



The Flame

Lighting the Way for Quality Health Care

February 2015

UNAP Outfront on Ebola Preparedness in Rhode Island



Linda McDonald, RN
President

Ebola and The Power of The Union Voice

Last October when two Nurses in Dallas, Texas contracted the Ebola virus, the UNAP along with other Unions across this country sounded an alarm. The UNAP accomplished this in Rhode Island because as organized workers we have a powerful tool.... *"A collective voice: This is the power of a Union."*

The UNAP sent out a member survey, held a press conference and requested a meeting with the Governor, Department of Health and the administrators of our hospitals to address our concerns. The Presidents of each UNAP local activated a response team to communicate our demands. We immediately met with Governor Chafee and Director of Health, Dr. Fine. Our message *"We did not feel adequately prepared to ensure patient and caregiver safety"*. Our message was clear and we were heard. On November 12th we addressed our concerns to the House HEW committee. President McDonald again voiced: *"Our members serve on the front*

Continued

lines of healthcare. Everyday we do more with less resources, while still providing quality effective care for our patients. In return we expect the most effective equipment and standards to keep us safe."

Due to our efforts, policies changed, proper protective equipment was ordered and improved training took place. Issues of proper staffing and compensation were addressed. It was a collective and positive response. This is what a Union is about, this is the power of a Union.



Linda McDonald, President of United Nurses & Allied Professionals, releases the results of a survey on concerns over Rhode Island's Ebola preparedness.



Dr. Fine presents Rhode Island's Ebola action plan to UNAP members at the December Joint Board meeting.

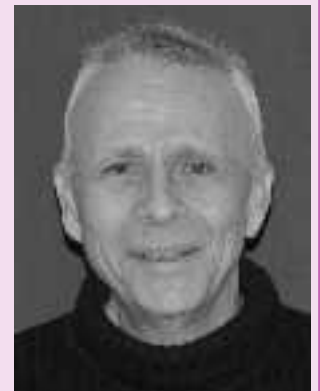
UNAP Welcomes Two New Staff

Ken DeLorenzo and John DiNicola

Ken DeLorenzo, Field Representative has worked at the UNAP since October 2014. He has many years of experience advocating for employees as a lawyer and Field Representative. At the UNAP Ken works with the RI Hospital local and the RNs who work at state facilities represented by the UNAP.



John Di Nicola, Field Representative joined the UNAP staff in December 2014. His experience includes working as a field representative and union organizer in health care. John works with Local 5067 at Landmark Medical Center and Rehab Hospital (Prime) and Local 5110 at Fatima Hospital.





Westerly Hospital Locals Oppose Non-Union Intrusion in Service Area

The Westerly Hospital Locals were surprised to learn that the town recently approved construction of a competing medical facility on Route 1 in Westerly. The new building will be run by non-union South County Hospital and may cause the Westerly Hospital a loss of patients, revenue and jobs. The land for this building was sold by the family of two former Westerly Hospital Board members including one time Chairman of the Board in whose honor the Community Care Center is named (Joseph Kirby). The development work for the building is being done by the Cherenzia company for whom a current Westerly Hospital Board member is the General Counsel, (Thomas Liguori). Evidently, for these former and current Board members commitment to The Westerly Hospital is trumped by financial gain. The Locals are in the process of identifying points to oppose the building including further town approvals and Department of Health regulatory approvals.

State Nurses

During a recent grievance arbitration over job duties for a Veterans Home nurse, the Union was able to secure a favorable settlement in which the Grievants' job duties were clearly

delineated allowing her to perform her job in a far more effective manner and not have to perform duties outside of her job description.

Fatima Nurses to Non-Union Colleagues: We're Stronger and Better Together

When the Employer imposed drastic changes to the non-union employee's medical insurance, the Local Union Executive Board immediately reached out to all non-union colleagues and invited them to join their union even though Union members were minimally effected by the changes **(the Union contract protected them from the most drastic changes and the Union is arbitrating less drastic changes)**. Rather than taking the selfish "It doesn't effect me" position, the Union launched a full blown organizing drive to organize the rest of the hospital. The nurses know that they are stronger and better when everyone at the hospital is organized. The Westerly Hospital, Landmark Medical Center and Rhode Island Hospital are just about completely organized. Representation elections are expected later this spring.

Arbitrator Reinstates Employee Terminated by the Brattleboro Retreat

An arbitrator ruled in favor of a Brattleboro Retreat employee who was terminated for, in part, allegedly fighting with a co-worker. The arbitrator based his decision on several factors. While the other employee clearly instigated the incident, the Employer issued no discipline to the other employee. The manager announced to a charge nurse that he was going to fire the employee before he got the employee's side of the story. The Employer let an inordinate amount of time pass from the date of the

incident until the determination to terminate the Employee.

VNS Local Approves New Contracts With New Employer

The three bargaining units at the Visiting Nurse Home Care completed an Agreement with their new Employer, Visiting Nurse Home Care. The new Employer is the result of the merger of the old Agency and Home and Hospice of Rhode Island. The contract provides for between 5%-15% decrease in the premium share for a family plan medical insurance, 2% pay raises, more time off for clerical and home care aides, established pay ranges for the clerical unit, a much improved on call position in the nurse unit to alleviate pressure on regular staff to take call and improvements in all aspects of work schedules.

Preparations for Negotiations begin at RI Hospital

With the current contract expiring in June, the recently elected leadership of Local 5098 has started the necessary preparations for the upcoming contract negotiations. Led by President Helene Macedo, the Executive Board has been working hard to mobilize members for the upcoming fight. With results of the in-depth membership survey just in, the Executive Board will share the results with the membership and solicit feedback at the March 2015 membership meeting. Based upon the survey results and the membership meeting, the Executive Board will formulate its proposals and strategy for the bargaining table. The local will also be holding extensive training for new and existing unit representatives. The training sessions are designed to educate representatives about the contract and the collective bargaining process, as well as teaching effective methods for communicating with

and mobilizing members. Members interested in becoming a unit representative or becoming more active in the union should contact the UNAP office.

