Nurses rally across Michigan for Safe Patient Care (see inside)
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The MNA website store is open for business. Join together in solidarity with fellow NURSES by wearing MNA RED. MNA is making t-shirts and scrubs available at our lowest negotiated cost. Order more items to share shipping expenses. To get MNA gear, go to:

Bit.ly/MNAshop
I’ve been reflecting on the different ways MNA members are growing as advocates for patients and the nursing profession. When one workplace is in a contentious contract negotiation, members from other MNA units are coming beside them and helping strengthen the effort. Solidarity has become more than a word – it’s a way of life for MNA members.

What does that look like in real life? When Borgess nurses in Kalamazoo were marching in an informational picket demanding staffing levels in their contract, members of the Professional Employees Council of Sparrow Hospital showed up and picketed with them. Nurses from the Traverse City Munson Nurses Association and the Hackley Hospital RN Staff Council in Muskegon posted pictures on Facebook of themselves with handwritten signs encouraging the Borgess nurses.

The Traverse City Munson nurses are no stranger to supporting nurses in other workplaces. When the nurses at Manistee Munson were fighting a tough contract negotiation, the two Munson groups came together and supported each other’s efforts in negotiating with the administration.

Members of the RN Staff Council of Marquette General Hospital were ready to come to the aid of nurses at OSF St. Francis in Escanaba during their contract negotiations.

Solidarity is not a word we take lightly. As we unite not only in our own workplaces but through helping others, we see the power we gain when we’re working collectively. That power has resulted in strong contracts, strong locals, and strong relationships. Together we’re sharing our expertise in everything from continuing education to community health to safe staffing.

This is an exciting time to be part of MNA. If you’re not a member, you can join as an Associate Member on our website (minurses.org). The cost is $75, which gives you free access to all our events, online CEs and more. If you’re interested in having your workplace represented for collective bargaining, call the MNA office at 888.MINURSE and ask for the Organizing Department.

I encourage you to read this issue of Michigan Nurse and experience nursing’s voice in action for a better workplace, a stronger influence in politics and more. We’re busy making a difference for the nursing profession. If you’re not a member, come join us! If you’re already a member, be involved. Go to membership meetings and ask yourself, “What can I do to help the union that is protecting my ability to practice?” There are many small jobs that your LBU could use help with – passing out fliers, sending reminder emails, inviting a co-worker – many hands mean more power. Your involvement is needed!
Members Recognized for Leadership, Heroism

Five MNA members were recognized at the 2019 Awards Banquet for their leadership in locals, statewide, and for heroism in the face of a devastating medical diagnosis.

**Nurse Hero Award (posthumous)**

Trisha Goodridge, RN, a former nurse at U-M Hospital, was diagnosed with stage 3C ovarian cancer in 2015. After five surgeries and 50 rounds of chemotherapy, Trisha bought a 1964 Ford Galaxie 500 XL, painted it teal (the representing cover of ovarian cancer), named it “Lola,” and decided to travel to California via Route 66. By the time the road trip concluded in July 2018, over 1,200 information cards had been distributed in Native American reservations, primarily Spanish-speaking communities, big cities, small towns and rural areas. Trisha passed away on July 27, 2019, having warned thousands of women about the symptoms of ovarian cancer. For her determination and willingness to spread the word about ovarian cancer to as many people as she could, Trisha was awarded the MNA Nurse Hero award.

MNA leaders Katie Oppenheim, RN; Stephanie DePetro, RN and Katie Scott, RN were recognized for the valuable contributions they have made to their locals and to MNA. Katie Oppenheim, RN, (left) president of the University of Michigan Professional Nurse Association in Ann Arbor, was awarded the Cheryl L. Johnson, RN Labor Legacy award for her work at both the local and state levels of leadership. Stephanie DePetro, RN (center) was awarded Labor Leader of the Year for her guidance as president of the RN Staff Council of Marquette General Hospital. Katie Scott, RN (right) was presented with the newly re-named Carolyn Hietamaki Nurse Political Activist award. Katie is active at the local and state levels of MNA leadership and is also a County Commissioner representing Washtenaw County District 9.

