

# Labor Education NEWS

UCLA CENTER FOR LABOR RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

SUMMER 2003

## Labor Summer Internship Program 2003

The UCLA Labor Summer Internship Program (LSIP), now in its third year, continues to train and inspire the next generation of L.A. labor organizers and researchers.

Last year, 80 percent of recently graduated interns took staff positions at their LSIP worksites. This year, sixteen students, both graduate and undergraduate, are working at thirteen different organizations throughout Los Angeles. Whether probing nonunion businesses, mapping state-wide industries, conducting house

visits, or setting up town hall meetings, this summer's crop of interns has moved headlong into the challenging task of worker organizing.

As a result of deep state budget cuts this year, participating unions have had to subsidize the cost of the program. A variety of organizations have stepped up to support LSIP 2003, including: the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the Service Employees International Union's Health Care Action Campaign (SEIU-HCAC), and the Los Angeles Alliance for a new Economy (LAANE), to name a few.

The highlight of this year's program was the border trip, where

interns toured the factories and villages situated just south of the United States-Mexico border. The interns also took part in a labor tour of Los Angeles County, where they visited the sites of historic labor struggles, including the Farmer John plant, and saw firsthand the disparity between the rich and poor in Los Angeles. Finally, the interns toured a unionized garment production plant and a sweatshop, seeing for themselves the tremendous benefits of unionization for garment workers.

In addition to the interns' full-time work schedules at their sites and the offsite tours, they also participated in day-long education and training sessions each week. These sessions emphasized labor history and political education as well as valuable skills trainings, including organizing, corporate research, and civil disobedience.



*The 2003 Labor Summer Internship Program participants.*



*LSIP interns participate in a role-play debunking labor stereotypes.*

### In This Issue

HEMOCARE  
WORKERS  
AT UCLA



IMMIGRANT  
WORKERS  
FREEDOM RIDE



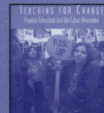
STUDENT INTERNS  
GO GLOBAL



COMMUNITY  
SCHOLARS  
2002-2003



POPULAR  
EDUCATION  
BOOKS





## Homecare Workers Teach at UCLA

*"I'm honored to be here. My daughter graduated from UCLA and now she's working in social services . . . I told her she's not going to get rich doing it, but I'm so glad she wants to help people. That's what I've been doing all my life—taking care of people."* Lula Grayson, homecare worker since 1986 and SEIU Local 434B member.

On May 12, faculty, students, and staff gathered in the School of Public Health to listen to the personal stories of homecare workers from SEIU Local 434B. Lula Grayson wasn't the only one feeling honored. Attendees were likewise honored to hear from homecare worker and 434B member, Bertha Modesto, 434B Research Director Wendy Duchon, and 434B Secretary-Treasurer Amanda Figueroa. In candid terms, these women described the hardships and rewards of years of work in this

often invisible profession. They shared accounts of how those they cared for became like family members, how they struggled to balance the needs of their clients with

the needs of their own families, and how they got involved in the union in an effort to improve their own lives as well as their ability to provide quality care. These homecare workers serve almost 100,000 elderly and disabled who have long-term care needs in L.A. County.

The ILE-funded Homecare Working Group was the main sponsor of this event. Its goal is to bring together workers, unions, and academics to illuminate the urgent issues confronting the homecare industry workforce. For more information,

see the website at [www.iir.berkeley.edu/clre/programs/organizing/homecaregroup.html](http://www.iir.berkeley.edu/clre/programs/organizing/homecaregroup.html).



*Bertha Modesto, homecare worker and Local 434B member.*

## SoCalCOSH Commemorates Workers Memorial Day

"Mourn for the Dead; Fight for the Living." This is the motto participants wore at the Workers Memorial Day event and press conference, sponsored by the Southern California Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health (SoCalCOSH). On April 28, workers, elected officials, community members, and health and safety advocates joined in solidarity to commemorate their coworkers and family members who have died or suffered from work-related injuries or illnesses. To honor the many workers who have died at the workplace, Councilmember Eric Garcetti presented a city council resolution officially recognizing Workers Memorial Day and designating the last week of April as Worker Safety Week. The event took place at the UCLA Downtown Labor Center, with twenty-six different unions and community-based organizations in attendance.

