

## Special Message for CRONA Nurses from a Strike 2000 CRONA Nurse

Dear Nurses,

I was present for the 2000 strike. It took the hospital 52 days to show the Nurses that we were valued. For those 52 days, CRONA and its members showed everyone what unity among Nurses looked like, and what was gained from that strike was an enormous victory for all of us. CRONA nurses are special. Our patients are special. Our union is special. For a while after the 2000 strike, we stood stronger because we felt valued.

Now, that has changed. Slowly, our gains diminished. We see more travelers, more responsibilities, and more changes — yet less respect and less compensation for our work.

I've been a nurse for 20 years. During that time, I've been hit, spit at, cursed at and kicked. I've cleaned up countless spills of human waste, blood and chemo too... even before we had to wear gowns and double gloves. I've been exposed to TB, hepatitis, influenza, shingles, c-diff, and countless other pathogens. I see pain and suffering on a regular basis, and through it all I am cheerful and I smile, because that's what nurses do. I work with people who are dying, and their families who are sad, scared and angry all at the same time. And I cry with them too, sometimes. And, I sometimes get sick too — that's why I need time off and good healthcare.

We need security in our jobs, security in our healthcare, security in our ability to provide for ourselves and our families, and security in our future — a future that includes the same quality healthcare that we have been providing to others. We need to have some quality of life that counteracts the sickness, pain and suffering we spend our working hours dealing with. We just want to be compensated fairly for the quality care that we provide.

To the newer nurses who don't yet recognize the importance of these contract negotiations, please understand, it is important! It may seem like you make a decent wage now, but if we allow the take-aways, the marginal wage increases, the inadequate retirement and retiree medical benefits, then we are setting ourselves up for future disappointments. We should be standing strong to insist the hospitals improve our benefits for now and the future.

Standing strong and for unity prevailing,

A CRONA Nurse

**#CRONAstrong**