

UCLA Retirees Association (UCLARA)
Report for Fall 2021 CUCRA Meeting—October 28, 2021

UCLARA is an active and thriving organization with an ever increasing, engaged membership. As the concerns of the Covid Pandemic continue, UCLARA in-person events, programs, and interest groups participation have not been possible. This presents a challenge to be able to offer opportunities for making connections with other retirees and for continuing the important connection to the UCLA campus. Even in these uncertain and challenging times, we all look for ways to accommodate the changes in our lives...UCLARA has been able to successfully meet the need.

Membership. 88% of our FY20/21 members renewed as of August 31, 2021. 31% of FY20/21 first year free trial membership holders renewed for FY21/22. (The offer of free one year trial membership to new retirees continues through FY24/25.) The Membership Marketing Committee has made it a priority to connect with our members and have presented several marketing ideas going forward. These include sending emails to retirees who attended our 20/21 events (18 or 11% joined for FY21/22), reaching out to members whose membership have lapsed; sending thank you notes for renewing memberships, sending welcome letters to new members. Other ideas include expanding our membership categories to include a lifetime membership, an honorary membership, and offering affiliate membership to Belmont residents. The committee will also spearhead a holiday solicitation for the Staff Scholarship Endowment and will release a special edition newsletter with new retiree profiles, information following the CUCRA October Meeting, and the virtual Holiday event in December.

Programs and Events. UCLARA provides a variety of virtual activities and events for our members, thus being able to capture a wider audience in a safe environment. To date in FY21/22, we have taken an armchair tour of Westwood, a tour of LAX to view art exhibits in terminals that we often rush by, and a second tour of JPL to those who were on our Spring waiting list. In September, 55 members attended a virtual tour of Backyard Birds in West Los Angeles.

Upcoming programs, continuing with no cost to our members, include after lunch lectures co-sponsored with the Emeriti Association (First in January -- "Wagnerism-Art and Politics in the Shadow of Music). In November, the LA Conservancy is taking us on a virtual tour of the architecture and impact of Paul R. Williams. Our annual Holiday Luncheon in December will be virtual again this year. Future tours and musical performances are scheduled for early 2022.

Although we expected 2022 to be more friendly to in person indoor and outdoor programs as more of our members became vaccinated, our Board of Directors was not confident in being able to enforce the measures recommended by the CDC and required by the University. The Program committee drafted a recommendation to the Board of Directors, however, there were more concerns and the recommendation was sent back to committee.

Interest Groups. Many of our interest groups have chosen not to meet in person. Although the CDC and University have provided safety guidelines, our members have chosen a "wait and see" posture. Some of the groups do meet online and they continue to play bridge, discuss suggested books, and the play reading group meets online, too. UCLARA provides funding to video-tape cooking lessons offered by one of our retirees and has made those recordings available online to our membership.

Campus and Community Relations. Senior campus administrators join us at our virtual monthly board meetings to discuss opportunities for partnerships and collaboration between UCLARA and their areas of responsibility. Dean Susan Ettner, Dean of the Graduate Division, responded enthusiastically to the 2020 CUCRA Survey and joined us at our September meeting. Patricia Nguyen, Senior Director for Diversity Programs, is our October speaker, and Michael Cohn, Director of UCLA Student Organizations, Leadership and Engagement will be our November guest speaker. Our immediate past president is chair of an advisory board who is exploring the creation of a mentorship program that would pair retiree mentors with career staff mentees. This Board includes representatives from UCLARA, the UCLA Staff Assembly, and UCLA Administrative Management Group (AMG) as well as Campus Human Resources, Health Services Human Resources and Housing and Hospitality Services. UCLARA also continues to support career staff by funding eight staff development scholarships at \$500 each that will awarded through UCLA Staff Assembly in Spring 2022.

IT Committee. The IT Committee continues to improve and update our website as we transitioned away from the old website thus making it easier to navigate and be interactive. Google Analytics installed in September 2020 helps us understand the internet traffic accessing our website. 30% of those accessing the UCLARA website do so from a mobile device. Our social media presence on the UCLARA Facebook Group page includes 151 members.

Travel Committee. The UCLARA/CUCRA travel committee sponsored a train trip in September through the Canadian Rockies. With limited attendance due to the Pandemic, the trip will be repeated in 2022 with many advance reservations. Also scheduled are a Spring 2022 trip to the Netherlands, Belgium and France that had such great response that the tour was delayed a week to enable Collette to secure a bus and tour guide to accommodate UC travelers exclusively. Future travel scheduled in 2022 includes trips to New Orleans, New England, a Christmas trip on the Danube; a trip to West Africa is scheduled for 2023. Collette is sponsoring a travel webinar in November 2021 to encourage even more travel opportunities for UC travelers.

Advocacy. UCLARA continues to be a key advocate for our members. We are keeping our members informed on important health, welfare, and California budget concerns as they affect each of them. Our members receive a quarterly newsletter with the latest news of the organization, campus and UC. The UCLA ERRC “publishes” an electronic bi-weekly newsletter informing UCLARA and UCLA Emeriti members of virtual programs, timely campus information and services, and other matters of concern and interest to UC retirees.