Thank you to the two-dozen nurses who have attended one of our bargaining sessions! Your attendance means a lot to our team and nourishes their efforts to work on your behalf. It also shows the employer that nurses are attentive to negotiations this round.

We also appreciate the 143 ONA members who voted in our recent ratification vote. Our team recommended a “NO” vote on the employer’s offer from our first bargaining session of May 10. In resounding support for our team, 94 percent rejected the employer’s offer of 2.5 percent wage increase in October 2018 and 2.25 percent the following October. Of our dues-paying members, 59 percent voted in this ratification election, which is the highest turnout we’ve had at Mercy Medical Center (MMC) in recent memory.

Our team used this solidarity to move the employer. At our second bargaining session on May 25, the employer increased their offer of wage increases of 2.75 percent in 2018 and 2.75 percent in 2019. By our calculations, this would put our average wages about 3.2 percent below our regional average in 2018.

In talking to the employer, our negotiators (Su Mellor, Trish Hayes, and Carolyn Starnes, supported by labor relations rep Gary Aguiar) reported that nurses have repeatedly told us that they don’t feel like they are “below average” nurses. We are pleased we have made progress on our team’s goal of reaching market parity. To recruit and retain experienced nurses in Douglas County, we’ve contended that MMC should pay wages close to market average.

Our team returned with a proposal of pay increases of 5.0 percent in October 2018 and 5.0 percent in October 2019. According to our research, this would leave us about 1.0 percent below market in 2018, on average.

Throughout, both sides continued our polite discussions in a professional, evidence-based atmosphere. We appreciate the employer’s efforts to address nurses’ concerns. With the pay increases reached in the tentative agreement at Providence Medford Medical Center, we now are 5.7 percent below average in regional wages. The employer’s most-recent offer cuts our market disparity almost in half.

Since we ran out of time on Friday, May 25, both sides agreed to arrange two additional bargaining dates in July. We will keep you informed about those dates.
We need to continue to hear from you!

In bargaining, both sides usually compromise to reach an agreement. At what point would you be willing to vote to ratify a contract? We heard from many of you in our pre-bargaining survey. Now that we are in the middle of negotiations, we have a better sense of where the employer is at. We would like to reassess our dues-paying members’ willingness to stand firm.

Please contact any member of our bargaining team as well as our officers and stewards directly, by checking your bargaining unit webpage. We will be hosting another membership meeting.

**Membership Meeting**
**Thursday, June 28**
**5:30 – 8:30 p.m.**
**Location to be announced**

Like our meeting earlier this month, this is a drop-in session. Come anytime, even for just a few minutes. It is a valuable opportunity for our team to hear from you!