



PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

As we open the New Year I can't help but think of all the struggles we went through in 2022. As nurses we have endured the continuation of caring for patients with COVID while masking up daily and not having enough staff to provide proper care. It feels like this will never end.

On a positive note, we now have two new Executive Board Officers, which will help us to stay on top of the many issues that arise, further educate our members about Unionism, and prepare for our 2024 contract negotiations. I want to thank Brittany and Joe for committing to do the work to move our Local Union to the next level.

I realize there are times when you are not satisfied with the outcome of the concerns you have raised. Every issue you bring forward is addressed with Administration with a sense of urgency. There are Labor Laws that govern when the employer must negotiate with us and when they do not have to do so.

One example is SIP. When an employer wants to institute an incentive program, they are required to discuss it with the Union because it is a change in our wages. Our wages are a mandatory subject to bargaining. This means they can NOT implement such a program without our approval. It does NOT mean they have to accept our counter proposals for the language, or the dollar amounts that they propose. We always have an option with this example, take the money or tell them to STOP offering SIP.

We will not suggest ending SIP because when we look at the numbers, there are many nurses on a consistent basis picking up the additional hours. It is OUR choice whether or not to work additional hours.

When I read some of the posts on our Facebook page, it is apparent that we need to provide as much education as possible so we all better understand what we can and can not do at certain times. It is disheartening when I read the personal attacks toward our Local Executive Board. We are Nurses, too. A lot of time and thought goes into how we approach the problems at hand. For example, our button day, which for the most part was successful. Buttons are ordered and bagged, date is set, calls/texts are sent to many of you asking for help to get out the buttons and to track who wore them & who refused to support our Union by putting on a button. We track this stuff in order to assess where our strengths and weaknesses are and how to plan for the next action. This becomes very important when we are in contract negotiations with the hospital and are making critical decisions.

Let's fight this fight together for better staffing, better wages, and safer working conditions. Our Unity is what will help us to prevail.

In Solidarity,
Doris Bell, Local 5118 President

A LOOK AHEAD

Happy New Year!

As we wave goodbye to 2022, we open our arms to welcome 2023. As we embrace this upcoming year, we have put some amazing things in place to keep you informed, engaged, and educated about what to expect in 2023!

Attend a meeting, a zoom call, and or send us an email either way keep us in the loop of the chatter in your units.

Here are some of what you can expect this year!

- An increase in the frequency of our General Membership Meetings
- Facebook: Quicker Facebook response time
- Outpatient Ambulatory meetings: More meetings
- Update technology for Blast emails and communication.

We stand behind you; so, you can stand with us!

We have over 1500 truly amazing, hardworking, and compassionate nurses; let's come together to send a strong message to Coopers' Administration.

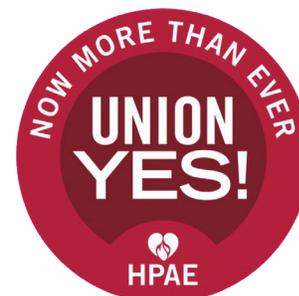
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH! Together we can do more!

Cooper is lucky to have us!

**A great author once said:
A truly amazing nurse is hard to find and impossible to forget.**

Be on the lookout for upcoming dates, and times to collaborate on important topics, issues, and events.

In solidarity,
Tina Jones, VP Local 5118



UNION REMINDERS AND UPDATES

SUMMER HOLIDAY SIGN UPS – Article 19 Vacation Scheduling

- Sign up lists should be posted no later than February 1 by our managers
- Vacation week sign-ups are given by bargaining unit seniority
- Vacations are chosen in one-week blocks
- Once everyone chooses their first week of vacation by bargaining unit seniority, the list starts over for the second week, again time chosen by bargaining unit seniority

RN License Renewal – Plan Ahead

- May is our NJ License Renewal time
- If our license is not renewed and posted timely, we are not permitted to work

Tuition Reimbursement and Staff Development Program – Article 21.4

- \$500 each calendar year from Cooper if we have worked more than 1,000 hours in the previous calendar year
- Includes specialty certifications, CPR/BLS/ACLS taken outside of Cooper and professional organization fees

ADO Forms – Assignment Despite Objection Forms

- Assignment Despite Objection forms are to be completed when we know our assignment is unsafe, unmanageable

- After we have filled out the form, please put it in the Union box outside of the cafeteria
- When we receive the completed form, we stamp it in and give it to Cooper. They review the form and respond during our Staffing committee meetings.
*** We are going to review this process during our next Joint Staffing Committee meeting and will update you on the process.

