Unit Specialists & CNA’s Stand Together. Save Jobs. Improve Schedules.

Standing together, Unit Specialists and CNAs reached a settlement recently that improved staffing matrices for CNA’s and Unit Specialists without mandatory 12 hour shifts and layoffs. Throughout negotiations with management, the bargaining team remained strong and with support of our members, were ultimately victorious. The agreement included the hiring of additional CNA’s and Unit Specialist to protect staff and patient safety. Details of the agreement also included: Eight hour matrices for CNA’s and Unit Specialist; no Mandatory 12 Hour Shifts; lower patient to CNA’s ratios; formation of a CNA/US Staff Committee; and a Float Utilization Agreement.

Historic Agreement reached with Governor Kitzhaber and Health Systems

A Message From SEIU Local 49 President, Meg Niemi

Recently, our union reached an historic agreement about the future of healthcare in Oregon. With the leadership of Oregon Governor, John Kitzhaber and the impetus of our Act Now for a Healthy Oregon ballot measures, the CEOs of the largest health systems in Oregon agreed to a series of meetings about how front line caregivers can be part of the solutions we need to see in healthcare.

Act Now kicked off with 5 ballot measures around improving healthcare in Oregon, but is now shifting gears. With the Governor’s support, we hope we can now more effectively achieve the aims of the campaign by working directly with healthcare system leadership.

Hospital CEOs have agreed to meet with us, and Governor Kitzhaber, to fix healthcare in Oregon, with our goals being:

- Access to affordable care for workers and their families
- Transparency on cost and quality of care
- A voice for frontline healthcare workers in the future of healthcare

The agreement to meet is an exciting victory for our union: it proves our members’ voices are legitimate and powerful. But we are also preparing to file our ballot initiatives in 2016 if this process doesn’t yield the fixes our healthcare system desperately needs.

You’ll hear more in the coming weeks as the Act Now For A Healthy campaign continues to build steam.

But you can do something now:

Our union’s political strength is a direct result of member participation and contributions our members make to COPE. If you’re not already, become a COPE contributor by talking to your organizer.

And, make sure you help to hold elected leaders accountable by helping decide which candidates our union endorses this Fall.

Join us on Saturday, March 15th as our members hear elected leaders who are looking for our endorsement. And don’t miss this opportunity to have a voice in electing leaders that will stand up for the issues that are important to us.

Meg Niemi is President of SEIU Local 49 and was recently elected Executive Vice Chair for Kaiser’s Coalition of Unions. The Coalition represents roughly 100,000 Kaiser members.
Each year, thousands of Oregonians avoid or limit their care due to high healthcare costs and ever increasing numbers of people are taking on medical debt.

With healthcare workers leading the way, our union’s Act Now for a Healthy Oregon campaign is working to achieve the goal of keeping our communities healthy by improving quality, enhancing access, and increasing affordability of care. Our efforts include: making sure frontline healthcare workers have a voice in the future of healthcare, making policies that matter to working families and improving transparency issues around quality and cost.

We know that healthcare is going through dramatic changes unlike we’ve ever seen before. Caregivers and our community must have a voice in helping shape these changes for the better.

As caregivers in our community, your voice is invaluable in helping to inform and drive the changes we know need to occur in the healthcare system.

Visit our campaign page online and click on “What’s Your Story”. Acthealthyoregon.org

Caregiver Spotlight: Vici Leach, Kaiser Westside

One doesn’t have to spend too much time at the recently opened Kaiser Westside Hospital before hearing the name “Vici Leach”. Known across the hospital, Vici is a respected leader and an active steward for our union. Recently, we sat down with Vici to catch up and get the latest news from the Westside hospital.

Kaiser Westside opened union. Since opening, how have things been there for hospital workers?

Everyone was so excited to have our hospital open union and there is still so much excitement here. I’m incredibly proud of the care we provide here and I know caregivers from across Kaiser are interested in being here because of what we’ve built together.

Any challenges or bumps along the road?

We’re definitely out of the “honeymoon” phase and face common issues around staffing, resources, etc. Ultimately though, it comes down to how we handle our frustrations at work. We can work positively to change them or we can let them go and feel hopeless. We should all congratulate ourselves and our co-workers, in spite of our department and staffing struggles - we are still providing outstanding care to our members. This is why we are here and we are making a difference.

The Westside recently had UBT elections. How did that go?

It was great to see so many people interested to work on making their department the best it can be. We’ll also be doing a special on-site steward training for folks. The steward training is on March 22nd, starting at 9am. People should email me for details and to confirm a spot Victoria.L.Leach@kp.org

All Steward Elections!

It’s Time Again for SEIU’s All Steward Re-Election’s Blitz. Make Sure You Come out to Vote!

We know that stewards are the backbone of our union – they enforce the union contract and protect our rights to make sure our voices are loud and strong.

To maintain the steward role, our stewards are re-elected every two years. This year steward re-elections are scheduled throughout the month of March at various region-wide locations.

Flyers are being distributed out to worksites. Please contact your local building’s Chief Stewards or any of the Stewards at your worksite for details on the specific voting dates, times and location sites.

Political Endorsement Interviews - March 15

Upcoming political endorsement interviews are on Saturday, March 15 from 12pm to 3pm at SEIU Local 503 (6401 SE Foster Rd).

Let’s make sure political candidates are held accountable and will stand up for the issues that matter to working families.

This year’s endorsement interviews will include Oregon Senator Jeff Merkley, as well as interviews for the Oregon Governor’s race.

SEIU LOCAL 49 www.seiu49.org 503-236-4949 x220