

# BUILDING bridges



## Orange County in 2005: A Report Card on Growing Inequality

This spring, as part of our "Changing Face of Orange County" lecture series, COPC convened a group of leading researchers to examine the issue of growing inequality in Orange County. Panelists discussed increasing disparities in the areas of health care, housing, work/income, and racial/ethnic diversity. Panelists included Pamela Austin, Orange County Health Needs Assessment; Victoria Basolo, UCI Department of Planning, Policy, and Design; Marlon Boarnet, UCI Department of Planning, Policy, and Design; and Leo Chavez, UCI Program in Chicano/Latino Studies and Department of Anthropology. The panel was moderated by Linda Vo, UCI

### Key findings from the panel include:

- **Poverty in Orange County is increasing.** In 2000, 10.4% of Orange County residents lived in poverty, up from 8.5% of OC residents in 1990.
- **The largest increases in jobs in Orange County are in sectors with lower paying salaries,** including business and professional services, health services, and tourism.
- **In OC, families need an annual income of nearly \$50,000 to afford the rent on a two bedroom apartment.**
- **Housing conditions are worse in the older, northern part of Orange County.** For example, 16% of housing units in northern OC are overcrowded.
- **Opportunities for home ownership are not available to many residents.** 68.9% of non-Hispanic white residents in OC own their own homes, compared to 47.7% of minority individuals. The rate of homeownership is increasing at a slower rate for minority households.
- **The Orange County homeless population grew by 88% in the last four years,** and is now up to over 16,000 individuals.
- **Though greater numbers of OC residents are getting health insurance in recent years, approximately 10% of adults in the County (over 230,000 people) remain uninsured.**
- **Hispanic families continue to face significant health disparities.** The majority of uninsured adults and children in OC are Hispanic.

These findings serve as important benchmarks for policy goals and practices in Orange County. Leaders from all sectors must continue to work together to combat these trends, to ensure a healthy future for the county.

Sources: US Census Bureau, 1990 & 2000; 2004 OCHNA Survey; OCBC Analysis of data from the California Employment Development Department; National Low Income Housing Coalition, (2003). "Out of Reach 2003: America's Housing Wage Climbs." Available: [http://www.nlihc.org/oor\\_current/](http://www.nlihc.org/oor_current/)

### COPC COMMUNITY SCHOLAR STUDIES WAYS TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN OC

The Community Scholars Program is designed to recruit and train a new generation of professionals in urban planning and public policy who are committed to serving communities that are undergoing demographic change. COPC Community Scholars work on behalf of local organizations, to address important planning issues in an increasingly urbanized and diverse Orange County.

Joseph Alcock, a COPC Community Scholar in 2004-05, completed a study this spring that examined the

*Continued on page 3*

## Urban Revitalization Leads to Collaborative Learning

The Minnie Street neighborhood in Santa Ana, California, had a reputation as one of the toughest areas in the city. The neighborhood was a haven for gangs and drugs. Cars on the street posed a hazard for local children. Working together with local residents and building owners, the City of Santa Ana implemented a multi-million dollar project to renovate the neighborhood, to make it safer and more attractive for local residents.

The Minnie Street renovation presented an excellent opportunity for a collaborative research project. Students from Santa Ana College and from UCI's Department of Planning, Policy, and Design worked with the City of Santa Ana and the Santa Ana Police Department, to evaluate the Minnie Street renovation. Students conducted bilingual surveys with over 120 local residents. They monitored traffic on the street, measured how fast cars were traveling, and analyzed police crime data for the neighborhood. The evaluation was supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and by UCI's Health Policy Research group.

The students' findings were compared to similar information collected before the renovation. The results showed the positive impacts of the renovation for local residents. For example, the number of cars on Minnie



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

Street declined dramatically after the renovation, and residents felt that the area was now much safer for children and adults. This project provided a valuable opportunity for students from the two schools to learn from each other, and from the community. Also, we are proud to announce that one of the Santa Ana College students has joined UCI as a new student this fall!



*UCI and Santa Ana College students present findings to City officials and housing groups*

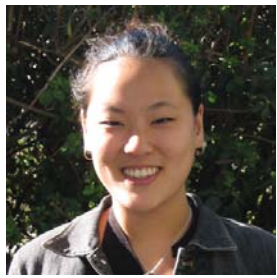
use of inclusionary housing policies to increase affordable housing for working families in Orange County. "Inclusionary housing policies" are a set of land use planning and policy tools that connect the construction of low and moderate income housing to market-driven developments. The study was prepared on behalf of The Kennedy Commission, a non-profit housing organization that conducts policy development and advocacy, public education, and community building to develop housing solutions for those earning less than \$10 per hour.

