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UCLA Community Scholars at LA City Hall



2009 Community Scholars Class at City Hall

Redesigned LOSH Website Launched

Our redesigned website

is up and running:

www.losch.ucla.edu

Visit the website often to view recent LOSH news, project updates, and upcoming LOSH training and events. Our website also provides downloadable occupational health & safety fact sheets and curricula, as well as bilingual (English-Spanish) educational resources.

Led by LOSH Director Linda Delp, the 2009 Community Scholars class (Green Collar Jobs, Green Buildings and Social Justice: Pathway to a Sustainable City) focused on a recent Los Angeles City ordinance to retrofit more than 1,000 LA City buildings and to create job opportunities in underinvested areas of the city.

The Green Building Retrofit & Workforce Development Ordinance is the result of a years-long campaign spearheaded by the Los Angeles Apollo Alliance/SCOPE. Successful implementation will highlight Los Angeles as a leader in innovative policies to address the environmental and economic crises and to spur action to improve worker health and community economic development.

UCLA Community Scholars is a multidisciplinary program that brings together graduate students, community leaders, and labor leaders to shape community development policy in Los Angeles.

This year's class culminated in two separate events. The historic site of LA City Hall was an appropriate setting for the June 11th presentation of *Roadmap to Retrofits*, a working report on the implementation of the new ordinance. Recommendations ranged from the specific and technical aspects of green building retrofits to the social justice aspects of investing in underserved communities and, ultimately, to the broader goal of building a movement for good, green, safe jobs and a more sustainable Los Angeles.

On August 5th more than 100 people attended a conference held at the UCLA Downtown Labor Center. Discussion at the "Working in Unity, Greening our Communities" conference centered on the goals of the ordinance in the context of the current sociopolitical and economic environment, and challenges and opportunities involved in moving the ordinance forward, including creating safe and healthy green jobs.

In addition to a presentation by the Community Scholars class, speakers included community leaders, activists, environmentalists, academics, and policy-makers.

For a copy of the final report contact:

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Building Youth Leadership



Veronica Reyes

Veronica Reyes, a LOSH Young Workers Project (YWP) “peer educator”, received a scholarship to attend the 28th Annual Summer Institute for Union Women (SIUW) held at UCLA in August, 2009.

She assisted YWP Coordinator Nancy Morales in developing a 6-hour workshop “Outreaching to Young Women” in partnership with the Communities for a Better Environment (CBE) Youth Environmental Justice Group.

Veronica, currently attending Los Angeles Community College, has been involved with the Young Workers Project since her high school years. She was a 2006 participant in the annual Young Worker Leadership Academy, which provides

an opportunity for young adults to become leaders and advocates for teen labor rights and workplace health and safety. She has also worked as a youth mentor, and spoke on behalf of young workers at the 2008 Workers Memorial Day event in Los Angeles.

The Young Workers Project is one of several projects of the LOSH Program. Focused on youth issues, it addresses environmental and occupational health issues that young workers face by developing educational

programs, school curricula, and youth leadership training.

The Summer Institute for Union Women was organized by the UCLA Labor Center with co-sponsorship from LOSH. The four-day residential program brought together over 100 participants from the United States, Mexico and Canada for workshops on the history, struggles, and achievements of working women.

For more information on the Young Workers Project contact Nancy Morales: moralesn@ucla.edu

Students and Workers Collaborate Through Internships

For the fifth consecutive year LOSH was a partner in the Occupational Health Internship Program (OHIP), a national program with training centers in Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area, San Diego, and New York City. OHIP links the skills and interests of students with the needs of workers to reduce or eliminate workplace hazards. Students gain hands-on experience regarding workplace safety and health by spending eight weeks working on projects and learning about the field from those with the most at stake: the workers.

The 2009 Los Angeles OHIP project teams worked with ports truck drivers exploring the role regulatory agencies play in trucker health and safety; household

workers to develop guidelines for workers and employers regarding health and mental-health hazards; and the LA Apollo Alliance to create a matrix that analyzes priorities and guidelines for green building retrofits. Six students represented a mix of graduate and undergraduate students from UCLA, USC, and Harvard. They brought a multi-disciplinary perspective to the issues; Public Health, Urban Planning, Public Policy, and Medical departments were all represented.

