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President's Message

After thirty three years, I will retire at the end of the year as your President.

I have often talked about UNAC/UHCP's beginning when a small group of nurses met in the clubhouse of a trailer park to discuss ways to improve our working conditions. Our first meeting was held on May 21, 1972.

We had nurses from four hospitals talking on that day – Balboa Naval, Los Alamitos, LA County, and Kaiser Fontana – and the in-plant nurses from McDonald Douglas. We decided UNAC's structure then and there. Nurses would represent nurses. Any member would be able to easily contact the union officers. Every facility would have their own organization called an affiliate with their own officers. Our Association would be led by an Executive Council with a representative from each of our Affiliates, so members would have a voice in the organization. We would represent our members in all areas – legislation, collective bargaining, and representation. We would be run by nurses who would be elected, not hired. And for the most part, this is how we've remained, for 38 years. I feel so fortunate to have led this union through so many firsts.

We were the first ever southern California nurse's organization to go on strike in 1977. Eight hundred nurses in four Kaiser facilities went on strike for 30 days. We drove Kaiser crazy. And we won what had caused us to strike – a management nurse would now be in charge of the staffing office, nurses would get every other weekend off, and our wages were no longer

tied to Hospital Council rates. We argued St. Francis nurses right to organize all the way to the US Supreme Court – and won the right to have an all RN Bargaining Unit. We were the first independent nurses union to affiliate with an AFL-CIO union. When the Sharp nurses organized in 1996, it was the single largest group of Registered Nurses to vote in a NLRB certification election in the history of the US Labor movement. We were one of the founding unions of the historic Labor Management Partnership with Kaiser, the single largest, longest coalition in the labor movement. Through this Partnership we were able to push for staffing ratios which have been proven to save lives.

I want to thank all of you for your support over these many years. Without you, UNAC/UHCP wouldn't exist. You – the members – are the heart and soul of this union. I want you and I need you to continue to be our heart and soul. To stand with the new President and the State Officers as they carry the UNAC/UHCP tradition forward, making it the best, most innovative health care union in the country. Thank you. You truly are the best.

In Solidarity,
Kathy J. Sackman, RN



Reflections



What can I say about Kathy, WOW! To think that over her career, she has led UNAC/UHCP to grow from one small group of nurses in Fontana to over 18,000 Registered Nurses and Health Care Professionals. To me, that is totally amazing. While a proven leader, Kathy has always looked at what was the best thing to do for the patients and the UNAC/UHCP members. Not only has she led to meet their needs, she has done the leading in a humble manner. There is no arrogance in her leadership. I personally owe a lot to Kathy, as she has been a tremendous role model and mentor to me in the twenty one years of working for and with her. Kathy, take care and enjoy the well deserved retirement you are going into.

Ken Deitz, RN — UNAC/UHCP Executive Vice President



You were not the “union boss” that I envisioned when I first heard about the organizing campaign at the Kaiser Mental Health Center in 1982. Although you and Sonia did not win over my vote in that election, I was converted once I had an opportunity to see the two of you in action in the 1983 negotiations. You were truly concerned about the patient care, the nursing staff and advancing the nursing profession. You have never lost those driving forces.

Throughout California and the nation, nursing leaders, labor leaders and representatives of management, have the highest regard and admiration for you. You are known as tough, honest, and a “straight shooter.” It has been said that you have only gotten better with the years of experience. I heard one labor leader declare “Kathy Sackman is like a fine wine, she just gets better with the years.” You are the standard which all nursing and labor leaders should be held.

You have been my mentor, friend, confidant, tutor, leader, “boss” and have always inspired my personal and professional growth. I am grateful for the opportunity of working with you and for you, over the last twenty four years. The time has flown but many of the challenges for nursing and labor still continue. You have provided the foundation for those of us remaining to continue the fight and most importantly, continue the growth and development of UNAC/UHCP.

You deserve a retirement filled with joy, time with your family, hours of uninterrupted sleep (remember those late night calls regarding mandatory overtime), long walks with Lady and afternoons with time for “a glass of wine with a side of ice.”

With greatest respect and gratitude,

Barbara Blake, RN — UNAC/UHCP State Secretary



Kathy J. Sackman, you have dedicated your life to making working conditions, wages and benefits better for healthcare professionals. You are a pioneer and a heroine for nurses in the Labor Movement. To have the strength and courage to break away from CNA because they did not meet the needs of our organization and to have the determination and commitment to build our union to what it is today is priceless.

We have grown in membership and have represented our healthcare professionals under your leadership and guidance through many negotiations, grievances and arbitrations. Your belief that all healthcare professionals should have a say in the workplace and in the care of our patients is evident with our persistence in the courts (St. Francis) and the couple of strikes that we have endured and were victorious.

