

Dear NTEU Chapter 282 Sisters and Brothers:

Greetings from your FDA Chapter 282 Officers and Stewards. We wish you, your families and friends an extra measure of Peace and Joy this Holiday Season. Please stay safe and in good health. For all who have lost loved ones, please accept our deep condolences. May their memory always be a blessing to you.

The past four (4) years have been very difficult and challenging for all federal unions including our NTEU Chapter 282 FDA Headquarters and Baltimore. In May 2018, the President issued three (3) Executive Orders (EOs) using illegal “union busting” tactics. The “Executive Orders” limited union collective bargaining rights. Diminished established union representational functions and made it easier to fire employees. FDA managers implemented HHS guidance that took away union official time from our stewards and officers to make it very difficult for our Chapter 282 to represent our bargaining unit employees.

All our union offices but one was taken away and required our chapter to pay an annual rent of \$9,321 for that single small union office on the White Oak Campus. Our bargaining unit size is at least 8,500 bues dispersed in about 40 buildings across Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia and the District of Columbia. It is impossible for our chapter to operate from one small office on White Oak Campus. This situation has been imposed on all bargaining employees by a few extremely anti-union political appointees determined to break the union. National has stated that it will negotiate with the new HHS administration to revert to the status quo-ante. The position of NTEU is that the Contract of 2014 is still in effect. The articles imposed on our union by the FSIP political appointees of the present administration must be renegotiated.

Pursuant to mandatory guidance from HHS political appointees, Chapter 282 was prohibited from communicating with our members using government email and virtual bulletin boards thereby severing the connectivity of an efficient, timely and vital functionality to discourage members from participating and receiving timely impactful union information. In result, our Union was severely obstructed in its capacity to communicate with our members, thereby disrupting the normal flow of controlled information that our Executive Vice-President Dr. Michael Theodorakis routinely issued via email by authority of the negotiated in HHS-NTEU Consolidated Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), 2014.

In July 2018, Mike Theodorakis represented our chapter at the bargaining table for renewal of our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) contract. The representatives of HHS quite unabashedly refused to discuss any union proposals to revise and strengthen the CBA. Instead, HHS declared impasse, went to Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) and after a few days of negotiations declared another impasse and fled to FSIP's panel of political appointees who imposed 19 articles to the liking of HHS, forced withdrawal of 4 articles, and we agreed only on 6 and now we are negotiating the last 6 articles. If the FSIP imposed contract is not reversed, the union for the next 5 years will be under an effectively gutted contract. It has been an unending ordeal with the current administration's impositions on our union.

To meet the challenges, we who represent our members, locally as officers and stewards collectively made decisions of how best to continue providing the demands of representation including service responsibilities, duties and allegiance to our valued collective bargaining functions. We are mandated by our National Office to be relentless in our pursuit of fairness in the workplace despite the obstacles and impositions. We have and will do so going forward!

Special thanks to the National NTEU Headquarters leadership through National President Tony Reardon and his Executive Vice President Jim Bailey who continued their vigilance in this fight by filing grievances and challenges in the courts to stop these illegal tactics.

The time, legal expertise, and money that the National union expended in the ongoing fight to extinguish these damaging Executive Orders is commendable. Your National union was effective and instrumental in garnering gains for our bargaining employees to continue **100% telework** until the COVID Pandemic is controlled, and the establishment of the **NTEU Disaster Fund**.

The "**Paid Parental Leave**" program is now in effect at FDA as of October 1, 2020. **Paid Parental Leave** is another good news story that I took this on as one of our Chapter's goals to ensure that parents would not have to suffer pay loss in order to take care of their families.

This has been many years in fruition but with National, our union lobbyists and you, our loyal members who did not abandon Union but instead you dug in your heels and contacted your congressional leaders - **we "did it"**! If you happen to be in any of the new hire orientation where I spoke, I know you must have

remembered my testament for paid parental leave and Mike's passion for recruitment.

Unfortunately, with the continued imposition of the past HHS rules to limit our recruitment from all bargaining unit employees we had to forego an opportunity to meet and greet new employees. **Nonetheless - "Welcome to FDA, it's a wonderful place to work"!**

Another disappointment is the cancellation of the 2020 December Holiday Celebration for Chapter 282 members. If you have attended our past celebrations, you know what I mean. Let us hope that in 2021 it will be safe to meet again to celebrate together the Holidays. Stay tuned!

Because of the poorly managed pandemic, we are all experiencing personal distress. We must look for a more promising future. The new administration of Biden/Harris has been certified as of December 14, 2020 and we are on track to having an administration that supports federal employees' unions.

Chapter 282 union stewards and officers are posted on this website, www.nteu282.org or www.nteu282.com .

I will continue to work with them and we all will continue in the bond of service unity for fairness in the FDA workplace and improve Quality of Work and Life!

IF YOU ARE NOT A DUES'S PAYING MEMBER JOIN US BY COMPLETING THE 1187 ON THIS WEBSITE OR CONTACT Michael Theodorakis at MichaelCTheodorakis@comcast.net

my email address is : MarshaNTEU282@gmail.com

What Chapter 282 needs from you:

1. Your updated home address if it has changed and you are not receiving the "Bulletin" newsletter from National.
2. Your personal email address so that Chapter 282 will be able to provide you information that might not be appropriate to provide on your work computer.
3. If you are not a due's paying member join us by completing the 1187 form on this website and sending to Mike Theodorakis.

Thank you everyone and have a Safe Holiday Season whatever you choose to Celebrate!

Marsha

Marsha Hayden

President

NTEU Chapter 282

Microbiologist

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