

## Health Professionals and Allied Employees

Affiliated with the AFT Healthcare, *AFT/AFL-CIO*

# Annurion

October 2010



Vol. 24, No. 3

## NEW OWNERS OF MEADOWLANDS HOSPITAL NEW CONTRACTS FOR HPAE MEMBERS

By a nearly unanimous vote, members of HPAE Local 5147 at Meadowlands Hospital Medical Center in Secaucus ratified a five-year contract extension with MHA LLC, the for-profit company that is expected to buy the hospital, pending state approval.

Local 5147 leaders, representing more than 400 nurses, technical staff, and service workers, had successfully negotiated both job security and seniority protection for all current employees, with annual wage increases of 2% a year, plus steps, for each of the next five years.

"Our members voted overwhelmingly in favor of this agreement with MHA," Registered Nurse JoAnne Dudsak, President of HPAE Local 5147 at Meadowlands Hospital, "We have always been proud of the health care we provide at Meadowlands Hospital and wanted to make sure that when ownership changes, the same dedicated and experienced staff would be there to ensure continuity of quality care for our patients. This contract does that."



**"I never gave up. Not only because I care for the patients and the community, but most of all I had faith in my union. I had gathered all my strength because I have faith in HPAE; I believed we would not be defeated."**

**Andre Savaille**  
Local 5147

The contract settlement culminated months of public activities by HPAE, community groups, and political leaders to preserve the union contract, guarantee jobs, and maintain the hospital's services. HPAE members at Meadowlands signed petitions, wore union stickers, and attended meetings to show support for our demand that the contract be recognized. New Jersey Citizen Action canvassed the local community, gathering 1200 petitions expressing support for the staff and for keeping a strong, community hospital. Area politicians, including Mayor Gonnelli of Secaucus and



**"HPAE Hero of Healthcare"**  
**Renee Steinhagen, Executive Director of the New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center.**



**HPAE President Ann Twomey testifying at the Meadowlands hearing**



**Ev Liebman, from NJ Citizen Action testifying at the Meadowlands hearing**

State Assemblyman Vincent Prieto, urged MHA to negotiate with HPAE and to maintain services. Public interest attorney Renee Steinhagen actively intervened with both the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services (DHSS) and NJ Attorney General to win conditions to preserve the hospital, its services, and its jobs.

At two public hearings held on August 26 and September 21, HPAE representatives and members of the community demanded that the sale to MHA be approved only if jobs were preserved and services maintained. Renee Steinhagen, Executive Director of the New Jersey Appleseed Public Interest Law Center, emphasized the need for transparency and accountability from the new owners in any sale agreement

As a result of advocacy by HPAE, Citizen Action and New Jersey Appleseed, on September 30 the State Health Planning Board of the NJDHSS approved the sale, with specific conditions designed to assure access to care for patients, workplace rights and job security for union members; and financial transparency and accountability. Some of the key conditions include the requirement for MHA to maintain the hospital for seven years as a general hospital, with all of its current services, and to submit various financial reports to the Department of Health and Senior Services.

To be finalized, the sale must also be approved by the DHSS Commissioner and the state Attorney General, who has until November 11 to make that decision.

While the sale is not yet complete, HPAE Local 5147 members and leaders are feeling enormous relief and pride as union members. As Andre Savaille, the local's treasurer put it, "I never gave up. Not only because I care for the patients and the community, but most of all I had faith in my union. I had gathered all my strength because I have faith in HPAE; I believed we would not be defeated."



**"Our members voted overwhelmingly in favor of this agreement with MHA**

**JoAnne Dudsak**  
President Local 5147

## LOOK AT THE TRACK RECORD



It galls me this year to see so many politicians up for election – some Democrats and most Republicans – running from our new national health reform policies. While I read these attacks on reform, I also am a witness and advocate to my non-smoking sister maneuvering through the health care system while she is dying of lung cancer. This personal experience is both grounding and reaffirming. That's why I mention it.

Contending with insurance company rules is often overwhelming, and defeating, even with health insurance, access to good doctors and family advocates. It is not what the sick or their family members should be dealing with at our most vulnerable.

So it's mind-boggling to me that the OBAMA health plan, as it is called, is under such vicious attack by those who would benefit politically from half-truths and fear mongering. Because health reform actually does make our lives better – for those of us who don't have insurance, or who have chronic or severe illness, or who have adult children with no insurance, or those of us who work in hospitals failing under the weight of lack of reimbursements. Health reform will provide more people with insurance coverage; end discriminatory policies against the sick like caps on coverage and 'rescission' (the practice of repealing a health plan during an illness); and provide young adults continued coverage through their parents' plans. Most of our HPAE health plans must abide by these new rules (see [www.hpae.org/political/reform](http://www.hpae.org/political/reform)).

