

THE AMERICAN **Postal Worker** APWU

November/December 2019



Fighting in Arbitration for a Good Contract!

Please see:

Pages 5-7 and 14 for Contract Updates

Pages 16-18 for the APWU National Election Results

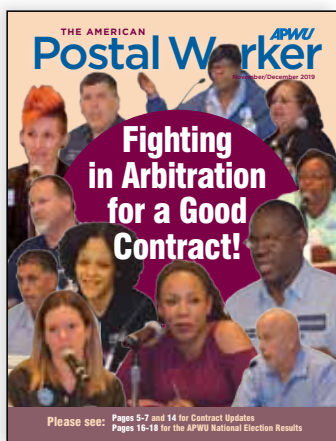


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This issue went to press before the term for the new APWU National Officers began on Nov. 12. Look for officer changes reflecting the 2019 election in the January - February 2020 issue.



PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

Fighting Forward

The following are excerpts from President Dimondstein's installation speech given on Oct. 31, 2019 in Las Vegas, NV:

I am deeply honored to be re-elected by our members for a third term as national president.

I congratulate all who have been elected. Join me in wishing the outgoing officers the very best and thanking them for their contributions and dedication to the APWU and postal workers.

Our election is over. Now *principled* unity is key, as we battle corporate greed, Wall Street privatizers, a hostile political environment, and those in management who are undermining the Postal Service.

Together, working with you, we are marching forward and building an activist, winning union. We achieved the 2015 contract stopping the downward spiral of concessionary bargaining and winning more job security, protected jobs in the victorious *Stop Staples* battle, built A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service, converted 66,000 Postal Support Employees to career, negotiated important settlements that protect our work, fought against plant closings, aggressively enforced the contract, encouraged new and young workers to step up, strengthened the retirees department, improved cooperation among the four postal unions, campaigned for expanded services including postal banking, practiced solidarity with other unions and workers, improved communications with the members, and built an impressive fightback campaign in the critical fight against postal privatization.

But we cannot rest. We are working, living and struggling when there is an all-out war on workers... It is Them vs Us, Wall Street vs. Main Street, Capital vs Labor.

Our problems did not start, nor will they end, with this [Presidential] Administration. But they are intensifying as witnessed by the Janus Supreme Court ruling, increased voter suppression, Executive Orders to destroy federal unions, and the outrageous lock-out of 800,000 government workers. Green lights from the highest office have unleashed a "divide and conquer" torrent of race and religious hatred and immigrant bashing.

The paramount job security battle of our time is to ensure the public Postal Service remains just that. Our jobs, our union and the people's democratic right enshrined in the Constitution depend on our determination and success. Since the White House plans for full-blown postal privatization emerged, the APWU has mobilized all hands-on deck. With a soon to be new Postmaster General chosen by the Trump controlled Postal Board of Governors, this critical battle will greatly intensify.

I challenge all of us to find ways to inspire and encourage members to attend meetings, join committees, write articles, stand up for safe jobs, sign up non-members, wear union gear with pride, welcome young workers, lobby politicians, fight for postal banking, stand in solidarity with all workers, and speak up and defend the public post office.

We, the people, are the makers of history. Dolores Huerta, famed farmworker leader, who graced our last convention at 88 years young, challenges working folks to "walk the street with us into history." Be encouraged by the words of Tommy Douglas, the beloved Canadian leader and founder of their labor party, the National Democratic Party, "Courage my friends, tis not too late to build a better world!"

And so, from our workplaces to the streets, from our neighborhoods to the halls of Congress, it's time to ever more educate, organize, mobilize and galvanize. We cannot solely elect, litigate, hope or grieve our way out of these difficult and dangerous times. We will have to fight our way forward with a movement of millions. We must organize the unorganized and save our unions. We must carry on the crusade to save the public Postal Service and our collective bargaining rights, and to take on corporate Wall Street power with more workers' power! Let's continue to stand up and fight back, hand in hand with each other, all crafts, active, retiree and auxiliary members, postal and other unions, community allies and the people who support the public post office and trust postal workers.

Solidarity Forever! ■

Arbitration Panel Hears Why Postal Workers Deserve a Good Contract NOW

Since the last issue of the *American Postal Worker* went to press, the APWU has been focused on fighting for a good contract for postal workers in Interest Arbitration. Hearings opened on Sept. 4 and ended on Nov. 15, with thirteen days of hearings in total.

“We are on target for a new union contract in the new year,” said President Mark Dimondstein. “While we can not predict the final outcome, the hearings went well.”

“We put on a strong case throughout the numerous days of hearings in support of you being awarded the good and just contract you all deserve,” said Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman, who oversaw the planning, development and implementation of the union’s interest arbitration strategy. “Our team of attorneys; along with the craft directors; our experts in the field of economics, job analysis, wage comparability; and APWU members testified on the work you do. The union put forth the arguments we believe were necessary to sway the Arbitration Panel chair, Stephen Goldberg, to rule in our favor.”

The APWU’s opening statement, delivered on Sept. 4, set the tone for the union’s case; discussing how postal workers are mission-dedicated, skilled, public servants deserving of increased pay and benefits, retention of Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs), job security, and a safe workplace, free of harassment. “The key to the past and the future success of the Postal Service is the hard work and dedication of hundreds of thousands of postal workers,” President Dimondstein said in his Opening Day testimony. “From those who sell postage and accept packages; to those who sort medicines, letters, and on-line orders; to those who transport the mail and repair the vehicles; to



those who maintain the equipment and facilities; to those who deliver the mail.”

In addition to critical testimony by APWU members (*see pages 6-7 for more information*), the APWU’s case included: testimony from all four craft directors; a detailed job analysis showing postal workers are highly skilled, with positions that require intensive training and expertise in order to be done efficiently and safely; true wage and benefit comparisons between APWU bargaining unit employees and other skilled, unionized workers; testimony showing that the Postal Service should expand services to generate more revenue; and labor economists testimony refuting the Postal Service’s claims.

The Postal Service’s witnesses showed their contempt for postal employees, stating that they were overpaid, unskilled workers. The USPS tried to justify an expanded two-tier workforce, cutting wages, and abolishing COLAs.

One of the Postal Service’s key witnesses said the agency needed more “flexibility.” ‘Flexibility’ is a management code word for more non-career employees, less protections against lay-offs and subcontracting, and undermining of seniority bidding rights for clearly defined preferred duty assignments,” President Dimondstein explained in a video to APWU members.

As this issue arrives in mailboxes, the arbitration decision is in the hands of the Arbitration Panel. Once issued, the interest arbitration decision is final and binding. Go to apwu.org to read more about the interest arbitration hearings and view videos from President Dimondstein explaining the sessions. Text CONTRACT to 91990 to receive immediate updates on your cellphone. ■



APWU Members Testify During

During the interest arbitration hearings on September 24-25 and Oct. 22, the APWU brought members from the workroom floor to testify to the Arbitration Panel, providing details about many aspects of their jobs including responsibilities, working conditions, training requirements, and staffing concerns. Their testimony showed postal workers' deep commitment to the postal mission of service to all the people of this country.

A total of 32 postal employees testified on seven panels, organized by craft and job type. The Clerk Craft panels were Mail Processing and Retail Clerks, the Maintenance Panels were Mail Processing Equipment and Building Maintenance, and MVS panels were PVS Drivers (MVOs/TTOs) and Vehicle Maintenance. There was also a panel made up of Postal Support Employees (PSEs).

