

November–December  
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*President*

Barbara Blake, RN  
*Secretary/Treasurer*



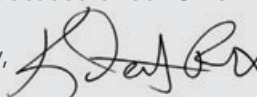
## *President's Message*

Democracy in Action—we've seen a lot of it lately. At our 40th anniversary convention in San Diego, I saw democracy at its best. Our delegates came together to vote on amendments to our constitution, and the quality of debate—passionate, but considerate and respectful, made me proud. With three open seats on our Board of Directors our union put up six strong candidates, any one of whom would have been an excellent choice. That made me optimistic for the vitality of our union's future. And I was pleased to see our unanimity in electing Barbara Blake, RN, as State Secretary/Treasurer.

The November election showed us the worst and best of democracy. We saw deception at the local, state and national levels. Despite last minute, deceptive attacks we helped carry our own Political Director Jimmy Gomez to a seat in the California State Assembly. With Prop 32, we saw a small group of rich donors, backed by a flood of out-of-state dollars, try to trick voters into drowning out the voices of workers from our political dialogue. But union members joined with voters who understand and value our contribution to defeat that attack—this time. In the Presidential election we saw more deceptive politics, but the outcome was good for health care professionals and union members. Obamacare will

expand health care, save lives and grow our professions. In addition, many may not be aware of how the President affects us as union members by his appointments to the National Labor Relations Board. Under Obama's NLRB, just here at UNAC/UHCP we've seen numerous decisions favorable to our members that could easily have gone the other way under a Republican administration.

What I saw during our convention and in this election reminds me of what our union values are: they are American values. Democracy. Unity and community. The dignity of hard work. We operate by our constitution. We elect our representatives. We debate and vote our way forward. And we help to democratize our workplaces. Our union ensures that we are part of the crucial decisions made for our patients and our professions, at the hospital and governmental levels. As UNAC/UHCP comes to the end of a very strong year of victories for our members and organizing new members, we can all be proud that our democracy and our health care system function better because of our Union.

In unity, 



*United Nurses Associations of California*  
*Union of Health Care Professionals*

# UNAC/UHCP Celebrates the Big 4-0 Hard at Work

UNAC/UHCP President Ken Deitz, RN, opened the 40th Anniversary Convention by talking about how far we've come and how much we've grown—adding almost 2,000 members in just the last year—before laying out the hard work yet to be done, with dozens of hospitals in Southern California still unorganized, new contracts to be won, and the need to strengthen safe staffing enforcement. "Are you with me?" he called out, rousing the delegates with the message that none of us can do it alone. We are all in this together.

Delegates then got down to business. They voted on 13 amendments to the UNAC/UHCP constitution, as well as a resolution, and got in six CEUs in the process. The theme of the convention, Power+Unity=Victory, could not have been more appropriate as delegates debated serious issues that will shape the course of the union for years to come, and then put it all behind them as they picked up "No on 32" lawn signs and committed to bringing back all they learned to their affiliates.

Barbara Blake, RN, was elected to her first full term as Secretary/Treasurer, after longtime UNAC/UHCP Treasurer Delima MacDonald retired on

March 31, 2012. Delima attended convention as a guest of the Retiree Council chapter of AFSCME.

Barbara has had a long and distinguished career both in nursing and as a union and political activist. She became an RN in 1977, and was first elected an officer in UNAC/UHCP in 1982, as Vice President of the Kaiser Sunset affiliate. In 1986, she began working for the union as a Staff Representative. She was elected the UNAC/UHCP State Secretary in 1996.

As leader of UNAC/UHCP's legislative team, Barbara has worked on numerous bills to protect patients' rights, establish safe staffing regulations in California hospitals, achieve health care reform, and improve working conditions for health care workers.

"The patients, nurses and health care professionals of California and UNAC/UHCP have no greater champion than Barbara Blake," said Ken Deitz, RN, President of UNAC/UHCP. "She'll continue to lead our fight in Sacramento."

