

THE AMERICAN

APWU

Postal Worker

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Thousands of postal workers and supporters sent a message on Oct. 8 that the ‘U.S. Mail is Not For Sale.’

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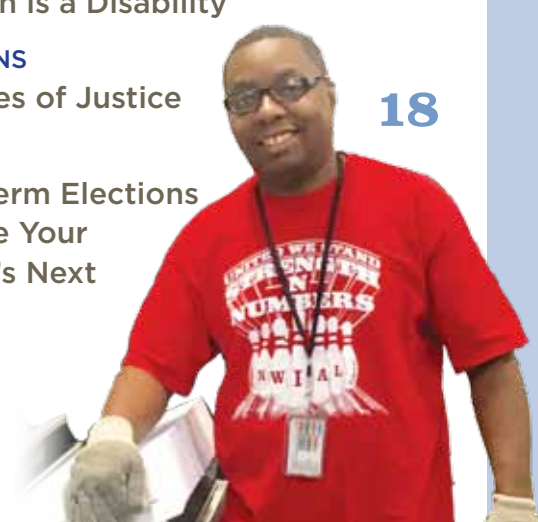
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PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

Eagle or Vulture?

“We won’t let the postal eagle be replaced by the vulture.” What a great response by Legislative Grassroots Coordinator Janice Kelble to the White House of Office Management and Budget (OMB) proposal to sell-off the Postal Service to corporations for private profit. The eagle symbolizes that the public Postal Service belongs to, and serves, all the people. The vulture represents those who want to pick the public good apart and devour it for private Wall Street greed.

Terrific rallies were held on Oct. 8 in over 150 cities. APWU members joined with the other postal unions and allies, mobilizing to proclaim “The U.S. Mail is Not For Sale.” The bipartisan majority support for House Resolution 993 (“sense of the House”) opposing postal privatization is also a very positive step in the right direction.

A salute to all of you who engaged in these and other efforts. We must be “all hands on deck” in this serious and crucial fight for the public Postal Service, our jobs and our union.

The people want a PUBLIC Postal Service

Preparing for a long-run struggle, the APWU is increasing our capacity for research, media relations, advertising, digital communications, legislative efforts and our public outreach as we confront the privatizer vultures on the battlefield. We plan to win!

In this light, the APWU recently commissioned Hart Research to conduct a country-wide poll to best understand the views of the people.

The poll included over 1,000 respondents from every region, a cross-section of urban, rural and suburban dwellers, varying ages, nationalities, political views and affiliations. Results include:

- A stunning 96% rated mail service as important to them.
- 88% rated the job performed by the Postal Service as either excellent or good.
- 80% of respondents had positive views of the U.S. Postal Service.

- 78% have a positive view of postal workers. Only 5% had a negative view.
- A large majority of respondents believe only minor changes, not a major overhaul, are needed to fix any problems.
- By an over two-to-one margin (59% to 24%), respondents were against selling the Postal Service to private corporations.
- 70% believe that the White House’s postal proposals would raise the cost of letters and packages.
- 78% of respondents wanted to hear from postal workers regarding postal issues – the highest rated group! 68% said they wanted to hear the union’s views.

There you have it! Not only is the public extremely supportive of the public Postal Service but your friends, neighbors, community, faith-based, veteran and civil rights groups are waiting to hear from you – the ones they trust the most!

We have a great opportunity to speak up for the truth: If the Postal Service is privatized and sold-off to private corporations, the result will be higher costs and less service.

Universal service that obligates the USPS to deliver to every address in the country (157 million!) will disappear. Veterans and seniors who rely most on medicines sent through the mail will suffer. The exchange of ideas and information from magazines and periodicals will be diminished. Ecommerce will not work for everyone if packages are delivered only where profit can be extracted. Good union jobs, which sustain stronger communities and nourish families, will be destroyed. A few will gain at the expense of the many.

As we did with the successful Stop Staples fight, let the message resound that “The U.S. Mail Is Not for Sale.” The Postal Service belongs to all the people – and it should be protected, expanded and remain vibrant for generations to come.

The people are with us, and the APWU is with the people! Now that’s a winning combination to ensure the vulture never replaces the eagle! ■

APWU and USPS Agree to an Additional 30 Days of Negotiations

President Mark Dimondstein announced on Oct. 20, 2018 that the union and the United States Postal Service again agreed to extend negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (union contract) for an additional 30 days, until November 20, 2018.

The APWU/USPS Contract originally expired Sept. 20, 2018, and at that time, the parties agreed to an initial 30 day extension on negotiations until October 20, 2018. The contract covers the wages, hours, and working conditions of 193,000 postal workers.

Negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement between APWU and postal management have been ongoing since June 26, 2018. After four months of frequent negotiations, the parties believe that additional time to discuss and explore the issues is appropriate and useful before declaring an impasse.

"We are still working towards our goal of reaching a negotiated settlement that can be voted on by the members. Multiple meetings have already been scheduled with the Postal Service in the upcoming weeks," declared President and lead negotiator Dimondstein. "Our goals remain consistent and we are still demanding fair wage increases, cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), job security, bridging the gaps of the divisive three-tier wage structure, addressing concerns of hostile work environments, seeking better career and full-time opportunities for both PSEs and PTFs, and expanded postal services."

"The battle continues for a decent union contract you deserve," shared chief spokesperson and Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman. "Your negotiating team thanks you – the members – for all that you have done to support the contract campaign. Keep it going and show management that we remain united in demanding a good union contract."

All the rights, benefits and provisions of our existing union contract remain in place, and are fully enforceable during the new 30-day extension of negotiations. ■



Springfield Mass Area Local



Dallas Area Local

"OUR GOALS REMAIN CONSISTENT AND WE ARE STILL DEMANDING FAIR WAGE INCREASES, COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS (COLAS), JOB SECURITY, BRIDGING THE GAPS OF THE DIVISIVE THREE-TIER WAGE STRUCTURE, ADDRESSING CONCERNS OF HOSTILE WORK ENVIRONMENTS, SEEKING BETTER CAREER AND FULL-TIME OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOTH PSEs AND PTFs, AND EXPANDED POSTAL SERVICES."

– PRESIDENT
MARK DIMONDSTEIN



Big Island Area Local

Thousands Proclaim the

Seattle, WA



On Oct. 8, thousands of postal workers and supporters participated in over a hundred rallies across the country to proclaim that the *U.S. Mail Is Not For Sale!* Together, members of the four postal unions joined with community supporters to protest the proposed sale of the U.S. Postal Service to private corporations (privatization).

"The Postal Service belongs to the people," President Mark Dimondstein said in Washington, D.C. "The last thing that we want and the people of this country want is Wall Street vultures feeding off the public good, for the benefit of a tiny minority, at the cost of the people of the country."

Dozens of news outlets reported on their local events, with 285 print articles across the country published and 88 TV/radio stations covering the protests. Social media was abuzz as the hashtags #USMailNotForSale and #NotForSale tagged countless posted pictures and videos.

"Corporate greed is what drives those who threaten to take away our public Postal Service for personal profit," said Legislative and Political Director Judy

UNITE HERE members came out to support postal workers in Chicago, IL.

Manchester, NH



United Mine Workers of America members came to support postal workers in Carbondale, IL.



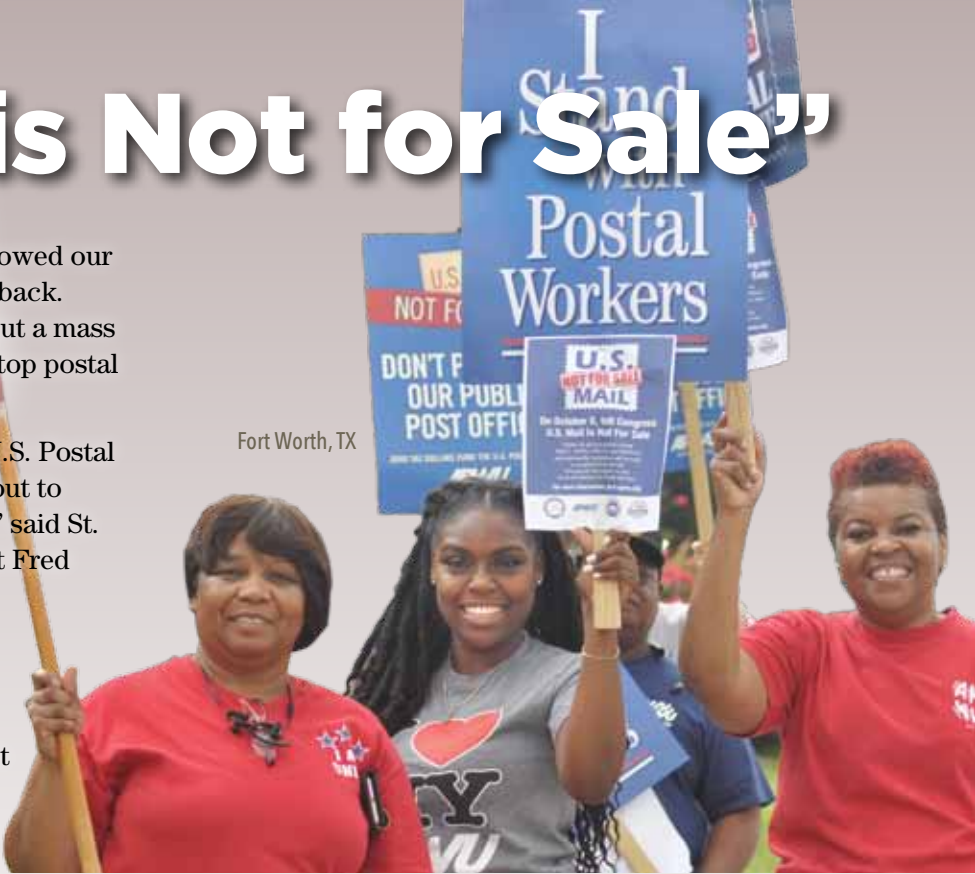
“U.S. Mail is Not for Sale”

Beard. “In the streets on October 8th, we showed our POWER and that we will stand up and fight back. October 8th was not a just a day of action, but a mass movement of the people of this country to stop postal privatization.”

“The White House is proposing to sell the U.S. Postal Service to private corporations and we are out to inform the public that this is a terrible idea,” said St. Louis Gateway District Area Local President Fred Wolfmeyer.

“Congress should take all appropriate measure to ensure the United States Postal Service remains an independent establishment of the Federal government and is not subject to privatization,” said Chattanooga Area Local (TN) President Judy Stocker at an event in the city. ▶

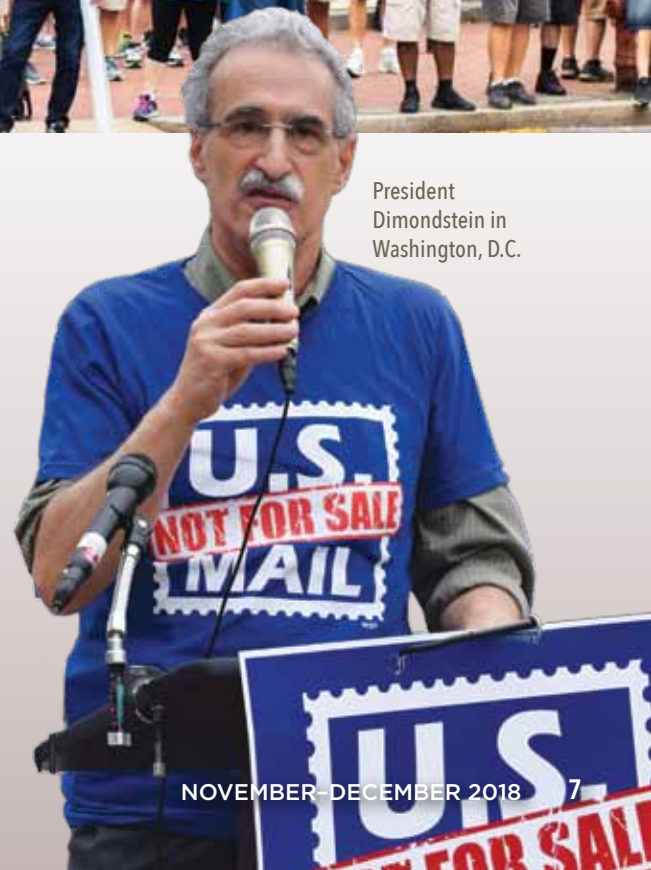
Fort Worth, TX



Philadelphia, PA



Los Angeles, CA



President
Dimondstein in
Washington, D.C.

Message Sent on

"The Postal Service is under attack by our current Administration in the government," said Western Colorado Area Local member Matthew Davis. "[It] has been in the public's hands – your hands, the people's hands, my hands – and we don't want to lose that!"

