Welcoming Cancer Center Nurses to Our ONA Bargaining Unit

ONA is happy to welcome Willamette Valley Medical Center cancer center nurses to the ONA family as part of last week’s successful election! When WVMC nurses first discussed organizing, we did our best to include all staff nurses who do patient care and are employed by the hospital in the eventual bargaining unit.

After we filed for an election with the NLRB, management tried to include nurses in job classifications who perform a substantially different job and report to a different management structure. We did not even know a few of these job positions existed! Management also objected to and attempted to exclude nurses who we wanted in our unit, including charge nurses, from the vote. To this day, there has been no clear or coherent explanation from management as to why.

There is little doubt in our mind that management did this to dilute our vote support and attempt unsuccessfully to weaken nurses’ voices. In a very short window of time, we reached out to as many cancer center nurses as possible to answer questions and bring them up to speed about why nurses at our hospital are unionizing. Rather than hold up our vote for longer than necessary and have a drawn-out fight with management over voter eligibility, we opted to proceed with the vote and work out which positions to include in our contract after we won and got to the bargaining table.

Despite management trying to throw us a curveball, we are more united than ever and are thrilled to have cancer center nurses as part of our bargaining unit of nurses at WVMC! After all, we have seen that nurses are stronger together.

We invite all nurses to join us at our next ONA meeting on Jan. 15 for a chance to ask questions and discuss moving forward together for the standards we deserve in our first contract.

Calling All Leaders to Step Up to Serve on Our Leadership Team

ONA is actively seeking enthusiastic, engaged nurses to run for leadership in our organization! Now that we’ve won our union, it’s time for us to elect officers who will lead us as we fight for our first contract and beyond. Serving as an officer inside ONA is a rewarding opportunity for you to give a voice to yourself and your coworkers on the most important issues facing nursing today. You can nominate yourself or your coworkers to help ensure WVMC nurses have the standards our families count on that ensure our patients get the care they rely on. Step up for your coworkers – run for ONA office in your bargaining unit today!
ONA Officer Duties as Outlined in Model Bylaws

CHAIRPERSON
Conduct and supervise the affairs of WVMC-ONA in accordance with these Bylaws; Serve as an ex-officio member of all WVMC-ONA committees; Appoint special committees and their members with the approval of the Executive Committee; Fill vacancies that occur on committees with the approval of the executive committee until the next regular election; In conjunction with the Treasurer, disburse or order the disbursement of all monies necessary to pay the bills, obligations and indebtedness of WVMC-ONA, which have been properly incurred as provided herein; Enforce these Bylaws and ensure that all officers perform their respective duties.

VICE-CHAIR
Assist the Chairperson in the discharge of all duties; Perform such other duties and render such assistance as may be directed by the Chairperson; In case of the Chairperson’s absence, the Vice-Chair shall perform the duties of the Chairperson; and Should the Chairperson’s position be vacated, the Vice-Chair shall serve as the Chairperson until the next election.

SECRETARY
Send out meeting notices as directed; On at least an annual basis, update all members’ contact information, including correct mailing addresses, home and work telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. Provide this information to ONA; Collect names of nominees for elected positions and construct a ballot for all the names submitted; Confirm that the nominees are willing to serve and when there is no Membership Chair, ensure the nominee is in good standing; Verify that amendments to bylaws are properly submitted; Record, maintain and archive minutes for all Executive Committee meetings; Sit on the Elections Committee; and Conduct correspondence as directed by the Executive Committee.

TREASURER
Has financial responsibility over the financial affairs of the WVMC-ONA; Make at least a quarterly report to the Executive Committee and EGW that includes the assets and liabilities of the WVMC-ONA; and Keep itemized records, showing the source of all monies received and spent, and keep records, vouchers, work sheets, books and accounts and all resolutions to verify such report and provide a copy of this information to EGW by December 31st of every year.

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR
Conduct and supervise the affairs of the Membership Committee in accordance with these Bylaws; Ensures that all new hires are contacted in a timely fashion to discuss membership in the WVMC-ONA and the ONA, ensures new hires are provided with a copy of the collective bargaining agreement, these Bylaws, a ONA membership application and to ensure that the new hires are introduced to the new hires’ unit steward; Strive to increase the membership of the bargaining unit; Maintain a group of activists who are members in good standing and who are willing to perform duties at the request of the Executive Committee or ONA. The goal should be to get at least one activist in each unit at the hospital; Ensure that the activists receive training in organizing; and Ensure that membership records accurately reflect who are: a) members in good standing; b) members in bad standing; c) fair-share members; d) bona-fide religious objectors; e) new hires who are potential new members; and f) non-members. The Membership Chair will ensure that the list is updated on an annual basis and before every vote of the bargaining unit.

