

Through collective bargaining our family has enjoyed wage increases based on comparative analysis, merit increases, and cost of living allowances. These rises in wages have not only allowed our family to keep up with growing costs but has allowed us to purchase a home in our hometown. This has been a special blessing to our family, with the continually accumulative cost of real estate, we have been able to stay in the town where my mother was born and raised. Also due to the power of collective bargaining, our family has benefited from only minimal increases in the cost of health insurance. Many people today are paying a very high portion of their wages toward health care. Our family has quality health coverage at an affordable price thanks to the union. My father and grandfather have been IBEW 1245 members, so the positive effect of the union goes back a couple of generations. Through the labor movement, our city council seems to place a greater value on the employees of the city than in the past. This greater appreciation fosters growth and a better relationship between workers and management. This creates a more positive work environment where everyone is more productive.

The union has affected me positively through its many benefits given to employees. I have been able to use that health insurance to a large degree. I have had many sport physicals and regular check-ups at the doctor's office along with a regular attendance with the dentist at an affordable cost. The wage increases have allowed me to have braces, which were medically needed for my mouth. These salary growths have also permitted me to participate in multiple activities and community service opportunities. I have profited from the union by the generous health benefits and slow but steady wage increases.

I would be greatly honored to be chosen for this scholarship from the IBEW 1245 Scholarship Program. I have been accepted to the CSU Maritime Academy located in Vallejo, California. My goal is to major in Marine Engineering Technology. Included in my degree program, I will receive a U.S. Coast Guard license as a Third Assistant Engineer. I will be preparing for operating and maintaining engineering systems on a ship as a licensed engineering officer. I excitedly anticipate three training cruises during my time in college. As a freshman, I will be housed on the 500 foot training ship *Golden Bear* that was donated to this college by the U.S. Navy.

I am grateful that I will have the opportunity to see the world and experience a specialized education at this academy. Of the many career fields I will have access to with my degree, I can accept jobs in maritime and non-maritime industries from power plant operations, including geothermal and co-generation, to stationary power and energy systems, or on-ship electrical and power maintenance. My future goal is to have a reliable and financially secure career that would allow me to continue living in the Sonoma County area. I am a native of Healdsburg, California, and I would like to raise my future family in the region that has meant so much to me. I will likely join the IBEW 1245 union if I find the appropriate occupation in this region.