

Two members' children win scholarships

Samantha Gollmer of Albion, PA, whose mother, **LeAnne Gollmer**, is a member of Erie, PA Branch 284, was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship. Union Plus awarded a \$3,500 scholarship to Isaiah Oropeza of Santa Maria, CA; his father, **Ulysses Oropeza**, is a member of Central California Coast Branch 52.

Gollmer plans to begin pursuit of a bachelor's degree in agribusiness management at Penn State University this fall. An active 4-H member since middle school and a four-year Future Farmers of America member, Gollmer served in a variety of FFA leadership positions and earned the prestigious Keystone Degree her senior year. She was a National Honor Society member beginning in her sophomore year and was a participant in the Pennsylvania Governor's School for the Agricultural Sciences last summer.

Both of Gollmer's parents are union members—her father, Jeffrey Gollmer, is a member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT). She said her family has benefited greatly from union assistance. “The unions have allowed my parents to have job safety and better working conditions,” she said. “Union support has helped my family tremendously over the years, and we are grateful for what they have accomplished.”

Oropeza plans to study mechanical engineering. He is particularly interested in automotive engineering and aspires to work for a large automotive company. Isaiah was captain of his high school football team his junior and senior years, was a three-year starter, and was on track to play in an all-star game before a concussion ended his football career. He was a National Honor Society member and a member of the Freshman Connect Crew, a program that establishes mentoring relationships between upperclassmen and freshmen.

Oropeza said his life has been positively affected by his father's NALC membership, noting how the union protected his father's job while he recovered from carpal tunnel surgery. “The union has allowed my father and several other family members to have reassurance and confidence in their jobs,” he said. “Without the union, they would have to deal with worries including pay cuts, being fired without proper reason, and work-related injuries without compensation.”

These scholarships were among the \$150,000 in college and technical school assistance Union Plus awarded this year to 104 students representing 32 unions. The Union Plus Scholarship Program, now in its 25th year, awards scholarships based on outstanding academic achievement, personal character, financial need and commitment to the values of organized labor. The program is offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation.

Since starting the program in 1991, Union Plus has awarded more than \$4 million in educational funding to more than 2,700 union members, spouses and dependent children. Union Plus Scholarship awards are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school, or recognized technical or trade school. The selection process is highly competitive, and this year more than 5,700 applications were received from students of parents in 55 unions from all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and three U.S. territories. Visit unionplus.org/scholarship for applications and benefit eligibility.

In addition to the scholarship program, Union Plus provides a wide range of money-saving programs and services for union members and families. **PR**



Above: Isaiah Oropeza with his family
Below: Samantha Gollmer

