



Dear friends,

As I reflect on our achievements over the last year, I am in awe of what we have been able to accomplish through the combined strength of our dedicated staff and labor partners across the state.

In partnership with unions, workers, students, faculty, and policymakers, the UCLA Labor Center's impact resonated across our communities and working people's lives. From deeply-engaged research capturing the frontline experiences of low-wage workers, to fellowships that gave our young people hands-on paid organizing experience, to statewide collaborations that have expanded labor education and shaped worker-first policies—this year proved that we are at our strongest in solidarity with one another.

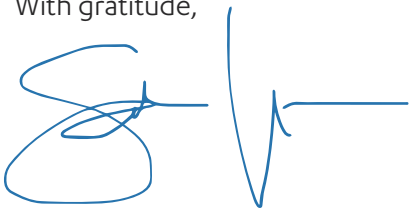
As you'll see in this annual snapshot, our team was hard at work. We released 10 publications, led 8 school-to-movement programs for hundreds of young people, hosted more than 40 educational events, provided public comment during critical legislative hearings, and participated in a variety of local, statewide and global coalitions pushing forward worker-centered agendas. Several of our project directors continue to teach in our Labor Studies program at UCLA while sustaining active research justice work. And every day, our staff and faculty experts discuss timely, policy-relevant worker issues with top media outlets across print and broadcast news, such as NPR, the Los Angeles Times, CalMatters, and more.

This September marks not just 60 years of research justice, schools-to-movement pathways, and narrative change, but our successful transition to a new era of leadership, greater organizational alignment, and strengthened cross-team collaboration. Throughout it all, we remained steadfast in our commitment to leveraging our resources in service of workers.

Yet this year was not without profound loss. With the passing of civil and workers' rights icon Rev. James Lawson Jr., the namesake of our MacArthur Park building reopening in 2025, I am reminded that our work is only possible through those who came before us. As we move forward, we must do so with immense courage, relentless discipline, and committed passion for our struggle toward economic, racial, and immigrant justice.

In this historic year for not just our organization, but workers across the globe, I could not be more proud of sharing our annual accomplishments with you: the community of labor partners who make this work possible.

With gratitude,



**Saba Waheed**  
Director, UCLA Labor Center



# Research Justice

Impactful, cutting-edge research is at the core of the UCLA Labor Center's mission to advance worker justice. By utilizing a research justice framework that centers workers' everyday experiences, this past year's initiatives and publications provided crucial evidence-based analyses that informed sound labor and economic policies, lifted industry standards, and created jobs that are good for communities.



## INITIATIVE HIGHLIGHTS

### Our research centers workers' voices, capturing their varied experiences and intersectional identities.

This year, we conducted research on the 2.11 million young workers across California, and we supported our undergraduate students' research on "workers and learners," or students who juggle studies alongside employment. We also surveyed undocumented Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) youth, as well as conducted a statewide survey of Black workers and their pathways to equitable and quality jobs.

### Our focus on workforce development research builds pathways to quality jobs.

We evaluated the City of Los Angeles' Workforce Demonstration (WED) Project in creating pathways to good jobs for Black workers. We also evaluated a Long Beach training program for undocumented entrepreneurs, and we created a repository of workforce development resources and continued our collaboration with state and local agencies on workforce development initiatives, guided by the high road training partnership framework.

### We provide in-depth industry analyses, evaluating critical innovations that shape the future of work.

Our research dived into a broad array of industries, including meatpacking and food processing, restaurants, retail, cannabis, and nail salons. We partnered with key stakeholders to help strengthen policy efforts that support quality climate jobs and protections for workers in a rapidly-evolving technology landscape, including the impact of automation on port workers.

### We know that worker protection laws are only as good as their enforcement—which is made possible through workers' empowerment.

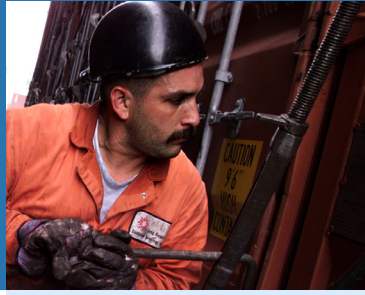
We completed an evaluation of the Domestic Worker Education and Outreach Program (DWEOP) that trains workers and employers on workplace laws and rights. Our report on the Private Attorneys General Act (PAGA) ensures the continuation of the program that allows workers to report workplace violations. This year, we launched a research project examining restorative justice's role in the workplace, in partnership with the Labor Commissioner's Office, using a trauma-informed approach to assess the impact of labor violations on workers and their families.

