February 2, 2021

Dear CWA-Represented Associates:

First, I want to thank you for all you have done this past year to care for our patients and one another as we continue to battle this pandemic. It can’t be said enough that your hard work is the reason we have been able to provide such outstanding care throughout this crisis. It seems hard to believe that when we began bargaining last year, our community was a much different place. Now, nearly a year into this pandemic, we are encouraged by the strides we have made in treating this virus, and, most importantly, by new vaccines that will protect our associates, patients, and community.

Today, we will resume contract negotiations with Communication Workers of America (CWA), AFL-CIO. As you recall, faced with the mounting pressure of responding to the COVID-19 pandemic last year, we collectively decided to suspend negotiations and extend our current contracts for registered nurses, and service, technical and clerical associates at Mercy Hospital of Buffalo, Kenmore Mercy Hospital, and Sisters of Charity Hospital, St. Joseph Campus.

Like providers throughout WNY, and our country as a whole, this pandemic has been particularly hard on hospitals. The suspension of elective surgeries and other services, reimbursement shortfalls that do not match the cost of caring for COVID patients, and added costs associated with our COVID response, have all contributed to significant financial losses for Catholic Health in 2020 and projected in 2021. We continue to optimize the benefits of our new Epic electronic health record, and realize we will continue to have lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic for quite some time.

Over the past four years, we have worked closely and collaboratively with the CWA on initiatives to improve trust, quality, safety, associate recognition, and the overall work environment for CWA-represented and all associates throughout Catholic Health, yielding measurable results. We believe the foundation we have built is stronger than it has been in the past and will help guide us in our upcoming negotiations.

The Bargaining Committees (listed on the back of this letter) will be meeting virtually over the next several months, resuming negotiations were we left off last spring. While we made much progress, there is more work to be done. Catholic Health is committed to bargaining fairly and transparently, and working with your bargaining committee to reach new agreements by June 30, 2021.

We will continue to provide updates on the progress of our negotiations, as well as information on proposals that have been presented at the bargaining table. Visit [chsbuffalo.org/negotiations](http://www.chsbuffalo.org/negotiations) for the latest news and information. Thank you for your continued patience throughout this process and all that you do to support the mission of Catholic Health.

Sincerely,

Mark A. Sullivan

President & CEO

**CWA Bargaining Committee**

**CWA Leadership**

* Erin Spaulding
* Jackie Ettipio
* Carrie Dilbert
* Cori Gambini
* Lisa Boettcher
* Ulanda Frank

**St. Joseph Campus – RN**

* Heather Lawrence
* Becky Lawrence

**Kenmore Mercy Hospital – RN**

* Vanessa Quinn
* Debbie Arnet

**Mercy Hospital of Buffalo – RN**

* Maureen Kryzak
* Cori Webb

**St. Joseph Campus – Service**

* Dawn Knaus

**Kenmore Mercy Hospital – Technical**

* Erica Scherer
* Andrea Nugent

**Mercy Hospital of Buffalo – STC**

* Eileen McDonald
* Cheryl Darling

**Catholic Health Bargaining Committee**

* Diane Pietraszewski
* Joseph Scrivo
* Jennifer Jacobs
* JoAnn D’Angelo
* Susan Brooks
* Christina Tobin
* Anne Hedges-Creighton

**The following committee members will be added as needed:**

* Mary Young
* Dane Franklin
* Robin Fitzsimmons
* Jason Judd
* Carolyn Hilbert
* Kristen Parisi
* Terri Livingston
* Mike Galbraith
* Jeanette Hughes
* Michelle Wild