

SEIU-UHW EXECUTIVE BOARD APRIL 1-2, 2021

THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021

9:00 am General Session

Vice President Stan Lyles opened the meeting with a reflection on the past year and on the Cesar Chavez Day event held yesterday. Even during the pandemic, UHW has continued to get work done, including working to protect our members.

Year in Review

Ethan Ruskin (*Kaiser San Jose*), **Zelda Aaron** (*Community Hospital of San Bernardino*), and **Sharon Brooks-Boyd** (*Healthcare Justice*) presented the year in review including the stress and uncertainty at the beginning of the pandemic, fighting for adequate PPE, leading to pass SB 275, holding employers accountable to keeping member safe, fighting against racism, pushing back on employers who tried to cut hours or benefits, bargaining contracts, electing labor champions at the state and federal level, dealing with the winter COVID-19 surge, leading on vaccinations.

Racism and the Pandemic

Georgette Bradford (*Kaiser Sacramento*) led a discussion with **Darren “Tree” Wallace** (*Kaiser LAMC*), **Jeff Taylor** (*Kaiser Sacramento*), **Rexie Dizon** (*Alameda Hospital*), and **Yudis Cruz** (*Cedars-Sinai*) about the intersection of racism and the COVID-19 pandemic. Systemic and institutional racism has worsened the impact of COVID-19 on communities of color in many ways including anti-Asian hate, underlying health disparities driven by institutional racism, racism in how patients were treated differently, disproportionate numbers of people of color whose jobs put them at higher risk of infection, and racism against healthcare workers.

The AFRAM, API, Latino, Lavender, Young Worker and Retiree caucuses introduced themselves and talked about how the caucuses are working against hate and racism.

President Dave Regan presented themes around the pandemic, the Executive Board’s successes and responsibilities during the pandemic, the economic realities of California and healthcare, and efforts to address racism. These intertwined challenges call the question of how willing UHW is as a union to look outward rather than only looking inward.

Dave began with a presentation on current COVID-19 statistics including total to-date case counts, vaccinations given, and impact by race and economic standing both for vaccination rates and deaths due to COVID-19. He reviewed the statistics on wealth distribution and union density by state from 1984 to 2016 to draw a parallel between the dramatic drop in union membership and the even larger increase in upward wealth redistribution. Dave also announced that UHW is developing programs on financial literacy for our members to tackle some of this problem as best as we can.

Using all this data as the background, Dave challenged everyone to think about how we can be successful looking inward as well as outward, beginning with the Strengthening Our Voice campaign. Dave also summarized the efforts and successes of several of our outward looking projects including The Fairness Project, Healthcare Rising Arizona where we are on a path to 2k members, Futuro Health, and AlliedUp (our new SEIU UHW represented worker co-op)

Dave's presentation wrapped up with a Q&A session

Futuro Health is starting to take off and get more attention. Almost 1,700 students were enrolled in Futuro Health in 2020, and 3,500 students will be enrolled in 2021. AlliedUp is the worker-owned coop partnering with Futuro Health that will give graduates a pathway into a union job through the coop, even if the facility at which they work is nonunion.

Multiple large contracts are coming up soon. Those employers will be trying to push for concessions, and we will need to be ready to fight back.

Patrice Carrigan (*Bakersfield Memorial Hospital*) described the Strengthening Our Voice campaign to build leadership in our facilities and find additional leaders to take ownership of the union. She described how organizing her hospitals gave her a voice at her facility to win improvements for herself and her family.

Gabe Montoya (*Kaiser Downey*) explained political priorities for 2021 including recognizing that healthcare justice requires racial justice.

- AB 1204 (Race and Healthcare Transparency Act) would result in more healthcare data publicly available by race and ethnicity in order to help better solve race-based healthcare disparities. The first hearing for AB 1204 will be the Assembly Health Committee on April 13th and the Assembly floor vote will be in late May or early June.
- AB 650 (Healthcare Worker Recognition and Retention Act) would require private sector healthcare companies (like Kaiser, Dignity, and Tenet) to pay bonuses to healthcare workers who worked during the pandemic and continue working in 2022. The first hearing will be the Assembly Labor Committee in April and the Assembly floor vote will be in late May or early June. This will be like an incredibly difficult contract campaign, and we will need to be ready to escalate just like a bargaining campaign.

