

THE PULSE

<https://uswlocals.org/local-9460>

voice of United Steelworkers Local 9460, the Northland's healthcare workers' union



2021: THE YEAR OF TOUGH CONTRACT FIGHTS

This past year we've had negotiations with all of our employers—Essentia, St. Luke's, Lake Superior Community Health and Ecumen. Due to the pandemic, some of our contract negotiations in 2020 were delayed, which resulted in a lot of them later having to be conducted at the same time this year.

We were able to win decent contracts from St. Luke's, Lake Superior Community Health and Ecumen. In all of those instances, there were some tough parts, but in the end we were able to come to an amicable settlement.

At Essentia however, some of our units have had a really tough go of

it. This has necessitated our putting on a whole series of solidarity actions. They ranged from having our members wear stickers and put signs in their car windows on the same day, to informational pickets and car caravan protests.

We are proud to be able to do these kind of actions, and we saw that they DO work.

The heart of these actions is our Workers Information Networks—a team of volunteers that helps spread the word about actions to their co-workers. These teams will be kept in place so as to always be ready. Contact us if you'd like to get involved with the WIN!

Pass the PRO-Act!

The purposes of the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act are simple: to ensure workers can push for the changes we want to see at our jobs without fear of retaliation, and to strengthen workers' rights to form a union and negotiate for those changes if we so choose.

Currently, there are no penalties for employers who illegally retaliate against or fire workers for collective action. The bill is necessary because our woefully outdated labor laws are no longer effective as a means for working people to have our voices heard.

The PRO-Act has already been passed in the House of Representatives. Contact your Senator to urge that they pass this important bill!

MEET OUT NEW VICE PRESIDENT: TUAN VU

Greetings Siblings! My name is Tuan Vu. I have been in the union for six years. I've had the honor of being Steward for 5 years, with the last two also being the Unit Chair for the Red Book. I have had the opportunity to attend many of the leadership programs offered by the USW and I am excited to bring that knowledge to my new position. Before being elected the Vice President of the local, I was working in the Behavioral Health Units located at Miller-Dwan and have 20+ years in Behavioral Health.



I believe the best way to strengthen the union is through communication and that will be one of my primary goals. Also during this term, I'd like to develop a new member outreach program to educate new members that may have never been in a union before or to explain what this union stands for to people that have. Finally, I'd like to expand our community outreach. I believe this will make our jobs easier when the community knows we are a part of them. I am excited to bring my passion for helping people to this organization. Solidarity!

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS:

3rd Tuesday of every
month @ 5:30pm at the
Duluth Labor Temple

UNIT UPDATES

S.L. CHEQUAMEGON CLINIC: We were able to ratify a new contract at St. Luke's Chequamegon back in January.

ESSENTIA REGIONAL CLINICS: The Regional Clinics had a wage re-opener this Spring. We were able to get the company to agree to a 2.2% wage increase for the final year of the contract.

ESSENTIA SANDSTONE: We were able to ratify a new contract at Pine Medical Center this past summer.

ECUMEN LAKESHORE: We were able to ratify a new contract at Ecumen this past Spring.

LAKE SUPERIOR COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER: We have reached a tentative agreement with Lake Superior Community Health Center in our negotiations for the Professional Union contract. We'll be mailing out the tentative agreement and setting up a ratification meeting soon. And once that is done, we'll be starting negotiations for the Support Staff contract at LSCHC.

ESSENTIA GREEN BOOK: The Green Book went through some tough negotiations with Essentia. The local held a number of solidarity actions to put pressure on the employer. Finally in July we were able to win a decent contract with fair raises in July.

ESSENTIA RED BOOK: After a very LONG and tough set of contract

negotiations, the Red Book ratified a new contract on August 24. In a very close vote, the new proposed Red Book passed. We'd like to sincerely thank everyone that was able to come out and vote yesterday and today - especially those who offered feedback on the issues that concerned them. We are committed to continue to address all of those concerns going forward.

STEELWORKER RETIREES

The United Steelworkers has a national retiree group called SOAR (Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees). A group of folks is looking to start up a local SOAR chapter that would be open to members of our local, and Local 1028.

You actually don't have to be a retiree to join. Any current or former USW member age 45 or older can join. It's \$12 a year. Our local has voted to pay the first year of dues for any of our members who want to join.

If you're interested reach out to the office and we'll sign you up! You can also find out more about SOAR online at www.usw.org/act/activism/soar. And stay tuned for our next issue for info on how SOAR family members can qualify for free college credits!

CALENDAR:

September Membership Mtg: Our membership meeting for Sept. has been moved from the 21st to the 28th, at 4pm at the Labor Temple.