

The Value of Unions in our Society

Jordan Picard, son of Marc Picard, Eacom Timber Timmins

Unions continue every day to play a critical role in our society.

They try to be loyal and true. They protect each and every employee working for the union. They try to insure that employees have a higher pay, better benefit packages, safer working conditions and greater job security.

Sometimes people don't always believe in unions or paying into union dues. As they often state: if you only do your job right you won't need a Union to back you up. That is not at all the only thing a Union can do for you.

The union helps fight for workers' rights. Today the working people have a collective voice at work and an avenue to equality. They try to insure the people have fair treatment and economic security in decisions regarding compensation and benefits such as medical, vision and dental benefits.

Unions have played a very important role in the labor laws and regulations covering areas as diverse as overtime pay, minimum wage, health and retirement coverage, civil rights, unemployment insurance and workers compensation. We can't forget the leave for care of newborns and sick family members.

Common to all these rules is a desire to provide protections for workers either by regulating the behavior of employers or by giving workers access to certain benefits in times of need. Union workers also get more paid time off which includes paid vacations, paid civic holidays for example Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day and might be a few more. They also help with sick time as well. They also provide their employees with a Pension Plan when they retire. This is where the society becomes very thankful to unions.

They also make sure that they have an Occupational health and safety committee in place.

This day and age people are often too shy, won't speak or express themselves in what they believe is to be right or wrong. That is why it's always great to have a union representation in the workplace to ensure workers have a voice in workplace for decisions that affect them. To provide clear check when speaking to upper management levels, unions exist to serve as a countervailing force against employers, whether those employers are government agencies, corporations or not-for-profit.

Working people tend to follow the rules by the Collective Agreements act. It is always good to have a union that believes in the Labour movement. Unions play a much broader role in society. The union continues to be an important force of democracy, not just in the workplace but also in the community locally, nationally and globally.

Unions have a tough role, which some people don't always understand. They are constantly battling with employees to stay away from a strike.

My dad has been a member of United Steelworkers Local 1-2010 for quite some years now and I take all the advice he is willing to give me at this point as I am now sooner than later entering the working force.

And now I wish to state that I truly understand why people say it's so important to believe and appreciate the value unions have to offer employees.