ends meet and participate in their children's schools.

Garment and domestic worker parents, however, express a strong desire to support their children's learning and engage fellow parents to improve the educational opportunities of low-wage working families.



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## OUR MODEL: TRAIN THE TRAINERS

We develop parent worker leaders who go on to educate their peers about accessing and reforming public elementary and middle school education. Each project cycle we train 25 parent leaders who in turn exponentially impact 500 fellow garment and domestic workers with young kids in Los Angeles schools.

By training parent workers to navigate the school system and access community resources such as libraries, museums, financial institutions, and specialized programs, we help them engage critically with their children's education.



Newly trained parent leaders collaborate to identify their families' needs and priorities, lead advocacy efforts for education policy reform, and serve as spokespeople on public education issues and concerns at local, state, and national levels.

They create parent engagement initiatives, which include bilingual leadership development, literacy workshops, and parents-as-first-teachers curriculum.

A tutoring program supplements the Parent Worker Project. While parents learn to navigate the public school system, their children receive tutoring from UCLA students ranging from undergraduates to PhD candidates.



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