

My dad has been a member of the United Steelworkers union for far longer than I have even been alive, however, I've never thought too deeply on the importance of his membership before more recently. I have a rather large family consisting of my four sisters and me, my parents, and, of course, our dog. We have never had to worry about our dad being out of work or weigh too heavily on the impact of medical expenses because his membership in the union has kept his job secure. While we have grown to more or less take this everyday comfort of security for granted, we shouldn't. There are many industries that lack unionization and I cannot imagine what it must be like for, not only the employee, but their family to live in a state of uncertainty in the face of hardship and the fear of unforeseen events.

Growing up into a union family has presented me with a variety opportunities to take part in union sponsored events, such as picnics and community fundraiser. I find these interesting as they provide me with an opportunity to feel that I am a part of my father's career and also give me a chance to support the community around me. I believe that these community functions are especially important because they set a positive example of how a business should properly act and conduct itself. These events also create the sense that the company is more than just an industry, it's a company that actually cares about the wellbeing of the community sounding it. While the United Steelworkers union has certainly had an overwhelmingly positive impact on my family, unions, such as this one, have helped to reform American lives everywhere. Because unions are so large, they are able to sway the opinions of legislation in a beneficial direction by encouraging the support of organized minimum wages, quality health care plans, and pay equality between men and women. Though a similar way, unions promote education in areas concerning the employee and encourage political participation, therefore supporting our democracy.

In history classes it is always frightening to learn of the time before the organization of unions. It's hard to believe now, in a society that unions have become so large and span such a range of industry, that there was a time that unions did not exist at all. The rights of employees were ignored and people were placed in inhuman scenarios as they were forced to work ridiculously long hours, many times lacking the proper safety precautions necessary for the workers' protection. Unions promote positive work environments and create a sense of inclusion to the community. Their growth encapsulate the humanity of the people working, rather than just the industry, in a sense that appeals to the heart of community affairs.

I have read about how communities have functioned on a nationwide scale to shape and mold the country into what it is today and I have also seen, first-hand, how my father's union has had a positive impact on, not only his work environment, but the entire life of my family. I am thankful for the union and all the opportunities that it has given and will continue to provide my family and others with.

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