## PUBLICATIONS RELEASED



### “Workforce Warriors: Los Angeles Black Worker Center’s Bold Battle for Equity”

In partnership with the 1000 Strong Coalition and Los Angeles Black Worker Center, we evaluated Los Angeles’ Workforce Demonstration Project, which codifies the city’s commitment to pre-apprenticeships and on-the-job trainings for Black workers.



### “Automation and the Future of Dockwork at the San Pedro Bay Port Complex”

Our mixed-methods study, commissioned by the California Workforce Development Board, analyzed the potential impacts of increased automation at the San Pedro Bay Port Complex.



### “Taken for a Ride: Poverty and Food Insecurity Among Workers at Universal Studios Hollywood”

We documented the working and living conditions of more than 6,000 service, retail, and other workers at Universal Studios Hollywood.



### “Overcooked & Underserved: The Challenges of Koreatown’s Restaurant Workers”

In partnership with the Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance, Cal Poly Pomona, and San Diego State University, we examined the labor and housing conditions of immigrant workers in Koreatown’s restaurants.



### “Nail Files California: A Study of Nail Salon Workers and Their Industry”

We profiled the nail salon industry and its workforce to identify the gaps in research as well as the policy needs of the sector, in order to better address its inequities and challenges.



### “A Shrinking Toolbox: The Corporate Efforts to Eliminate PAGA and Limit California Workers’ Rights”

We analyzed the impact of a ballot initiative that would dramatically alter the state’s tools for preventing and correcting wage theft and other workplace abuses of California workers.



### “Surviving While Studying” and “Remapping Realities”

Both student-authored and produced this year, these research projects unpacked the experiences of workers and learners navigating work, school, and life.



### “California’s Future is Clocked In: The Experiences of Young Workers”

We studied the employment, educational, financial, and household challenges impacting California’s 2.11 million workers ages 16 to 24.

# Schools-to-Movement Pathways

The UCLA Labor Center believes that a public university belongs to the people, and in 2024, this belief shaped our approach to providing accessible quality education. By hosting robust fellowships, engaging curricula, and community-engaged courses, our schools-to-movement pathways give students in California and across the nation diverse, life-changing opportunities to grow into leaders of the labor movement.



## BUILDING THE NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS

Our paid fellowship programs place young leaders in unions, worker centers, and immigrant organizations in Los Angeles and nationally to engage in exciting organizing efforts.



The national **Dream Summer Fellowship** continues to be a shining example of engaging immigrant youth nationwide in organizing efforts. The paid eight-week program provided \$7,000 fellowship awards to 59 immigrant youth and allies by partnering with 35 community-engaged social justice organizations.



The annual **Labor Summer Fellowship** brought together 16 young leaders and 12 local community organizations that share a vision for worker justice and labor rights. The fellows engaged with efforts to align labor rights issues with parallel fights for equity, including but not limited to those impacting queer and transgender communities, AAPI communities, and Black immigrant communities.



The **Freedom Fellowship** offered a 10-week experiential opportunity for students to gain hands-on experience working with activists and community organizers involved in the movement for civic and economic justice for Black workers. Nine fellows worked directly with Black worker centers to support their regional projects, brainstorm policy solutions, and conduct hands-on research.

## TRANSFORMING SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION

Our dynamic curricula, training workshops, and educational programs equip young workers with vital workplace readiness knowledge as they enter the workforce.

Prompted by the introduction of Senate Resolution (SR38) in 2023, the Labor Center launched the **James Lawson Jr./Dolores Huerta Nonviolence Project**, inspired by their nonviolence teachings. Our staff are facilitating a community college class at Los Angeles Trade Technical-College and conducting pilot lessons throughout the Los Angeles Unified School District.

As a result of the passage of AB800, which requires all California public schools to observe “Workplace Readiness Week,” our **Young Worker Initiative** has been at the forefront of producing workplace readiness training materials and conducting innovative know-your-rights training workshops for middle and high school students across the state of California.



## CENTERING STUDENT RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

Our work with the Labor Studies department at UCLA engages undergraduate students in hands-on applied research that uplifts the needs of workers today and paves the way for workers tomorrow.