The workers' testimonies followed opening comments of the respective craft panels by Clerk Division Director Clint Burelson, MVS Director Michael Foster and Maintenance Director Idowu Balogun. Support Services Director Steve Brooks also testified to the Arbitration Panel.

"Every member should be proud of your co-workers," said President Mark Dimondstein. "Through their

eloquent testimony, it was crystal clear that postal workers are skilled public servants, deeply dedicated to our jobs, to the mission of the public Postal Service – and who deserve to be well-compensated and well-treated with a good union contract."

"We are very fortunate to have such a strong union well-represented by the members on the panels," said Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman, who led the preparation and planning for the APWU's interest arbitration case. "The workers did a superb job of explaining the complexity and diversity of our multiple jobs and the service we provide to our customers."

Clerk Craft Panels

The Mail Processing panel's testimony included information about the safety concerns and physical requirements of their jobs. They also discussed the difficulties in processing a massive amount of mail – tens of thousands of pieces per hour – and how each envelope or package is unique.

Most of the time the "mail is with the clerk...and we take [our responsibility] quite seriously," said Mail Processing Clerk Veronica Hills, of the Hattiesburg MS Area Local. "Our customer is America, and they trust us to get their things where they are sending them."

During their panel, Retail Clerks offered testimony that provided details about their day-to-day tasks and the skill it takes to successfully engage with customers and deliver true public service.

"The service that we provide is not a service that you'd find at Walmart or Target," said Stephanie Clark, of the Northeast Mississippi Area Local. "These are services that are wrapped up in the mail our customers send. We are sending smiles and hugs and love."

Maintenance Craft Panels

In their testimony, Mail Processing Equipment workers described the complex and state-of-the-art mail sorting machines they work on every day, as well as the high pressure and stress of repairing machines under time constraints. The panel emphasized how much training is necessary to do their jobs and described how they must share knowledge and work together to meet difficult challenges that may arise each day.

Members of the Building Maintenance panel testified how extensive training and experience is needed to effectively solve different sets of problems that come up daily. Yet workers face more challenges following the job cuts in the last couple of years.



► Vehicle Maintenance (l-r): Luis Fabila, San Jose Area Local; Mervin Gooch, Montgomery County Area Local (MD); Wade Jackson, Baltimore Francis Stu Filbey Area Local; Leo Wesolowski, Eastern Montgomery County PA Area Local; Mike McDonald, Boston Metro Area Local



◄ Retail clerks (l-r): Stephanie Clark, Northeast Mississippi Area Local; Raelle Soles, Clarksburg WV Area Local; Kevin Robinson, Saint Charles Local (IL); Cori McIntosh, Missoula Local (MT); Sharon Stierle, South Jersey Area Local



Arbitration Hearings

"We are required to do the same amount of work with less people," said Ana Marrero, a Custodian from the Nation's Capital Southern MD Area Local. "A lot of the work is physical...and [the other custodians and I] carry more of a workload...it causes a lot of stress."

The panel also testified how important their work is when it comes to fulfilling the Postal Service's mission.

"What we are doing is a lot more than just delivering the mail. What we do is affecting our community," said Area Maintenance Technician Parker Rauch, from The Northern Virginia Area Local. "I go into a facility and I want to make it the best I can...if I make it a better environment for our employees, they will be able to give better service to our customers."

MVS Craft Panels

The two MVS Panels highlighted multiple issues that affect their work, including pay, subcontracting, safety, and a lack of training to complete difficult tasks.

Vehicle Maintenance workers testified how difficult their work has become, as they deal with new technology in vehicles without the training and tools needed to efficiently solve

problems. "Our job is to keep [drivers] safe, and to keep those around them safe," said Wade Jackson, from the Baltimore Francis Stu Filbey Area Local. "When you don't have any training to see how things work, as a mechanic you can figure [things] out...but it takes longer than it needs to."

"The hardest part of doing my job is doing it without the [tools and training] I had at the dealership," said Mervin Gooch, of the Montgomery County Area (MD) Local.

Panelists also testified about the pride they have in helping to fulfill the Postal Service's mission each day. "Truck drivers are on the front line," said Tiwana Rogers, a Motor Vehicle Operator from the Detroit District Area Local. "We play a very big part in the Postal Service."

"We are the beginning and the end of everything with the Postal Service," said Gooch. "Without us, the mail does not move."

PSE Panel

It was Postal Support Employees' (PSEs) turn to testify on Oct. 22. The panelists described their knowledge of the machines they operate and the retail services they provide.



Mail Processing clerks (l-r): Adrain Allman, Northeast Florida Area Local; Lizette Rodriguez, Manasota Area Local (FL); Todd Clark, Greater Cincinnati Area Local; Veronica Hills, Hattiesburg MS Area Local

A major issue they face is scheduling – schedules are often changed after they are posted. One member described having his start time for the next day altered on his day off. People were surprised when he turned up "late," but he had no opportunity to see the amended time.

But despite the hardships, the panel expressed their dedication to the postal mission and the communities they serve. "I'm proud to be a postal worker. I walk in and out with confidence and my kids are proud," said Dominique Ballinger.

That dedication should be rewarded, and their services secured with career status.

"The misconception is that PSEs are secondary help," said Leah Rochon. "We are primary help in the plants. In my plant, we are the alpha and omega at night. We start and finish... I don't see myself being a PSE forever. I want to get to career status and move on." ■



◀ Postal Support Employees (l-r): Leah Rochon, Lafayette Local (LA); Dominique Ballinger, Nation's Capital Southern MD Area Local; David Dinnen, Lehigh Valley Area Local (PA); Ericka Hobbs, Chicago Local

PVS Drivers (l-r): Tiwana Rogers, Detroit District Area Local; Michael Nazzaro III, New York Metro Area Postal Union; Christina Smith, Denver Metro Area Local; Willie Santiago, Raleigh Cosmopolitan Area Local (NC); Auvelio Connor, The Northern Virginia Area Local ▶



◀ Building Maintenance (l-r): Ana Marrero, Nation's Capital Southern MD Area Local; David Donahue, Chattanooga Area Local (TN); Jason Behrens-Magner, Cascade Area Local (WA); Steve Shamburg, Phoenix Metro Area Local; Parker Rauch, The Northern Virginia Area Local



▲ Mail Processing Equipment Maintenance (l-r): Jeffery Stagner, Nashville Area Local; Kevin Baughman, Des Moines BMC Local (IA); Jason Shively, Greater Cincinnati Area Local; Wayne Greenside, Boston Metro Area Local

Postmaster General to Retire, Postal Board of Governors to Appoint Successor

In mid-October, the Postal Service announced the upcoming retirement of Postmaster General Megan Brennan, after serving in the position for five years. Her retirement will be effective Jan. 31, 2020.

The task of appointing the next Postmaster General now falls to the Postal Service's Board of Governors. In a climate of increased financial and political pressure on the USPS, the selection of the next PMG will be essential to the Postal Service's future as a public institution.

One of the key goals of the postal reorganization in 1971 was removing political influence from the Post office. Previously, the Postmaster General was appointed directly by the President of the United States. Since 1971, members of the Postal Board of Governors are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate, and the Board in turn selects the Postmaster General.

**THE TASK OF APPOINTING THE
NEXT POSTMASTER GENERAL NOW
FALLS TO THE POSTAL SERVICE'S
BOARD OF GOVERNORS.**

In August of this year, the Senate confirmed three nominees appointed by President Trump to the Board of Governors and the Board reached a quorum for the first time since 2014. Now with a quorum, the Board is in a position to hire Brennan's replacement and set the course for the Postal Service's future.

