

## The Importance of the Ontario Nurses' Association (ONA) for Nurses

My mom was in her final year of nursing when my eldest brother was born. She fought every day for a better life for not only herself but for her children. In my own life, I have seen how hard she works every day to ensure that none of my siblings or I has wanted for anything, even when she would have to go without. When I was growing up, we had very little money; but I am fortunate enough to have seen my mom fight for my siblings and I and provide us with better lives, getting us out of the situation we were in due to our monetary shortcomings.

While my mom fights tooth and nail for my siblings and me, she has limitations on how hard she can fight for herself because of her chosen profession. Nurses are considered to be an essential service, and because of this, they are not legally allowed to strike as other professions can.

ONA fights for the rights of many nurses in Ontario such as my mom as well as nursing students like myself. ONA is a union that represents over 68,000 registered nurses as well as 18,000 nursing students. ONA works as a voice for nurses and nursing students across Ontario, with the goal of ensuring better working conditions, better wages and better-quality health care. Knowing that I am entering into a profession that limits my abilities to fight for myself, I find comfort in the knowledge that I have the support of an organization that fights every day for my rights and my future career, the same way they have for many nurses since 1973. When patients need an advocate, they can rely on nurses. When nurses need an advocate, we rely on the ONA.