

We're Forming a Union!

Last Monday, May 6, we successfully delivered our signed declaration to Unity administration and filed a petition for representation with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

We also kicked off a public campaign, letting our community know we're fighting for an organized voice to improve patient care and provide the resources our community deserves.

Several local and statewide media outlets have covered our effort so far, including:

- Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB)
- [The Oregonian](http://www.OregonLive.com/health)
(go to: www.OregonLive.com/health)

- [The Portland Business Journal](http://www.BizJournals.com/Portland/News)
(go to www.BizJournals.com/Portland/News)
- [The Lund Report](http://www.TheLundReport.org/content/)
(go to www.TheLundReport.org/content/)
- [The Portland Mercury](http://www.PortlandMercury.com/blogtown)
(go to: www.PortlandMercury.com/blogtown)

We expect media and community interest in our story to continue as our campaign unfolds.

Thanks to Amer Filipovic, Tracie Henry, Sherrie Neff, Jeff Ferrier and Sarah Mittleman for acting as spokespeople this first week.

Letting the broader public know what we're fighting for is so important, and you all have done a fantastic job so far.

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Sticker Action: Wear a Sticker in Solidarity



On Tuesday, May 21, we are asking all Unity nurses to wear a sticker demonstrating our solidarity during the first day of our NLRB hearing. If your unit needs stickers, contact Annabel at Torres@OregonRN.org.

NLRB Hearing Begins May 21

Now that we've petitioned the NLRB for recognition of our union, our next step is for the Oregon Nurses Association (ONA) and our employer to come to an agreement about who's eligible to participate in our election. This week, a board agent from the NLRB will facilitate a hearing, wherein both parties will make arguments regarding how our "bargaining unit" should be defined.

We anticipate Unity administration will attempt to deflate our effort by arguing that nurses at Emanuel and Randall Children's Hospital belong in our group. This is a typical strategy by employers to try and prevent workers from unionizing.

ONA's legal counsel is working with us to ensure our right to an appropriate bargaining unit is respected so we can move forward with our election.

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NLRB Hearing Begins May 21 *(continued from page 1)*

It's not uncommon for employers to campaign against unionization efforts.

Attempting to change the scope of our bargaining unit is nothing more than a desperate attempt to frustrate our progress. **Other strategies to be aware of include:**

- ◆ Holding "informational meetings" where anti-union propoganda is shared;
- ◆ Pulling employees aside for one-on-one intimidation;
- ◆ Attempting to erode support for our union by spreading misinformation about membership dues, strikes, how unions work, etc.;
- ◆ Making promises to listen to our concerns, change things for the better, etc.;
- ◆ Visits to the facility by high up executives we've never seen before, who express concern about our well-being and tell us we're part of a big, happy family;

- ◆ Describing unions as "third parties" who "interfere" with our ability as employees to engage directly with management.

The truth is, "the union" is us, the nurses at Unity. By joining together with ONA, we are forming an organized voice for ourselves, our patients, and for the betterment of our profession as a whole.

We'll get through this process just like we get through a difficult shift – by standing together.

Kristen Sharp: I'm voting Yes!



You may recognize Kristen Sharp, a charge nurse on Unit 2.

She floated to all units except for Unit 6. Before coming to Unity, Kristen worked on the psychiatry unit at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), Oregon State Hospital (OSH), and she was one of the first

nurses who worked at Crisis Assessment and Treatment Center (CATC).

She also teaches black & white photography to middle school kids. When she's not working, you will often find Kristen outside.

During the winter, she skis, and during the warmer months, she's either hiking or in her garden.

We sat down with Kristen to get a better understanding of why she is a nurse and why she supports a union for nurses at Unity.

Q: What initially motivated you to become a nurse?

I was working as a Doula helping mothers with

either problematic or traumatic first births and woman with minimal if any support systems.

I was motivated to learn more of the science behind a woman's health and felt a nursing career was also more supportive of my family life with small children. When I took my mental health rotation in nursing school at the VA, I fell in love with psychiatric nursing.

Q: When you worked at OHSU and OSH, how did being in a union impact your work and your life?

I was a member of ONA at OHSU and American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) at OSH.

With both jobs, my wage was clearly defined by how many years I had worked and by my level of education.

I was confident about what I was paid, and my benefits were fair and in line with the other nurses I worked with.

I also had confidence that my union had my back when enforcing safe working conditions. There was never any question of how acuity was determined and ensuring there were appropriate staffing ratios.

