

## Opening Day of Interest Arbitration!

*APWU discusses how postal workers are mission-dedicated, skilled, public servants deserving of fair pay and benefits, job security, and a safe workplace, free of harassment.*

On Wednesday, September 4, the APWU began presenting its case for a strong contract on the opening day of Interest Arbitration hearings in Washington, D.C. The hearing was the first of many in the process that will determine the next Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the APWU and the USPS.

After introductions by Arbitrator Goldberg – the Arbitration Panel’s neutral arbitrator – and APWU Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman introduced the union officers present, the hearing began with the Postal Service’s opening statement, delivered by USPS attorney Kevin B. Rachel. The APWU’s opening statement, delivered by APWU general counsel Mindy Holmes, followed. Both attorneys outlined the cases and the general proposals from each side.

Contrary to the regressive and draconian management proposals calling for reducing wages and benefits, eliminating COLA, increasing non-career employees, and undermining job security by diminishing the no-layoff protections, APWU proposals include:

- An on-average 3 percent annual wage increase,
- Increasing USPS contribution to health insurance premiums,
- Retaining COLAs,
- Restoring top pay step increases lost in 2010,
- Eliminating postmasters doing bargaining unit work in level 18 offices,
- Guaranteed hours and advanced scheduling for PTFs,
- Reducing PSE percentages and creating more career jobs.



*President Mark Dimondstein testifies to the Arbitration Panel*

Following management’s rebuttals and a break in proceedings, APWU President Mark Dimondstein made his presentation as a witness. In his statement, President Dimondstein discussed how postal workers are passionate about their mission to provide a vital service to the general public as outlined in the 1970 Postal Reorganization Act: ‘To provide postal services to bind the Nation together,’ to ‘provide prompt, reliable, and efficient services to patrons in all areas,’ and to ‘render postal services to all communities.’

In order to properly fulfill this mission, President Dimondstein said, APWU members need good-paying jobs and working conditions. These include:

- An end to the unfair and divisive three-tier structure that pays workers significantly different amounts for performing the same work.
- Further reductions in the non-career workforce and an increase in the career workforce where workers make decent, family-sustaining wages and receive a solid set of benefits.
- A relief of the ever-growing problem of hostile working environments and a management structure that refuses to hold management accountable.

“The key to the past and the future success of the Postal Service is the hard work and dedication of hundreds of thousands of postal workers,” President Dimondstein concluded. “From those who sell postage and accept packages; to



*(Facing left to right) Arbitrator Goldberg, APWU Arbitrator Phillip Tabbita, APWU General Counsel Mindy Holmes, APWU attorney Jason Veny, Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman*

those who sort medicines, letters, and on-line orders; to those who transport the mail and repair the vehicles; to those who maintain the equipment and facilities; to those who deliver the mail.”

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witnesses will continue to make the APWU’s case that working conditions and salary must be improved in order to continue serving the essential mission of the Postal Service.

In addition to APWU officers and experts, rank and file members from the crafts will appear as witnesses in further hearings. These

The next interest arbitration hearings are scheduled for September 24-26, 2019 and throughout October (will post more information as it becomes available).

## Thank you for sending in your photos!



Omaha Area Local



Saint Louis Gateway District Area Local



Western Michigan Area Local



Missouri Postal Workers Union



Minneapolis Area Local



Manchester Area Local (NH)



Channel Island Area Local (CA)



Dallas Area Local



Twin Cities PDC Local

### Keep sending in your photos!

The arbitration process will continue this fall. Remember to wear your stickers (and wristbands) for the entire month of September to show management we are united! Send pictures of you and your coworkers wearing them to [nccc@apwu.org](mailto:nccc@apwu.org) and post online to Facebook, Instagram and Twitter with #APWUnited.

\* Members in official USPS uniform should wear provided wristbands instead of stickers. Contact your local for wristbands.