Pam Brodersen, NP of Kaiser Downey, and Cindy Klein, RN, of Kaiser Riverside were re-elected to

something to get excited about at the UNAC/UHCP Retiree Founding Convention.

Willie Pelote, AFSCME California Legislative and Political Director kicked things off by laying out the legislative landscape. Pelote is known throughout the state and beyond as a dynamic speaker, and he did not disappoint. Assemblywoman Norma Torres also gave a sobering speech



their seats on the Board of Directors. Belinda Redding, RN, from Kaiser Woodland Hills was elected to her first term on the Board to begin January 1, 2013.

During a brief awards ceremony Sharp RNs honored Elizabeth Huch with an incredibly touching award for her service. Liz worked in the Rehabilitation Unit at Sharp Grossmont Hospital for many years, where she was a tireless patient and nurse advocate, much admired by her colleagues. In thanking her colleagues for the honor, Liz said her coworkers were like her family.

## Only the Beginning: The UNAC/UHCP Retiree Council Founding Convention

On October 2, over nearly 100 retired and soon-to-be retired UNAC/UHCP members filled the classroom in our state office to learn more about the next chapter in their union activism. Some came to hear about Medicare and Social Security, namely what they could do to preserve it for future generations. Others came to find out how they could get more involved with the union, or to get active in politics. Luckily everyone found

about the reality of where this country is, legislatively. RN Donna Knoch, a future retiree from Kaiser Fontana, said she liked Norma's speech in particular because it highlighted new avenues for making change.

Donna's former coworker, Virginia Zickuhr, RN, said she's more concerned about the future now than when she was working, because she was too busy then. While the political topics didn't really speak to her, she was interested in hearing more about opportunities to get involved in communicating with nurses at

# California's Gain is UNAC/UHCP's Loss: Gomez Headed to Sacramento

For the past three years from a desk inside the UNAC/UHCP state offices, UNAC/UHCP Political Director Jimmy Gomez has carried out his ambitious vision for the way the world should be. Jimmy built up the stature of the union so quickly that within three years, we were nearly successful in moving a bill through the state legislature and to the Governor's desk—under very strong opposition. And really, that's only the tip of the iceberg in terms of his accomplishments at UNAC/UHCP. Jimmy changed the very way this union thinks.

Jimmy taught us that others will stand with us when it comes to fighting for quality patient care. During the fight over the St. Francis contract renewal in 2011, for example, Jimmy and his team helped the nurses who faced the possibility of a strike by allowing community supporters such as Lynwood Mayor Aide Castro to join in their struggle. We all know that our work is about the patients. Jimmy helped the world to see that. In doing so, he

helped this union achieve contracts that recognized the RNs' right to advocate for patient safety. And that is the legacy of Jimmy Gomez at UNAC/UHCP: he taught our members how to get involved politically so that they could help their patients more effectively. Whether it was lobbying for a bill to enforce staffing ratios, or speaking to their local mayor about a contract negotiation that would impact our members' ability to treat patients, Jimmy helped us all connect the dots.

In May, RN Tina Ang, from UNAC/UHCP's Kaiser Sunset affiliate in Jimmy's district said, "Having seen Jimmy's commitment to nurses and patients through his work at UNAC/UHCP, I am proud to be a part of his campaign to represent us in Sacramento." Her sentiment mirrors that of many other UNAC/UHCP RNs, who believe Gomez not only knows what nurses need to



provide quality patient care, but can effectively advocate for it in the state capitol.

And this was the true magic of Jimmy Gomez. He wasn't just our visionary Political Director for the past three years. He was able to not only find a way to help members get involved in a meaningful way, but to show us how much that involvement mattered for our patients. Jimmy, we wish you the best of luck in Sacramento, and we will miss you terribly, but we know we will be working with you in your new office!

non-union hospitals through UNAC/UHCP's organizing department.

