



# Pettis Memorial Registered Nurses Association

# PMRNA Newsletter

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“Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean.”

## PMRNA Bargaining Team

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## The Union Advantage

Union membership raises living and working standards for all workers, union and non-union. Collective bargaining affects more than wages. For teachers, it's smaller classrooms. For nurses, it's better patient care. When they are successful, the whole community wins.

Seventy years ago, employees had almost no rights at work. If we were to tell the workers of the past about the benefits we have today, they would probably look at us in disbelief and laugh. Back then, the norm was 80+ hours of work per week, including weekends and holidays. Breaks were nonexistent, many worked in unsanitary working conditions, and employees were paid next to nothing with no chance of a raise, health insurance or paid vacations. These are just a few of the conditions that workers were forced to work in.

Since then, union leaders have fought for our rights in the workplace, ultimately improving not only our working conditions but also our home life as well. Many of these leaders and members sacrificed a great deal, and many even lost their lives for things we take for granted today. Did you know that nearly all the benefits and rights you have at work were made possible by unions?

Here are a few examples of the rights brought to you by unions.

- Weekends without work
- Rest breaks and meal periods
- Paid vacation
- Sick leave/FMLA
- Worker's compensation
- Overtime pay/holiday pay
- 8-hour workday/40-hour work week
- Minimum wage/pensions
- Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA)
- Sexual harassment laws
- Equal Pay Acts of 1963 & 2011

Throughout history, organized groups such as unions have shown us how powerful we can be when we come together to fight for a common goal. Unions not only improve the workforce but also economic growth, productivity, product or service delivery, quality training, and economic development. Most of us have heard the saying, "There's power in numbers." Standing united is a way to ensure success. We all want what's best for the VA. It is where we work and spend a lot of our time. So why shouldn't we have a voice in the decisions? Being a member of the union gives us a say in the decisions made by management and also helps initiate change.

Being a part of UNAC/UHCP benefits both our work and home lives. It allows us to support our fellow workers and our profession. Many of the benefits we fight for are geared towards improving work-life balance.

UNAC/UHCP and the AFL-CIO helps us take our membership one step further by providing consumer benefits for its members and their families. The AFL-CIO offers current and retired union members Union Plus benefits. These are money-saving benefits that may even extend to your family members. Some of these benefits include AD&D life insurance; discounts on car rentals, flowers, and health clubs; auto insurance or auto buying; mortgage assistance; and even credit counseling and student loan debt relief assistance. You get all these benefits and more just for being a member. For more information, go to [www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org) and start taking advantage of the consumer benefits.

Remember these benefits are for dues-paying members only. Eligibility for these benefits is simple: Just become a member. Contact one of your PMRNA officers for more information on becoming a member.

## Coming to the Table

On Wednesday, May 20, both your elected bargaining team and select management sat across each other for the first time to go over ground rules and expectations for future bargaining sessions. This is what some are calling the beginning of change.

Your current Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) is desperately due for some changes. Your voice is crucial during this time.

Changes are sure to come and they will only have a greater impact if we have the majority driving those changes. Your support and participation is what will ensure a stronger, better contract. We all know there is power in numbers.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to make change. Keep yourself informed so that we may get feedback when the time comes. Be

a part of the change and be a part of success.

For information about upcoming negotiations sessions, keep an eye out for emails and flyers that will help keep you updated. Contact one of your PMRNA officers for any additional questions.

# UNAC/UHCP Scholarship Program



Scholarship winners  
Jing Ren, RN, with  
daughter, Chelsea Ji

*“Save one life  
and you’re a  
hero.*

*Save a hundred  
lives and you’re a  
nurse.”*

In 2013, UNAC/UHCP started a scholarship program to assist members, their families, and community members who wish to pursue a career in the health care field and/or continue their education. Since then, we have had hundreds of applicants take advantage of this opportunity.

This year, one PMRNA member and her daughter did just that and won. Our very own Jing Ren, RN, of Occupational Health here at the VA, was awarded the Kathy Sackman Member Scholarship. This scholarship is for full dues paying members pursuing continuing education in the health care field and each scholarship winner received \$3000.

Jing’s daughter, Chelsea Ji, was awarded the Delima MacDonald Community Scholarship. These \$2000 scholarships were awarded to students seeking a

degree in the health care field.

