

Labor Education NEWS

UCLA CENTER FOR LABOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

WINTER 2004

ILE Struggles to Save Budget

Governor Schwarzenegger's announced 2004–2005 California budget singles out only two programs within the University of California for elimination: the Institute for Labor and Employment (ILE) and Outreach, a program to increase minority admissions. The proposed elimination of these two programs unfairly targets resources vital to workers and communities of color.

The UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education receives about 75 percent of its budget from the ILE. The ILE has funded critical research on immigrant workers, living wage ordinances, family leave policies, women in the workplace, economic inequality, and labor in the global economy. The new Downtown UCLA Labor Center, which has become a hub of learning and skills development for workers throughout Los Angeles, is also being threatened with this proposed budget cut. ILE support has also enabled the Labor Center to launch a new minor in Labor and Workplace Studies, providing UCLA students with an

opportunity to learn about the world of work, both in the classroom and through dynamic internships.

Since its establishment in 2000, the ILE has gained national attention as an outstanding program that embraces the core research, teaching, and service mission of the university. Although the Institute was initially funded at \$6 million annually, the allocation has already been reduced to \$4 million due to budgetary constraints. Given that the University receives \$2.9 billion per year in state funding, this is an extremely modest budget in relation to the research and education needs of California's working population.



Assemblymember Judy Chu and State Senator Sheila Kuehl speak at a January 30 forum on the state budget, sponsored by the UCLA Downtown Labor Center.

Already, more than eighty top labor leaders in California have written to the governor supporting the ILE. Fifty members of the state senate and state assembly have similarly written the governor to oppose the proposed cut in funding. These next few months will be a time of critical negotiation to encourage the governor to compromise with the state legislature and restore funding for the ILE.

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Immigrant Workers Improve English and Computer Skills

In December 2003, the UCLA Downtown Labor Center partnered with the Community Planning Department of the Los Angeles Trade Technical College to offer an English as a second language (ESL) course for immigrant workers, focusing specifically on workplace issues and leadership development. The curriculum for this class is also different from traditional ESL courses in that it offers individualized attention to each student and engages them in participatory exercises.

Fifteen workers from various unions and worker centers signed up for the semester-long course held two evenings a week.



Students at the Downtown Labor Center's ESL class.

In addition to covering the fundamentals, each class includes workshops conducted by advocates from various community organizations. The topics for the workshops range from labor history and workplace justice issues to tenant rights and how to do your income taxes. Computer literacy is also an important component of the class, conducted in the Downtown Labor Center's computer lab.

The class is free, and participants receive class credit through L.A. Trade Technical College. For more information on the Labor Center's ESL classes, contact Victor Narro at 213-480-4156 or vnarro@ile.ucla.edu.

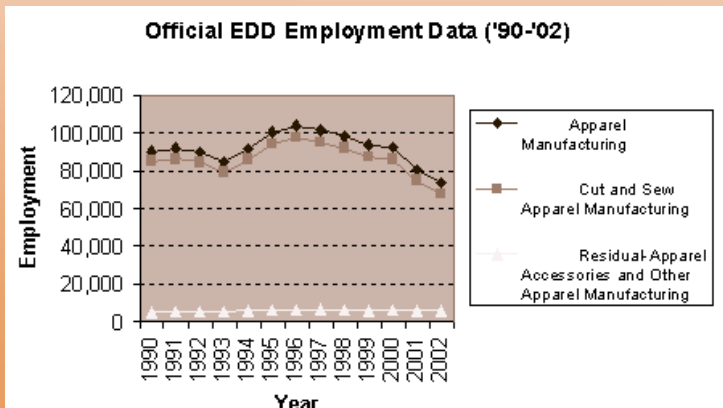
Cross Border Trends Affect Local Garment Industry

Lilian Coral, graduate student researcher for the UCLA Labor Center, is working on an innovative project funded by a grant from the UC Institute for Labor and Employment and focused on cross-border trends between the United States and Mexico in garment production and how this information can help provide a better assessment of the Los Angeles garment industry.

