

RESOLUTION TO INCREASE OFFERING OF UNION-MADE, LIVING-WAGE,
WORKER'S RIGHTS CONSORTIUM-VERIFIED APPAREL SUCH AS ALTA GRACIA
AT UCLA STORE

Unanimously approved on March 8, 2011

WHEREAS, students and employees of the University of California, Los Angeles have the responsibility to advocate for workers' rights in all arenas where university money is spent, whether on campus or through global supply chains; and

WHEREAS, the efforts of students and employees have been the lifeblood of the movement to support workers' rights in the global apparel industry throughout history. i.) Workers' Rights Consortium affiliation ii.) Designated Suppliers Program affiliation iii.) Defending BJ&B workers in Villa Altagracia, Dominican Republic (1998, 2002, 2006 & 2007) iv.) Cutting contracts with Russell Athletic (2009 & 2010) v.) Cutting contracts with Nike (2009 & 2010)1; and

WHEREAS, steep competition and price pressure in the apparel industry set the stage for exploitative conditions of workers that make University of California, Los Angeles apparel; and

- Long hours and low pay are commonplace. Most garment workers barely make enough to cover their basic needs. Though the apparel industry provides needed jobs, it often fails to compensate workers at levels that would fuel development of local communities. In many cases, factories have failed to pay even legal minimum wages.
- Human rights violations are far too frequent in the apparel industry.
- Civil liberties such as the freedom of association are often infringed upon.
- Workers who attempt to advocate for their rights are commonly intimidated, fired, black-listed, threatened, and sometimes the victims of violence. 2
- In a situation where factory managers have substantial power over workers, verbal abuse and even physical abuse are not unheard of.
- In countries where poverty and desperation are widespread, factories look for younger hires for their agility and complacency, violating international child labor laws.
- Women, who make up the vast majority of the apparel industry's workforce, often face rights violations based on gender. Forced pregnancy tests, termination for pregnancy, sexual harassment, and worse violations have often been reported. 3

- Workers' rights violations have been a significant issue and forced or unpaid overtime is common. Factories often fail to comply with minimum wage laws, short workers on paychecks, or close illegally. 4

WHEREAS, the university community has the right to the option of university apparel that guarantees human rights and safe and healthy working conditions for workers in the textile industry via an impartial body; and

WHEREAS, apparel industry workers have the right to a life of dignity and living-wage which "covers the cost of meeting a family's basic needs: food and water, housing and energy, clothing, health care, transportation, education and childcare, as well as modest funds for savings and discretionary spending." 5; and

WHEREAS, the University of California Code of Conduct states that 'licensees and their contractors must provide wages and benefits which comply with all applicable laws and regulations and which match or exceed the local prevailing wages and benefits in the relevant industry or which constitute a 'living wage,' whichever provides greater wages and benefits.' 6; and

WHEREAS, less than 1% of the apparel industry pays a living wage⁵; and

WHEREAS, independent labor rights watchdog Workers' Rights Consortium (WRC) has over a decade of experience monitoring collegiate apparel at more than 180 universities⁷; and

WHEREAS, the WRC has developed a living-wage calculation that covers a household's basic needs based on a cost of living study, information which is readily available for the use of any brand or factory via a WRC consultation; and

WHEREAS, union-made living-wage WRC verified brands, such as Alta Gracia Apparel, are readily available and affordable to universities in the apparel market; and

WHEREAS the Undergraduate Students Association Council denounces violations of human rights and workers rights in Los Angeles, the United States, and overseas,

WHEREAS, the United States Student Association and University of California Student Association boards have passed resolutions in support of Alta Gracia; and

WHEREAS, UCLA's undergraduate student government is a constituent of the aforementioned bodies; and

WHEREAS, ASUCLA has an existent contract with Alta Gracia to produce UCLA-licensed apparel; and

WHEREAS, said apparel is offered at the UCLA Store.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Undergraduate Students Association Council of the University of California, Los Angeles commends ASUCLA for licensing Alta Gracia Apparel.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Students Association Council commends ASUCLA's purchase of \$70,000 in Alta Gracia Apparel for the Spring 2011 quarter.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Undergraduate Students Association Council encourages ASUCLA to maintain and, if possible, increase the level of investment in Alta Gracia and similar companies for future years.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that the students of the University of California, Los Angeles support and encourage ethical business practices, workers' rights, and human rights as conscious consumers.

Sponsors:

Cristopher Santos

USAC External Vice President

John Christian De Vera

USAC Facilities Commissioner

Matt Spring

USAC General Representative 1

1. www.workersrights.org
2. <http://www.hrw.org/legacy/reports/2002/quat/>
3. Ibid.
4. www.workersrights.org, www.usas.org,

5. Workers' Rights Consortium, "Living Wage Analysis for the Dominican Republic"
[http://workersrights.org/linkeddocs/WRC%20Living%20Wage%20Analysis%20for%20the%20Dominican%20Republic.pdf](http://workersrights.org/linkedddocs/WRC%20Living%20Wage%20Analysis%20for%20the%20Dominican%20Republic.pdf). 2010.
6. University of California Code of Conduct for Trademark Licensees, January 2000
7. www.workersrights.org
8. Ibid.
9. www.altagraciaapparel.com
10. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/07/18/business/global/18shirt.html>