

UNASTAT

UNITED NURSES OF ALBERTA NEWS UPDATE FOR MEMBERS

UNA says new government must keep promises

- The strains on our health system were a major election issue and the Alberta government must address them immediately, says the union for the province's Registered Nurses and Registered Psychiatric Nurses.

"We will be closely watching the steps the new government takes," says UNA President Heather Smith.

"Premier Stelmach made it clear that he understands the crisis in our health workforce is significant. His first promise of the election was to educate more nurses, doctors and other health workers," Heather Smith noted. "The government must follow through on this as soon as possible."

UNA congratulates Rachel Notley, the new MLA for Edmonton Strathcona, who has been a UNA staff Labour Relations Officer for the past several years. UNA also congratulates member Holly Heffernan for her participation as a candidate in Calgary.

Manitoba nurses reach settlement just days before strike vote

- The Manitoba Nurses Union reached a tentative agreement just two days before a planned strike vote March 10. The settlement calls for a 10% salary increase over two years, plus a spe-

cial provision for an arbitrator to further increase salaries. On October 1, 2008 the arbitrator must set an additional salary increase if it is necessary to keep Manitoba Nurses in fourth place in Canada in wages.

The agreement also included long service recognition with extra vacation for nurses in their 20th year. It also improved maternity wage top up, employer paid disability and rehab premiums, mentorship premiums and an improved northern isolation allowance.

The Union broke off talks February 25 after health employers backed down on an earlier offer. Many nurses in the province had already begun refusing to pick up extra shifts.

Ontario Nurses settle main contract

- The Ontario Nurses' Association's (ONA) Hospital Central Negotiating Team is unanimously recommending acceptance of a tentative settlement negotiated for Ontario's 50,000 hospital registered nurses and allied health professionals.

The tentative settlement includes salary increases for hospital nurses of 9.55 per cent over the three-year term running to 2011. In addition, nurses will receive a lump sum payment that varies with length of service and is equivalent to an additional 3.70 per cent for the majority of ONA members.

The new ONA salaries effective April 1, 2008 go from a start rate of \$27.67 to a top rate of \$40.00.

In comparison, UNA rates, on April 1, 2008 have a start rate of \$30.80 to a top rate of \$40.43.

It is a three-year agreement for ONA running until 2011. Shift premiums rise each year to 2011 when they reach:

Night shift \$2.25

Evening shift \$1.85

Weekend shift \$2.40

Nova Scotia nurses reach new contract

- Nova Scotia Nurses' Union recently announced a contract settlement for more than 5,700 Registered Nurses, Licensed Practical Nurses and Nurse Practitioners in that province. The deal includes a 2.9% salary increase for three years, and a 2.1% increase in 2009, the final year of the agreement.

The agreement also included a 2% per year bonus for all nurses who are eligible to retire who agree to work for another year.

The Nova Scotia agreement also provides full portability of seniority from any Nurses' Union across the country that belongs to the Canadian Federation of Nurses' Unions.

UNA provincial Executive Board looks at shortage strategy

- Promises about dealing with the nursing shortage abounded during the provincial election. Immediately following the vote, the UNA provincial Executive Board considered what nurses should do to make sure all the promises get acted on and the issue is not swept aside. Watch for upcoming information and action on dealing with the shortage.

AFL's mid-term Membership Forum

- The Alberta Federation of Labour will be holding the 2008 Membership Forum April 25 and 26 in Edmonton. The educational focus of the Forum will be on ideas and strategies for rebuilding the core strength of union locals, and the title for the event is "Pumping Iron: Rebuilding core strength". UNA will fund 12 members-at-large to attend the Forum. Funding includes registration, travel, hotel, meals and salary replacement as per UNA policy. Interested members can submit their name to UNA Provincial Office by 1600 hours March 28, 2008.

UNA sending delegates to RPN and CNA conferences

- UNA is funding members to attend both the World Congress of Psychiatric Nurses May 22-24, 2008 in Regina and the Canadian Nurses' Association Convention in Ottawa June 15-18, 2008. For the Psychiatric Nurses Conference, UNA will fund two members-at-large to attend. Funding includes conference registration, travel, hotel, meals, salary replacement for LOAs as per UNA policy. To be eligible to enter the draw to attend this conference, members must hold current registration



The UNA 2007-08 provincial Executive Board met in Edmonton during the first week in March.

with the College of Registered Psychiatric Nurses. Deadline to submit your name to Provincial Office is April 11, 2008.

UNA will fund two members-at-large to attend the CNA Convention. Funding includes conference registration, travel, hotel, meals, salary replacement for LOAs as per UNA policy. To be eligible to enter the draw to attend this conference, members must hold current registration with the College and Association of Registered Nurses of Alberta. Deadline to submit your name is May 9, 2008

NOT For Sale PIA's conference on promoting public solutions

- On April 4-6, Public Interest Alberta is hosting *Not for Sale*, a conference about the many faces of privatization and how to promote public options in today's Alberta. *Not for Sale* features local, national and international leaders in advocacy and research, including broadcaster Avi Lewis. Also coming are Allyson Pollock, the U.K.'s leading expert on P3s who spoke at the UNA annual meeting some years ago, and Maude Barlow, from the Council of Canadians, who spoke at UNA's AGM last year. To find out more or to register, go to: www.pialberta.org/events/conference.

UNA will choose five members at large by random draw to attend the Conference. Funding will include conference registration, travel, hotel, meals, but not salary replacement. Deadline to submit your name to Provincial Office is March 25, 2008.

AFL Kids' Camp register by June 16

The Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) is again sponsoring its annual Kid's Camp at the Goldeye Centre near Nordegg from August 11-15th. The Camp combines summer activities with educational activities on unions and social justice issues. It's a 5-day residential camp – on Lake Goldeye – for children of union members affiliated to the AFL. The classes are combined with canoeing, wall climbing, hiking horseback riding, swimming and even a tour of an old coalmine. The camp is for young people age 8 to 15 years. The AFL is also looking for sponsors to help kids attend, volunteers and donations of union materials. The registration deadline is June 16th. Call the AFL, 780 483-3021 for more information.

Calgary Forum and social on Temporary Foreign Workers

- The Alberta Federation of Labour is putting on a special forum on *Temporary Foreign Workers in Alberta: Who wins? Who loses?* in Calgary next week. Four speakers will talk about the foreign worker phenomenon and who is employing the workers, are they needed and are they being fairly protected? The forum will be followed by a social, an opportunity for everyone to meet and discuss the issues more informally. The event will be at the Westin Hotel, 320-4th Ave. SW starting at 7 pm, Tuesday, March 18th. For posters or more information see www.afl.org or call 780-483-3021.