



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Kindred Hospital Bay Area

Kindred Hospital Brea • Kindred Hospital Westminster

APRIL 2017

Around the union

More than 60 workers at **Keck Medical Center** at the University of Southern California voted overwhelmingly to join NUHW in the past month. On April 12, workers at Keck's Beverly Hills clinic voted 94 percent voted to join. Six inpatient radiology workers and nearly 40 lab and outpatient radiology workers voted in March to join. Their goals are to improve staffing and the quality of care at the hospital, protect benefits, and achieve parity with their NUHW-represented colleagues at Keck. We now represent more than 1,000 workers at USC facilities.

Service and technical workers at **UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland** won a three-year contract, totaling 14 percent wage increases, including across-the-board increases, retroactive pay, and market adjustments for all employees. Workers also won improvements in other areas, including shift differentials, tuition reimbursement, meal allowance, and more. NUHW represents two additional bargaining units at the hospital.

NUHW members at **Sutter-California Pacific Medical Center** won two grievance victories by forcing management to honor union jobs and seniority:

- 1) An Anesthesia Technician received pay for a shift that management gave to a non-union employee.
- 2) Two EVS employees received overtime pay after management gave the overtime opportunity to a less-senior employee.

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BREA: MEMBERS USE PATIENT CARE COMMITTEE TO ADDRESS SHORT STAFFING

Members at Kindred Brea fought for and won the right to establish a Patient Care Committee (PCC) and we're now using it to address short staffing in the hospital.

The purpose of the committee is to improve patient care and working conditions, such as staffing, patient services delivery, or work design. It's an outlet for members to meet with management and address workplace issues. On March 16, through the PCC, NUHW members Vanessa Flores, Miranda Madrid, Michael Bautista, and Elizabeth Poulin met with Kindred management to address a number of workplace issues, most notably, short staffing. Our goal for the meeting was to discuss issues that have led to widespread short-staffing. We achieved that and much more. We won three key advancements:

1. Management shared their ideal staffing level with the PCC: a team of one RN, one LVN, and one CNA, with the team responsible for 8-10 patients.
2. Management agreed to implement huddles more frequently to allow members to ask questions about assignments.
3. Management agreed to share all hiring information with the union, allowing us to better understand the difficulties around short staffing.

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BAY AREA: MEETING APRIL 25 TO TACKLE SHORT STAFFING AND WORKPLACE INJURIES

Short-staffing is a major problem plaguing NUHW members at Kindred San Francisco Bay Area. Many CNAs report regularly working with 11-13 patients. Sometimes they'd have to work a whole floor, with 20 or 24 patients all on their own. RNs are so short staffed that management can't even make arrangements so nurses can attend their own bargaining session.

As a result of this unsustainable workload, more workers are getting injured on the job. Some CNAs who've only been at Kindred for less than a year have already experienced work-related injuries and have been forced to shift to light duty.

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STEWARD SPOTLIGHT

MARSHA SHANNON-MABRY Monitor Tech, Kindred Westminster

I've been working at Kindred Westminster since 2002 and became a steward shortly after we ratified our contract in August of 2015. I decided to become a steward because I remember what this hospital used to be. Kindred Westminster used to be a great place to work. We used to have employees of the month and felt appreciated.

All of that changed around 2012. Around that time we stopped feeling appreciated and employee morale went downhill. We used to have employee-



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Around the union

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Sterile processing techs at Napa's **Queen of the Valley** organized their co-workers in other departments to join them in a march on the boss to address chronic understaffing and poor communications at the hospital. In their meeting with the hospital's CEO, they outlined issues and asked management to take specific, concrete steps to resolve them. Management committed to deal with these staffing issues by hiring and strategically using more per diems, and to respond soon with a more thorough plan.

After a year of contentious bargaining, NUHW reached an agreement with **Providence St. Joseph Health** to add 49 outpatient imaging workers to our 700-member bargaining unit at **Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital**. The agreement includes placing workers on the existing union wage scale, and providing protections for workers who don't complete the work of co-workers who call off or are floated to the hospital from their clinic. Finally, it includes a process that recognizes seniority for staffing during expanded weekend, evening, and holiday hours.

ER admitting workers at **Providence Tarzana Medical Center** began implementing a new trial of 12-hour shifts. They organized, drafted a proposal, and successfully convinced management to agree to a schedule of 12-hour shifts instead of the usual 8-hour shifts for a two-month trial period beginning in February. Fewer work days would allow workers to spend more time with their families, attend their children's school activities, and pursue educational courses.

NUHW MEMBERS TAKE PART IN THE RESISTANCE

Throughout the state, scores of NUHW members are engaged in the resistance movement to defend working people, immigrants, and an equitable healthcare system. NUHW members' commitment was on full display at many town halls from Eureka to Orange County. At these town halls, many participants provided powerful testimonials about their own experiences trying to navigate our complex and often problematic healthcare system.



NUHW members at Congressman Barbara Lee's town hall in Oakland.

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BREA: MEMBERS USE PATIENT CARE COMMITTEE

"The Patient Care Committee allows us to address the issues that affect us everyday at work," said Vanessa Flores, NUHW shop steward and PCC member. "Having hiring info shared with our union allows us to see what steps management are taking to try to address the staffing shortages and allows us to take steps, if necessary, to force them to do more."

The next PCC meeting takes place on Thursday, April 6 at 8:30 a.m. in the Family Conference Room. If you'd like to join the PCC, get in touch with a committee member.

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BAY AREA: APRIL 25 MEETING TO TACKLE STAFFING

But short-staffing and workplace injuries don't just affect nursing staff. They affect tech workers, housekeepers, dietary, and above all, our patients.

Luckily, we have many different tools to tackle this issue. To get started, we need to document every time we feel that our assigned patient load is unsafe. We need to make sure we report every injury, ache, and pain, to our direct supervisors. Then we need to bring these issues directly to management, which we can do using the Labor Management Committee meetings that we won in our new contract.

If you are interested in making sure Kindred is a safe place to work for both employees and patients, stop by the Staff Lounge on your break on Tuesday, April 25 between 11:30 a.m. and 2 p.m. or between 6 and 7 p.m. (if you work night shift) to discuss this issue with your co-workers and NUHW Organizer Alexandra Early.

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WESTMINSTER: STEWARD SPOTLIGHT ON MARSHA

of-the-month awards and recognition for the hard work we put in.

That stopped around 2012 and we started hearing only about the mistakes we made. Recognition for our hard work went away, and many people that I knew quit working at Kindred. I became a steward in order to help us get back to where we were before and encourage my co-workers to have a voice in changing our workplace for the better.

The most rewarding part of being a steward is being able to sit down across from management and fix problems, both big and small in the facility that will improve our working conditions. My advice to new stewards would be: don't be afraid to ask questions!

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