

HEALTHPARTNERS UNION NEWS

In This Issue

Serious Offense
Disciplines 2

Member Spotlight:
Vanessa Lindsey .. 2

Message from an
SEIU Member 3

Why we should stand
in solidarity 3

Local 12's new
Political Action
Committee 4

Covid Pay
Update ... 4

Call for more
Stewards 4

Reach Your
Representative 4

Keep In Touch 4

Excess Revenue at HealthPartners in 2020

Even as modern society seems set to run off the rails, caught as it is between climate change and the rise in anti-democratic movements, we continue to look for leadership from the very forces that got us here in the first place: big business. Almost every nonprofit and not-for-profit organization treats their CEOs as interchangeable with those of the corporate world, even though these organizations have a dramatically different central purpose.

What happens if you run an organization that should be serving people as if it should be serving the shareholders? Well, you get Health Partners, an institution that brags about posting record “excess revenue,” as if it’s proof of something other than misguided principals.

The leadership at Health Partners is cut from the same cloth as the folks you’ll find at General Motors or General Mills, and you don’t have to question the profit motive to understand why that mentality is so terrible for health care. What does maximizing profits (i.e. excess revenue) mean in this industry?

For starters, it means HP’s leaders don’t see communities in need of care, they see sources of revenue. They don’t see their own workers as good people committed to the cause of public health; they see cogs in their money-making machine. It means the same cost-cutting, revenue-increasing mantras of “just-in-time delivery” and “employee flexibility.” It means they don’t see the contradiction in going after your benefits even as they announce another banner year. They don’t see the contradiction inherent in shutting down clinics in low-income communities of color even as they open expensive, brand-new facilities in the suburbs.

Imagine what it would look like if Health Partners were led by people whose concern was humanity and human decency. They’d realize that they should make sure everyone received the health care they needed, and that their employees were able to take care of their families. They wouldn’t see 250 million dollars in “excess revenue” as something to celebrate, they’d see it for the *injustice* that it is. They’d recognize that they had squeezed it out of their employees, and their patients, and their communities.

Given the actions of HP’s leadership, those who hadn’t seen their mission statement might be surprised by it. It reads, “To improve health and well-being in partnership with our members, patients and community.” Their behavior suggests an entirely different mission statement, one they are clearly more committed to but don’t see as fit for public consumption. Take a look at what HP is doing with much of their “excess revenue,” and you’re likely to get an idea of what their hidden agenda is. Here’s a link that explains a good chunk of it: [ballooning salaries at the top](#).

The people in their *public* mission statement, the “members, patients, and community,” need to challenge them on their *private* mission—the promotion and celebration of funneling money toward the top.

We need to change the culture at Health Partners because right now, they’re not about health, and they’re not about being partners.



Serious Offense Disciplines

HealthPartners has been issuing more and more disciplines using the serious offense language. Under Article 25.01 Progressive Discipline, the language reads, “*Serious offenses may require a higher level of discipline as an initial action.*” Local 12 has been meeting with HR to address their having skipped progressive discipline under this language. Their

“ Serious offenses may require a higher level of discipline as an initial action.

— Article 25.01 of

”

argument is that they cannot define what a serious offense is because they need to judge it on a case by case basis. Local 12 leadership feels that the intent of the language is that a serious offense would be something along the lines of intentional theft, violence or threats of violence and things of that nature. We are seeing skipped progressive discipline for things such as disrespect, or calling in after being refused time off, or not recording work in the department recording systems. We feel this is an abuse of the language and are continuing to fight these but we can't do this alone. Local 12 reps and stewards need the help of members to start getting more involved in the grievance process.

Here's how you can help: 1. We encourage you to be open to your co-workers about disciplines and coachings. 2. Start petitions around issues and grievances in your department. 3. Talk to one another and share your personal contact information with each other and the union so we can continue to know what is going on. We will continue to work these grievances and try to keep HealthPartners from abusing this language, but we need members to continue to be actively involved in their place of work. If you do not have a steward in your area, please sign up to become one. We will train you and teach you the fundamentals as well. Members need to have a trusted co-worker to turn to.

Member Spotlight- Vanessa Lindsey

Vanessa Lindsay is a Clinic Assistant at HealthPartners Como clinic in the Cardiology department. She became more involved in the union as she started to get to know her steward during a grievance process.

Vanessa noticed there were issues of discrimination in the work place and voiced this to her steward and learned she was not the only one. Vanessa helped organize a small zoom meeting amongst the other members who were also experiencing some injustice. With the help of her steward they encouraged everyone to stay strong and offered tips on how to fight against the racism, including microaggressions in the work place, while maintaining and keeping composure, their jobs, and their sanity.

