



International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
District Lodge 66
1307 Market Street
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Union Herald Article from the desk of:

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Sisters and Brothers,

Each year the District Lodge No. 66 donates two (2) Scholarship Awards, one to a son of our Machinists Union Member and the other to a daughter of our Machinists Union member. The winning essays are published in this paper. IAM District Lodge 66 is pleased to announce the 2010 Scholarship winners for this year. Every essay submitted was great and thank you to all who participated. The scholarship committee of District delegates had a tough and final decision to make with all being well written essays. The female recipient is **Karla Hagen**, daughter of Chris and Diane Hagen. Chris is a member of Local Lodge 1115 and is employed at Crown Cork and Seal. Karla is a senior attending Viroqua Senior High School. The male recipient is **Corey Wilhelm**, son of Dean and Cheri Wilhelm. Dean is a member of Local Lodge 2191 and is employed at Chart Energy and Chemical. Corey is a senior attending La Crosse Central Senior High. The District Lodge would like to thank all of the participants and wish them the best of luck in their endeavors in the future. The winning essays are to follow – Ladies First!

"How Unions are Important to my Family and my Community" by Karla Hagen

My name is Karla Hagen and I am applying for the District Lodge No. 66 Scholarship. My dad is employed at Crown Cork and Seal in La Crosse, WI. He has worked there for seven years and is an active member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers Union, District Lodge 66. My grandfather was a member of the UAW 1263. He was employed at Norplex in La Crosse for 30 years. He and his union experienced a strike in the early 1970's to

obtain higher wages and better health benefits. At the time he didn't agree with the outcome, but later realized that without the Union he would have been out of a job. He is very grateful for what the Union did for him and his coworkers. My dad and grandfather have taught me the importance of the Union in that it serves as a group of fellow employees working together to achieve a common goal. Higher wages in our community benefits area businesses thus stimulates the economy in the area.

I am enrolled at the University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire, in the fall of 2010 with an intended major in Nursing. Healthcare is one of the areas where Unions are growing most quickly. For example, large numbers of teachers, nurses, therapists, and other healthcare workers are members of Unions across the Country. This is encouraging to me in that some Unions have locals of healthcare providers who have joined to defend their interests and have been successful in doing so. They have acquired higher wages, better benefits and retirement plans.

Having my dad be part of the Union gives my family security in knowing that he has a secure job, exceptional healthcare benefits, paid vacations, job security, overtime, and a promise of a good pension plan. My parents have given my sister and I many opportunities to represent the La Crosse YMCA. We have been active members of the YMCA gymnastics team for fifteen years. We have represented the La Crosse Area YMCA at the Women's National Competitions in various states of the country for the past ten years as a result. My long time membership with the YMCA has taught me how to work with a team, sometimes making compromises and also voicing my opinion in what I believe. I have gradually worked my way up from a beginner to a mentor. I have gained respect of my fellow teammates and coaches. I feel these qualities will help me to one day become a valuable member of society.

I very much appreciate and enjoy the La Crosse area and hope to one day return to the area to live and work. My goal is to return to the La Crosse area and become employed as a registered nurse. I would very much like to work in the pediatric field. With the strong foundation that Unions provide I am confident that I will thrive in this area and be able to provide my family with the same security my family has provided me.

And now for the male essay!

"Strength in Numbers." by Corey Wilhelm

"Strength in numbers" is something all students learn at a young age in grade school. Looking back at this quote, it seems quite elementary, it is commonly associated with stories of heroic school children who stand up to the bully at the playground, or a group of students trying to pull off a prank on a teacher telling each other "they can't punish all of us," but after taking a deeper

and closer look into the quote, one can easily find that this quote is not so elementary. During the great depression when work was difficult to find, and manual labor was common, workers who did not like how their employer operated were simply replaced with the next person in line looking for a job. This made it very difficult for workers to insist on a safe, clean work place, competitive pay, and manageable working hours. American workers joined together and formed groups that called for change in the workplace. As more and more workers joined these groups, or unions, businesses were forced to change their working conditions in order to attract new employees. Had it not been for these brave Americans, working conditions today could possibly be much different.

Unions have had a large impact on my family throughout my lifetime. Two major events have happened, and the happy outcomes would not be the same had it not been for the help offered by the I.A.M.A.W. My father had been employed by Chart (formerly Altec) for five years. He was injured on the job after a freak explosion in the factory. The Union fought for my father as the Company wanted to take away one year of his pension because of the time he needed to miss to recover from his injury. Thanks to the Union, my father was able to return to his job without lost seniority or pension. When the Company wanted to take away something that was rightfully my fathers, the Union fought for him to keep what was rightfully his.

On the second occasion the employees at my father's workplace demanded better contracts. The union supported these workers as they went on a strike, and gave them a voice. The Union worked with the Company and ultimately helped come up with a compromise that made both workers and company executives happy. Without the Union's backing in this situation, hundreds of workers could have lost their jobs, and unfair wages and poor working conditions would have remained in the Company, and their new employees.

Every American has been affected, whether directly or indirectly, with the work of a Union. Giving workers a voice has worked to achieve fair pay, manageable working hours, and good working condition in America. It is safe to say that one person could not do this alone. Whether taking on a small challenge like conquering a playground, or a problem of significance such as creating a voice for American workers, happy solutions are never found without someone else's help, and simply put, we have strength in numbers. Maybe those teachers weren't so crazy after all.

Congratulations to both of our scholarship winners as well as all graduating High School Seniors from District Lodge 66, we wish them all the best in life and luck in their journeys they are just starting.

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