

National Lawyers Guild

Labor & Employment Committee

July 17, 2009

Chancellor Gene Block
University of California at Los Angeles
2147 Murphy Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90095

via fax (310) 206-6030

Dear Chancellor Block,

This letter is on behalf of the National Lawyers Guild Labor and Employment Committee [L&EC], to express our strong disapproval of the UCLA administration's decision to close down the UCLA Labor Center as reported in the New York Times.

Since 1937 the National Lawyers Guild has provided legal support to movements for social change, principally on a volunteer basis. The Labor & Employment Committee, comprised of several hundred labor and employment attorneys across the country, focuses on struggles for economic and social justice. Since the 1930s the Guild has focused on workers' rights, supporting New Deal legislation to assist working people and the unemployed; in the 1950s the Guild defended labor leaders and others attacked for their progressive political views. Then and now, the Guild L&EC actively supports progressive labor and employment law struggles.

For many years, the UCLA Labor Center and the UCLA Downtown Labor Center have given both the UCLA community and the broader community invaluable resources in research and education. Shutting down these Labor Centers would be a horrible mistake because these centers have become one of the best known and best regarded of UCLA's outreach programs. The end of these programs not only sends the community a very bad message, but also cuts off a vital community service.

As a publicly funded university, it is UCLA's responsibility to serve the entire community, not to disproportionately support corporate programs and interests. The UCLA Labor Center receives a small fraction of the funding that goes into the UCLA business school. It is both irresponsible and unfair to use taxpayers' money to support corporate interests while not supporting programs that help working families.

We encourage you to take immediate steps to restore funding to the UCLA Labor Center.

Sincerely,

Frances C. Schreiber
(510) 302-1071
fcs@kazanlaw.com