SoCalCOSH is actively continuing its efforts to create safe and healthy workplaces through monthly

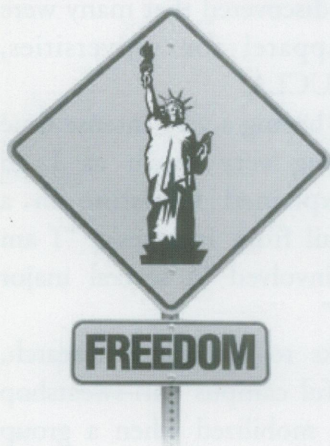
meetings featuring updates on policy efforts, event planning, community outreach, and health and safety trainings. For more information, contact Jessica Martinez at 310/206-0860 or via email at [socalcosh@ile.ucla.edu](mailto:socalcosh@ile.ucla.edu).



*Grace Kim, poster winner, receiving an award at WMD event.*



# Immigrant Workers Fight for Legalization



thousands of immigrant workers.

Over one hundred people attended the hearing, and workers from IBT, SEIU, KIWA, and CWA gave powerful testimonials on how the letters have affected their lives. A panel of labor leaders and politicians also addressed the issue, including, Maria Elena Durazo, HERE Local 11; Cristina Vazquez, UNITE; David Sickler,

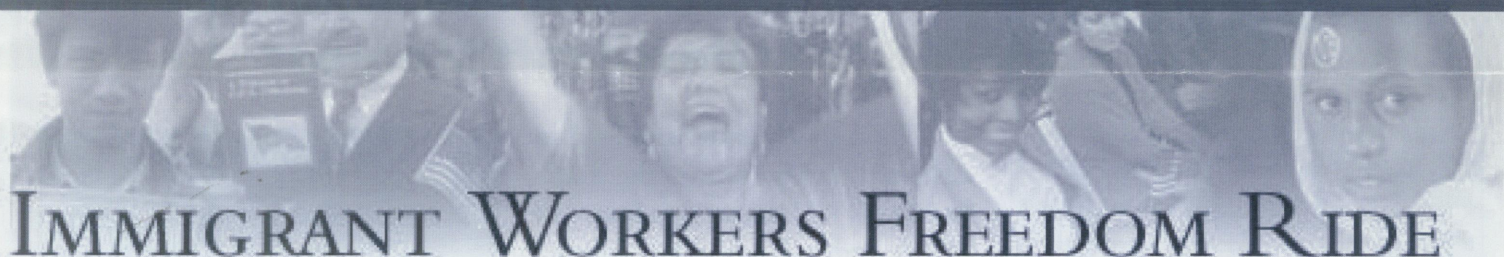
On May 1, 2003, the Labor Center hosted an historic hearing on Social Security “no-match” letters. The Social Security Administration (SSA) sends these letters, listing names of employees with allegedly improper social security numbers, to employers—resulting in the unjust and sometimes illegal firing of

Building Trades Council; Ernesto Medrano, IBT; and Senator Richard Alarcon.

The Labor Center, along with unions and community organizations, is administering a survey to document the impact of the Social Security no-match letters on workers in Los Angeles. For more information, contact Carolina Bank Muñoz at 310/794-5973.

In spite of the threats against immigrant workers, they continue to organize around the issue of legalization. Hundreds of immigrant workers will participate in the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, spearheaded by HERE and inspired by the freedom riders of the Civil Rights Movement. Immigrant workers and their allies will depart from nine major U.S. cities and cross the country in buses to meet with members of Congress in Washington, D.C.

For more information on the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, go to [www.iwfr.org](http://www.iwfr.org), or call Sylvia Carranza at 213/381-5611.



## IMMIGRANT WORKERS FREEDOM RIDE

September 20–October 4, 2003

### Building Labor Solidarity Across the Border

Labor is organizing across national borders, as demonstrated by the research collaboration between the UCLA Labor Center and Teamsters Local 952 addressing cross-border trucking. These research findings were presented at a conference on June 19 at the UCLA Downtown Labor Center.

“The presentation was an eye opener for me,” said Cristina Vazquez, western regional vice president for UNITE!. “We had lots of communications with unions in Mexico and know a fair amount about manufacturing there, but when you see it presented visually it’s a whole different thing.”