UNAP, Local 5051, Bargains New 3-Year Deal at HCRS in Vermont

In October of 2014, UNAP, Local 5051, sat down to negotiate a new contract under the able leadership of Local President Joyce Dion and a dedicated Local Executive Council. The Union reached a tentative agreement on a new 3-year contract on January 13, 2015, which was swiftly and unanimously ratified on January 22, 2015.

The Union successfully negotiated new contract language with regard to employee health and safety, employee training and professional development, job descriptions, and paid time off. In addition, the Union negotiated bonuses and 2% pay increases as well as new health care plans that maintain the same levels of coverage under the old contract and contain out-of-pocket costs to employees and their families.

UNAP, Local 5050, Bargains New 1 Year Deal at Youth Services in Vermont

In September of 2014, UNAP, Local 5050 began their negotiations for a new contract. They reached a tentative agreement on January 14, 2015 and ratified the agreement the following week on January 22, 2015. Along the way, the Local went on offense by filing an Unfair Labor Practice Charge against management with the NLRB.

Under the 1 year deal, employees will get a 2½% pay increase and will purchase their health insurance coverage off of the Vermont exchange, with the help of the employer subsidies. The Local also managed to maintain

the status quo with regard to their dental and vision coverage.

UNAP Organizes Environmental Services at Kent Hospital

The Environmental Services Department at Kent Hospital voted on October 16th to join the UNAP. The vote was a solid 53 to 36 for the union. The employees withstood an anti-union campaign, complete with captive audience meetings and one on ones with the eligible voters. The employees stayed united throughout several weeks of employer misbehavior. The new members have elected a bargaining team and have started to develop proposals for contract negotiations. Congratulations to Environmental Services employees!



Donna Lamont and Sandy Robinson (above) JoAnn Budnick and Deborah Correia (below) members of the bargaining team discuss contract language.



In other UNAP Local news at Kent Hospital, registered nurses, CNAs, ER Techs, and Surgical Services members prepare themselves for upcoming contract negotiations with Care New England.

Rita Brennan, RN, President, UNAP Local 5082 @ Memorial Hospital of Rhode Island



I was less than one year into my nursing career at Pawtucket Memorial Hospital when I was approached by 3 senior nurses to ask if I would be interested in organizing a union.

Yes! I exclaimed. I

came from a union family. My late father was past President of the International Association of Machinists Union, Local 1680, and he was exactly how you would picture a big union guy to be!

Initially our organizing consisted of fewer than 10 registered nurses from the Maternity and Intensive Care units. We were gung ho! We were driven, committed, stealth, strong and failure was not an option. We wanted a voice in our workplace. We wanted an end to disparate treatment of employees regarding discipline, job opportunities, assignments, schedules, vacations, sick time, orientation, wages, and a plethora of other basic worker rights that we all deserved. We wanted job protection and a grievance procedure to address infractions when they occurred. We wanted to assure that our benefits and employment rights would be protected. We knew we needed a union to make this happen and we wanted to win the right to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement with our employer. And we did it!

That was 30 years ago, and today as President of Local 5082 at Memorial Hospital, I am reminded daily how much we need and depend upon our union and our union contract. We remain united - and UNION STRONG. And, together with our sisters and brothers in union solidarity at Kent County and Rhode Island Hospital, we foresee a very interesting summer on the way with all 3 contracts set to expire at the same time.

Now that's SOLIDARITY!



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Who is the UNAP?

The UNAP represents over 6,300 nurses, therapists, technologists, support staff and others who work at:

- Brattleboro Retreat (VT)
- Copley Hospital (VT)
- Fatima Hospital
- Health Care & Rehabilitation Services of SE Vermont
- Kent Hospital
- Landmark Medical Center
- Memorial Hospital
- Putnam School District (CT)
- Rehabilitation Hospital of RI
- Rhode Island Hospital
- RI Community Living & Support Services
- RI Dept of Human Services
- RI Veterans' Home
- URI, CCRI, RIC Health Services
- Seven Hills RI
- Visiting Nurse Home Care
- Westerly Hospital
- Youth Services (VT)
- Zambarano Hospital

2015 UNAP College Scholarship Applications Accepted



Pictured are the 2014 scholarship winners.

Applications are currently being accepted by the Joan Medberry Memorial UNAP Scholarship Fund. Applicants must be a UNAP member or a child (under 25 years of age) of a UNAP member, and must be enrolled at least half-time in a degree-granting institution. For an application and more information call the office at (401) 831-3647, or go to: unap.org/scholarships.

2014 Alton Jones Leadership Retreat



The 2014 UNAP Leadership Retreat held at the beautiful Alton Jones Conference Center was standing room only. Pictured below are Vermont participants Local President Sandy Grace from Copley Hospital, Joyce Dion, Local President of UNAP at HCRS and Susanae Glovacki Vice President of HCRS UNAP Local.

Save the Date

CEU Program
Featuring Edie Brous, RN/Esquire
“Safeguarding Your Livelihood: Common Misconceptions About Licensure”
Thursday, May 21, 2015, 6 - 8pm
Crowne Plaza Hotel

Workers' Rights Protected

On Election Day Rhode Island voted NO to a Constitutional Convention. The UNAP actively worked to defeat this.

The UNAP was concerned a convention would be used by outside special interests to attack workers rights and weaken collective bargaining rights.

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