At OHSU, we had Unit Base, where every member of our team from social workers, occupational therapists, behavioral health therapists, MDs,

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Nurse Solidarity: ONA at Providence Portland Medical Center



Sue Phillips has been a nurse for 37 years.

Sue is a proud ONA member and works in the neuro surgery, comprehensive stroke unit at Providence Portland Medical Center (PPMC). She's also elected director on ONA's Board of Directors and has volunteered to serve on the PPMC nurse bargaining team nine times to negotiate and improve working conditions, hours, benefits and wages.

Earlier this month, PPMC's nurse-elected bargaining team helped bargain and ratify a contract for more 1,150 nurses, resulting in a 10.25% wage increase over 4 years, a new differential for float pool nurses, and increases to per diem and standby differentials, as well as mandatory day off caps. [CLICK HERE](#) for the PPMC Bargaining Unit webpage or go to www.OregonRN.org/81

Sue became a nurse because she loves people. She grew up caring for her Aunt Margaret who had cerebral palsy. That experience inspired Sue to become a nurse to advocate for and protect people who are marginalized and to ensure those patients have their voices heard. When she's not working, Sue enjoys taking long walks at the off-leash dog park.

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Kristen Sharp: I'm voting. Yes! (continued from page 2)

management, and nursing was represented. We made decisions about the unit collectively, and outcomes were never mandated from the top down.

Everyone had an equal say, and I felt that management truly valued our opinions.

Q: What's, are the most challenging aspects of your work?

My favorite part of being a nurse is seeing people get better; sometimes it's a lift of their mood or watching their mania decrease, other times it's watching their sleep and thinking improve, or it's witnessing our patients having a better insight of their illness and how to manage it.

The most challenging part is when they go back out to the community and they don't get the support they need and often have to come back to Unity.

Sometimes it feels that they have to start their battle of getting well all over again.

Q: Are there things about Unity's policies, procedures, or environment that make any part of your work, especially challenging?

When Unity started, there was minimal direction on how the unit should be run, and that felt very chaotic at times.

Then came Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and the plan of correction.

The units then had an extreme 180 with very rigid rules and no input on how it affected the patients and the culture of the units. Communication was poor, and decisions felt reactionary.

Q: Why are you voting YES for ONA?

I appreciated the collective voice

we had at OHSU. Even when decisions had to be mandated by a more significant power, everyone was included in problem-solving, and the communication was clear.

I worry that Legacy finds the nurses at Unity expendable and does not value the individual care that we give our patients. I feel that by us joining ONA, we will have a stronger collective voice to support an environment of safety for everyone—and real Just Culture.

Q: What advice would you give your nurse colleagues as we head towards our election?

To vote **YES!** We are stronger together! I think we all were very fractured and undervalued after the plan of correction. By joining ONA, I believe nursing will once again have our voice back to fight for patient safety and feel confident again as nurses by giving excellent trauma-informed care.

Nurse Solidarity... (continued from page 3)

Sue joined our May 6 meeting to show her support for Unity nurses and to wish us success in the nurse delegation.

“There is strength and power in numbers,” Sue told us. “A collective voice will be more effective for advocating for patients, nurses, and our communities.”

“It’s true that the hospital may not listen to just me or just you—but they will listen to 100 of us.”

My union and collective bargaining agreement guarantee nurses a voice and direct input in our work, wages, and benefits.”

We’re Forming a Union! (continued from page 1)

We appreciate your voice and your strength!

If you’re interested in speaking publicly about the reasons you’re

organizing, contact Annabel Torres at Torres@OregonRN.org

“I feel that by us joining ONA, we will have a stronger collective voice to support an environment of safety for everyone—and real Just Culture” — Kristen Sharp

Upcoming Meetings

Upcoming ONA Meetings – Every Monday

Stop by for as long as you’re able. These meetings are where we talk about next steps in our campaign, answer questions, and build a shared vision for improving our workplace.



Monday, May 20

Monday, May 27

Monday, June 3

Monday, June 10

Where?

The Encorepreneur Café

1548 NE 15 Ave

Portland, OR

When?

Drop-in from
5:45 to 9:00 p.m.



Tune in!

OPB’s *Think Out Loud* will interview Unity Center nurses live on

**Wednesday, May 22, 2019
at Noon**

Listen at **91.5 FM** or online at **opb.org**

Meeting Guest Speakers:

Monday, May 20



Caitlin Reid, RN
ONA Board of Directors
OHSU, 12K Cardiovascular ICU

Monday, May 27
Valerie Whitmore, RN
Providence Newberg

Monday, June 3
Maria Barnes, Behavioral Health RN, Rogue Regional Medical Center (Medford,OR)