

The Newsletter of the National Federation of Federal Employees,

Making It Happen!



NFFE 1450

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President's column

A message from the President, NFFE 1450.

In 1998, there were 9,442 HUD employees (not including OIG and GNMA). By 2016, HUD was down to 7,286 and is projected to be at 6,998 staff at the end of 2018. This represents a nearly 26% decrease in the number of HUD employees. One in four HUD employees is no longer with the agency and the plan is to downsize even more.

A smaller workforce makes change mandatory. HUD has repeatedly reorganized itself to streamline its functions to accomplish its primary mission of providing decent, safe and sanitary housing. As HUD has changed, the demands upon our members have dramatically increased. The Federation must change as well if we are to continue providing services such as protecting the working environment of employees through bargaining; disseminating information in a timely manner; and, directly working with individual employees in addressing workplace matters to name only a few services that the Federation provides.

When I moved to the Regional Office from the East Coast to manage attorneys, I was given a mandate to change a dysfunctional office. And, I did.

I changed the business processes of the office and improved the efficiency of the office by more than 90%. This was recognized when I was selected as the only attorney in the country to participate in the inaugural class of leadership training known as the Fellows Program.

Change can be difficult, but change is necessary.

Please join me as I work to improve how the Federation delivers services to all of you and as I work to improve the quality of the services that the Federation provides.

Thank you for your support.

Dennis Murakami
President
NFFE-1450



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Upcoming Membership Meeting in 2017

November 15
December 13

Newsletter Editors:

Toulu Thao
Anna Dennis
Janie Lopez



Collective Bargaining

By Toulou Thao, Communicator/Steward – San Francisco

HUD Management plans to roll out a new software, a Customer Relationship Management software application that will be used by receptionist(s) and BUE's who volunteer at the front desk, at all HUD field offices.

Upon implementation, Customer Services Staff and Volunteers at the front desk will be required to enter essential information from each caller such as his/her name, contact information, the nature of the call and how each call is handled i.e. whether it is resolved by staff at the front desk or referred to others for further processing.

The CRM software has some pre-built information that can be readily provided to the public; however, for the most part, this may be adequate. Therefore, Staff at each field office will have to gather, research the relevant answers and enter them into the system. Ideally, once adequate data has been built into the CRM system, anyone at the front desk can search for answer to any question from the public by simply clicking the proper title or subject – and the answer will simply pop-up.

Most definitely, besides going through a learning curve, the CRM application has not been field-tested. Therefore, we do not have a good prediction how the CRM will impact the users, how smoothly it will run, whether it will perform as intended or whether users will experience any difficulty when using it at a full version in the field.

For these obvious reasons and others, NFFE-1450, NFFE-259 and NFFE-1804, collectively issued a demand to bargain so there will be an opportunity to address these concerns, and most importantly, NFFE wants to ascertain that the CRM implementation will have no negative impact to the affected members. NFFE also wants to assure that there will be no work force reduction and that no one should have to be removed or down-graded or face any undesirable outcomes resulting from the roll-out of this CRM software.

Subsequently, on February 5-8, 2018, our Collective Bargaining Team met in the HUD office in Phoenix and negotiated with the Management via VTC. Unfortunately, our Team Members could not agree with the management on two essential issues which they believe may bring negative consequences to the affected employees. (Continued on page ?)



NFFE's Bargaining Team, From Left-Right

Front row: Liliana Daniel, FPM-Phoenix; Ken Einbinder, Chief Negotiator;
Larry Alcantar, President NFFE-1804

Back Row: Dennis Murakami, President NFFE-1450
Toulu Thao, Steward-San Francisco

(Unable to participate, but is a part of this negotiation is NFFE-259)

Basically, the following items were proposed by NFFE but were rejected by the Management:

- 1) In the event that the CRM application creates any unforeseeable adverse impact upon the bargaining unit employees, at the request of any NFFE local, management and the Union will proactively work to address these issues. If the issues STILL remain unresolved, NFFE has the rights within 60 days from the date the CRM was launched, to re-open a negotiation within 60 days.
- 2) The Customer Experienced Officer (who was appointed by the Management to oversee the CRM implementation) will not be used to rate the affected employees, (meaning the receptionist and the volunteers at the front desk), in their performance appraisal.

NFFE believes that item #1 is important because the CRM application has never been tested. And the Management has previously agreed to item # 2 at their recent negotiation with AFGE. Why they did not honor the same agreement with NFFE? That is unknow to us.

Ken Einbinder, our Chief Negotiator and Dennis Murakami, President of NFFE-1450, continue to work with the Management on these issues. We will keep you informed.

If you have any question, concern, input or advise, please reach out to Ken Einbinder at (602) 379-7259 or Ken.A.Einbinder@hud.gov



Veteran Stand Down, HUD Los Angeles

By Annette Williams



Los Angeles Field Office VA Veterans Stand Down Volunteers (L to R):

- John DeCastro – Ret. AF Reserves- Lead IT Specialist
- Marcie Chavez – Director LA Office Public & Indian Housing
- Michael Nakagawa – Health Care Account Executive
- Annette Williams – Ret. AF – FHEO EOS
- Hein Dom – Army Reserves – Public & Indian Housing

The LA Field Office personnel recently volunteered for the 3rd Annual VA Greater Los Angeles Veteran Stand Down. The purpose of the Stand Down was to provide several VA services in one central location to homeless veterans. There was over one thousand veterans seeking some type of assistance.