"Rural Mississippi is spread out... here you might have to drive a mile, a mile and a half, between mailboxes," said George Collins, President of the Mississippi Coast Area Local. "If we are having to [deliver mail] in the private sector, [the company is] going to charge more for that. The Postal Service is now mandated by Congress that everybody pays the same rate."

"If a private company took over, then that private company would make decisions on where [mail] would go," Memphis Tennessee Area Local President Melvin Richardson said.

"We are going to stand united... saying we don't need to privatize our post office!" said Philadelphia PA Area Local Union President Nick Casselli.



Los Angeles, CA



The California Bay Area



Chicago, IL



San Jose, CA



Madison, WI

October 8, 2018

Many members of Congress participated in the rallies to support the people's Post Office and their postal worker constituents. Union solidarity was also on display across the country, with members from other unions and worker organizations standing in the streets with their brothers and sisters.

"One thing that binds us together is when people mess with us we know how to pull ourselves together and fight for what we believe," Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth 'Liz' Powell said in Washington, D.C. "There will be NO privatization of the United States Postal Service!"

"Sisters and Brothers, keep up that good fight! Listen to what the union is telling you. Be there as you always are when we need you," Secretary-Treasurer Powell continued. "As long as we stand together, fight together, nobody can stop us from doing anything!" ■



Portland, OR



Gadsden, AL

SIGN THE PLEDGE TODAY!

Be a part of the fight! Pledge to Defend the Public Postal Service and we'll keep you posted on ways you can help stop the privatizers from selling the USPS to the highest bidder. Go to apwu.org to fill out the pledge online or ask your local president for a card you can mail in.



Gary, IN



APWU Members Spreading the Message

Julie Bates, a postal worker from Des Moines, penned an op-ed (opinion editorial) promoting the Oct. 8 National Day of Action. Her story ran in at least 14 local newspapers around the country and on several major online news sites.

Jim Krivonak, from the Virginia Postal Workers Union, published a letter to the editor in the *Richmond Times-*

Dispatch, dispelling myths about USPS published in that paper.

The public wants to hear from you! The national union is prepared to help you write and publish your own letters-to-the-editor and op-eds. Reach out at 202-842-8543 or sdematteo@apwu.org for more information.

Kernersville News

It's Your Post Office ... Keep It



Other Words

By Julie Bates

This summer, the White House proposed selling off the United States Postal Service to private corporations.

As a 22-year postal worker, I recently joined my coworkers, our families, and neighbors across the country to rally in support of our public Postal Service. Our message to those who want to sell off our national treasure to the highest bidder: U.S. mail is not for sale.

Many may think that in the internet age, the Postal Service has outlived its usefulness, and that the decline of letter mail is the cause of the Postal Service's financial troubles. But the Postal Service actually turns a profit on its deliveries.

The truth is that the USPS's problems were largely created by Congress.

A bipartisan 2006 law, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, law mandated that the USPS pre-fund future retiree health benefits 75 years into the future. That means we have to fund retirement benefits for postal employees who haven't even been born yet.

It's a crushing burden that no other agency or company — public or private — is required to meet, or could even survive.

The mandate drained \$5.5 billion a year out of Postal Service funds and accounts for more than 90 percent of its losses. In fact, if it weren't for this manufactured pre-funding crisis, the USPS would have reported profits in four of the last five years — all without receiving a dime of taxpayer money.

While it's true that the way people use the mail is changing, the Postal Service is still a vital part of the country's infrastructure.

Package volumes have exploded with the e-commerce boom. Companies as large as Amazon and as small as a one-room Etsy vendor rely on the Postal Service. USPS delivers 30 percent of FedEx Ground packages and 40 percent of all of Amazon's many shipments. Vivaly, the USPS is at the heart of a \$1.7 trillion mailing industry that employs more than 7.5 million people.

The people of this country love the Postal Service. A recent Pew Survey showed 88 percent of Americans view the USPS favorably.

One reason for this success is our commitment to serve 157 million homes and businesses six — and sometimes seven — days per week at affordable, uniform prices. Our public Postal Service reaches everyone, everywhere,

no matter one's health, wealth, age, or race. We should never lose sight that it's veterans, seniors, and people in rural areas who rely most on the Postal Service for essential goods and life-saving medications.

What could the public expect if the Postal Service were sold to off to private interests? Higher prices, slower delivery, and an end to universal, uniform, and affordable service to every corner of the country.

And who would pay the price? All of us.

Postal services that have been privatized abroad provide a cautionary tale: In the UK, postage is up nearly 80 percent since 2007. The privatized Portuguese post has closed nearly a third of their post offices.

Our postal system is older than the country itself. It was a vital component of our country's public good then. It still is today. And along the way, one fundamental fact has always been true: Our postal system has never belonged to any president, any political party, or any company. It's belonged to the people of this country.

Postal workers are rallying to urge lawmakers to stop the selling off of the public postal service for private profit — and to remind everyone the Postal Service is yours. Keep it.

Julie Bates is a 22-year postal worker at the Des Moines, Iowa post office.

Richmond Times-Dispatch

The USPS provides great service at a good price

Editor, Times-Dispatch:

Your editorial "Trump can't even fix the U.S. mail" is full of misinformation. As a 45-year postal worker, I feel compelled to respond.

The Postal Service, with its constitutional roots, is mandated to operate "as a basic and fundamental service provided to the people by the Government of the United States." Since 1971, USPS is self-financing and receives no taxpayer support.

Surveys by Pew Research and the American Consumer Satisfaction Index show that Americans believe USPS is a highly trusted and reliable agency.

We at USPS provide a universal service to all for a universal price. Your editorial claims that this universal mandate is nothing more than a costly "inefficiency." USPS's losses aren't due to technology or our promise of universal service. They're because a 2006 law (Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, or PAEA) required pre-funding future retiree health benefits 75 years into the future, at a cost of \$6 billion annually. Absent that, USPS turned a profit in three of the past four years.

Selling off the U.S. mail to corporations would mean a reduction of delivery days and a further erosion in service standards. Profiteers would send and deliver your mail at increased rates and decreased reliability, especially for elderly and rural customers.

Comparisons to foreign countries are misguided. None cited is larger than Texas, and they have only a fraction of our population. Additionally, stamps in those countries range from 66 cents to \$1.05, compared to our 50-cent postage.

Selling off the Postal Service isn't the answer. We at Virginia Postal Workers Union support repealing the draconian prefunding mandate, allowing greater pricing flexibility, and offering additional services like postal banking. Congress agrees; nearly 200 bipartisan legislators have cosponsored H.R. 993, "to ensure the USPS remains an independent establishment of the federal government and not be subject to privatization."

*James Krivonak.
Alexandria.*

Seasons Greetings

The officers and staff of the American Postal Workers Union wish you and yours a joyous and healthy holiday season, and a Happy New Year.





Pledge Your Time in 2019!

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

By 2019, we at APWU Headquarters will have possibly completed negotiations, and one of three decisions will have been made: 1) you will have the right to vote on a voluntary contract, 2) we have no contract and will be going to arbitration, or 3) we have agreed to an extension of the 2015 contract with possible additions.

Going forward there are more battles ahead: the fight against privatizing the Postal Service, against consolidations and closures of plants and post offices, and the fight to expand services like postal banking and community services that help take care of our neighbors across this country.

Our battles *need mobilized members* from all our locals to participate in building alliances with congressional members and local politicians, as well as community organizations and our sister unions.

We must mobilize. In the United States, we have approximately 600,000 postal workers of all nationalities. We, the APWU and our sister postal unions, have negotiated and provided good jobs, benefits, pensions, services to our community to be passed on to our children. It is always a battle to keep what we have.

Sitting Bull, the Hunkpapa Lakota Leader who defended the rights of his people, has been quoted as saying “Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children,” and “as individual fingers we can easily be broken, but all together we can make a mighty fist!” Today Native American tribes in South Dakota, Arizona, North Carolina, California, and many other places across this country, are still fighting to save the sacred land and water from mass destruction at the hands of big corporations and politicians. They are killing people, animals, wildlife, and sacred grounds. We too are fighting the same enemies.

The corporate and political greedy scavengers are going after the mighty dollar, and the hell with what it costs to our people and our country.

There is only one prayer I have for APWU members this holiday season, and that is that many more members rise up with us.

1. Make sure your local and the national has your email and cell phone number to stay connected and active.
2. Go to your union meetings and union activities.
3. If you are a retiree, help start or become a member of a retiree chapter in your local or state, and/or offer to mentor a young postal worker.
4. Volunteer to help the union – there are many kinds of activities to choose from, find something you like, try something new.
5. Be the eyes and ears for your union representatives on the workroom floor, be a witness for your coworkers who are being harassed, or stand up for yourself and get the union representative involved when harassed so that we can work together to make our workplace healthy and safe.
6. Help to mobilize other members in your work area and share issues of concern. Ask your local union to provide educational materials on workers’ rights. Help get members to stand together in your work section.
7. Help communicate our issues with other community organizations who can be an ally in our fight to stop privatization and help us expand postal services for the good of the community.
8. Get involved in the political process, build a relationship with new politicians, help get candidates in office that will fight privatization, support expansion, and support vote by mail.

There you have it, eight small actions to make a big difference in the struggle to keep the Postal Service public. Get involved with your local and state organizations, and give of your time, make your life count in our movement. We have much work to do in 2019. ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

RICHMOND VIRGINIA AREA LOCAL REGISTERS VOTERS



Richmond Virginia Area Local members 'geared up'

Richmond Virginia Area Local members are "Fired Up and Ready to Go!" At the local's picnic on Sept. 9, they held a voter registration drive. Rep. Donald McEachin (D-VA-4) and Virginia State Attorney General Mark Herring (D) attended the picnic and expressed the importance of voting in the next election.

SUPPORTING MICHIGAN NURSES

Central Region APWU Retiree National Convention Delegate Paul Browning (right) with Traverse City MI Area Local Vice President Ron Krumrie (left) supporting Munson Hospital nurses. The nurses were rallying for a fair contract that will attract and retain RNs and put patients first (munsonnurses.org). They are trying to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement after voting last year to join a union and be represented by the Michigan Nurses Association.



APWU MEMBERS MEET WITH CANDIDATE FOR CONGRESS

On Sunday, Oct. 7, the day before the National Day of Action, Eastern Region APWU members met with Andy Kim, Democratic Party candidate for the New Jersey-3rd Congressional District, and presented him with a COPA contribution.

They spoke with Kim on the state of the United States Postal Service and urged that he back legislation that supports the people's public Postal Service.

Kim pledged that once he wins the congressional seat, the members of the American Postal Workers Union will undoubtedly have his full support and backing.



(L-R) Marge McGinley, Saint Vincent De Paul Society; Debbie Kloza, Maintenance Craft Director, New Jersey Shore Area Local (NJSAL); Ron Dever, Trustee, Philly BMC Local; Kelly Salerno, President, NJSAL; Vince Tarducci, NBA; Lynn Gallagher, APWU Administrative Assistant; Andy Kim, Candidate; Mike Gallagher, Eastern Region Coordinator; Cindy Heyward, Legislative Director, Philadelphia Area Local; Nick Casselli, President, Philadelphia Area Local; Michelle Maimone, Trustee, South Jersey Area Local (SJAL); Jason Treier, NBA; Chuck Camp, President, Philly BMC Local and Rob Armentani, President, SJAL.



SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

Maintaining a Financially Sound Local

One of the overwhelming responsibilities of all officers, shop stewards and representatives of the union is to ensure it holds its money and property solely for the benefit of the union and its members. When union officials express an interest in leadership positions, they inherit the responsibilities entrusted to them, which includes maintaining a financially sound local.

First and foremost, officers pledge to uphold the Constitution and Bylaws of the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO and of the state and local affiliate to which they belong. The national *Constitution and Bylaws* provides affiliates with language when your state and local constitution does not. State and local constitutions cannot contain any language that is in conflict with the national *Constitution and Bylaws*. Adhering to these provisions is one aspect of what union officials take on when they fulfill leadership positions.

Secondly, when members express an interest in leadership positions they often do so without any knowledge of the rules and regulations labor union affiliates must abide by. Union officials should have a working knowledge of the Labor Management Reporting Disclosure Act (LMRDA), the national APWU constitution and the local union's constitution. Collectively, these provisions will assist in ensuring all officers manage, invest and expend union funds accordingly.

The Secretary-Treasurer's department is committed to providing tools and resources for officers in leadership positions to fulfill their responsibilities and stay in compliance with applicable regulations and laws. In addition to providing Secretary-Treasurer conferences, various webinars specific to what the needs of the local are can be provided upon request. I strongly advise beginning with Fiduciary Responsibilities of Union Officers or New Officers Training & Responsibilities. These two trainings provide officers in leadership positions a foundation to build upon, with additional training opportunities. Training in budgeting, and Department of Labor (DOL) & Internal Revenue Service (IRS) requirements and audits, is also the key to maintaining a financially sound and efficient local.