The garment industry is a prime example of what happens when trade is gradually liberalized, resulting in a "race to the bottom" as production costs are forced down in order to increase profits for clothing manufacturers. At the same time, production continues to decrease in both the United States and Mexico. The initial decline in U.S. production was believed to be related to the expansion of Mexico's production as a result of NAFTA. A decade later, as U.S. production continues to decline, Mexico's industry has also taken a downward turn. But the reality is that production numbers fail to take into account the hundreds and thousands of women and men who toil in

local garment shops that neglect to register. In addition to not being counted, these individuals are denied basic worker rights.

Our study will look at current employment patterns in Los Angeles's garment industry, taking into account the underground sector. In addition, Mexico's rise and fall in production will be examined to assess the future of Los Angeles's garment industry at this crucial juncture.



Colegio de Liderazgo 2004

From the sweatshops of the garment industry to the restaurant industry, from day laborers to domestic workers, from janitors to homecare workers providing supportive services for the ill and the elderly, immigrant workers endure hard work and sacrifice daily but still are unable to earn enough to raise themselves out of poverty. For three days, thirty-two union and nonunion immigrant workers from these industries converged at the Downtown Labor Center for the Colegio de Liderazgo, the second Spanish-language leadership school offered by the Labor Center.

This year's Colegio brought together not only union members but also immigrant workers involved with worker centers in Los Angeles. On the union side, the participants were composed of janitorial, hospital, and homecare workers from SEIU locals 1877, 434b, and 399. On the community side, the participants included day laborers involved with the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles (CHIRLA) and the Institute of Popular Education of Southern California (IDEPSCA) as well as workers from the Garment Worker Center, the Korean Immigrant Workers Advocates (KIWA), the Maintenance Cooperation Trust Fund, and CHIRLA's Domestic Workers Project.

The principal goal of the Colegio was to create a strong leadership among immigrant workers representing



Participants in the Colegio de Liderazgo 2004.

a diversity of unions and worker centers, with a special focus on health and safety and the fight for healthcare for all. The workers participated in workshops on local and national labor history, power analysis, health and safety, campaign planning, and political education, all conducted with a focus on leadership development through a train-the-trainer, popular education approach. Workshop facilitators included Labor Center Project Directors Carolina Bank, Linda Delp, and Victor Narro; Pablo Alvarado from the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON); and Katarina Davis Del Valle from SEIU and the L.A. Trade Technical College labor studies program.

The Colegio ended with a moving graduation ceremony that included a performance by the day laborer band, Los Jornaleros del Norte, and a keynote address by Maria Elena Durazo, president of HERE Local 11. The workers who graduated from the Colegio made a commitment to implement what they learned in their respective unions and worker centers and to continue the solidarity developed during the school by supporting each other's campaigns and organizing efforts. The workers will meet for a followup workshop on March 8.

For more information on the Colegio, contact Victor Narro at 213/480-4156 or vnarro@ile.ucla.edu.



Colegio participants illustrate their personal histories.

Community Scholars Study Affordable Housing

The 2004 Community Scholars class will focus on "A Strategy for Good Jobs and Affordable Housing in the Figueroa Corridor." In May 2001, the development company owned by billionaires Rupert Murdoch and Phillip Anschutz signed a historic agreement with the Figueroa Corridor Coalition for Economic Justice that guarantees local hiring into living wage and union jobs along with the building of affordable housing and community parks. This agreement, the most comprehensive in the nation's history, involved the cooperation of thirty community organizations, five unions, and hundreds of local residents.



2004 Community Scholars.

This year's Community Scholars will work directly with the staff and members of Strategic Actions for a Just Economy (SAJE) and with the Figueroa Corridor Coalition as they begin to turn the victories of their economic justice campaign into effective programs for economic development. The two major efforts in the Figueroa Corridor will be the Figueroa Corridor Community Jobs

Program and the Figueroa Corridor Community Land Trust.

