



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 17, 2013

**CONTACTS:**

Kareem Aref, UCSA President, [ucsapresident@ucsa.org](mailto:ucsapresident@ucsa.org)

Bridget Botelho, UCSA Communications Director, 510.834.8272, [commdirector@ucsa.org](mailto:commdirector@ucsa.org)

**Annual Student of Color Conference Celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

*University of California Students Create a Space for Students to Discuss Issues Affecting Students of Color*

This past weekend, students from all over the state gathered at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) for the Annual Student of Color Conference—a weekend long conference where students discuss in depth the challenges facing students of color in California and nationwide.

Annually hosted by the University of California Student Association (UCSA), this conference marked its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary with an agenda full of workshops, caucuses and speaking engagements that focused on today's most relevant topics regarding young people of color. Issues discussed in workshops and caucus spaces included but were not limited to the school-to-prison pipeline, decreased funding to ethnic and LGBT studies departments, low admission rates for students of color, and limited funding for UC student retention programs.

On day two of the conference, several hundred students marched down Westwood Blvd from the UCLA campus to Wilshire Blvd in support of the UC Student Association's IGNITE campaign, which stands for Invest in Graduation Not Incarceration, Transform Education. The IGNITE campaign urges the state to reinvest in and reprioritize education spending over prison spending, and replace the school-to-prison pipeline with a UC diversity pipeline.

The Conference exemplifies the commitment UC students have to affecting change for communities of color in California higher education. "The Student of Color Conference provides a space where students are challenged to learn about themselves and their communities in a way that's unlike any other," says UCSA President Kareem Aref. "This event is life-changing for many students who attend, and that's what makes this 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conference so special."

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**About the University of California Student Association**

The University of California Student Association is the official voice of over 230,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students from the eleven UC campuses. It is our mission to advocate on behalf of current and future students for the accessibility, affordability, and quality of the University of California system.