RNs Emelie Galang and Adelia Tandas, both retired from Kaiser Anaheim, credited Asela Omilig-Espiritu, RN, Cherie Sloan, RN and Paul Stoeppler, RN with keeping them active in the union while they were working. Now they say so far they are happy with their retirement, and want to keep it that way! They came to the convention to find ways they could get re-engaged with the union now that they are part of the retiree council.

The convention body voted at the end of the conference to elect officers. They are: President: Sonia Moseley, NP; Vice President: Fran Powell, RN; Recording Secretary:

Donna Knoch, RN; Treasurer: Delima MacDonald, RN; and Board Members: Marie Scheet, NP, Roseann DeWitt, RN, and Fred Tinamisan, RN.



## It was the Best of Times, It was the Worst of Times

Over the past few months, we have asked you to help UNAC/UHCP and its legislative program by writing or calling your local Member of the State Assembly or Senate, as well as writing, calling and emailing Governor Jerry Brown to sign into law our legislative priorities. As you know, one particular bill, SB1246, which UNAC/UHCP sponsored regarding staff ratio enforcement, generated lots of interest both from you and Registered Nurses and Health Professionals throughout California. It even drew a lot of attention in the California Legislature.

Unfortunately, SB1246 was vetoed by Governor Jerry Brown in late September. While it is disappointing that the bill was vetoed, UNAC/UHCP has experienced some positive gains in its legislative program.

First, our profile in Sacramento has significantly increased and respect for UNAC/UHCP has grown tremendously. The legislators and their staff know that we are credible, reasonable and professional. We have a legislative team that has experience, strategy, and the awareness that our work as health care professionals must always have the patient at the center of our decisions. This has been noted by the legislators.

## Proposition 32 Falls: Our Voice for Patient Safety is Safe

The biggest threat to everything we have achieved over the last forty years as a union—patient safety measures, staffing ratios, fair wages, first-rate health care benefits, excellent pensions, overtime pay, and breaks—has failed. Proposition 32, which would have silenced our voice in legislation and politics, has been defeated.

Second, UNAC/UHCP was able to lobby successfully for several new laws, signed by Jerry Brown, that include:

SB1524, authored by Senator Ed Hernandez, which will make access to a health care provider much easier for a patient. SB 1524 would increase access to quality health care by removing a barrier to employment of Nurse Practitioners and Certified Nurse-Midwives. These professional health care providers already undergo extensive training and are regulated by the Board of Registered Nursing, and SB1524 would eliminate the arbitrary six-month supervisory requirement.

AB 761, authored by Assemblyman Roger Hernandez, which will improve patient safety in Optometry. Currently, an Optometrist may order diagnostic tests from a lab, but the patient and doctor must wait for the test results, which can unnecessarily delay appropriate diagnosis and treatment. AB 761 provides that a laboratory director may include a licensed Optometrist, and authorizes an Optometrist to perform certain clinical laboratory tests or examinations classified as waived under the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Act (CLIA).

## Physician Assistant Week 2012

During 2012 Physician Assistants' Week, held October 6-12, 2012 UNAC/UHCP went to some of those Kaiser Permanente facilities where we have PA members. Special rounding at Kaiser West LA, Kaiser Sunset, Kaiser Orange County, and Kaiser South Bay, as well as special PA Week events at Kaiser Fontana and Kaiser Riverside allowed us to meet many of our PAs as we passed out gifts. The pictures below show the highlights of our adventures. We only wish we could have seen and left a gift for every PA at every facility.



# EVERYDAY LEADER

sunday monday tuesday wednesday thursday friday saturday



Isaac Saroia, RN

**BEVERLY HOSPITAL REGISTERED NURSES ASSOCIATION**

Unit: PACU

RN: 40 Years

UNAC/UHCP Member: 1 Years

**“My message to all the nurses is: Be united, and keep working hard, and support each other. And work for our patients’ safety and our safety.”**

After two months of Beverly nurses trying to organize a union, I joined. I saw the hospital taking action against the nurses, who were only trying to speak up about practices that were unsafe to patients and unsafe to nurses. There were a lot of unfair and dangerous practices at the hospital. Short staffing. Floating nurses to floors where they weren’t qualified. A lack of equipment. Leaky roofs and electrical wires shorting out. People got promotions even though they weren’t qualified because of favoritism.

