

DCNA Together – Making a Difference in DC

July, 2021



DCNA Mourns the Death of AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka

(Excerpted from the AP) — Richard Trumka, the powerful president of the AFL-CIO who rose from the coal mines of

Pennsylvania to preside over one of the largest labor organizations in the world, died Thursday (August 5). He was 72.

“The labor movement, the AFL-CIO and the nation lost a legend today,” the AFL-CIO said. “Rich Trumka devoted his life to working people, from his early days as president of the United Mine Workers of America to his unparalleled leadership as the voice of America’s labor movement.”

A burly man with thick eyebrows and a bushy mustache, Trumka was the son and grandson of coal miners. He was

born in 1949 in the small southwest Pennsylvania town of Nemaquin and worked for seven years in the mines before earning an accounting degree from Penn State and then a law degree from Villanova University.

At times, Trumka challenged blue-collar workers to confront their own prejudices, including a forceful denunciation of racism in the union ranks during Barack Obama’s first campaign for the White House. “We can’t tap dance around the fact that there’s a lot of white folks out there ... and a lot of them are good union people, they just can’t get past this idea that there’s something wrong with voting for a Black man,” he said during an impassioned 2008 speech. Until his death, he used his power to push for health care legislation, expanded workers’ rights and infrastructure spending.

DCNA released a statement on Facebook – “Today is a very sad day for the labor movement, for workers across the world and for all who care about workers’ rights and dignity. Mr. Trumka was a fine man and a tireless leader. Rest in power, brother.”

Negotiations Updates

United Medical Center

On August 4th, DCNA leaders formally executed the recently negotiated collective bargaining agreement between DCNA and United Medical Center. The two most significant contract gains are the implementation of nurse to patient staffing ratios, believed to be the first in the DMV, and 15% salary increases between 2019 and 2023.

Howard University/Howard University Hospital

DCNA and HUH have agreed to extend the collective bargaining agreement for approximately 400 nurses and licensed health care professionals through August 31st. The parties have committed to bargaining sessions twice per week through August and are currently discussing matters relating to the working conditions of employees, including staffing, hours of work, subcontracting, grievance procedures and discipline. Despite the very real differences in proposals, Edward J. Smith, Chief Negotiator for DCNA, expressed confidence that DCNA will be successful in negotiating a fair and equitable contract on behalf of all members and one that will provide the opportunity for continuing excellent health care for DC residents.

Organizing Updates

DCNA is committed to organizing and adding new members to our union. Over the past several months, staff and leadership have signed up new members at United Medical Center and Children’s National Hospital. We have signed up 53 new members at UMC since the Spring. DCNA is also having discussions with health care professionals working in facilities that do not have a union.



If you know of any colleagues working in non-union hospitals or facilities that may be interested in joining DCNA, please contact Thomas Raymond at traymond@dcna.org.

DCNA's Zoom Party Celebrates the Year of the Nurse

On July 16th, DCNA held our Year of the Nurse celebration via Zoom. This was yet another challenge during the pandemic – how to have a virtual event and show our appreciation for all of our members. We opened with an array and slideshow of photos dating back to the 1980s. We also gave our respect to a nurse and labor and community activists who has passed away since March 2020 – Noel Sinkiat, Howard University Hospital RN, John Sweeney, AFL-CIO President, Howard Croft, Civil Rights activist, Andrew Washington, Executive Director, AFSCME, Council 20 and Elizabeth Davis, President Washington Teachers Union. DJ Prince Royal spun a bunch of fun songs, while we enjoyed a dinner from DealDash. We also had a trivia competition and closed out the party with comedian Mary Mack. Nearly seventy DCNA members attended. DCNA hopes that the event was successful, despite the inability to share food, hugs and drinks in person.

The Practice of Nursing – Deborah Thomas , RN, BSN, CDES

The state of nursing practice currently is demanding and contentious. The weariness of the pandemic has left nurses with the challenges of maintaining sanity in a chaotic world. Our lives still demand and need us but there has been little time to recover before other challenges emerge. Caring for yourself is important now more than ever.

In the work environment as much as the pandemic showed our intense worth. The aftermath of this pandemic will continue to highlight the same problems with heightened needs in our healthcare system. Your vigilance in your practice now is required: report dangerous conditions of work; and use the Assignment Despite Objective (ADO) format to report unsafe conditions that may be detrimental to your licensure and your patient's safety. Become familiar with the DC Nurse Practice Act to clearly understand your legal responsibilities. Your activism is imperative now. Most of all take good care of yourself, because we as one of the most sacred and respected professions, are needed now, more than ever. You can download the ADO forms and view The DC Nurse Practice Act on the DCNA website (www.dcna.org).

DCNA Needy Nurses Fund

Did you know that DCNA has a fund specifically set up to help members in need of financial assistance? For well over a decade, DCNA has provided assistance to nurses and licensed health care workers who have struggled financially. We ask that you help keep this fund maintained. To donate, please contact Ms. Veronica Burnett at vburnett@dcna.org.

Upcoming Events

DCNA Board and Cabinet Meetings, Tuesday, September 21, 2021, 5:30pm, via Zoom. These meetings are open to all members. Should you wish to join the meeting, please contact Ms. Vickie Spence (vspence@dcna.org), no later than September 14th to confirm attendance.

DCNA Annual Meeting and Elections

DCNA has tentatively scheduled our Annual meeting for either December 2 or 9, 2021. We hope and plan to have a meeting in person. Your elected leaders will be discussing potential locations and a program, including continuing education. Elections will be conducted on-line. **Please make sure you update your contact information. Send DCNA your personal email and your home address to ensure you receive election information and a ballot. Send your contact information to Ms. Veronica Burnett at vburnett@dcna.org.**

Please visit DCNA on our website at www.dcna.org or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/DCNursesAssociation.

For Assignment Despite Objection and Grievance forms, visit www.dcna.org.

DCNA is located at 1220 12th Street, SE, Suite G10, Washington, DC 20003. Telephone – (202) 244-2705