As healthcare workers, we see firsthand what the lack of insurance and funding means to our ability to provide care. People may get emergency care but then can't pay for the medications or needed follow up. Our hospitals lose money, eliminate needed services that are not reimbursed, and chase after more profitable ones. Research dollars are cut, as are programs to train our future doctors, nurses and professionals.

Here in New Jersey, we have Congressmen and US Senators who, in fact, were champions for us during the health care debate. Congressman like Frank Pallone, Rush Holt, Steve Rothman and Bill Pascrell, who sought our our counsel, met with consumer groups regularly, and fought for working families throughout the long debate. These Congressman, along with Senator Menendez, were members of important committees that helped to shape the health reform legislation. NJ Congressmen were out-front in their advocacy for reform, and never wavered in the face of fear tactics and threats, including Albio Sires, Rob Andrews and Donald Payne. Senator Menendez fought to make sure insurance would be affordable with Medicaid expansion and the new 'insurance exchanges' and high risk pools.

That advocacy translates into more secure funding for our hospitals, and more insured patients. National health reform also includes funding for pilot programs to improve delivery of preventive health services, such as 'Accountable Care Organizations'. We launched our union's look at the future of health care delivery at our HPAE state convention. HPAE staff are and leaders will be involved in community coalitions examining and developing these new models of care. Instead of reacting to the negative forces of the economy, we want to be proactive in building a health care model that reaches the entire community.

But it's not just health care that is the target of political mud-throwing this year. Instead of listening to fiery rhetoric and anti-government attacks, I urge you to look at candidates' track records. Did they work to strengthen our hospitals, expand health coverage and support our health care system? Are they working to create jobs, halt hasty mortgage foreclosures and invest in our roads, bridges and tunnels? Where were they when you were in contract negotiations, on the picket line or working to protect patient care? Do they support our right to organize and our public schools and community services?

Here in NJ, Governor Christie can truly be blamed for lack of 'tunnel vision' –first vetoing a women's health program, then stopping construction on a tunnel that both environmentalists and building trades unions agree would bolster mass transit, create jobs, cut down on car traffic and pollution, and ease commuting for thousands of New Jersey residents. Most of the funding for both programs, big and small, came from the federal government.

If our government in the 1940s, 50s and 60s had refused to build our infrastructure of hospitals, roads, schools and bridges – where would we be? Thank goodness for Senator Frank Lautenberg who has worked to bring sanity to the discussion and get our Governor to the table with the US Transportation Secretary to resolve the issue.

At the local level this year, there are special elections that matter to, to state politics and to our working lives. For example, Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein has not only been a sponsor of key staffing legislation, but is among the very few legislators who stood by our public health care workers when it was easier to attack them.

At the local level, HPAE is also supporting Freeholder and Town Council members who have been supporting our members at local hospitals, like Meadowlands and Memorial Hospital of Salem County.

These are all individuals – whether federal, state, or local - who have helped us and who have stood by us. That's why we have recommended your support for these candidates. In other cases, we've included for you information the candidates supplied – for example, both Kathe Donovan and Dennis McNerney responded to HPAE by meeting with us, and putting their positions on Bergen Regional Medical Center in writing. You can see their responses at [www.hpae.org/political](http://www.hpae.org/political), and decide which candidate you think would best serve your concerns in Bergen County.

Most of all, even in these difficult economic and heated political environment, you need to have your voice heard. If you think you will be unable to vote you can also get your absentee ballot by visiting [www.hpae.org/political](http://www.hpae.org/political). Vote on November 2.

**Ann Twomey**  
President HPAE

## HPAE 2010 Recommendations (COPE Recommended)

The HPAE Committee on Political Education spent countless hours over the past months reviewing questionnaires and screening candidates running in this year's election on November 2nd.

