



## CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS UPDATE

September 28, 2011

After the cancellation of our three previously scheduled negotiation sessions by the Washington Hospital Center (WHC), we had our first negotiation meeting yesterday, September 27, 2011. We finally received WHC's initial contract proposal, and although we know that this proposal may change as they usually do during negotiations, the message has been sent that this will be a difficult negotiation process. What WHC has proposed affects each and every one of us negatively. We knew through early discussions with WHC that they wanted to freeze the Cash Balance Retirement Plan (CBRP), eliminate Veteran's Day and President's Day as paid holidays, eliminate the payment of excess PTO accrual, change the way that PTO hours are accrued, and place us in the same Medical, Pharmacy, Vision and Dental Benefits Coverage as every other employee at WHC. Although we tentatively agreed to accept all of the above and to bring it to you the membership to vote on, it was still not enough for WHC.

The only thing that we would not agree to was to give WHC what we consider a blank check on their PTO policy. Many of you have asked me what does that mean. Simply put, it means that whatever we negotiated with WHC concerning PTO could be changed by WHC without negotiating or discussing it with us. This means that things such as your accrual rates (how much PTO hours you get), when you get to use your PTO, what percentage of PTO hours you would receive if you retire, quit or are terminated, could change at the whim of WHC. The premise of WHC is that we would receive the same PTO benefits as all the other WHC employees, whether union or not. We must not fall into that trap or accept their logic. **Under D.C. Law, employers with more than 100 employees are only obligated to provide seven (7) days per year of sick leave to its employees.** Remember, we still have our two additional holidays and Pension Plan because we do not fall under the same category as other non SEIU employees. We have given WHC every opportunity to negotiate any changes that they want in the policy. Our only request is that whatever we agree to be placed in the contract. WHC's refusal to do this only indicates that changes are already being contemplated that WHC does not want us to be able to negotiate.

Because we did not give WHC a blank check on the PTO policy, they now propose to penalize us and change the **On-Call Pay** from 25% of an employee's individual base hourly rate, per hour, to **\$3** per hour. This is a significant reduction. WHC also proposes to eliminate **Time and one half (1-1/2) pay** for working during a **Snow Emergency**, and to be able to unilaterally establish the parking fee for Union members. Currently our rate ranges from **\$16.80** per month to **\$25** a month. Other employees of WHC are at **\$50** a month. Non SEIU represented employees are welcomed to support and join us in this fight.

DANIEL FIELDS, JR  
President

MARCHEL SMILEY  
Treasurer / Business Manager

SERVICE EMPLOYEES  
INTERNATIONAL UNION  
AFL-CIO, CLC

Hospital Professional  
Technical and Service  
Workers

1673 Columbia Road, NW  
Suite 100  
Washington, DC 20009

Phone: 202-483-6221

Fax: 202-483-6242

e-mail: seiu722@aol.com

website: www.seiu722.org



It is clearly apparent that we are going to be in a fight with WHC to maintain

benefits that we have fought so hard in the past to obtain. We need to continue to show WHC that we are united in this fight. Our purple/gold day was a tremendous success. Many of you are still wearing the ribbons and purple bracelets that were given to you. We are now asking that you wear them every day through the completion of negotiations. Show them off with pride. Raise your wrist and show off your bracelet as you walk down the hall.

We also see that we need to show more solidarity. On Tuesday, October 4, 2011, we are asking all members, and any supporters to bring their meals (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks, drinks) to work. We are calling this **Purple Bag Day**. We will be distributing purple bags on Friday, September 30, and Monday, October 3. Contact any Negotiation Committee Member, Shop Steward, or call the Union Office (202) 483-6221 to get your bag. If you can't get a purple bag, bring a brown bag and just write Purple Bag Day on it. When you go to the cafeteria or wherever you eat, make sure you put the bag on the table and make it visible. The bags that we will be distributing are reusable, so you can bring them every day. You may see how much money you actually save by showing solidarity.

Our hope is that every member participates in the Purple Bag Day. For those of you who do not want to participate remember that these changes also affect you. More importantly please step aside and not hinder us from obtaining the best contract that we can.

On Saturday, October 1, 2011, President Daniel Fields, Jr., will be in room GO-O2, from the hours of 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., or longer if necessary, to entertain all questions concerning the negotiations. We are sure that WHC will begin to try and spin their version of negotiations and show you how you will benefit from what they are proposing, but ask is their proposal on PTO set in stone, or can it unilaterally be changed by them. Listen carefully to their answer. After all the rhetoric that they give you, the answer will equate to they can change it whenever they want.

It is because of our hard work, dedication, sacrifice and service that WHC is now considered one of the top hospitals in the country. We have played a very integral part in getting them to this plateau and in lieu of rewarding us WHC proposes to take from us. This is the time to stand together.

We are Strong, we are United, and we will Prevail.

Check our website at [www.seiu722.org](http://www.seiu722.org) for copies of our proposal and WHC's proposal. Also, check it for additional updates and information.

**Solidarity Forever.**