

SEIU-UHW EXECUTIVE BOARD JUNE 24-25, 2021

THURSDAY, JUNE 24, 2021

9:00 am General Session

Vice President Stan Lyles opened the meeting welcoming everyone to the meeting, including new board members. Stan pointed out how much SEIU-UHW has accomplished despite the pandemic. He outlined the goals of the meeting:

- Embrace our worth as healthcare workers and leaders;
- Align our organization's goals, strategy, and practices to where we are in the pandemic;
- Develop our understanding of what it takes to build our power to win economically – How we've grown through our Strengthening Our Voice work, what we've learned, and how we apply this in both the short and long-term;
- Discuss how we continue our commitments during the pandemic regardless of what anyone else does: Fight for recognition bonuses, honor those we've lost, and support healthcare workers moving forward;
- Build community across the organization & create an environment of pride, responsibility, and power.

Stan also went over the expectations of Zoom meetings including punctuality, participation, and the importance of respectful, clear communication.

Rexie Dizon (*Alameda Hospital*) introduced **Zoe Dorado**, local high school student, poet, and activist, who shared her poem, "We Breathe," a slam against racism and reflection of how it impacts her mother, Lola, a nurse.

*"When I say that our histories are intertwined
I mean that we breathe the same air."*

Kristin Urquiza, Co-founder of Marked by COVID, spoke about how COVID effects immigrants and POC differently. After offering thanks and appreciation to healthcare workers such as SEIU-UHW's members, she told the story of how her father died of COVID due to lax precautions in Arizona and lack of concern by government agencies for immigrant communities. She was inspired to co-found Marked by COVID, an organization dedicated to addressing problems exposed by the COVID pandemic, support for those "marked by COVID," memorials to victims of the disease, and healthcare justice in general.

President Dave Regan welcomed everyone and thanked our guests for sharing their inspiring work with the board. Dave walked through some observations, lessons, and thoughts on the "Pandemic Days" (March 2020 to June 2021). He stated that we have a significant number of contract negotiations coming up which will require strong union solidarity. He described some of the large employers we have to meet at the table in the next year.

Dave then posed the question, “What do we want to bet our future on?” In that light, Dave outlined some strategies and expectations for upcoming negotiations. He talked about the successes of Futuro Health and Allied UP as well as future goals. Dave shared a launch video of the Healthcare Rising Arizona’s Predatory Debt Collection Act. He also described initiatives and progress of The Fairness Project. To close his remarks, Dave discussed the union’s 10-year goals and his confidence that SEIU-UHW can accomplish them.

Suzanne Jimenez (*Political Director*) led a talk about how the union can build strength through politics. She described the union’s Political Leadership Committee (PCOM) and introduced the members. Members of PCOM summarized some of the union’s political initiatives, including support for state bills in the Assembly and Senate, pushing for relief funding in the state budget process for all healthcare workers, and building political leadership inside the union.

PCOM Chair **Gabe Montoya** (*Kaiser Downey*) described the state budget process, including the importance of reaching and influencing individual members of the state legislature in order to move bills. This will require lobby visits, office calls, and advocating on Twitter, all of which requires as many members as possible to participate in order to move legislation to help our members.

Members moved to breakout rooms to discuss what was presented by PCOM and the next phase of the union’s political program.

Upon return, Dave Regan answered questions from members submitted via chat during session.

End of General Session

FRIDAY, JUNE 25, 2021

9:00 am General Session

President Dave Regan opened up the session welcoming delegates and guests to day two. Dave shared artwork done by UHW staff member Lenny Rizzuto as an example of how important it is to express ourselves in the movement through many different ways, including art and performance.

Dave administered the oath of office for new members of the Executive Board.

Approval of the minutes

President Dave Regan asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the April 2021 Executive Board meeting. The motion was made and seconded. The motion passed.

Dave talked about the new federal holiday for Juneteenth and the importance of it in acknowledging and recognizing our history as it was.

Georgette Bradford (*Kaiser Sacramento*) stated that although we have a holiday, there is much work to be done. She introduced and shared a video about the history of Juneteenth, which isn't taught in our schools.