Whether you are a new officer or have been in a leadership position for some time, there is always something to gain from continuing to hone fiduciary responsibilities to better serve as leaders for your local membership.

Lastly, educating your membership works hand in hand with knowledgeable local leaders. Oftentimes your membership may not understand why it is not in the best financial interest of the local to take on or sustain specific endeavors – whether or not full-time officers can be sustained, purchasing or renting a union hall, or potentially whether or not a dues increase or decrease is appropriate. These are examples of decisions officers in leadership positions should discuss with their membership to determine what is in the best interest of the local. They should ask if the outcome of these decisions will maintain and keep the local financially sound.

Make sure you mark your calendar for any of the 2019 national training seminars the Secretary-Treasurer's department will be scheduling. In addition to the scheduled training opportunities, local unions can also schedule training webinars. Please contact Annette August-Taylor, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer, at 202-842-4215 or via email to aaugust@apwu.org. ■

APWU SCHOLARSHIPS

The 2019 scholarship deadline for the E.C. Hallbeck Memorial Scholarship, Vocational Scholarship, and Best Essay Award is **March 31, 2019**. Every year the union selects deserving students to receive scholarships for the college or vocational institution of their choosing.

The APWU Scholarship Program is one of the great benefits of being a member of the union. The E.C. Hallbeck Memorial Scholarship awards 10 recipients \$2,000 annually for four years to use toward an undergraduate program. Five Vocational Scholarship winners receive up to \$3,000 to be used for three years of study in a specific trade, technical, industrial, or vocational school. One "Best Essay" winner is selected from the applicant pool to receive a one-time \$2,000 award for his or her four-year college tuition.

Association of Flight Attendants-CWA Produces Video Against Postal Privatization!



Birmingham Area Local member Courtney Agee speaking in the video produced by the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA.



Sara Nelson, President of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA speaking at APWU's 24th Biennial National Convention.

In a strong show of solidarity, the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA produced a video to educate flight attendants and other workers about the importance of public services and the role of solidarity in winning our fights.

"The U.S. Postal Service mail and packages fly on our planes. The routes we fly to communities across the country depend on a strong United States Postal Service. We're standing with our sisters and brothers from [the four postal unions] to stop privatization!"

The video features APWU convention delegates speaking about the importance of a public Postal Service and the need to stand in solidarity. Courtney Agee from Birmingham, Alabama is ready for the fight against privatization: "We can prevent this. We can. We can band together. We cannot be scared. We can get in

the face of Congress and say, 'Hey, you can't take this from the public like you want to.' I can't even imagine America without the Postal Service."

"Look to your left, look to your right, look behind you, and tell everyone around you, 'I've got your back!,'" proclaimed Sara Nelson, President of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA at the August APWU convention in Pittsburgh.

Nelson's call for solidarity inspired APWU member Stephanie McGee from Kansas City. "To see that you have other unions that support you and that have your back 100 percent," said McGee, "it's a wonderful thing." ■



Scan to watch the video.

Correction for Combined Federal Campaign Forms

The Combined Federal Campaign pledge forms provided to the APWU, appearing on page 35 in the Sept/Oct 2018 edition of *The American Postal Worker* magazine, will not be processed by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) because of a typo in the authorization portion of the forms. OPM subsequently revised both forms after we went to press. In order to give through the Combined Federal Campaign, please go to <https://cfcgiving.opm.gov/welcome>.

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the largest and most successful annual, workplace charity campaign in the world. During the CFC, postal, federal and military employees have the opportunity to make tax-deductible donations to one or several of their favorite charities through payroll donation.



Attacks on Federal Workers

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR VANCE ZIMMERMAN

Let me take a moment and wish each of you a happy and safe holiday season. No matter how you celebrate the holidays, I hope you all have an enjoyable time with your families and friends.

Recently our sisters and brothers who work for other federal agencies had their collective bargaining rights attacked. In a series of Executive Orders, President Trump forced agencies to re-write collective bargaining agreements under new guidelines.

In the new collective bargaining agreements, workers would not be allowed to perform on-the-clock representation. Union stewards and officers would be limited to small amounts of official time. Union stewards and officers would be required to be off-the-clock for all grievances, negotiations and meetings.

The orders called for the elimination of the right to file a grievance on discipline, like removals. Federal unions can no longer bargain over work rules, staffing, or schedules. Unions with dedicated union space inside agency buildings were issued eviction notices to force them to move out of the agency buildings. Finally, in one of his most insulting actions against federal workers, President Trump issued a call to freeze federal worker pay – all while he continues to brag about how much more money Americans are making today because of his policies.

Multiple unions sued and some of the orders were put on hold by the court. Even though the unions may have been victorious today, the White House has appealed the court decision and it is clear that war will be waged against the federal unions – and the postal unions.

The Executive Orders did not apply to the Postal Service because we have our bargaining rights under the Postal Reform Act. However, there are other ways the Presidential Administration is attacking our union. Calls for privatizing the Post Office are the most basic attack on us. Breaking up and selling off the Post Office to the highest corporate bidder would eliminate your contract because the collective bargaining agreement we have is with the Postal Service – not a new

corporation. There would be no guarantee you get to keep your job at the new “Corporate Postal Service” and if you did, you wouldn’t have your current wage, retirement, annual leave, or many of the other benefits you enjoy today.

Attacks on federal workers and calls for post office privatization don’t just hurt the workers. When the APWU and the other federal unions negotiate contracts, we negotiate things that help the American people. When we negotiate good schedules or win the fight for proper staffing, we are ensuring our customers are cared for. When we negotiate good wages and benefits, it helps our customers because the workers feel better about what they do and feel justly compensated. The fight against privatization and the fight to protect federal unions is really the fight for the American people.

IT IS CLEAR THAT WAR WILL BE WAGED
AGAINST THE FEDERAL UNIONS —
AND THE POSTAL UNIONS.

Lastly, please remember that you have the right to a safe work environment. You have the right to come to work and return to your families unharmed. Be mindful that any safety program the Postal Service has is voluntary. For example, the Safety Ambassador program is not a jointly agreed to program. Under Article 14 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, your union is the sole representative for the enforcement of safety rules and regulations and the Postal Service is required to cooperate with the APWU on safety. Your national safety officers have initiated a national dispute on this program. Our dispute is that the program was implemented unilaterally without negotiations with the union, that it is not implemented consistently, and hinders what local safety and health committees are tasked with. You are asked not to participate in this program and should be filing grievances as necessary. Should you have questions on the program, please contact your national safety and health officers. ■

The explosive devices being sent through the mail as this issue goes to press – subject of major news stories and causing deep concern for postal workers – must be viewed as domestic acts of terrorism. The APWU condemns such criminal acts. These devices were designed to kill and maim. Each device was not only a serious threat to the addressees, but potentially to every postal employee.

These events should serve as a reminder that the work postal employees perform can be very dangerous. Postal employees must be vigilant while handling the mail, to – first and foremost – protect yourself and protect the public we serve. It was observant postal employees, who helped recognize some of the recent dangerous mailings, that led to the safe removal of the devices.

Dangerous substances and explosives can be designed to be mailed in many shapes and sizes – not just parcels. Letter-size mail and flats can also contain dangerous substances.

Always remember the protocols for identifying suspicious mail. Ask yourself:

- ☛ Was it dropped in a collection box with excess stamps on it or not enough postage?
- ☛ Is the return address missing or wrong?
- ☛ Is it over 13 ounces?
- ☛ Is it ridged?
- ☛ Is it odd-shaped or lopsided?
- ☛ Are there wires, stains, discolorations, strange odors or excessive tape visible?
- ☛ Does it appear to be leaking liquids or powders of any kind?
- ☛ Does the address seem odd?
- ☛ Are words misspelled?
- ☛ Is it addressed to just the title of a person and not to a person's name?
- ☛ Does it have restrictive markings such as “personal,” “confidential” or similar language?



If something does not seem right, or you suspect something, follow the suspicious mail protocol:

- ☛ Stop handling the item immediately.
- ☛ Do not touch or move the item.
- ☛ Do not taste or smell the item to try to determine what it is.
- ☛ Shut down any mail processing equipment in the area.
- ☛ Evacuate the immediate area.
- ☛ If you believe it is an immediate threat call 911.
- ☛ Let your supervisor know and activate the facility emergency plan.
- ☛ Contact the Postal Inspectors at 877-876-2455.

Explosives are not the only dangerous substances illegally shipped in the mail. Hazardous chemicals and biological agents can also be mailed illegally. Never assume a mail piece that appears suspicious is harmless. It is better to believe a suspicious mail piece is dangerous than to think it is “no big deal.” If you are in doubt, stop handling the item and notify your supervisor immediately.

You have the absolute right to a safe workplace. Unfortunately, when an individual puts a dangerous item or explosive device in the mail, they are not thinking about your wellbeing. By staying alert and observant you can go home to your families alive and uninjured.

Your safety and life are more important than any piece of mail ever will be. ■

Want a Good Contract?



New York Metro Area Postal Union



Green River Valley Local (WA)



Phoenix Metro Area Local



Madison Wisconsin Area Local

Charlotte Area Local (NC)

On October 8, thousands of APWU and other postal union members, our families and supporters in hundreds of communities rallied across the country proclaiming “The U.S. Mail is Not for Sale.” As we face a White House that is intent on selling off the Postal Service to private corporations, we are letting the public know that postal workers are fighting for the vital public service the people rely on.

The rallies and demonstrations across the country were inspiring and showed that postal workers are prepared to do what it takes to defend the public Postal Service. The National Contract Campaign Committee applauds all locals, contract action teams, and active and retired members who made the rallies a success. But what does the privatization fight have to do with our campaign for a good contract?

It might be easy to think that the contract campaign and the fight

to save the public Postal Service are separate issues. Clearly, they are two parts of the same fight to secure a better future for postal workers and our families, and to safeguard the vital service we provide every day to the people of this country.

For more than thirty years, anti-worker think tanks like the Heritage Foundation, backed by big corporate interests, have called for the sale of the Postal Service to private corporations (privatization). Their effort to dismantle our vital national treasure is to enrich their corporate backers at the expense of ordinary working people, who rely on efficient public services like the Postal Service.

So what’s standing in their way? Postal workers, from every craft, united in all four unions, are standing up and refusing to allow the privatizers to take profit for the few out of the public good.

Join the Fight to Stop the Sale of the Postal Service to Private Corporation

When the profiteers attack the public Postal Service, they're attacking our union. When they attack our union, they're attacking our contract. When they attack our contract, they're attacking our guarantees of a decent job and a decent life for ourselves and our families.

A step on this road to a 'Corporate Post Office' is the White House Task Force. When it issues its report it will likely attack postal workers' rights to collective bargaining and union representation. Because the privatizers know that as long as the APWU and other postal unions are strong, their dream of selling off the USPS faces serious headwinds. While we've faced down partial privatization in the past (such as the Staples retail privatization plan) we have never before been faced with a plan to sell-off the entire Postal Service to Wall Street corporate interests.

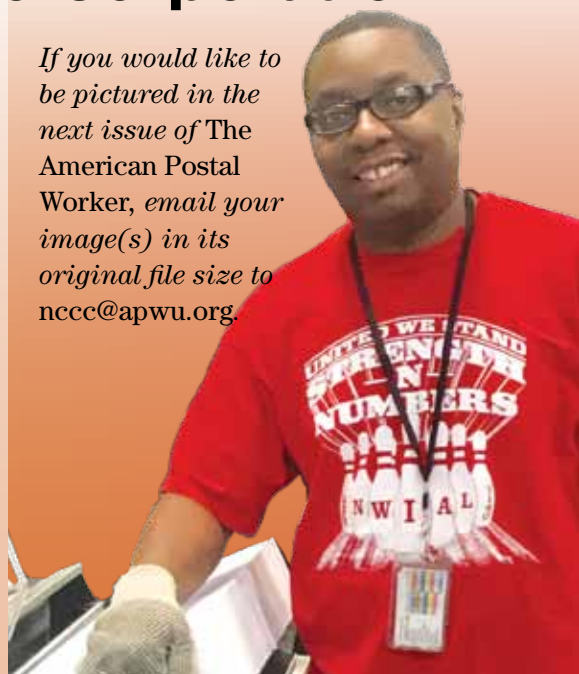
And never before have the privatizers been as close to a White House and a Congress intent on doing their bidding.

So if we want to beat back postal privatization, we need a strong union. If we want to win a decent contract, we need a strong union. Get involved and stay involved in the calling of our generation of postal workers – the fight to save our service, jobs and union. ■

APWU 'GEARING UP'

APWU Gear Days have taken off across the country. Every Thursday, hundreds of members – both local members and members-at-large – are 'gearing up' to show management our solidarity during the contract negotiations.