MNA President Jamie Brown, RN (left) presents Jessica Lannon, RN (right) the Outstanding Contribution to MNA award. Jessica was recognized for her work as the Professional Employees Council of Sparrow Hospital Grievance Chair in Lansing. Jessica serves on many councils and committees at Sparrow, and on the weekly Labor Councils held in Lansing.

Two MNA members are appointed to the Michigan Board of Nursing

Congratulations to two MNA members appointed by Gov. Gretchen Whitmer to the Michigan Board of Nursing: Jessica Lannon, BA, RN, C-FEM, of PECSH (Professional Employee Council of Sparrow Hospital) and Donna Carnahan, BSN, CRNA, DNAP of UMPNC (University of Michigan Professional Nurse Council). They join nurse leaders from around the state who help create policies and oversee the profession.
Members of the Professional Nurse Council of St. Francis spread signs throughout their community, asking for a safe and fair contract from OSF St. Francis in Escanaba. Nurses from Marquette were prepared to drive down and join the St. Francis nurses in an informational picket when the employer abruptly came back to the table with a strong settlement, which was overwhelmingly ratified.

Munson Manistee and Munson Traverse City nurses showed solidarity as they both fought a large healthcare corporation for a fair contract that puts patients first. The nurses made the hour-plus trips to attend each other’s pickets and rallies.

Members of the Hackley Hospital RN Staff Council show their support for the Borgess RN Staff Council members who are negotiating their contract.

Members of the Borgess RN Staff Council march in support of safe patient care during the Kalamazoo Holiday Parade.
Following damaging changes to staffing in March 2018, Ascension Borgess Hospital in Kalamazoo has struggled to recruit and retain quality RNs. The members bargained hiring and referral bonuses while also winning additional compensation for current nurses working extra shifts.

Now, the Borgess RN Staff Council nurses are fighting for staffing ratios to be guaranteed in the contract in order to maintain safe patient care. In October, the nurses, other union activists and community supporters picketed the hospital to raise awareness of RN safety concerns. The bargaining will continue with the nurses’ commitment to fair wages, benefits and staffing.

Borgess RNs Fight For Safe Staffing

Borgess RN Staff Council members picket for safe staffing at Ascension Borgess Hospital.

Members from the Professional Employee Council of Sparrow Hospital (PECSH) helped the Borgess RN Staff Council nurses picket for safe staffing ratios.

Borgess RNs know that if there’s nurses on the outside of the hospital, something must be wrong on the inside of the hospital.

Traverse City Munson nurses show their support for the Borgess nurses.
Nurses at Hackley Hospital in Muskegon demonstrated the power of union solidarity through their coordinated action to fight back against the outrageous actions taken by management against a union officer.

Justin Howe, the president of MNA at Hackley Hospital in Muskegon, stood up for patients and staff when he was concerned about the safe staffing levels during a monitor outage in the ICU. In response, management tried to retaliate against Justin by suspending him.

Nurses immediately took action by filing a grievance and wearing “No Retaliation” stickers with nearly 100% participation across the hospital for a few days. The administration folded quickly thereafter. As a result of the courage of Hackley RNs, Justin was reinstated and paid for the shifts he missed.

Hackley RNs Win $125,000 Back Pay

Hackley RNs have a contract that guarantees the nurses receive their regular schedule shift differential on PTO. Marcia D’Oyly, an MNA nurse at Hackley Hospital in Muskegon realized that management wasn’t following the contract and she was receiving less money than she should. Upon examination, management had been underpaying nearly every nurse in the hospital. They quickly filed a class action grievance after reviewing several individuals’ pay stubs. By being active and communicating with her fellow RNs, Marcia was responsible for Hackley RNs winning over $125,000 in back pay.

When We Fight Together... WE WIN!

Hackley RNs scored several wins this year. They won a settlement with the National Labor Relations Board after the hospital tried to cancel their employee medical discount. Nurses were paid back over $13,000 for costs they had incurred, and it is estimated that over $160,000 in future costs was saved for the membership by protecting their discount.

