



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Providence St. Joseph and Redwood Memorial Hospitals

FEBRUARY 2022



**STEWART SPOTLIGHT:
KELLIE SHANER**

“I was always a team captain,” said Kellie Shaner of her days playing softball at Arcata High School and College of the Redwoods.

So it’s no surprise that when St. Joseph Hospital caregivers voted to join NUHW in 2014, the monitor tech was at the front, leading her co-workers as they organized and bargained their first contract.

“I was one of the go-to people from the start,” said Kellie, who remembers those days as a “huge fight,” with the employer trying to “sweet talk” and “promise all these things” to prevent the workers from joining the union.

“NUHW really prepped us,” she said. “Richard Draper (NUHW’s director of organizing) told us step by step what was going to happen. It was about leaning in and trusting the process.”

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CLINICAL LADDER APPLICATION PROCESS EXTENDED THROUGH FEBRUARY 10

In the initial rollout last October, more than 60 workers at St. Joseph and Redwood Memorial Hospitals applied and qualified for the clinical ladder and got a wage increase and more than half received the “advanced” 6 percent increase; the rest got the 3 percent increase.

Employees receive these wage increases based on a number of criteria, such as new certifications, volunteering in the community or doing extra activities at work beyond their normal duties.

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MEMBERS HELP ENFORCE THE CONTRACT

For a contract to be effective, it must be enforced, and members have been doing exactly that, solving problems on the job.

One of those issues had to do with PTO requests. Article 15 of the contract states workers are entitled to receive a response to their requests within 14 days, but some managers were not abiding by this time.

Similarly, we made it known to managers that schedules must be posted 14 days in advance so workers can coordinate and they’re not supposed to change, unless there is an emergency.

Our contract also helped us shut down three fact findings before they even started because disciplinary actions can’t go back more than 30 calendar days and the hospital wanted to bring incidents that happened over that period.

Read the contract and talk to your co-workers! Remember that you also have the right to have a union representative present at any meeting that may lead to disciplinary action and should be notified in writing in advance.

FEBRUARY 23

Join us at 6 p.m. on Zoom to learn more about key pieces of our contract.

CLINICAL LADDER PROGRAM

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The program application period will now come twice a year, with regular application deadlines between January 1-10 and July 1-10, but in this second installment, the deadline has been extended through February 10.

In addition, the program has expanded to more clinical job classification. If you have questions whether you are eligible or need an application, speak with your core leader.

Kellie Shaner, PCU steward at St. Joseph Hospital, said she's noticed the effect the wage bump has had on those who got it. "Everybody was really happy with what they got. It gave them a little pep in their step to get another raise for working hard like they do," she noted. "Even for us little guys, if you're making \$20 (per hour) and get an extra 6 percent, it does make a difference."

Volunteering at your kids' snack bar at school, picking up trash around your neighborhood, or order supplies for your department can help you get the points you need to qualify for the program.



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PTO GOOD DEED RESOLVED AFTER HR NIGHTMARE

"Winners never quit, and quitters never win," the famed coach Vince Lombardi said.

And this perseverance – along with help from a steward and a grievance– is what led to the happy resolution of a PTO issue at St. Joseph Hospital.

Last year a worker lost her husband. She spent several months dealing with her grief and her colleagues rallied around her.

They created a "meal train" and a GoFundMe page to help her, and in September, one of them also donated 12 hours of her PTO.

It was supposed to be a simple transaction. But instead of 12 hours of PTO, the hospital took out 25.5 hours of PTO.

When she noticed the mistake, the worker sent a ticket to payroll in October through the hospital's HR site and the person who took the case acknowledged the error and that they would fix it in November.

"But it never got fixed," said NUHW steward Kari Helgeson.

The problem lingered through the holidays without solution, until Kari recommended the worker file a grievance. A grievance meeting was scheduled with HR on January 12 and the next day the issue was finally fixed, and the worker was issued her 13.5 hours of PTO back. Members have also asked the hospital to do an audit on other PTO donations.

"We don't always have to file grievances, but we do have to at times," Kari said.



STEWARD SPOTLIGHT: KELLIE SHANER

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She became a steward soon after and continues in the role today. "Being a leader is just something that I am. I can't not do it," said the mother of six.

Just as when she rallied her teammates on the softball field, Kellie does the same at the hospital, advocating, defending, and voicing co-workers' concerns to management.

"One of the biggest things I've learned is the more vocal you are, the more seen you are, the less you are going to be messed with," Kellie said, noting that "I've gone toe-to-toe several times with managers over things."

But Kellie stresses that anyone can do it, and that's why she's always encouraging others to join as stewards.

"Some people think becoming a steward is like taking a blood oath and they're reluctant to get involved, but it's not like that," Kellie said. "Your job is to be our go-to person, someone employees can reach out to when they have problems. You're there to help enforce the contract," which ultimately protects all workers.

"Those who stay silent are the ones victimized the most by managers. If people don't speak up, we don't find out the contract is being violated." Kellie hopes her leadership paves the way for others in the future. "Trusting the process paved by leaders before me really gave me the strength to stay strong," she said.