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NEWS

O.C. groups plan May Day march and rally

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By RON GONZALES / THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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ROD VEAL, THE ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER, TEXT BY RON GONZALES

May Day event in Santa Ana

What:The Orange County May Day Coalition is planning a march and speakers discussing immigration, education and labor concerns.

When:Participants will gather for music and poetry at 2 p.m. on Tuesday, May 1, then begin their march about 3 p.m.

Where:Sasscer Park, Fourth and Ross streets, Santa Ana

The coalition:Chican@s Unidos, DeColores Queer OC, El Centro Cultural de México, OC DREAM Team, OC Peace Coalition, Occupy

SANTA ANA – Groups concerned with immigration, education and labor rights will hold a May Day rally and march on Tuesday, a day celebrated worldwide as International Workers' Day.

Members of nine groups have formed the [Orange County May Day Coalition](#) to stage the event, which begins at 2 p.m. at Sasscer Park, followed by a march about 3 p.m.

Following a one-hour march, the group will return to the park to hear representatives of nine organizations discuss their concerns, and talk about how people can get involved.

Yenni Diaz, a spokeswoman for the coalition, said as many as 500 participants are expected at the event, which marks the 10th year of a May Day event in Santa Ana, the third by the coalition.

"Our primary goal would be to educate our community and connect our community to our campaign," she said.

[Last May](#), members of the coalition brought their concerns about the city's vehicle-impound policy to the City Council, saying it was unfair to people who lack legal

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Santa Ana, RAIZ, SEIU-USWW, and Tonantzin Collective. residence.

Information: ocmdc.org.

[The Police Department about four months later implemented a new policy](#) aimed at lowering the number of vehicles impounded from unlicensed drivers.

This year, the coalition is targeting public education reform, and wants to see people who live here illegally be able to receive driver's licenses.

The state for several years has been cutting funding to higher education, while school districts are eliminating teaching positions, cutting programs and increasing, the coalition said.

"California's refusal to prioritize and invest in public education has made education inaccessible and unattainable to a whole generation of our youth," said Carolyn Torres, education chair of Chican@s Unidos.

Since 1994, California has refused driver's licenses to immigrants living in the state illegally. Roadways would be safer if they were properly trained, tested and insured, the coalition said.

"We ask that our state legislators do the right thing and make no delay in ensuring all Californians are able to get a driver's license," says Abraham Flores Rojas, co-founder of Resistencia, Autonomia, Igualdad, Liderazgo (RAIZ).

The march and rally also coincide with a contract dispute involving 18,000 janitors around the state who are represented by the [Service Employees International Union-United Service Workers West](#). About 1,500 janitors in Orange County are affected.

"Janitors are currently fighting to maintain dignified wages and full family health care," says Marisol Rivera, vice president of SEIU-USWW Orange County. "In order for Orange County to prosper, hard-working families cannot continue to be held back. Many of our members are parents and as all parents, they want a better future for their kids."

Contact the writer: 714-796-6999 or rgonzales@ocregister.com

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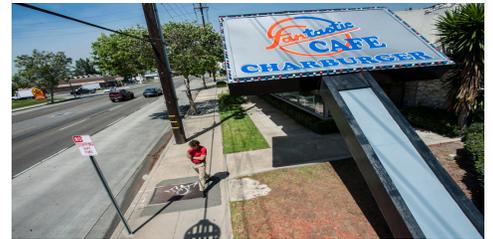
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