The event included presentations by Labor Center staff William Kramer and graduate student Lilian Coral;

Teamster principal officers Patrick Kelly of Local 952, Randy Cammack of Local 63, and Political Affairs Representative Jennifer Esposito from the Teamsters in Washington, D.C.; and Jorge Gonzalez Mendez, deputy for external relations from the powerful independent Volkswagen union in Puebla, Mexico.

“The conference helped connect independent union organizing efforts in Mexico with U.S. labor unions,” noted Victor Narro, coexecutive director of Sweatshop Watch. “It highlighted the major role that cross-border organizing efforts can play in addressing the significant impact of globalization on major manufacturing industries where unionized jobs are in jeopardy.”

Over seventy-five labor and community activists attended, including elected leaders and staff from the United Auto Workers, Machinists, UNITE!, Longshore Union, and the L.A. County Federation of Labor.



## Labor Center Student Interns Changing the World

Dozens of student researchers have participated in the Labor Center's Strategic Research internship program over the last two years, and many are now working for unions as full-time researchers.

Two student researchers, Julia Plascencia and Christine Nguyen, participated in the United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) International Union Summer, where they helped workers build unions to fight sweatshops around the world. Julia is working with CAT (Centro de Apoyo al Trabajador) to organize garment workers in Puebla, Mexico, and Christine is in Indonesia, where she



*Julia Plascencia campaigning against PUMA in support of workers in Mexico.*

has interviewed workers at sweatshops and discovered that many were making apparel for universities, including UCLA.

"I am having a very intense time and learning very much as I go along," explained Christine in a recent email from Indonesia. "I am currently involved in several major cases here."

Thanks to Christine's research, the powerful campus anti-sweatshop movement mobilized when a group of 537 workers who make collegiate apparel were locked out by their employer for demanding the minimum wage.

### New Labor Studies Minor at UCLA

The Labor Center is happy to announce that students are now able to enroll in the new Labor and Workplace Studies minor, established last Spring at UCLA. This is an exciting, new project for the Labor Center, as students will be more integrated into the Center's activities in addition to receiving a comprehensive education in all aspects of labor.

To complete the requirements for the minor, students will take twenty-eight units in areas such as sociology, women's studies, Chicana/o studies, economics, history, management, policy studies, political science, and psychology.

For more information on the minor, contact Carolina Bank Muñoz at 310/794-5973.

### The Labor Center Welcomes New Staff Member

The Labor Center is pleased to welcome MyMy Lu to the staff. MyMy is a recent graduate of UCLA and a familiar face around the Labor Center. Prior to her current position, she served as a student assistant to the Labor Center, contributing to various projects, including extensive work with the LGBT Union Leadership School.

In her new position, MyMy will work with SoCalCOSH and the Labor Center's Homecare Workers' Project. She will also be integral to the planning of the 2004 Summer Institute for Union Women, to be held at UCLA.

To contact MyMy Lu or for more information on the Summer Institute, call 310/206-0812 or email [mymylu@ile.ucla.edu](mailto:mymylu@ile.ucla.edu).





## Community Scholars Take On the State Budget



*2002-2003 Community Scholars class with Jackie Leavitt, left.*

In the wake of the California state budget crisis, the UCLA Community Scholars class took on the challenge of analyzing the budget and using that analysis to help grassroots organizations intervene in the budgetary

process. Comprised of selected graduate students and community organizers, the Community Scholars class, under Professor Jackie Leavitt's tutelage, have laid out a thorough two-sided wall chart which portrays the revenues and expenditures in the state budget and the process that takes place each year. The final project presents the budget, not as a field of numbers, but as a battle of values, with oral histories to give a human face to the debate.

For copies of the final project, contact Larry Frank at 213/480-4154.

This year's Community Scholars class also hosted three organizer trainings, drawing on some of the best practices in Los Angeles. SEIU Local 1877 modelled their leadership development work, SAJE (Strategic Actions for a Just Economy) led

a discussion on race, gender, and organizing, and AGENDA demonstrated the application of their power analysis tool to the electoral process (focused on the Martin Ludlow for City Council campaign).