HPAE COPE members carefully designed the questionnaires to reflect our key priorities in the NJ Legislature. We also reviewed their voting records on key legislative initiatives supported by HPAE. Here are our recommendations for this year's election:

<b>District 1</b>	Rob Andrews (D) *
<b>District 2</b>	Frank LoBiondo (R) *
<b>District 3</b>	John Adler (D) *
<b>District 4</b>	Chris Smith (R) *
<b>District 5</b>	No Endorsement
<b>District 6</b>	Frank Pallone (D) *
<b>District 7</b>	Ed Potosnak (D)
<b>District 8</b>	Bill Pascrell (D) *
<b>District 9</b>	Steven Rothman (D) *
<b>District 10</b>	Donald Payne (D) *
<b>District 11</b>	Douglas Herbert (D)
<b>District 12</b>	Rush Holt (D) *
<b>District 13</b>	Albio Sires (D) *

### SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS

<b>District 5</b>	State Senate	Donald Norcross (D) *
<b>District 5</b>	State Assembly	Gilbert "Whip" Wilson (D) *
<b>District 14</b>	State Senate	Linda Greenstein (D) *
<b>District 31</b>	State Assembly	Jason O'Donnell (D)

**Salem County** Freeholder Candidate Sherman Woods (D)

### Secaucus Town Council:

Susan Pirro Jim Clancy Gary Jeffas

## HPAE EDUCATION DAYS

For more information or to register visit:  
[www.hpae.org/education/training](http://www.hpae.org/education/training)

### November 9th, 2010

Quality Inn and Convention Center  
531 Route 38 W — Maple Shade, NJ

### November 11th, 2010

Kenilworth Inn  
60 South 31st Street, Boulevard & South 31st  
Kenilworth, NJ 07033

**Financial Planning for Retirement** - With instability in the job market and the ups and downs of the stock market, those of us who are beginning to plan for retirement face some difficult challenges. Learn how you can improve your financial security before you retire. (No contact hours awarded for this session)

**The Impact of HIPAA and the Cullen Law on Healthcare Professionals** - HIPAA and the Cullen Law have had a significant impact on the practice of healthcare professionals. While both laws address serious problems, they have been used by some employers to treat employees unfairly. For example, some healthcare professionals have lost their licenses as a result of employer actions. Find out how these laws impact your license and professional practice. (2.5 contact hours awarded for this session)

Each workshop will be 2.5 hours long.

Health Professionals and Allied Employees, AFT/AFL-CIO is an approved provider of continuing nursing education by the New Jersey State Nurses Association, an accredited approver by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's COA. P94-1/2008-2011 HPAE - 110 Kinderkamack Road, Emerson, NJ 07630



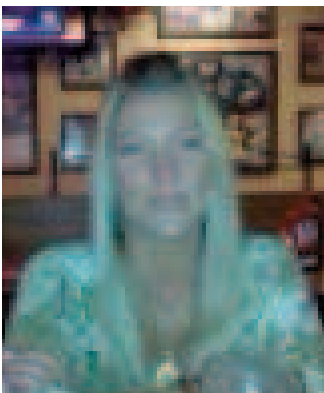
# SALEM HOSPITAL RNS VOTE IN ELECTION TO JOIN HPAE

After several months of delays by Community Health Systems (CHS), the corporate owner of Memorial Hospital of Salem County (MHSC), RNs at the hospital finally had their opportunity on September 1st and 2nd to vote on whether they will be represented by HPAE. While the ballots had not been counted as of this writing, we are confident that the RNs did vote for HPAE representation.

CHS tried to exclude over 50 Charge Nurses from the bargaining unit, leading to lengthy hearings at the Regional office of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). However, the NLRB eventually ruled that almost all of the Charge Nurses were part of the bargaining unit and the election went forward.

From the beginning, MHSC RNs have shown strong support for the union. Over 70% of the RNs signed a petition requesting HPAE representation. The RNs' motivation for organizing with HPAE is similar to many of the RNs and health professionals who have organized before them. They simply want the ability to have their voices heard and to make a real difference in improving their working conditions, staffing, equipment and education, so they can have the resources they need to provide better care for their patients.

From the moment this group of RNs came together, they knew this was no small task they were taking on as they were about to go up against CHS, a large for-profit company traded on Wall Street, which took over MHSC in 2002. CHS has spent millions of dollars in legal and anti-union consultant fees to stall and delay the process.



**April Cooksey**

Despite CHS' intimidation tactics, MHSC RNs were not deterred. "My experience as an organizing committee member was empowering. I was unaware of the amount of influence we had as a group. By standing strong together, we can accomplish great things for our profession," said **April Cooksey**, MHSC RN, 2North Telemetry.

They did stand together at the NLRB hearings in June, as eleven Charge Nurses took the stand to testify about their duties and responsibilities as charge nurses. Two of the nurses were directly threatened and intimidated the moment they took the stand by CHS's attorney, who was attempting to prevent them from testifying. His attempts were ineffective and both continued to provide their testimony despite such outrageous antics on behalf of CHS' attorney.