For more information on the Community Scholars Program, contact Jackie Leavitt at 310/825-4380 or Eric Schwimmer at eschwimm@ucla.edu.

Those who teach justice



Design by Deborah Willis.

shall be like the stars... forever.

Daniel 12:3

Rev. Lawson's 75th Birthday Celebration and Fundraiser

Rev. James Lawson Jr. celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday before more than eight hundred well-wishers on September 25, 2003, at the Westwood United Methodist Church. The celebration not only was an occasion to acknowledge the historic contributions of Rev. Lawson's lifelong commitment to social justice, but also marked the launching of the "Lawson Justice Fund," housed at the Liberty Hill Foundation, to continue to fund nonviolent movements for change. More than \$40,000 was raised by the celebration.

Rev. Lawson is not one to rest on his laurels, however, and will return to the UCLA Labor Center to teach a Spring 2004 course on "Nonviolence and Social Movements," offered along with the Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies and the Cesar Chavez Center for Chicana/o Studies. This is the third year the class has been offered and the first time it will be offered through the Labor Center's new Labor and Workplace Studies minor.

Rev. Lawson will also be an honoree at the Labor Center's fortieth anniversary celebration dinner, May 22, 2004, at the Wilshire Grand Hotel. (See page five for details.)



save the date

UCLA Labor Center

40th Anniversary Dinner

Hosted by the LA County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO

Saturday, May 22, 2004

6:00 p.m. reception • 7:00 p.m. dinner

Wilshire Grand Los Angeles

Tickets: \$100 • Tables \$1000

Ads: \$1000 full page • \$500 half page
• \$250 quarter page • \$125 eighth
page • \$50 friends listing

Make checks payable to UC
Regents, and mail to UCLA Labor
Center 40th Anniversary, PO Box
951478, Los Angeles CA 90095-1478.

For more information, contact
Julie Monroe at 310/794-5982 or
jamonroe@ucla.edu

honoring
Dolores Huerta

United Farm Workers Cofounder

Rev. James Lawson Jr.

Civil Rights Leader

Tom Rankin

President, California Labor Federation AFL-CIO

Dave Sickler

Southern California Director, Building Trades Council

Design by Deborah Willis.

Labor Summer Internship Program 2004

Despite expected budget cuts, the UCLA Labor Center will proceed with its annual Labor Summer Internship Program (LSIP), a program that has consistently led to the placement of graduates in full-time staff positions at unions and community-based worker centers throughout Southern California.

This year, however, the Center will offer the course for ten units of UCLA course credit, which will be applicable to the Labor Center's academic minor in Labor and Workplace Studies. Offering the program for course credit allows for the inclusion of both non-U.C. and out-of-state students for the first time in LSIP's four-year history.

LSIP 2004 is an eight-week program, beginning in late June and continuing through late August, during which time students will work as researchers and organizers at local unions and worker centers. Because the program will be offered as an academic course with a large field component, thorough attention will be paid to skills training such as bargaining, internet corporate research, and basic organizing, as well as labor history.

Students, unions, and worker centers interested in participating in LSIP 2004 should contact Jazmín Ochoa at jochoa@ile.ucla.edu.



Student interns participating in the 2003 LSIP tour a Sweat X garment factory.

State Budget Forum Draws Three Hundred Participants

The UCLA Downtown Labor Center sponsored a forum on the California state budget on January 30, attracting three hundred concerned union and community organizers from all over the region. Jean Ross, executive director for the California Budget Project, was the opening speaker, followed by State Senator Sheila Kuehl and Assemblymembers Judy Chu and Jackie Goldberg. Anthony Wright, the executive director for Health Access, and Erika Smith of SEIU 660 provided additional context. Participants left the four-hour training armed and ready for the upcoming budget battles.

