

UCLA Retirees Association (UCLARA)  
Report for October 2023 CUCRA Meeting

*Submitted by Judith A Tuch, UCLA CUCRA representative*

During the past six months, UCLARA has continued to offer various ways for members to connect with each other and stay engaged with UCLA. The Board typically does not meet during the summer months and resumes meeting monthly in September.

Highlighting UCLARA challenges and successes over the past six months:

**Board Meetings and Events:** The Board discussed what the new normal might look like with regards to in-person meetings and events. The Board decided to meet twice a year in-person and continue with virtual meetings for the other meetings.

**Membership:** We are a dues paying organization that offers a free first year trial membership. Thanks to the efforts of the Membership Chair and the Membership/Marketing Committee our membership numbers remain strong at just under 1,000. For the first time, we offered automatic renewals in July. This was well received by our members as 86 have signed up through August 31<sup>st</sup>. We had a very successful renewal rate during the first two months at 89% of the prior year. Three renewal reminders emails/letters were sent since July 1<sup>st</sup> (the first two were emails and the last one was a mailed hardcopy renewal).

**Programs and Events:** The Program Committee meets throughout the year to plan events and programs. The Committee offers a mix of both virtual and in-person events. UCLARA will continue to offer virtual programming at no cost as it did during the Pandemic, to reach the widest number of members. Two virtual programs – one on the Getty Collection and an LA Conservancy program on Millard Sheets were offered at no cost. Other no-cost, in-person programs included a tour of NASA JPL in Pasadena and a docent-led tour of a special exhibition at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). Hiking fans enjoyed a hike to Escondido Falls and Santa Monica Beach. UCLARA partnered with the Faculty Women's Club on the docent-led tour of LACMA.

We continue to host joint After Lunch Programs at the Faculty Club with the Emeriti Association. A new format was rolled out with the first program in September, a series of UCLA Conversations led by a moderator.

In a further collaboration with the Emeriti Association, the two associations have formed a joint committee along with the ERRC to organize the first joint arts and crafts art show to be presented at the Faculty Club in May of 2024.

The ERRC continues to provide additional on-campus Bruin Legacy Programs (Hall of Fame, Powell Library) and many virtual sessions such as LA Parking for all retired staff and faculty..

**Campus and Community Relations:** We have continued the practice of inviting campus administrators to Board meetings to explore ideas and opportunities for partnerships and collaborations between UCLARA and the campus. Carey McCarthy, UCLA Health Volunteers Center Director and Eric Bullard, Dean, Division of Education and UCLA Extension attended Board meetings in May and September respectively. Articles about these conversations in the quarterly newsletter and on our website, keep our members up to date and provide opportunities for further collaboration.

**Supporting Current UCLA Staff:** Last year, UCLARA launched two new mentorship programs and is very pleased with the response. UCLARA members participated in two existing campus programs (11 in the College of Letters and Science ACE Mentorship Program and 6 in the AMG ProShare Program). Both programs are continuing in 2023-2024; with an increase to 17 for the ACE Program. The ProShare Program launches in November.

The UCLARA Board agreed to offer 10 staff scholarships at \$500 per award for the year. The scholarships are awarded annually through the UCLA Staff Assembly. We are embarking on a fundraising campaign in November 2023 to grow the scholarship fund to \$100,000.

**Other Active UCLARA Committees:** The Newsletter Editor conducted a readership survey following the summer issue of *Connections*, our quarterly publication. The feedback was very positive and readers made a number of suggestions as to content. The survey was experimental in that Google docs was used as the survey instrument and then distributed through Personify/Wild Apricot.

The Travel Committee Chair continues to promote the UC Travel Program through virtual meetings, articles in the newsletter, and on Facebook. Virtual and in-person travel programs are scheduled for the fall. We are experimenting with a three-day cruise on Princess for UCLARA members in 2024.

Interest Groups continue to ease back into in-person meetings; however, some groups continue to opt for virtual meetings. One challenge in organizing new interest groups is finding a common day and time to meet in-person.

The IT Committee continues to improve and update the website and maximize the use of Personify/Wild Apricot. The readership survey and roll out of automated renewals were two programs that took advantage of the software. UCLARA continues to experience challenges with system support from Personify/Wild Apricot. If other associations use this software, it might be advantageous to discuss issues with the software.