If you would like to be pictured in the next issue of The American Postal Worker, email your image(s) in its original file size to nccc@apwu.org.



Northwest Illinois Area Local



Puget Sound Area Local (WA)



Columbus Area Local (OH)



San Diego Area Local



Bakersfield Area Local (CA)

A Benefit Plan Focused

Comprehensive coverage



A nationwide network of more than 1 million providers, with no need for referrals



Two solid plans to choose between



Affordable premiums



The personal touch from people who care



You pay nothing for these services when you choose a network doctor.

HIGH OPTION ●

100% covered services

- Preventive care and screenings
- Maternity care
- Accidental injury within 72 hours
- Lab tests (covered blood work performed at LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics)
- Visits to registered dietician/nutritionist
- Diabetes management: Generic medication, glucose test strips, lancets and coaching calls
- Weight management, pregnancy and tobacco cessation programs

CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION ●

100% covered services

- A Personal Care Account (PCA), which is funded by the Health Plan each January and is used by the member for covered medical services. Until the PCA is exhausted, the member is covered at 100%. The Plan funds the PCA at \$1,200 for Self Only and \$2,400 for Self Plus One and Self and Family
- Preventive care and screenings
- Maternity care
- Pregnancy and tobacco cessation programs



	You Pay			
	Enrollment code	PSE biweekly	Retiree Monthly	APWU Career More than 1 Year in FEHB
HIGH OPTION				
Self Only	471	*	\$227.50	\$101.80
Self Plus One	473	*	\$458.44	\$204.75
Self and Family	472	*	\$604.72	\$271.80
CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION				
Self Only	474	\$68.96	\$149.42	\$23.29
Self Plus One	476	\$149.88	\$324.75	\$59.41
Self and Family	475	\$163.51	\$354.27	\$77.65

*PSE's are responsible for 100% of the premium for this option. Check with the USPS for details.

2019 Health Plan Premiums

on You and Your Family

New Plan Benefits for 2019 (High & Consumer Driven Option)

- ✓ Chiropractic visits increased to 24 per year
- ✓ Home colorectal cancer screening Cologuard Kit
- ✓ Skilled nursing facility coverage
- ✓ Residential treatment center coverage for mental health and substance use disorders

New Plan Benefits for 2019 (High Option only)

- ✓ Smart 90: Maintenance drugs may be obtained at a retail network pharmacy, including CVS and Walgreens
- ✓ Lower copay for virtual visits – only \$15 through American Well

The APWU Health Plan has always put the postal worker and their family first. We work hard to gain an understanding of what drives your decisions during Open Season. Your healthcare decisions can be complicated, looking for value and quality of care.

We are proud of our two plans and the service we provide.

What your coworkers are saying

The Plan has always been there for me!

Meet Ray Bell, Boston Metro Areal Local Vice President, speaks with conviction, especially when he's talking about the APWU Health Plan. When it comes to the Health Plan, he knows with certainty that there is just no better value. In addition to routine healthcare, Ray has had to navigate our Health Plan on a number of different occasions—broken bones with his wife and son that required surgery. When his wife broke her wrist and ankle and needed surgery and rehab, everything was covered with moderate out-of-pocket costs. And, when his son broke his nose and required two surgeries less than a year apart, there was no objection from the Plan. Quite simply, Ray says, "The Plan has always been there for me."

Working for you!

I'm writing this card to thank Glenda, who was most helpful to me and my daughter after her stay at UCSF Children's Hospital. At times I felt like Glenda was the only one who was willing to listen to me and also understood what our problem really was. With her willingness to further investigate and continued pursuit, she was able to correct the room charges that my daughter incurred at the hospital. It is this kind of service to the policy holder that I am proud to tell everyone that I belong to the APWU Health Plan! Thank you! Peter.

Real customer service!

Amber is awesome! I had a lot of questions and she was always patient. She is an angel and called back multiple times. Always friendly and professional. Companies need more employees like Amber!

There when you need us!

A big thank you to APWU Health Plan. At 61 years old, I am taking care of the basic and preventative medical issues. Aubrey was your representative who helped me. She was very patient and informative as I stumbled around with questions. Thank you again. Aubrey made me comfortable with uncomfortable health issues. Kelly.

2018 Open Season will run Nov. 12 - Dec. 10.

Consider your APWU Health Plan which is
union owned with a union workforce.

WWW.APWUHP.COM | (800) PIC-APWU



TOGETHER.BETTER HEALTH.®



Reduce Inequality with Conversions to Career



Assistant Director Lynn Pallas-Barber, Director Clint Burelson and Assistant Director Lamont Brooks

The single most effective bang for the buck method to significantly reduce inequality at the Postal Service is to convert a Postal Support Employee (PSE) to career. The *increase* in pay and benefits is estimated at \$26,000 a year or about \$2,000 a month.

With career status, the PSEs will earn retirement, see a boost in pay, be eligible for good health care, get set schedules with regular hours, receive better rights under the CBA, and start their six years for layoff protection. Accordingly, the significant improvements resulting from conversion to career are something that deserves greater attention.

Background

In March of 2014, newly elected President Mark Dimondstein signed a breakthrough MOU that provided for a conversion process for PSEs to career. At the 2014 National Convention held later that year, the membership voted to make conversions of PSEs a priority for national negotiations.

In the 2015 national negotiations, the Clerk Craft negotiated two separate agreements that will convert PSEs to career. First, we negotiated a new MOU *Re: Residual Vacancies – Clerk Craft* that improved the 2014 MOU. Second, we negotiated permanent language in Article 37.5 that will convert PSEs to residual vacancies in a fast and clean manner similar to the conversion of PTFs.

The Postal Service would agree to the Article 37.5 language only with an understanding that the MOU *Re: Residual Vacancies – Clerk Craft* would apply until the end of the 2015 CBA. At that point, if the parties did not agree on a new MOU, the Article 37.5 language would go into effect.

The main difference between the two methods is that Article 37.5 considers transfers with the hiring of career employees per the MOU *Re: Transfers* while the MOU *Re: Residual Vacancies* considers transfers with the conversion of PSEs. PSEs would be converted to career much faster under Article 37.5 as the process would be similar to the process of converting PTFs to

full-time regular residual vacancies. PSEs would convert to residual vacancies immediately after all PTFs in the installation have been converted.

Creating Duty Assignments

The language in Article 37.5 and the MOU *Re: Residual Vacancies* provide a mechanism for converting a PSE to a residual vacancy, which is an important first step. The important second step is to increase the amount of residual vacancies by applying Article 37.3.A.1, which states, “Every effort will be made to create desirable duty assignments from all available work hours for career employees to bid.” The APWU has been successful in utilizing the Maximum Duty Assignment Tool (MDAT) to show PSE available work hours and demonstrate the need for creating additional duty assignments.

IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT WE CONVERT AS MANY PTFs AND PSES WHEN WITHHOLDING IS NOT IN PLACE, WHICH IS RIGHT NOW.

When additional duty assignments are created and posted for bid, the career employees bid on the new duty assignments and employees move to more desired assignments. At the end of this process, because there are now more duty assignments than career employees, residual vacancies are created. That is when PTFs are converted to full-time and PSEs are converted to career.

Conversions will not occur when the USPS is withholding jobs due to planned excessing. Therefore, it is imperative that we convert as many PTFs and PSEs when withholding is not in place, which is right now.

The national has updated MDAT to provide more opportunities for conversions. Each area has a lead NBA who will assist locals and state organizations in converting PSEs to career. When we all work together, progress can be made. The conversion of PSEs to career is a significant life changing improvement that we can make happen. ■

Call to Serve



Assistant Director Terry Martinez, Director Idowu Balogun and Assistant Director Jimmie Waldon

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

My name is Idowu Balogun, your New National Maintenance Division Director. I would like to thank each and every one of you for your letters, cards and emails of congratulations and condolences.

Brother Raymer's untimely departure left all of us stunned and without adequate words to describe our feelings.

I am writing this open letter to you to share with you the state of the Maintenance Division within a 60-day time frame of the unexpected passing of our beloved Director Steven G. Raymer.

- Two weeks prior to Director Raymer's passing, the Maintenance Division Secretary retired after over twenty years at the APWU headquarters.
- The 2018 contract negotiations were set to begin in a matter of days.
- Article 32 Roof National Maintenance Arbitration was in full swing.
- The APWU 2018 National Convention was also less than 60 days away.
- National Convention books had to be completed, Pre-Convention workshop materials had to be finalized.
- BMC Conference materials, schedule and agendas also needed to be completed.
- The Assistant Director A, two National Business Agents, and Maintenance Secretary positions all needed to be filled. The Director and Assistant Director office relocations were in progress, furniture had to be moved.
- President emeritus William Burrus and former Assistant Maintenance Director A, Edgar Williams passed away.

Through it all, we buckled down, multi-tasked and together we weathered the storm in Maintenance fashion – making decisions and readjusting those decisions all along the way. We learned new skills in addition to polishing our contract knowledge and making necessary changes. Daily, we prayed for clarity of mind and continued good health to be able to persevere and complete the missions ahead.

I am humbled to inform you, although still saddened, we have completed all of the above listed tasks. Many thanks to all of you, especially the Maintenance Council and Staffing Advocates across the country for lending a helping hand in our time of need. Thank you! Thank you!

In Union Solidarity,

Idowu Balogun

2018 APWU Maintenance Contract Update!

The current Collective Bargaining Agreement (union contract) expired on September 20, 2018. By the time you are reading this, we are either getting ready for interest arbitration or we are successful in reaching a settlement. Negotiations with the Postal Service started months before the expiration of the contract. The Maintenance Craft Resolutions were fully deliberated in

Pittsburgh, PA by our delegates attending the Maintenance Craft Conference and the 24th Annual National Convention. The maintenance resolutions revolve around training, open season and billet allocations. Your Maintenance team is fighting and will continue to fight for your interests, day and night. The struggle continues!

Most Regressive Demands Ever



Assistant Director Javier Piñeres and Director Michael Foster

As the parties reached the Sept. 20th contract deadline, the USPS proposals submitted at the Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) table were by far the most regressive demands in negotiations.

MVS Craft Officers expected the postal proposals would attempt to extract years of our bargaining history, achievements, and protections, but the Article 39 and 32 USPS demands went far beyond those expectations.

The Most Repressive Attempts in Bargaining

The USPS proposals would:

- Eliminate consecutive days off – “In the Motor Vehicle craft, the employees normal work week is five (5) service days, each consisting of eight (8) hours within twelve (12) hours, regardless of installation size. The five days need not be consecutive days within the service week.”
- Change Storekeeper Automotive Parts from “senior qualified” to “best qualified.”
- Eliminate frequency, time of departure, and arrival and estimate annual mileage in Article 32.2.C.1
- Article 32 A-F. The USPS proposes to notify the union after the HCR has been let.
- Change the criteria in 32.2.6 as follows: 1) Reduce round trip miles to 200. 2) Increase fixed annual rate to 200k. 3) Increase spotter value to 90k. 4) Reduce operating time to 6.5 hours.
- Article 32 exceptions, the USPS sought to exclude certain VMF repairs from 32.1: 1) Engine and transmission repair/replacement exceeding \$10,000 (including parts and labor), 2) Major collision repairs, 3) Heavy duty towing/Accident repairs, 4) Frame straightening or replacement, 5) Air conditioning repair, 6) State emissions testing, and 7) Work on hybrid systems.

These USPS proposals are both regressive and repressive. As we continue to negotiate, the MVS Craft will continue to fight against the erosion of our contractual gains and benefits. ■

POM Finally Publishing

On August 28, the parties finally agreed on publishing parts of the Postal Operation Manual (POM) that were settled in 2007, after the union challenged changes the USPS made to the manual in 1995. The revised publication will take place within 12 weeks of the agreement. Among the provisions are:

712.1 Fleet Operations

Fleet operations encompasses local transportation operations, new vehicle requests, vehicle hire, vehicle assignment, vehicle utilization and requirements, accident investigation, dock and maneuvering area design, traffic flow, container operations and driver training.

713.1 Vehicles Used by USPS

PVS vehicles are under the jurisdiction of managers at designated offices. They are operated by USPS personnel and consist of:

- USPS-owned vehicles – vehicles purchased by the USPS.
- Hired Vehicles-vehicles hired by the USPS
 - From commercial sources
 - From letter carriers

714 Motor Vehicle Service

MVS is a specific category of vehicle service. It pertains only to vehicle movement of bulk quantities of mail. This is distinct from other vehicle operations, such as vehicle movement of mail by letter carriers for delivery and collection. Note:

- MVS vehicles are usually very large vehicles, some weighing more than 5 tons.
- MVS drivers are motor vehicle craft employees, rather than letter carriers, etc. (See also 721.1)

742.3 Staffing

VMF staffing is based upon planned repair work and is established only in accordance with demonstrated need. VMF staffing must follow established guidelines by the area. (See also 715)

744.11 Scheduled Maintenance

Scheduled maintenance examinations allow deficiencies to be discovered and necessary repairs to be made when still minor in nature. This reduces the necessity for expensive, time consuming major repairs. It also reduces vehicle operations costs. Preventing a failure is less costly than correcting it after it occurs.