With the prefunding debacle still unresolved, there's real concern that the Trump Administration will pressure the Postal Board of Governors to appoint a Postmaster General who shares the White House's views on important issues of privatization, service standards and collective bargaining rights for postal workers.

"We must ensure that Postmaster General Brennan's successor shares postal workers' vision for a vibrant Postal Service that continues to belong to the people of the country," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. ■

Petition to Appoint a Postmaster General Who Supports a PUBLIC Postal Service

Signatory Organizations of A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service are rallying their members onto a public petition demanding that the Postal Board of Governors appoint a new PMG who is committed to continuing public ownership of the Postal Service and to providing quality postal services to everyone – no matter who they are or where they live – at reasonable and uniform rates.

"Postal workers! Now is the time to rally the public in support of our national treasure, the public United States Postal Service," said President Dimondstein. "Talk to your co-workers, neighbors and friends, and ask them to sign the petition. Meet outside of post offices and talk to customers about the importance of a public Postal Service. Let's send a clear message to the Postal Board of Governors that the people demand a public Postal Service – our jobs depend on it!"

The petition to the Board of Governors states:

We, the undersigned, believe in a public Postal Service committed to providing quality service to everyone, no matter who they are or where they live, at reasonable and uniform rates. Our United States Postal Service is an essential part of the fabric of the country and a source of good, living wage jobs for our communities. We call on you to appoint a Postmaster General who is fully committed to universal service and the public ownership of the Postal Service.

Go to usmailnotforsale.org or apwu.org/petition to sign the petition today! Get a link sent to you by texting PETITION to 91990. You can also scan the QR code.



PEW POLL:

Postal Service Takes Top Marks Among Federal Agencies

The Pew Research Center released in October the results of an opinion survey where the public ranked their views of various federal agencies. The United States Postal Service once again topped the list of any federal agency, edging out the National Park Service and various law enforcement agencies.

Fully 90 percent of the public views the Postal Service favorably, with 37 percent saying they view USPS “very favorably.” Unlike many other agencies, the public’s view of the USPS was consistent across political parties: 87 percent of Republicans and 91 percent of Democrats hold a favorable view of USPS.

Perhaps most interestingly, the Postal Service’s favorability has grown consistently in the last several years. In 2010, total favorability was 83 percent, it was 84 percent in 2015 and 88 percent last year.

While postal workers and allies well know the hard work and dedication to mission required to move and deliver the mail, the public’s confidence and appreciation in the Postal Service is remarkable in the context of the challenges facing this vital public good. After years of declining mail volume, political attacks, and management’s short-sighted and ultimately ineffective slowing of delivery standards, the people of this country still value the important role the public Postal Service plays in their everyday life.

Mail after privatization: UK posties gear up for dispute over future of Royal Mail

The United Kingdom’s postal union, the Communication Workers Union, has returned a 97 percent “Yes” vote authorizing strike action in the Royal Mail heading into the busy holiday season. The dispute centers around the future business model of Britain’s postal service, which was privatized in 2013.

Royal Mail management has floated plans of separating the mail company into two separate business entities – one for parcels and one for letters. Postal workers believe that would inevitably lead to service reduction.

“Our dispute is about the very future of our industry – the future of postal services, and it’s about change. The change that we want to see is postal workers still being able to have a role in society,” said CWU General Secretary Dave Ward. “All it needs is the will to invest in the people’s post and the people who run it.” *Read more on p. 35.*

Attacks on Federal Workers Continue

A recently leaked memo from the White House shows that the Trump Administration is keeping up its attacks on federal employees and their unions. The memo shows the Administration’s plans to severely restrict union rights for workers across a number of government agencies and even recommends that the government stop bargaining entirely with TSA security screeners.

The memo suggested that President Trump should issue an executive order exempting certain Defense Department workers from collective bargaining. It also considered including employees in parts of the Departments of Homeland Security, State and the Office of Personnel Management in the collective bargaining restrictions.

Veterans Administration (VA) workers continue to fight for their rights, after the Trump Administration moves severely restricted union time and other union rights, leading to ongoing court challenges by the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and other federal unions. VA workers are now attempting to bargain for their next collective agreement, and have filed a national grievance alleging the VA is bargaining in bad faith amid White House attempts to shutter additional VA facilities across the country. ■

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.



People Power in 2020

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

The National APWU Election of Officers is over and I want to thank those who supported me.

Approximately 36,000 members voted, out of approximately 190,000 members. In the 2016 election approximately 46,000 members voted. During the campaign I spoke to many members who said that it was hard to vote for people we don't know. I explained that a booklet with the candidate's 1000-word articles about their goals will be in the envelope that has your ballot. You had the ability to read those articles to help you make a choice. If you trust your local officers and stewards you could vote for those candidates that they endorsed, because many have met the candidates or have kept up on officers around the country. The candidates tried to meet members during this campaign and be there if you had questions. We can't be everywhere, and unfortunately the contract campaign ran into the election campaign.

Thank you for your support and confidence in my leadership skills. We have a lot of work to do.

There is another very important election ahead: the 2020 Federal Election. We need to be ready to not only vote for candidates who support postal workers and our families, we need to help them get elected. Our work can help stop the attacks against expanding the Postal Service and with the right people in office they can help us provide important services to this country. We need to fight like hell for job security, more staffing, good benefits, and a better working environment.

So, what should we be doing in the next three years?

We have to educate our members about why belonging to a union is important, and more important than that why we need to become involved as a union member now. Our future is in our own hands and it is so much better when we all share in the work to make our workroom floor a better place – that is safe, non-hostile, with better wages and benefits so that we can stop living like a slave to our job.

There is power in people. There are plenty of examples on how people power is real, and it works. I hope in the new year ahead we can bring educational programs and

BUILDING UNION POWER

activities to the workplace, get you excited about standing strong with your sisters and brothers, and together save this good work we do, and the benefits and services we provide to the people of this country.

Let us pray that we start the New Year with a strong, supportive arbitration decision on our Collective Bargaining Agreement. May you work safely, have some time to share with your family, and get ready for the fight of our lifetime. Leadership excludes no one. Our vision is for a united membership committed to each other and our communities, "Be Not Afraid." ■

THERE IS POWER IN PEOPLE. THERE ARE PLENTY OF EXAMPLES ON HOW PEOPLE POWER IS REAL, AND IT WORKS. I HOPE IN THE NEW YEAR AHEAD WE CAN BRING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES TO THE WORKPLACE, GET YOU EXCITED ABOUT STANDING STRONG WITH YOUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS, AND TOGETHER SAVE THIS GOOD WORK WE DO, AND THE BENEFITS AND SERVICES WE PROVIDE TO THE PEOPLE OF THIS COUNTRY.

LETTERS

The Real "Norma Rae" Still Lives!

To Mark Dimondstein, Editor of *The American Postal Worker*

Dear Brother Mark,

I'm sure many APWU members have seen the Academy Award-winning Hollywood movie, Norma Rae. It is the story of Crystal Lee Sutton, the real 'Norma Rae,' the working-class hero, the "shero," who became famous around the world for her courageous stand in the 1970's successful union organizing drive of textile workers in eastern North Carolina. Many APWU members

may not know that she was also a close friend of yours.

