

The Caregiver

Summer 2014



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UDW CAREGIVERS MAKE HISTORY

For the first time ever, IHSS providers will be paid overtime

After an intense six month campaign, UDW caregivers successfully stopped Governor Brown's attempt to ban providers from working more than 40 hours per week. Scheduled to start in January 2015, IHSS providers will be eligible to earn overtime pay—for the first time in history. Our latest victory shows just how much is possible when we stand together! *(Read more on Page 2)*

OVERTIME VICTORY

will help our families

- We successfully defeated Governor Brown's proposed 40 hour cap that would have meant strangers caring for our loved ones and clients, and forced many of us further into poverty.
- Scheduled to start in January 2015, caregivers who work more than 40 paid IHSS hours per week will be paid time-and-a-half for overtime hours. If you work in Riverside County, for example, your regular wage rate would be \$11.50/hour and your overtime wage would be \$17.25/hour.
- IHSS providers can earn a maximum of 21 hours per week in overtime pay (26 hours if the 7% cut to IHSS hours goes away).
- IHSS providers will also now be paid for travel time in between clients and for wait time at clients' medical appointments.
- **We are still fighting to end the 7% cut and fully restore our clients' hours.**

Still have questions about overtime pay? Read more at udwa.org.



“This is real progress toward equality and dignity for homecare workers. As always, we still have more work to do.”

— UDW Executive Director
Doug Moore

“Governor Brown: Don’t Give Me to Strangers!”

That was what IHSS client Jessie Eppert wrote on her sign at a rally to protect continuity of care at the Capitol in May.

Jessie and her mom, UDW caregiver Stephanie Eppert, have been on the frontlines fighting against Governor Brown's proposed cuts since they were first announced in January.

Now that caregivers and our clients have successfully protected continuity of care by winning overtime pay for caregivers, many of us are dreaming about what we will

be able to do with the extra income we'll be making come January. For a lot of us overtime pay means finally being able to pay all of our bills and stay in our homes, and for some it even means being able to save up some money for a change.

For Jessie, overtime means she will continue to be cared for by her mother instead of strangers. Stephanie is excited that she will be able to enroll Jessie in dance classes, something the young girl with Down syndrome has been



wanting for a long time. “Someday we might even be able to go to Disneyland,” Stephanie said. “That would be a dream come true for her.”



HOMECARE HEROES

We asked caregivers across California: Who inspires *you* to fight for homecare?

Life beyond the white picket fence

By Sarah Ilenstine, caregiver, Santa Barbara County

When I was a younger, I fantasized about having a perfect family. A husband, a few kids that would grow up and eventually go off to college, and maybe even that highly-coveted white picket fence. In all my daydreaming, I never imagined the challenges I would face in life, or the surprising and amazing gift that is my granddaughter Crystal.

My name is Sarah Ilenstine, and I am a full-time homecare provider in Santa Barbara County. I care for my granddaughter Crystal, who is 11 years old and was born with spina bifida.

I won't sugarcoat it. Life as a caregiver can be stressful, with the seemingly endless doctor appointments, sleepless nights, and the full-time care Crystal requires. But living with a child with disabilities is also an amazing and rewarding experience. Crystal has such a great personality; she is always cheerful and never gets mad or upset about her disability. She loves to try all of the things that able-bodied kids do, she just does them in her wheelchair!

Taking care of my granddaughter has opened my eyes and mind, and reminds me to take time for life's littlest pleasures. The truth is, I enjoy my life with Crystal so much, and I hope to always enjoy my life as much as I do now.

I still don't have that white picket fence. And maybe some people think having a grandchild with disabilities is something to grieve over. But none of that matters—because I know how good my life is, and how lucky I am to have Crystal in it. Her positive, can-do attitude inspires me everyday.



Clients fighting for homecare



By Corie Crowson, caregiver, Merced County

Before Katrina Bucol's mother passed away, she made Katrina promise to help keep her brother Randy from being institutionalized. Randy grew up with intellectual disabilities stemming from a childhood illness, and until then their mother had been his full-time caregiver. Their mother feared that when she died, Randy would be forced into institutional care, where his disabilities would make it hard for him to adjust or live a happy life. Katrina knew that wasn't an option for Randy, so she took over her brother's care.

At the time of their mother's passing, Randy needed a lot of help. He was anti-social and

isolated, afraid of people and animals, and grew violent under stress. But in just a couple years under his sister's care, Randy has flourished.

