



UNION NURSE



NATIONAL NURSES ORGANIZING COMMITTEE-TEXAS • NATIONAL NURSES UNITED
JULY/AUGUST 2013

NNOC-TEXAS/NNU RECEIVES KICK-ASS AWARD AT STATE LABOR CONVENTION



The 2013 Kick-Ass award, to all of you

The Texas State AFL-CIO at their state convention in Dallas recognized the nurses of NNOC-Texas for their spirit, dedication to colleagues and patients, and willingness to put up a fight when right. The award really is to all of you reading this Bulletin. You take your time to make the Union work, pay your fair share of dues, and build Metro Committees so that nurses without collective bargaining rights can also have an organization. Congratulations.



RN Judy Lerma, one of the founding 'pioneer nurses' of NNOC-Texas shows the Convention the first public action by NNOC, at the Alamo, July 17 2006

Among its business the state convention debated and approved five resolutions submitted by NNOC-Texas: to support state legislation on safe patient handling and on mandated RN-to-patient staffing ratios, to call for a national strategy to assist southern workers to organize for collective bargaining, and for a workers' Bill of Rights in Texas.



NNOC at the AFL-CIO: Robert Baker (Machinist Union and husband of Kim), Kim Baker (Corpus Christi MC), Maria Navarro (Del Sol MC), Judith Lerma (San Antonio Metro Committee), and from the very first private sector nurses' union ever in Texas – Brenda Landreville and Brenda Prewitt (Cypress Fairbanks MC)

Union Wins Wrongly Fired RN's Job with Back Wages

During the union organizing campaign at Sierra Medical Center in El Paso, management fired RN Susan Houghton in retaliation for her union activity. This is illegal, a violation of both federal law and the U.S. Constitution. As too many Texas nurses know, such high-handed treatment of nurses by Hospitals is often routine and unchallenged because most Texas nurses do not have a union. But not in this case. NNOC-Texas took up the case and won RN Houghton's job back along with any lost wages and benefits. She returned to work in the ICU on July 8.



TOP RIGHT: *RNs at Sierra Medical Center welcome RN Susan Houghton's (sitting center) return to work*

BOTTOM RIGHT: *RNs Monica Martell (Nurse Rep for CCU days) and Brenda Contreras (Negotiating Committee, ICU days) pass out flyers announcing the victory. RN Alex Gomez gets his copy.*



RN PAY TO INCREASE THIS MONTH

Attention RNs at HCA-affiliated hospitals!

A special wage bulletin was distributed this month in all facilities. Make sure you get a copy and check your pay stub for the first full pay period in July. By Union Contract, RN wages are to go up by 2% this July and then by 2.25% next July.

There is no more 'merit' system.

COMPANY CUTS PAY FOR PARALLON NURSES

Agency nurses report receiving a memo from management that their pay will be cut by 2.8%, up to a \$1 an hour.

PAY CUTS REPORTED IN TEXAS AND BEYOND

Christus nurses in Corpus Christi report a steep cut in their night differential, formerly a percentage and now a flat \$5 an hour. This on top of a reduction in the maximum allowed for PTO accruals. Next door in Louisiana several nurses have written NNOC to report a maximum raise of 1.5% (but even that is not paid to everyone) and a wage-freeze on top pay. One nurse writes, "The huge healthcare organizations are becoming so powerful here. We need help."

PATIENT CARE CONTRACT LANGUAGE MAKES THE DAY GO BETTER

"Recently at our hospital we had a very busy week due to lack of space in Same Day Surgery. The nurses in PACU were asked to recover the Surgical patients and discharge them from PACU. But according to the union contract we needed orientation with a proper checklist before we would be considered competent to do what was being asked. Management was shown the contract language and made other arrangements. It turned out to be a good day for RNs and patients – and everything went well thanks to all the hard work of our nurses and ancillary staff."

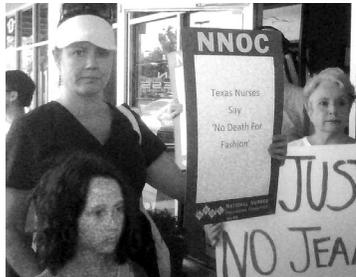


ABOVE: *left to right: Toni Limas, Jan Weed, Emily Lloyd and Teresa Reeder*

— Jan Weed, RN, PACU, CCMC, Nurse Rep.



RN negotiating committees from all 3 Tenet facilities – Providence Memorial Hospital (above), Sierra MC (upper right), and Cypress Fairbanks (lower right) – proposed a new wage system for RNs based on years of experience.



FIRST IN SOLIDARITY. RN Kelly Green and her daughter Jacquelyn protest clothing workers sweatshop conditions at the GAP in Austin.



Contreras (ICU Days, on right) and Amy Hernandez (NICU Days on left), with RN Carlos Soriano (CCU nights) who wears his 'passing out leaflets' shirt. They report that hospital security was less than amused.

SHOULD WE ADOPT A NEW SLOGAN?
Preparing to distribute flyers at Sierra MC, Negotiating Committee

members Brenda



Some of the Texas nurses in San Francisco at the big NNU rally and march across the Golden Gate Bridge in June.



Several months ago NNOC-Texas leaders met at the semi-annual state meeting for a full review of our situation in Texas. Here are some updates since that meeting:

- El Paso County judge Veronica Escobar is now in public support of the Robin Hood Tax, stating in a letter, “It’s time that Wall Street contributes their fair share to improving our economy.”
- The Safe Patient Handling (lift) bill HB 1829 was voted up by the Texas House Committee but died in the Senate. Rep Gonzalez continues to work with NNOC on this bill.
- RNs testified for the Texas Patient Protection Act (ratios) HB 2880 while the Texas Hospital Association opposed, claiming that the staffing committee legislation passed in 2009 was working just fine. NNOC is working with state legislators to expose that canard.
- NNOC-Texas worked with Texas Forward in favor of Medicaid expansion, election reform, increased education funding, and against corporate cronyism (giving state funds to political donors).

