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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Arbitrators award pay raises to HGEA Unit 9 nurses

A three-member arbitration panel has awarded pay raises to nearly 1,700 registered professional nurses of HGEA Bargaining Unit 9.

The following is a summary of the decision:

- Retroactive to Jan. 1, 2013, all Unit 9 employees are placed on their appropriate step (i.e., step movement is restored).
- Retroactive to Jan. 1, 2013, all Unit 9 employees receive a 4 percent pay increase.
- Effective April 1, 2013, all Unit 9 employees receive a 4 percent pay increase.
- The working condition differential is increased to \$1.00 per hour.
- Two-year agreement – July 1, 2011 – June 30, 2013

In April 2011, Unit 9 nurses voted to reject the tentative agreement for the 2011-2013 contract. Arbitration hearings took place November 5-9, 2012. The arbitration panel consisted of Sanford Chun, union representative; Henry Kanda, employer representative; and Joe Henderson, neutral arbitrator.

“During the 2011-2013 contract negotiations period, the employer had every opportunity to negotiate a fair contract, but they chose not to,” said HGEA Executive Director Randy Perreira.

“This arbitration decision objectively presents the facts of the situation, and recognizes that wages for registered nurses in the public hospital system are woefully lagging – 20 percent less than the private sector. The neutral arbitrator clearly determined the state couldn’t justify the glaring pay disparity. While this is a good first step to address the wage gap for the nurses, I fully agree with Mr. Henderson who states in his decision that ‘it should not be interpreted to mean that the disparity no longer exists.’ We will continue to fight for fair wages for Unit 9, as well as our six other bargaining units who have had to endure dramatic pay cuts over the years.

“Lastly, I want to thank the members who took the time to attend and testify on behalf of their fellow nurses during the arbitration hearing. Their efforts truly helped to make a difference.”

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About HGEA

HGEA was founded in 1934 to ensure fair and equitable representation for government employees. HGEA is the largest labor union in Hawaii, with more than 42,000 members. HGEA represents state and county employees in seven bargaining units. HGEA also serves a large associate membership composed primarily of retirees, other state and county employees and officials, and federal and private sector employees.