744.12 Repair Maintenance

Repair maintenance consists of all repair actions from malfunctions, road calls, and other abnormal breakdowns which are not corrected during scheduled maintenance examinations.

The POM settlement can be found on apwu.org.

Numerous Negotiations Continue



Director Steve Brooks

I hope everyone had a good time at the 24th Annual National Convention in Pittsburgh, PA. I think it was a very good convention. As usual, the delegates came prepared to demonstrate why they felt their resolutions had merit, and articulated their arguments appropriately. Our conventions and the process of passing resolutions is a true illustration of how the democratic process should work. As is probably true for most of the delegates to the National Convention, you hit the ground running when returning home.

The same can be said for your national officers. The convention took place smack dab in the middle of contract negotiations. With the contract expiring on Sept. 20, 2018, we went into a lock-down period with the Postal Service from Sept. 14-20, where the parties met around-the-clock in attempts to come to an agreement. In the end, we did come closer together on many issues, but were unable to complete the agreement. Because the parties were making headway and still talking, they agreed to extend the negotiation period by 30 days.

While negotiating the National Collective Bargaining Agreement, simultaneously the Support Services officers are negotiating terms for a private-sector contract with a company called Hollingsworth, which holds a postal contract to do Mail Transport Equipment Service Center work. This group is located in Temperance, MI. These negotiations are for an initial agreement and have been painstakingly slow.

Also, in addition to the National Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiations, we are in the middle of Postal Service negotiations for the National Postal Professional Nurses (NPPN). Again, the Postal Service does not seem interested in spending money to expand the extensive educational opportunities of this group of employees. With the increased threat of chemicals and substances being illegally sent through the mail system, you would think you'd want your professional nurses on hand with all of the necessary tools and training to properly be able to help in any emergency

situation. The Postal Service seems to have a different thought process, one that indicates that they do not take the safety of our employees seriously.

The nurses' contract ended August 18, 2018 and we are still attempting to come to terms as of the writing of this article. Much like the National Collective Bargaining Agreement negotiations, the parties agreed to extend the negotiation period since we are making some progress with the non-economic terms.

THE GREATEST SATISFACTION COMES WHEN YOU NEGOTIATE AN AGREEMENT THAT IMPROVES THE WORKING CONDITIONS, PAY, AND BENEFITS FOR OUR MEMBERS.

As we try to come to terms with the Postal Service and the Hollingsworth group, the time has come to begin contract talks over the Postal Information Technology and Accounting Service (IT/AS) Collective Bargaining Agreement. The expiration date on that contract is January 20, 2019. I expect these negotiations for the IT/AS Agreement to be quite difficult. On our IT side, the Postal Service has taken the position that they want to sub-contract computer programmers in excess of allowed numbers. This is an issue we have been dealing with for years, and it is about time the Postal Service recognized the skill level of its own postal programmers, and raise their salaries accordingly. On the accounting side of the house, they have been automating a number of processes and it has led to the reversion of accounting positions. To date, USPS have said that they will do this through attrition, and thus far they have held to that promise. Our hope is that the bleeding will stop and there will be an end to the reversions.

It is a never-ending cycle of contract expiration and renewal for the Support Services Division. The greatest satisfaction comes when you negotiate an agreement that improves the working conditions, pay, and benefits for our members. The struggle continues, but we are up to the challenge. ■



Omar M. Gonzalez, Regional Coordinator

Is the Postal Service Sick?

33,400+ employees are absent daily claims management, triggering their Attendance Control Employee Availability (AC/EA) crackdown while they impose so-called “Dynamic Scheduling.”

Leave rules in CBA Article 10 and the Employee & Labor Relations Manual (ELM) Chapter 510 have existed for 40 years. ACEA can’t change those rules. ELM 665.11 requires you to be regular in attendance. However, ELM 511.1 requires management to administer leave on an equitable basis for **all** employees considering a) the needs of the service b) the **welfare** of the *individual* employee.

Too often management imposes discipline using select rules and dictates, such as, three (3) absences in 90 days requires discipline. This dictate violates the contract. *“It is the supervisor’s review of the attendance record in light of all relevant evidence, **NOT** any set number of absences that determines whether corrective action is warranted.”* [Article 10.1; 10.2 JCIM].

Stand By Your Rights

You have the right to earn and use sick leave which insures you against loss of pay if you’re incapacitated because of illness, injury, pregnancy, confinement, medical exams, appointments/treatments (including optical/dental) [ELM 513.11].

Management has always claimed they can issue discipline even for approved sick leave. However,

properly documented and approved sick leave should not be used *in and of itself*, in a way that is against your interests. Nor can management violate official leave regulations like failing to give you copies of your 3971s. You have the right to challenge management’s actions. (PSEs please see box)

Not Just Cause They Can

To issue discipline our Contract requires management have “just cause.” There are several “tests” your supervisor **must use before** taking discipline. Also, discipline must be corrective, progressive and not punitive [Article 16 JCIM].

Tests include there be reasonable attendance rules and proof you’re aware of them. Official rules can’t be altered [Article 10 JCIM], must be applied fairly, without discrimination, be consistently and equitably enforced.

No Scripted Witch Hunts

Your supervisor must complete a thorough objective investigation **BEFORE** they can issue discipline which includes your “day in court” right to know in detail the charges, to be able to defend yourself. Under Weingarten rules you have a right to have your steward present: Per EL 921 stewards have the right to:

- fully participate in the interview
- ask the supervisor questions (e.g., on application of rules, equal treatment etc.)

- comment on supervisor’s questions (especially leading/misleading questions read from a script)
- help clarify your answers to questions
- discuss favorable facts (e.g. your past record and other relevant factors)

Whether management may impose discipline for alleged excessive absenteeism (including approved leave) is a question of fact and must be determined on a case by case basis in light of all relevant factors/evidence [Arb. Case NC-NAT- 16 285; JCIM 10.2].

You should challenge every instance of AWOL; unscheduled leave determinations, return to work meetings, improper demands for substantiation, inaccurate 3971s; and unjust discipline.

Change Is Here

The mid-term elections have consequences. Our contract fight continues as our Brother, Northeast Coordinator John Durzius retires. Coordinator Stone, Gallagher, Beasley and I wish you a blessed New Year and extend our prayers for those who passed on in 2018. ■

Under the 2015 CBA, PSEs do not earn sick leave; they accrue annual leave. PSE attendance rules are on page 71 JCIM. PSEs can also file grievances for violations of these rules, improper AWOL and unjust discipline. The CBA (page 255) prohibits management from firing PSEs for exercising their grievance rights.



FROM the FIELD

Below are quotes from various APWU local and state publications throughout the country. All the publications listed are part of the Postal Press Association.

"As the days and weeks and months go by, more and more people are retiring. Congratulations to all of those members fortunate enough to have reached the point of benefitting from all of those years of hard work. The USPS, meanwhile, is failing to fill any of these vacant positions all across the country. The results are exactly as you would expect. We are short-staffed and local managers would like more work done by less people in a workforce comprised of more people nearing retirement than of people starting their careers. Sound like typical postal managing, right?"

— Chuck Camp, Philadelphia BMC Local President, *Philly Parcel*

"It should be very concerning to every member that our careers, livelihoods and retirement will continue to hang in the balance until we regain a postal friendly majority and foothold somewhere in Congress. **If you aren't concerned or aren't voting to protect your job, you simply haven't been paying attention!** To that point we can't expect others to advocate for us if we are unwilling to do it ourselves. It is imperative that members of Congress, regardless of party, hear from us regarding all pending legislation that affects postal workers. We need to educate our elected officials and let them know how their votes will impact our lives and our communities. We also need to make sure we are educating our family members of why it is important to support postal friendly politicians."

— Chris Czubakowski, APWU of Wisconsin
Director of Legislation, *Badger Bulletin*

"The unions that represent the American workforce have given so many benefits to employees that many of these benefits we take as a normal part of the job today. But it wasn't that long ago that the generations before us fought hard for these benefits that we think are our given rights. Just a small example of those are: holidays, overtime pay, health care, vacations, sick leave, breaks, a minimum wage and many more. Before the unions these things were not guaranteed to anybody."

— Clyde Trent, Central Kentucky Area Local Secretary-Treasurer, *The Informant*

"This seems to be the perfect place to make an appeal for members to step up to the plate and get involved in your union while us old timers still have enough energy in us to mentor you and get you prepared for one of the most challenging and rewarding jobs you will ever undertake. Just as the Postal Service's workforce is aging so are the union's workhorses... take advantage of our years of experience and allow us to help you grow in knowledge; insuring our union will maintain the quality of representation we have enjoyed over the past 30+ years."

— Martha Foote, Indianapolis Area Local Secretary-Treasurer, *Indy Info* [Editor's note: Sister Foote unfortunately passed away on Sept. 3. This underscores her call to the next generation to get involved.]

"The other day I was working on a grievance that required looking at past pay schedules. I was reminded again how hard our union works for us. Looking back to September 2016, as fulltime regulars we received wage increases on 9/03/2016, 11/26/2016, 3/04/2017, 9/22/2017, 11/25/2017 and 3/03/2018. That would be six wage increases in 18 months! How much luck do you think you would have begging for six raises in 18 months in a nonunion work environment? Be proud to belong to our union and appreciate the workers who struggled for the rights and benefits that we receive today!"

— Faron Williamson, Nebraska Postal Workers Union Motor Vehicle Service Craft Director, *The Nebraska Postal News*

"Please remember to vote! I think our country is in a mess. I think we need change. But in this article I am not trying to tell anyone who to vote for. What scares me is one issue that we should all be concerned about. I have a lot of things that I feel strongly about but none so strong as to exclude other considerations. My one issue is without a job, good pay and benefits I can't do anything about the rest. We must look at those who would, if they could, destroy our USPS and do away with our bargaining agreements. We need to continue to seek those who would work to repeal the 2006 ridiculous 75 year retirement funding which exists in no other business in the world. It is the only reason the USPS starts out deep in the red every year."

— Bob Stutts, North Carolina Council APWU,
Director Research and Education, *The Tarheel Postal Worker*

Wave of hotel strikes

Hotel workers represented by Unite Here locals across the country rose up in September in a wave of worker militancy that led to work stoppages in eight major cities.

More than 11,000 hotel workers in Chicago, Detroit, Boston, Oakland, San Diego, San Francisco, San Jose, and in Hawaii were on strike in September. The strikes in Chicago affected hotels across the city. As of press time, all but one hotel strike in Chicago has been resolved, but strikes in Marriott hotels continue in the other cities.

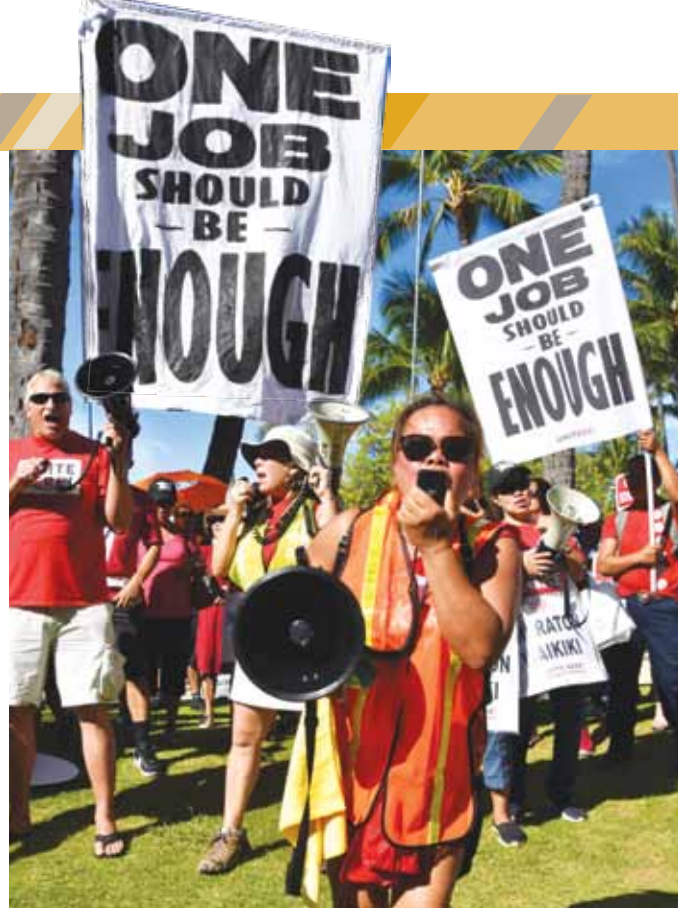
Chicago workers are celebrating victory from their strikes, winning significant improvements to pay and benefits. A key union priority in Chicago was winning guaranteed maintenance of good health care coverage during the winter months, when hotel business slows and some workers are temporarily laid off.

