



For Immediate Release
Friday, Jan. 10, 2003

Media Coordinator
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Union Election Set for 300 Sutter County Homecare Workers

Homecare workers say that unionizing will give them a united voice to achieve an improved homecare program with livable wages and health benefits for homecare workers.

Jan. 9 - Sutter County verified a petition of homecare workers who filed for a union election, which is slated in 45 days. The 300 homecare workers care for almost 400 Madera County low-income seniors and people with disabilities, helping them live safely and independently in their homes and avoid institutionalization.

Homecare workers are some of the most impoverished employees in the state and work at minimum wage (\$6.75/hour) without health-care benefits. These poverty wages have hurt the program overall because it has created a labor shortage of crisis proportions. Many homecare clients go for days or weeks without homecare.

"The cost of living goes up every year and eats away at your paycheck," said Gloria Jean Chavira, who has been a homecare worker for more than 25 years. "I care for a client who was shot in the head and has fragments of the bullet still there. This job is 24/7 and very stressful. We don't have health benefits or any vacation pay. We want respect for homecare workers and our clients."

In other counties where homecare workers have unionized, they have been able to achieve higher standards for themselves and their clients. For example, in Sacramento and Yolo counties, workers achieved \$9.50 an hour start rates with health benefits, and the labor shortage has begun to shrink.

“When homecare workers organize, everyone benefits,” said Sal Rosselli, President of SEIU 250. “Much of the improvements would be paid for by hundreds of thousands of dollars in state and federal matching funds, which would mean a huge influx of cash into Sutter County’s economy. It would be irresponsible for the county to pass up this opportunity.”

With over 85,000 members, SEIU 250 is the largest and fastest-growing healthcare union in the Western U.S. We represent every type of healthcare worker, including nursing, professional, technical and service classifications. Our mission is to achieve high-quality healthcare for all.

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For Immediate Release
Wed., Dec. 18, 2002

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71 Santa Cruz Assisted Living Caregivers Join Union in Landslide Vote

Caregivers at Dominican Oaks say they now have a united voice to improve the quality of patient care and jobs

In a 53-4 vote, 71 assisted care workers at Dominican Oaks in Santa Cruz joined SEIU 250 last Friday. The employees include certified nurse assistants, activity assistants, dining room servers, cooks, dishwashers, housekeepers, janitors and front desk personnel.

"Now we will have a voice to improve the quality of service that our residents pay for and deserve," said Julius Camat, a food server. "This vote is good for everyone, because we can improve working conditions, which will help recruit more staff."

As part of Dominican Hospital, Dominican Oaks is owned by Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), California's largest hospital system. In the past 2 years, over 9,000 CHW employees in 15 cities have voted to join SEIU and have gone on to set new standards for patient care, wages and working conditions. Those standards include a voice in improving staffing levels and patient care and employer-paid healthcare for workers and their families.

While unionization has been stagnant across the United States, it is increasing rapidly among Northern California caregivers.

"This is the latest victory in a growing movement that is sweeping our state," said Sal Rosselli, President of SEIU 250. "When caregivers have a united voice, it not only improves their work lives, but also it improves patient care, the hospital and the community as a whole."

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For Immediate Release
Tues., Jan. 28, 2003

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Marin County Homecare Workers and Supporters Will Rally to Improve Homecare Program

**Supporters say that Marin should continue their tradition of
support for seniors and people with disabilities**

What: Rally for a better Marin Homecare program

When: Tuesday, January 28, 8:30 AM

Where: Civic Center

Corner of North San Pedro and Civic Center Drive, Marin

On Tuesday, January 28, a rally will be held to call on the County to support improvements in Marin's In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Program. Supporters want a living wage of \$9.75 an hour and health benefits for homecare workers, which they say will help recruit and keep qualified staff and improve the program overall.

"Homecare workers do some of the most important work in California, helping seniors and persons with disabilities," said Robin Curley-Minaberry, who has been a Marin County homecare worker for the past six years. "We deserve livable wages, healthcare and most of all respect."

The County's 1,000 homecare workers play an invaluable role in the healthcare delivery system, enabling seniors and people with disabilities to live safely and independently in their own homes and avoid institutionalization.

"This really comes down to a larger societal question: how are we as Northern Californians going to provide for our seniors and people with disabilities?" said Sal Rosselli, President of SEIU 250.

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