He now volunteers at our UDW office with Katrina, goes on trips with other caregivers and clients to the Capitol to fight for IHSS, and even has two dogs of his own.

While Katrina may be Randy's homecare hero, Randy—and clients like him who fight to protect homecare with our union—are the ultimate heroes. "I didn't expect this responsibility," Katrina said. "But now that I have it, I feel like it was meant to be."

What's life like through your eyes?



"I have to make ends meet by picking up house cleaning jobs."

LaTanya, caregiver in San Diego

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THROUGHACAREGIVERSEYES.COM/SUBMIT**

The **POWER** to **WIN**

Some of us remember the days when California caregivers didn't have collective bargaining. It meant minimum wage for IHSS providers. No health care benefits. No voice with lawmakers in Sacramento and very little power to stop cuts to IHSS that hurt our families and clients.

But today we are a powerful force that stands up for our families and the seniors and people with disabilities who rely on homecare. Overtime pay is the latest victory for caregivers, and we have a proven track record in winning improvements for IHSS providers and clients.

Protecting the IHSS program

As caregivers, our number one priority is to protect our clients and loved ones. By joining together as union members, we have been able to save IHSS year after year from budget cuts and politicians threatening to gut the program.

- Stopped a 20% cut to IHSS hours in court last year
- Stopped pay reduction to minimum wage
- Stopped elimination of pay for family member providers
- Stopped elimination of pay for domestic services
- Stopped additional \$17 fee for FBI background check

Winning for caregivers and our clients

We have also worked together to make improvements to the program and win wage increases and other benefits for caregivers. Our voices have made a difference.

- Won wage increases and overtime pay
- Won direct deposit for paychecks (UDW-sponsored bill)
- Won thousands of dollars in back pay for providers and more hours for IHSS clients (appealing hours assessments)
- Won health care benefits

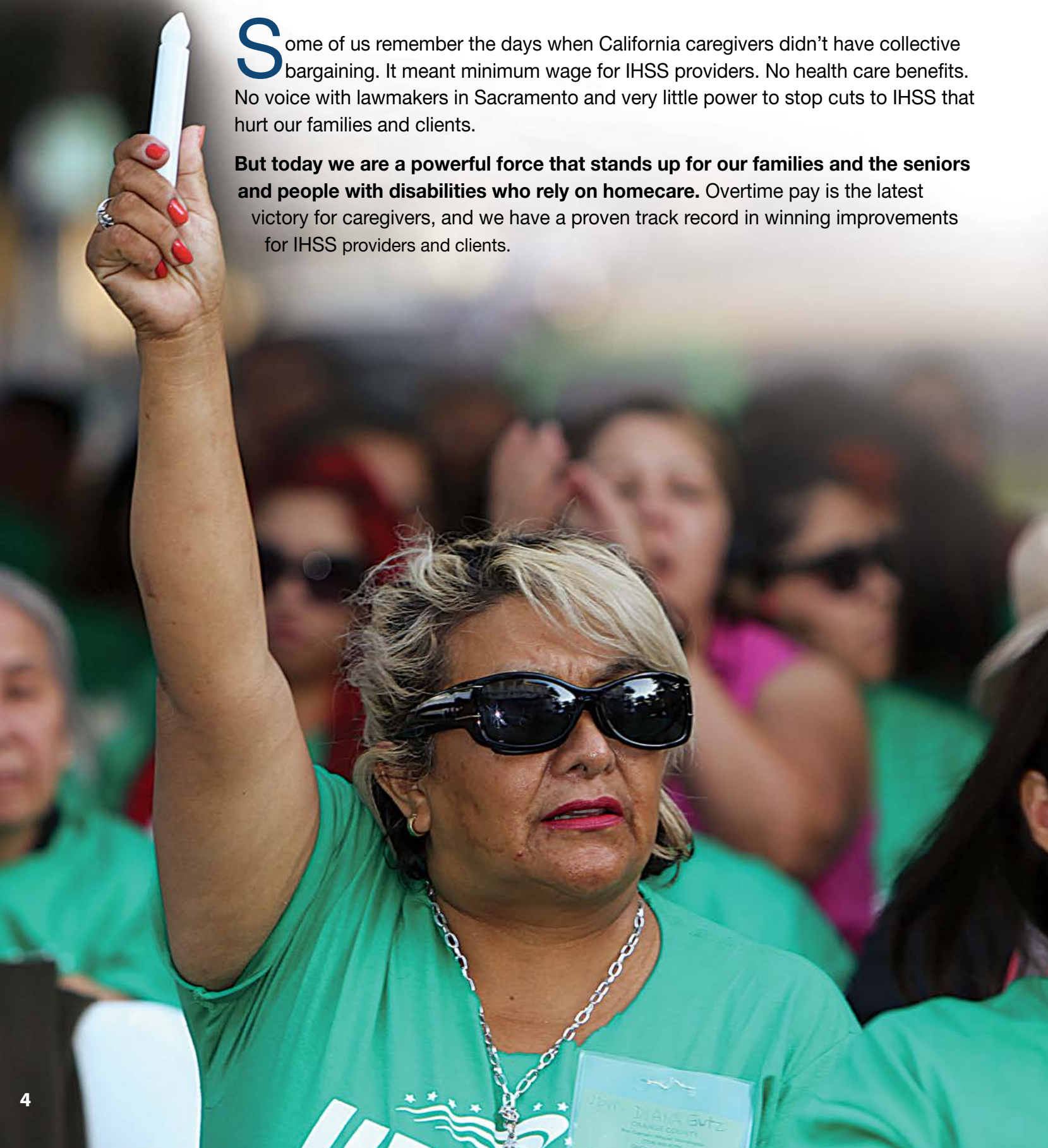
There is strength in numbers!