This September on the tenth anniversary of her death, her life was celebrated. I was honored to represent the APWU and you at this recognition of Crystal's inspiring life, held at Alamance (N.C.) Community College where her books and papers are archived.

As a collaborator with Crystal on much union work over many years and a long-time personal friend of hers and her family, I was pleased to be asked to be a speaker, along with her children who spoke so proudly of their mother.

The stories were many, and were warm and inspiring. One of the most impactful was the greeting I shared from you. The fact that you have played a significant role in the U.S. labor movement in recent years, including in defense of working class women and leaders, made manifest how Crystal's rich and generous legacy is still being carried on today in the labor movement.

Crystal Lee Sutton's spirit lives on in all who are fighting for the empowerment of the union rank and file and for justice for working people all over the world!

*Richard A. Koritz,
APWU Solidarity Representative*



Crystal Lee Sutton with Richard Koritz in 1984

There is More To Me

Growing up in a housing project,
down in Chattanooga Tennessee.

Having dreams and aspirations of
making a better life for me.

I paid for college, gained some
knowledge.

As a single parent raised my children
(all 3),

one a store Manager

one works in Logistics

one an Air Force Airman

Quite a feat you see.

As the years moved forward
during the course of my life I
stayed grounded

(I can't help it being only 4ft. 10).

I took on the challenge of entering a
workforce that was predominantly
covered by men.

For I'm just a truck driver, that's how
most view me,

when they're on the outside looking
in.

Not knowing what it takes for their
mail or packages to arrive,

by way of dedicated women and men.

Not knowing of all the long hours,
missed times spent with family
and or enjoying the gatherings of
friends.

It takes all of us

the Maintenance Crew, Mail Handlers,
Mechanics, Clerks, Letter Carriers, and
yes that Ol' Truck Driver again.

For most days (not all) there's a pep in
my step,



Christina Smith (pictured) recited her poem as part of the MVS panel testimony to the Arbitration Panel. For more on the panel's testimony, see page 7.

but always pride in my stride.

As I climb in my truck to prepare for
my day,

just that Ol' Truck Driver inside.

Maneuvering through traffic, school
zones, and construction

always with Safety in mind.

Remembering of course, we're the
Postal Service, so that means Rain,
Ice, Snow and Sunshine.

When you peel back the layers of all
that's involved in getting the mail
from point A to point B,

and you're sitting in traffic next to a
mail truck, look up and think about
what you see.

When I raised my hand and took my
Oath to provide a service you see,

I'm more than just a truck driver, who
is providing a service to unknown
names and unseen faces, all of which
are counting on me.

I do my best in the MVS as a TTO with
pride.

At the end of the day and with a
sigh of relief, it makes me feel good
inside.

*— Christina "Pinkki" L. Smith,
member of Denver Area Local*



SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

Implementing Commercial Crime Policy Bond Coverage

How it is Different From a Labor Bond, How it Protects the Assets of Your Local

Local union bonding is required by (1) the Constitution, and (2) the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA). Under the LMRDA, local unions are required to have a bond limit liability of no less than ten percent (10%) of the local's liquid assets. It is strongly advised that locals obtain bond coverage for 100 percent of their liquid assets for any officer responsible for handling union funds. This has been interpreted to mean the total of liquid assets on hand at the end of your prior calendar (or fiscal) year, and the gross income received during the year.

The Labor Organization Bond was specifically written for labor unions to satisfy the requirements of the LMRDA whereas Crime Policy can be used for several types of entities. A bond is a guarantee to protect unions from financial loss arising from fraudulent or dishonest acts in the handling of funds or other property by officers and/or employees. Violations of the LMRDA bonding requirement may be punishable by fines up to \$10,000 and imprisonment for up to one year. National APWU provides \$5,000 of bond coverage for each local.

As cyber technology becomes more and more sophisticated at an alarming rate, it is important to be proactive in protecting local assets from these types of losses. Implementing Commercial Crime Policy coverage would provide coverage for forgery or alteration, computer theft, and funds transfer fraud for the International and the Locals/Affiliates listed on the Labor Organization Bond.

Forgery or Alteration: Coverage is provided for losses resulting directly from "forgery" or alteration (coverage not applicable to employees of the named insured) of checks, drafts, promissory notes, or similar written promises, orders or directions to pay a sum certain in "money" that are: (1) Made or drawn by or drawn upon you; or (2) Made or drawn by one acting as your agent; or that are purported to have been so made or drawn.

Computer Theft: Covers loss of or damage to "money," "securities" and "other property" resulting directly from the use of any computer to fraudulently cause a transfer of that property from inside the "premises" or "banking premises" to a person (other than a "messenger") outside those "premises;" or "banking premises;" (a) To a person (other than a "messenger") outside those "premises;" or (b) To a place outside those "premises."

Funds Transfer Fraud: Will pay for loss of "funds" resulting directly from a "fraudulent instruction" directing a financial institution to transfer, pay or deliver "funds" from your "transfer account."

Local affiliates will now have Labor Organization Bond and a Crime Policy coverage if these unforeseen circumstances arise to protect local assets. Please contact the Secretary-Treasurer's Department if you need assistance with determining the amount of bond coverage your local will need or if your local needs to decrease the amount of current coverage.

The Secretary-Treasurer's Department is moving forward with the important task of preparing for the 2020 National Convention. Information will be forthcoming as preparations are finalized and will be posted in the APWU magazine and on apwu.org. ■

Webinars Available

The Secretary-Treasurer's Department provides training webinars in the areas of Fiduciary Responsibilities of Union Officers, Trustee Training, Local Elections, Recording Secretary Training, and various other topics for local and state officers.

Contact the Secretary-Treasurer's Department today to learn more details and sign up, 202-842-4215!

Season's 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.

You Can Give Today to the Combined Federal Campaign

The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) is the largest and most successful annual, workplace charity campaign in the country. During the CFC, postal, federal civilian, and military employees have the opportunity to make tax-deductible donations to one or several of their favorite charities through payroll deductions. This year, the CFC season started on Sept. 9 and runs through Jan. 12, 2020.

If able, the APWU encourages members to donate to causes that are near and dear to their hearts. "Postal workers have a generous spirit," President Dimondstein said, "and CFC contributions are one way it shows."

In the wake of natural disasters in recent years, including ongoing California wildfires, APWU members may consider donating to the Postal Employees Relief Fund (PERF), one of the many organizations employees can designate during the campaign.

PERF was established to assist postal workers who are rebuilding their lives during trying times. It is a non-profit organization that is for the potential benefit of all postal employees. PERF depends on continued generosity to help our coworkers rebuild their lives after natural disasters strike.

To support PERF via the CFC, designate #10268.

APWU SCHOLARSHIPS



The deadline for the 2020 E.C. Hallbeck Memorial Scholarship, Vocational Scholarship, and Best Essay Award is

March 31, 2020. 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 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.



The APWU, Still Fighting for the Rights and Wages We Deserve

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR VANCE ZIMMERMAN

I must start by telling all of you thank you. You, the members of this great union, let your voices be heard and elected me to a second term as your Industrial Relations Director. I am deeply honored to have been given the continued opportunity to serve each of you. You have placed your trust in me to continue to fight against an employer who it seems does not value and respect you for the work you all do. I will be dedicated to you, the members. I congratulate all the winners of the past election and look forward to everyone working for the betterment of the members and the union.