Hackley OR nurses won an increased number of Full Time Employees after over 50 nurses, joined by OR Techs of the Michigan Union of Healthcare Workers, marched on the management with a signed petition demanding better patient staffing.
Through collective bargaining, nurses speaking with a unified voice are recognized as equal partners in health care. The Michigan Nurses Association has more experience representing nurses at the bargaining table than any other organization in the state.

In today’s health care environment, collective bargaining is proving to be one of the most effective ways to protect patients from inadequate and unsafe care. It also ensures that nurses have fair pay, good benefits, and safe working conditions; establishes effective channels of communication with those who make decisions that impact nursing practice; and advances nurses’ professional growth and development.

The following collective bargaining agreements and settlements have recently been ratified by nurses represented by the MNA (in alphabetical order):

**Jackson County Medical Care Facility**

The bargaining team worked to address the time and attendance policy at JCMCF. The threat of exposure to the flu was an important focus in negotiations in order to keep residents of a long-term care facility healthy. Additional excused absences were negotiated in order to allow nurses to stay home if they were ill with the flu. The nurses won improved language to reduce mandatory overtime and greater incentives for nurses to agree to work additional shifts. The nurses also won improvements in the provisions for holiday pay and overtime to ensure safe staffing for those weeks.

**Macomb County Health Department**

Going into contract negotiations, democratically elected RNs on the Macomb County Health Department Bargaining Team held conversations with their co-workers to learn members’ priorities. One of the priorities was wanting to win release time. Because there are multiple facilities and no Health Department-specific new hire orientation, nurses wanted to win paid time to be able to more effectively build their union.

They succeeded. The recently ratified contract includes language that will allow the president of the Nurses Staff Council of Macomb County (or a designated representative) to spend one hour a week doing union work. By winning provisions to have a stronger union, Macomb County Health Department members will be able to better advocate for their patients. Additionally, the members won raises, improved protections for just cause employment, and improve bereavement leave.

**Martha T. Berry Medical Care Facility**

After years of management not paying comparable salaries with other facilities, the Registered Nurses Staff Council of Martha T. Berry Medical Care Facility ratified a three-year contract, including wage increases between 26% and 34%, depending on seniority and position.

**Munson Manistee Hospital**

A tentative agreement was reached in September and ratified by the membership as the result of united bargaining, an informational picket, strong communications, a town hall, and yard signs placed throughout the community. The demands of the hospital were hugely concessionary, and

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being recently purchased by a large corporate entity (Munson), the members were able to fight off many of their demands and won a contract that moves nurses forward.

With the new contract and the fairly new owner, the nurses are now turning their attention to building their strength to continue advocating for patients in Manistee.

**Munson Traverse City**

Nurses at Munson Medical Center in Traverse City overwhelmingly voted to ratify a historic first contract. The agreement limits forced overtime, provides nurses a formal structure to address RN staffing levels, and implements new workplace safety procedures that will benefit patients. Nurses also won a 13% raise over the course of the three-year contract, which will help to recruit and retain quality RNs.

The nurses’ victory at Munson Medical Center makes this the largest successful unionization effort since Michigan went “Right to Work” in 2013. It is also the largest newly unionized workplace in any “Right to Work” state in the country in over five years.

In addition to other gains, nurses have won improved scheduling standards, an enforceable grievance procedure, and guaranteed health care benefit levels through their new union contract.

**Sturgis Hospital**

In December 2018, the Sturgis community was taken by surprise when it was announced that the OB and cancer transfusion departments at Sturgis Hospital would be closing. Members of the Sturgis Hospital RN Staff Council were especially horrified – their patients would now have to travel at least 50 minutes to receive care.

Kelly Glick, RN, president of the Sturgis Hospital RN Staff Council, spoke about her fears for OB and cancer patients who would no longer receive patient care at the Sturgis Hospital.

Together with State Rep. Aaron Miller, the nurses hosted a Town Hall so that community members could ask questions of CEO Robert LaBarge. Sturgis community members packed the gymnasium of the school. The cancer transfusion treatment center stayed open and Robert LaBarge was dismissed from the CEO position soon thereafter.

