

STATE OF THE UNION

Monroe County Federation of Social Workers, IUE-CWA 381

167 Flanders St

(585) 328-7170 voice

web site: www.fsw-union.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/FederationofSocialWorkersIUE/CWA81381

Evelyn Evans, president

Rochester, New York 14619

(585) 328-2162 fax

e-mail: fswmessage@aol.com

Date: 7/9/10



To my friends and incredible colleagues,

As I write this to you I find it difficult to hold back the tears so, I will not hold them in. A little over nine months ago, I was diagnosed with stage IV colon cancer, a diagnosis that began the hardest battle of my entire life. In the following days of my diagnosis, I can recall asking myself why me? Why not someone else? The truth is that if this did not happen to me then it may have happened to someone who was less ready to accept this burden. It could have happened to someone who did not have the support of their family, friends and colleagues. It could have happened to you. I pray to God every day thanking him that this was not the case.

Until Wednesday, I was face to face with the reality that after July 16, I would no longer have income, as my short-term disability insurance would expire and consequently I would lose my health insurance. I remember my husband asking me, "Beatriz, what are we going to do?" I remember telling my husband not to worry because God always finds a way to provide and by his stripes, I am healed. He looked at me as if I was crazy. Then, Evelyn Evans called me and told me the e-mail she had sent and your overwhelming responses. I nearly collapsed in tears. I never knew how much I was loved until that phone call and for that, I am truly humbled. Words simply cannot express how truly grateful I am to be a part of such an incredible agency. There is no way I could ever repay you for what you have done for me.

I do not believe any of this was coincidence but rather, a reminder of the power of people and what is possible if you never give up. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for not giving up on me. You were by my side when I was in the hospital with your phone calls, your cards, your visits, and your kind words. You stood next to me again when you took the time out of your day to provide my family and I with meals after my chemotherapy treatments and here you are again answering the call for help with your donation of your hard-earned time so that I can finish this fight. Your actions put the human into Human Services. I believe my faith in God, the incredible care of Dr. Brian Smith oncologist at Highland Hospital, and most of all the love you have shown my family and I throughout this experience is what will allow me to beat this disease. Again, thank you. I look forward to seeing you all soon. With all the love in the world, --Bea