Rexanne “Rex” Payne has stepped down as our bargaining unit chair, which creates opportunities for others to participate. Last bargaining round, Payne brought our team together, recruited others to participate, and assisted in training new members on the negotiation team drawing on her experiences from Providence – Willamette Falls.

That effort led to nearly equal pay to Good Samaritan Regional Medical Center (GSRMC). Twenty years ago, SPCH nurses were paid significantly lower than GSRMC wages. SPCH are now paid less than one percent below GSRMC! Throughout, Payne has been an active steward representing nurses in disciplinary meetings as well as providing support and advice to others.
We have needs for ONA positions in our bargaining unit. Our primary need is for additional bargaining team members, who will serve during the bargaining round beginning this Fall and until we ratify a new contract. Since our contract expires June 30, 2024, we expect to begin preparations for bargaining immediately.

Bargaining a new successor contract takes a significant time commitment. It is not unusual for us to meet weekly preparing proposals, rounding the units, negotiating directly with the employer, and developing strategy and tactics to move the employer.

Each team member is expected to attend all planning meetings and all negotiation sessions. Further, each team member carries their share of the work, including assuming a role in bargaining and assignment of a specific contract article. This involves researching, developing, writing, and advocating proposals.

The term for at-large bargaining team members expires when we have a printed contract that is delivered to ONA members.

Those interested must be ONA dues-paying members and complete the consent to serve form by following the link or scanning the QR code.

Please be prepared to describe your participation in ONA or other union activities and why you want to serve on our bargaining team.

Nominations close for at-large bargaining team members Monday, September 11 at 9 a.m.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2023ONA-SPCH-At-Large-BargTeamMembNoms
Other Vacancies and Leadership Opportunities

We have other leadership opportunities for those who want to participate.

**Executive Committee Members** serve throughout the life of our contract and are also on our bargaining team. We currently have vacancies for Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Membership Chair, and PNCC Chair. Learn more in Article 5 of our bylaws: [http://www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/Bylaws/PCH-BY-2015-10-23.pdf](http://www.oregonrn.org/resource/resmgr/Bylaws/PCH-BY-2015-10-23.pdf)

We will also need **Contract Action Team (CAT) Members** during bargaining. They serve as communications liaison, assisting our bargaining team by listening and questioning other members.

Finally, we would like to have more **Stewards**, who represent other nurses in disciplinary and grievance proceedings. Stewards are available year-round to provide information, advice, and support other nurses in workplace situations.

If you know anyone interested in serving in these roles, please have them contact our labor rep, Gary Aguiar, text/call 503-444-0690 or Aguiar@OregonRN.org.

**Words Matter**

The Terms We Use Frame Ours (and Others’) Thinking

The words we use shape our (and others’) thinking about what we stand for. Often, we and others third-party the union by saying “the ONA this” or “the ONA that.” WE ARE ONA! Instead, we should say “we” or “ours” or “the nurses.” For example, it is not “the contract” but “our contract.”

Another example is the use of the word “hospital” to describe the employer. The implication is that hospital administrators are “the hospital,” when actually it is us, the caregivers, run the hospital on a daily basis! It is more accurate to call them the “Employer,” because in our relationship as employees, that is their role.

Further, some nursing administrators refer to themselves and other managers as “leaders,” which is inaccurate. Leaders are defined as people who facilitate change, hopefully for the positive good. Some managers may perform that function, but actually their primary role is to manage resources, specifically money and personnel. Leaders can populate any rank of an organization, including an entry-level job. We should call managers what they are: managers.

**Better Care Now!**

Just about everyone in America has a loved one in a nursing home, knows someone who works in a nursing home, or recognizes that they may need nursing home care in the future. We need your help to make sure we have a strong safe staffing standard nationally. Learn more: Better Care Now | AFL-CIO (aflcio.org)
Bargaining Primer—Part Two

This is the second part in our series to introduce members to bargaining a union contract. Often, before formal bargaining begins, the two parties (i.e., the union and the employer) will negotiate ground rules to govern the process. Read the ground rules from last time here: SPCH_TAs_2021-05-06.pdf (ymaws.com)

Independently, each party develops formal proposals to change existing language in our contract. Most often, these are presented for an entire article in the contract.

Typically, the union presents first with the employer following. In some bargaining rounds, the parties agree to settle non-economic issues before tackling economic ones (e.g., wages). In other rounds, high-priority proposals are bargained first.

**Proposals** are presented in a redline format, where the red words are proposed changes to the existing language. Underlined words are proposed insertions and words struck through are proposed deletions.

