

# DCNA Together – Making a Difference in DC

October 2016



## Children’s School Services LPNs Join DCNA

On October 17, 2016, DCNA filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board seeking representation of LPNs working at Children’s School Services. Subsequent to the filing, CSS management agreed to voluntarily recognize DCNA as the exclusive bargaining representative of the LPNs. Arbitrator Joseph Sharnoff will conduct a review of the cards signed by LPNs indicating that they desired representation by DCNA and if he finds that the majority of LPNs seek union recognition, DCNA will be recognized by the employer as the LPNs union.

On October 26<sup>th</sup>, Walakewon Blegay, DCNA Staff Attorney, Ed Smith, DCNA Executive Director, and Robin Burns, RN, Chairperson, DCNA/CSS, met with LPNs to provide them with the good news. DCNA thanks our newest addition to our family. We are excited to begin representation and look forward to negotiating the LPNs first contract.

## Negotiations Updates

### United Medical Center

DCNA and UMC remain mired at impasse in the negotiations of the collective bargaining agreement. The parties will proceed to a hearing before Arbitrator Sean Rogers and he will make decision on proposals surrounding scheduling, staffing committees, accrual of leave, wages and retirement benefits. The hearing is scheduled to commence on January 23, 2017 and DCNA expects the it to last 2-3 days. DCNA RNs have not had a new contract or a salary increase since January 2012.

### District Government

DCNA has been meeting with RN bargaining teams representing RNs at the Department of Behavioral Health and Compensation unit 13 (other District agencies) in preparation of new contract negotiations. The bargaining teams are drafting compensation and working conditions proposals. Attorney Wala Blegay will be the Chief Negotiator on both contracts and anticipates that bargaining will commence in December 2016.

## DCNA Fights for Full-time School Nurses at Every DC School

On October 25<sup>th</sup>, the DC Council held a hearing on the nursing program in the DC Public Schools and Public Charter Schools. The DC Department of Health recently announced a decision to cut funding for the nursing program, which will result in the loss of nurses at various schools in the District of Columbia. Dr. LaQuandra S. Nesbitt, Director, Department of Health, announced that the decision will be implemented in January 2017, despite failing to release the details of the changes. Dr. Nesbitt believes that nurses are not required to be present in schools where students do not need daily medications for diseases; she insists that other personnel can provide emergency care or can

call 911 in the event of an emergency.

Nearly forty other witnesses testified at the hearing, including doctors, school administrators, teachers, health care professionals and parents. To a person, the witnesses disagreed with Dr. Nesbitt and could not support cuts to nursing in schools. In fact, many witnesses wanted to ensure that a nurse is assigned to every school. Testifying on behalf of DCNA were Walakewon Blegay, Robin Burns and Myra Hines, RN, Children’s School Services. Ms. Burns testified that “increasing enrollment coupled with high percentages of chronic health conditions require fully trained health care professionals to care for and treat children. In addition, parents, teachers and school administrators rely on our training and education to assist them in ensuring that students have an opportunity to stay in school and stay in the classroom and learn.”



As a result of our testimony and the testimony of all other supporters, on November 1<sup>st</sup> Councilmember Grosso introduced emergency legislation before the DC Council to maintain current nursing levels and hours at all schools for the remainder of the school year. DCNA supported this common sense approach as a first step towards gaining full-time nursing in every school. **The DC Council unanimously passed the legislation.**



DCNA also commenced a petition drive on MoveOn.org requesting that the District provide nursing services for forty hours per week at every school. To date, nearly 2000 people have signed the petition. If you have not yet, viewed or signed the petition, please go to our facebook page

([www.facebook.com/DCNursesAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/DCNursesAssociation)). To view DCNA's testimony, please go to [www.dcna.org](http://www.dcna.org).

Please support our nurses and protect the health and lives of our children. If you are on twitter, you can use this to tweet your councilmember - #nurseineveryschool.

## DCNA Elections

Official ballots for voting will be available at the November 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting. An eligible member can request an absentee ballot. An Absentee Ballot is only for those who are unable to attend the Annual Meeting. The absentee ballot must be returned to the DCNA Office via mail and be postmarked on or before **Thursday, November 17, 2016**. NOTE: Your name must appear on the return envelope.

Election results will be announced in early December via email, regular mail and will be posted on our website. Elected officials must attend an orientation session that will be hosted by DCNA. Detailed information will be made available in January 2017. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Vickie Spence via email at [Vspence@dcna.org](mailto:Vspence@dcna.org) or phone at 202-244-2705. Here is your slate of candidates:

### President - Board of Directors (1 Vacancy)

LaKisha Little-Small

### Secretary - Board of Directors (1 Vacancy)

Ignacia Joyner

### Board of Directors At-Large (6 Vacancies)

Olubukunola Alao

Bridgett Cameron

Katrena Clark

Lula Curry

Sandra Falwell

Garnett Freeman

Betty Holmon

Mary Jones-Bryant

Ignacia Joyner

Laverne Plater

Margaret Shanks

Eileen Shaw

Mary Thullah

### Economic & General Welfare Cabinet At-Large (3 Vacancies)

Lula Curry

LaKisha Little-Small

Margaret Shanks

Mary Thullah

### Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO Delegate (4 Vacancies)

Robin Burns

Katrena Clark

Sandra Falwell

LaKisha Little-Small

Renee Ross

### Nominations Committee (3 vacancies)

Robin Burns

Bridgett Cameron

## Upcoming Events:

**DCNA Annual Membership Meeting, Camelot by Martin's, 13901 Central Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD 20774, Thursday, November 17th commencing at 6:30 pm.** Dinner will be served and there will be a silent auction and music. The registration deadline has been extended to Noon, Friday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. If you wish to attend, please contact Ms. Vickie Spence at [vspence@dcna.org](mailto:vspence@dcna.org).

**DC Metro RN Council Meeting, Location TBD, December 7, 2016.** DCNA encourages members who are interested in working with other RNs across the District on issues that affect all nurses to contact Ms. Robin Burns if you wish to attend this meeting.

Please visit DCNA on our website at [www.dcna.org](http://www.dcna.org) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/DCNursesAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/DCNursesAssociation).

For Assignment Despite Objection and Grievance forms, visit [www.dcna.org](http://www.dcna.org).

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