

“The teamsters stood together in solidarity not just for ourselves and our families, but on behalf of all working Americans” (Rocco J. Calo). I grew up under three generations of teamsters. I never knew how lucky my family and I were to always have healthcare, pensions, competitive wages, a good work environment and job security. Once I became older and could see how others struggled, I knew I wanted to continue the tradition of being a union employee. When someone belongs to a union, it’s not only that single person that’s being taken care of, but their family, as well.

When I decided I wanted to become a nurse, the first question I asked was if I was going to be able to benefit from a union job. It is going to be important to work for a union to have protection and advocacy for my interests. Unions give nurses job security. Employers cannot terminate a job without cause or reason. I want to be given fair treatment and the union will help me accomplish that. I will be given a better work environment, including higher nurse to patient ratios and the elimination of mandatory overtime that give a patient the best care needed. Unions guarantee wages and pay raises. Employers cannot lower pay due to budget cuts when you are in the union. It is also found that unionized nurses get paid twenty percent more than non-unionized nurses. Being a part of this organization will give another voice to the management of my employers, the public, and other Americans.

The nurses at Tufts Medical Center recently went on strike together to show their solidarity. This was the largest nurses’ strike in Massachusetts history with 1,200 nurses walking off the job. The dispute was centered around wages, retirement benefits, and staffing levels. During this strike, the president of Local 25, Sean O’Brien, wrote a letter to the president of Tufts Medical Center explaining his support for the nurse’s union and reinforced the involvement Local 25 has

on the daily services required by Teamsters workers. This is a great example of unions working hard to recruit the best possible nurses which in turn gives patients the best overall care.

I want to be a part of something bigger than myself, to not only fight for my benefits, but for everyone's. Being a part of a union makes you feel like you belong to another family with the same interests. I have recently completed my freshman year of nursing school at Quinnipiac and I know I made the right decision. Over the past few months I have determined that when I graduate I want to work in a place where I can be a part of this family. Mr. O'Brien states it perfectly: "When you become a member of Teamsters Local 25, you'll stand on the shoulders of people who have worked, and are working now, to provide you and your family with extraordinary protections. You'll have an opportunity to share in that legacy—and continue it—for yourself, your spouse, and your children."