



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Marin General Hospital

DECEMBER 2017

PROMOTION GRIEVANCE UPDATE

Ken Cabeen

MEMBERS AND STEWARDS ENDORSE NOVATO AND TIBURON CITY COUNCIL

On October 18, Radiology Techs Linh Nguyen and Mike King joined seven NUHW members from Novato Healthcare Center at an NUHW-hosted endorsement meeting for Novato City Council candidate Pay Ecklund and Tiburon City Council candidate Holli Thier. Ecklund and Thier were seeking our union's endorsement.

NUHW Novato members asked the candidates to commit to support their efforts to get a fair contract, which they have been fighting for for two years.

After candidates made their speeches, we had a question-and-answer period and then NUHW members voted to endorse both candidates. On November 7, both Thier and Ecklund won their races.

At NUHW, we endorse candidates democratically, so it is up to our local member-leaders to decide which candidates to support. These endorsement meetings are also a chance to see whether these local candidates will commit to supporting our bargaining fights.

As we get ready for the November 2018 election and our own contract bargaining, NUHW will hold more endorsement meetings with local candidates.

Our members will have the chance to know more candidates and ask for their support in supporting our efforts to improve working conditions and secure better pay and benefits at Marin General.

I filed a grievance with the hospital in September, stemming from a misunderstanding about when I should have been moved officially from a Rad Tech to an MRI Tech and paid accordingly. Management told me I would have to wait to be re-classified, but I found out that two of my predecessors who had moved from Radiology to MRI were classified and paid as MRI Techs as soon as they finished their supervised training and began working independently.

According to this precedent, I should have been re-classified and paid as an MRI Tech on July 1, 2015, but I was not. I was willing to let that go, as long as I was moved over to MRI Tech at the appropriate step level. Our contract states "in cases of permanent promotion from one classification to the higher classification, the employee shall be promoted to the higher classification at the same step level." When management ignored my repeated requests to be re-classified at my current step level, I filed a grievance, asking the company pay me at the correct step level retroactive to July 1, 2015. My other goal was for us to have clarity on this issue, so that none of my co-workers would go through training expecting a promotion, and then get the disappointment of finding out they actually wouldn't get any promotion or pay increase.

During this process, I worked with my fellow stewards to decide what was fair for me, but also for others looking to make similar classification changes. Eventually, we decided to offer a compromise — having the company move me immediately to my higher step level in the MRI pay scale, but letting go all those months I was classified and paid incorrectly. We also decided to make the settlement non-precedent setting, meaning that if you decided to make the move from Rad Tech to MRI Tech, the company might not want to pay you at your current step level. We decided to take on the fight of clarifying that issue in the next contract negotiations.

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STEWARDS CLARIFY HAND HYGIENE POLICY

On September 29, stewards Cierra Thlang, Julia Smith, and Ken Cabeen met with HR and Radiology Department Manager Mike Watson to discuss a new hand hygiene policy memo from management and came away with a clearer understanding of the policy enforcement.

Stewards were confused about how management would implement "vigorous enforcement" of the new policy. Some concerns were about the policy's unrealistic and hardline approach on using hand sanitizer between each and every entry or exit of a patient's room. Stewards told management that Rad Techs always go in and out of rooms only to relay messages or move equipment. We often push a patient on a gurney or our portable machine, so we can't just simply stop to put on hand sanitizer. Since the new trackers on our badges are not completely reliable, we also asked management how they'd investigate and use progressive discipline in cases of suspected violations of this new policy.

Management clarified that workers would have 30 seconds from when they exit a room to use the hand sanitizer and enter another room. Both Mike Watson and HR made clear that they understand that we enter and exit numerous times during portables and that we're only expected to swipe when we first walk in and when we are completely finished and exit the room. Management assured stewards that they will not target or discipline workers based on their low scores; workers will only be

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AROUND THE UNION

NUHW continued our drive to organize mental health clinicians with a victory at **Elk Grove Unified School District** (Sacramento County) in late October. Nearly 40 Elk Grove mental health therapists and behavior support specialists are now NUHW members, marking our union's fourth mental health organizing victory over the past year.

Nearly 120 psychologists, therapists, behavioral health counselors, employment consultants and clinical supervisors at **Richmond Area Multi-Services** voted in a mail-ballot election to join NUHW, seeking staff retention, higher staffing levels, and fair wages. RAMS is a nonprofit that operates in San Francisco schools and serves community members.

NUHW has committed \$100,000 to help victims of the **Northern California wildfires** that killed 42 people and destroyed 5,700 buildings. Twenty-two NUHW members lost their homes in the fire. They will each be offered an immediate \$1,500 grant. A portion of the remaining funds will be donated to the relief efforts spearheaded by the North Bay Labor Council and North Bay Jobs with Justice. The remainder will be set aside to provide further help to NUHW members impacted by the fire.

Following President Trump's declaration that the **opioid addiction crisis** is "a **public health emergency**," NUHW president Sal Rosselli released a statement urging for more resources for mental health care services. Read the full statement on our website: NUHW.org.

STEWARD CIERRA THLANG REPORTS BACK FROM THE NUHW LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



"On October 21 and 22, I attended the NUHW Leadership Conference in Anaheim. During the conference, I met other shop stewards from various hospitals around California, learned new organizing strategies, attended training workshops for new stewards, and watched Democratic nominees running for governor debate.

NUHW is one of the few, if not the only union that allows its members to have a vote for whom the union is going to support during the race. Our union dues cannot be used for federal elections, so the only way that we can influence federal

elections and elected leaders is through voluntary members' donations to our union's Committee on Political Education (COPE). Since our government funds and regulates healthcare, it's very important that we have a say in who we want in office to help support us. Over 300 shop stewards voted and after a tie and a re-vote, Gavin Newsom became the candidate that NUHW is going to support during this upcoming governors race.

I also was able to attend a training workshop for new stewards which allowed me to learn more about my role as shop steward. I feel more prepared now to better support all of you if and when the time ever comes. I am very grateful that I was able to attend this event and gain more knowledge to bring back to you all. Please let me or your other stewards know if there is ever anything we can help you with."

continued from front, promotion grievance

Management retaliates by suspending cross-training

During this process, management tried to retaliate against us by abruptly suspending the cross training program, despite an obvious and on-going need for more IR techs. We told management that we believed that this was retaliatory and that my grievance was about promotions to a higher classification not specialty differential pay, which is detailed in a completely different section of the contract, Article 5, section G.

HR's response to this was that they were concerned about being forced to pay workers specialty pay while they were still in training. This showed that we need to clarify when Rad Tech workers should start getting specialty pay after most of their training is completed. Mike King is heading up that effort but we will definitely need to clarify that language in our contract negotiations next year.

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my fellow stewards, Julia, Mike, Cierra, Justin and Carol, as well as to our NUHW Representative, Alex, for seeing and helping me through this. Wishing you and yours all a wonderful holiday season.





continued from front, hand hygiene

disciplined if a supervisor sees them directly violating the policy.

Mike Watson acknowledged that 100 percent compliance with the policy was very challenging in the Radiology Department. While he wanted to increase their compliance scores, he said he would not be out to "ding people." If you feel that management is being overly punitive or not following the commitments they made at this meeting, please talk to a union steward or union organizer, Alex Early.

For more information, please contact NUHW Organizer Alexandra Early at aearly@nuhw.org or (617) 816-4260.

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