

MAR 19
2014

UNION UPDATE



ORGANIZING VICTORY

AT NEW PRISON MEDICAL FACILITY

Grassroots effort yields second CDCR medical win in two months

After weeks of intense organizing, Local 1000 members earned hard-fought wins at California's new flagship correctional medical facility—the California Health Care Facility (CHCF) in Stockton.

Their efforts pushed CHCF management into implementing a new post and bid process for health care workers, and to stop changing employee shifts without notice. A joint labor management committee (JLMC) was formed to give workers a seat at the table while addressing ongoing issues.

“Our members stepped up and organized themselves to work with management and solved some very difficult workplace issues,” said Kim Cowart, chair of Bargaining Unit 17.

Critical staffing and supply issues have plagued the state-of-the art facility since CHCF opened in July. An

official internal memo published in the Los Angeles Times indicated that staffing shortages throughout the prison—including an inadequate number of nurses—resulted in “fragmented care.” Clark Kelso, the receiver appointed by a federal judge to run the troubled prison health care system, ordered a halt to further admissions to the facility last month because of widespread problems.

“Management was acting like they could do what ever they wanted without regard for our families and our lives outside work,” said Linda Miller, a registered nurse who became a steward at CHCF Stockton in December. “A bunch of us decided to fight back so we got organized and stopped them in their tracks. Now that people have seen what we can do with our union, lots of members want to become stewards.”



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-Kim Cowart, Chair, Bargaining Unit 17

Organizing builds momentum throughout CDCR Medical Facilities

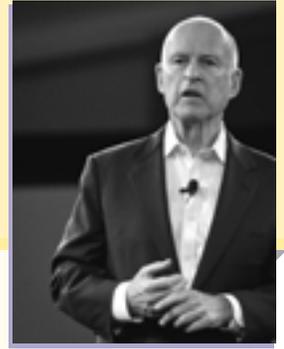
Earlier this year, workers fought for and won a JLMC at the Sierra Conservation Center (SCC), which yielded major breakthroughs in improving conditions for staff, patients and the community.

Shortly after the formation of the JLMC, management at SCC agreed to fully comply with contract language governing sick time, mandatory overtime and progressive discipline.

“The JLMC at Sierra is the product of our members supporting each other and taking action together,” said Krisse Fells-Kjono, Bargaining Unit 20 member and DLC president who also sits on the committee. “I hope that we can be an example for other facilities—the solidarity that grew within our members was truly inspiring.”

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CalPERS—Governor take steps to strengthen retirement security



Employer contribution to increase but Local 1000 member contribution rates remain the same.

The state is increasing the employer contribution to CalPERS in order strengthen the retirement fund against future stock market swings and ensure retirement funds remain on stable financial footing.

The move, which benefits all state workers, will not affect the pension contribution rates of Local 1000 members.

Under the plan adopted by CalPERS board in February, the state will ramp up the rate increase over a three-year period, beginning July 1.

“CalPERS and the state are working together to ensure that our retirement funds will be there for us when we need them,” said Theresa Taylor, a Franchise Tax Board employee who serves as a member of Local 1000’s Retirement Security for All Committee. “This will further protect our hard-earned retirement savings from losses and

ensures the fund’s stability and longevity.”

Gov. Jerry Brown proposed that the state start increasing payments immediately because it will save the state over the long run. Other public employers, such as local governments and special districts, will also increase their payments but over a longer timetable.

“CalPERS and the state are working together to ensure that our retirement funds will be there for us when we need them.”

~ Theresa Taylor
Franchise Tax Board and
Local 1000’s Retirement Security for All Committee

“Think of it like a mortgage payment,” added Taylor. “The state is taking responsibility to pay down its debt at a time when the economy is rebounding and CalPERS investments are doing well. It’s a really prudent decision.”

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Women’s History Month

Campaign focuses on gender disparity in retirement security

Local 1000 president featured in documentary calling for better retirement options for women

Anthropologist and human rights activist, Margaret Mead once said, “Sooner or later I’m going to die, but I’m not going to retire.” Mead kept working by choice, but studies show that for more than 40 percent of Americans, including millions of women—the only choice will be between retiring into poverty or working until they die.

Mead’s famous quote inspired the production of a new SEIU-produced documentary film titled “I Am Not Margaret Mead: Protecting Women’s Access to Financially Secure Retirement,” which illustrates the retirement gap between men and women.

The documentary explains why women are twice as likely to retire in poverty than men through interviews with retirement security experts, advocates and working women, including Local 1000 President Yvonne Walker.

“Women are counting on lawmakers, employers and advocates to do more to deliver retirement security to them and their families,” said Walker. “I’m proud to say that California is making significant strides addressing this issue through our Secure Choice Retirement legislation. It’s exciting to see this effort catching on across the nation as other states work to create solutions to America’s retirement security crisis.”

Retirement insecurity disproportionately affects women, who live longer and earn less than men. Women also take on more family obligations and are less likely to have a pension or retirement plan than their male counterparts; making them more vulnerable to poverty in old age. “We must find solutions so that every woman can retire with dignity after a lifetime of working hard and caring for their families,” added Walker.

To see the six-minute video, click <http://seiu1000.org/2014/03/womens-history-month.php>