



District 1199 NM
Newsletter – October 2018

Our Chapters

CHRISTUS St. Vincent Hospital
Alta Vista Regional Hospital
Los Alamos Medical Center
Holy Cross Hospital
UNM Hospital

Help Us Bring Patient Safe Staffing
To New Mexico Hospitals
See Page 3.

Chapter Updates
Pages 2 & 3.



The Watchword for Our Union - Relevance.

“The name of the game is being relevant to what it is that people need in the workplace of the future.” -

Liz Shuler, the secretary-treasurer, AFL-CIO.

Relevance, noun – the quality or state of being closely connected or appropriate; significance, bearing, application, importance, weight.

The next three years will be critical for New Mexico hospitals, the patients they serve and the employees that work at our hospitals.

Last month we wrote about the need for the New Mexico state government to set aside 10% of the \$1.2 billion in surplus revenue it will have for budgeting in January to be used for protecting our hospitals.

Three of the hospitals where District 1199 NM represents employees are rural hospitals, and two of them Holy Cross Medical Center and Alta Vista Regional Hospital are especially vulnerable.

The other two, more urban and larger, hospitals where our Union represents employees, also provide care for a great many New Mexicans who live in rural areas.

Our Union represents about 5,000 healthcare workers – Nursing Assistants, Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Physician Assistants, Specialty Technicians, Housekeepers, Plant Facility Employees, Pharmacists,



Liz Shuler, Secretary Treasurer,
National AFL-CIO

Custodial Employees, Social Workers, and more Support Service Employees.

With the attacks on labor unions by corporations interested in how much money they can squeeze out of every facility they control and every person they employ, it is important for us to reach out to all members – and non-members – to demonstrate the RELEVANCE that our democratically comprised employee organization has in the workplace and in supporting our members’ families and their quality of life.

To do that our officers and staff will be spending more time engaging the people we represent to find out what they are thinking, and what they believe we can do better.

We will also be asking the newer and younger members of the bargaining units we represent to take an active role and become a leader.

We represent employees when things go bad and when they have disputes with managers. But we also need to make sure that we are listening about the other things people want our Union to do.

We are going to find out how our Union can be more *“RELEVANT to what it is that people need in the workplace of the future.”*

UNMH – The Union Wants Your Input for November Negotiations

District 1199 NM is preparing for negotiations with UNMH in November.

This is an important year for negotiations. We are seeking input from members about the issues they want brought up at the bargaining table.

And once negotiations are underway, President Sharon Argenbright, wants to keep members informed throughout the negotiations with updates via texts and email.

Please contact her, your Delegate, union staff, or the union office and provide the best number and/or email address we can use to text and email updates.

Sharon can be reached at (505) 690-6932. Phone and email contact information for staff representatives and organizers Mauricio de Segovia and Susan De Leon, can be found on Page 4, of this newsletter.



Alta Vista Regional Hospital Employees Get New Contract

Employees at Las Vegas' Alta Vista Regional Hospital (AVRH) recently ratified a new contract including an economic package which included increasing the wages for employees whose positions needed significant upgrading.

Alta Vista Regional Hospital is owned by Quorum Health Corporation, which has sold or closed ten, primarily rural, hospitals since April 2016.

During negotiations the Union discovered that Quorum was scheduling as many as seven more rural hospitals for sale or closure.

Union negotiators demanded to know if AVRH was to be one of those, and was told the Las Vegas hospital was not one of those on the list.

Nonetheless, the Union negotiated a requirement that the hospital provide a sixty-day notice for any major reduction in force, should that happen.

CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center – Education Benefit

Employees at CHRISTUS St. Vincent Regional Medical Center previously negotiated a provision in their contract which requires the hospital to contribute money to an education fund for employees when the hospital does not meet staffing levels it agreed to according to the contract.

Some employees have made use of the education benefit, but more could.

Sharon Argenbright, the Union's new president is encouraging members to speak with her or the Union's staff representatives to find out how it works and how much money employees are eligible for each year.

Staff representative Lori Gonzales frequently visits St. Vincent and can be found in the Atrium conference room. Call or email her to see when she can meet with you. Her contact information is on page 4, of this newsletter.



IMPORTANT MESSAGE: The New Mexico Patient Safe Staffing Coalition – District 1199 NM Nurses have been at the forefront in the battle for creating safe staffing in New Mexico, and we support the newly formed **Coalition for the Patient Safe Staffing Act** to increase visibility for this important issue. Here is a link to the Patient Safe Staffing Website: <http://patientsafestaffing.org/>

Los Alamos Medical Center -

Los Alamos Medical Center, like Holy Cross and Alta Vista, is a hospital serving a rural area. Due to its proximity to and the needs of the National Labs, LAMC has fared better than most rural hospitals when it comes to financial stability.

LAMC is owned by LifePoint Health, Inc. which announced in July that it was merging with RCCH HealthCare Partners - which is owned by funds managed by affiliates of Apollo Global Management, LLC.

At the suggestion of LAMC employees it represents, the Union will put together a working group to monitor this merger to be sure that decisions impacting planning for the hospital and the patients it serves are reflective of the needs and participation of all stakeholders.



Holy Cross Medical Center – New Unit Negotiations Completed.

Congratulations to the Advanced Practice Nurses and Physician Assistants who recently completed negotiating their first contract with Holy Cross Medical Center and will hold the contract ratification vote on October 1, 2018.