The Marriott strikers have rallied around their strike slogan, “One Job Should Be Enough!” Workers say that one job, with the largest hospitality chain in the world, should be enough to support them and their families. Hotel workers often suffer from low pay, erratic scheduling and insufficient hours.

“I am striking because I have to work three jobs to try and cover all my family’s expenses,” Brooke Melanson, a striking worker in Boston, said in a statement. “Just like any parent, I want time with my children to see them grow up. We hear all the time how well Marriott is doing. We want Marriott to recognize our contribution to their success.”

“Marriott is the richest and most profitable hotel company in the world, and by taking them on in this historic hotel worker strike, UNITE HERE union members are going to change the lives of all workers in our industry,” Donald ‘D.’ Taylor, President of UNITE HERE told *USA Today*.

Union contracts with Marriott expired in July and August. The work stoppage has been marked by impressive acts of militancy. Picket lines at struck hotels have run non-stop. On Labor Day, 75 workers were arrested in San Francisco for blocking a street leading to the Westin St. Francis, a Marriott property.



UNITE HERE strikers in Hawaii



In addition to better pay and scheduling, workers have put health and safety issues at the front of their demands. Housekeepers in particular are demanding relief from back-breaking assignments that frequently lead to injury and additional protection on the job from sexual harassment and violence that often plagues workers in their position.

“For the Marriott corporation this is about dollars and cents, but for our hotel workers it is about our families, our livelihoods and our children,” Anand Singh, President of UNITE HERE Local 2 told a San Francisco CBS station.

McDonald's workers strike over harassment

McDonald's workers striking in 2013

McDonald's workers across the country, many of whom have been leading the Fight for \$15 and a union campaign against the fast food giant, struck in September to draw attention to rampant abuse and harassment that they face on the job.

Led by women's committees of McDonald's workers, the strikers are calling on McDonald's to beef up their stance against on the job sexual harassment. Many of the strikers are also party to a pending lawsuit with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, filed in May, which alleged rampant sexual harassment of line workers in the burger chain.

Editor's Note: As this issue went to press, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers started rolling 24-hour strikes in rotating cities throughout Canada. Below is a letter of solidarity written to CUPW President Mike Palecek, CUPW Executive Board, and CUPW members.

Dear Brother Palecek, the CUPW Executive Board and our Sister and Brother Postal Workers:

On behalf of the 200,000 members of the American Postal Workers Union, we extend our firm commitment and international union solidarity to you and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) as tens of thousands of postal workers embark on militant rolling strike actions to win a fair and decent collective bargaining agreement.

The struggle for a healthy and safe workplace, proper compensation for all hours of work and maximization of full-time jobs is just. Postal workers in the United States face similar problems with massive numbers of workplace injuries and far too much non-career and part-time work. So, when you make gains it strengthens our hands at the bargaining table and in our workplaces as well!

Attached is correspondence sent to the Canadian Prime Minister, the Minister of Public Services and Procurement, and the CEO of Canada Post Corporation, demanding that they bargain in good faith with the CUPW and address the legitimate concerns of the workers regarding unsafe conditions, the need for fair compensation and other outstanding and important issues.

If there are other actions of union solidarity we can take, please let us know.

We are confident that, just as you did in the door delivery fight, the Canadian postal workers, through your unity, solidarity and militancy, will prevail!

In Union Solidarity,



Mark Dimondstein, President
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO

BOURBON WORKERS STRIKE Beat 2-Tier proposals

Workers at Four Roses Distillery ended a two-week strike in September at the Kentucky bourbon maker after their employer attempted to impose a two-tier sick-leave policy in contract negotiations. Currently workers are able to accumulate sick leave which they rely on in case of serious illness or injury. Four Roses had proposed that new hires not be permitted to bank unused leave, and instead be forced onto short-term disability.

Once workers walked off the job, "these guys [Four Roses management] understood how serious we were about that," Jeff Royalty, UFCW Local 10D President said in an interview.

The company's proposal would have cost sick and injured workers as much as half their pay in cases of extended leave. And workers recognized that a two-tier system would divide workers and weaken their future bargaining power. "This fight isn't over money, we just need this two-tiered system stuff to go away," Royalty said.

The workers, represented by two UFCW locals and a local of the National Conference of Firemen and Oilers/SEIU, ratified a new five-year master agreement after the strike concluded.

Around the World, Privatization Fails to Deliver

In June, the White House Office of Management and Budget proposed that “like many European nations, the United States could privatize its postal operator.” The OMB report seems to suggest that postal privatization – selling the post office to private corporations – has been a tremendous success in Europe. But has it? A closer look seems to suggest otherwise.

Across Europe, there has been a thirty-year effort to redefine the role postal services play in society. By the mid-1990s, the European Union (EU) began demanding the elimination of the monopoly that national postal operators had on delivering letter mail. In other words, any company would be allowed to carry and deliver the mail, not solely the postal service. By 2013, the postal monopoly was entirely eliminated across the EU. This is usually referred to as postal liberalization.

EU leadership made the argument that increased competition would lead to more innovation, better efficiency and overall improved postal services with lower rates. But despite liberalization, only a handful of countries have actually sold off – or privatized – their postal operations to private corporations and investors.

How has the European experiment with postal liberalization and privatization turned out? Not as well as the OMB might want you to believe. A few real-life examples should make clear that the OMB has missed the bigger picture.

Portugal sold off its postal service in 2013 as a condition of European financial relief in the wake of the global financial crisis. Since then, the Portuguese postal company, CTT Correios, has closed nearly a third of all post offices and 13% of other postal access points.

An anti-worker government privatized the United Kingdom’s Royal Mail in 2013. Stamp prices skyrocketed in advance of the privatization. Since 2007, postage in the UK has nearly doubled (five times the increase seen in the US.) The retail network of the Royal Mail was spun

off, separating postal counters from the delivery company, and hundreds of post offices were closed.

Even the very act of selling the Royal Mail laid bare who the winners and losers of the process are. In the first day of trading on the stock market, shares in the Royal Mail shot up nearly 40 percent. Investors got rich and the public were left holding the bag.

Privatization has not delivered on either improved service or cost savings for the public. And its impact on postal workers has been even more dramatic. In the Netherlands, there are nearly zero full-time jobs in the postal sector. The majority of Dutch postal workers now work on contracts that guarantee them 20 or fewer hours of work per week with dreadful working conditions. Delivery workers are usually paid for each mail piece delivered, averaging less than the minimum wage on an hourly basis.

Job losses have put hundreds of thousands of postal workers out of work and weakened their unions. Deutsche Post in Germany has cut 44% of its total workforce and Austria Post 47%.

The OMB report claims, “major changes are needed in how the Postal Service is financed and the level of service Americans should expect from their universal service operator.” APWU President Mark Dimondstein warns, “If the European experiences the OMB points to seem to be any indication, the people of this country should start to expect less service, at higher prices, while Wall Street investors get richer. We must fight to keep our Postal Service in the hands of the people, not Wall Street!” ■

A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service is a broad coalition of national, state and local organizations including the NAACP, Vote Vets, Jobs with Justice, National Council of Churches and Rainbow PUSH. These groups have come together to take a stand against the unprecedented assaults on the Postal Service including efforts to dismantle and privatize it. To join A Grand Alliance, visit www.AGrandAlliance.org.



The Bronx Wants Postal Banking Now!

On Oct. 16, APWU members and retirees, our sister postal unions, community leaders and allies filled the Hunts Point Post Office in the Bronx, NY to deliver a petition of more than 5,300 signatures to Bronx Postmaster Scott Farrar, calling for expanded financial services at the Bronx post office and nationwide.



Photo Credit: Kevin Walsh

New York Metro Area Postal Union President Jonathan Smith, New York Metro Postal Union Communications Director Chuck Zlatkin, Rep. José Serrano (D-NY), and New York Metro Area Postal Union VP Tiffany Foster at the Bronx Postal Banking press conference.

“Postal Banking brings a service to the people that’s not only important to the community of the Bronx,” said New York Metro Area Postal Union President Jonathan Smith, “but it’s important to this nation.”

An astounding 52.3 percent of Bronx households are underserved by traditional Wall Street banks. These residents either have no bank account or have an account and use “alternative” financial services including paycheck cashing and pawn shops.

“Residents of the Bronx need affordable banking services – and the women and men of the U.S. Postal Service are ready to deliver,” Smith continued. “Consumers without access to banking services are paying thousands of dollars a year to alternative financial institutions. The U.S. Postal Service has the legal authority, and the capacity, to provide a range of financial services at a much more affordable cost.”

“This is a better, more secure, more respectful place to go to,” said Congressman José E. Serrano (D-NY-15).

Rep. Serrano and Rep. Joe Crowley (D-NY-14), who both represent the Bronx, participated in the event. Serrano and Crowley delivered a letter to support the Campaign for Postal Banking. All four Congressional representatives of the Bronx signed the letter, including Rep. Adriano Espaillat (D-NY-13) and Rep. Eliot Engel (D-NY-16).

The Campaign for Postal Banking invited Postmaster Farrar to accept the petitions. He declined to attend the event. Rep. Serrano agreed to deliver the petitions and the letter of Congressional support to Postmaster General Megan Brennan.

APWU retirees – including Dennis O’Neil, Betty Aiken, Shirley Dunaway, Rosa Greene, Doris Leary, Delphine McRae, Roberto Rodriguez, Randy Salley, and Carol Thomas – worked tirelessly through heat and cold to spread the word about postal banking to the residents of the Bronx and to collect the more than 5,300 signatures. ■

Cleveland City Council Passes Resolution for Postal Banking!

Thanks to the tremendous organizing work of the APWU Cleveland Area Local and Cleveland Jobs with Justice, the Cleveland City Council went on record for postal banking with Resolution 1246-18. The October 8, 2018 resolution “urges the U.S. Postal Service to expand and enhance existing services such as check cashing and international money transfers, and to take necessary steps towards designing and implementing additional financial services.”

The Campaign for Postal Banking is a coalition of consumer, worker, financial reform, economic justice, community, civic, and faith-based organizations calling for low-cost, consumer-driven financial services via the Postal Service. Products and services could include check cashing, bill payment, savings accounts and small-dollar loans. Postal Banking will benefit consumers without access to traditional banks as well as those who want a public option. The expansion of services would also strengthen our public Postal Service. To learn more, visit www.CampaignforPostalBanking.org.

Majority of House Members OPPOSE POSTAL PRIVATIZATION

Before members of the House of Representatives left for the October recess, a majority of them signed on as cosponsors of H. Res. 993. As of press time there are 236 cosponsors. The resolution expresses the need to keep the United States Postal Service an independent establishment of the federal government and for it not be sold to private corporations (privatization). This resulted from the hard work of APWU members who reached out to their elected officials and encouraged them to support this important resolution.

Representative Stephen Lynch (D-MA), who originally introduced the language, commented, "It is more than clear that the delivery of essential government services should not be subject to privatization and is best performed by our experienced federal workforce."

"The bipartisan support of the non-binding resolution demonstrates what we already knew to be true. It is an important step forward in our ongoing campaign to defeat privatization," said President Mark Dimond-

stein. "The need to maintain the public post office with universal service to everyone in the country, regardless of income or zip code, transcends party lines."

For more information on H. Res. 993, please go to apwu.org.

In support of the Postal Service not being subject to privatization, the Senate introduced companion language with S. Res. 633, which as of press time has 44 cosponsors. Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard urges members to continue garnering support for both resolutions during this lame duck session.

To see a full listing of cosponsors of H. Res. 993 and S. Res. 633, please go to congress.gov and search for "HRes 993" or "SRes 633." The APWU encourages its members to check if their elected officials are in support of these resolutions. If your member of Congress has not signed on, please call 1-844-402-1001 to speak with their office. If they have, please call and thank them for supporting the people's Post Office. ■

AFL-CIO Takes Strong Stand in Defense of a Public Postal Service & Postal Workers

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and the AFL-CIO Executive Board, representing 55 national unions, unanimously adopted a statement against privatization of the USPS, calling it out as corporate greed. The initial resolution was crafted and jointly submitted by National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) President Fredric Rolando and President Mark Dimondstein, both of whom sit on the Executive Council.

"We know that if [the Postal Service] is privatized in whole or in part, the decision to provide services will be based on whether a company can make a profit

rather than what's good for working people," the statement said.

"Inevitably, privatization will lead to increased rates and diminished services for customers, especially in rural communities and potentially low-income urban areas."

The statement champions A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service and the AFL-CIO membership in it.

