

Western Regional Summer Institute on Union Women 2009



The 28th Annual Western Regional Summer Institute on Union Women was held August 11 – 15, 2009 at the UCLA campus. The Institute was hosted by the UCLA Labor Center, and the Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program (UCLA-LOSH). Over 200 participants from the western region of the United States, Canada and Mexico spent five days engaging in workshops, plenaries and social events focused on the theme of building global solidarity networks for working women.

This year's workshops offered techniques in leadership skills development as well as discussions on key issues impacting working women, such as workforce development in the green economy and building alliances across cultures. In addition to workshops, participants heard from many women who are leading some of the top labor organizations and campaigns in California, Mexico and Canada, including Connie Leyva (President of UFCW 1428 and the California Labor Federation), Beatriz Lujan (Mexican Authentic Labor Front [FAT]), and Lorene Oikawa (British Columbia Government and Service Employees Union [BCGEU]). In a special event, the institute paid tribute to the original organizers of the LA Homecare workers union and launched the release of the publication "Women's Work", which documents an oral history of the campaign.

This year was also the first time a community service project was adopted and participants led a donation drive for a local non-profit organization. The Summer Institute raised over \$1500 in donations to A New Way of Life Reentry Project, which will support women and their families in substance abuse recovery and finding good employment. The 2010 Summer Institute is scheduled to be held in Portland, Oregon. For more information about the 2010 institute, please contact Helen Moss at the University of Oregon, Labor Education Resource Center (hmosse@uoregon.edu).