"We have an amazingly strong group of RNs at MHSC. I've always

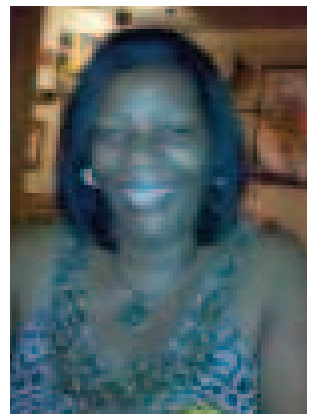


**Lorie Halter**

known that. But it's been great working side by side with some people that I've never had the chance to work with. So much has gone into this fight for Our Union - some of it very tiring, most of it rewarding! People have given up time with their families and friends, because we believe in it... it IS the right thing for us!" said **Lorie Halter**, MHSC RN, ICU.

HPAE locals have always been there to support other RNs and health professionals who are ready to organize their union and this campaign was no different.

"I am inspired by the solidarity of nurses and the unyielding support from the nurses at South Jersey Healthcare, Cooper, Virtua and Newton Memorial Hospital," said **Pam Thomas**, MHSC RN, 2 North Telemetry.



**Pam Thomas**

HPAE members travelled from near and far to come speak with MHSC RNs and answer their questions. Just days before the vote, three Newton Memorial Hospital RNs - Mary Ellen Levine, Barbara Masters and Julie Osbourne - made a three hour journey to stand with MHSC RNs as they leafleted outside the hospital.

Michelle Silvio, President HPAE Local 5131 (SJH), Debbie White, President HPAE Local 5105 (Virtua), and Lee Ball, President HPAE Local 5118 (Cooper), along with Ann Twomey, HPAE State President, attended meetings to inform MHSC RNs about HPAE, how the union operates and what has been achieved at the bargaining table and through grievances. They also spoke of their own efforts to unionize and the anti-union tactics used by their hospitals.



**Tracy McAllister**

"I've met some great people from other New Jersey hospitals who have been totally supportive of our efforts. The members, staff and officers of HPAE have been there for us from the beginning, teaching us, encouraging us, and cheering us on. There were times that I would start to think it was all futile, and then I'd hear from someone who had been through all of this before. I'd hear how everything is so different - so much better - for them since they

organized, and it gave me the pick-me-up I needed to move on," said **Tracy McAllister**, MHSC RN, Emergency Department.

# HPAE LOCALS IN ACTION

## Downstaffing and Bumping Rights Fixed

HPAE members at Bayonne Medical Center, Local 5185, won two major arbitrations in the past two months.

One case concerned the improper lay-off of 35 union members in September 2009. Through a settlement agreement, Local 5185 gained new language that clarified that 12 hour shift employees (36 hours per week) and 8 hour shift employees (40 hours per week) were both to be considered "full time" employees for purposes of bumping and seniority rights. Management had tried to claim that only 40 hours per week employees were classified as full time. This meant, for example, that a nurse with 27 years seniority would be unable to "bump" a nurse in with two years of seniority simply because the more senior employee worked on a 12 hour shift floor! Also included in the settlement, are expanded rights for us to review alternatives to lay-offs as well as bumping options before the lay-offs take place. Local 5185 Secretary Mary Mack and Nanette Rivera, Vice-president for the Service Unit, placed key roles in achieving this victory.

Another arbitration victory concerned "down staffing" or who gets sent home when the census drops below a certain point. There were multiple sections of the 5185 contract that tended to contradict each other. According to the agreement, full time and part time staff will be given preference over per diems and agency staff to float to other units when the census is low. This will keep the more experienced employees working. Local Officers, John Bauer, Mary Mack, Nanette Rivera and Joan Zitzman played major roles in the drafting of the final agreement.

## LOCAL 5138 (SOCH) Message from Grievance Chair

### *In These Times, We Need A Union More Than Ever*

The nurses at Southern Ocean County Hospital (SOCH), represented by HPAE Local 5138, have greatly benefited from joining the HPAE ranks seven years ago. Gaining the legal right to bargain over working conditions, wages, benefits and patient safety issues has been empowering. We all realize that our country is living through an era of financial crisis and future fiscal uncertainty. The healthcare coverage debate is still heated and ongoing, even in the presence of sweeping new reforms. Every hospital in the State of New Jersey, Southern Ocean County Hospital (SOCH) included, has seen drastic cuts in reimbursements from Medicare and Medicaid, private insurance companies, and for charity care as well. As we observe first hand a declining daily census of our patient admissions and decreasing surgical caseloads, we wonder how our hospital can stay afloat.

