UCI researchers are helping City of Santa Ana address environmental injustice

Addressing environmental injustice requires coordinated effort among research institutions, community-based organizations and government agencies.

Monday, February 27, 2023

UCI School of Social Sciences



Addressing environmental injustice requires coordinated effort among research institutions, community-based organizations and government agencies. With this goal in mind, researchers from UCI's EcoGovLab and AirUCI and others convened in January to begin building greater understanding of the work different stakeholders - including diverse government agencies - can do, independently and collaboratively, to characterize and address Santa Ana's cumulative pollution burden.

External collaborators included GREEN-MPNA (Getting Residents Engaged in Empowering Neighborhoods - Madison Park Neighborhood Association) and the City of Santa Ana's newly expanded Division of Neighborhood Initiatives and Environmental Services. There were more than 100 people in attendance, including residents of Santa Ana, community leaders, representatives of the City of Santa Ana, EcoGovLab and AirUCI researchers, and members of UCI's Environmental Law Clinic. Zoom attendees (approximately 25) included Assistant United States Attorney for Central California, Amanda Bettinelli, and representatives of California's South Coast Air Quality Management District. The panel was co-moderated by UCI anthropology professor Kim Fortun, who represented EcoGovLab and AirUCI, and Mr. Leonel Flores, GREEN-MPNA's Environmental Justice Programs Manager, who also served as Spanish-language translator. The meeting also served as a launch point for GREEN-MPNA's new campaign, "Greening Santa Ana" which aims to identify and meet environmental justice benchmarks for Santa Ana to be achieved at yearly intervals.

Read the full report of the meeting and planned follow up points online at https://faculty.sites.uci.edu/fortunlab/2023/02/22/607/.

-pictured on stage l to r: Leonel Flores: GREEN-MPNA Environmental Justice Programs Manager, Jose Rea: GREEN-MPNA Executive Director, David Penaloza: Santa Ana Councilman - Ward 6, Minh Thai: Executive Director for the Planning and Building Agency of Santa Ana, and Kim Fortun, UCI Anthropology Professor/EcoGovLab Director. Photo courtesy of Tim Schuets, UCI anthropology graduate student.

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