Even before negotiations began, we were preparing for a possible interest arbitration. Since starting on Sept. 4, 2019 with Opening Day, thirteen days of hearings have taken place. At the time this article is being printed, both the APWU and the USPS will have finished our direct testimony and will be completing our primary cases. Our next contract is now in the hands of the Arbitration Panel.

As Director, I oversaw the planning, development, and implementation of our interest arbitration strategy. Working with various headquarters and craft officers, we put on a strong case throughout the numerous days of hearings in support of you being awarded the good and just contract you all so deserve. Our team of attorneys; APWU Craft Directors; our experts in the fields of economics, job analysis, wage comparability; and APWU members testified on the work you do. They worked together to put forth the arguments we believe were necessary to sway the Arbitration Panel chair, Stephen Goldberg, to rule in our favor.

I WAS PERSONALLY MOVED GREATLY BY OUR APWU MEMBER EXPERTS' TESTIMONY ON YOUR WORK.

I was personally moved greatly by our APWU member experts' testimony on your work. These experts came from the ranks of window clerks, mail processing clerks, maintenance personnel, MVS drivers, MVS mechanics, and PSEs who go to work at the Post Office every day. They shared inspiring stories of their dedication to the Postal Service and its mission – stories of helping their custom-

ers and the pride they take in that work. They shared stories of the difficulties of being a non-career postal employee. Most of all they reminded us how dedicated the hard-working women and men of the Postal Service are to the American public. The testimonies shared by these union sisters and brothers clearly demonstrated that all of you are deserving of a fair wage increase and benefits package.

Of course, the Postal Service took the opposing view. Though they didn't directly question any of the testifying members' dedication and hard work, they did question whether or not the skills you have and the work you do is worth the wages and benefits you currently earn. Witness after witness testified for the Postal Service that – clerks in particular – are non-skilled employees. They testified that things window clerks do – like face-to-face interaction with others – is not important to the job. They claimed that if you make a mistake in your job it is insignificant and does not cause a problem. I know, as I am sure you do too, that when a mail processing clerk experiences an out-of-sequence error on a 200,000-piece DPS run, that it is problematic. We all know that a small error can cause a problem and has an effect on our customers.

**YOU DESERVE EVERY PENNY YOU EARN
AND EVERY BENEFIT THE POST OFFICE
IS REQUIRED TO PROVIDE UNDER THE
CONTRACT. A FAIR AND DECENT CONTRACT
IS NOT TOO MUCH TO ASK.**

With the majority of the arbitration process done, we can now only wait for the decision. When the decision is released it will be final and binding. There will not be a vote of the membership to ratify the Arbitration Panel decision.

You deserve every penny you earn and every benefit the Post Office is required to provide under the contract. A fair and decent contract is not too much to ask the arbitration panel to require the Postal Service provide.

Solidarity! ■



WHAT IS A 1767?

A Powerful Form!

PS FORM 1767-Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice



- ▶ Officially documents and addresses employee's safety hazards or concerns in writing.
- ▶ Requires a timely written response during your tour by management consistent with ELM Section 824.632.
- ▶ It is tracked and identifies abatement date.
- ▶ The Joint Local Safety and Health Committee is required to review all 1767s at their meetings.
- ▶ User friendly form that is easy to complete—instructions are clearly printed on the back of the form.

The form must be readily available for an employee to use! Not locked in a supervisor's desk or any non-accessible area.

The employee must be provided a signed copy of the form (blue copy). It is also suggested you have your union representative make a copy before it is submitted to the supervisor.

This form can be used to document other safety and health related concerns as well (i.e. housekeeping issues, buildings not maintained, dirty bathrooms, bad lighting, abusive supervisors, etc.).

The form may also be completed anonymously and submitted directly to the safety office.

Text SAFETY to 91990 for a link to the PS 1767 page.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE IN ESTABLISHING
YOUR OWN SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE,
PLEASE CONTACT**

**Your Regional Coordinator
Your Regional Safety Rep**

OFFICIAL RESULTS IN ELECTION

Dimondstein Re-Elected National President

APWU President Mark Dimondstein was elected to a third term on Oct. 8 in the 2019 APWU Election of National Officers. Also re-elected were Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy, Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth Powell, Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman, Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard, Organization Director Anna Smith, Research and Education Director Joyce B. Robinson, Human Relations Director Sue Carney, Retirees Department Director Nancy Olumekor and Maintenance Craft Director Idowu Balogun.

Lamont A. Brooks will become the new Clerk Craft Director, and Sarah Jane Rodriguez will become the new Health Plan Director. Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) Craft Director Michael O. Foster and Support Services Director Stephen R. Brooks were unopposed.

The official results of the election were certified by the American Arbitration Association on Oct. 16, and are printed below. Winners are identified by an asterisk; incumbent officers are denoted by "(I)" after their name. Uncontested elections are listed on page 17-18.

"I am honored to be re-elected as the national president of the APWU by the members of our great union," President Dimondstein said. "I greatly appreciate and am humbled by the continued support!"

"Congratulations to all of the winning candidates," he added. "Now is the time for all leaders and members to come together as we use our collective voice to fight for a strong contract and stand up for a vibrant public Postal Service."



2019 APWU Election Committee, (l-r) Top: Will Khong, Lamont Green, Kim Guy, Mark Jennings, Bev Fletcher Bottom: Norma Impallari, Tony Turner, Michelle Elliott

General and Departments

President

Mark Dimondstein* (I)	15,766
Greg Bell	6,746
John L. Marcotte	9,765
Tony D. McKinnon, Sr.	3,151

Executive Vice President

Debby Szeredy* (I)	14,237
Sam Wood	7,794
Jonathan Smith	13,108

Secretary-Treasurer

Elizabeth "Liz" Powell* (I)	25,276
Jeane Gardiner	9,488

Industrial Relations Director

Vance Zimmerman* (I)	13,205
Scott M. Hoffman	11,735

Legislative/Political Director

Judy Beard* (I)	17,653
Courtney Jenkins	9,797
Thomas Benson	7,490

Organization Director

Anna Smith* (I)	17,736
Doris Simmons	6,996

Research and Education Director

Joyce B. Robinson* (I)	14,273
Dena Briscoe	10,592

Human Relations Director

Susan M. "Sue" Carney* (I)	18,979
Nannette J. Corley	4,932
Daleo Freeman	10,908

Health Plan Director

Robert Furbush	8,618
Sebrina E. Maynard	11,152
Sarah Jane Rodriguez*	13,659

Regional Coordinators

Central Region

Sharyn M. Stone* (I)	3,818
Roscoe Woods	2,265

Eastern Region

William LaSalle	1,268
Gwendolyn Lane	794
AJ Jones*	2,216

OF NATIONAL UNION OFFICERS

Northeast Region

Scott Adams	1,713
Tiffany Foster*	3,026

Southern Region

Kennith L. Beasley* (I)	4,320
Princella J. Edwards Vogel	1,637

Western Region

Omar M. Gonzalez* (I)	2,978
Dominic Davis	1,004

Clerk Division

Director

Clint Burelson (I)	6,769
Lamont A. Brooks*	10,519

Assistant Director (A)

Sam Lisenbe*	8,960
Michael Macho	8,030

Assistant Director, (B)

Lynn Pallas-Barber* (I)	9,981
Christine "Chris" Pruitt	7,197

National Business Agents, Central Region

Chicago Region, (B)

Mike O'Hearn (I)	696
Devendra Rathore "D"*	790

Wichita Region, (A)

Ashley Cargill*	306
David W. Black, Sr.	256

National Business Agents, Southern Region

Atlanta Region, (C)

