



# The Flame

Lighting the Way for Quality Health Care

December 2018 - January 2019

## No Surrender - On Patient Safety



### No Solution, No Surrender on Question 1

Despite the defeat of the MNA ballot campaign for Safe Patient Limits, the MNA's message is they are "Still United, Still Committed to Securing Safe Patient Limits".

More than three quarters of a million people in Massachusetts voted yes on 1. While the ballot was defeated, MNA leaders stated "those numbers prove we succeeded in putting the issue of safe patient limits front and center for the citizens of the commonwealth"

The MNA and the UNAP plan on continuing the effort to bring about a resolution that patients and nurses deserve. The opposition, led by the Massachusetts Hospital Association and hospital industry spent nearly \$ 28 million (to date) to confuse and defeat the ballot.

Julie Pinkham, Executive Director of the MNA stated, " They could scare people into believing that it was the wrong solution, but they had to admit the problem existed. It is from that vantage point that we are building from and moving forward."

Let's not be deterred from fighting for safe patient limits. Let's hold management and administrator's accountable. Demand your voice be heard. You are the experts.

### Workplace Violence Survey

UNAP has sent a workplace violence survey out to all its members. Over 600 responses have been returned so far.

With participation from the membership we will work on a policy that all hospitals could adopt

regarding preventing workplace violence and how to support the healthcare worker after an assault of any kind. Please call the UNAP office if you did not receive a survey and want to fill it out.

### Some actions to take if assaulted

- Get Help
- Report the assault to your supervisor and the union

### Officers and Representatives and Staff of the UNAP Locals Depicted Below Participate in the 2018 Leadership Retreat at Alton Jones

### 2018 Leadership Retreat

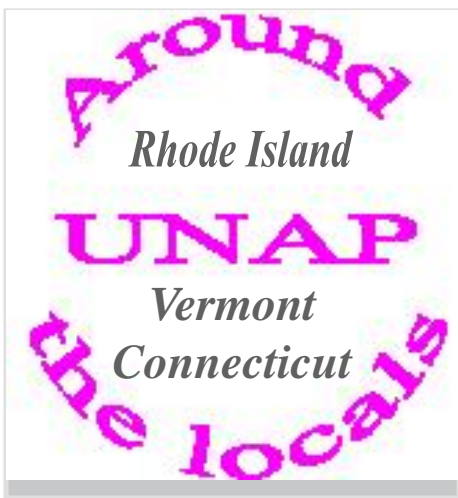
The 2018 Leadership retreat was held in September at the beautiful Alton Jones Conference Center.

Bill Fletcher Jr., a well-known Union Activist, spoke to the group of 60 UNAP leaders why Unions are so important, and why a thriving union movement is so essential.

State Treasurer, Seth Magaziner, addressed the group and in the afternoon UNAP staff spoke on:

- Internal re-organizing
- Fighting the boss
- The implications of the Janus decision
- How to use state statutes in bargaining
- RI Sick and Time Off Law





#### **Brattleboro Retreat Local 5086**

Members of the Brattleboro Retreat approved perhaps their best contract ever this October after a long hard fight preceded by regular informational picketing. Positive changes included substantial wage increases for mental health workers and registered nurses on top of a general wage increase of 3%. There were improvements to the pension and medical benefit. Long simmering work place issues and grievances were settled favorably to the union including protections for set recurring work schedules, loosening of attendance policies, more equitable offering of extra hours giving part time staff more advance notice of opportunities, protections from outsourcing and improved staffing.

#### **VNS Hope Health Local 5201**

The clericals, home care aides and nurses at VNS Hope Health have continued a long history of one year contracts reaching agreement on one contract that went into effect in March of 2018 while preparing for the next negotiations to begin shortly. The last round of negotiations were particularly difficult as the union had to fight off major workplace rights that were under attack. The Employer came up empty trying to diminish on-call provisions, meal and break times, work schedules and days off, leave of absence rights and number of paid holidays. The union secured 3% wage increases for the year. All three bargaining units have bargained together for years now. Their strength and support for one another carried them through this past round and will assure success in the next round.

#### **Westerly Hospital Local 5075 & 5104**

The future of the Westerly Hospital continues to brighten with its affiliation of Yale New Haven Health Systems. It was recently learned that services will be expanded including the development and opening of a new geriatric psych unit, a cancer treatment program and possibly new construction for surgical services.

#### **Fatima RN's Local 5110 St. Joseph Health Services of RI Retirement Case Goes Forward**

The lawsuits over the collapse of the St. Joseph Retirement Plan continue to work their way through Providence Superior Court and the United States District Court for the District of RI. To date, there have been no cuts to benefits and applications for benefits continue to be processed.

In recent months, a state court judge approved two (2) settlement's that stand to bring up to \$16 million into the struggling pension fund.

The Local will begin the registered nurses 2019 contract preparation soon after the holidays which will include a survey of the membership.

#### **Copley Hospital Local 5109**

Copley Hospital conducted steward's training in early October and the training was well attended. Steward and new Union Leadership training, the importance of contract language and the Vermont Sick Leave Law was covered. The Local is preparing to bargain a new Clinical Ladders program this coming January.

#### **Kent Hospital Local 5008**

When Brown University and Prospect Medical Holdings (owners of Roger Williams and Fatima) joined together to carve up Care New England among themselves and derail the Partners/Care New England talks, the Union mounted a public relations campaign to expose Prospect's terrible record of labor relations and patient care inside the Brown University community including the Alpert Medical School. The union was pleased to learn that Brown quickly dumped Prospect Medical Holdings and their hare brained scheme collapsed. The Partners/Care New England combination is moving closer to fruition. It is expected that the formal application to complete the arrangement will be submitted to the state shortly.