The third scholarship offered by UNAC/UHCP was the Sonia Moseley Family Scholarship for \$3000. These scholarships were awarded to spouses, registered domestic partners, and dependent children of full dues paying members.

For 2015, each scholarship yielded 10 winners for a total of 30 recipients. All three scholarships were named for major players that helped shape UNAC/UHCP into what it is today.

Jing Ren takes every opportunity to attend union meetings and classes. It was during one of these union activities, a basic labor class, that she first learned about UNAC/UHCP’s scholarship program and decided to apply, encouraging her daughter to do the same.

To both her and her daughter’s

surprise, they became two of the 30 recipients awarded scholarships. And on May 2, the third annual UNAC/UHCP scholarship banquet was held to honor those scholarship recipients at the Mission Bay Hilton in San Diego.

Jing found the experience to be very exciting and motivational. She felt comfortable and at home and was happy to be able to meet other union members and the UNAC/UHCP officers.

One thing Jing and her daughter learned was that everyone can have a voice if they make themselves visible. She hopes the experience showed her daughter how to go after what she wants no matter the odds. Jing says that she will be doing her best to encourage others within her department to get involved and to take advantage of the many benefits union membership provides.

## “The Three Wishes”

A nursing assistant, a floor nurse, and a charge nurse from a small nursing home were taking a lunch break in the break room. In walks a lady dressed in silk scarves and wearing large polished stone jewelry.

“I am Gina the Great,” stated the lady. “I am so pleased with the way you have taken care of my aunt that I will now grant the next three wishes!” With a wave of her hand and a puff of smoke, the room was filled with flowers, fruit and bottles of drink, proving that she did have the power to

grant wishes before any of the nurses could think otherwise.

The nurses quickly argued among themselves as to which one would ask for the first wish.

Speaking up, the nursing assistant wished first. “I wish I were on a tropical island beach, with single, well-built men feeding me fruit and tending to my every need.” With a puff of smoke, the nursing assistant was gone.

The floor nurse went next. “I wish I were rich and retired, and spending my days in my

own warm cabin at a ski resort with well groomed men feeding me cocoa and doughnuts.” With a puff of smoke, she too was gone.

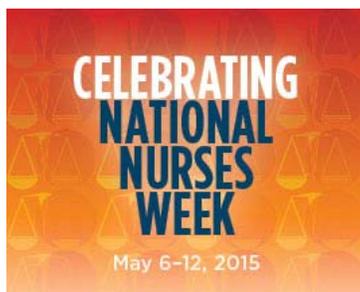
“Now, what is the last wish?” asked the lady.

The charge nurse said, “I want those two back on the floor at the end of the lunch break.”

**“Laughter is a tranquilizer  
with no side effects.”**

**Arnold H. Glasow**

# Nurses Rock!



During Nurse's Week, we celebrate RNs' contributions to delivering the highest level of quality patient care to their patients and society.

This year's theme is "**Ethical Practice and Quality Care**" and understandably so since according to the Gallup poll, nurses have been voted the most ethical and

honest profession in America for the past 13 years.

Nurses all over the globe have done so much for the betterment of our profession and in the best interest of our patients, families, and community.

Nurse's Week allows us to recognize the contributions made by not just nurses in the past but also our fellow nurses today.

Here are a few inventions made possible by nurses like you and me that we still use today.

- Anita Dorr, ER nurse, got tired of running to a code with hands and pockets full of supplies. She invented the

"crisis cart," now called the crash cart.

- Clara Barton, one of our pioneer nurses, created the Red Cross in the 1880s.
- Sister Jean Ward is considered Mother of Phototherapy in newborns in 1956.
- Elise Sorenson developed the first ostomy bag in 1954.

A few other things created by nurses:

- Sanitary napkins
- Isolation gowns
- Hospice
- The Baby Snuggli
- IV catheter shields

This is why **NURSES ROCK!**

## CARING SHOULDN'T HURT

Workplace violence has become far too common, causing tremendous amounts of stress for health care workers across the country. As health care professionals, we need to recognize that this is not part of the job, and report these incidences.

Workplace violence is any act or threat of physical violence, harassment, intimidation, or other threatening disruptive behavior that occurs at the worksite. Although workplace violence is underreported, the Bureau of Labor Statistics Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) reported over 154,000 nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving days away from work during the 2003 to 2012 time period. The health care and social assistance industry accounted for two-thirds of the injuries and illnesses each year.