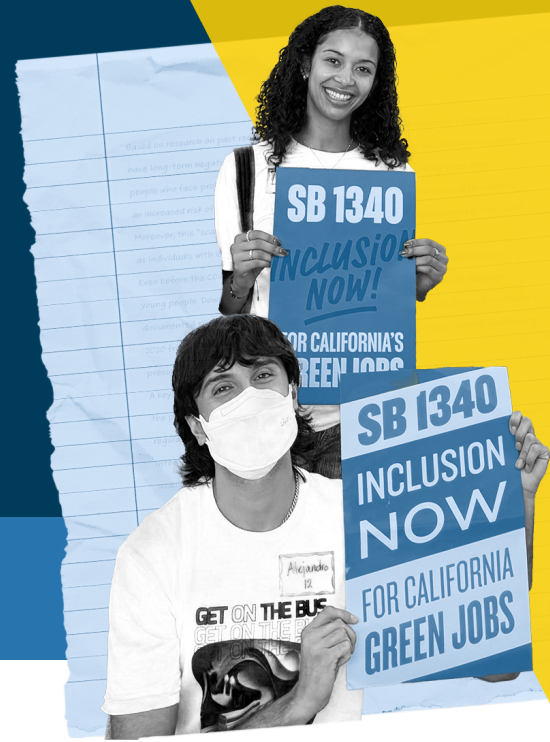
In partnership with local community colleges and other campuses, CARE at Work’s **“We Gon’ Be Alright: Developing Next Generation of Black Organizers”** course provided students the opportunity to learn from and build on Black labor and community organizing traditions. This year, the class enrollment reached an all-time high.

Our annual **Labor Summer Research Program** engaged undergraduate students in applied research focused on the social, economic, and political context of “workers and learners,” or students who attend college in Los Angeles County and also work at the same time.

In May, students at the **Labor at UCLA Research Showcase** addressed timely topics from airport worker dynamics to supporting disabled nonfiction media creators. In July, four undergraduates showcased their research projects at the Southwest Oral History Association (SOHA) Conference.

# Movement Building and Support

We leverage our university resources to build strong movements and communities. We continue to serve as thought partners, technical assistance providers, and strategic communicators to uplift worker conditions and stories.



## CREATING ADVOCACY PATHWAYS

We have supported the **Opportunity for All campaign**, which aims to provide equal access to employment opportunities for all students, regardless of their immigration status, across California's public university and college campuses.

What began as a student-led campaign at the university level transformed into the Opportunity for All Act (AB2586), which is progressing through the California state legislature.

The UCLA Labor Center launched the **Asian American Racial Justice project**, which centers and amplifies AAPI community voices. The project collaborates with unions and community organizations to uplift immigrant youth, develop AAPI union leadership, and coordinate organizing and educational programs that intersect race and worker power.

The **Global Solidarity** program continues to organize transnational convenings, bringing together labor leaders and workers from Mexico, Canada, and the U.S. to develop shared strategies and visions that address our interconnected global economic challenges.

## FORTIFYING LABOR EDUCATION AND RESOURCES

The **Re:Work podcast** elevates stories that humanize workers and break down social justice issues. In 2024, we released five episodes that spotlight the voices of workers, immigrants, and people of color.

In 2023, **six new labor centers** launched at UC campuses across California. Modeled after existing centers at UCLA, UC Berkeley, and UC Merced, these centers provide vital research and educate future labor leaders.

In 2021, UCLA dedicated our MacArthur Park building to Rev. James Lawson Jr., champion of civil and worker rights. The **UCLA James Lawson Jr. Worker Justice Center** is currently undergoing renovations, but by 2025, will reopen as a key hub for worker rights and social justice advocacy in Los Angeles.

In 2024, we were one of 30 community-based programs selected to move into UCLA's historic **Trust Building on Spring Street**.

# Collaborating with Partners

Our work would not be possible without our community partners. Thank you to the following organizations, funders, and donors who are essential to making the UCLA Labor Center thrive:

