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## *President's Message*

Most of us look forward to retirement with excitement, and some trepidation. We have to adjust to losing the structure of our work routines. We have to adjust to losing the daily social interaction with our colleagues. And, we have to adjust to losing the security of our work income. This last adjustment is best managed with a well designed retirement plan – a plan with some degree of certainty.

Historically retirement income has been built on the foundation of an employer's defined benefit pension plan, Social Security, and personal savings. Add to the mix a retiree medical plan and you have the makings of a financially secure retirement. This foundation, however, has been breaking down for some years now, with fewer nurses covered by an employer pension plan, Social Security seemingly under constant attack, and personal savings subject to the vagaries of Wall Street.

Since we work all our lives paying into the Social Security system, it should be the certainty in our retirement plan. So, the attacks on Social Security need to stop and the fixes need to start. Part of the problem with fixing Social Security, however, is the myths that always seem to make the rounds when changes are debated. For example, Social Security was never intended to be a pension. Of course it was – from its very beginning. Or that its designers in the late 1930s didn't anticipate Americans would live much beyond age 65.

Not true – even back then the average Americans who would have collected Social Security lived into their early 70s. Or my favorite – Social Security is just another government entitlement program. Again, not true. Have you checked your pay stub lately? You pay a 6.2% Social Security tax each and every pay period, along with an equal contribution from your employer – a total of 12.4%.

There is no question that Social Security needs updating and there are a variety of ways to address this. One would be to raise the retirement age – it currently ranges from 65 to 67. Not such a good fix for health care professionals. Can you imagine working beyond 67 as a nurse? Nursing is such demanding work that many of us struggle to make age 62 or 65 as a working nurse. Another would be to increase the cap on income subject to the Social Security tax – it is currently \$106,800. Perhaps. Another would be to increase the Social Security tax. Again, perhaps. I am sure there are other viable fixes as well that would secure Social Security's future, and therefore, our future. The time is now to get it done.

*Kathy J. Sackman, RN*



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

# Giving Back: Camp Laurel

## UNAC Volunteer RNs Provide Care to Children with HIV/AIDS

Registered Nurses from UNAC/UHCP joined other health care professionals to provide medical care at Camp Laurel this summer. Camp Laurel is a program offered twice a year in Bear Valley for children living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. The volunteers provided medical services during the weeklong camp to all of the children and adults supporting the program.

Camp Laurel Foundation, a non-profit organization based in Pasadena, is still in need of medical volunteers who can provide health care to campers. UNAC/UHCP reached out to our members to find volunteers for this year's summer camp program.

"While we provide educational and support programs to the children, youth and families we

volunteers Autumn Auston Kelly, RN, Lorraine Costello, RN, and Theresa Mulroy, RN, provided their health care expertise to support the camp's ongoing efforts to bring joy to the lives of these children.

## UNAC/UHCP 2010 Convention

The convention will be held at the Planet Hollywood Hotel in Las Vegas from Monday, November 8 to Wednesday, November 10. No amendments were submitted for this year's Convention. Resolutions may be submitted up to 10 days before the start of Convention. Affiliates may offer resolutions by mail to the State Office; by fax at 909-599-8655; or by email to [Barbara@unac-ca.org](mailto:Barbara@unac-ca.org)

If you wish to nominate yourself or another member for an open position on the Board of Directors or for the State Office positions of President and Secretary, you may submit the nomination by mail to the State Office; by fax at 909-599-8655; or by email to [Barbara@unac-ca.org](mailto:Barbara@unac-ca.org). The nomination must include the member's full name and title. A brief written biography is recommended.

Nominations will be accepted until the close of business on Nov. 8.



"As an RN, I am committed to ensuring that all people who need health care have access to it," said Lorraine Costello, RN and a UNAC/UHCP member. "It is very important to give back to the community by volunteering. I enjoy having the opportunity to contribute to the camping experience of these children in such a constructive way." The

work with on a year round basis, our camps are designed to provide campers with a meaningful learning experience filled with friendship and fun in a safe environment," stated Margot Anderson, President and Founder of Camp Laurel. "We are grateful for all of our volunteers and are always looking for more each camp session." UNAC/UHCP

# On Special Assignment

Troy Seagondollar, RN-BC, MSN, currently serves as the UNAC/UHCP Registered Nurse technology liaison, a position that works jointly with Kaiser and UNAC/UHCP to address issues that arise regarding Kaiser's electronic medical records system, KP HealthConnect. This Labor-Management Partnership assignment allows



Troy to: give nurses a voice in the enhancements and changes made to KP HealthConnect build a support system for nurses at the medical centers; and engage more RNs at the medical centers.