The nurses at SOCH are more than willing to work with administration to cut costs and stay operational. We have all done our part and paid the price with staff reductions and flexing. We want to save our jobs. In the presence of this continued financial crisis at SOCH we want our voices heard and our collective bargaining agreement honored. We have contract language that provides "flexing" or "temporary reduction" of a nurse's shift on a "fair and equitable" basis. Unfortunately, this language has been frequently ignored and the nurses are forced to file grievances. Many of these grievances have been won and many lost wages recovered. Our biggest class action "flex hour" grievance paid our members a settlement of almost \$100,000 in 2008!

We have a new chapter at SOCH beginning with our new Meridian owners. The nurses at SOCH welcome improving our education and raising the bar for patient outcomes. We can only hope that the Meridian corporate leadership will be successful at SOCH.

Julie George, Grievance Chairperson

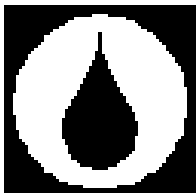


## HPAE Nurses Present Nursing Scholarship to Student

On Friday, Sept. 3rd, HPAE Local 5118, which represents registered nurses at Cooper University Hospital in Camden, NJ, presented a \$1000 scholarship to a high

school senior entering the nursing profession whose family is associated with a union. This occurred at the Southern New Jersey Labor Council (SNJLC) 116th Annual Peter J. McGuire Scholarship Breakfast. This event commemorates Labor Day and the organizing of the Labor movement in America.

Local 5118 was one of 16 unions in south Jersey who provided scholarship money to high school students. Local and State government officials attended the event, which was held at the Collingswood Ballroom in Collingswood, NJ. After the breakfast, participants rode to the grave site of Peter J. McGuire, one of the leaders of the U.S. labor movement in the 19th century, to lay a wreath to honor him and to celebrate Labor Day.



## MESSAGE FROM ARC UNION COALITION – "Donate your Blood - but not to Us"

HPAE Local 5103, representing techs and nurses at the American Red Cross Penn Jersey Region, recently signed a solidarity statement with a coalition of unions who represent 3,000 Red Cross workers across the country. Throughout the country, Red Cross has taken an anti-union, hard stance in contract negotiations, resulting in many unsettled contracts and blocking first contracts of new local unions. They have unabashedly stated that union-avoidance that is a major priority for the organization.

Until ARC respects its staff and recognizes the value of the work they do, the union coalition is requesting that union members seek alternative blood drive operators. Since United Way is strongly linked with ARC, they also are urging everyone to contact their local United Way Agencies to demand that the Red Cross respect the collective bargaining process.

Our current contract will expire May 2011. We are gearing up for some difficult bargaining. For more information about the coalition, go to [www.bloodrivesafety.com](http://www.bloodrivesafety.com).

## Per Diem Nurses Win Major Back Pay Arbitration at SJH

Per Diem RNS at South Jersey Healthcare (HPAE Local 5131) settled a grievance that provided over \$16,000 in retroactive weekend pay that they had been denied. HPAE Local 5131, filed a class action grievance on behalf of the per diem RNs. The hospital policy stated that the weekend began for per diems at 2:45 pm on Fridays, but the hospital had not been paying the \$5 weekend rate until 6:45 pm. During contract negotiations, the Bargaining Committee successfully negotiated a settlement that would pay all the back pay for the difference from July 2009 through May 31, 2010 and agreed that the weekend would begin at 6:45pm on Friday for per diems going forward.





## Can your employer restrict your right to join FaceBook? Nurses at Virtua (#5105) challenge hospital's new policy.

On July 14 Virtua instituted a new social media policy that was not negotiated with the union. Local 5105, which represents nurses at Virtual Memorial Hospital and Community Nursing Services, sent a demand to bargain over the effect of the policy and filed a grievance. Finally, we filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and began some internal activities to protest the policy, including a petition signed by the membership.

Virtua's Social Media Policy severely restricts use of internet-based communication technology (i.e. Facebook, My space, twitter, blogs, Youtube, Digg, Wikipedia, Linkedia and Personal Websites).

The policy is overly broad and unduly restricts the ability of nurses to communicate with each other and to exercise their legal rights as union members. Violations of the policy can result in discipline, up to termination.

The one paragraph of the policy which goes to the heart of the matter

*.....If your affiliation with Virtua is known, even with a disclaimer, your online presence reflects Virtua and any inaccurate or inappropriate images, posts or comments which may damage Virtua's reputation are prohibited.*

Virtua claimed that they didn't have a contractual duty to bargain the policy prior to issuing it, citing a part of the Management rights section of the contract that authorizes Virtua "to make and enforce rules of conduct governing employees and to establish policies and procedures related to our operations."

