The United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) was formed in 1970, through the merger of the Association of Classroom Teachers of Los Angeles (ACT-LA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Local 1021. At the time, UTLA was the second-largest teacher’s union and the largest merged teacher’s union in the nation. The collection documents the development and achievements of UTLA, and consists of five series, with the first three reflecting the activities of the pre-merger associations, LATA, LATA/ATOLA, and ACT-LA, respectively. These series include minutes from Board of Directors and Representative Council meetings, and an extensive run of issues of the Hot Line, the newsletter that all three of the associations published. The last two series deal exclusively with UTLA.

Language of Material: English

Historical Note:
United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) was formed in 1970, through the merger of the Association of Classroom Teachers of Los Angeles (ACT-LA) and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), Local 1021. At the time, UTLA was the second-largest teacher’s union and largest merged teacher’s union in the nation. After the new merger of UTLA and ACT-LA was ratified in February 1970, the new union was a combined NEA/CTA and AFT/CFT local. A layered leadership structure was put in place that would ensure representation of each national/state organization at the highest levels of UTLA.

In April 1970 the newly merged union declared a teacher’s strike, demanding a contract. The strike lasted four and a half weeks, and led to a mutually-satisfactory contract that was subsequently thrown out by the courts after lawsuits were brought against both the union and the school board by disgruntled CTA members and a citizen taxpayer group. As a result, roughly 5,000 teachers left the union, the vast majority of whom were former members of ACT-LA.

Soon thereafter, each group sought to dislodge the other from the National Education Association. The dispute started when leaders of CTA asked NEA to disaffiliate UTLA because of the strike they deemed illegal. UTLA countered by backing a new organization, United Teacher Associations of California (UTAC) in an attempt to siphon off the more militant members of CTA, and eventually supplant it as the state organization of the NEA. In April of 1972, an agreement was reached between CTA, NEA, UTLA, and UTAC to dissolve UTAC and give financial backing, chiefly from the CTA, to help support UTLA. In 1973, CTA once again disaffiliated with UTLA over a dues dispute. The antagonism between the two associations was finally buried in 1976, as the CTA once again re-affiliated with UTLA.

Scope and Contents

Series I, Los Angeles Teachers Association (LATA), consists of the minutes of Board of Directors and Representative Council meetings. Also included are later versions of the organization’s by-laws (1966 and 1968) and copies of its newsletter, Hot Line, originally published between 1965 and 1967. The files are arranged in alphabetical order and chronologically within.

Series II, Affiliated Teachers of Los Angeles (AOTLA)/Los Angeles Teachers Association (LATA), reflects the activities of the merged teacher association that would later become ACT-LA. Most of the documents consist of minutes of Board of Directors and Representative Council meetings from 1967 and 1968. In addition, this series contains photocopies of the organization’s newsletter, Hot Line, running from September 1967 to January 1969. Documents reflecting the merger of the two organizations are also included in this series. The files are arranged in alphabetical order and chronologically within.

Series III, Associated Classroom Teachers-Los Angeles (ACT-LA), consists primarily of administrative papers and newsletters of the teacher association that grew out of the ATOLA/LATA merger. It includes Board of Directors and Representative Council minutes and by-laws. Three different newsletters were published by ACT-LA and are represented here, including Hot Line, LA Action, and News at a Glance. A publication called Fact Sheet and a public relations proposal are also included. The files are arranged in alphabetical order and chronologically within.

Subseries A, UTLA Administrative Records, consists of administrative records, including minutes from Board of Directors and Representative Council meetings. Subseries B, UTLA/LAUSD Collective Bargaining, includes minutes of negotiating meetings, reports to fact-finding panels, and drafts of contracts agreed to by UTLA and LAUSD. Subseries C, UTLA Newsletters/Newspaper, contains the union's newsletter, United Teacher, spanning from February 1970 merger to July 1989. The files are arranged in alphabetical order and chronologically within.

Series V, Labor Education Material, encompasses educational materials issued by various local, state and national organizations and agencies, including AFT, CTA, NEA, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the U.S. Department of Labor, among others. The files are arranged in alphabetical order by author and chronologically within.

Series V, Non-Manuscript Material, includes audio cassettes, video tapes, and organize labor posters.

Arrangement of Materials:
Series I: Los Angeles Teachers Association (LATA), 1962-1968
Series II: Affiliated Teachers of Los Angeles (ATOLA)/Los Angeles Teachers Association (LATA), 1967-1969
Series III: Associated Classroom Teachers-Los Angeles (ACT-LA), 1968-1970
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Related Material
Affiliated Teacher Organizations of Los Angeles Collection
Daily News Morgue Files of the Bustop Campaign Collection
Cliff Fridkis Legal Files of the Bustop Campaign Collection
California Federation of Teachers Collection

General
Other Information:
The finding aid for this collection was revised in December 2004, in part under a gift from the J. Paul Getty Trust.

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Immediate Source of Acquisition
United Teachers Los Angeles, 02/01/1994

For information about citing items in this collection consult the appropriate style manual, or see the Citing Archival Materials guide.

Processing Information:
Robert G. Marshall, Brett Arena, and Yadhira V. Contreras, 1999

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