Michael Sullivan* (I)	1,145
William G. Flanagan, Jr.	746

Dallas Region, (A)

Jack Crawford* (I)	687
Carlton Williams	566

Dallas Region, (C)

Alex Aleman	424
Diann Scurlark*	469
Ben Martinez	365

National Business Agents, Western Region

San Francisco Region, (A)

Sonia E. Canchola* (I)	710
Ricardo "Rick" Ruiz	653

San Francisco Region, (C)

Eric A. Van Dyke*	818
Terry L. Hood	501

Maintenance Division

Director

Idowu Balogun* (I)	3,492
Sayed Moustafa	1,506

Assistant Director, (A)

Jimmie Waldon* (I)	3,290
Kenneth Wall	1,634

Assistant Director, (B)

Terry B. Martinez* (I)	3,067
Steven Duckworth	1,935

National Business Agents, Maintenance Division

Southern Region, (A)

John Gearhard* (I)	795
Michael Burris	440

Southern Region, (B)

Carlos Paz* (I)	735
Kyle Powell	493

Western Region, (B)

Louis M. Kingsley* (I)	466
Caroline B. Federico	237

Motor Vehicle Service Division

National Business Agents, Eastern Region

Kenneth (Ken) Prinz* (I)	336
Michael "Mike" Strano	86

National Business Agents, Southern Region

Southeast Sub-Region

Bruce E. Amey* (I)	352
Gregory Dixon	277

Southwest Sub-Region

Dwight (D.D.) Johnson (I)	97
Dyrike Shaw*	143

Retirees Department

Director

Nancy E. Olumekor* (I)	4,895
Jennifer D. Fulbright	4,830

Retiree National Convention Delegates

Western Region

Patricia A. Williams* (I)	992
Patricia Mort	497

Uncontested National Offices

Clerk Division

National Business Agents, Central Region

Chicago Region, (A)

Linda Turney (I)

Chicago Region, (C)

James Stevenson III

Cincinnati Region, (A)

Michael D. Schmid

Cincinnati Region, (B)

Michael W. Funk, Jr.

Minneapolis Region, (A)

William "Willie" Mellen

Minneapolis Region, (B)

Martin J. Mater

St. Louis Region, (A)

Robert D. Kessler

St. Louis Region, (B)

Daniel F. Skemp

National Business Agents, Eastern Region

Philadelphia Region, (A)

Robert Romanowski

Philadelphia Region, (B)

John Louis Jackson, Jr.

Philadelphia Region, (C)

Vince Tarducci

Washington DC Region, (A)

Rachel A. Walthall

Washington DC Region, (B)

Pamela Richardson

National Business Agents, Northeast
Region

New England Region, (A)

Frank Rigiero

New England Region, (B)

Stephen Lukosus

New England Region, (C)

Thomas O'Brien

New York Region, (A)

Peter "Pete" Coradi

New York Region, (B)

Elizabeth "Liz" Swigert

New York Region, (C)

Bernard C. Timmerman

National Business Agents, Southern Region

Atlanta Region, (A)

James "Jim" DeMauro

Atlanta Region, (B)

Doris E. Orr-Richardson

Dallas Region, (B)

Charles Tillman

Memphis Region, (A)

Billy Woods

Memphis Region, (B)

Pamela Smith

National Business Agents, Western Region

Denver Region, (A)

Vicki L. Carios

Denver Region, (B)

Stella "JoAnn" Gerhart

Northwest Region, (A)

Brian Dunsmore

Northwest Region, (B)

Brian Dunn

San Francisco Region, (B)

Shirley J. Taylor

San Francisco Region, (D)

Chuck Locke

Maintenance Division

National Business Agents, Maintenance
Division

Central Region, (A)

Craig Fisher

Central Region, (B)

Jeffrey S. Beaton

Central Region, (C)

Curtis Walker

Eastern Region

Jason Treier

Northeast Region

Dave Sarnacki

Western Region, (A)

Hector Baez

Motor Vehicle Service Division

Director

Michael O. Foster

Assistant Director

Javier E. Piñeres

National Business Agents, Motor Vehicle
Service Division

Central Region

William Wright

Northeast Region

Joseph LaCapria

Western Region

Jerome Pittman

Other National Business Agents

Alaskan Area

James M. Patarini

Caribbean Area

Daniel Soto

Pacific Area

Rufina Pagaduan

Support Services Division

Director

Stephen R. Brooks

Support Services Division, National
Business Agent

Judy McCann

Retiree National Convention Delegates

Central Region

Paul Browning

Eastern Region

John P. Richards

Northeast Region

Dolores Young

Southern Region

Patricia McGriff

Installation of National Officers Brings Message of UNITY



APWU National Officers say the Oath of Office

On Thursday, Oct. 31 the APWU conducted the installation of the newly elected national officers with a message of unity and determination to fight for the future of postal workers and working people everywhere.

The night's theme was "Moving Forward Together" and the ceremony was presided over by APWU Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell.

The guest of honor at the ceremony was AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre, who administered the oath of office.



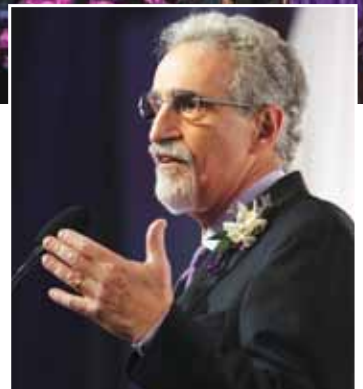
Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell presiding over the Installation

After an introduction by Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy, Gebre addressed the gathering, praising the work of APWU's officers and leadership: "Your union, led by your president, Mark Dimondstein, has been a leader in our movement with the creation of a A Grand Alliance to Save our Public Postal Service, the successful fight to *Stop Staples*, the campaign to expand the role of the Postal Service, including vote by mail and postal banking – fighting to defend the common good, public services and public sector unionism."



Guest of Honor, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre

He spoke of the fight during the tough times we face, with working people experiencing cruel and unnecessary hardships with low wages, unsafe workplaces, voter suppression, families ripped apart and refugees turned away.



President Mark Dimondstein gives the keynote speech

But he expressed his hope in the face of this adversity:

"Hope in each of you...serving your communities. Hope in striking teachers. Hope in the 60 million Americans who would join a union today if they could. Hope of a brighter day," he said.

