



LA28 Begins at Home: Student Civic Engagement in UCLA Housing

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Project Summary

Los Angeles is setting up to host the 2028 Summer Olympics and Paralympics, with UCLA acting as the Athlete's Village for the games. Students, staff, faculty, and other community stakeholders will play a tremendous role in the implementation of a successful Olympics in 2028, highlighting Los Angeles to the world. 2026 offered a unique time in the run up to LA28, with the 2026 Winter Olympic Games (officially the XXV Olympic Winter Games) held in Milan and Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy, from February 6 to February 22, 2026. Originally, VOICE funding was to be used to engage students around the Winter Olympics. Student engagement for the Winter Olympics was low, due to academic midterm season and apathy towards displays of patriotism that the Winter Olympics elicited, according to student programmers. Funding ended up being used to promote residential student government's spring quarter town hall, which brought out representatives from the campus Olympics programming committee to give residents updates on the 2028 Olympics, including details about tickets, volunteering, and impact on campus.

Impact

What impact did your work have on the campus community?

Students that attended Town Hall learned about a number of explicit and implicit knowledge and capacity. Town halls have been effective and efficient ways to bring community members together, in order to engage directly with their representatives. For students in housing, quarterly town halls allow space to directly engage with directors

Were your project objectives met?

Although the project evolved from its original concept, it remained grounded in the VOICE Initiative's mission of fostering dialogue, civic participation, and informed engagement around issues affecting campus communities. The original objective was to engage students around the 2026 Winter Olympics as a lead-up to LA28 and it was not met as planned. Midterm

across Housing and Hospitality Services and Student Affairs, as they are decision-makers in their residential experience. Explicitly and in additions to programming updates from the Olympics campus representative, participants learned about construction updates to the recreation space on the Hill, safety updates about access control to dorm facilities, and other topics regarding their student experience. Implicitly, students engaged in democratic engagement with leaders and powerholders in ways that foster continued engagement. For example, during the Winter Quarter Town Hall, the Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA) chapter at UCLA attended to advocate for free laundry for residents. During the open-floor portion, students from the organization shared data about residents' experiences regarding their clothing and cost, questioned the Assistant Director of Housing in charge of the WASH contract, and offered solutions, specifically free laundry. They ended up meeting with HHS leadership to talk through resource management and the housing contracts. It became a flash point for the rest of the year, including at this Spring Town Hall when follow-up was demanded from students not affiliated with YDSA, but inspired by their action.

season created a structural barrier, and student programmers flagged that the Winter Olympics did not resonate with residents the way we had anticipated. However, the spirit of the project, building student awareness and investment in LA28 and UCLA's role in it, was meaningfully achieved through the pivot to the Spring Town Hall. Students left with concrete knowledge about ticketing, volunteering, and how the games will affect campus life. In that sense, the core civic engagement goal was met, even if the vehicle changed.

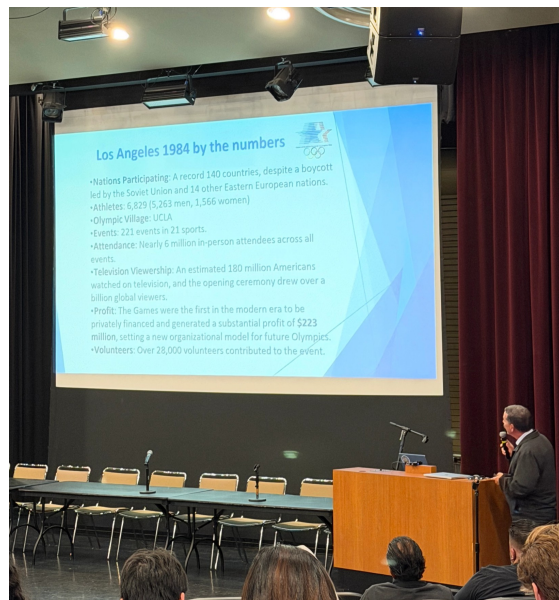
What demographics did attendees/participants represent (students, staff, faculty, community members)?

Participant representation is exclusively undergraduate student residents that live on “the Hill” at UCLA. The Hill is the “on-campus” traditional-style housing for undergraduate Bruins.

How many people were impacted by your project?

We had 160 participants at the Spring Town Hall, with about 30 asking questions during open floor.

Are there any next steps for your project? For instance, will any aspects of the program continue outside of VOICE funding?



We will look to host intentional Olympics programming when tapped by campus, as we continue our collaboration with Campus Life. For example, in July 2026, volunteer sign-ups will open and student government should be an engine for promoting that opportunity to students.