## California State Budget Briefing at the Downtown Labor Center

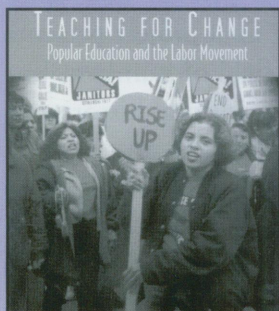
On March 20, 120 union and community leaders got an earful about the coming budget crisis from Jean Ross, executive director of the California Budget Project, and Assemblymember Jackie Goldberg, along with a panel of experts. The event was sponsored by the Labor Center; the California State Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO; the L.A. County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO; the Liberty Hill Foundation; the State Building and Construction Trades Council; SEIU; AFSCME; and AFT.





## Summer Reading: Popular Education Books *Voices for Justice* in Japanese and Chinese

Looking for inspiring summer reading? If you haven't already picked up the two new popular education books from the United States and Canada, now's the time! They are indispensable tools for anyone interested in building a viable labor movement to confront the challenges of our times. And they complement one another perfectly; one describes how popular education is being used in successful campaigns; the other describes the philosophy behind a popular education approach and provides detailed activities that you can use in your work.



*Teaching for Change: Popular Education and the Labor Movement* highlights recent struggles in the United States and the critical role of education in organizing workers, building labor-community alliances, and developing visionary leaders in our movement.

Interviews with union organizers and essays from key activists and educators make the numerous campaigns in this book come alive.

Read about the Avondale workers in Louisiana, the successful multi-union campaign in Connecticut to organize workers and protect affordable housing, the breakthrough in union organizing in Puerto Rico. Get the inside story of what happened behind the scenes to ensure the success of the Los Angeles janitor's strike and the Battle in Seattle. Learn how hotel workers developed their own contract campaign to document the health effects of employer abuse in Las Vegas, how labor and community groups created an environmental justice campaign in Arizona, and how the historic Tennessee Highlander Center has inspired organizers and educators since 1932.

*Teaching for Change* also chronicles the worker health and safety movement in the United States, describes innovative labor education programs with high school students and with workers in adult education classes, and outlines the education philosophy of the George Meany Center-National Labor College. Also featured are examples of progressive union education programs in Canada and the inspiring story of *maquiladora* workers' struggles on the United States-Mexico border.

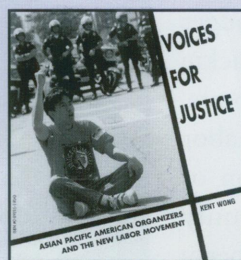
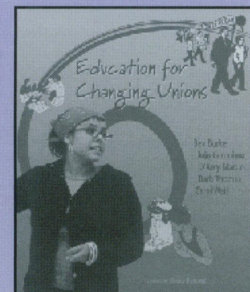
To order in the United States, go to [www.labor.ucla.edu](http://www.labor.ucla.edu), or call the UCLA Labor Center at 310/794-5982. In Canada, call the Catalyst Centre at 888/521-1453 or go to [www.catalystcentre.ca](http://www.catalystcentre.ca).

*Education for Changing Unions* describes the philosophy and methods that underlie a popular education approach for successful union-building campaigns. Written in a clear and accessible style, it includes a wealth of activities, ideas, and practical exercises by five seasoned Canadian labor and community educators who have worked extensively in the areas of worker education, social justice, human rights, and antiracism.

If you've ever wondered what popular education is or how to do it, this is the book for you. It describes popular education programs, courses and tools, and the corresponding principles that inform the practice of popular education. It includes the specific steps needed to implement innovative education activities in your union, community, or labor education classroom, such as planning, design and facilitation of strategic planning, leadership development, and organizational change programs.

*Education for Changing Unions* updates the essential 1991 educators' handbook from Canada, *Educating for a Change*, by adding new activities and ideas, all in a highly usable format and adapted specifically to the labor movement context.

To order, call 800/718-7201, go to [www.btlbooks.com](http://www.btlbooks.com), or email [btlbooks@web.ca](mailto:btlbooks@web.ca).



*Voices for Justice: Asian Pacific American Organizers and the New Labor Movement* is now available in both Japanese and Chinese translation. This book features interviews and photos from a new generation of organizers who are helping to change the U.S. labor movement. To order, go to [www.labor.ucla.edu](http://www.labor.ucla.edu), or call 310/794-5982.