Holy Cross continues to face financial problems, as do many rural hospitals. President Sharon Argenbright recently appeared before the Taos Board of County Commissioners, expressing concerns employees and the community have about the hospital's plans.

The Commissioners agreed to allow the Union to make a presentation of ideas for assuring the hospital continues its mission to serve greater Taos patients.

The presentation will be made on October 9, 2018, in Taos County Office.

It's Time Hospitals Stop Fighting Against Patient Safe Staffing

Nurses and hospital employees across the United States are busting down the doors of state legislators and governors demanding they create state laws to create safer staffing for patients.

The on-line publication which monitors healthcare issues, Healthcare Dive, recently published a story by Tony Abraham entitled “[Fight for mandated nurse-to-patient ratios heats up.](#)”

He points to the effort of Pennsylvania and Massachusetts nurses. Massachusetts voters will have the final say in that state in November. In Pennsylvania the battle will be in the legislature where nurses have picked up the support of key policy makers.

Abraham writes, “On top of Democratic Gov. Tom Wolf's support, 49 state legislators in Pennsylvania have co-sponsored bills in the House and Senate that seek to establish mandated nurse-to-patient staffing ratios in hospitals.”

It's time that the legislators of New Mexico do what so many of them promised to do – Pass the Patient Safe Staffing Act.

New Mexico's measure has a chance of becoming law if the new Governor and the Democrats who control both branches of the legislature will stand up to the hospital lobby.

Contact the [Patient Safe Staffing Coalition](#) to see what you can do to help. See the information on page 2.

IMPORTANT MEETING IN OCTOBER:

October 9, 2018 – Legislative Health and Human Services Committee. New Mexico Roundhouse State Capitol, Room 322 Santa Fe, at 2:30 p.m. – Nurse Staffing Levels. District 1199 NM President Sharon Argenbright, MSN, RN will present with Patient Safe Staffing Coalition Leaders Diane Spencer, RN and Cleo Fowler, BA RN.

Staff Representatives and Office Support for District 1199 Bargaining Units



Mauricio de Segovia is a District 1199 NM Organizer & Staff Representative. He is bi-lingual, is experienced at organizing and comes to the Union from El Centro de Igualdad y Derechos. He is working with UNMH and can be reached at (505) 639-6423 Email: Mauricio@district1199nm.org



Lori Gonzales is a former and long-time District 1199 Vice President for Technicians at St. Vincent Hospital, is a Staff Representative and assists in the Santa Fe office. She can be reached at (505) 780-8272 Email: loretta@district1199nm.org



Yolanda Ulmer is a long time District 1199 Organizer and has been working as Staff Representative at Alta Vista, Los Alamos Medical Center and St. Vincent Hospitals. She can be reached at (505) 690-6871 Email: yolanda@district1199nm.org

Susan De Leon has been involved as a Union Organizer and Staff Representative for many years working for other unions besides District 1199 NM. She has also assisted unions in their presentations to legislative bodies. She can be reached at (505) 884-7713 or Email: susan@district1199nm.org

Ivan Peña is one of the Office Assistants for District 1199 NM. He's Bilingual and has years of customer service experience. He worked for the U.S Census Bureau in 2010, working closely with the Hispanic community. He can be reached at (505) 884-7713 or Email: admin@district1199nm.org

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While the main office is for all of District 1199NM, it also focuses on issues affecting UNMH employees.

The Santa Fe Office mainly focuses on matters affecting members from CHRISTUS St. Vincent, Holy Cross Hospital, Los Alamos Medical Center and Alta Vista Regional Hospital. You may call either office with new organizing tips and ideas.

What Are Weingarten Rights? And Why Are They Important to You?

In the 1975 case NLRB v. J. Weingarten Inc., the U.S. Supreme Court declared that unionized employees (in the private sector) have the right to have a steward present during an investigatory meeting with management when the employee believes the meeting might lead to disciplinary action being taken against him/her.

Weingarten rights apply during investigatory interviews when a supervisor questions an employee to obtain information that could be used as grounds for discipline.

When an employee believes such a meeting may lead to discipline, he/she has the right to request union representation.

These basic Weingarten rights stem from the Supreme Court's decision:

The employee must request representation before or during the meeting.

After an employee makes the request, the supervisor has these choices:

- grant the request and wait for the union representative's arrival;
- deny the request and end the meeting immediately; or
- give the employee the choice of either ending the meeting or continuing without representation.

If the supervisor denies the request and continues to ask questions, the employee has a right to refuse to answer. In addition, the supervisor is committing an unfair labor practice.

Employee Rights in "Weingarten" Meetings

Beware that management is not obligated to inform employees of their Weingarten rights – employees must ask for them. Unlike Miranda rights – where police are required to tell a suspect of his/her right to an attorney, etc. – Employees must ask for their Weingarten rights.

Ask your District 1199NM Representative for a Weingarten Card if you have not already received one ... and keep it in your purse, wallet, or someplace you can find quickly when at work. You can also cut out the shaded and dotted box below and keep it with you and don't be embarrassed to read it to your accusing supervisor.

HERE'S WHAT TO SAY:

"If the discussion in this meeting could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or impact on my personal working conditions, I request that my steward, local officer or union representative be present. Without union representation, I choose not to answer any further questions at this time. This is my right under a Supreme Court decision called Weingarten."

And call your Union Representative, Your Union Chapter Officer or Delegate.