Guest Speaker

Denise Ellis (*Kaiser Orange County*) introduced our guest speaker, **Reverend William Smart**, as a tireless supporter of the labor movement and staunch ally of SEIU-UHW.

Rev. Smart thanked the Board for inviting him. He talked about the importance of front-line workers like those in SEIU-UHW, especially in tough times like a pandemic. He gave numerous examples of how healthcare workers really stepped up and took care of the community. "You are champions. You have passed the test. Know what you have done."

Building Our Power Through Strengthening Our Voice:

Vicki Jackson (*SEIU-UHW Kaiser Division Director*) thanked Rev. Smart for his powerful and supportive words as well as his own work. She suggested that members take that fire back to our facilities.

Chokri Ben-Said (*SEIU-UHW Hospital Division Director*) addressed the importance of strengthening our voice as workers. Not only do we want to amplify our voice, but we want to make sure it is one voice, in solidarity.

Yudis Cruz (*Cedars-Sinai*) said that not only do we need to strengthen our voice with our employers as a union, but also in our communities. She talked about the importance to reaching out to all workers in a facility by "walking the floor." Part of this outreach is to identify leaders within units.

Oscar Gaspar (*Kaiser LAMC*) talked about lessons learned during the pandemic and the significant challenges that had to be overcome. He reported on the union's successful efforts to add new leaders. He also showed the union's success in signature gathering among our members.

Chokri stated that strengthening our voice will be essential in the next 18 months as we face some large, wealthy employers in negotiations.

Members moved to breakout rooms to discuss what we can do to amplify our voice, including ways to identify and recruit new leaders.

Organizing Report

Cass Gualvez (*SEIU-UHW Organizing Director*) led a report on the union's organizing efforts. She introduced **DaLonda Crossley** (*Kaiser – South Sacramento*) who has been working on organizing new workers, which has only made her appreciate her own Kaiser contract more. She described the challenges she faced, especially with some of the disinformation people had about unions. She reported that they were successful in organizing these workers at Vibra, who now have a new contract. She stated there are still 210 hospitals out there which are not unionized.

Jernetta Backus (*Washington Hospital*) spoke about how organizing new members serves to strengthen our union. She stated that she personally gained confidence by having the union behind her. She also described how getting people more politically involved can strengthen the union.

Adrianna Barragan (*Kaiser Regional*) talked about how outreach around COVID has helped reach new workers. She described the success in getting people involved through political action, including numbers of calls/contacts made.

Gisella Thomas (*Desert Regional*) described her experience in turning a worker's frustration into action by working with the union. This could lead to the person becoming a leader.

Cass wrapped up by reminding us of how important it is for us to strengthen our voice and stay strong, especially in the face of upcoming negotiations with very well-funded employers. She warned that our members could potentially lose a lot, such as healthcare plans, if we do not stand strong.

Guest Speaker

Zach Adams (*Kaiser-San Rafael*) introduced Guest Speaker **Bamby Salcedo**, LGBT and trans activist. **Bamby** spoke from the White House, but unfortunately there were technical difficulties due to ambient music in the White House beyond anyone's control.

Claudine Vine (*Barlow Respiratory*) introduced an exercise in storytelling with members completing sentences, such as "When I need support I..." and "When all things start working together, I realize..." Numerous members volunteered how they would complete these sentences.

Triana Silton (*SEIU-UHW Deputy Chief of Staff*) reported that we wouldn't be able to hear from Bamby Salcedo due to her location at the White House and resulting technical difficulties. She then started a discussion about building our teams to grow new leaders.

Members moved to breakout rooms to share experiences and ideas, focusing on the following three questions:

"What helped you stand up for yourself for the first time? (How did you find YOUR voice?)"

“How have you been successful in helping others to stand up for themselves?”
“How are you being persistent with others to get them to step into leadership?”

Georgette Bradford (*Kaiser Sacramento*) announced and invited members to caucus lunches immediately following general session.

After lunch and division breakouts we heard from **Gisella Thomas** (*Desert Regional*) and **Debru Carthan** (*Kaiser Modesto*) about the importance of our job and how we support and appreciate each other.

The meeting adjourned at 4:19pm