



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland

OCTOBER 2023



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT
HUMBERTO RETANA
MARRIAGE AND FAMILY THERAPIST

The work of a mental health therapist and a union steward isn't as different as it might appear. Humberto Retana takes a similar approach to serving his patients and his colleagues: Understand exactly what's causing the problem in order to figure out a solution.

When it comes to being a steward, "Once you identify the problem, you can prescribe the solution based on the contract," said Humberto, who has worked as a Marriage and Family Therapist at UCSF Benioff Children's Hospital Oakland for 10 years.

Humberto became a steward soon after he and his colleagues in the Professionals Unit signed their first contract in 2018.

"I got involved with NUHW because I have always been on the side of labor," Humberto said.

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WE MARCHED ON THE BOSS FOR OUR RETROACTIVE PAY



When we ratified our 3-year contracts in June, part of the agreement included retroactive pay increases because we had been bargaining well after our previous contracts had expired.

Since then, we've been waiting for those retroactive checks to arrive.

Initially, the hospital gave us an estimated date of September, but later said it would be in November.

Upset over this delay, we scheduled a meeting with Payroll and HR, but no-one from Payroll showed up.

So we took action. On Friday, October 13 we held a "March on the Boss" where several of our members expressed their frustration over the delay and the lack of respect from Payroll by blowing off our meeting.

The interim president wasn't in her office, so we spoke to her administrative assistant, who committed to relaying the message.

We will reschedule the meeting with Payroll and HR to find out more about the delay and when we can expect to get our retroactive pay.

And, we'll continue ramping up the pressure until we get those checks.

NUHW stewards gather for annual Leadership Conference, pass internal organizing resolution

Approximately 350 stewards from across California and Hawaii gathered together earlier this month at NUHW's 2023 Leadership Conference in Los Angeles. The stewards participated in training workshops and strategy sessions, while also approving a resolution that aims to build our strength in every workplace.

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NUHW Leadership Conference

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The resolution empowers stewards to take on roles previously handled in many workplaces by union staff, including taking the lead on disciplinary and grievance hearings as well as Labor-Management Committee meetings and performing New Hire Orientations.

Each steward council will designate stewards with appropriate training to perform these duties. Education and training courses will be made available to ensure that stewards have the skills and resources to do the job well.

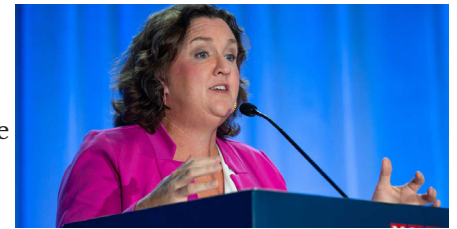
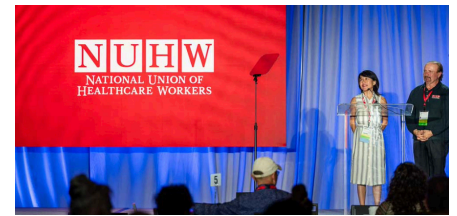
The resolution won't be implemented immediately. Each steward council will report on its progress at the 2024 Leadership Conference, which will be held in the Bay Area.

NUHW members endorse Katie Porter for U.S. Senate

Members who attended the Leadership Conference also got to hear from the three leading Democratic contenders for U.S. Senate. The forum organized by NUHW marked the first time Rep. Katie Porter, Barbara Lee and Adam Schiff, were on stage together since the recent passing of Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

The candidates outlined their positions on a variety of issues including Medicare for All, mental health parity, the housing crisis, and workers' rights. After the forum, and for the next two days, NUHW members voted electronically and chose to endorse Porter for U.S. Senate.

The endorsement commits NUHW to dedicate its energies and resources to back Porter in the March primary election that will determine the two candidates who will run in November for a six-year term to represent California in the U.S. Senate.



SUCCESSFUL RE-BID IN EVS



Back in 2018, the hospital tried to layoff a lot of EVS workers. We organized and minimized the cuts, but the workers who remained faced larger sections of the hospital to clean, creating an unsustainable heavy workload for all of them.

Our members had to hustle to finish their assignments, resulting in many injuries.

So we went back to the bargaining table and got the hospital to add EVS positions, allowing for more manageable workloads for everyone in the department.

There will be a 30-day, 60-day, and 90-day review periods to see whether the agreement has solved the problem and make necessary additional changes.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT HUMBERTO RETANA

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I became a steward to stay close to the action; and learn more about what a union is, how it works; to give myself greater incentives to stay involved in labor-management relations."

And this past year Humberto had plenty of chances to do that as he took part in negotiations for a new three-year contract that included a one-day strike in April.

"It was emboldening," he said of the strike that brought hundreds of workers into the streets, including nurses who struck in sympathy. "It opened my eyes. I felt a sense of encouragement to persuade my colleagues to advance."

Humberto believes the strike "softened up" management and helped deliver a good contract with strong raises and job projections.

"We did good," he said. "We largely got the things we wanted, but not everything."

Humberto is proudest of language in the contract that will make it harder for UCSF to layoff his colleagues in the East Bay if it seeks to further consolidate Children's Hospital Oakland with its children's hospital in San Francisco or seek a full merger of the hospitals.

The protection probably won't benefit him, but it should benefit hundreds of his colleagues who do office and clerical work at the hospital.

The unity his colleagues demonstrated at the bargaining table and on the strike line bodes well for the future, Humberto said. "We can all be actors in the workplace," he said, "not just cogs in the hospital machinery."



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