Federal law prohibits both sides from “regressive” or backwards bargaining. Regressive bargaining occurs when one party offers a proposal that asks for more than their earlier proposal. Since it has the effect of moving the parties further from an agreement, it is illegal. When one side offers a regressive proposal, the other party may file a complaint with the National Labor Relations Board, which is the federal agency charged with enforcing the law.

Each proposal is responded to by the other party, where they can accept, reject, or offer counter proposals. Counterproposals continue back and forth, which may result in both sides agreeing on specific language. Part Three of this series will address the various outcomes here.

Proposals related to wages and working conditions are “mandatory subjects” of bargaining, which includes base wages, differentials, meals and rest periods, seniority, and other benefits. If either party offers a proposal on one of these topics, both sides must engage and negotiate it. Permissive subjects allow both parties to negotiate but neither side is required to bargain them. Learn more: 5-Subjects-of-Bargaining.pdf (usw.org)

Both parties must bargain in “good faith,” which is a legal term defined by the National Labor Relations Board. Many elements constitute good faith bargaining, e.g., the employer must meet with the union at reasonable times and reasonable intervals, cannot engage in surface bargaining, and must provide information requested by the union related to working conditions or topics of bargaining. Good faith bargaining does not require either side to move off their initial proposals! Learn more: What's the Law? | National Labor Relations Board (nlrb.gov)

When one party accepts the other side’s proposal, it is often called a Tentative Agreement (or TA). A TA means that both sides agree to particular language for a provision. Once all of the proposals in an article are TA-ed, the lead negotiators from each side will sign it. Then, that article is put to bed and cannot be reopened. The TA-ed language will appear in the final redline to be presented for ratification.

**Supposals** are informal presentations, which ask, “if we proposed such-and-such, how would you respond?” It allows the parties to think creatively without being subject to regressive bargaining.
Regional News

Nurses Uniting to Raise Standards

PROVIDENCE SEASIDE

After significant pressure from our bargaining committee — including our statement that forward progress could not be made on negotiations unless retro pay was restored to their offer — management returned to the table with an economic offer that included retro pay and restored the small one-time bonus they proposed before the strike.

Even better, Providence made a small improvement to their economic offer, despite threatening to make the offer worse if we went out on strike — for the first time, management offered some small, one-time increases to our paid time off banks. We believe we can earn more, but this is a positive step in the right direction.

OUR SACRED HEART TEAM IS IN MEDIATION

After 30 bargaining sessions, we finally achieved a tentative agreement (TA) for the Sacred Heart Medical Center. But Home Care Services negotiations continue with the help of a federal mediator as PeaceHealth is still trying to give Home Care a much lower wage increase. While we have victories to celebrate, we still have a lot of work to do to make sure Home Care wages stay in parity with the Medical Center’s.

The SHMC bargaining team recommends a “yes” vote on this TA. Below are some highlights. This is one of the best contracts we have achieved at Sacred Heart and something for all of us to be proud of.

TENTATIVE AGREEMENT HIGHLIGHTS:

- 4-year contract with an option to increase wages in the fourth year
  - Year 1 – a $1.00 market rate adjustment added to all steps plus 6% which equates to an 8% increase.
  - Year 2 – 5.5%
  - Year 3 – 4%
  - Year 4 – 3%

- Significant increases to almost all differentials including:
  - Compensation for Extra Shift (CES) = $22 Year 1; Increasing to $23 July 1, 2024
  - Charge Nurse = $5.50 Year 1; Increase to $6.00 July 1, 2024
  - Facilitator = $3.75 Year 1; Increase to $4.00 July 1, 2024
  - Evening Shift = $3.75 Year 1; Increase to $4.00 July 1, 2024
  - Night Shift = $8.50 Year 1; Increase to $9.50 July 1, 2024
  - Evening and Night Shift differentials to be paid for the entire shift.

- On-call:
  - Voluntary - $5.50 Year 1; Increase to $7.00 July 1, 2024
  - Mandatory - $6.50 Year 1; Increase to $8.50 July 1, 2024
  - NEW Float Differential = $1.50
ONA stewards are the lifeblood of what makes our union strong. A strong union has at least one steward for every unit and shift.

Stewards are there to answer colleague’s questions and discuss concerns and help keep every nurse up to date on important union activities.

There are three different steward trainings offered throughout the year. Introductory steward training focuses on representing your coworkers and problem-solving workplace issues. Grievance handling covers identifying, filing and following up on contract grievance. Building worksite power stresses how to build your union and create an environment that results in improvements for nurses.

Find the training and date that works best for you!

More steward trainings and other learning opportunities are being planned, so check back to the ONA website regularly to find more opportunities.

Space is limited so register today at:

www.OregonRN.org/Steward-Training