AAPI Data	California Teachers Association	Echo Park Immigration Center	John Jay Immigrant Student Success Center
AFL-CIO Solidarity Center	California Transit Works	Democracy at Works Institute (Brooklyn NY)	Koreatown Immigrant Workers Alliance
AFSCME United Domestic Workers	California Workforce Development Board	Garment Worker Center	Labor Commissioner's Office
AFT 1521	Centro de Entrenamiento y Liderazgo Para Trabajadores	Gender Justice LA	LA-Orange County Building & Construction Trades Council
Aliento Education Fund	Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights	Grantmakers Concerned with Immigrants and Refugees	Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy
Amalgamated Transit Union	College Track	Gig Workers United	Los Angeles Black Worker Center
American Federation of Teachers	Community Power Collective	Equality CA	Los Angeles County Federation of Labor
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance - Los Angeles Chapter	Comite Obrero Fronterizo-CFO	Empowering API	Los Angeles County Federation of Labor
Building Skills Partnership	Convivir	First Gen Empower	Los Angeles Worker Center Network
Black Alliance for Justice Immigration	Centro Binacional para el Desarrollo Indígena Oaxaqueño	FREE ALAS	Liga Obrera Mexicana
Borderlinks	Center for Policy Initiatives	Hand in Hand: The Domestic Employers Network	Malikah
Buy Your Values	Center for Immigration Law and Policy	Hospitality Training Academy	Maintenance Cooperation Trust Fund
California Building Trades Council	Child Care Providers United	IATSE Local B192	Miguel Contreras Foundation
California Coalition for Worker Power	Chinese Progressive Association	Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights	Mixteco Indigena Community Organizing Project
California Domestic Workers Coalition	Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights	Immigrant Legal Resource Center	National Domestic Workers Alliance
California Federation of Teachers	CLEAN Carwash Worker Center	Inland Empire Black Worker Center	National Employment Law Project
California Healthy Nail Salon Collaborative	City University of New York (CUNY) Undocumented and Immigrant Student Programs	Inclusive Action for the City	National Skills Coalition
California Immigrant Policy Center	Earthlodge Center for Transformation	Institute of Popular Education of Southern California	Neighborhood Ministries
California Labor Commissioner's Office		International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 11	Nuestras Manos
California Labor Federation		International Longshore & Warehouse Union	Orange County Labor Federation
			Organized Power in Numbers



## Partners Cont.

Organizing Rooted in Abolition Liberation and Empowerment	Trabajadores Unidos/Workers United
Pacific Gateway	The Salvadoran American Leadership and Educational Fund
Presidents' Alliance on Higher Education and Immigration	Unión Nacional de Trabajadores por Aplicación
Pilipino Worker Center	UNITE HERE Local 11
PowerSwitch Action	United Auto Workers
Public Law Center	United Farm Workers
Restaurant Opportunities Center of Los Angeles	United Food and Commercial Workers #770
Rideshare Drivers United	United Food and Commercial Workers Western States Council
San Diego Black Worker Center	United for Respect
San Diego Imperial County Labor Council	USC Equity Research Institute
Silicon Valley De-Bug	United Nurses Association of California
SEIU California	United Steelworkers
SEIU 2015	Undocumented Student Network
SEIU 721	United We Dream
SEIU Locals 99	United Teachers Los Angeles
SEIU UHW-West	Warehouse Workers Resource Center
SEIU United Service Workers West	Woori Juntos
SINACTRAHO Sindicato Nacional de Trabajadores y Trabajadoras del Hogar	Worker Education & Resource Center
Somos Familia Valle	Worksafe
Southern California Association for Non-Profit Housing	Young Worker Education Project
Southern California Black Worker Hub	
Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health	
Starbucks Workers Union	

Thank you to all the fiscal year 2024 UCLA Labor Center supporters, and a special thanks to funders listed below who supported at the \$1,000 or more level.

AAPI Equity Alliance  
American Center for International Labor Solidarity  
California Department of Cannabis Control  
California Community Foundation  
California Department of Industrial Relations  
California Labor Federation  
California Workforce Development Board  
Cathay Bank Foundation  
Congregations Organized for Prophetic Engagement  
Dubchansky Family Foundation  
ECMC Foundation  
Ford Family Foundation  
James Irvine Foundation  
Kellogg Foundation  
New America  
New World Foundation  
Rosa-Luxemburg Foundation  
Rosenberg Foundation  
The California Endowment  
The California Wellness Foundation  
Weingart Foundation

# Support Our Work

For more than 60 years, the UCLA Labor Center has advanced quality employment and education for all. With a history of fostering innovative collaborations between students, faculty, workers and community partners anchored in the heart of Los Angeles, our approach to research justice, leadership development, and narrative change promotes worker justice, racial and economic equity, global labor solidarity, and immigrant rights. We accomplish our work in direct partnership with our community and supporters.

To learn more about how to support our work, visit: [labor.ucla.edu/get-involved/support](https://labor.ucla.edu/get-involved/support)

## Get Connected

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