

FOR MOTHER-DAUGHTER ACTIVISTS, FIGHTING FOR JUSTICE A FAMILY AFFAIR

For two of our members, Lien Nguyen, and her daughter Van, social justice is a family affair.

Both are committed to building union power in their worksites, while encouraging fellow members to step up and become more engaged.

Lien Nguyen, works as a Senior Compliance Representative at the Franchise Tax Board in Sacramento. She's been a steward for the last seven of her 36 years of state employment, and is currently the Vice President/Chief Steward at DLC 786.

Her daughter, Van Nguyen, is a Retirement Program Specialist II at CalPERS in Sacramento and Secretary of DLC 781, and has been in state service for more than a decade. She became a union activist in early 2016 in anticipation of our upcoming contract negotiations.

Between them, they have nearly 50 years of state service.

Lien became a steward after realizing there were few API members who had stepped into the role. "As a community, we tend to act conservatively and not rock the boat. I'm achieving success by demonstrating the things we can achieve when we stand together."

Leading by example, she's encouraged others to stand up with her. "I built trust by never asking someone to do something I wouldn't do myself," she says. "And the result is a Worksite Action Team that's always ready to go."

At the urging of her mother, Van Nguyen became a union activist and signed up for our

Leadership Apprentice for Stewards (LAPS) program. She graduated and became a steward in October 2016, just as our contract campaign was really heating up.

"I wanted to help my coworkers by talking to them about bargaining and about protecting our rights, and to get them involved," Van said. "I realized that if I wanted to push for change at my worksite, I needed to get involved, to be the change I wanted to see."

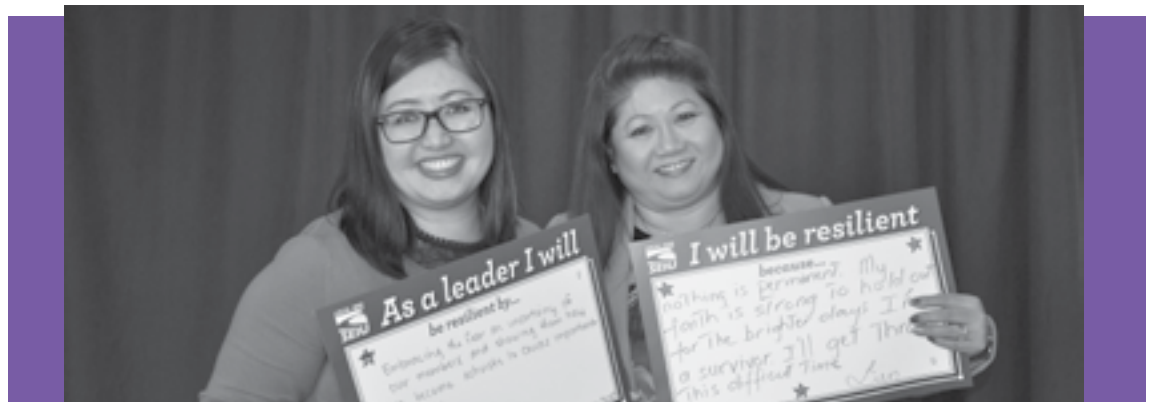
Van is a member of our union's Asian Pacific Islander committee, and works to increase membership and engagement among API employees.

She's already achieving those goals. "When I first became a steward, there were only two or three API members attending worksite meetings and now, that's increased at least fourfold," she said.

When asked to name someone who's inspired her as a labor activist, Van answered, "My mom! She told me that you don't have standing unless you become active, and that everything is a pipe dream until you become a steward."

Lien and Van recently met with two members they're recruiting as potential stewards. "We had a conversation and helped them imagine the great things we can accomplish together to build a stronger union," said Lien.

We celebrate the dedicated efforts of this mother-daughter team of activists for their role in creating a stronger union for all.



Mother-daughter team, Lien and Van Nguyen, dedicated to building a stronger union.

MAY 24
2017

UNION UPDATE

WOMEN EMPOWERING WOMEN AT UNION ROUNDTABLE

More than three dozen women—all leaders and activists in our union—met in a roundtable discussion in Ontario last month to continue the momentum created around issues of leadership highlighted in January at the Women’s March in Washington, D.C.

The event was co-hosted by Tamekia N. Robinson, our Vice President for Organizing/Representation and by Assemblymember Christina Garcia, chair of the California Legislative Women’s Caucus.

The meeting focused on the importance of women leading together, supporting each other, and the upcoming challenges we face in our union, our communities and as a nation.

“The recent women’s marches around the country speak to the need for women to insist on representation, fairness, respect and responsiveness to our needs,” said Vice President Robinson. “As Kamala Harris told us in January, ‘there is nothing more powerful than a group of determined sisters marching, standing up for what is right.’”



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PILOT PROGRAM GRADS CELEBRATE BECOMING RNS

Two members are moving their careers forward by becoming Registered Nurses, thanks to an innovative apprenticeship pilot program that’s helping Licensed Vocational Nurses (LVNs) achieve upward mobility.

Juanita Esquer and Alexis Barba are slated to graduate May 24 from San Joaquin Delta College with an Associate’s Degree in Nursing, ready to start a new chapter in their careers providing critical care at the California Health Care Facility in Stockton.

The new LVN-to-RN apprenticeship program was created with the help of a \$1 million state grant to assist already-skilled workers with their professional development, as well as reducing a chronic shortage of RNs in state service, where recruitment is difficult.

“This program is a great example of how having a union makes a difference for professional development,” said Rionna Jones, Bargaining Unit 20 chair.

The program is unique in that the majority of apprenticeship programs serve jobs that are

traditionally male-dominated, while today’s nursing workforce is 80 percent female, with a high percentage of people of color and single heads of households.

The grant will provide tuition and school expenses for up to 50 students. Those participating will work in their current jobs for 20 hours, while being paid to attend classes for 20 hours.

“I’m so excited,” said Alexis Barba. “I saw no opportunity for doing this because of my work schedule. My union really made this possible.”

The pilot program is limited to LVNs working at CHCF in Stockton, Deuel Vocational Institution in Tracy and Mule Creek Prison in Ione. Already, a second wave of more than a dozen students have started their classes at Delta College.

“This is going to be life-changing, because I can better provide for my family,” said Juanita Esquer. “I’ve always dreamed of getting my nursing degree while I work.”