



For Immediate Release

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**Historian named director of UCLA's Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies**  
*New leadership comes during center's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year*

(Los Angeles, Calif.) -- The [UCLA Institute of American Cultures \(IAC\)](#) is pleased to announce that Dr. Kelly Lytle Hernandez has been named director of the [UCLA Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies](#), effective July 2019. Lytle Hernandez had served as interim director of the center since the 2017-2018 academic year. Her appointment comes during the center's historic 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year.

"Professor Lytle Hernandez not only brings innovation, vision and a dynamic program of research to the Bunche Center, but also a collaborative spirit that links students, staff, and faculty colleagues with community partners around the most pressing issues of our times," said David K. Yoo, vice provost of the UCLA Institute of American Cultures.

Lytle Hernandez is one of the nation's leading historians of race, policing, immigration, and incarceration in the United States. Her award-winning book, "MIGRA! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol" (University of California Press, 2010), explored the making and meaning of the U.S. Border Patrol in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands, arguing that the century-long surge of U.S. immigration law enforcement in the U.S.-Mexico borderlands is a story of race in America. Her book, "City of Inmates: Conquest, Rebellion, and the Rise of Human Caging in Los Angeles" (University of North Carolina Press, 2017), chronicles how Los Angeles County built the largest jail system in the world. "City of Inmates" won numerous awards, including the American Book Award and the John Hope Franklin Book Prize.

Lytle Hernandez is the director and principal investigator for the project, [Million Dollar Hoods](#), a UCLA-based research project which maps the fiscal and human cost of mass incarceration in Los Angeles.

"I am thankful and eager for the opportunity to direct the Bunche Center, which boasts a five-decade tradition of scholarly excellence and community engagement," Lytle Hernandez said. "In the years ahead, I will continue to invest in this tradition by working with our faculty, staff, and students to lift up new research dedicated not just to the study of Black life but to improving the conditions of Black life, locally, nationally, and globally."

**BUNCHE CENTER**

The Ralph J. Bunche Center for African American Studies, founded in 1969 as the Center for Afro-American Studies (CAAS), was renamed after Nobel Prize winner, scholar, activist, and UCLA alumnus

Ralph J. Bunche in 2003, in commemoration of the centenary of his birth. Research sponsored and conducted by the Bunche Center is intersectional and multidisciplinary in scope and spans the humanities, social sciences, fine arts, and the professional schools.

The Bunche Center is housed within the IAC, which was established to promote the development of ethnic studies at UCLA by providing a structure for coordination of the four ethnic studies centers on campus (Bunche Center, Chicano Studies Research Center, Asian American Studies Center, and American Indian Studies Center). Through each center, the IAC awards annual pre-doctoral and visiting scholar fellowships and faculty and student research grants.

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