Yesterday, at our NUHW union hall in Emeryville, we held our first session of contract negotiations. About 40 of us attended, representing departments in the Service/Tech and Business/Office/Clerical bargaining units.

We gave a presentation to management’s team about our FIVE MAJOR PRIORITIES in these negotiations:

**Our top priority is JOB SECURITY.** We’re all worried about the increasing intermingling of our beloved Children’s Hospital Oakland with UCSF. We’re aware of the things that have already happened, we’re concerned about what may happen, and we are ready to do whatever it takes to achieve real job security in these negotiations.

**Fair pay increases:** The cost of living here in the Bay Area continues to rise and some of our job classifications are paid at less than competitive rates. We will be pushing for decent, fair wage increases.

**Retiree healthcare:** Many of us have worked here at Children’s for a long time, and are committed to working here until we retire. We deserve to retire with dignity. After careers of providing healthcare, we should not have to struggle just to make sure we can afford health insurance when we retire.

**PTO improvements:** We have to use PTO for so many things: when we’re sick for one, two, or three days; when our kids or family members are sick, when our clinics or departments are closed; when we’re flexed off. Most of these things are completely out of our control. Often, we don’t have enough PTO left to take vacations. This is unsustainable and unhealthy, and we deserve better.

**Improved job training and educational leave:** Many of us have ambitions to learn new things and advance in our careers, but the current Educational Leave benefits in our contracts are too restrictive and need improvement.

We will be giving our first set of bargaining proposals at our next meeting on February 25.