Troy has been working as a Registered Nurse at Kaiser Permanente Fontana Medical Center for the past 22 years. In 2003, Troy began working on the KP HealthConnect project as the Emergency Department Nursing Subject Matter Expert and now continues his work on KP HealthConnect in partnership with UNAC/UHCP.

Troy has been married for 18 years and has two children. When he's not working, Troy enjoys spending time with friends and family participating in sports like fly-fishing, snow skiing and mountain biking.

## Are You a PEOPLE Member?

PEOPLE is the political program that allows UNAC/UHCP to fight for our members' rights using voluntary financial contributions. Those contributions are essential in defeating bills like SB 1111, which would have posted nurses' home addresses on the Internet.

If you would like to become a PEOPLE member, or are interested in becoming a PEOPLE recruiter, please contact Jeremy Lanni, UNAC/UHCP Political Representative, at [jeremy@unac-ca.org](mailto:jeremy@unac-ca.org) or (909) 451-3797.

# UNAC/UHCP Wins Big in Elections

UNAC/UHCP protects our members' legislative interests in Sacramento by helping elect candidates who demonstrate a commitment to work with nurses and health care professionals to improve our health care system and the delivery of patient care. Fortunately, during this past June's primary election, UNAC/UHCP won big with 12 out of 13 endorsed and supported candidates winning races for State Senate, Assembly and Statewide office.

As an early supporter and endorser, our wins came in the 43rd

Assembly District (Mike Gatto, Pre-Special Election Primary Endorsement), the 47th Assembly District (Holly Mitchell) and the 53rd Assembly District (Betsy Butler). All of these candidates worked hard to learn about the issues our members care about at the bedside and eventually earned our support. UNAC/UHCP also congratulates Mike Gatto as the newest member of the state Assembly. We look forward to helping secure their victories in November.

Other victories include Richard Pan (AD 5), Roger Hernandez

(AD 57), Ricardo Lara (AD 50), Toni Atkins (AD 76), Ben Hueso (AD 79), Juan Vargus (AD80) Kevin De Leon (SD 22), Ed Hernandez (SD 24), and Dave Jones for Insurance Commissioner.

UNAC/UHCP uses the following criteria to determine the candidates we will support: their positions on issues that impact nurses and health care professionals; their participation in our endorsement process; and final approval by our bi-partisan Political Committee, Board of Directors, and Executive Council.

# Meet Our New Staff

Christy McConville recently joined UNAC/UHCP as the public affairs director after moving back home to Los Angeles. Her experience is varied, touching the fields of communications, public relations, public affairs, Internet strategy and field organizing. Christy previously lived in Washington, D.C. for nine years, working in the public affairs department at Ketchum Public Relations for the past two years. She has also worked for several political and progressive

organizations, such as Planned Parenthood, Center for American Progress, and the Democratic National Committee. Christy received her M.A. in political management from the George Washington University in 2002.

Christy started her career in Los Angeles as a financial analyst at an investment finance firm. Previous to those two years spent in the private sector, Christy attended the University of California, Los Angeles.



As a political science major, she spent her days volunteering for political campaigns and her time off cheering for UCLA's basketball team.

# Legislative Update

It's been another busy summer in Sacramento for UNAC/UHCP, with numerous nursing and health care professional bills making their way through the legislative process. UNAC/UHCP State Secretary Barbara Blake, RN, worked closely with the office of Assembly Speaker John Perez on AB 2385. This legislation aims to facilitate the graduation of community college nursing and allied health students by expanding class formats and availability at select community colleges through a seven year pilot program. Underlying the need for this bill is the fact that the community college system prepares approximately 70 percent of California's Registered Nurses. Unfortunately, with recent state budget cuts, enrollment in these programs has become more limited,

while the demand to enter the nursing and health care professions has only increased. UNAC/UHCP thanks Speaker Perez for recognizing the need to address this important issue facing our health care systems.

Other important bills this session include:

- SB 1069 (Pavley) Physician Assistant Act successfully passed out of the Senate and will now head to the Governor's desk for signature. If signed, the bill would go into effect January 1, 2011. The Act would clarify various inconsistencies and omissions in existing law.
- SB 1474 (Steinberg) Card check advanced out of the Senate and will now be sent to the Governor's office for signature.



- SB 294 (Negrete McLeod) This legislation, related to sunset dates and health care boards, advanced out of the Senate and will now be sent to the Governor's office for signature. The original bill introduced in 2009 addressed NP scope of practice. The bill was amended in September 2009 with language regarding mandatory reporting to the BRN for various charges including breach of patient confidentiality. UNAC/UHCP was instrumental in halting the advance of that language. The bill was amended in 2010 to the current version.