Despite their position, we have recently been contacted by the Employer to discuss a settlement of the issue. As of today, there is no word from the NLRB

## HPAE Members mourn the loss of a respected Director at Harborage Nursing Home (Local 5097)

Long-time Director of Nursing at the Harborage, **Una Bryne**, passed away recently following an illness. HPAE members arranged for a mass and memorial service for Una at the Harborage that included both the staff and the residents of the nursing home.

## Social Workers and Behavioral Therapists to Join HPAE

Several months ago the social workers and behavioral therapist on the Episcopal Campus of Temple University Hospital decided they wanted to become part of a union. After meeting with Local 5106 officers and Adam Clark, HPAE organizer, they asked to become part of our local union. We began the slow and steady process of talking to all of the non-nursing professionals who might be included in the bargaining unit to determine that there was a strong majority in favor of unionizing. It was clear from the beginning that these employees wanted and needed a say in the daily changes to their working conditions.

With a solid majority of signed authorization cards the local officers, and fourteen enthusiastic professionals met with Temple management on Thursday, August 26th to request voluntary recognition by Temple. Management danced around the issues, spouted some inaccurate information and said they would get back to us the following week. They talked about the employees' right to know what they might lose by joining a union. The professionals were not swayed by management's sudden concern for their well being.

On Tuesday, August 31st, management informed us that they were not interested in recognition, nor a joint request for an election. So be it. The membership cards have been sent to the Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board along with our request for an election. The RNs and Techs of Local 5106 will stand with the Professionals and support them in any way possible to help them win an election and join us as members of their local union.

Sue Clements, Vice President  
Episcopal Hospital/Temple (Local 5105)



## HPAE RETIREE MEDICAL TRUST: AN UPDATE

The HPAE Retiree Medical Trust continues to grow, both in assets and participants.

In 2010, two additional HPAE locals have joined the Trust. (There are now eight HPAE locals participating in the Trust, as well as the staff of HPAE.) Employer contributions for members of Local 5112 at Runnells Hospital began in January. In May, nurses at Jersey Shore Medical Center (Local 5058) voted in a referendum to participate in the Trust through pre-tax, mandatory employee contributions. Those contributions began in September 2010.

Assets of the Trust have grown markedly due to contributions and interest income from investments. From December 31, 2008 to December 31, 2009, net assets available for benefits grew from \$1,176,337 to \$2,289,225. According to Benserco, Inc. the Third Party Administrator of the Trust, as of July 31, 2010, assets had increased to \$2,753,968.

Eligible retirees can receive benefits from the Trust, in the form of reimbursements for medical expenses. While some benefits have been paid out, at this time, contributions from participants and interest income are far in excess of benefits, and will continue to be for the next several years.

For more information on the HPAE Retiree Medical Trust, email Mike Slott at [msslott@hpae.org](mailto:msslott@hpae.org) or go the HPAE website at: [www.hpae.org/locals/benefits/retiree](http://www.hpae.org/locals/benefits/retiree)

## ER Staff requires professional behavior of management at PMC.


■ HPAE members (5030) at Palisades Medical Center, including Nurses, CNAs and Social workers, filed a class action grievance against a hospital manager who has demonstrated unprofessional and abusive behavior toward the staff. The staff provided several examples of "out of control" behavior and has demanded action by top management to address this. Union Rep. John McCausland helped organize the ER staff to participate in the meeting.

■ A class action grievance has been filed by Certified Nursing Assistants to address the short staffing throughout the hospital. With an average daily assignment of 13 patients, the CNAs cannot meet patient care needs and are tired of getting management's excuses instead of solutions. Union Rep **Velma Howell** presented a petition with the signatures of 68 CNAs in support of the grievance.

■ Staffing was the key issue for the RNs on the 4th floor. A follow up meeting is planned.

## HPAE

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# HEALTHCARE REFORM ACHIEVEMENTS



## Here's the Timeline

HPAE has strongly supported healthcare reform and we will continue to work for additional reforms so that we finally have a universal healthcare system that provides quality care and is affordable to all.

While the Patient Protection and Affordability Act,

also known as the healthcare reform bill, does not achieve universal healthcare coverage, it will allow more than 25 million Americans who now have no health insurance to get the coverage that they need. Other important reforms in our healthcare system will also occur as a result of the law, which went into effect March 23, 2010. Below is a timeline of the implementation of the main provisions of the law.

