

The Voice of SEIU Local 250 Members working at Mercy Hospitals in the Sacramento area.

"The boss doesn't listen when one guy squawks, but s/he's gotta listen when

THE UNION TALKS

PROFESSIONAL COUNCIL UNITES HEALTHCARE WORKERS

November 2003
Volume 2, Issue 11

This is an MHS employee-produced monthly newsletter. It will report union activities and issues from facilities represented by SEIU Local 250.



Letters and suggestions are welcome-
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Ellen Dillinger, Editor

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An online copy of this newsletter as well as information and photographs of Sacramento union events can be seen at <http://dillingertoons.net>

The SEIU Local 250 Professional Council met in Oakland on October 11th, uniting Northern California healthcare technologists and technicians from Imaging Services, Laboratory, Nursing, Nutrition, Pharmacy and Respiratory Care.

The different ideas presented about our jobs and what we can do in the future were great! For Pharmacy Techs, ideas like having certified chemo and compounding techs with a pay differential were discussed. Staffing, workload and facility policies were other big subjects. This council is going to be a big benefit to all of us. It will keep us informed on what each of our facilities is doing to keep up with new changes. Are we following the legal guidelines that are in place? Each department in the hospital has a policy-setting committee. We have the right for an SEIU Local 250 Union member/employee to be on this committee, as well as on other committees that the hospitals have in place.

Attention Pharmacy Techs!

Of particular interest to the Pharmacy Techs is the idea that Pharm Techs should be recognized in the professional/technical field. SEIU does recognize us for the work we do. That

is why we are part of the Professional Council.

Also of interest to Pharm Techs is that in January

the number of Pharmacy Techs, and at the same time increase our value. This brings me to the discussion of Pharmacy Techs' wage



The Council met in October at the SEIU Local 250 Hall in Oakland.

2003, the Board of Pharmacy Legislation and Regulation Committee sponsored legislation that would place more stringent requirements on Pharmacy Technicians registering after 2004. These requirements would be an Associate's degree in Pharmacy Technology or completion at an accredited college, military or industrial training program, eligibility for the state Pharmacist exam, or national certification by the PTCB. This would limit

scale: Our contract will be expiring in 2004. We will be campaigning for a master contract for all SEIU members statewide employed by CHW, with some variations directed at each classification. As Pharmacy Techs, we need to come together and discuss wage scales. It's getting more expensive to live in the Sacramento area now, and to earn less than employees in the Bay area

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ASK JOSIE



1) In 2004, SEIU locals 49, 121, 250, 399, 535, 616, 707, 1199 NW, and 4988 will embark on the largest coordinated campaign in the history of the western United States. What is one of the six issues that we are united to support?

A) Allow management the right to discipline without just cause. B) Not to have a voice in patient care. C) Improved health/pension plan. D) To allow management the right to make changes without bargaining. E) None of the above.

Answer: c. Improved health/pension plan. To find out what the other five issues are: attend the general membership meeting being held in the months of Nov/Dec at your local facilities. Contact your shop steward or field representative for more information.

2) Are union dues used for political purposes? a) Yes b) No

Answer b) No, according to federal laws, union dues cannot be utilized for political purposes. Union dues pay for staff salaries, office operations, legal services, negotiation costs, and organizing non-union workers into SEIU Local 250.

3) If union dues are not used for political purposes, how can SEIU Local 250 support the political aspect of the union?

Answer: SEIU Local 250 has a separate fund called COPE (Committee On Political Education). The purpose of this fund is to build political power with elected officials, religious leaders and other community allies. We as union members can make politics work by defeating proposed cuts in health care funding, and improving access to care for Californians without health insurance, etc. By giving just \$3.00 per month and joining together with other Local 250 members, we can build a mighty force for working families.

4) Is a union member considered in good standing if they are delinquent in payment of union dues?

A) Yes b) No

Answer: b) No. A member who is delinquent in payment of her/his dues or other financial obligations will be suspended from membership and will not be entitled to any membership benefits (voting on a contract, attending general membership meetings, ect.) Is it fair for non-paying dues members to receive benefits (wage increases, family paid health insurance, duty to fair representation, etc.)? Remember, to be in good standing, fill out the membership form. Contact your shop steward or field representative.

MGH

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

DATE: December 3, 2003

TIME: 07:00-09:00 a.m. in Greenhouse A, 1100 a.m.-1330 in Conference Rm #2, 1500 -1830 in the Greenhouse

METHODIST

DATE: November 25, 2003.

TIME: 07:00 a.m. - 09:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m. - 13:30 p.m, 15:30 p.m.- 18:00 p.m.

LOCATION: ART THERAPY ROOM.

Free raffle for SEIU shirts, etc. Receive a copy of the contract. Learn about bargaining for the year "2004", and ask any questions you might have.

MSJMC HOLDS 1ST PATIENT CARE COMMITTEE MEETING

On September 23rd, 2003, MSJMC conducted its very first Patient Care Committee meeting. The committee consists of six employee representatives and six employer representatives.

Representing the employer at the first meeting were Donna Utley (Director of Human Resources MSJMC), Norm Harris (Director of Ancillary Services), and May Farrell (Manager of ICU Units and Telemetry). Representing the patients and the employees were

Sherry Macias (EKG, Chief Shop Steward MSJMC), Victoria Taylor (LVN, Chairperson, PCC), Susie Boedecker (UA, CSICU), Janiece Owens (Echo tech) and Suzette Walker, (Trauma-Med Surg.). We were honored to have Mary Henagan, Local 250 field rep for MSJMC, also in attendance.

Issues such as safe staffing ratios were brought to the table. This committee will be meeting on a monthly basis to discuss and plan for our future here at MSJMC.

-Suzette Walker, Shop Steward, MSJMC

WHAT'S NEW ON THE POLITICAL FRONT....

