



NUHW NEWS AND VIEWS

Providence St. Joseph and Redwood Memorial Hospitals

OCTOBER 2021



STEWARD SPOTLIGHT LEAH LESTER

Leah Lester strives to help people however she can.

It's something she does every day, whether at work as a Lead Respiratory Therapist at Redwood Memorial Hospital in Fortuna for the past 10 years, pitching in at her local food bank, or collaborating with the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

That's also the reason why she became a NUHW steward when the union bargained its first contract at the hospital in 2016. Among the victories in that contract was a Clinical Ladder program that compensates employees for going above and beyond their duties, helping out in the community, or furthering their education.

"We definitely would not have it without the union," Leah said.

continued on back



APPLY NOW: CLINICAL LADDER PROGRAM DEADLINE ENDS OCTOBER 31

Do you volunteer in the community? Do you train co-workers? Have you received a new certification or renewed one you had? Do you cross-train, or have you been floating between St. Joseph and Redwood Memorial Hospitals?

If you answered yes to any of those questions, you might be eligible to receive a nice bump in your pay by 3 percent or 6 percent. Note: This program is only available to some clinical positions — check with your steward, Clinical Ed, or your organizer to see if you're eligible.

continued on back

NUHW STEWARD COUNCIL SAYS NO TO COAL TRAIN

Members of the NUHW Steward Council from St. Joseph and Redwood Memorial Hospitals in Humboldt County voted to join a local coalition opposing a Wyoming-based corporation's intent to rebuild defunct rail lines along the Eel River to ship coal to Asian markets out of Humboldt Bay.

The Humboldt County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution against the idea, which creates worries about pollution and public health. Coal dust — which coal trains emanate in large amounts — contains PM2.5 fine particulate matter that contributes to asthma, prenatal complications, respiratory illness, and cardiac diseases.

"Protecting our air purity and waterways from this project is crucial," said Kellie Shaner, a steward in the Progressive Care Unit at St. Joseph Hospital. "Being a coastal community we rely on the cleanliness of our environment for the health of our ecosystem. We have pristine air, beautiful forests and rivers, and top notch oysters from our bay. We must do everything to protect them."

For more information, please contact NUHW Organizer Julia Minton at (707) 932-5554 or jminton@nuhw.org.

CLINICAL LADDER PROGRAM

continued from front

After years of fighting for this program, the Clinical Ladder committee is thrilled to celebrate this victory and hopes everyone eligible considers applying.

The deadline to apply for this initial application period of the Clinical Ladder Program ends October 31, so you still have time to apply and gather the supporting documents, demonstrating how you've been going above and beyond your duties, sharing your knowledge with colleagues, or furthering your education.

Workers don't need pre-approval from a manager to apply for this initial round of the program. Employees can receive either three points for contributions made outside of their regular work duties for a 3 percent raise, or five points for a 6 percent raise. In addition, everyone approved in this initial kick-off will receive a one-time payment equal to 3 or 6 percent of their salary dating back to May 1.

Those who miss the October 31 deadline will have another chance to apply in January or July, but they won't receive the retroactive pay.



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MEMBERS DEMAND A FAIR BONUS PROGRAM

Throughout the COVID pandemic, NUHW members have protested layoffs and short staffing in the Providence network while the company's cash reserves grew to \$15.3 billion in 2020.

To ease this crisis, Providence rolled out bonus programs across its hospital.

While they may have good intentions, these programs have been poorly crafted and inequitable, leaving many of our members out. Even worse, they were implemented without first negotiating with NUHW, as required by our contract and the law.

That's why stewards and NUHW members from Providence hospitals in Northern California decided to take action. In a coordinated effort, stewards at each hospital marched on management on September 17 to deliver a letter demanding Providence sit down with all of us to discuss solutions to the staffing crisis. NUHW has filed an Unfair Labor Practice charge with the National Labor Relations Board over the hospital refusal to bargain with us on this bonus program.

Meanwhile, our action is paying off! Members in Patient Access Services departments recently got word they would be included in the bonus program. We'll keep up the pressure and continue to fight for all of our departments to be properly staffed and compensated!



STEWARD SPOTLIGHT LEAH LESTER

continued from front

She pushed hard for the program and for the past five years has been involved in the Clinical Ladder Committee. High turnover and other issues prevented the program implementation until this year and she's now doing everything she can to help her co-workers apply.

It's a new program and the application can be daunting because it requires workers to provide proof of everything they claim in order to get the points needed for the wage hike. So Leah has been sharing a video of her application materials, compiled in a binder. She's also doing one-on-one coaching via phone and FaceTime.

"I feel like I'm the Clinical Ladder Champion," she said.

There are two levels of the Clinical Ladder: three points, which equates to a 3 percent raise, and five points for a 6 percent raise. For some workers, this "might be an extra week of pay at Christmas time," Leah said. "It could super help people during the holidays."

"Most people do more than the bare minimum," added Leah, and this is a way to reward those "who go above and beyond" for their departments. And by "having more happy, engaged workers" earning additional compensation, she said, it could also help with retention and recruitment.

That's why she's doing what she can to make sure everyone who is eligible submits an application.

"I'll help anybody who needs it," Leah said.