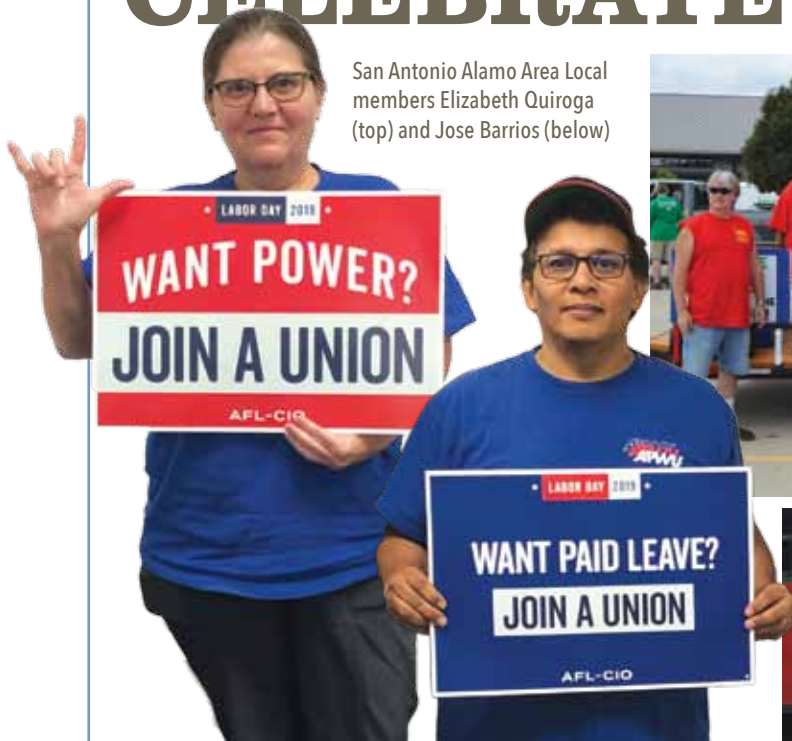
"HOPE IN EACH OF YOU...SERVING YOUR COMMUNITIES. HOPE IN STRIKING TEACHERS. HOPE IN THE 60 MILLION AMERICANS WHO WOULD JOIN A UNION TODAY IF THEY COULD. HOPE OF A BRIGHTER DAY."

President Mark Dimondstein gave the keynote speech, congratulating all who were elected and thanking the outgoing officers for their contributions and dedication to the APWU and postal workers. With the union election over he pointed out that "now principled unity is key, as we battle corporate greed, Wall Street privatizers, a hostile political environment, and those in management who are undermining the Postal Service."

To read more of President Dimondstein's speech, see page 4. ■

MEMBERS

MEMBERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY CELEBRATE LABOR DAY



San Antonio Alamo Area Local members Elizabeth Quiroga (top) and Jose Barrios (below)



Des Moines Area Local members and local officers



New York Metro Area Postal Union members and local officers

MINNEAPOLIS AREA LOCAL HOLDS MEMBER APPRECIATION PICNIC



Minneapolis Area Local members and officers at the local's picnic on Sept. 15. The picnic included a raffle and silent auction for COPA.

PUERTO RICO AREA LOCAL HOLDS SHOP STEWARD TRAINING



Samuel Antonio Hernandez Algrin trains new Puerto Rico Area Local shop stewards on August 25.

IN ACTION



Sacramento Area Local Legislative Director Ric Baretto (left), Long Beach Area Local President Denisha Dean (second from right), and National Business Agent, San Francisco Region (A) Sonia E. Canchola (right) meet with Congressmembers Harley Rouda, D-CA-48 (pictured) and Gil Cisneros, D-CA-29 (not pictured)

Albuquerque Local (NM) Education and Organizing Director Dan D. Huerta (right) with Congresswoman Xochitl Torres Small, D-NM-2

LOCAL OFFICERS MEET WITH CONGRESSMEMBERS TO ADVOCATE AGAINST POSTAL PRIVATIZATION

SEND US YOUR PHOTOS! Have Your Local Featured in Members in Action

The *American Postal Worker* is putting the call out to send photos of local officers and members at APWU local, state or retiree chapter sponsored events, community parades, picnics or any other civic event.

We want to highlight the great work that you, the members, do every day!

Anything from membership events, to supporting a picket line or an organizing drive for other union brothers and sisters, to participating in a community donation drive, to handing out flyers at a community barbeque or baseball game would be welcome.

High-resolution photos should be emailed to communications@apwu.org. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the APWU National Communications Department at 202-842-4250.

NORTHEAST TN AREA LOCAL HOLDS DINNER TO SUPPORT CONTRACT FIGHT



Northeast TN Area Local members and officers in support of APWU National's Contract Campaign on Oct. 2

60 YEARS OF SERVICE TO

PREMIUM REDUCTION

- **APWU career:** Premiums **reduced** for both the High Option and Consumer Driven Option
- **All other categories:** High Option premiums **reduced** and Consumer Driven Option premiums stay the same

APWU Health Plan serves postal employees and retirees with diligence and compassion. We're here to help you get the most from your Plan. As a member, you can rely on:

- 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

2019 OPEN SEASON

Nov. 11 - Dec. 9.

Join the benefit plan
America's workforce has
trusted for 60 years.

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

#BetterTogether60Years



Premiums 2020

	Enrollment code	PSE biweekly
High Option Self Only	471	*
High Option Self Plus One	473	*
High Option Self and Family	472	*
Consumer Driven Option Self Only	474	\$68.96
Consumer Driven Option Self Plus One	476	\$149.88
Consumer Driven Option Self and Family	475	\$163.51

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

APWU Members 'Stuck' and 'Banded' Together During Interest Arbitration



Saint Louis Gateway District Area Local

Throughout the country, APWU members wore *Good Contract NOW!* stickers and/or wristbands on the workroom floor.

Thank you from the National Contract Campaign Committee to every member who sent in pictures. We received dozens from coast to coast.

A larger compilation of pictures can be found on the APWU National Flickr page.

Together we showed local management that we are united in our fight for good contract!



Pittsburgh Metro Area Local



Athens Local (OH)



Miami Area Local



Central Florida Area Local



Detroit District Area Local



New York Postal Workers Union



Miami Area Local



San Francisco Local

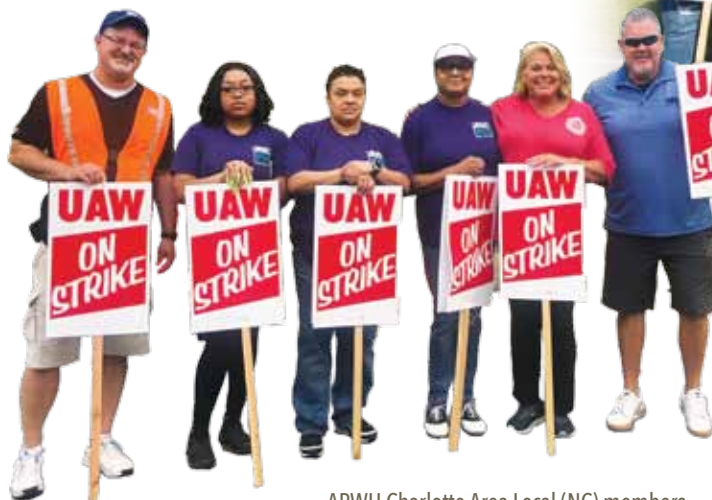


Bakersfield Area Local (CA)

APWU Supports UAW Strike for a Fair Contract

40-day strike ends after workers approve new four-year contract

On Sept. 15, when nearly 50,000 United Auto Workers (UAW) members went on strike against General Motors (GM), many in the union were prepared to spend an extended period of time on the picket line. By the time the members voted to ratify the new four-year contract, the strike had lasted 40 days – the longest auto strike in over 50 years.



APWU Charlotte Area Local (NC) members and officers on picket line

Fortunately, they weren't alone in their fight: other union sisters and brothers, as well as community members, joined pickets, provided meals, and supported the strikers. The people of this country united in a strong response when General Motors cut off the strikers' health care coverage, pressuring the company to resume it. Some of that support came from APWU members who joined workers on picket lines in their area.

"The community is stepping up, coming out here, and recognizing the issues that we have are important. Not just us, but their movement...", said UAW Local 774 President J.R. Baker during the strike.

