

FUND A  
CENTER



CHANGE  
THE WORLD

Working for dignity.



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
SANTA CRUZ

SOCIAL SCIENCES & HUMANITIES DIVISIONS

# CENTER FOR LABOR STUDIES

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# OUR MISSION

The Center for Labor Studies (CLS) is dedicated to the study of working people and the labor movement in California and beyond.

CLS underscores the University of California's mission to explore public interest issues. Specifically, we produce research addressing inequality, the changing nature of work, the rise of the low-wage economy, migration and mobility, affordable housing, and movements for labor justice.



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# OUR WORK

Community-initiated, student-engaged, locally and publicly relevant research is at the very heart of what we do. We start by asking basic questions of community organizations combating inequality. These questions guide our research while helping the organizations better understand the problems they face.

- What do you know but cannot prove?
- What do you not know but would like to know?

We also connect our research directly to student learning. We involve students from under-represented groups in our research projects. Their involvement provides rigorous training in research methods, fundamental preparation for graduate school, and essential skill-building for the workplace.

Once research projects are complete, our findings are presented to the organizations involved, as well as to local government and the broader community. Results help shape and drive policy decisions and foster broad discussion, opportunity, and social advancement.



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# CLS PROJECTS MAKING AN IMPACT

## Working for Dignity: The Santa Cruz Low Wage Worker Study

In our community-based “census of the invisible,” over 100 UCSC undergraduates surveyed 1,300 low-wage workers across Santa Cruz County, speaking to community members who are often neglected and difficult to reach. Their findings resulted in a multimedia presentation that included digital stories from interviews, an art and photography exhibit, two large community forums on the experiences of low-wage workers, and a bilingual website sharing findings and resources. As a direct result of our research, our non-profit community partners were able to win grants from the county of Santa Cruz to establish monthly wage-theft clinics for residents.



## No Place Like Home: The Santa Cruz Affordable Housing Crisis Study

Building on our community-initiated, student-engaged research model, the center launched a new initiative to examine the local crisis surrounding the lack of affordable housing. In this ongoing project, undergraduates are collecting data on key but under-researched issues such as rent burdens, overcrowding, poor living conditions, discrimination, commute times, and housing insecurity. Students will continue to collect surveys and interviews from local residents, create interactive digital maps using GIS, and build a web hub to host our results. CLS also will host a series of public forums to share research findings, spark local awareness, examine policy options, and advocate for change.



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# THE DIFFERENCE IS YOU

With your help, CLS can accomplish these goals:

- Establish an endowment for student research that will make CLS a field research hub for under-represented students on campus.
- Offer students new, community-based research opportunities that focus on the local economy.
- Expand relationships between the university and local municipalities to address inequality in Santa Cruz County and beyond.
- Endow a chair of labor studies.
- Endow and name the center.

We depend on private donations to help fund the vital work we do. **Thank you for your support!**



“ Work is about a search for daily meaning as well as daily bread, for recognition as well as cash, for astonishment rather than torpor; in short, for a sort of life rather than a Monday through Friday sort of dying. ”

— Studs Terkel

**FUND A CENTER, CHANGE THE WORLD.**  
Contact the Social Sciences Development Office  
at 831-459-3857 or by email at [socsci@ucsc.edu](mailto:socsci@ucsc.edu).



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THE ORIGINAL  
AUTHORITY  
ON QUESTIONING  
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