

SANTA BARBARA STUDENT HOUSING CO-OP

about

HOUSES

FUTURE

apply





▼ IN THE 70'S



CO-OP HISTORY

MISSION





NEWMAN



MANLEY



DASHAIN



BIKO



MERTON





OUR HISTORY

After the riots in IV and the burning of the bank, in 1976 relations improved with local officials through the efforts of locals and students. For instance, the IV Community Council was founded in 1970, along with the IV Recreation and Park District in 1972 and the IV Food Co-op in 1974. 1976 is of great significance to us because that is when a group of UCSB students came together and decided to tackle the issue of housing injustice through creating our organization.



Originally incorporated as the University Student's Rochdale Housing Co-op (USRHP), the cooperative formed to master lease buildings in order to lower rates and give members more agency over the units they lived in.



OUR HISTORY

From its founding, the co-ops were a huge success, as the first building we leased in 1977, at 6520 Cervantes, had 61 members. Within three years, we were able to acquire master leases for seven properties, totalling a staggering 200 members. Within just five short years of its founding, the USRHP purchased its first building at 6503 Madrid.



The Newman House, which was named after Patti Newman, one of the first co-op directors, served as a shining example of what is possible when a group of like-minded people organize to create tangible change in their communities. Keeping up with the demand for more affordable housing and less landlord misdeeds, the USRHP purchased and established the Manley co-op in 1984, with a total number of members almost at 500 students and faculty. While 1984 was a year of joy and success for us, it was also a year of drama, trials and tribulations. With so much influence over so many residents of IV, the USRHP came into several legal disputes with the property owners it took out the master leases from.



OUR HISTORY

This point proved to be the ultimate test for the co-op, as we went to court against the well-funded legal teams of the IV property owners. After losing the legal battle, alongside a considerable amount of money, the USRHP was forced to give up all of its master leases and start from the ground-up with the Newman and Manley house.



Now, however, we are telling a different story. After sound financial management, the Santa Barbara Student Housing Co-ops (the name was changed in 1991) owns and operates five houses throughout Isla Vista. Also, we work alongside the North American Students of Cooperation (NASCO), which is a national student cooperative organization. Today we are the face of a diverse group of people and stories who reside in IV. At the leading edge of culture and expression, we seek to spread our philosophies of community engagement and cooperation through self-help living at a low cost.



IN THE BEGINNING

On a cool afternoon on February 25, 1970, 3,000 young and idealistic UCSB students along with faculty and other residents of Isla Vista were making their way to Harder Stadium to listen to a speech by a prominent civil rights attorney, William Kunstler.



With a sense of global injustice, alongside a stark disillusionment with The Man and a rejection of traditional values, these young spectators were looking to change the world. In an already-intense local political climate, with police units patrolling Isla Vista, local residents started filing out of Harder Stadium, empowered with the words of Kunstler. Police signal out Rich Underwood, a prominent student leader, accusing him of having a Molotov cocktail (which was an open bottle of wine) and not only starting to use the force of the billy-club on him, but also on the rest of the crowd. Violence ensued.



IN THE BEGINNING



The battle between the police and the locals raged on for hours. According to one spectator, "People charging like gladiators with trash lids as shields throwing rocks at the cops," as locals set fire to police cars. Enraged by what they identified as systemic oppression by landlords, politicians and school officials, the locals attacked and ransacked the nearby real estate management companies, which to this day rent to 96% of Isla Vista residents. Finally, the violence culminated in the burning of the local branch of Bank of America. Amongst the crowd was a sense of injustice coupled with an optimism for the future. While police would occupy Isla Vista for almost a year afterwards, there was a sense of unity and a common purpose to change Isla Vista for the good.



IN THE BEGINNING

Year of Rebellion

The 1970 Isla Vista Riots

Photographs by Joseph S. Melchione





MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Santa Barbara Student Housing Co-op (SBSHC) is to provide low rent co-op housing for student, staff, and faculty of the University of California at Santa Barbara, regardless of gender, race, social, political, or religious affiliation, and thereby influencing the community to eliminate prejudice and discrimination in the community. We strive to engage in continuous educational programs that further the principles of cooperation through mutual, self-help living at a minimal cost.

