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### **What Being a Member of a Union Family Means to Me**

One of my first memories is attending yearly Boeing Family days thrown by IFPTE's SPEEA branch with my mom and my sister. I remember making paper airplanes with her manager, eating popsicles with her coworkers and the overwhelming awe I felt walking amongst these huge airplanes that my mom and all the other attendees played a part in creating. Unions play an integral role in the protection and advocacy of workers, and I saw firsthand the enormous number of families impacted and connected through SPEEA. Not only have these benefits trickled down into my life considering my mother is an IFPTE member, but I have received direct advantages as part of a union family which have impacted my career choice and helped me grow throughout my life into the person I am today.

As a part of SPEEA, working for Boeing, my mom has been able to maintain a stable career for as long as I know which has been crucial to the wellbeing of our family. Last year, my mom underwent surgery and was unable to work for about six months, so I was in charge of taking care of the family. Knowing that my mom's job was not in jeopardy was an astronomical weight taken off our shoulders and allowed my mom to be confident in going forward with the procedure. Additionally, in light of the recent Coronavirus pandemic, job loss skyrocketed nationwide, and I saw many of my peers and their families struggle to get by. Because of the strength and dedication of IFPTE our family never had to worry, allowing me to dedicate more time to my academic success and extracurricular activities.

Not only did job security allow me to focus on my passions, but SPEEA directly fueled them as well. Ever since freshman year I have been a part of my school's robotics team, channeling the fascination for engineering I first discovered at Boeing Family Days. Not only are the majority of my team's mentors, including my mom, Boeing SPEEA members which gave them the flexibility to work on the robot with us for so much time, but we also received annual SPEEA grants that helped fund our program and advance our capabilities. This allowed us to buy new parts, learn and use new tools to improve design such as CAD and 3D printing and expand our club to almost 100 members. This pushed us to win various awards in both FTC and FRC such as multiple design and control awards and allowed us to advance to the district championships many times. It also helped me, as our FTC driver, and my teammates have the resources to win first place in the Interleague Championships last year. Using the knowledge I gained in robotics, I was able to mentor rookie students as an upperclassman, become logistics head for FRC my junior year and COO for all three clubs (FLL, FTC and FRC) my senior year where I dedicated my time to ensuring inclusivity and fairness for all members the same way the union did for my mom.

My experiences in robotics were so profound that I decided to further my passions for STEM and pursue a degree in Mathematics and Computer Science at the University of California San Diego this fall. I am so grateful for the opportunities presented to me through robotics, the assurance of job stability my mom was given and the principles I learned about advocacy,

community and fairness, made possible by SPEEA and their community of hardworking professionals. In the future, I hope to use my degree to improve the human condition through technology, implementing the lessons I learned as a result of being part of a union family.

#### Activities:

I would also like to add my activities and commitments in addition to those in the essay because they were made possible by SPEEA. Because of my mom's job security, she was able to fund and take me to these activities and I was able to spend much of my free time pursuing them.

I was a part of the Bellevue Youth Symphony Orchestra starting in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and made it to the highest-level orchestra playing violin in the first violin section by my junior year. I also played in my school orchestra and was first chair for the majority of high school.

I also volunteered teaching autistic children to play music through the organization Faneros and dedicated 140+ hours teaching the skills I learned in BYSO to them, leading me to win the Silver President's Volunteer Service Award my sophomore year for my service.

I was also accepted into 6 honor societies at my school (National Honor Society, National Tech Honor Society, National Math Honor Society, National Science Honor Society, National French Honor Society and Tri-M Honor Society). I was treasurer my junior year for National Science Honor Society and tutored 9<sup>th</sup> grade geometry through National Math Honor Society my senior year.

I have studied Chinese since elementary school every weekend outside of school and received the Seal of Biliteracy for my high scores on the Chinese AP test.