

LOS ANGELES ALLIANCE FOR A NEW ECONOMY

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Living Wage Leader Receives Public Interest Award UCLA Recognition of Madeline Janis Coincides With 5th Anniversary of L.A.'s Landmark Living Wage Legislation

LOS ANGELES -- Madeline Janis-Aparicio, who led the successful battle to pass L.A.'s landmark living wage law, received the Antonia Hernandez Public Interest Award yesterday from the UCLA School of Law.

Janis-Aparicio, executive director and co-founder of the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), was given the alumnus honor for her efforts on behalf of the working poor.

"The UCLA School of Law has chosen to honor Madeline Janis-Aparicio with its Antonia Hernandez Public Interest Award this year in recognition of Ms. Janis-Aparicio's national leadership in the living wage movement and her longstanding commitment to and work on behalf of those who are less fortunate, " said Dean Jonathan Varat.

The award coincides with the fifth anniversary of L.A.'s living wage ordinance, which took effect in May 1997. That law, one of the first in the nation when it was adopted, requires that city contractors and financial aid recipients pay their employees \$7.99 an hour with health benefits, or \$9.24 without benefits. It has helped lift some 10,000 workers out of poverty, and has served as a model for dozens of cities throughout the country.

"This award is a tribute to all the people-particularly the workers-who have taken a stand for fair pay and decent working conditions," said

Janis-Aparicio. “There is still much to do, but together we can create a just society that leaves no one behind.”

Since its creation in 1993, LAANE has become an influential voice for the working poor. Combining research, organizing and legislative advocacy, the nonprofit organization has spearheaded numerous campaigns to improve wages, benefits and working conditions in Los Angeles.

LAANE first came to prominence in 1995 with the passage of L.A.’s worker retention law, which helped save the jobs of nearly 1,000 LAX workers. Following the living wage victory in 1997, LAANE joined with a coalition of unions and clergy to form Respect at LAX, which has extended union and living wage protections to thousands of airport workers.

LAANE also played a central role in the passage of Santa Monica’s living wage law, a ground-breaking ordinance which has attracted national attention. That law has been the focus of a \$1.5 million opposition campaign by the tourism industry, which is trying to repeal the ordinance with a ballot referendum this November.

Last year, LAANE launched its new accountable development program, which is designed to ensure that developers provide quality jobs and community benefits in exchange for public subsidies. Working with residents and community-based organizations, LAANE negotiated three far-reaching agreements with the developers of the Staples Center expansion and two San Fernando Valley projects.

LAANE is also known for its research. The organization has released three well-received studies, including reports on the Community Redevelopment Agency, the Mayor’s Business Team and working poverty in Los Angeles. LAANE is currently collaborating with UCLA on a major study of L.A.’s living wage law.

Prior to founding LAANE, Janis-Aparicio served as the executive director of the Central American Refugee Center (CARECEN) from

1989 to 1993, where she helped tens of thousands of Central American immigrants achieve legal immigrant status and headed efforts to combat civil rights abuses by the L.A. Police Department and the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Before coming to CARECEN, Ms. Janis-Aparicio, an attorney, represented tenants and homeless people in slum housing litigation, and advocated for homeless disabled people who had been denied government benefits. She also worked for two years at the law firm of Latham & Watkins on commercial litigation and land use matters, representing many large companies throughout Los Angeles. She received degrees from the UCLA School of Law and Amherst College in Massachusetts.