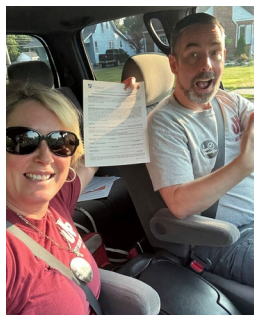




## AFT CT Video Features Our MOI Grads

Last month we told you about our AFT CT Member Organizing InSTITUTE class, held at our office at the end of June. Today, please take a moment to watch the video AFT CT produced to share with other locals to raise awareness of this training opportunity. It's another example of how UHP is on the leading edge of Connecticut's labor movement! Watch now: [bit.ly/2307MOI](http://bit.ly/2307MOI) or use the QR code.



**Summer Lambert and Rich Vance pair up for home visits as part of member organizing training.**



**Sara, Smile!**

**Congratulations to Sara Olson Peterson, not only our rep of the year but also recipient of the prestigious 2023 RNA Society Outstanding Career Researcher Award! See the story at [bit.ly/2306OlsonAward](http://bit.ly/2306OlsonAward).**

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### Bringing Back the Soapbox



This month's article is going to be a little different. I've spent nearly half my life at UConn Health. If you do not know, I'm 55 and I was hired here as a registered nurse to work on Oncology 6 in the old hospital Feb. 2, 1996. I worked 12-hour shifts, nights, on both Oncology 6 then the emergency room, both old and new. In 2016 I was first elected president of UHP, and I've loved every job I've done at UConn, the good, the bad, and the ugly. In 27 years here, you could say I've seen a few things.

All those years ago, we had a vice president for communication named Dave Besse. He was a great guy. He was a great big old teddy bear. Every month in the union newsletter, he had a column called "The Soapbox." Dave would write about the stuff that "got to him" that month. Funny thing was, it was not always union related, but it was enjoyable reading.

So, for one of my mentors: [Stands on the soapbox]

What a month this has been. First off, we are still fighting with HR over **pandemic pay**. Many of our hourly employees are all set. Our salaried employees, however, still have a lot of problems. Because there were no timecards, there was no way to tell if you were on-site or working from home. HR used garage access or badging into locked doors, if you did that, they gave you credit for the day. However, considering the parking garages had their gates up for some of that time, and with Area 3 parking, this leaves a lot of holes. As for the door badging, not all our doors are locked, or someone could have held the door for you. Too many holes in that plan. There were over 350 UHP members who put in challenges to the Office of the State Comptroller's website for either their hours worked, or their low-risk/high-risk status.

As for low-risk vs. high-risk, We are trying to make sure they are all correct. We had COAs and PSRs up front in clinics, the first person a patient saw, listed as low-risk, but the MAs, nurses, APRNs, PAs, doctors all in the back listed as high-risk. While that is bad, I do not believe that is the worst of it. Many of our allied personnel were listed as low-risk as well. Not all of them are UHP, but many of our maintenance and cleaning crews, brothers and sisters in other unions who went to the floors daily, are listed as

**(Continued page 2)**

## A Word From Our Steward of the Year



**Jozii Ruiz shows her Steward of the Year award, with 1st VP Shawn Brown, Chief Steward Jean Morningstar, and President Bill Garrity.**

My sincere thank you to the UHP executive committee for naming me the Steward of the Year 2023!

I am truly humbled and honored in accepting this award. When I became a steward it was my intent and purpose to wholeheartedly help as many members as possible to the best of my ability.

The past 18 months have been an incredible journey, as I have been fortunate to represent UHP on a national level through several committees. Throughout my travels, not only was I able to make strong connections, I was also able to share and collaborate with other union members with similar concerns, ideas, and projects that have been introduced throughout the country. I am looking forward to presenting similar ideas to our members within the upcoming months.

To our UHP members, please believe when I say to you that we have your best interest at heart. The time, efforts, devotion and dedication that every person in our UHP union office and team puts forward is remarkable.

**—In solidarity, Jozii Ruiz**

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER *(continued)*

low-risk. While I am working for UHP members, their unions are doing the same for them. But the most painful thing to me is someone in HR has made the argument that UConn Health is not a health care institution. My belief is, anywhere we see patients, in any building, is a health care institution.

Next up, **on-call**: We have multiple areas where on-call is becoming an issue, and some places where one or two people were expected to have 24-7 call. This is an ongoing issue but I'm hoping it is being resolved with cross-training of other staff. HR is just saying someone is on call. Never been on call before, no agreement, but we question their procedure and policy, and suddenly, "We're going to give that nurse on call pay."

Also, I got a call from a member who had been on call for six years, a Tier 1 (salaried) employee, who received no compensation for it. Your manager has 24-hour accountability, you do not. I'm going to quote First Vice President Shawn Brown here: "This is not a prison nor plantation."

On to **scheduling**, I got multiple calls, emails, and texts about a scheduling issue in the pre-/post-op area. The concern was about being scheduled their full FTE in a week with a holiday. Sept. 4 is Labor Day. If the nurses in that area are not scheduled to work, they are giving the 8 hours of comp time and then scheduling them three days, or 36 hours.

I gave you my history because I want you to know I worked that for 20 years. They are doing it wrong. We have newer managers who may not know. But when you tell them, and they don't listen, they are just taking advantage of you.

And I wrote it that way specifically, because in the 12-hour agreement it says, "8 or 12 hours of compensatory time based on the regular hours *scheduled* to work." So, with eight hours of comp time, they are losing twice. We are fighting this. This used to be a simple "H" day.

Finally, I want to finish on a positive note. We all need to work on being kinder to each other. Many of our work areas have become toxic. All of us can either work to make it better or make it worse. I am no exception. I know I am high-strung and if I've snapped at you, I'm sorry. We are all under a ton of stress. But we all need to work to make our workplace a better place. Not everyone is going to be your friend at work. But we need to give respect to get respect.

Since this article is a throwback to the 1900's, let's close with a quote from way back then:

"Be excellent to each other."

**—In solidarity, Bill Garrity**

**—Please see the UHP calendar page for upcoming meetings: [bit.ly/uhpca](https://bit.ly/uhpca)—**