In light of those changes, the nurses bargained a one-year contract that preserved wages and healthcare. Nurses held on to the ability to keep spouses on their benefit plans and maintained health savings account contributions in a one-year contract. Since then, the nurses have ratified a one-year contract extension that includes quarterly bonuses. Both of the contracts were bargained in tandem with the two other bargaining units in the hospital, allowing for a strong and united union workforce.

**Three Rivers Hospital**

Issues on the table included excessive mandatory overtime, floating to other units and pay for precepting a new nursing school graduate. The Three Rivers Area Hospital Staff Council members were able to win new language on all of the priorities set by the membership. When management tried to force steep increases to healthcare, the nurses worked to ensure wage increases. The nurses worked to ensure wage increases to offset incremental increases to healthcare costs and not negatively impact nurses and their families.

**Nurses are stronger when we stand united.**

For more information about your contract or bargaining unit, please contact your local MNA representative. If you are interested in forming a union at your health care facility, please contact the MNA Organizing Department at 517-853-5512.
Member Profile  
Stephanie DePetro, RN

Leading and Mentoring in the U.P.

Stephanie DePetro is a certified OR nurse at UP Health System-Marquette and the president of the RN Staff Council of Marquette General Hospital. She recently received the MNA Labor Leader of the Year award and is a director-at-large on the MNA Board of Directors. We spoke to her about her profession, her pride in the labor movement, and the move to a new hospital building.

How long have you been a nurse?
I have been a nurse since February 28, 2012. Nursing is a second career choice for me. I hold a Bachelors and Masters in Criminal Justice. I spent a lot of time with kids in the juvenile court system, and working with their parents and parole officers. My goal was to become a police officer, but I ended up turning a two-year degree into a four-year and then an advanced degree.

While I was studying to become a police officer, Northern Michigan University created a special minor for those who wanted to be in law enforcement, mainly due to the rural location. The first people on the scene of an accident are most likely the police, and to help officers become more prepared in the field, I enrolled and excelled in the program. I really loved school, I was good at it and enjoyed the classes. The only problem was that after I got my master’s, I realized I had educated myself out of a police officer position because you can’t have more education than your captain. So, I went back to school and got my BSN.

What department do you work in?
What is your favorite part of the job?
I’m kind of a trauma junkie. I know what I need to do to help someone and I’m at my best when I’m given that opportunity. Everyone is one degree from Kevin Bacon up here. When we say our patients are our family and friends, they literally are our friends and family. We know everyone up here. Everyone is a friend of a friend or a family member, even if they’re from as far away as the Keweenaw Peninsula. I’m confident that when I get a trauma that I have the knowledge and the skill to help that person. I always remember that the patient is a somebody to somebody. That’s really important to me.

I’m the only certified OR nurse at Marquette General. I took a national certification course from AORN and received my CNOR certification. In this role, I make sure that we have correct policies continued on next page

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Stephanie talks with the local media during the 2017 contentious contract negotiations with UP Health System-Marquette. She shared with the public what was happening in the hospital in regard to safe staffing and what needed to be corrected.

(L-R) RN Staff Council of Marquette leaders Stephanie DePetro and Diane Adams had the chance to meet Gov. Gretchen Whitmer and used the opportunity to advocate for passage of the Safe Patient Care Act, for which the governor pledged her full support.
and procedures in the OR, and that they are being followed. I studied all different aspects of surgery, from sterilization of equipment, proper supplies and patient safety while in the OR.

**What has your family history of union activism taught you?**

I’m a third-generation union president; my grandfather and great-grandfather were both union presidents. I’ve been part of a union family for generations. When I had the opportunity to join MNA, it wasn’t even a thought or consideration, I just did it. When we were in tough negotiations in 2017, I would call my grandfather and ask him questions – what would you do? How would you respond to management? He gave me great advice. Don’t let management get to you because they’re being stubborn on purpose. Absolutely go ahead with your proposals and don’t think twice about it. Get that good core of people that have solidarity, and the patient safety will go from there.