### BEGINNING IN 2010:

- Your children can stay on your family health plan until they're 26.
- Retirees in the "donut hole" receive a \$250 rebate to help pay for their medications.
- Insurance companies can't deny coverage to children under 19 with pre-existing conditions.
- Insurance companies can't drop coverage when you get sick.
- Uninsured people with pre-existing conditions can get health insurance through a temporary program.
- Insurance companies can't put lifetime caps on the amount they'll pay for your care; annual caps are subject to restrictions.
- Tax credits are phased in for small businesses that want to provide health insurance to their employees.
- New programs that offer low-interest loans, scholarships, loan repayment and tax relief to cover educational costs for health professionals become available.

### BEGINNING IN 2011

- Free preventive care and annual wellness visit for Medicare beneficiaries.
- Continue closing the "donut hole" for seniors by providing a 50 percent discount for certain drugs.
- Medicaid programs can cover home and community-based care for people with disabilities instead of institutional care.
- Long-term care insurance program created to provide cash benefits to adults who become disabled.
- A new program allows states to offer home and community-based services to disabled individuals through Medicaid rather than institutional care.

### BEGINNING IN 2014

- Insurance companies can't deny coverage to anyone because of pre-existing conditions and can't charge more for groups with large numbers of women.
- Health plans can't place annual limits on the amount of care they'll cover.
- Most people are required to have health insurance. Nearly all Americans will have some form of health insurance coverage.
- Health insurance "exchanges" are open in each state for individuals or families who do not receive health insurance from their employers or who are not on Medicaid, allowing the uninsured to comparison shop for those policies that are best for their needs and their budgets.
- Tax credits and vouchers are available for lower-income people to buy coverage and access to Medicaid is expanded.

Source: <http://www.aft.org/issues/healthreform/timeline.cfm>

For additional information on healthcare reform, go to the HPAA website at <http://www.hpae.org/political/reform>.

# HPAE CONVENTION 2010



Salem HosTracy McAllister, Lorie Halter and Local 5141 member (Newton) Mary Ellen



Staffing Matters speaker Linda Flynn



Trudy Barthelemy, Local 5089 (UMDRN)



HPAE Vice President Bernie Gerard



Marilyn Higgins, Local 5058 (Retiree Council)



Locals 5147 and 5185 members (l-r) Andre Savaille, Isabella Michaels, Juan Sequinot, Norma Busacco, Kevin Crane, Curtis Jeter, Kathy Schappa, JoAnne Dudsak, Mary Mack, HPAE Staff Rep Karen Szczepanski and Linda Tsaklis



Local 5058 VP, Fran McLaughlin, Carol Concepcion, Local 5112 and Barbara Egger, Local 5112 President



Mary McDonald-Lehman, Director, AFT Healthcare



HPAE Staff Jeanne Otersen, Public Policy Director; Larry Lipschultz, Organizing Director; Harriet Rubenstein, Public Policy Staff and Mike Slott, Education Director.



Gloria Lee Richardson, Local 5030 (Palisades General) and Lourdes Voytac, Local 5112 (Runnells).



Lucia Eliojoor Local 5089 (UMD RN)



Local 5185 Grievance Chair Joanne Zitman, HPAE Secretary/Treasurer Barbara Rosen and Local 5185 President Donna Benjamin



HPAE members from Locals 5131 (SJH) and 5138 (SOCH) and 5103 (ARC) Standing (l-r): Karen Daly, Kathy Whalen, Beth Manganaro, Judy Merkowsky Seated (l-r): Julie George, HPAE Staff Rep Jeff Hayden, Karen Bailey, Kelly Hobbs, Michelle Silvio, Deborah Pacitti and Joanne Savidge.



Geraldine Dever, Sue Clements, VP, Carol Harrison, and Isaac Gary Peoples, VP, Local 5106 (Temple)



Local 5186 members (Christ Hospital) left to right, Myrna Libatique, Mae Carino Manuyag, Aracelli Mangrobang, Eden Alayon, Lillian DeGracia, Lolita Torrizo, and Cecile Claudio



Christine Bader, Local 5091 (BRMC)



HPAE members (l-r): Lorraine Thone, Local 5105 VP (Virtua); Local 5105 President Debbie White, Local 5118 President Lee Ball, and Claudia Storicks, VP CNS.

# HPAE CONVENTION 2010

HPAE members, leaders and staff came together at the 2010 HPAE State Convention, held in Atlantic City, charting a course for our future and determining how best to protect patient care and working conditions in the face of rapid and comprehensive changes taking place in health care delivery.

On the first day, members focused on safe staffing, starting off with a presentation by well-known researcher Linda Flynn, RN, Ph.D, who presented empirical evidence on the importance of adequate staffing for quality patient care, and a presentation by Stephanie Orrico, Local 5004/Englewood and Bernie Gerard, HPAE Vice-President on NJ laws and regulations governing staffing, and current efforts to strengthen staffing levels in our hospitals.