UPDATES

HPAE and Cooper Medical Surgical Meetings

- The purpose of these meetings is to find out from the nurses what would improve the staffing and the flow of work on the units.
- RN ideas given: Scattered shifts, upstaff number of RNs, have bargaining unit RN flow nurses to take patients for scans, move patients, admissions/discharges. This is a work in progress. Please submit any ideas you have.

General Membership Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 8th

Time: In Person - 8am, 1pm, 6pm

Zoom call - 8pm

Location: Hilton Garden Inn, Camden Waterfront

UNION SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

IS YOUR SON OR DAUGHTER A SENIOR IN HIGH SCHOOL?

Peter J. McGuire was an American labor leader of the nineteenth century. He co-founded the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America in 1881 and became one of the leading figures in the first three decades of the American Federation of Labor. He is credited with first proposing the idea of Labor Day as a national holiday in 1882.

In recognition of his work in the labor movement, the South Jersey Central Labor Council holds an annual Peter McGuire Labor Day Breakfast at which time they present scholarships to seniors in high school who:

- Have an affiliated union member in their immediate family
- Show documented financial need
- Maintain a minimum GPA of 2.5 or higher
- Live in Southern New Jersey
- Attend one of the following institutions:
 - Camden County College. Contact Dean of Student Affairs*
 - Gloucester County College: Contact GCC Scholarship Committee*
 - Rowen University: Contact Dean of Students*
 - Rutgers University: Contact Financial Aid Office*

Our Local Union 5118 annually awards a \$1,000 scholarship to a senior in high school who is pursuing a career in health care.

American Federation of Teachers (AFT) our National Union offers the ROBERT G. PORTER SCHOLARSHIPS

Robert G. Porter was a Union activist who dedicated his life to championing for the rights of working people, and their civil rights. In his honor, American Federation of Teachers remembers his legacy with scholarships. **WE ARE MEMBERS OF AFT.**

Scholarships offered are:

- Four, 4 year \$8000 scholarships to dependents of AFT members.
- en one time \$1000 grants are given to members to assist with continuing education.

To apply visit AFT.org, Click on member benefits, then Education and learning.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at jimandpattischarff@msn.com.

Patti Scharff, RN

GRIEVANCE CORNER

In 2022, we saw an increase in the number of RN's disciplined for **HIPAA** violations. The disciplines ranged from written warnings to termination. Whenever an employee accesses a patient's chart without authorization, a compliance officer is notified, and he/ she investigates the situation. The hospital takes HIPAA violations very seriously, so I am taking this opportunity to remind/ inform you of common violations.

1. Accessing a family member/ friend/ co- worker's chart. **NEVER OK** unless the authorization form is completed and filed with HR. Note: the authorization is good for 1 year and it is the RN's responsibility to renew it annually. To obtain this form, contact Christina Zia-Sass: Zia-Sass-Christina@cooperhealth.edu
2. Accessing the chart of a patient that is not under your direct care. **NEVER OK**- once a patient is transferred, discharged, expired, etc., they are no longer your patient and you do not have the authority to access their chart.
3. Accessing a patient's chart from home. **ONLY OK** to finish documenting on a patient in your care within 24 hours. It is **NOT OK** to just view the chart, orders, lab results, X-ray's, etc. Once you leave your shift, they are no longer your patient.

Please take the time to review Cooper's HIPAA policy.

We are looking to recruit additional Union Reps. If you would like more information on what a Union Rep is and does, please contact me at annmcc@comcast.net.

Ann McCausland, Grievance Chair

WELCOME TO OUR LOCAL EXECUTIVE BOARD, BRITTANY

Hello everyone! My name is Brittany Cucunato. I am now one of your new Local Executive Board Officers (LEB). Let me start off by saying I am excited to be working for YOU! Some of you may know me as the backpack dealer. I may have missed a few of you, but I was able to deliver hundreds of backpacks throughout the hospital. I will continue to do my best to serve you and to make sure our Voices are heard.

I start! started at Cooper as a CCT on Pavilion 9 and worked my way through nursing school. I transitioned to a nurse on P9 and worked closely with the interventional cardiologists and surgical team. I later transferred to the Cardiac Cath Lab where I currently work. I became a Union Representative shortly after my coworker/husband dragged me into it. After deep consideration, I wanted to take on becoming an Officer.

We have a lot of new things up our sleeve to make sure our nurses know they are heard, and our message is clear:

RESPECT US ❤️ **SUPPORT US** ❤️ **PROTECT US**



Address Service Requested

A Newsletter for the members of
HPAE Local 5118 at Cooper Hospital

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www.hpae.org