The final report made several recommendations to cities that adopt inclusionary housing policies, including:

- ◆ Provide meaningful incentives to developers who partner with cities, to help cities meet their affordable housing goals
- ◆ Ensure the long-term affordability of inclusionary housing units
- ◆ Require that inclusionary housing units be indistinguishable from market-rate units
- ◆ Target inclusionary housing units for individuals and families with very-low and low incomes.

Joe Alcock received his Masters degree in Urban and Regional Planning from UCI this spring and is now working for the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG).

COPC Community Scholars for 2005-06 are Suzy Kim and Lan Ngyuen. Both are students in the Department of Planning, Policy, and Design at UCI. Ms. Kim will work on behalf of Neighborhood Housing Services of Orange County. She will identify outreach strategies to increase the number of Asian Americans in NHSOC programs. Ms. Ngyuen will work on behalf of the MIKA Community Development Corporation in Costa Mesa. She will investigate successful strategies for working with non-profit job centers to develop the work skills of "day laborers."



**Suzy Kim**



**Lan Ngyuen**

## 2006 Conference to Focus on Inequality in Southern California

Growing economic and social inequality, made so obvious by Hurricane Katrina, has emerged as one of the most distinctive features of 21st century in US society. The patterns of inequality include the "hourglass" economy, the increase in "working poor" households, the disappearance of affordable housing for moderate income and working-class families, and school funding patterns that reinforce racial and economic divides. Influenced by demographic and economic change, inequality has become a permanent fixture of life in California cities and suburbs. These issues will be the focus of a 2006 conference sponsored by COPC's new **Research Initiative on Inequality and Social Justice**, and supported by the School of Social Ecology; Department of Planning, Policy, and Design; Center for the Study of Latinos in a Global Society; UCI Department of Education Speaker Series Committee; University of California System wide Committee on Labor and Employment; Office of Research and Graduate Studies; and the UCI Office of the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs.

"**Inequality: Southern California's Fault Line**," will bring together top scholars and community leaders to examine issues of inequality in the region, and to explore their implications. Speakers will give special attention to how Southern California communities are experiencing, and combating, growing inequality in work, education, and the family.

The conference will feature distinguished keynote speakers William Julius Wilson and Myron Orfield. Professor Wilson is Director of the Joblessness and Urban Poverty Research Program at Harvard University. He is considered by many to be the preeminent sociologist and scholar in the United States on issues of joblessness, urban poverty, inequality, and race. Myron Orfield is the Fesler-Lampert Chair in Urban and Regional Affairs, the Executive Director of the Institute on Race and Poverty at the University of Minnesota School of Law, and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institute. Professor Orfield is an authority on civil rights, the legislative process, and race and regionalism.

"**Inequality: Southern California's Fault Line**," will be held on May 11-12, 2006, at the Beckman Center on the UCI campus. For more information, please contact COPC Director Victor Becerra at [vbecerra@uci.edu](mailto:vbecerra@uci.edu), or (949) 824-9337.

THE  
**CHANGING FACE**  
OF ORANGE COUNTY  
LECTURE SERIES 2005-2006

FALL

Envisioning Real Utopias

Erik Olin Wright, Professor of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Madison

When: Thursday, November 10, 2005

Where: University Club, 801 East Peltason

Time: Reception 6:00pm-7:00pm, Lecture 7:00pm-8:30pm

WINTER

Gated Communities: Security, Segregation, and the Politics of Fear

Professor Seta Low, Department of Environmental Psychology, Graduate Center, City University of New York

When: Thursday, February 23, 2006

Where: University Club, 801 East Peltason

Time: Reception 6:00pm-7:00pm, Lecture 7:00pm-8:30pm

SPRING

The Bridge over the Racial Divide: Rising Inequality and Coalition Politics Reexamined

William Julius Wilson, Lewis P. and Linda L. Geyser University Professor, Harvard University

When: Thursday, May 11, 2006

Where: Beckman Center, 100 Academy Dr.

Time: Reception 6:00pm-7:00pm, Lecture 7:00pm-8:30pm

Building Bridges

UCI Community Outreach  
Partnership Center  
University of California, Irvine

phone: (949) 824-9337

fax: (949) 824-8566

email: [copc@uci.edu](mailto:copc@uci.edu)

COPC Staff

Victor Becerra  
*COPC Director*

Kristen Day  
*COPC Executive Director*

Student Assistants:

Cecilia Preciado  
*Program Manager*

Lucinda Torres  
*Education Coordinator*

University of California, Irvine  
Community Outreach Partnership Center  
School of Social Ecology  
202 Social Ecology I  
Irvine, CA 92697-7075

**In this issue**

page 1 A Report Card on Growing Inequality

page 1 Increasing Affordable Housing in OC

page 2 Urban Revitalization & Collaborative Learning

page 3 2006 Conference to Focus on Inequality