The type of services provided was, housing assistance, veterans benefits, counseling services, medical services, hot showers, hair cuts/grooming, etc.

The LA Staff picked which area of service they wanted to volunteer for during a two hour time frame. John DeCastro volunteered at the water section. Marcie Chavez volunteered in the VASH and Public Housing section. Michael Nakagawa volunteered as a Medical Runner, escorting Vets from the eligibility review office to the medical checkup area. Annette Williams volunteered in the Veterans Affairs section directing veterans to specific veteran services. Hien Dom in the Information and Registration booths. Where he provided information regarding event times and check-in services.

We all agreed that the experience opened our eyes to the large number of homeless veterans that are in need of services in the Los Angeles area. We are also looking forward to volunteering in 2018.



LA Field Office FHEO, VAG Rep and Retired Air Force Veteran, Annette Williams met VA Outreach Employee and Event Coordinator, Michael Johnson.

Comments from members

Dear Union:

*My request to earn credit hours for pp25 and my request to telework on Fridays has been **approved**. You are awesome! Could not have done this without you. Thank you for your valuable assistance with this matter. I really appreciate your expertise on dealing with Management and your knowledge of the LMA to help resolve these issues. Happy Holidays!*

(HUD-Employee, Phoenix, 12/15/2017)



"I thank you and the Union for your professionalism in helping advance the performance Planning Process. Your preparation and contributions helped advance HUD's mission and ensure employees were safeguard.

(Qz, HUD Management, 12/12/2017)



"Great advice and excellent opportunity to talk over what's going on and getting another's point of view"

(HUD-Employee, San Francisco, 12/12/2017)



What has NFFE worked on in this quarter?

Sue M. Sheftel, Regional Chief Steward

Stewards in all of the Region IX HUD offices are eager to help their co-workers with matters that arise. Individual stewards have their own unique education, expertise and strengths and can call on each other anytime for help when needed.

We are happy to welcome two new stewards: Cristan Diaz joined the Los Angeles steward team and Peter Ludlam became a Santa Ana steward. Both of them spent time last year training at the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) Winpisinger training center for union stewards in Maryland and will return again this year for additional training. You may remember that four of our members attended a week-long program for millennials last September at Winpisinger. One of those who attended, Davin Lal of the San Francisco office, was elected NFFE 1450 auditor in our last election.

I encourage all of you to attend our monthly membership meetings. One of our members told us that she could never attend NFFE meetings because her program held monthly meetings on the same day of each month. Santa Ana steward, Anna Dennis, ran a survey and the majority of you told us that you preferred membership meetings to be on Thursdays rather than Wednesdays. Starting in February, membership meetings will be held on the fourth Thursday of each month. Attending is one way to learn what's going on within NFFE 1450 and find ways to become more engaged in your union.

So, what were some of our involvements this past quarter? Ken Einbinder, our Vice President and steward in the Phoenix office, I, and NFFE members in PIH continued communicating with PIH REAC Region IX about 100% travel employees who are not paid for travel time and costs to and from airports. NFFE's persistence along with the persistence of these employees is beginning to pay off. Management has indicated that it is working on developing a policy for 100% travel employees. We are keeping our fingers crossed that the new policy will conform with HUD's travel policy for the majority of other HUD employees and pay these employees back pay and time and costs going forward.

- NFFE has been working closely with San Francisco/Phoenix CPD employees to provide a conduit between the bargaining unit staff and management. San Francisco steward, Damon Harris, and I have been collecting suggestions for facilitating improvement from employees who do not wish to communicate directly with management. We have an upcoming meeting with Lori Michalski, Acting General Deputy Assistant Secretary, who will be visiting the San Francisco office from Headquarters.
- Liz McDargh, our former president and Los Angeles Chief Steward, assisted an employee who got a hardship transfer to the Los Angeles office. The employee had attempted on her own to get locality pay that came along with the transfer, but without success. Liz stepped in and helped her get approximately \$12,000 in much needed back pay and locality pay going forward to help with the higher cost of living in Los Angeles.
- Liz helped another member whose supervisor was denying her the use of credit hours. Liz communicated with upper management and Employee Relations. As a result, the employee got credit hours approved and also received an additional day of telework.
- One of our stewards filed a grievance when the supervisor responded in a less-than-professional manner that she would not permit the steward to work for NFFE. With cooperation from Employee Relations, a mediation was facilitated for the two of them to address their work relationship, resentments and hopes for better communication in the future. The result was very positive.
- NFFE helped several employees grieve contested EPPES evaluations, aided an employee in getting a hardship transfer, and consulted with a number of employees who were denied promotions to name ways NFFE was there for employees who needed us.

A Farewell to our members

We want to thank the following members for their past support and wish them a very happy retirement and great success for those who have transitioned into a new career.

Martin Capp, Santa Ana
Imron Bhatti, Transferred
William Ward, Los Angeles

Toni Orozco, Los Angeles
David Bond, Santa Ana
Ivy Wilkerson, Los Angeles

Our newest members

Greg Harris, San Francisco

Luis Casillo, Los Angeles

Tyler Bridges, San Francisco

Marilyn Yazzie, Phoenix

FEEDBACK/COMPLAINT/COMPLIMENT/SUGGESTION/REQUEST FOR HELP FORM

LET US KNOW HOW WE ARE DOING. NFFE 1450 is doing a _____ job.
Comment or Please look into:

Name/Contact Info if you want us to get back to you:

Email Your Feedbacks to:

Dennis Murakame at Dennis.T.Murakami@hud.gov

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