



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital

NOVEMBER 2021



STEWARD SPOTLIGHT ANA ORTIZ

Whether you're on the floor caring for patients or working behind the scenes in the Purchasing Department, hospital work can be stressful. Ana Ortiz knows this well; she's done both.

And she's taken on a great deal of union work as well. The former certified nursing assistant took part in the unionization effort in 2012 and became a steward in the Northside and Southside skilled nursing facilities. And later, after becoming an expediter, she spearheaded the organizing effort for the Purchasing Department and became a steward when that unit joined NUHW earlier this year. She also helped negotiate for the engineers unit when they joined the union.

She did it all while fighting ovarian cancer, which she was

continued on back

COVERAGE IN CASE OF VACCINE REACTION



September 30 was the deadline for California healthcare workers to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19. Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital has agreed to place employees who recently got the shot as a condition of employment after filing for an exemption on paid administrative leave if they develop any symptom or reaction to the vaccine.

The decision is meant to encourage more employees to get the vaccine and protect them should they have to be away from their work.

THE CONTRACT MUST BE PROTECTED AND FOLLOWED!

Our contract clearly defines the procedures for disciplining workers and stipulates that they must be given every opportunity to appeal the decision and present their case before a final decision. When those processes and appeals are not followed, we must stand up to protect them.

That's why we've decided to take a recent dismissal case to arbitration.

Hazel Hawkins Memorial Hospital did not extend due process to a NUHW. Our contract clearly defines the procedures for disciplining workers and stipulates that they must be given every opportunity to appeal the decision and present their case before a final decision. When those processes and appeals are not followed, we must stand up to protect them.

If we let this stay as it is, it's going to give the hospital precedent to terminate other employees in the same manner and we can not allow that, no matter what the case may be. The contract must be defended and followed, and NUHW will fight to protect workers' rights.

WE'RE GETTING READY TO BARGAIN!

Our contract expires on June 30, 2022 and we are getting ready to start the bargaining process.

We can't do it alone. Everyone needs to participate to win the contract that we deserve!.

Be on the lookout for a bargaining survey that will go out soon and raise your voice for what you want in the new contract. Your opinions matter because they'll dictate the priorities we want to pursue when we come to the table with management.

We need to plan ahead for next year's battles. Talk to your shop steward or union representative to see how you can get involved and help make a difference for you and your co-workers.

This is our chance to make improvements for our patients, our careers, and our families!



NUHW GEAR
[NUHW.org/store](https://www.nuhw.org/store)



ONLINE CE
[NUHW.org/CE](https://www.nuhw.org/CE)



NUHW NEWS
[NUHW.org/pulse](https://www.nuhw.org/pulse)



STEWARD SPOTLIGHT ANA ORTIZ

continued from front

diagnosed with in 2005, when she was pregnant with her third child. With the help of radiation treatments the cancer went into remission, but it returned in 2016. After further radiation treatments and three surgeries, she overcame it once again and has been cancer-free for five years.

To find some respite in those challenging times she relied on her family and her faith, but also on a newly discovered passion: Aztec dancing.

Ana was part of Salinas-based Tlayolotli (Loyalty) Aztec dance group. She got into Aztec dance after seeing presentation at her youngest daughter's school, and for a time Ana and her three children were part of the group. She and her daughters danced, dressed in colorful and elaborate regalia, and her son played the drums and the *concha* (sea shell).



"It helped me a lot with stress," Ana said. "It gave me joy for life, gave me the strength to keep going."

Learning to gracefully execute each danza in tandem with her fellow dancers took effort and patience. "We earn our attire with every dance we learn, starting at the bottom with the zonaja, chachayotes (the nutshells around our ankles), the headdress feathers and our outfit," she explained.

The group performed at parades, Dia de los Muertos and Mexican Independence Day events, farm workers' rights marches and even weddings and quinceañeras.

"When you're having radiation and chemo, you're always very sick. Dancing took a little bit of the pain away," said Ana. "I always told my kids, 'Your mom is unbreakable.' It was a way to show them that even in bad times you still need to find a way to get strong and do the things that make you happy."

Dancing helped ground her, which also enabled her to better manage the pressures of her job and her role as a steward, to which she devotes considerable time and energy. "For the union to be strong, everyone has to get involved," Ana said.

This is especially important when it comes to bargaining, set to begin for workers at Hazel Hawkins as they prepare for a new contract in 2022.

"I tell my coworkers, 'If you don't like something in the contract, get on the bargaining committee and make those changes,'" said Ana. "You have to speak up for any changes that benefit you and patient care. You have to get involved in decisions and issues that matter to your department."

Ana finds her union work gratifying. She has advocated for her co-workers in several departments over the years, and has even helped some of them avoid unwarranted terminations.

"Their gratitude is rewarding," Ana said. "What I've learned is how to talk to management and negotiate. I don't like to argue with somebody, but I go to HR and I say to them, 'How are we going to solve this?'"