Vanessa says her favorite part of the job is her co-workers and the patients. Her favorite memory from the job at HealthPartners is when she paid for a lift home for someone or when she's giving directions to a patient on how to get to the clinic. She says she can get people to the clinic from anywhere.

Rowing, traveling and volunteering at the Ronald McDonald House is some of Vanessa's fun hobbies she does out side of work. She loves what she does at HealthPartners. When asked what she likes about being an OPEIU Local 12 member, she says the support.

Thank you Vanessa for being a fierce advocate for your colleagues and yourself!



HealthPartners Member Vanessa Lindsey meeting National AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Fred Redmond at the MN AFL-CIO convention in September

A Message from SEIU Member, Kate Lynch



Pictured, SEIU HealthPartners Bargaining team members hold a Press conference in 2020

Fellow OPEIU colleagues,

SEIU HCMNIA will be going to the table once again to bargain our contract with HealthPartners starting in December. Our main issues include wages and healthcare among others. We fought the good fight with you by our side in 2020 when we got down to the wire! We have all put ourselves, our families, and their well-being on the line during the hardest parts of COVID and each and every one of us should be recognized for that. We are asking for you to stand by us as we enter this round of bargaining knowing we will have your back once you head to the table shortly after us. There is power in numbers and solidarity! Support of any kind during this time is greatly appreciated. You can check out updates on our website or Facebook page throughout the process.

Please visit SEIU webpage [here](#).

And Facebook page [here](#).

Why we should be standing in solidarity with SEIU



Solidarity, June 30, 1917. The Hand That Will Rule the World—One Big Union.

Some of you may be wondering, “Why should we stand in solidarity with SEIU if they are the ones fighting for their contract and we get nothing out of it?” This is not true. When union members win we all win especially at the same place of work.

OPEIU Local 12 goes into bargaining after SEIU does so anything they lose or gain, the likelihood of the same happens for us as well. This round they will be demanding fair wages and healthcare benefits. This is the least HealthPartners can do, especially after learning that a not-for-profit business has over 250 million dollars in excess revenue. HealthPartners has never been shy about placing the blame of cost and expenses on the workers that earn their revenue, but can barely give a thank you.

Instead we get to see reports of massive bonuses and spending towards executive pay while some of our own members are visiting food shelves this year ahead of the holidays.

SEIU and Local 12 will continue to stand together, send strong messages to the corporate greed, and work together so when we go back to the table in 2024, we are prepared even more so and ready to hold strong to our demands for our contract, and get the best possible outcome for all. Please join us, and offer words of encouragement to your SEIU HC Colleagues, and stay up to date during their journey through the bargaining

Interested in becoming a steward?

We need more stewards to step up and be leaders in various departments. Please reach out to Kelsie Anderson or Molly Thul if you are interested and we can tell you all about it!

Training will be offered on Thursday, Dec 15th at 7pm for all current and interested stewards via zoom. You may join on zoom [here](#).

We look forward to seeing you!

Remember, a union is only as strong as its members!

OPEIU Local 12 is starting a Political Action Team

Local 12 is starting a Political Action Team and are looking for members who may be interested in joining a training put on by our international some time in the spring/early summer, date is TBD.

Local 12 feels that the core of union membership isn't just a service model where we process grievances and go about business as usual but we need to participate in public discourse as well.

Laws are being made and proposed everyday that hurts unions, workers, and every day Americans for the benefit of greedy corporate executives. Laws need to be put in place and protected to keep protecting workers. In order to do this we need to be actively involved with getting the people into office that care about labor, unions and workers. If you are interested please email

Kanderson@opeiu12.org and Dhogan@opeiu12.org and we will work on getting you on our list!

Covid Pay Update

Local 12 just got word the the Critical Staffing Provisions in the LOU will be extended through June 30, 2023. If you have questions please contact your rep.

Reach Your Representatives

Molly Thul- mthul@opeiu12.org Union rep and President Kelsie Anderson Kanderson@opeiu12.org for a copy of the steward list. You may also reach out to Chief Steward Betty Jones for help at betty.k.jones@healthpartners.com

Question or Comment?

Please share your comments about this edition. Send them to:

cmontufar@opeiu12.org

Download the free OPEIU app at the App Store and Google Play.

Receive text updates from your union by texting OPEIU Local 12 to 97779. Message and data rates may apply.

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