



# NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Seton Medical Center • Seton Coastside

**FEBRUARY 2017**

## NUHW keeps growing with big win in Oakland

About 250 Children's pharmacists, social workers, physical therapists and other professional workers at **UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland** voted by a 4-1 margin January 24 to join NUHW.

More than half of the new members work in mental health, an area of expertise for the union which represents several thousand mental health professionals at Kaiser hospitals and clinics.

These new members are coming on board as the union negotiates a new contract for its approximately 900 technical, business/office clerical, and service workers at Children's.

With more than 1,100 members now at the facility, the union is better positioned to boost pay, improve working conditions, and beat back UCSF's threats to cut service to the East Bay.

"We want to make this organization even better and safeguard care for the families we serve," said Felicia Hashimoto, an occupational therapist. "We can do this by having a bigger say in the hospital so we can better advocate for ourselves and our patients."

This election victory comes on the heels of several organizing victories last year including 419 caregivers at Queen of the Valley Hospital in Napa, 120 at the University of Southern California's Norris Cancer Hospital, and more than 600 at Children's Hospital Oakland. More than 2,000 workers have joined NUHW in the past 12 months.

## COASTSIDE MEMBERS COMPEL MANAGEMENT TO ADDRESS STAFFING PROBLEMS

NUHW members have forced management to finally begin to respond to our concerns by providing more transparency in staffing changes and creating systems that allow for better communication and feedback from members.

Last year, many managers were hired under the new hedge-fund operator, BlueMountain. These new managers made changes to staffing without meeting and consulting with NUHW and its members. At Coastside, management reduced the number of CNAs on the floor when the census rose. In the past, management and the union had created safe staffing guidelines and criteria, but new management refused to adhere to past practices.

After NUHW filed a cease-and-desist demand, members, union staff, and management met and together came up with an interim agreement, which we all signed off on. But management refused to stick to the agreement; one manager just could not grasp the concept that he had to abide by an agreement with the union. After members wore "safe staffing" stickers, marched on the boss with a big delegation, and sent letters to demand information on staffing, Seton started making management changes at Coastside.

Because of our efforts as NUHW members, management has now agreed to work with us and to create a fair and safe staffing plan that includes a timeline and education for Coastside members. Coastside members and NUHW staff will work with management in upcoming meetings to continue to improve staffing.



### STEWARD SPOTLIGHT MICHAEL GREBOWICZ

When Michael moved to the Bay Area from New York seven years ago, he was looking to leave the restaurant industry for a more rewarding and meaningful career. He found it in healthcare; Michael now works as an ER tech at Seton.

As a restaurant worker, Michael was used to being on his feet, doing shift work, and interacting with people, so the transition to ER tech wasn't difficult. Meanwhile, he's a part-time nursing student and plans to become an RN. Michael was motivated to become a steward and leader in his department after seeing how successful we were in bargaining a strong contract. He knew that a lot of leadership and hard work went into securing the contract and felt inspired to be part of that process moving forward.

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## Members gather for statewide meetings

With the executive orders signed in his tumultuous first week on the job, President Donald Trump has upended the lives of millions of immigrants and their families and cast uncertainty over our nation's healthcare system. The new government taking shape in Washington D.C. will have major implications for us as caregivers and union members. In addition to radical changes to healthcare, we can expect President Trump to appoint a National Labor Relations Board that is friendlier to management than it is to us.

As a union that prizes democracy, NUHW scheduled special statewide membership meetings from January into early February to hear members' thoughts on how we should respond to the new federal government and stand up for each other and our patients.

In the ten total meetings, we had robust discussions about immigration, universal healthcare, the threat to our rights as a union, and more.

We also discussed two resolutions from our union's elected executive board. The first resolution, which has been adopted by the board, reaffirms our support for a Medicare for All universal healthcare system and efforts underway to make that a reality in California. The second resolution, which would declare that we are a "Sanctuary Union" committed to defending the rights of immigrants, has been recommended by the board for discussion at our meetings.

**If you would like a copy of the resolutions, contact your steward or NUHW organizer.**



Workers from Seton Medical Center and Sutter-CPMC attended one of a dozen statewide NUHW membership meetings to plan the union's response to the Trump administration's actions on immigration and healthcare. See story on left.

## NUHW UPCOMING EVENTS

### Stewards Council Meeting

Wednesday, February 15  
Noon – 4 p.m. • location TBD

## KNOW YOUR CONTRACT: SCHEDULES AND BEREAVEMENT LEAVE

*Rosalie Zamora, Senior Office Coordinator, Respiratory Department*

**Posting of schedules:** Per our contract, if the employer needs to change the schedule after it has been posted, the employer must receive mutual consent from members whose schedules would be affected. The employer must receive the mutual consent by first initiating an in-person or direct telephone conversation, unless emergency conditions dictate otherwise.

**Bereavement Leave:** Our new contract includes an improvement in bereavement leave. As a benefited employee, when a death occurs in your immediate family, you are entitled to a leave of up to 40 hours with pay within 30 days of the death. The previous contract allowed leave within only seven days from the death.

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## STEWARD SPOTLIGHT: MICHAEL GREBOWICZ

"I became a shop steward to ensure that my co-workers have a voice in NUHW," said Michael. He recently attended a steward training where he and other NUHW shop stewards learned about Weingarten rights.

In addition to his work and activism at Seton, Michael is also passionate about sailing. He volunteers for a group that delivers supplies to scientists on the Farallon Islands who are studying the effects of climate change on seabirds and other wildlife.

*For more information, please contact NUHW Organizer  
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