

DCNA Together – Making a Difference in DC

July 2017



Negotiations Updates

Children's School Services – LPNs

On July 24, 2017, DCNA and CSS reached agreement on the initial collective bargaining agreement. The agreement will provide for annual leave, up to 9 weeks of severance pay in case of a lay-off, grievance and arbitration rights, internal transfers options, development of a labor-management committee, access to personnel files, LPN to RN transition and more. The parties also reached agreement on a \$600 signing bonus, 3% wage increases for 2018 (with wage reopener for 2019 and 2020) and \$500 annually for educational benefits. Marilyn

Fuller, a member of the union bargaining team, remarked that, "We are excited to have union representation with DCNA and we made progress from day 1 of negotiations. I am pleased with the results and look forward to further collaboration with other union leaders and management." On August 7th, the union membership will vote on whether to ratify the agreement.

Department of Behavioral Health and Compensation Unit 13 (District Agencies)

DCNA met with the Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) and the DC Agencies covering Compensation 13 (Comp 13) to negotiate the compensation collective bargaining agreements on July 11th and 13th. Both days were difficult and somewhat unproductive. DCNA negotiators had hoped to convince the District to provide fair wage proposals in light of the work performed by RNs and because the District certainly cannot point to any financial difficulties. The District, however, only proposed 2% (DBH) and 1.25% (Comp 13) for annual salary increases. The parties remain apart on wage increases, step increases to step 15, increase in educational benefits and Metro subsidy. During the DBH negotiations, DBH did agree to provide Grade 9 nurses \$.50 for Charge Nurses but most nurses in the District make between \$2.00 and \$5.00 for Charge Nurse premium pay. During the Comp 13 negotiations, one of management's proposals limits the ability for nurses to receive their MSN and BSN Quality Step Increase or Certification Bonus if they do not receive a performance rating of "Highly Effective." This proposal is simply unreasonable especially since many agencies rarely give a performance rating of "Highly Effective" to nurses.

Negotiations for both units will continue in September and if the parties are unable to come to an agreement, they will declare impasse. Wala Blegay, Chief Negotiator for DCNA, stated that "this Administration is unnecessarily uncooperative at the table when it is clear this Administration does not have the proper understanding of the difficult work RNs undertake each and every day to care for some of the District's most vulnerable citizens." She vowed to continue to fight for fair wage increases and other compensation benefits.

Labor Law Corner:

Know Your Weingarten Rights

In the case of an investigatory interview, all employees are entitled to union representation. The union has the right to be present and to represent employees during investigatory interviews. These rights are referred to as Weingarten Rights, and only come into play when the following four circumstances exist: 1) there must be a formal meeting between the employee and a representative of the employer; 2) The meeting must be connected in some way to the investigation; 3) the employee must reasonably fear that they will be disciplined as a result of the investigation; and 4) the employee must take on the responsibility of requesting union representation. If you are contacted by Management regarding an investigatory interview, please contact Staff Attorney Wala Blegay at wblegay@dcna.org.

DCNA Holds Shop Steward Training

On July 12th, DCNA held a shop steward training for new member leaders. The event was held in the evening and was attended by new leaders from Howard University Hospital, Children's School Services, Department of Behavioral and Children's National Medical Center. After a short introduction, by Executive Director, Edward J. Smith, DCNA Staff Attorney Walakewon Blegay and DCNA Intern Taryn Levels worked with the new leaders on representation during grievances and negotiations. An added bonus was the attendance and participation of Ms. Robin Burns, DCNA Treasurer (Board of Directors) and DCNA/CSS Chairperson.



Registered Nurses Join Wala Blegay at her Campaign Kick-Off & Birthday Celebration

On July 21st, Walakewon Blegay, Staff Attorney for DCNA, celebrated her birthday and announced that she was running for the Delegate position in the Maryland State Legislature, District 25 (Prince George's County). Several DCNA members from PG County attended to hear Ms. Blegay's vision for the future. Edward J. Smith, DCNA Executive Director, also provided remarks to the large crowd in attendance, detailing Ms. Blegay's work ethic and strong labor beliefs. Ms. Blegay described her upbringing and commitment to progressive causes and discussed her ideas on preventing domestic violence, creating better educational opportunities and reducing crime, among other issues.



Upcoming Events:

3rd Annual African American Male Wellness Walk 5K, Saturday, August 5, 2017, McKinley Tech High School, 7:00 am -9:00 am. The walk will begin at 9:00 am. We are in need of volunteers for the following screenings: hypertension, diabetes, and obesity. The screenings are an invaluable component to decreasing the incidence of preventable diseases among African American males. If you are available to volunteer, please notify Veronica Burnett via email 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 5100 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 306, Washington, DC 20016.

Telephone – (202) 244-2705