In other news, the Union will have a change in leadership later this month. Rose Desnoyers, the first and only local union president is stepping down after 10 years of service.

#### **Support Staff Negotiate for Second Contract Fatima Local 5110**

The support staff at Fatima Hospital is at it again – they're at the bargaining table negotiating their second contract.

Their bargaining agenda includes proposals to stop subcontracting and the cancellation of shifts during times of low census. They've also proposed to establish a wage scale and improve medical insurance

benefits. Leafleting and picketing are on the horizon, and the Local has already filed two unfair labor practice charges against Prospect CharterCARE for failing to provide much needed information for bargaining.

On the contract administration front, the Local has won two suspension cases in recent months, as well as an arbitration restoring dental and vision benefits for employee spouses and doing away with a \$50/month penalty for not participating in a wellness program.

#### **The Strike of 2018 Local 5098**

It was a tumultuous summer indeed. The Local leadership commenced negotiations for a successor CBA in April of this year, which extended through the summer, resulting in the largest healthcare strike in Rhode Island history. The Union struck Lifespan on July 23 for three days; Lifespan locked the Union out for an additional day. The Strike of 2018 was incredibly successful as the leadership and rank and file members spoke loudly and often about the working conditions at the hospital; specifically the lack of staffing and vital supplies. As a result, the membership ratified a new 5 year CBA in August which included better pay increases for all employees, protecting the health insurance and pension (as well as offering employees a choice between two pension plans) and improved vacation allocation language. More importantly, the Union and the Hospital agreed to address the staffing and supply issues with a ground-breaking working group comprised of rank and file members and working managers, led by an independent facilitator. That working group began meeting in December. Finally, the RI Department of Labor declared the entire work stoppage a "lock-out" allowing members to collect unemployment benefits for the entire 4 days of the walk-out.

#### **Landmark/RHRI Local 5067**

By a 6-1 margin ratified a new three-year collective bargaining agreement with the following improvements:

- Shift differential increases
- Charge Pay increase
- On call increase
- Weekend Premium Increases
- Expansive Preceptor pay.
- New Wage Scale with step movement every year of the contract
- Three Year Contract
- Zero increase on health Insurance premiums (same as the current contract)
- New MERP program for employees who do not choose to access the Hospital's insurance.

### Landmark/RHRI Local 5067 Update Continued

It provides up to \$7,900 individual and \$15,800 to offset Copays, deductibles and coinsurance for a qualified spousal insurance plan.

### Negotiations at Seven Hills RI Local 5068

UNAP members at Seven Hills Rhode Island started contract negotiations at Seven Hills Rhode Island last year. The employer so far has insulted the members by offering a paltry 13 cent raise. Given the salaries of top administrators they should do better than that. The membership has voted to authorize a ten day notice to strike and the union has called the federal mediator to ask for intervention.

The members also authorized funds to start a community campaign to raise awareness amongst the public, families and legislators of the poverty wages paid to employees who care for our most vulnerable citizens.

### John Slaven Award

Congratulations to President Linda McDonald RN on receiving the 2018 John Slaven Award, for work done to advance social and economic justice. She is joined by Michael Connolly, the AFSCME retiree chapter president.



### Labor History Award

Cindy Lussier, President of the State Local 5019 received one of the Labor History Awards recognizing her years of Union activism.



## UNAP Highlight

Sherry Ann Johnson RN, Unit 6A/6B  
at RI Hospital Local 5098



Sherry Ann Johnson RN  
Rhode Island Hospital

Sherry-Ann has always worked in the medical field and pursuing a nursing degree was always in the back of her mind. However, it was when she became an advocate for a sick family member that became the catalyst for her to pursue a nursing career.

Sherry-Ann's union involvement began upon her employment at RI Hospital in 2012. Her passion for safe patient care and protecting workers' rights quickly put her on the union path. She was asked by her coworkers to represent them as their Unit Representative because of her keen interest in understanding the contract and her attention to detail. Because of her active involvement, the Union reached out to Sherry and voted her in as Vice President to represent members in the Main Building.

Congratulations to Sherry-Ann in her new role as Liaison for the RI Hospital local. Liaison positions involve advocating for members on the more complex and intricate issues that involve such a large local. Sherry-Ann, thanks for all you do.

## Welcome to Greg Kotecki UNAP Field Representative

My name is Greg Kotecki and I'm the newly hired Field Representative for UNAP. I have over twenty-four years of experience representing Unionized workers in a wide variety of professions including public workers, teachers, police, and all types of Healthcare workers. I have been assigned to the Fatima RN's, Landmark/RHRI Hospitals and Copley Hospital in Stow Vermont. I look forward to working with everyone in UNAP! I'm very excited being part of the UNAP family.



## 2018 UNAP Scholarship Winners

Lynne Simpson is a registered nurse who works at Rhode Island Hospital.



Scott Barber on the left is the son of a secretary at Kent Hospital. Sherry Thorton is a registered nurse who works at Rhode Island Hospital.





## United Nurses & Allied Professionals

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# Scholarship Opportunities

# Save The Date

## Scholarship Opportunities

for UNAP members and/or their children.

Joan Medberry Scholarship: Available to

ALL UNAP Locals. Three \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded.

Susan McGuire-Pizzo Scholarship: For RI Hospital only and pursuing a degree, license or certification specifically in health care.

Two \$1,000 scholarships will be awarded.

Applications and details at [unap.org/resources/scholarships](http://unap.org/resources/scholarships) or call UNAP at 401/831-3647



**Deadline March 29, 2019 4pm**

CEU Program: Re-Thinking Addiction

Speaker: Sharon Morello RN, BSN

Date: Thursday, May 9, 2019

Time: 6:00pm to 8:00 PM

Place: Crowne Plaza

Approved for 2 CEUs