

DCNA Together – Making a Difference in DC

February 2016



DCNA Marches in Selma, AL

DCNA representatives went down to Selma, Alabama from March 4-6 to join in marches and other events celebrating 50 + 1 years of civil rights. A series of events, including the Selma Bridge March, commemorated the 1965 March on Selma. DCNA attendees were Edward Smith, Executive Director; LaKisha Little, President; Robin Burns, Treasurer; Ignacia Joyner, Secretary; Olubukunola Alao, E&GW Cabinet; and Garnett Freeman, E&GW Cabinet. In addition to participating in the March, DCNA attended services at Brown AME in Selma and visited the Rosa Parks and Civil Rights Museums in Montgomery, Alabama.



Photos (clockwise from top left): DCNA on the Bridge in Selma before the March; Dr. King – Selma March 1965; DCNA and thousands get ready to start the March; John Lewis speaking at Brown AME; DCNA at the Rosa Parks Museum (Montgomery, AL); DCNA at the Civil Rights Museum (Montgomery, AL).

Negotiations Stalled at United Medical Center

Negotiations were last held on December 3rd and 9th. The parties discussed several open issues, including nurse staffing, development of a nurse clinical advancement program (CAP), wages and discipline and discharge. Despite DCNA's availability to negotiate in December and January, management has failed to modify its initial offer regarding wages and benefits. DCNA has put forth proposals to assist in recruiting new graduate nurses, to standardize pay rates for RNs and to implement the CAP. Although there have been fruitful discussions on the development of the CAP, management has failed to offer a wage scale system to be utilized in conjunction with the CAP. Hospital officials have, to date, been unable to commit to further discussions on wages and benefits. Edward J. Smith, Esq., Executive Director, DCNA, believes that the time is almost here to seek mediation and ultimately interest arbitration, a process in which a third party will make rulings on all impasse items, including wages and benefits. "Unless management is prepared to come to the table and iron out our differences, we can no longer hold RNs hostage to the failure of hospital and DC officials to competently run this necessary healthcare institution, Smith advised.

Nurses Continue to Fight for Protection Against Workplace Violence

Despite assurances from several DC Councilmembers, no legislation was introduced on March 1st regarding workplace violence against nurses. DCNA has drafted and circulated proposed legislation that requires hospitals to accurately report workplace violence incidents and to work with DCNA in developing plans to combat the violence against nurses. Despite receiving pledges of support of the legislation from the International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 36, the Washington Teachers Union and the National Association of Government Employees, councilmembers stayed silent at their March legislative session.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports that workplace violence annually affects an estimated 1.7 million employees in the U.S. and nurses are at the highest risk. Health care workers suffer violent assaults at a rate nearly five times higher than the average worker in all other industries combined. It is estimated that more than 80 percent of all assaults on registered nurses go unreported. 35 states have passed laws to address the violence against nurses.

Councilmember LaRuby May, Ward 8 Councilwoman, has been working with DCNA in drafting legislation that will address this issue. The legislation will lead to enhanced penalties (including imprisonment) for any serious physical harm or threat of serious physical harm against a nurse. It will also require health care facilities to establish workplace violence committees to protect nurses from violent acts and will implement oversight by the DC Government of the workplace violence in health care facilities.

It will take your voice to hold Councilmember May and the rest of the DC Council accountable for protecting nurses.

DCNA is circulating a petition to support the legislation. Please sign the petition. If you need more information, please contact Wala Blegay at wblegay@dcna.org.

DCNA has also created a Facebook page – DCNA Nurse Lives Matter, <https://www.facebook.com/nurseslivesmatter>. Please “like” and “share” this page and get involved.



Washington Metro Labor Council, AFL-CIO Swears in DCNA's Delegates.

In February 2016, several DCNA members officially became our delegates to the Washington Metropolitan Labor Council, AFL-CIO. Pictured at left is the swearing in ceremony of Ms. Olubukunola Alao. Other DCNA delegates are: Andobah Acquah; Robin Burns; LaKisha Little; Ndubusi Okoroafor; and Loretta Peterson. DCNA membership elected our delegates in the 2015 Annual Meeting and Elections.

Upcoming Events:

Local Leader Grievance Training Workshop, DCNA, 5100 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 306, Washington, DC 20016, April 6, 2016, 10:00 am – 2:30 pm. DCNA will be conducting intermediate level training on investigating and processing grievances. Please contact Ms. Vickie Spence at vspence@dcna.org or Walakewon Blegay, Esq. at wblegay@dcna.org to register.

Training - Vulnerable Places: Health Inequality and the Ethics of Nursing, Tuesday, March 29, 2016 from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, DoubleTree Hotel, 8727 Colesville Road; Silver Spring, MD. The training session is free to DCNA members. Attendees must remain for the full day to receive CE Credit. If you are interested in attending, Ms. Vickie Spence at vspence@dcna.org by Friday, March 11, 2016.

DCNA on the Radio – WPFW, FM89.3 or wfwfm.org, Thursday, March 24, 2016, from 1-2 pm. Edward Smith, DCNA Executive Director, hosts the weekly show “Your Rights at Work,” and will have as guests Attorney Wala Blegay and a DCNA member to discuss workplace violence and what DCNA is doing to prevent it.

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 5100 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 306, Washington, DC 20016. Telephone – (202) 244-2705