Protecting IHSS takes effort—and cash! By pooling our resources, homecare providers are able to fend off attacks to IHSS by billionaires and CEOs. Union dues pay for the work we do to stop IHSS cuts, win more hours for IHSS clients, and win better pay and benefits for caregivers. UDW caregivers also have access to members-only benefits such as free caregiver trainings and a low-cost dental plan (visit udwa.org/member-benefits).

Our next step: Restoring hours and ending the 7% cut

We know that without the strength of our union—made up of 66,000 caregivers across the state—the IHSS program as we know it would simply not exist. This is why we continue to fight for homecare, and are working right now to restore client hours and end the 7% cut.

But what about the future? There is so much we want to accomplish together: from improving the IHSS program and increasing caregiver wages and benefits, to making sure that caregivers can afford to retire someday. We want to build up the IHSS program in California and strengthen our union so that we can ensure a better future for all of us, because we are the future of homecare!



“The voice of one is good but when you have the voice of thousands backing you, it can move mountains.”

—Astrid Zuniga, caregiver and UDW District Chair, Stanislaus County



“I want more people to get involved in our union because our loved ones and clients count on us to stand together so that they can receive the best possible care in their homes and communities.”

—Rudy Sanchez, caregiver, Santa Barbara County



“I’m a strong advocate for our union because when people have tried to knock us down and prevent us from having power, we’ve stood together and fought back. And, as a member I got help getting more hours of care for my dad.”

—Marilyn Smith, caregiver, Riverside County

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UDW members:
Sign up for **FREE** caregiver trainings!



Adult and Child CPR/First Aid
(English and Spanish)



Caregiving Essentials
(English and Spanish)



Eat Healthy Workshop



U.S. Citizenship
(English and Spanish)

To register for a class, please call toll-free **877-410-0576**, or email info@caiptc.org. Please note that class schedule and availability varies by county.

Today, we are over 20,000 stronger!

Hello brothers and sisters,

It has been a busy and exciting time for UDW caregivers over the last three months. In June, we witnessed passage of a state budget that protects continuity of care for our clients and won overtime pay for IHSS providers. What a tremendous victory!

Together, we are unstoppable. That's why we are making a group of anti-worker billionaires really nervous. They've attacked our union before, and now they have taken it to new heights with a lawsuit called Harris vs. Quinn.

Harris vs. Quinn was financed by a billionaire-backed group that has been trying to eliminate unions for more than four decades. We are disappointed that the conservative majority of the U.S. Supreme Court sided with wealthy CEOs over caregivers, but we will never let them silence our voices.

Our legal team is reviewing the decision closely, and we are not sitting back to let others decide the fate of our families and clients. In fact, over the last several months, we have signed up over 20,000 caregivers to join us as UDW members!



At our union's national convention in Chicago, UDW caregivers were recognized for leading the way for homecare.

I encourage you to call your local UDW office to volunteer and get more involved.

Together, we have the power to protect homecare. Together, we will keep fighting for our clients and loved ones!

In unity,
Editha Adams
Caregiver and UDW President