We thank you for showing us the way! Your legacy will not be forgotten. You will be missed but the officers know that you are only a call away. I wish you well in all your new endeavors.

Delima MacDonald, RN — UNAC/UHCP State Treasurer



I cannot believe that Kathy is actually retiring. After 30+ years it does not seem possible that there will be UNAC/UHCP without Kathy.

We have so much to thank Kathy for.

There would not be the great Kaiser Labor Agreements without her.

There would not be the Nurse Negotiators without her (she taught me).

We would not be known nationally without her—she insisted that AFSCME start United Nurses of America for the AFSCME Nurses Nationally.

She was instrumental in forming the Kaiser Labor Management Partnership and has played a big role in holding it together.

Her Leadership and support has kept Tenant, Sharp, St. Francis, Big Bear, Balboa, and Pettis VA in place.

Kathy's commitment to education and legislative issues has led UNAC/UHCP to take a leadership role in legislation in California. She has also continued to encourage and provide our leaders and members with education in the field of labor management both internally and externally.

Because Kathy firmly believes that nurses and other health care providers can represent their peers, she has tried to hire representatives from within and they continue to do a fine job of representation.

I believe with the legacy that Kathy Sackman has left this organization, it will continue to grow and prosper and be one that she can be proud of forever. But in spite of this she will be missed by us all and we wish her well in her retirement.

Sonia Moseley, NP — Retired UNAC/UHCP Executive Vice President



Hi,

I just received the notice that you're not going to run for re-election! Am surprised but then, not surprised when I think of the time/years that have gone by ever so fast! How true are your words that it's bittersweet to say goodbye.

It's bittersweet to be writing you under these circumstances. Your written words regarding the memories you have starting with that group of 40 nurses in 1972 reminded me of some memories, too. The small role I played in UNAC allows me to remember what a very special bond there was that enabled each of us AND the Organization to remain, maintain and to grow into what it has become: A dream that came true NOT just because of the members, but in huge part (as the old song goes), because of YOU.....And yes, I will never forget your support in those early days. Yes, you've had some superb help along the way; Sonia for one and am sure you miss her. However Kathy, YOU did it!

I am sure the Organization will continue albeit NOT the same. That special flavor will be gone but not forgotten. There's a saying: "The place will never be the same." I would rather say: The place will be the same; WE will not be the same.

Kathy I wish you well always, continued success and as YOU choose, whatever future relationship with UNAC is there for you.

With special care, love and fondness,

Jan Platz, RN — Retired UNAC President (1972-1974)

Meet Our New Staff



Rob Penney, PhD — Organizing Director

Rob Penney, Ph.D., joined UNAC/UHCP as Organizing Director in October 2010.

Rob runs the union's organizing program and builds local leadership at UNAC/UHCP's affiliates. He leads organizing campaigns for Registered Nurses and other health care professionals seeking a voice in the workplace in order to improve the quality of patient care.

Rob brings more than two decades of labor organizing experience to UNAC/UHCP. He began his labor career in 1990 as an organizer for the healthcare division of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). After earning his Doctorate of Sociology at the University of Michigan, where Rob negotiated two contracts for graduate student employees, he had a three-year stint as a professor at The George Washington University before returning to union organizing for SEIU-UHW and SEIU 721 in southern California.

"Having a voice in the workplace is key for RNs and other health care professionals committed to providing high caliber patient care," commented Rob. "I look forward to helping many more throughout southern California gain that voice through UNAC/UHCP."

When Rob is not organizing, he spends his time with his wife, a clinical psychologist, and their two boys, ages three and seven, at their Orange County home.

Barbara Lewis — Director of Collective Bargaining and Representation Services

Barbara Lewis has joined UNAC/UHCP as the Director of Collective Bargaining and Representation Services.

Barbara will work with the UNAC/UHCP affiliate leadership to continue to strengthen and build the Union's representation and collective bargaining programs. Barbara's focus will be to ensure that UNAC/UHCP members have the primary voice in protecting and advancing high quality patient care, and continue to win contracts that recognize the skill, expertise and commitment of UNAC/UHCP's membership.

Barbara is a long-term union activist, coming to UNAC/UHCP from the National Union of Healthcare Workers. She has previously worked with the Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union (HERE) Local 2 and with several different affiliates of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Throughout her extensive career, Barbara has overseen bargaining, representation, training, leadership development, employer relations, membership participation in political programs and organizing. Among her accomplishments, Barbara helped develop SEIU's National Nurse Alliance program and served as statewide director of one of the largest health care campaigns in the country, organizing 25 Tenet Healthcare hospitals in California.

