



IBEW 2213 NEWSBEAT

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IN SOLIDARITY



The College at
BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

SCHOLARSHIP SPOTLIGHT

This week in the spotlight is IBEW 2213 Scholarship recipient, Gabriella Petricca. Gabriella is the daughter of Laura Petricca from the Western area. Read on to learn about her. Also enjoy her essay in which she shares how the union affected her Life!

Gabriella Petricca—I'm 18 years old from Orchard Park, NY. I recently just graduated from Orchard Park High School in June 2018, and I plan on furthering my academic career at The College at Brockport. Since I've done competitive dancing for 16 years I plan on majoring in dance while I'm there.

"Throughout the world today, many people work in what's called a union. A union is an association of workers formed to protect and further their rights and interests. Unions can be made of thousands of people from all over, standing together to make a difference. In any circumstance there are benefits to having certain things, and a union is one of them.

Having a union with your job means that you can collectively meet and negotiate with management over any issues that may affect you and your job. Growing up, both my parents have had the opportunity to work with a union, therefore I've been subject to many of the conversations they've had that may involve their union.

Spring 2016 is when I realized the importance of working for a union. My mom was on strike and my family couldn't afford to pay for "luxuries". I was so happy to be asked to prom, only to find out that I couldn't afford the dress or shoes I wanted to buy. My story did have a happy ending, I was fortunate that my grandparents were able to pitch in and help me with the cost of everything and I went to my first prom. When I was younger I walked the line with my mom and attended some rallies, however, strikes in the past didn't last 7 weeks.

Realizing that my family and I were down one of my parent's income, tremendously affected us. Not having "spending money" and being the 16-year-old girl that must tell her friends she can't hangout with them because they're going out to eat was getting very old. Sometimes I felt like my parents didn't understand how I felt, because they'd just tell me to tell my friends I didn't have money to spend on little things such as going out every couple weekends. I felt a sense of embarrassment having to explain to people why we were down half my parent's income. It was almost as if nobody else my age went through something like this.

Although the 7 weeks my mom was on strike felt a lot longer than it really was, I believe it's an important thing to support. If workers aren't getting what they deserve and how they want to be treated, the only way to bring attention to a situation like this is to boycott it.

When I was younger, my mom also went on strike another time before 2016. It didn't last nearly as long as the one in 2016, but this still had an impact on our family. Learning what a strike was at such a young age didn't quite make sense to me, but now since I'm older it makes sense to go against something if you don't think you're getting what you deserve. I never felt like my mom and her other coworkers were doing anything outrageously bad to cause the union to go on strike, but if you're working for stuff that you aren't getting it tends to turn into something bigger than expected.

Overall, unions are an important aspect to my family. Although my mom went on strike for a good amount of time, she was never fired from her job. A union helps someone, and potentially can help someone from being fired. The purpose of having a union is to meet and negotiate issues with management that may affect you and your job.