In the afternoon, a panel consisting of representatives from the Englewood, South Jersey, UMDNJ RN, and Cooper locals led a discussion on ways locals can fight and win better staffing through membership activities, grievances, and labor-management meetings.

## The Convention: The Second Day

Following a call to order by Vice-President Bernie Gerard, HPAE President Ann Twomey gave her State of the Union address, describing HPAE's continuing successful campaigns to protect our hospitals in the face of for-profit buyouts and mergers; and to organize new members, including the RNs at Newton Memorial Hospital and Memorial Hospital of Salem County, and non-nursing professionals at Temple/Episcopal Hospital in Philadelphia. A copy of Ann's State of the Union address can be found at <http://www.hpae.org/node/689>

HPAE members heard from other providers and experts on the impact on consumers and providers of national healthcare reform, as well as new models of health care delivery and funding being proposed and piloted under the new reform law. The panel, led by attorney and advocate Renee Steinhagen, included Jeffrey Brenner, MD, who described a new, alternative model called accountable care organizations (ACOs), formed by local hospitals, clinics, private practitioners, and public health agencies to improve the quality, capacity, and accessibility of care, focused on Medicaid patients initially. The challenge for HPAE is to play a proactive role as such new models are being developed. David Knowlton, of the Health Care Quality Institute gave a presentation on the phase-in of national health care reform, and some of the reimbursement changes to expect for hospitals and outpatient care.

Later in the day, HPAE member delegates discussed and voted affirmatively on resolutions to:

- Support staffing legislation and changes to the current hospital licensing regulations. Members spent part of the day writing letters to the NJ Department of Health and Senior Services advocating for improving staffing.



**"Transforming Healthcare in New Jersey" panel discussion (l-r): - Jeffrey Brenner, Executive Director, Camden Coalition of Healthcare Providers; Renee Steinhagen, Executive Director, NJ Appleseed; HPAE President Ann Twomey; David Knowlton, President, NJ Health Care Quality Institute; and Geri Dickson, PhD., RN, Exe. Dir., NJ Collaborating Center for Nursing.**

- Support the actions of members at Meadowlands Hospital, who have been advocating for their rights in a pending hospital sale to a for-profit company, and who recently successfully negotiated a contract with new buyers; and
- Challenge attacks on public employees, who face attempts to take back their retirement security and benefits in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey. To read the 2010 convention resolutions, go to <http://www.hpae.org/node/689>

Delegates also approved changes to the HPAE constitution and by-laws, including a change that will simplify the dues structure. Currently, members pay 1% of salary and a separate fee, used to pay a portion of our "per capita" dues payments to our national union, AFT. Delegates voted to abolish the separate AFT fee and establish a 1.1% dues payment. For virtually every HPAE member, this will actually mean a reduction in dues.

Finally, the delegates elected HPAE's state officers, re-electing President Ann Twomey and Vice-President Bernie Gerard for four year terms and electing Barbara Rosen as Secretary-Treasurer for the same term.

HPAE members also took time to honor local colleagues and community leaders and elected officials who have made important contributions to our efforts. Mayors Mark Smith of Bayonne, Mayor Michael Gonnelli of Secaucus and Renee Steinhagen of Appleseed Foundation were among the public awardees. Each local picked a member to honor at a special luncheon, and Joan Johnson, from Local 5105/Virtua received the state HPAE award for her dedication and leadership to the union since her local was formed in 1997. For a complete list of the honorees, go to <http://www.hpae.org/node/689>

# HPAE HEROES OF HEALTH CARE



↩ Senator Ron Rice with HPAE Local 5089 members (l-r): Cynthia McDougal, ..., Casey Warren, Elmer Daniels, Banita Herndon, Rosa Johnson and Jeannie Redd.



Nancy Miller, AFL-CIO Community Services with Ann Twomey



↑ Kathleen Gialanella, Esq.



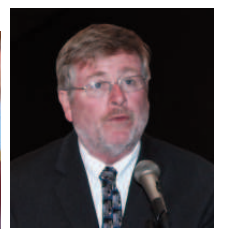
↑ Erica Daughtrey Congressman Sires' Staff



↩ Sam Liebman, AFT Legal Department with (l-r): Linda Serata, Tracy McAllister, Bernie Gerard, Ann Twomey, and Lorie Halter



Sue Cleary, Pres. Natl/Health Care 1199J



↑ Bayonne Councilman Terry Ruane