**How does your involvement in the community help?**

Marquette is a union community and we have to do it all together. I’m on the Regional Labor Federation which keeps us all up-to-date on union issues. I’m also on the UP Labor Management Council, which is a group of labor and management on the same council. Every year we put together a labor management conference with different speakers and look at topics from the side of management and the side of labor. You can pick your sessions and get the perspective from both sides. If you can find something like this in your area, it’s very helpful for people who are on a negotiations team especially right before contract negotiations begin. The fact that we are all in the labor community together is very beneficial. When one union needs help, we all pitch in.

**In the last two years, you faced extremely difficult negotiations with the management. What steps are you now taking in order to show UP Health System-Marquette your solidarity?**

UP Health System-Marquette is not honoring our new contract the way we had hoped they would. So I make sure that I follow the contract to the letter and apply due diligence as needed. I was the Grievance Chair for four years before I became President and I still hold that office. I have a lot of history in the grievance process and that helps. I expect the nurses to uphold our end of the contract but I also remind management that they need to uphold their

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Today, I was searching to find the right words to say, on the eve of one of the biggest changes in our career. Although we are leaving our history behind, one thing still remains – our solidarity. The physical location of where we take care of our patients is changing in a few short hours, but the love and compassion we all share for our profession and our patients will remain as strong as ever. Just remember; it’s not the building that makes a family, it’s the people. We all have strong emotional ties to our old home; we fought for the safety of our patients by walking the block – twice. Thank you all for what you do for our patients and our community each and every day. I know that same dedication will move down the street right along with us.

In solidarity,
Stephanie DePetro

These “super heroes” called attention to the importance of nurses during the 2019 Labor Day Parade in Ishpeming.

MEMBER PROFILE continued from previous page
end as well. Sometimes it’s tempting to get mad but I always tell our members that we’re taking the high road and in a professional manner. Any time we feel the contract is being abused, we file on it.

Do you have any advice for union members who may have upcoming contract negotiations? How important is it for members to get directly involved?

It is always a struggle to keep members involved, especially with the restrictions we have for working longer and extra shifts due to our short staffing. But I tell members that they have to carve out time for their union life as well. It’s the way we stand as a whole to show our solidarity. We have monthly meetings at our office. We have a Facebook page that we update frequently. In fact, as soon as nurses get through orientation, I tell them that I want them to join the Facebook page. I let them know that I will stalk them and we will be friends, so you should just like the page now. I post all labor events in the community, not just ours. We post our leaders’ names and phone numbers on every unit. I check Facebook constantly.

We also try to do fun things together, too. We always march in Marquette’s 4th of July parade. We make a float for the Labor Day parade, which is held in Ishpeming. We’ve won the best float award for the last three years. Last year we used the theme “I’m a nurse, what’s your superpower?” and several of our members dressed as superheroes. Our new office has plenty of room for meetings so we try to have food available at all meetings. We’ll also raffle off gift cards. There’s plenty of incentive to come to our meetings. The incentives get them in the door, and the solidarity we talk about in the meetings is what helps keep us together.

Written the last day of practice in the old Marquette General Hospital before moving to a new building:

Members of the RN Staff Council of Marquette General Hospital walk in a 4th of July parade in Marquette to remind the community of the need for safe staffing in their local hospital.
The Michigan Nurses Association has a strong presence at the Capitol in Lansing. Grassroots lobbying by members combined with our government affairs team ensures nurses are educating lawmakers and having a say in public policies that affect us, our profession, our patients and our communities.

Here’s an update on key legislation. Legislative positions come from a two-step process: Your Council on Legislation and Public Policy votes, and then your Board of Directors makes the final determination.

**Safe Patient Care**

MNA is the only state organization fighting for a safe staffing law. The Safe Patient Care Act is a bipartisan plan to establish safe RN-to-patient ratios by unit, limit forced overtime, and require hospitals to release their staffing numbers. (House Bills 4279-4281 and Senate Bills 156-161). You can help by urging the chair of the House Health Policy Committee to hold a hearing on the bills. Visit misaferhospitals.org.