Workplace sponsors collaborated with LOSH to mentor the interns. This year LOSH worked with the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE); the Teamsters; the Instituto de Educación Popular del Sur de



2009 Los Angeles OHIP Team

California (IDEPSCA); and the LA Apollo Alliance.

On August 5th teams from each local program presented a final report to NIOSH representatives in Washington, DC via videoconference. A NIOSH staff member remarked: “Stories reflecting the lives of real people are far more powerful than the statistics.”

OHIP is operated under the sponsorship of the Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics (AOEC). (www.aoec.org)

For more information on LOSH OHIP internships, contact Ingrid Zubieta (ixzubieta@ucla.edu) or Sarah Jacobs (sjacobs@irle.ucla.edu)

Committing to the Health of Women Workers



Participants at the 5th International Congress

Women workers face a unique set of challenges including gender inequality, reproductive issues, unpaid and compulsory labor, sexual harassment and discrimination, and balancing work-family demands.

The 5th International Congress on “Women, Work and Health”, cosponsored by LOSH, was held in Zacatecas, Mexico from October 27-31, 2008. More than 600 workers, researchers, government agency

representatives and other women advocates from 43 countries attended. General Secretary Leonor Cedillo stated, “An important achievement of the Congress was the dialogue about how to improve women’s health and working conditions among such a diverse group of women.”

Participants discussed a broad range of work-health issues confronting women across the globe – Mexican migrant agricultural

workers, US home care workers, Nigerian widows’ unpaid labor, Venezuelan professors, Central American maquiladora workers and others. They also described the importance of women’s contribution to economic development in India and women’s efforts to organize in South America, Europe and beyond.

Resolutions were generated to advance organizing,

education, research and policy initiatives with the goal of “strengthening our collective voice to demand better living and working conditions.”

LOSH Director Linda Delp and Leonor Cedillo are heading a team to publish key articles in a special 2010 issue of the journal *New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy*.

Workers Memorial Day 2009



Over 250 workers, activists and students gathered at the UCLA Downtown Labor Center on April 25th to commemorate Workers Memorial Day, which began with a symbolic funeral procession through downtown Los Angeles

In Memoriam: Gloria Altemus-Virgin



Gloria Altemus-Virgin
(1961-2009)

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of our colleague Gloria Altemus-Virgin. She was an essential

member of the LOSH HAZWOPER team, bringing her expertise and energy as an independent training consultant to the program throughout the years.

Gloria received her Hazardous Materials Instructor’s Certification from the State of California in 2000, and was an instructor for the California Specialized Training Institute, a nationally recognized leader in emergency response training.

She served as a firefighter for almost 10 years with the

Inglewood Fire Department. She was a founding member of the Professional Black Female Firefighters Association of Southern California and a founding member of the South Bay Black Firefighters Association. She also served on the Advisory Board of Women in Non-Traditional Employment Roles (WINTER), where she was the recipient of the 2006 Career Award.

HAZWOPER Project Director Bill Hatch stated: “Gloria has been an inspiration to other instructors,

students, and everyone who worked with her, including myself. She had a dynamic way of teaching wherein participants not only were educated but also enjoyed the way in which the subject matter was presented. We’ll miss her presence at our trainings and in life, but she left us so much to remember that she will always be in our thoughts.”

Gloria’s husband, Marvin Virgin, is also an independent training instructor and a valued member of the LOSH HAZWOPER team.

Newsletter

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The UCLA Labor Occupational Safety and Health (LOSH) Program is a nationally recognized center with a special emphasis on serving the Southern California workforce. LOSH provides bi-lingual (English-Spanish) occupational health and safety education programs in the community; teaches UCLA courses; researches the conditions of immigrant, low-wage and young workers who are disproportionately impacted by job hazards; and provides input into public policies to improve worker health and safety.

LOSH is part of UCLA's Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE) within the College of Letters and Science and the Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH) within the School of Public Health. Founded in 1978 and now celebrating more than 30 years of service, LOSH has established a strong presence in Southern California, with ties to local and international labor unions, community groups, schools, local and state governmental agencies, and community health providers.

LOSH is supported by funding from the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS); the California Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation (CHSWC) within the Department of Industrial Relations (DIR); the UCLA Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (COEH); the UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE); the California Wellness Foundation (TCWF); the California Department of Public Health (CDPH); and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).

2009 LOSH Staff

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