"As a member of 'A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service,' the AFL-CIO will actively engage in the fight to save the Postal Service by mounting a serious defense to this threat and encouraging central labor councils and state federa-

tions to join with labor and community allies in concrete actions against privatization," the statement continued.

President Trumka followed through by writing to every state federation and central labor council, encouraging them to adopt the same or a similar statement and to go on record supporting a strong public Postal Service.

As of press time, there are already positive results. The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO State Federation, the Lehigh Valley Central Labor Council and the Cincinnati Central Labor Council are among those passing the strong statement. ■



Judy Beard, Director

What Could Happen in the Lame Duck Session

Consider the federal midterm elections as just one round of our fight to win economic justice for workers and their families. This year, we can be proud of the work we have done to educate members of Congress and the public on the value of the people's Postal Service. Many sitting members and candidates took a public stance against postal privatization leading up to the midterms because of your engagement with them.

However, with a new congressional session coming up, our fight is not over. We must continue to be aware of postal issues and have discussions with coworkers, community leaders, family and friends to support a progressive, working class agenda during the lame duck session.

Following the 2018 midterm elections, Congress will enter into what is known as a "lame duck session." This describes the period of time after the Nov. 6 elections, but before January 3, 2019, when newly-elected representatives take office for the 116th Congress. Some of the current legislators will not be returning for the new session, either due to retirement or loss of their election.

The public may think this 50-day period is a time when legislation moves slowly. However, history shows if the majority party changes in the election, the current party in power begins to schedule votes on issues that support their agenda.

The lame duck session of the 109th Congress passed with a bi-partisan vote the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) of 2006. This law required the USPS to pay \$5.5 billion per year to fund future retiree health benefits 75 years in advance, which no other government agency or private business is required to do. There has been postal reform introduced every Congress since to address this issue.

Possible action in the 2018 lame duck could be confirming nominations for the Postal Board of Governors. There are nine governors' positions; only two are currently filled. In August 2018, the Senate confirmed the nominations of David Williams and Robert Duncan to the Board of Governors. Although this is a

step in the right direction, the Board still fails to have a quorum.

The Board oversees the Postal Service's expenditures, reviews its practices, conducts long-range planning, approves officer compensation and sets policies on all postal matters. The Board also takes up matters such as service standards and capital investments.

In September 2018, the White House nominated Ron Bloom and Roman Martinez, for terms expiring in 2020 and 2024, respectively. Both men had careers in investment banking and have worked in the public and private sectors. By having the additional two members of the Board and with the Postmaster General and Deputy PMG, a quorum can be reached. The Postal Regulatory Commission also faces a vacancy. While the Trump Administration nominated Michael Kubayanda, and the Senate held a confirmation hearing, he has yet to be formally appointed to the PRC. During the lame duck, the Senate Homeland Security & Governmental Affairs committee could take up these confirmation hearings. If the committee votes in favor of the nominations, the full Senate would then have to vote on their confirmations. The committee confirmation hearing and the full Senate vote are conducted at the discretion of the committee chairman and Senate majority leadership.

While we can only speculate what exactly Congress will take up when they return, it is certain that elected officials will discuss federal government spending. The current spending plan is set to expire on December 7, 2018, and if a spending bill is not signed into law beyond this date, the federal government faces a shutdown. The 2013 government shutdown, which lasted over two weeks, cost the national economy \$24 billion. Shutting down the federal government has far reaching and negatively disruptive impacts on most Americans' lives, either directly or indirectly.

APWU will remain vigilant on actions that occur during the lame duck session. Let's continue to hold our elected officials accountable and build a movement that would result in a better life for all. ■



Anna Smith, Director

Have a Conversation

Having a conversation with a non-member coworker can be downright intimidating. It is because of this intimidation some find it frightening and daunting to ask them to stand with us. It is important to move past our concerns and approach them.

The fact is these non-members are working against our best interest. Some non-members are loud and confrontational with anti-union rhetoric. They let everyone know why they are not a member. While we all realize the harm done by the boisterous one, understand that the silent non-member is as destructive, if not more. They are silently working against everything we fight to achieve. They are not on the same side.

Make no mistake, it is personal. Our fight for a livable wage, health care for our families, and the benefits we enjoy – it is with them just as it is with postal management. If they are not standing with you, they are standing against you. There is not a neutral line. It is time to stop assuming everyone is a member and to remind the non-members they are working in a union environment, with pay and benefits that are only achieved from union solidarity. There is no harm in asking your coworker next to you if they stand with you as a union member, you share a common ground from that point forward. Not asking hurts us.

It cannot be said enough that organizing is everyone's responsibility. With approximately 840 state and local organizations in our union, only 36 of them have an "Organizing Director" position. Perhaps some local constitutions lack any language to elect or appoint a person to this position. If you have the language, it needs to be filled as much as any other position. If the local or state constitution is lacking the language, there are other avenues available such as appointing a committee and/or a lead organizer. If your local or state is not actively organizing, let it begin with you.

Even when our union is 100% organized, we'll keep up the organizing efforts. Member engagement is as essential as bringing new members in. I challenge you all to look at organizing as a duty assignment in which the tasks never go away. It is a duty assignment that

can't be abolished or reverted. We make arguments to this effect in grievances every day, in every corner of the country. We find it unacceptable when the Postal Service makes the decision to not post and fill a duty assignment. Apply that same theory to the need for organizers. The work is not going away, somebody needs to do it. If not you, then who? If not now, then when?

When local and state organizations aggressively organize, union involvement increases. Thank you to those who are setting goals, working to achieve those goals, and actively organizing for our future. Organizing our coworkers can be some of the most rewarding work you do. As 2018 comes to a close, let's work together to make organizing in 2019 a top priority! Happy Holidays to you and yours! ■

REMINDER

During our peak season do not delay sending in membership applications (1187s). In order for membership to be automatically reinstated when a PSE is rehired within 180-days after the conclusion of their current term of employment, the original application must be submitted and entered. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Organization Department at 202-842-4227.

National Convention Organizing Drive

Congratulations to the two names drawn for the National Convention Organizing Drive! The winners are Robert L. Helmig (Denver Metro Area Local) and Vontresa P. Brown (Northeast Florida Area Local).

Thank you to everyone who participated.



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

Student Financial Aid Programs

As the cost of a college education continues to escalate, many parents do not have the funds or resources needed to assure their children receive a college education. However, there are numerous student aid programs available at the state and federal levels. For assistance contact the financial aid offices of colleges for information on the types of aid offered, the procedures, deadlines, and how and when the student will receive the aid. Inquire about each school's satisfactory academic progress policy. Keep copies of the enrollment agreement, the school's catalog, and all financial aid documents.

Union Sponsored Scholarships

Both the APWU and Union Plus offer scholarship programs:

- **E.C. Hallbeck Memorial Scholarships and Vocational Scholarships** – Awarded by the APWU, a yearly scholarship to high school seniors who are the children and grandchildren of APWU members. For information visit APWU's Website at *apwu.org*, go to "Departments" and click on "Secretary-Treasurer," scroll down under "Issues" and click on "Benefit Programs," next, scroll down to Scholarship Programs. You can also call 202-842-4215 to receive an application.
- **The Union Plus Scholarship Program** – Awarded to union members and their families who want to begin or continue their post-secondary education at colleges or trade and technical schools. For more information, visit *www.unionplus.org/scholarships*.

Federal Student Aid Programs

Federal student aid programs are administered by the U.S. Department of Education and provide funds to students attending secondary schools. Not all schools participate in federal student aid programs; check with the college's financial aid office. Programs offered include:

- **Federal Work-Study** – Provides part-time jobs for undergraduate and graduate students with financial needs. The program is available to full-time or part-time students. Check with the school's financial aid office about its Federal Work-Study Program.

- **Direct Subsidized Loan** – For undergraduate students with financial need. For loans disbursed on or after July 1, 2018, and before July 1, 2019, interest rate is 5.05%. Interest is not charged on the loan during certain periods, such as when you're in school. The U.S. Department of Education (DOE) is the lender and receives payments. Loans are granted up to \$5,500 yearly.
- **Direct Unsubsidized Loan** – For undergraduate, graduate, and professional degree students; financial need is not required. For loans disbursed on or after July 1, 2018, and before July 1, 2019, 5.04% interest rate for loans made to undergraduate students, and 6.6% interest rate for loans made to graduate and professional degree students. Students are responsible for interest during all periods. DOE is the lender and receives payments. Loans are granted up to \$20,500 (less any subsidized amounts received for same period) depending on grade level and dependency status.
- **Direct PLUS Loan** – For parents borrowing money to pay for their dependent undergraduate child's education, and for graduate or professional degree students. Financial need is not required. For loans disbursed on or after July 1, 2018 and before July 1, 2019, interest rate is 7.6%. Borrower must have good credit reviews. DOE is the lender and receives payments. The maximum amount loaned is the cost of attendance minus any other financial aid received by the student.

To be considered for federal student aid for the 2018-2019 award year, complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) between January 1, 2018 and **midnight Central Time, June 30, 2019**. Many states and colleges have earlier deadlines for applying for state and institutional financial aid. Find your state's deadline at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/deadlines.htm>. In addition, check with your college about its deadlines. For help completing the FAFSA visit studentaid.ed.gov/students/publications/completing_fafsa/index.html. For additional information, contact the United States Department of Education's Federal Student Aid Information Center toll free at 1-800-433-3243. ■

Court Rules Pain Is a Disability



The U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans recently ruled that pain alone, without an underlying disability, may entitle veterans to compensation benefits. This decision could affect both veterans seeking service-connection and those seeking increased ratings for conditions that are already considered service-connected. Prior to this decision, the federal circuit held veterans had to have a diagnosed disability that rationalized the source of their pain in order to receive Veterans Administration (VA) disability benefits.

THE COURT FOUND THAT “PAIN IS A FORM OF FUNCTIONAL IMPAIRMENT” THAT CAN BE CONSIDERED A DISABILITY WITHOUT A DIAGNOSED CONDITION.

The case was brought by Melba Saunders, a Gulf War veteran, who suffered an in-service injury to her knee. She was treated by military doctors and diagnosed with patellofemoral pain syndrome, otherwise known as knee pain. After leaving the military, Saunders filed a disability claim for her condition. The VA denied the claim, citing “patellofemoral pain syndrome...is productive of no ascertainable impairment.” This essentially means without functional impairment there is not a disability, and without a disability there is no service-connected disability compensation benefit to award.

The VA argued that the law requires them to award compensation benefits for disability resulting from duty, not injury (38 U.S.C. § 1110). The court, however, cited the definition of a disability as “impairment in the enjoyment of life or earning ability.”

The court found that “pain is a form of functional impairment” that can be considered a disability without a diagnosed condition. The court also cited the VA’s presumption of certain, chronic unexplained symptoms related to service in the Gulf War that exist for 6 months or longer qualifies these veterans for compensation benefits without regard to cause. On this basis, it was the court’s opinion that other veterans who have

no specified condition should also be entitled.

Prior to Saunders, in most situations, a veteran was required to establish a medically diagnosed disability that was causally related to an in-service event, injury or disease. The decision affects the first of the three criteria – medically diagnosed disability. Saunders paves the way for the VA to grant awards for service-connected pain that lacks a specific diagnosis provided the pain can be linked to military service or the veteran reported a symptom that appeared during active duty.

The VA determines degrees of disability based on how functional loss or impairment impacts a veteran’s ability to perform movement with normal strength, speed, coordination and endurance. More severe disabilities are awarded larger percentage ratings, which can result in higher compensation benefits. The decision clarifies that a claimant does not have to demonstrate a condition causes loss of use to any particular body part or function. Instead, a veteran may be able to get benefits for functional loss due to headaches, insomnia or other limitations resulting from pain, even though they cannot be measured in the same way physical limitations are.

Additionally, veterans can now be awarded compensation if a service-connected condition aggravates pain, or the condition is worsened by pain. In all instances, the pain is still required to cause a functional loss of use. Subjective complaints will not be considered.

If you believe you are eligible for a service-connected rating based on pain, or believe you may be entitled to an increase, you should contact your local veterans’ organization, an accredited attorney, a VA claims agent or Veterans Service Officer for assistance. Veterans can go to eBenefits or search the VA Office of the General Counsel’s list to find a recognized organization or individual in your area.

Thank you for your service. ■

– Human Relations Department



Sue Carney, Director

Tilting the Scales of Justice

The confirmation of the 114th Supreme Court Justice, Brett Kavanaugh is expected to tilt the scales of justice dramatically to the right. Trump's first Supreme Court appointment was basically an exchange, one conservative, Scalia, for another, Gorsuch. Kavanaugh on the other hand replaces Justice Anthony Kennedy, a conservative appointed by Reagan. Kennedy was frequently a swing vote on social issues who ruled more liberally on issues such as guns, voting rights, abortion and the death penalty. In contrast, Kavanaugh has a reliable history of conservative rulings and is predicted to cause sweeping changes on these fronts. Kavanaugh will likely create a consistent 5-4 split favoring a conservative interpretation of the U. S. Constitution.

