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In Our Own Words: CUPW Special Needs Project Celebrates 20 Years!

Unions can do so much more than negotiate wages and benefits for workers. Thanks to unions, workers enjoy weekends, vacation leave and minimum wage; and of course, one of the historical breakthroughs that CUPW fought for was maternity leave. Unions have defended and implemented initiatives that support families, and improve our quality of life while setting a benchmark for social justice. The Special Needs and Moving On projects are among the most outstanding examples of the way unions improve quality of life for their broader communities.

CUPW has created a special anniversary video to celebrate what the Special Needs Project (SNP) has accomplished. In this moving 4-minute video, “In Our Own Words”, (<https://youtu.be/5H9lzpFeaHc>; ASL version: <https://youtu.be/Zl295LjCfWU>) postal workers share what this project has meant to them and their families.

The Special Needs Project (SNP) is an initiative of the CUPW Child Care Fund, and is a one-of-a-kind program. It was launched in 1996 after a union-sponsored study found that parents of children with disabilities face more barriers to workforce participation than others. The project provides information, resources and financial support to families with children who have special needs, to help reduce the emotional, physical and financial stresses and improve their quality of life.

Over these past twenty years, thousands of postal workers and their families have benefited from the financial support and resources they receive through this program. Just as importantly, they benefit from the moral support they get from their Special Needs Advisor and SNP staff. In the words of one postal worker, “She opens a lot of doors in terms of my son’s special need...and the information she provides makes a huge difference”.

Unions do so much more than negotiate wages. CUPW works hard to improve the daily lives of our members and the communities in which we live and work. Today, we celebrate 20 years of doing just that for families with children who have special needs.

In Solidarity,

Dave Bleakney

2nd National Vice-President

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