

Kaiser Contract Campaign Update February 4, 2020

Over the past decade, more than 8,000 healthcare workers have decertified SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West to join NUHW. SEIU members have flocked to NUHW because they've seen the power of our vision for what a union should be: member-led, bottom up, transparent, and ready to empower members to achieve their goals.

On Monday, for the first time, one of the units that left SEIU-UHW voted to return. Ten years ago, Kaiser optical workers here in Northern California voted by the slimmest of margins to join us. SEIU lost several attempts to bring them back over the years — until Monday, when ballots from a decertification election were counted.

SEIU has already sent out a press release trying to capitalize on this vote in hopes of decertifying more units. At this moment, it's important to remember that SEIU has never had any interest in fighting for mental health parity. We won a contract in 2015 that broke new ground by requiring Kaiser to hire more clinicians when it failed to meet return appointment ratios. And we have already secured additional improvements, including staffing increases, loan reimbursements and changes to schedule management as part of our next contract.

We've had to fight hard for these victories, and it's a fight that SEIU would never consider waging. Despite Monday's setback, we're still strong; we're still growing; and we still have a positive culture that empowers people to work with dignity, run their union, and stand up to their employers. And SEIU still has a corrupt culture, as evidenced by its [sexual harassment scandal](#).

As many of you know, [NUHW was formed](#) by SEIU-UHW leaders and members who refused to stay quiet when we learned that SEIU was making secret, backroom deals with major employers — deals that gave away the rights and benefits of caregivers in California in return for SEIU being able to try to organize workers in other states without employer interference.

The workers who founded NUHW pledged to do things the right way: No backroom deals, full transparency, open and honest culture. We've honored that pledge and won good contracts. But we can still do better. This is a moment for us to reflect on what we can do to further improve and strengthen our union, and we invite your suggestions and input. Email me with your ideas at SalRosselli@nuhw.org.

We've accomplished so much together as part of NUHW, and there is so much more we can achieve. Despite this setback, the distinction between NUHW and SEIU is as clear as it has always been: SEIU empowers its leaders to boss around members and cut deals with employers. NUHW empowers members to run their union, work with dignity, stand up to their employers and protect their patients.

In Unity,

Sal Rosselli, President
National Union of Healthcare Workers