Initiated in conjunction with Michele Prichard and Gwen Gary of the Liberty Hill Foundation, additional leadership on the planning committee came from Kathy Ochoa and Erika Smith from SEIU 660, Rita Ledesma from the Health Policy Outreach Center of the Pat Brown Institute for Public Affairs at Cal State Los Angeles, and Idabelle Fosse and Starlight Garcia from Health Access.



Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg speaks at the budget forum.

For more information on the state budget, visit the California Budget Project's website at www.cbp.org.

Housing-Labor Working Group Receives Award

The California Reinvestment Committee, a state-wide, nonprofit organization advocating greater community reinvestment, awarded its Panther Award to the Labor Center's Labor/Housing Working Group. The

group was convened in response to the passage of SB 975, which expanded the definition of public works projects to include affordable housing. Faced with the challenge of implementing prevailing wage in the affordable housing arena, the group has been working hard on forging a coalition between labor and nonprofit housing developers.

In addition to getting significant union support for the 2002 housing bond and from housing developers, the coalition has studied the impact of prevailing wages on multifamily housing, sponsored efforts to recruit union contractors to compete in this new arena, taken affordable housing developers on a tour of union apprenticeship programs, and developed a better understanding of current wages in the affordable housing arena. The participants are now getting ready to launch a pilot focused on building several union affordable housing projects.

Those not pictured are Dave Sickler, Southern California Building Trades Council; Jim Hilfenhaus, Laborers Local 300; Jaime Valdivia, Pipe Trades; Anthony Santos and Larry Frank, Labor Center.

For more information, contact Larry Frank at 213/480-4154 or lfrank@ile.ucla.edu.



Front row, *Kevin Norton, IBEW Local 11; Jim Bonar, Skid Row Housing Trust; Richard Slawson, L.A./O.C. Bulding Trades Council; Alexandra Lieben, Labor Center;* 2nd row, *Jan Breidenbach, SCANPH; Paul Zimmerman, West Hollywood Community Development Corp.; Robert Denver Smith, IUPAT District Council 36.*

CBI Helps Students Understand Grocery Worker Strike

In the midst of the ongoing supermarket strike, over one hundred students gathered at the twelfth annual Collective Bargaining Institute (CBI) to learn first-hand about the process of



A student presents a proposal at the CBI.

contract negotiations. Each year, the CBI brings in high school students from all over the L.A. Unified School District to educate them on the role of unions and the importance of the collective bargaining process.



Students caucus at the CBI.

The CBI was held at the United Teachers Los Angeles headquarters on December 8, 2003. Students were divided into union and management teams led by experienced

negotiators who served as volunteer coaches. The Institute utilized the current strike between the UFCW and Vons, Pavillions, Albertsons, and Ralphs to help students understand the struggle that confronts supermarket workers. Throughout the day, union and management teams presented and negotiated their proposals with respect to wages, childcare, seniority, and medical benefits.

The twelfth CBI was made possible by the sponsorships of the LAUSD Collective Bargaining Project, the UCLA Labor Center, the United Teachers Los Angeles, the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, and the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, along with the generous support of the LAUSD School Board, local unions, and community organizations throughout the Los Angeles area.



Kent Wong coaches students at the CBI.

For more information on the CBI, contact MyMy Lu at 310/206-0812 or mymylu@ile.ucla.edu.

Summer Institute for Union Women 2004

This July, more than 150 women from Canada and the United States will gather for the twenty-third Western Regional Summer Institute for Union Women (SIUW). The Institute is an annual tradition that brings union women together to educate and inspire one another. This five-day, four-night conference will feature an array of workshops and plenaries, a labor arts and culture night, and plenty of social festivities.

The 2004 SIUW will be held July 6–10 on the UCLA campus. Each year, the Institute is hosted by one labor center in the western region, and the UCLA Labor Center is proud to bring SIUW back to Los Angeles for the first time since 1999.

A planning committee for the 2004 SIUW is currently meeting on a monthly basis. For more information on the Institute or to join the planning committee, please contact MyMy Lu at 310/206-0812 or via email at mymylu@ile.ucla.edu.





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