Although there is no federal standard that requires workplace violence protections, some states have

legislative solutions which include mandatory establishment of a comprehensive prevention program for health care employers, as well as increase penalties for those convicted of assaults of a nurse and/or other health care personnel.

Nurses have reported being punched in the face, kicked, bitten, scratched, slapped, strangled, knocked unconscious, trapped by a patient in a room and assaulted. These incidents oftentimes result in medical follow-up and care. Just recently, two nurses were stabbed in Los Angeles area hospitals. In most of these cases, the attacks could have been prevented. UNAC/UHCP is fighting to strengthen regulations that will help reduce and/or prevent these occurrences.

UNAC/UHCP has been addressing this issue by launching a campaign against workplace violence in an effort to address this pervasive problem.

UNAC/UHCP members have participated in several actions to help with this cause, including launching a petition, surveying members, anti-bullying training, press releases, and testifying before the California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) hearing for draft workplace violence prevention regulations. See video on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/17lm89yFpXA>.

We have no control as to what comes through our doors while at work, but we do have control over the laws and standards that affect our job environment. You can do this by becoming aware of the VA's Violence Prevention Program, familiarizing yourself with Senate Bill 1299 and/or signing the petition for workplace violence prevention at [unacuhcp.org/calosha](http://unacuhcp.org/calosha). There are lots of ways to get involved.

**Caring shouldn't hurt.**

*Sign the petition  
calling for immediate  
action on workplace  
violence!*  
[unacuhcp.org/calosha](http://unacuhcp.org/calosha)



## PMRNA OFFICERS

**President:** Mary Mendoza

**Vice President:** Michelle Lanorias

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**Treasurer:** Eva Kummerfeld

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**To stay informed, sign up for TEXT BLASTS!**

**Text PETTIS to 411247**

In 1980, Pettis Memorial nurses voted to join UNAC. We can only wonder about their struggles and all they had to go through to get there. Today, all of those nurses have either moved on or retired and with them, the reasons and sacrifices of their fight. We may not know their reasons but we know their fight—their fight for better working conditions, safe patient care and respect for their profession. That theme hasn't changed. We, as nurses, must continue that fight. It is up to us to make sure that we advocate for our patients, our co-workers and our profession.

Our contract was ratified over three decades ago. In 2015, we (your officers) have set the wheels in motion to change that. We want to hear every voice and we are committed to doing whatever we can to make sure your concerns are addressed. But we can't do this alone. We need you now more than ever. We cannot make positive and significant changes without your participation. Our goal is to obtain concerns of the majority. Your voice matters.

Your voice counts. It's what keeps our union strong and effective. Get involved by staying informed. Come out to General Membership Meetings, read the flyers, sign up for text blasts, and check your emails for updates. We all know knowledge is power so take the opportunity to get reacquainted with your current collective bargaining agreement (CBA). We want to hear from all of you.

Help your union become a success and **GET INVOLVED!**

**THERE'S NO SUCCESS WITHOUT U!**

# Special Union Deals

We work hard for our money and spend it on things we need in order for our families to live comfortably. That means being smart with our money and finding deals where we can. Being a part of UNAC/UHCP helps us do that through its national affiliates, AFSCME and the AFL-CIO.

The AFL-CIO created Union Privilege in 1986 to provide union members and their families with valuable consumer benefits. With Union Plus benefits, your union membership "pays" at work and at home.

Union Plus benefits, offered by Union Privilege, serve the interests of today's working families. The Union Plus brand promises the value, quality service and cost-savings that union members deserve.

AFSCME members are automatically eligible for the following Union Plus benefits and discounts and more.

- Discounted flower delivery services (save up to 20% off)
- AT&T employee discount program
- Movie ticket discounts
- Theme park discounts
- Health club discounts
- Auto and life insurance
- Car rental discounts (save up to 25% off)
- Union Plus motor club (get \$40 free gas and more)
- Worldwide vacation tours
- Scholarships
- College planning center

- Textbooks
- Dell discounts
- Student Debt Eraser grant
- Prescription discount card
- Union Plus Assistance grants help select union families facing financial hardship
- Union Plus mortgage with financial protection for union members facing hardship due to strike, layoff or disability

For more information about these benefits, go to [AFSCME.org/members/advantage](http://AFSCME.org/members/advantage) and/or [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org) and start learning about some of the benefits of being a dues paying member and save money at the same time.

Now that sounds like a deal!