Before organizing a union we tried everything. We went to every hospital meeting, raising our voice to say, “This needs to be corrected.” But management wasn’t listening to the nurses. People became scared to speak up because whoever did, management would hold a grudge against them. Also, we hadn’t had a raise in years, while managers were getting raises and bonuses, and our benefits were being cut. Some supervisors told us to accept it or leave.

I’ve been a nurse since 1972. I used to have the same view of unions that a lot of people do, that if you did your job well, you didn’t need a union. But now I could clearly see the inequity and injustice. I saw the nurses fighting for patient safety and our rights, while management only brought in outsiders to tell the nurses they were wrong, instead of correcting things. That changed my mind. So I joined all the nurses, united in raising our voices for our patients and our own right to practice safely.

Since we won our contract, things have improved. There’s a lot of new equipment coming to the hospital. We’re getting a normal and fair wage increase every year. Management has begun to follow safe staffing laws. They never worried about it before. But now it’s written into the contract, so they worry about putting it into practice. My message to all the nurses is: Be united, and keep working hard, and support each other. And work for our patients’ safety and our safety.

## GET THE LATEST NEWS

In the last year, UNAC/UHCP has emailed out critical information to members about contract negotiations, license notices, and health care benefits. Don’t be left out because we don’t have your email address. Send us your email address at [publicaffairs@unac-ca.org](mailto:publicaffairs@unac-ca.org) along with your name and your affiliate.



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## Union in Brief

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### CHINO NEGOTIATIONS STALLED —

Chino RNs have been locked in negotiations with Prime Healthcare since June of this year. Prime has thus far been unwilling to listen to patient care concerns or discuss increasing the shockingly low wages. Seventy two percent of Chino RNs who have had their RN license two to six years are being paid less than new hires. Yet management refuses to pay any RN at Chino one penny more. Follow negotiations at [unacuhcp.org](http://unacuhcp.org).

### FOUNTAIN VALLEY TO START NEGOTIATIONS —

Fountain Valley Professional Association will be heading to bargaining table in December for their next contract. Their contract expires February 1, 2013.

### UNAC/UHCP ORGANIZING KAISER PHYSICAL, OCCUPATIONAL, AND RECREATIONAL THERAPISTS —

UNAC/UHCP is in the process of organizing Kaiser physical therapists, occupational therapists, and recreational therapists. During this time, UNAC/UHCP representatives will talk to these Kaiser employees and explain the benefits of joining our union. We encourage you to reach out to them and tell them your experience as a UNAC/UHCP member. Any questions about the campaign can be directed to Vanessa Caballero at [Vanessa.Caballero@unac-ca.org](mailto:Vanessa.Caballero@unac-ca.org).

### APPLICATION DEADLINE FAST APPROACHING FOR UNAC/UHCP SCHOLARSHIPS —

Starting this year, UNAC/UHCP will offer three different scholarships. The

UNAC/UHCP Member Scholarship Program is an ongoing program of scholarships available to full dues-paying UNAC/UHCP members to continue their education in the health care field. The UNAC/UHCP Family Scholarship Program is an ongoing program of scholarships available to the spouses, registered domestic partners, and dependent children of full dues-paying UNAC/UHCP members. The UNAC/UHCP Community Scholarship Program is an ongoing program of scholarships available to students seeking health care professional degrees at an accredited institution located in Southern California. All application materials must be postmarked by December 31. Scholarship recipients will be announced March 15. More information online at [unacuhcp.org/about-us/unacuhcp-scholarship-programs/](http://unacuhcp.org/about-us/unacuhcp-scholarship-programs/)