

UCLA Retirees Association (UCLARA)

October 2024 Report

Submitted by Judith Tuch, UCLARA President and CUCRA Representative

UCLARA continues to focus on ways for members to stay connected with UCLA and each other. UCLARA is a stand-alone organization that partners closely with the UCLA Emeriti Association (EA) and the UCLA Emeriti/Retirees Relations Center (ERRC).

Board Meetings and Membership: During the year, the Board continues meeting virtually with two in-person meetings (generally October and March). Virtual meetings make it easy for members to attend who live a considerable distance from campus. Five new members joined the Board as of 7/1/24 bringing it to 22.

Membership: Membership numbers remain steady at 1,000+. UCLARA continues to use Personify/Wild Apricot to manage membership and events.

Newsletter: UCLARA continues to publish the quarterly newsletter *Connections*. We still mail to 40 members who do not have email addresses. Back issues are available in the member section of our website.

Programs and Events: We have continued offering virtual programs at no cost to our members. During 2023-24 we offered 19 programs and ten hikes. From July through September of 2024, The Program Committee offered five programs, including in-person tours of SoFi Stadium, the UCLA Nimoy Theater, the Hollywood Heritage Museum, and downtown LA architecture. Another five programs are available for October through the end of the year. We have also collaborated with the UCLA Faculty Women's Club on several art related programs.

Our enthusiastic hiking members enjoyed ten hikes during 2023-24. The hike leaders plan to offer about one hike per month for 2024-25. An average of 24 members participates in each hike.

The joint UCLARA and EA after-lunch programs changed focus during 2023-24. We are now offering conversations with UCLA professors in an informal setting. Three conversations will be offered during 2024-25 with the first on November 7th with **Dr. Judith F. Baca**, a UCLA Professor Emeritus and one of America's leading visual artists, who has been creating outstanding public art for four decades.

The ERRC continues to offer in-person and virtual programs to our all retirees including UCLA at the Opera and a tour of the Academy Museum.

Campus and Community Relations: The Campus and Community Relations Chair continues to invite campus administrators to Board meetings to explore ideas and opportunities for collaboration. The first two speakers have been scheduled for November 2024 and January 2025. Future speakers will be tied into the initiative to the strategic funding process. (see new initiatives, paragraph 3).

Supporting Current UCLA Staff: For 2023-24, UCLARA contributed \$8,000 to various campus initiatives and centers in addition to funding ten career staff development scholarships. During the spring and summer, the Campus and Community Relations Chair and the President visited the

eight centers to which UCLARA made contributions, meeting with their staff and students. It was inspiring to have the opportunity to see the work of these various centers and further a strong sense of community.

This is the third year UCLARA has collaborated with two campus mentorship programs. Retiree participation has increased in both the College of Letters and Science ACE Mentorship Program and the AMG ProShare Program. In recognition of these important partnerships, a Mentorship Chair position was added to the Board.

Other UCLARA Committees:

Participation in the UC Travel Program has expanded thanks to the work of the enthusiastic Travel Chair who schedules regular virtual programs to promote the travel program and maintains an active presence on Facebook.

The Membership and Marketing Committee plans to create a new project list for the coming year, with a focus on increasing visibility.

The IT Committee continues to focus on known issues with Personify/Wild Apricot including adding certain privacy policies, automating the archival of travel programs, and finding a webmaster.

Interest groups continue to meet regularly with a mix of in-person and virtual meetings. The chair is exploring easier ways to facilitate the organization of new interest groups as it has proven difficult for new group leaders to organize meeting times and places.

New Initiatives for 2024:

A board orientation process was inaugurated in August 2024. The president and vice-president conducted a virtual orientation for all new board members. The first-ever orientation manual was created which includes key facts about UCLARA, board positions and responsibilities, and financial information. It is anticipated that this will become an on-going tradition.

A new Newsletter Editor joined the Board in July 2024. The recruitment process resulted in a close look at the responsibilities of this position. The Board recognizes that the skill sets for a newsletter editor and a website editor are separate and will explore a clearer definition of these responsibilities over the coming year. The past newsletter editor created an invaluable set of manuals for both newsletter and website responsibilities.

An important goal for 2024-25 is the development of a strategic process for the Board to fund student and staff initiatives across campus which will further community connections and appropriate recognition. An ad hoc committee is developing funding principles, selection criteria, and a selection process. This is in addition to the annual commitment to fund staff scholarships from the Scholarship Endowment.