

UCLA Retirees Association (UCLARA)

April 2025

Submitted by Judith Tuch, UCLARA President and CUCRA Representative

UCLARA is a standalone organization committed to focusing on ways for its members to stay connected with UCLA and each other. UCLARA works closely with the UCLA Emeriti Association at the Emeriti/Retirees Relations Center (ERRC).

The LA area experienced an unusual start to 2025. Two devastating fires approximately 40 miles apart swept across the Palisades, Malibu and Altadena. The news was painful; so many of our members found themselves displaced whether through the loss of their home or the resulting fire damage. The road ahead is challenging for all involved. Three Board members lost their homes; others evacuated and have not yet returned to their homes. The UCLARA Board made the unanimous decision to extend the current Board's terms for another year through 2025-26. The hope is that this additional time will provide an opportunity for the situation to stabilize and allow our members to assess their individual circumstances.

Membership: UCLARA membership has continued to grow at a steady pace. For the third year we continue to offer a first-year free trial membership; renewal rates for this membership type are strong.

Supporting Current UCLA Staff: The Board is working on a more strategic method to annually fund programs and scholarships across UCLA. The focus is to provide support across the campus, develop partnerships with campus departments, gain greater recognition on campus, and offset any unrelated business income (UBI) generated to avoid being subject to federal taxes. Chaired by the Vice President, an ad hoc committee has developed a formal application process. We anticipate accepting applications for grants that will range from \$1,000 to \$3,000. This is in addition to UCLARA's yearly support of four staff development scholarships funded by interest from the Staff Development Scholarship Endowment.

Programs and Events: A mix of virtual and in-person programs kept members engaged, including several Zoom art tours, a theater tour of downtown Los Angeles, and attending a play at the East West Theater. Three hikes around Los Angeles were fully subscribed as was a tour of the Virginia Robinson Gardens. The annual holiday party was held off campus this year in December. Two conversation programs in partnership with UCLA Emeriti Association offered a conversation with renowned muralist Dr. Judy Baca and a performance by two pianists from the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music. Special Interest Groups continue to provide close connection within the membership community.

The ERRC offered free tickets to several Los Angeles Opera programs which retirees were happy to take advantage of.

Committee work continues: The Membership and Marketing Committee is working on an informal presentation to promote UCLARA to various audiences. The IT Committee focuses on software related issues. Member participation in the UC Travel Program remains strong thanks to virtual sessions and our pro-active Travel Chair who keeps retirees connected. Two mentorship programs with campus departments are in their third year.

Board recruitment: The decision to extend Board service for another year presents the Nominations Committee with an interesting challenge – how to involve several potential candidates for Board positions which will not be available for another year. Candidates are being invited to join committees; new initiatives are being considered to further engage the candidates.