



IFPTE CELEBRATES LOCAL 21'S EXCELLENCE



Jade S. Gregory 2020 Public Sector Dominick D. Critelli, Jr. Scholarship Award Winner

Jade Gregory was named the Public Sector winner of the 2020 Dominick D. Critelli, Jr. Scholarship Award. IFPTE established the Dominick D. Critelli, Jr. scholarship awards for students who have demonstrated skills through academic achievement and service to their school and community.

As a requirement for scholarship submission, Jade was tasked with writing an essay on 'What Does Being Part of a Union Family Mean to Me?' Below is Jade's winning essay.

"It means that I can do a job that I love and am good at without fear of being fired. It means that I can do a job that I love and am good at without fear of being discriminated against. It means that I can do a job that I love and am good at without fear that I will be bullied or harassed. You see, not too long ago, these fears were a serious reality for many people like me, a gay woman.

"Unions have been an integral part in the gay rights movement since they were formed. Many of the rights unions have worked hard to protect are basic rights stripped from gay people in the workplace, such as discriminating against their ability to do their job solely due to their sexual orientation. Unions have spent many years combatting employers' abilities to discriminate amongst employees in the workplace. Unions have bargained recent contracts that include protections around pronouns, anti-harassment language, non-discrimination and health and safety benefits for the LGBTQ+ community.

"My goal is to achieve my Ph.D. in physics and someday do research on our beautiful universe. I want nothing more than to research string theory at the Large Hadron Collider to contribute to the evidence to one day make string theory into the Law of Strings. It has been my passion since I was a little girl. It is comforting to know that I will someday be able to benefit from the labor protections that unions provide for their workers without fear.

"Union representation is no stranger in my family either. Both of my parents are union members and have been for many years. My mother, for instance, started out as a union member as a farmworker in the grape fields of California's Central Valley. After years of struggle and perseverance, my mother received an education and is a state employee today. She wholeheartedly supports her union, never forgetting the labor support she has received since the days of her first employment on American soil as a prideful farmworker.

"To be part of a union is to be part of a family. I think of all the people that have fought for our labor rights, such as Harvey Milk and Dolores Huerta. I think about how they have paved the way so that I may have an opportunity to do the work I love and am good at. Their plight for the people that have come after them is not lost on me. Today I stand on their shoulders. Every day, I keep their sacrifices in mind as I make my decisions. I hope to also be a leader for those that come after me and need the same protections. We are a family. I would be honored to be selected to receive the Dominick D. Critelli, Jr. Scholarship because its ideals are in line with how I define family—in injury to one is the concern of all."

Jade graduated from Northgate High School in Walnut Creek, CA and is the daughter of Local 21 member John Gregory. She is a freshman at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA). IFPTE celebrates and congratulates Jade S. Gregory!

