

Benefits Officer Report

Dear Members,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for selecting me to serve as your Benefits and Advocacy Officer at the special election that was held in January 2021. As we know, 2020 was a challenging year and 2021 continues to present additional challenges. The Union continues to hold strong and fight for the values and rights of our members. While I have only been in office for a short time, I, along with other members of the Exec have made a number of changes as I work to keep the promises that I made to members at the GMM in January.

First and foremost, as promised I have taken it upon myself to work on improving awareness of the benefits offered by the Union. With the help of our administrative staff and Exec board, I have started to include a weekly “Did You Know” section highlighting the benefits offered by the Union. During the first newsletter, an update was sent out informing Unit 1 members of Child Care Reimbursement. In the weeks following this newsletter, I received a number of emails indicating an increase in Child Care Reimbursement applications. Since that time, we have seen an uptick in other benefit inquiries including the Gender Affirmation Fund, and Professional Development Fund. The next project that I hope to work on includes streamlining the website as per the recommendation of a few of our members.

During the last Benefits Committee Meeting, the decision was made to increase Unit 1 Gender Affirmation fund maximum eligibility to \$2,000 with a lifetime maximum of \$4,000 in the hopes that members will continue to access the funds for their needs. Unit 2 also received an increase to the Health Care Spending Account entitlement. Effective February 22nd, The Health Care Spending Account for Unit 2 members’ entitlements under the Unit 2 HCSA was increased to 80% of \$500 for eligible expenses. This is an increase from 70% of \$500.

Finally, since coming into office, I have worked to streamline and reorganize Professional Development applications to ensure a quick and timely approval process and transparency between our members. I would like to further thank all the members for their continuous support while we process these applications. Reviewing applications in a fair and consistent manner is a long process. The Benefits committee meets on a monthly basis to review Unit 3 applications. Unit 2 applications are addressed at the end of each term. We try to process it as quickly as possible as long as the application is complete. We value you and we will continue making the process more efficient moving forward.

I hope to continue working with you for year 2021/2022

In Solidarity,
Kyle Morrison
Your Benefits Officer