# EVERYDAY LEADER

sunday monday tuesday wednesday thursday friday saturday



Edwin Guardado, RN  
*St. Francis Registered Nurses Association*

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Unit: Critical Care/Telemetry

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Registered Nurse: 6 years

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UNAC/UHCP Member: 6 years

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Hometown: Los Angeles, CA

**“The biggest benefit to having UNAC/UHCP at St. Francis is an increase in the number of nurses at the hospital. St. Francis is an attractive place to work because we have great benefits, competitive pay, and a mutually respectful working environment.”**

I was introduced to nursing during my senior year of high school. I took it as an elective course, but never really took it seriously. It wasn't until my father had a crush injury that I truly became interested in becoming a nurse. While he was working under a van, an explosion caused the van to fall on top of him. Although I wasn't sure why at the time, I put my hand on his stomach. All I knew was that there was internal bleeding so I applied pressure to the wound. He was taken to Martin Luther King, Jr. Hospital and they saved his life.

I started working as a CNA at St. Francis in 1994. Later, I became an LVN and then received my RN license in 2004. Health care has been my first and only job. When people ask me why I like what I'm doing, I always say because it is

very rewarding. I enjoy helping people. It can be stressful at times, but you learn how to strategically deal with different situations. You learn how to manage patients who are struggling. You effectively communicate with patients to help them feel more comfortable, in spite of the fact that being in a hospital can be traumatic for many. We serve a rather large Hispanic population and sometimes patients even offer me their blessing for what I've done to make their hospital experience easier.

The biggest benefit to having UNAC/UHCP at St. Francis is an increase in the number of nurses at the hospital. St. Francis is an attractive place to work because we have great benefits, competitive pay, and a mutually

respectful working environment. The people in my unit know the benefit of having UNAC/UHCP at St. Francis. When issues come up, our contract makes it easy to effectively deal with whatever we might be experiencing. Our union representatives are always there to help clarify changes made by hospital management to how we provide patient care.

I think people forget the union isn't some outside organization – it's us. We are the union and having UNAC/UHCP here gives us a voice in the workplace. As a union activist, I make sure people remember that it is all of us together that make up our local union. You have to get involved if you want something to change, for the well being of yourself and, most importantly, for your patients.



## United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals

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# Union in Brief

## NLRB Dismisses Charges –

In a recent ruling, UNAC/UHCP was cleared of any misconduct during the Chino Valley organizing campaign that preceded the Registered Nurses vote to unionize in April. Following the election victory the hospital, owned by Prime Healthcare Services, filed 29 objections with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) alleging UNAC/UHCP election misconduct. On July 7, an Administrative Law Judge from the NLRB overruled all the hospital's objections, clearing the way for us to be certified as the nurses' representative. In mid-August the hospital filed exceptions to the judge's ruling with the NLRB in Washington, D.C. The NLRB has not yet ruled on the hospital's exceptions filing.

## Garden Grove Nurses Win Arbitration, Begin Negotiations –

A neutral arbitrator in mid-July found that Prime Healthcare Services violated the Garden Grove Registered Nurses' contract when it unilaterally eliminated the nurses' Reserve Sick Leave Program in April 2009.

Specifically, the arbitrator ordered Prime to reinstate the Reserve Sick Leave back to the date when Prime had stopped accruals and make whole all nurses who were forced to take unpaid sick leave because Reserve Sick accruals had been eliminated.

The Garden Grove nurses began negotiations for a new contract with Prime in late August. It is the first time the nurses have bargained with Prime as the hospital's owner. The current contract expires September 30.

## Bear Valley Negotiations –

As this edition of *The Voice* went to print, the Bear Valley negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement were not completed. After seven bargaining sessions, negotiations stalled in late July, and the assistance of a State mediator was enlisted. The current contract expired on June 30.

## Kaiser South Bay UBT Celebration –

Kaiser South Bay UNAC/UHCP members and other employees applauded accomplishments in

quality, service, and making Kaiser Permanente the best place to work during its second annual unit-based team (UBT) fair on August 2. More than 300 employees met with representatives of 17 UBTs to discuss the teams' activities and accomplishments that became best practices.

## AFSCME Scholarship –

AFSCME is currently accepting applications for the 2011 Family Scholarship Program. Ten scholarships of \$2,000 each will be awarded annually and renewed each year for a maximum of four years, and may be used for any field of study. Applications must be postmarked by December 31, 2010.

For detailed information on the application process and to download an application, please visit [afscme.org/family](http://afscme.org/family)

If you have problems downloading the application or have questions regarding the application process, please contact Susan Welsh at (202) 429-1079 or [swelsh@afscme.org](mailto:swelsh@afscme.org)