"I am excited about working with UNAC/UHCP's Registered Nurses and other health care professionals to achieve their goals of providing the highest level of patient care and ensuring they are recognized for their professional skills and expertise," commented Barbara. "Our members are on the frontlines of patient care and, in today's healthcare industry, they need strong, effective union leadership that will work tirelessly to address their concerns."

Barbara has been married for almost 25 years and is a proud mother of two sons. She is actively involved in fundraising efforts for both their high school and the local YMCA programs.



CONVENTION NEWS

Ken Deitz Elected President of UNAC/UHCP as Founder Kathy J. Sackman Retires



The United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals (UNAC/UHCP) Officers, Staff, and Delegates met in Las Vegas, Nevada to celebrate the retirement of founder Kathy Sackman, RN and to plot the course for the future. The 34th Biennial Convention from November 7-10, 2010 had a record number of delegates – over 620 – and included a banquet honoring longtime President Sackman who is retiring at the end of this year.

Ken Deitz, RN, currently serving as Executive Vice President, was elected the next President of UNAC/UHCP. Ken has been a key member of our leadership team for over two decades. A tough and tenacious negotiator, Ken has been a leader in bargaining almost every UNAC/UHCP contract during the last 18 years.

Barbara Blake, RN, was re-elected as UNAC/UHCP State Secretary, and will continue her groundbreaking work advancing our organization's name in the legislative and political world. Barbara began working for UNAC/UHCP in 1986 as a staff representative for UNAC/UHCP affiliates.

Elections were also held for one open seat on the Board of Directors left by retiring Board member Fred Tinamisan, RN. UNAC/UHCP would like to thank Fred for his years of service to our organization. Helen Bouman, RN was elected to fill Fred's seat, and Scott Byington, RN, Tim Uliasz, RN, and Mary Cavanaugh, OD were re-elected.

Consisting of three days of training sessions, continuing education courses, and updates on the state of the union, the Convention included a

banquet to honor retiring President Kathy Sackman that brought down the house. Dozens of labor leaders from around the country came to pay tribute to the woman who started it all, with stories that left few dry eyes in the room. One particular story told by Labor leader Henry Bayer concerned a crying pregnant woman who found Kathy outside a difficult negotiation with an employer who was about to lay her off. Kathy reportedly told the woman "stop crying, go in the bathroom, clean yourself up, and let me do all the talking."

Years later, Bayer was witness to this woman meeting Kathy again for the first time. She told the story of their first meeting and said, "You probably don't remember me, but you spoke for me many years ago. You did all the talking. I didn't get laid off. Thank you so much."





Union in Brief

Garden Grove Negotiations Continue –

The Garden Grove Registered Nurses Association is in ongoing talks with Prime Healthcare to negotiate a new contract. There is strong support from members, who continue to attend negotiating sessions in large numbers. The Garden Grove contract expired on September 30, 2010.

UNAC/UHCP Endorsed Candidates Win Big on Election Night –

All UNAC/UHCP candidates won their elections on November 2, an astounding win rate for a first foray into endorsements. In addition to the victory of Governor-elect Jerry Brown, the following were the UNAC/UHCP endorsed candidates who were elected or re-elected:

- ▶ **Lieutenant Governor** – Gavin Newsom
- ▶ **Controller** – John Chiang
- ▶ **Secretary of State** – Debra Bowen

- ▶ **Insurance Commissioner** – Dave Jones
- ▶ **Treasurer** – Bill Lockyer
- ▶ **Senate District 40** – Juan Vargas
- ▶ **Senate District 22** – Kevin De Leon
- ▶ **Senate District 24** – Ed Hernandez
- ▶ **Assembly District 5** – Dr. Richard Pan
- ▶ **Assembly District 35** – Das Williams
- ▶ **Assembly District 43** – Mike Gatto
- ▶ **Assembly District 45** – Gil Cedillo
- ▶ **Assembly District 47** – Holly Mitchell
- ▶ **Assembly District 50** – Ricardo Lara
- ▶ **Assembly District 53** – Betsy Butler
- ▶ **Assembly District 57** – Roger Hernandez
- ▶ **Assembly District 76** – Toni Atkins

▶ **Assembly District 79** – Ben Hueso

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.

Bear Valley Negotiations End –

After months of bargaining and several State mediated sessions, the Bear Valley RNA was unable to reach a suitable successor contract. On November 17 the Bear Valley Community Hospital Board of Directors rejected the Union's final offer for a new three year contract and implemented its last best and final offer, the terms of which will be in effect through June 30, 2011. The BVRNA, with the nurses' support, will negotiate a new contract next year.