

LOS ANGELES URBAN LEAGUE CONVENES LEADERS AND ADVOCATES FOR THIRD ANNUAL STATE OF BLACK LOS ANGELES

The annual gathering featured Dr. Shirley Weber, Mayor Karen Bass, Congresswomen Maxine Waters and Sydney Kamlager-Dove, and NUL President Marc Morial

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Los Angeles Urban League (LAUL), a leading civil rights and economic empowerment organization, convened prominent leaders, advocates, and community partners for the third annual gathering of the State of Black Los Angeles on October 16, 2025, at the University of Southern California's Town and Gown Ballroom. Themed "Solidarity in Action: Black and Brown LA," the event united influential voices from political, civic, business, and academic sectors to spotlight racial equity, health, economic empowerment, and immigration—creating a powerful platform for collaboration and solutions across Los Angeles.



L to R: L.A. Mayor Karen Bass; Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, LAUL President & CEO; Dr. Michele Turner, Associate VP, Business Diversity & Economic Opportunity, USC; Danny J. Bakewell, Jr., Exec. Editor of the Los Angeles Sentinel, President & COO of The Bakewell Company.

The conference, livestreamed by NBC4 and Telemundo 52, featured an extraordinary lineup of speakers and panelists who addressed pressing issues impacting communities of color and offered data-driven, actionable strategies for shared progress. A replay of the full event is now available for viewing on the NBC4 YouTube Channel (<https://www.youtube.com/@NBCLA>) and the Los Angeles Urban League website (<https://laul.org/>).

Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, President and CEO of the Los Angeles Urban League, who founded the State of Black Los Angeles Conference in 2023, created the annual convening, to spotlight critical issues affecting Los Angeles' Black and Brown communities and bring together leaders to drive measurable solutions. Her vision has transformed the conference into a cornerstone for collaboration among policymakers, advocates, and community stakeholders.

"Our theme, Solidarity in Action: Black and Brown LA, is not just a statement—it is a call to collective responsibility," said Mitchell-Heard. "We know that our power multiplies when communities stand together, when we move beyond conversation to commitment, and when we create coalitions that deliver real, measurable change for every Angeleno."



Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, Los Angeles Urban League President & CEO with D'Artagnan Scorza, Ph.D., Los Angeles County Anti-Racism, Diversity & Inclusion (ARDI), Executive Director of Racial Equality

"As Chair, I'm deeply committed to strengthening the League's impact — supporting Cynthia and her exceptional team as they expand programs that uplift families, create pathways to generational wealth, and prepare our youth for the jobs and opportunities of tomorrow," said Keith Drake, Board Chair, Los Angeles Urban League.

The event featured participation from leading voices including California Secretary of State Dr. Shirley Weber, Los Angeles County Supervisor Holly J. Mitchell, Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass, USC President Beong-Soo Kim, Los Angeles City Councilmember Heather Hutt, Assemblymember Isaac Bryan, Compton Mayor Emma Sharif, and the Honorable Dr. Michael Davis, along with national figures who joined via video—Congresswomen Maxine Waters and Sydney Kamlager-Dove, National Urban League President & CEO Marc H. Morial, and California Health and Human Services Secretary Kim Johnson. Melissa Magee of NBC4 served as emcee, while Dr. D'Artagnan Scorza, Executive Director of the Los Angeles County Anti-Racism, Diversity and Inclusion (ARDI) Initiative, presented new data highlighting progress and persistent disparities across key social indicators.

Throughout the day, three panels examined interconnected challenges and opportunities across health, economics, and immigration. The first, Health – Increasing Access and Life Expectancy,

moderated by Dominique DiPrima, Host and Senior Producer of “First Things First with Dominique DiPrima” on KBLA Talk AM 1580, featured Dr. David M. Carlisle, MPH, Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer, Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science; Dr. Pierre R. Theodore, MPH, Executive Director and Population Science Therapeutic Area Team Leader, Genentech Roche; Helen Torres, Chief Executive Officer, Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE); and LaVonna Lewis, Ph.D., Professor and Vice Dean of Student Success, University of Southern California Sol Price School of Public Policy, who discussed innovative strategies to close healthcare gaps in underserved communities.

The second, Economic Empowerment & Entrepreneurship – Building Pathways to Prosperity, moderated by

Danny Bakewell Jr., Executive Editor and Chief of Staff of the Los Angeles Sentinel and President of the Los Angeles Press Club, included Kevin G. Harbour Sr., President, BizFed Institute; Dr. Manuel Pastor, Ph.D., Distinguished Professor of Sociology and American Studies & Ethnicity and Director, USC Dornsife Equity Research Institute; Libby Williams, Director of Small Business and Policy, Office of Los Angeles Mayor Karen Bass; and Robert Sausedo, President and Chief Executive Officer, Community Build, Inc., who focused on pathways for small business growth and workforce inclusion.

The final panel, Immigration – Building Cross-Community Solidarity, moderated by Enrique Chiabra, News Anchor, Telemundo 52, featured Nana Gyamfi, Esq., Executive Director, Black Alliance for Just Immigration (BAJI); Angie Jean-Marie, MPP, Chair, Inclusive Action in the City and Founder & Principal, Fait La Force Strategies; Victor Leung, Chief Legal and Advocacy Officer at ACLU of Southern California; David Huerta, President, Service Employees International Union – United Service Workers West (SEIU-USWW); and Martha Arévalo, Executive Director, Central American Resource Center (CARECEN) of Los Angeles, who explored how Black and Brown communities can build coalitions to advance shared advocacy and reform.

The Los Angeles Urban League’s 2025 State of Black Los Angeles gathering was made possible through the generous support of the Los Angeles County ARDI Initiative, the University of



L to R: Michael Brownlee, NBC4 Anchor, Melissa Magee, NBC4 Meteorologist, Enrique Chiabra, News Anchor, Telemundo 52, Cynthia Mitchell-Heard, Los Angeles Urban League President & CEO

Southern California, Genentech, U.S. Bank, Comerica, GPSN, Butterfli Technologies, Inc., the Descendants Truth & Reconciliation Foundation, Health Net, SoCalGas, the California Wellness Foundation and the Los Angeles Sentinel. Together, these partners helped create an inspiring, solutions-focused convening dedicated to advancing racial equity, economic mobility, and social unity across Los Angeles.

Founded in 1921, the Los Angeles Urban League is one of the oldest and most respected civil rights and social service organizations in Southern California. Its mission is to help African Americans and others in underserved communities achieve economic self-reliance, power, parity, and civil rights through programs that promote workforce development, education, housing, entrepreneurship, health, and quality of life. The conference once again underscored LAUL's pivotal role as a convener and catalyst for progress, reaffirming its advocacy commitment to ensuring that Los Angeles remains a place where diversity is celebrated, equity is advanced, and opportunity is accessible to all.

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