Gabe described our plan to win including the Strengthening our Voice campaign, Leaders to Lawmakers, creating broad support coalition, and a media plan to get public support. There will be many ways for members to get involved in the campaign including helping to get organizations to join our coalition, joining Leaders to Lawmakers, joining regional actions, working through our caucuses. One way our work is already paying off is that SEIU-UHW was successful at getting 29 members elected or appointed to be delegates to the California Democratic Party.

Futuro Health

Sonya Allen Smith (*Kaiser Oakland*) and **Dennis Anderson** (*Mercy Hospital Folsom*) discussed the success of Futuro Health training friends and family members of SEIU-UHW members and encouraged members to share their stories about how Futuro is changing lives. Futuro is growing quickly, especially in the first quarter of 2021.

Turnout for future student orientations is up substantially, and **La Trena Robinson** (*Kaiser Richmond*) described her experience as an Education Ambassador getting to help introduce future students to Futuro Health. Currently recruiting particularly for the dental assistant and community health worker training programs. UHW is recruiting current members to be Success Sponsors who will help Futuro Health students succeed.

Vice President Stan Lyles swore in the newly elected members of the Executive Board.

Approval of the minutes

President Dave Regan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the December 2020 Executive Board meeting. The motion was made and seconded. The motion passed.

Potential gubernatorial recall vote

Dave explained that enough signatures have been turned in that the attempt to recall Governor Newsom will likely have to go before voters later this year for a vote. This effort is being powered by many of the same forces that supported Trump. While we recognize that he has made mistakes, Governor Newsom has stood with SEIU-UHW many times, including our first campaign to raise the minimum wage in California.

At a future meeting of the Executive Board meeting, the question on the table will be a vote to formally oppose the recall of Governor Newsom. A draft of the resolution will be sent to Executive Board members in advance of that meeting.

In Memoriam

Roy Ongpin (*Kaiser South San Francisco*) and **Claudine Vine** (*Barlow Respiratory Hospital*) shared a memorial for SEIU-UHW members who have passed due to COVID-19.

FRIDAY, APRIL 2, 2021

9:00 am General Session

Organizing

Cass Gualvez (*Executive Committee*) and **Gisella Thomas** (*Desert Regional Medical Center*) opened the meeting and described how we've used Hustle to talk to nonunion workers about their experiences during the pandemic. SEIU-UHW is the only local in the country that has successfully organized workers remotely without meeting a worker in person. They reviewed 2021 goals for external and residual organizing.

Javier Chavez (*Dignity Health security officer*) explained how it has felt to be a non-union healthcare worker during the pandemic. He described caring for combative patient without management supporting him. He contracted COVID-19 and unfortunately also spread it to his family, but he did not have any sick leave. He saw that his union coworkers were more protected.

Gisella Thomas (*Desert Regional Medical Center*) shared a list of not yet union hospitals and stressed that we need a COOL PAL from every POD to bring information back to their POD and steward councils about organizing opportunities.

Dalonda Crossley (*Kaiser South Sacramento*) reflected on why she decided to step up and organize non-union healthcare workers as a COOL PAL. She couldn't believe the conditions these workers were working under. During the pandemic, workers went from having 12 patients to 40 patients. It's our responsibility to go out and organize workers because we have a gold standard, and we need to bring

other workers up to working conditions and also help increase their wages so that employers like Kaiser can't say that our members are being paid above market.

Kimon Christopher (*Kaiser Modesto*) described reaching out to non-union workers via Hustle, including a respiratory therapist from Sutter Delta who, without a doubt, thought he deserved a bonus for what he's been going through during this pandemic. 21 members hustled 5,000 respiratory therapists, and 228 said they would sign petitions in support of AB 650. This opportunity shows not yet union workers and plants the seed that with a union they can get better protection and better representation.

Gisella Thomas (*Desert Regional Medical Center*) described an upcoming lost time opportunity for members to participate in a two-week deployment to help organize through Hustle.

Deputy Chief of Staff Triana Sifton reviewed upcoming SEIU-UHW events including upcoming trainings and Executive Board vacancy elections.

Debru Carthan (*Kaiser Modesto*) called on Executive Board members to have empathy and help each other and our members as we all face unprecedented challenges. She led an exercise of Executive Board members expressing appreciation for each other.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.