Guess we all know who won the election.... Seems like people wanted change in our State. Our Central Labor Council did very well in that we had more unions come out to walk precincts and phone bank than anywhere else in Northern California. On several weekends we had 100-225 members out walking the precincts. This means the labor movement is stronger than ever. What we must remember is the fight isn't over, and we must be stronger than ever. There most assuredly will be cuts in healthcare now and it's up to us, SEIU 250, to be at the forefront, lobbying and speaking to our electeds about keeping people from losing what we have fought so hard to get: paid family medical leave act, OT after 8 hours, no cuts in MediCal reimbursement for our hospital and doctors, and to make sure monies are not shifted which will endanger our home healthcare workers and/or shut down convalescent hospitals. We work hard every day to make sure our patients are well taken care

of. We cannot lose valuable reimbursement from the State!

We need more political action to get our patients covered for preventive healthcare as well. Governor Davis signed SB2 which will entitle more working people to healthcare. This is a step towards a universal plan to make everyone eligible for healthcare.

On the local front, the Local 250 Political Action Committee is interviewing candidates for the District 9 Assembly seat. Outgoing Assemblymember Darell Steinberg has served the 9th District well, but is termed out and we need to elect another candidate receptive to our views on healthcare and other issues important to working people.

As the Capitol of the largest economy in the nation, we should be at the forefront of supporting improvements for working people!



POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE:

We are also always looking for more members to become involved in our POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE. Come on out and see what we are all about! **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE** and **HAVE FUN TOO!**

Sharon Martinez (MGH)

JOINT TRAINING FOR MGH MANAGEMENT AND MGH SHOP STEWARDS

To improve Labor/Management relations at MHS, MGH and SEIU Local 250 are participating in an all-day training session on 11/11/03. It is mandatory for all MGH shop stewards to attend this session. Release time will be arranged.

TIME: 0730 a.m. - 1630 p.m. (Meals will be provided).

DATE: NOVEMBER 11, 2003

LOCATION: MAIN AUDITORIUM, MGH

A second follow-up training session will be held December 9th, 2003, at our Local 250 Union Hall.

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or at Kaiser when we all do the same work makes no sense. Let's stand up and get some fair wages!

Pharmacy Techs in the Sacto.

region: If you have questions, you can reach the Shop Steward in your department. If you don't have one, you should get one! Or, you can reach the Chief Shop Steward or Field Representative at your facility. If

you would like to talk with me, I can be reached by e-mail at

pharmcouncil@sbcglobal.net

or you can call my home phone (916) 645-9157. Let's get on the same page for all of our benefit. Hope to hear from you,

Gina Mastergeorge, CPhT
Shop Steward, MGH Pharmacy

NOTE: I attended the Council to represent CHW Pharmacies in the Sacramento region. Representation is not limited and anyone can get involved and attend the meetings which are held bi-monthly in various locations.

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WE NEED MORE SHOP STEWARDS!

CHIEF SHOP STEWARDS

MGH: Ellen Dillinger
Work: 453-4138
METH: Chris Kurpies
Work: 423-6176
Bruceville Terrace:
Daryl Bell
Work: 423-6025

MSJH: Sherri Macias
Home: 971-0654
Work: 537-5037
Woodland Clinic:
Annette Hendrix
Refer to union
bulletin board for
stewards' phone
numbers.)

SEIU Local 250 Field Representatives:

Josie Summers: 275-6342
(MGH, METH, BVERR)
Mary Henagan, 275-2659
(MSJH, FOL, WOOD)

STEWARD MEETINGS

Methodist/Bruceville meets
3rd Wed. 1530-1630 hours.
Location: Methodist
Hospital

Mercy General meets 2nd
Wed. at 1630 - 1730 hours.
Location: MGH Green-
house

Mercy San Juan meets 3rd
Thursday, 1800-1900 hours
Location: MSJH
Conference
Room.

Woodland Clinic and
Hospital meets 1st thurs-
day, 1730-1830 hours.
Location: DCR 3 and 4

Mercy Folsom meets 2nd
Tues. 1330 - 1530 hours
Location: MHF Conference
Room



Pam Williams, Dawn Smith, Leslie Elgin, and Mary Worley, new SEIU members from the Business Office of the Mercy Medical Center in Mount Shasta who attended the October Stewards' Council.

HOSPITAL DIVISION STEWARDS' COUNCIL

The Hospital Division Stewards' Council met in Oakland on October 25th to discuss a number of issues important to Union Healthcare workers.

A central topic was our 2004 contract. The current contract expires in May of 2004, but the bargaining committees will meet in January to start the bargaining process in February.

Healthcare coverage after retirement and an improved pension are big issues for the next contract.

Another important contract issue in these changing times is training: If jobs are going to change, we need to be trained to do them. Providing training is a ben-

efit for both employer and employee.

The Stewards' Council addressed several other issues that affect unions and the healthcare industry. In the Bay Area, the Alameda County Medical Center is in danger of closing. A ballot measure in Alameda county would increase taxes to keep this public health center open. It is important to everyone that public sector hospitals remain viable, as they generally serve a population that does not have health insurance. Where does this population go when there is no public sector hospital? To the Emergency Rooms of all the other hospitals! This is not an efficient use of healthcare assets.

The Stewards' Council also received an update on the United Food and Commercial Workers' strike in Southern California. The UFCW contract is up, and the Employers want take-backs on healthcare benefits in the next contract. As health insurance premiums rise, employers seek to shift the increase to employees. The grocery industry in Southern California finds itself competing with Wal-Mart's low end, and decreasing employee benefits is their idea of how to compete. Unless workers in the UFCW want to descend to Wal-Mart standards, they've got to win the fight over this issue.

— Ellen Dillinger, MGH

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