# SAVE THE DATE!

## LOSH's 25th Anniversary October 23, 2003

**2:00-5:00 P.M. POLICY FORUM ON IMMIGRANT WORKER HEALTH AND SAFETY**

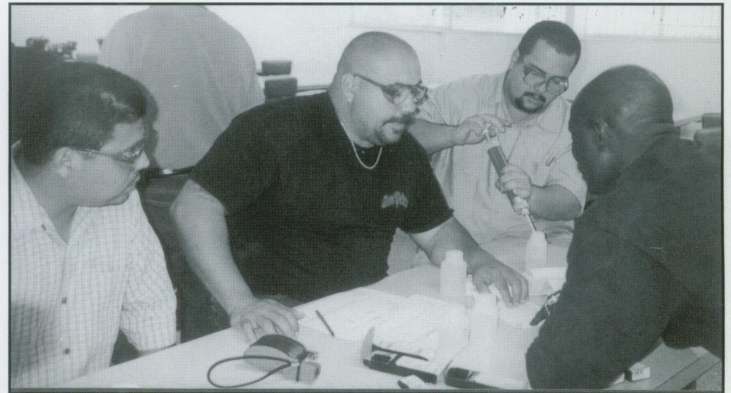
**5:00-7:00 P.M. RECEPTION**

**Call 310/794-5964 or email [mathews@ucla.edu](mailto:mathews@ucla.edu)**

### What is WOSHTEP?

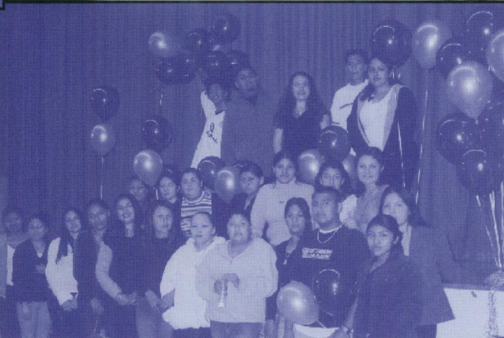
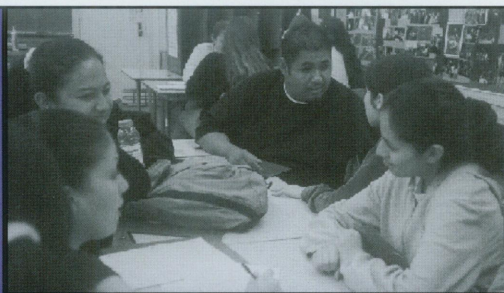
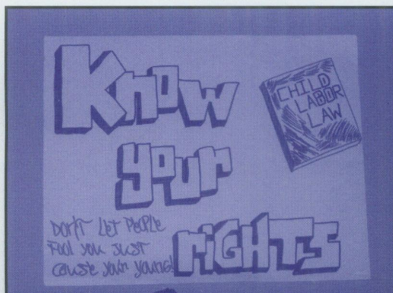
WOSHTEP is the Workers' Occupational Safety and Health Training and Education Program established as part of the workers' compensation reform bill, AB749, to educate workers about workplace health and safety in order to prevent injuries and illnesses.

The California Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation has contracted with the UCLA-LOSH Program and UC Berkeley's LOHP to conduct a training needs assessment and begin designing the program. The WOSHTEP curriculum is designed for those workers who are on health and safety committees or are safety representatives in the workplace. Possible topics to be covered in the training are: injury and illness prevention programs, worker rights and responsibilities, identifying and controlling hazards in industry, introduction to workers' compensation and return to work, and resources and strategies for solving health and safety problems on the job.



*Workers at a LOSH class learn how to take samples of (non-toxic) chemicals.*

The Commission is actively seeking input and support for this program from interested parties in California. Contact Brooke Nagle at the commission at 415/703-4227 or at [bnagle@hq.dir.ca.gov](mailto:bnagle@hq.dir.ca.gov).



### Safe Jobs for Youth

As part of Safe Jobs for Youth month in California, thirty Manual Arts High School peer educators led by UCLA-LOSH project assistants cosponsored a Town Hall event, "Safety Awareness for Everyone," on May 21. More than seven hundred Community Adult School and community members attended.

The program included a presentation on workplace health and safety issues, role-play skits covering topics such as union advocacy for health and safety and responding to sexual harassment, youth testimonials, and guest speakers representing the Garment Worker Center.





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