

(Speech by Sang-Hun Mun on accepting the Eddie Cauchi Award, Nov 3, 2017)

Good evening everyone.

I'm very pleased to be here today. This is a tremendous honour to receive this award.

Twelve years ago when I was lying in the hospital room after falling from the roof, I wasn't sure if I could walk again. So much in my life was uncertain. Who knew that would be the beginning of this incredible journey. This is going to be a night I will remember for the rest of my life.

I will accept this award on behalf of our IWA4J group members. Without them I would not be here. My deep heart-felt thanks to Jessica Ponting and Belia Berrocal for always being there and helping us remember how powerful we can be when we work together. I also want to thank all fellow injured workers across the province, union members, community legal clinics especially, IAVGO and IWC for the coordinated and sustained effort. Special thanks to the Toronto and York Region Labour Council of for its ongoing support for injured workers. And how can I forget my wonderful wife, Bo-Young, who walked this long and difficult journey with me. Thank you all for your love, care and commitment.

Let me start by saying a bit about our IWA4J group which started in Toronto around 2010. We are a diverse group that believes in inclusion, collaboration and collective leadership. Since our beginnings, we've been fighting together for our rights and respect from WSIB. Our big fight right now is on health care. Can I ask IWA4J group members here tonight to stand up for a second? *[all members named]* Please give them a big hand. ... Thank you.

Injured Workers Action for Justice has been organizing many actions and public awareness campaigns, and meetings with MOL, WSIB, Ontario Ombudsman, and MPPs to demand that the WSIB listen to our doctors and provide real health care to injured workers.

Healthcare is a fundamental basic need for all injured workers, but WSIB keeps cutting injured workers healthcare benefit and forcing us back to work very quickly, often against our doctors' advice. They are covering up the crisis in health care by claiming that their cuts are helping us. They are telling us that returning to work is the same as getting health care. They systematically ignore our experiences and what our doctors say we need. That's why so many injured workers are falling into poverty, losing their family and friends, and having so much stress and pains.

Instead of helping us get the health care and support we need, the WSIB keeps helping employers by reducing their premiums. This is our workers compensation system in Ontario right now. This is what all workers in Ontario will face when they get hurt at work if we don't fight together.

This is not just an injured workers fight. Two-hundred-thousand workers are injured at work every year. It could be anyone. In order to win this fight for all workers, we have to stand together because WSIB will not change until we make our voice strong enough and demand justice in our society.

I believe this award is not just for me, but for all injured workers who have been fighting for our right for long time. We will fight together until WSIB accepts our demands and fixes the injustice.

I would like to ask everyone in this room, say with me "**We fight together.**" ("*We fight together*"). Please give all injured workers and workers in this room a big hand.

Thank you.