Officer Nomination Forms Coming Soon!
Surveys: An Important Way to Provide Input

There are many issues we want to address in our first contract. To begin the negotiation process, we need to prioritize our issues. The first way we do that is by actively voicing our concerns through the ONA bargaining survey. Go to www.OregonRN.org and select Willamette Falls Medical Center under Find Your Bargaining Unit to view the sample survey, or click here. We need your feedback on what the survey does not cover. Please take a look and email your comments to Elizabeth Gemeroy at Gemeroy@OregonRN.org.

End of Year Message from ONA

As 2019 draws to a close, a period of historic growth and victories for our organization, the state of the Oregon Nurses Association is strong. Reflecting back on this past year, it is clear to me that Oregon nurses have what it takes to continue to rise and meet the challenges that persist in our field. This year was a major opportunity for ONA to reach new highs, and I am pleased that we established a series of organizing wins that did just that. We also had genuine organizational growth: securing an equitable contract for the staff of ONA, and filling key high profile vacancies within the organization. I am pleased to share that a new Communications & Member Services Director, Rachel Gumpert, joined ONA in November from a senior national leadership role within a major International Union, and that in February, Sarah Laslett will join ONA as Executive Director after working as a longtime ally to Oregon nurses within the broader Oregon labor movement.

Throughout the many challenges nurses face, whether attacks by hospital administrators on safe staffing practices or mandatory calls that leave too many exhausted and discouraged, ONA has proved time and time again that this organization is the premier vehicle in this state to fight back and advance the voice of nurses. I am proud that despite a corporate health care system that often puts nurses and patients last, and internal challenges that our union grappled with throughout the last year, ONA continues to move the needle for patients and nurses across Oregon.

As we close 2019 with a period of record external organizing growth and in victory over so many challenges, our union is in a position of power going into 2020. I am incredibly proud of the courage and work of so many who have gotten us here, including the workers in Baker City who successfully organized our first ever unit of hospital techs this fall, the acute care mental health nurses at Unity who won the union for the first time this year, and the Willamette Valley Medical Center nurses who voted to unionize with ONA just days ago.

In 2020, our organization has many fights ahead, including contract negotiations with some of our largest units at OHSU and Providence. I am confident that just as we have overcome challenges this year, we are poised to lead major victories in the coming year for the standards and safety of nurses and patients alike.

I thank you for your continued engagement and membership in the year ahead, and I can’t wait to be shoulder-to-shoulder with you in it as we continue to improve the lives of Oregon nurses.

Lynda Pond, RN
ONA President
Don’t Miss Important ONA Emails

ONA wants to make sure all members receive timely communications, ensuring you have the most up-to-date information on your contract, bargaining issues, upcoming votes, nursing research, practice issues and workplace policies. If you are not receiving ONA emails, we can help.

First, check to make sure ONA emails are not being filtered into a junk, spam or clutter folder. Many email providers, have built in spam/junk filters or blockers. The filters are intended to prevent you from getting junk mail or spam, but can unintentionally block emails you want to receive. If ONA emails are in one of these folders, flag them as “not junk” and add News@OregonRN.org to your safe sender list.

If there are no ONA emails in those folders and you still aren’t receiving ONA emails, there are various causes listed to the right.

You can fix most problems by simply emailing ONA at News@OregonRN.org with your name, personal email address and the name of the facility you work at in the body of the email.

We will update our records to ensure you don’t miss future ONA emails.

Common Reasons for Not Receiving ONA Emails

1. Spam/Junk Filters: Emails from ONA are being flagged as junk or spam by your email service provider.
2. No Email: ONA does not have an email on file for you.
3. Bad Email: ONA has an incorrect or outdated email on file.
4. Blocked: Due to several failed delivery attempts, our system has stopped attempting to send emails to your email address.
5. Opted Out: You have opted out of receiving emails.
6. Work Email Filters: Some health care systems filter out ONA emails so nurses don’t receive ONA-related emails. This is why we encourage nurses to use their personal email addresses instead of work emails.

Fixing Problems to Receive ONA Emails

1. Check your junk/spam/clutter folder for ONA emails: Flag ONA emails as “not junk/spam” and add News@OregonRN.org to your safe sender list.
2. Email ONA: To fix reasons 2-6, simply email ONA at News@OregonRN.org, and include your name, personal email and facility you work at in the body of the email.

SAVE THE DATE!

ONA Convention and House of Delegates
May 18-19, 2020, Portland, OR

The convention’s theme is “Rising Up Together” and will feature sessions on professional development, nursing practice and workplace issues, as well as topics critical to ONA’s strategic plan including equity and inclusion.

Registration is open at oregonrn.org/events