During what was probably one of the most contentious Supreme Court confirmation battles in U.S. history, protestors rallied at the U. S. Capitol and shouted from the gallery. Kavanaugh's selection sparked intense conversations about class, privilege and gender. Masses expressed dissatisfaction and outrage – fueled by political division, allegations of sexual assault, questions of truthfulness and temperament, views on presidential power and a host of other reasons.

Blue or red, believe him or her, pro-gun or pro-choice – Kavanaugh's confirmation presents yet another opportunity to remind ourselves who we are. We are Labor. I repeat, our fundamental purpose is to seek political, economic and social justice for the disadvantaged. We seek fairness, equality, dignity and respect for all common people.

Kavanaugh represents nothing Labor stands for. He has a dangerous track record of putting corporate interests ahead of workers' rights and safety. He is often the lone dissenter and has been a consistent enemy of collective bargaining. This is not just political rhetoric. The charge is supported by his opinions time and again. Some examples:

In 2007, he granted the Department of Defense the right to negate collective bargaining rights of employees. In the 2008 case *Agri Processor Co., Inc. v. NLRB*,

the court's majority held that undocumented workers' "fear of detection and termination does not prevent them from sharing a community of interest with their coworkers," granting them the same bargaining rights as their documented coworkers. Kavanaugh dissented. In 2012 Kavanaugh threw out the results of a union election at Trump Plaza. In 2014, he wrote a dissenting opinion siding with SeaWorld after the Occupational Safety and Health Administration found the Florida theme park willfully endangered its employees following the second death of an employee. In 2015, he sided with management at the Venetian Casino, authoring a majority opinion allowing the casino to summon police to issue citations against union protestors. In 2016 he wrote yet another majority opinion against workers – overturning an NLRB ruling that allowed Verizon workers to display pro-union signs at work. This year when a circuit court upheld a NLRB ruling that found a splinter company was created to circumvent bargaining rights – big surprise – Kavanaugh dissented. Is this really the guy you want sitting on the bench determining our future?

**WHEN YOU VOTE FOR THE LIKES OF
THOSE WHO CONFIRMED KAVANAUGH –
YOU ARE CULPABLE.**

Mary Kay Henry, SEIU President, perhaps summed it up best, "All Americans need a fair-minded justice who understands that the law should provide everyone with a level playing field and believes that everyone is created equal. Judge Kavanaugh is not that person."

With Kavanaugh now confirmed, our only hope for years to come cannot solely rest with Chief Justice Roberts investing more in the reputation of the court than his political affiliation. *Roberts is known to loathe public criticism that casts justices as bench politicians.*

When you vote for the likes of those who confirmed Kavanaugh – you are culpable. What will it take to stop putting your individual views ahead of our economic interests and the welfare of others? Anything less is a betrayal to Labor. Drain the swamp. ■



Nancy Olumekor, Director

After the Mid-Term Elections Continue to Use Your Voice for What's Next

There is still work we must do to protect our federal pension, benefits and the Postal Service on behalf of retirees. The Social Security Fairness Act (HR.1205 and S.915), along with the Social Security Expansion Act (S.427) are needed legislation. There are still millions of Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuitants watching and waiting for Congress to pass legislation to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) in order to provide us with a fair return on our investment in the Social Security system.

Many CSRS annuitants worked other jobs, second jobs and sometimes third jobs in order to increase their Social Security benefits. We worked and contributed to the Social Security system at the same percentage as other non-CSRS employees who contributed to Social Security yet we are denied an equitable benefit for those contributions.

I have included a few excerpts from the “Frequently Asked Questions About Social Security” by SocialSecurityWorks.Org on the subject “Strengthen Social Security...don’t cut it.”

- *“For most Americans, Social Security is essential for retirement. Just over 3 in 5 seniors rely on Social Security benefits for most of their income.”*
- *Americans have traditionally relied on the ‘three-legged stool’ – Social Security, employer pensions, and personal savings (including home equity) – to have sufficient income for retirement. For many, Social Security is the only stable leg of the ‘three-legged stool.’*
- *“Social Security’s revenue was about \$957 billion in 2016 – 87 percent of which was from workers’ and employers’ contributions on wages up to \$127,200 a year.”*
- *“Social Security’s benefits are modest, but vital, averaging around \$15,000 per year.”*
- *“Social Security lifts 22.1 million Americans out of poverty. Without it, the poverty rate of our seniors would be nearly 41 percent; instead, it is just under 9 percent.”*

- *“Social Security can never go bankrupt. Nearly all of its income, 97 percent, comes from the contributions of workers and employers, or interest on these contributions.”*
- *“It is projected that even if Congress took no action, Social Security could pay 100 percent of promised benefits until at least 2034.”*

We must continue to use our voices to let Congress know we expect them to be committed to protecting our hard-earned benefits – our federal pension (CSRS or FERS [Federal Employees Retirement System]), Social Security, Medicare, health insurance and life insurance. We also expect them to protect and preserve the public Postal Service. Continue to write letters or postcards and call Capitol Hill at 1-202-224-3121, or use the APWU line 1-844-402-1001, to speak to your member of Congress. Remind them that these are our paramount issues as postal retirees, senior citizens and postal workers. ■

2019 CSRS and Social Security COLA Increase Largest In 7 Years

The 2019 cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) to Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) annuitants and Social Security benefits will be 2.8 percent. The 2019 COLA for those covered in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) will be 2 percent.

Saying Thank You!

As we enter the season of gratitude and giving thanks I want to first thank all of all our Veterans and all of our active military personnel for their service. We also give thanks and share our blessings in other ways. Retirees can now make contributions to the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) using their annuity, credit card, or ACH from their bank account. Consider contributing to the Postal Employee Relief Fund (PERF) using Code 10268. Visit the CFC Donor Pledge System at opm.gov/ShowSomeLoveCFC for more information or to obtain forms and mail then directly to the CFC Processing Center address listed on the form, postmarked, no later than January 11, 2019. Direct your questions to CFC Customer Support at 800-797-0098.



John Marcotte, Director

Open Season

This year's Federal Employee Health Benefits (FEHB) Open Season is Nov. 12–Dec. 10. Now is the time to take advantage of a union-owned health plan, staffed by union employees, whose singular focus is serving you, the member.

At the APWU Health Plan we are driven to provide comprehensive health insurance at an affordable price. Now is the time to compare your current yearly out of pocket costs and the coverage your family needs with what the APWU Health Plan has to offer. Whether you desire proactive wellness coverage, are managing current health care conditions, or looking for peace of mind and financial security if an illness or injury strikes, the APWU Health Plan (APWUHP) is here for you.

Consumer Driven Option

With free preventative care, low out of pocket maximums and a prefunded personal care account that you can use immediately, this is a health care plan designed with postal workers in mind. If you are a career member of the APWU with over a year in FEHB, the USPS pays 95% of your premium cost for the Consumer Driven Option. This is by far the best value in FEHB Health Insurance.

- Some of the lowest premium costs available for APWU members.
- Superior health benefits and lower overall costs for our PSE members.
- Your Personal Care Account (PCA)
 - ◆ Members are given an account on day one of coverage that is fully funded by the APWUHP. Medical expenses get paid out of this account before members contribute to their deductible.
 - ◆ The PCA provides \$1,200 for Self Only and \$2,400 for Self Plus One or Family enrollment
 - ◆ The PCA pays for covered medical expenses at 100% as long as there are funds in the account.
 - ◆ APWUHP pays the first \$1,200 of Self and \$2,400 of Self+1 or Family deductibles, making our members portion of the deductible a very affordable \$800 for Self and \$1,600 for Self+1 and Family.
 - ◆ The PCA account money used counts toward your out of pocket maximum, which are a low \$5,000 for Self and \$10,000 for Self+1 and Family. Making

your out of pocket maximum a low \$3,400 for Self and \$7,600 for Self+1 or Family.

- ◆ Unused PCA funds will rollover to the next year, provided you remain a Health Plan member
- Increased chiropractic visits to 24 visits per year
- Coverage for skilled nursing facilities for non-custodial care
- 100% coverage for in-network preventive care
- 100% coverage for in-network maternity care

High Option

- Premium costs that are an excellent value for expansive benefit coverage.
- Increased Chiropractic visits to 24 visits a year
- Coverage for skilled nursing care for non-custodial care
- No deductible on prescriptions
- Generic drugs at retail pharmacy \$10 for 30-day supply, \$20 for a 90-day supply
- Members can obtain a 90-day prescription of maintenance medication from Walgreens and CVS without penalty for not using mail order
- Preferred brand name drugs are capped at \$300 per prescription with a 90-day prescription.
- 100% coverage for in-network preventive care including colon cancer screening.
- 100% coverage for labs when you use Quest Diagnostics or LabCorp
- 100% coverage for accidental injury within 72 hours
- \$25 copayment to see an in-network doctor, including specialists
- \$15 virtual visits in-network through American Well
- Diabetes Management Program that offers 100% coverage for generic drugs, blood glucose test strips and lancets through mail order
- Weight Management Program, 100% in-network coverage at dietitians or nutritionists.
- 100% coverage for in-network maternity care

Compare and join a health plan that works for you. Together Better Health. ■

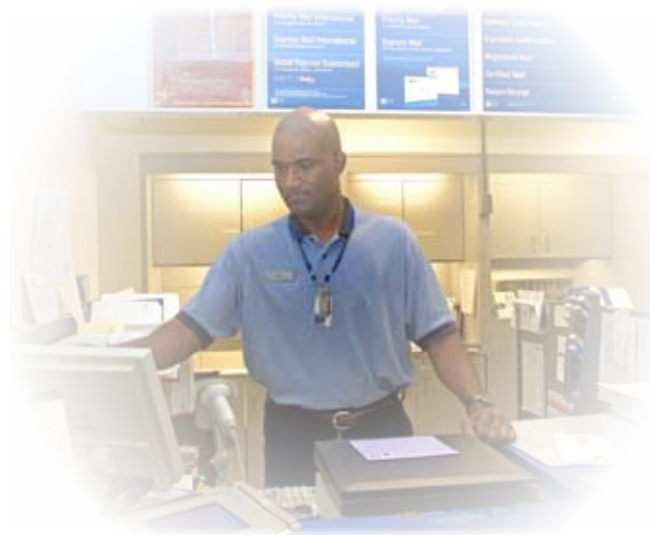
Comprehensive benefits at an affordable price.

OPEN SEASON DATES
NOVEMBER 12 - DECEMBER 10, 2018



apwuhp.com
OPEN SEASON HOTLINE
800.PIC.APWU

We work hard for you.



	2019 Premiums			
	Enrollment Code	PSE Biweekly	Retiree Monthly	APWU Career More Than 1 Year in FEHB
HIGH OPTION				
Self Only	471	*	\$227.50	\$101.80
Self Plus One	473	*	\$458.44	\$204.75
Self and Family	472	*	\$604.72	\$271.80
CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION				
Self Only	474	\$68.96	\$149.42	\$23.29
Self Plus One	476	\$149.88	\$324.75	\$59.41
Self and Family	475	\$163.51	\$354.27	\$77.65

*PSE's are responsible for 100% of the premium for this option. Check with the USPS for details.

● High Option



100% COVERAGE IN-NETWORK

- Preventive care and screenings
- Maternity care
- Accidental injury within 72 hours
- Lab tests (covered blood work performed at LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics)
- Visits to registered dietician/nutritionist
- Diabetes management: Generic medication, glucose test strips, lancets and coaching calls
- Weight management, pregnancy and tobacco cessation programs

HIGH OPTION HIGHLIGHTS

\$25 for office visits, including specialists
\$15 for virtual visits
\$40 for urgent care centers
\$10 for retail Tier 1 drugs – non-specialty

Smart 90: Maintenance drugs may be obtained at a retail network pharmacy, including CVS and Walgreens

● Consumer Driven Option



100% COVERAGE IN-NETWORK

- A Personal Care Account (PCA), which is funded by the Health Plan each January and is used by the member for covered medical services. Until the PCA is exhausted, the member is covered at 100%. The Plan funds the PCA at \$1,200 for Self Only and \$2,400 for Self Plus One and Self and Family
- Preventive care and screenings
- Maternity care
- Pregnancy and tobacco cessation programs

CONSUMER DRIVEN ADVANTAGE

No upfront deductible, coinsurance or copay until PCA is exhausted

Your PCA counts towards your in-network out-of-pocket maximum of \$3,800 Self Only and \$7,600 for Self Plus One and Self and Family

As an APWU career member with more than one year of service, you get a price break! Your APWU union has negotiated with the USPS to pay 95% of your premium