**Workplace Violence**

MNA is the only organization in the state advocating for a comprehensive plan that focuses on the approach of preventing violence against nurses and all health care workers. Our bipartisan bill (SB 303, HB 5089) would require hospitals and public health departments to create prevention plans with input from workers, provide training on de-escalation and workplace violence policies and procedures, and report assaults to police.

MNA also supports bills that increase criminal penalties against those who assault healthcare workers.

**Protecting Collective Bargaining**

One back-door way to weaken the power of collective bargaining is for employers to have a ready supply of replacement workers in the case of a strike. HB 4042 would accomplish this by adding Michigan to the nurse licensure compact. The legislation also sets a “lowest common denominator” standard and costs Michigan control over its own licensure process. MNA opposes HB 4042.

**Protecting Nursing Practice**

MNA opposes HB 4098, which would allow certain nurse aides in nursing homes to administer medication. This “slippery slope” is part of the trend of devaluing nurses and replacing them with lower-paid, less qualified workers. No amount of training can replace the expertise and skills of a nurse.

You can learn more about pending legislation and take action at our online advocacy center, under Legislation and Advocacy at minurses.org.
Visit our website for current CE independent study offerings and for a complete schedule of CE workshops offered at locations around the state.

Check out our online CEs. Contact hours are **FREE** for MNA members!

- Responding to Human Trafficking in the Health Care Setting - 1.5 contact hours*
- The Opioid Epidemic: History, Patients, Recommendations/Management, and Empowering All Nurses to Effect Change - 2.0 contact hours*
- Alarm Fatigue - 1.0 contact hour
- FMLA, LOA, Short Term Disability and Worker’s Compensation: A Nurse’s Guide to Workers’ Protections - 1.0 contact hour
- Risks Associated with Lithium Battery-Powered Mobile Carts in Health Care Settings - 1.0 contact hour

*Required by state law

**COMPLETE THESE CES ONLINE, TO RECEIVE YOUR CERTIFICATE BY RETURN E-MAIL!**

The Michigan Nurses Association is accredited as a provider of continuing nursing education by the American Nurses Credentialing Center’s Commission on Accreditation.

**Earn contact hours online or in person.**
University of Michigan Nurses Demand a Parking Solution

There is a parking crisis at the University of Michigan Hospital that has motivated the nurses to fight back. New rules on available parking passes and spaces mean many nurses must park miles away from their worksites and then look for shuttles to get to work that are not on time or don’t show up at all. This affects safe patient care when nurses cannot find parking and must work a 12-hour shift with an additional hour on the front and the back of the shift just to get to their car. Meanwhile, “gold” parking spaces for the administrators sit empty.

A recent decision by University management to build a $920 million adult inpatient tower with no consideration of parking for employees has increased the severity of the situation. During the groundbreaking for the new tower, University of Michigan Professional Nurse Council (UMPNC/MNA) members rallied with chants of “Build Your Tower, We’ve Got the Power.” The nurses wore red t-shirts printed with the words “Got Parking?” on them and carried signs asking for management to create a task force to address the parking issues.

UMPNC/MNA members are not easily deterred from a problem that affects safe patient care. In 2018, UMPNC/MNA members picketed for language in their contract that would improve safe patient care. Because of their solidarity, they were able to negotiate a contract that benefits both the nurses and the patients. UMPNC/MNA nurses are committed to seeking answers and speaking up until their voices are heard. Until the parking issue is resolved, nurses will be at the forefront, demanding solutions.

Nurses from the University of Michigan Professional Nurse Council take their concerns to a University of Michigan Board of Regents meeting, demanding that President Mark Schlissel address the parking situation.

UMPNC/MNA members picketed for safe patient care in 2018 during contract negotiations.
HIGHLIGHTS of the May event:

- A visit to a House of Representatives session
- Learn how to build your power, individually and collectively
- Lobbying at your legislator’s office
- 5.5 contact hours will be awarded to RNs who are in attendance for the entire event and complete the evaluation

Register at minurses.org/springaction