That community support helped workers stay on the line and win important gains in the new contract. Included in the approved agreement are pay raises of 3 percent in the first and third years, with no increases in health care costs for workers. Most significantly, the transition period to become a permanent, full time employee was cut from eight years to four years, and full-time temporary workers are able to become permanent employees after three years of continuous service. While UAW was not able to stop the closures of three GM plants, the company agreed to continue production at the Detroit-Hamtramck facility.



APWU Western New York Area Local officers on picket line

The Greater Cincinnati Area Local Executive Board joined members of the local AFL-CIO Labor Council in holding the line for workers as they left to collect their strike pay. "I had been on a lot of informational pickets before, but never a strike picket line, where the workers had to go to the street to fight for their wages, benefits, and working conditions," said their APWU Local President Mike Smith. "It was quite an experience."

"With our fight against privatization, we know one day it could very well be us. So we want to give that solidarity to our brothers and sisters. It doesn't just have to be a postal union. [We are] all about solidarity, and a firm believer in that an injustice to one is an injustice to all," said Tiffany Alexander, the Charlotte Area Local Clerk Craft Director. "So we just want to get out there and show them some support."

"I salute all the APWU members who stood on UAW picket lines and supported fellow union brothers and sisters during this strike," said President Mark Dimondstein. "In Our Unity, Lies Our Strength!" ■



APWU Greater Cincinnati Area Local members and officers with UAW strikers

Negotiation/Arbitration with the USPS



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

Most postal workers would be surprised to learn that during negotiations for a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), the top management officials did not meet with the union to discuss and resolve issues to secure a new CBA. However, management did come to interest arbitration to tell the Arbitrators what they “need” from a new CBA.

Testimony of COO Dave Williams

Chief Operating Officer (COO) David Williams, head of postal operations and second in command to the Postmaster General, bashed postal workers from every craft and utilized vague old corporate code words to indicate postal workers should be paid less and management should have more power to do whatever they want. Williams used the word 'flexibility' and its variations approximately 56 times during his testimony. He utilized companion corporate words 'agile' 11 times and 'nimble' seven times. Williams openly talked about replacing workers with automation and technology, including utilizing a fake “avatar” instead of a real person at post offices.

The USPS used a worsening financial condition to argue for lower wages and greater management control. Although management touched on it slightly, the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) changes, pushed by privatizers and the large mailers, implemented an unreasonably aggressive prefunding of retiree health care and the crippling cap on postage increases that put the USPS in this financial situation. The PAEA also stated the USPS should not offer logical expanded services like postal banking, which has provided much revenue for postal services in other countries and would help Americans keep more income as opposed to turning it over to corporations that charge outrageous sums for basic financial services.

The Revolving Door

COO Williams' testimony sparked a reminder of the revolving door between the large mailers and the top managers of the USPS. Williams mentioned that the Postal Service was investing in automated guided vehicles to replace what are commonly referred to as “tuggers.” Williams did not mention that the USPS contracted with the Seegrid Corporation for those tuggers, and that

former PMG Patrick Donahoe was on their Board. Also, former top postal managers occupy the top positions in influential large mailer business associations that pushed the PAEA and continue to push for reducing employee numbers and wages.

Williams's performance as COO and his testimony at the interest arbitration session demonstrate to the large mailers that he is worthy of their consideration to the vacant PMG position and/or could follow similar top management officials into lucrative positions working/consulting for the large mailers.

Imagine

Despite the deck seemingly stacked against us, there are plenty of reasons for hope. Poll after poll shows that the American people overwhelmingly think highly of and support the Postal Service. Millions of workers would like the opportunity for living wage postal jobs in their community. We have in our history the Great Postal Strike of 1970, along with the Sears and Staples boycott victories. I am hopeful because it really should be an easy fix.

Imagine you are observing an island with 100 people where one person lives in luxury, owns all the land and controls all the resources. He might have 19 people that he pays a bit better than the rest to try to control the 80 employees/peasants. How long should it take for those 80 people to change the system over to a fair system?

**HOW DOES THE VAST MAJORITY OF PEOPLE
ALLOW A FEW PEOPLE TO DOMINATE THEM?
WHAT IS NEEDED TO BE DONE TO CHANGE
THINGS FOR THE BETTER?**

How does the vast majority of people allow a few people to dominate them? What is needed to be done to change things for the better?

Answer these questions, and the people on the island can create a truly democratic system. Answer these questions, and postal workers can create a better Postal Service that serves our communities while providing good, meaningful work and wages and benefits that result in a better life for postal workers and their families. ■

Maintenance Craft Arbitration Testimony



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

The following is a shortened version of the introductory testimony given by Maintenance Craft Director Balogun, before the Maintenance Craft witness panels, during the arbitration hearings on Sept. 24. Director Balogun's testimony is available on apwu.org.

The Maintenance Craft Officers would like to thank those who participated on the two Maintenance Craft arbitration panels: Wayne Greenside, Jason Shively, Jeffrey Stagner, Kevin Baughman, Jason Behrens-Magner, David Donahue, Grisel Ana Marrero, Steve Shamburg, and Parker Rauch. Their testimony detailing the daily tasks, working conditions, and challenges faced by maintenance craft postal employees was well received by the Arbitration Panel. ■



Maintenance craft employees testifying during interest arbitration hearings Sept. 24-25.

Positions and Work in the Maintenance Craft

I'd like to give you an overview of the Maintenance Craft. Maintenance tasks can be divided generally into five main sections: custodial, mail processing equipment maintenance, building equipment maintenance, area maintenance, and administrative.

Currently there are nearly 30,000 maintenance employees nationwide. Maintenance employees are responsible for maintaining the building structures and the mail processing equipment at postal facilities. We do everything from cleaning facilities to changing locks, to keeping heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems running.

We maintain and repair dozens of different types of mail processing equipment that keep the mail flowing. The work of the craft is so vast that there are thousands of handbooks, manuals, and management instructions describing our work and duties. As a group, maintenance employees are exceptionally well-trained, highly skilled, and dedicated employees, and they are required to continuously attend trainings, in-house and outside, to maintain their skills. Some maintenance craft employees can even be away from home for several weeks in a given year for training. There is no end to our training...

There are approximately 35 positions [job types] in the Maintenance Craft, from ET-11s (also known as National Support Technicians), Electronic Technicians (ET 10), Mail Processing Equipment Mechanics (MPE 9), Area Maintenance Technician (AMT 9), Maintenance Mechanics (MM 7), and Maintenance Operations Support Clerks (MOS 7), Labor Custodian (Level 4)...

We have many veterans in Maintenance, with 12,452 of maintenance employees having served in the military – that is 42 percent of our craft... custodial positions are set aside for preference-eligible veterans for external recruitment.

Concerns of the Craft

A major concern for the Maintenance Craft is understaffing. In the past few years we have seen the Postal Service not fill many maintenance positions, especially BEMs, MMs and Custodians positions. This has created additional stress on the Craft, who are up to the challenge but are often faced with increased overtime as they make up for the reduced workforce.

In conclusion, I would like to address a part of Postal Service's opening statement. The Postal Service mentioned Line H in its opening. I do not know exactly where they plan to go with that issue. Line H MOU was a quid pro quo agreement entered into outside of negotiations and we believe is not properly before the panel.

Good Contract, Good Jobs



Assistant Director Javier Piñeres and Director Michael Foster

Motor Vehicle Service members are joining in the fight, protecting the craft, and demanding proper pay and work rules during the APWU's interest arbitration proceedings.

During the session from Sept. 24 through 26, Director Foster explained that both Tractor Trailer Operators (TTOs) and Motor Vehicle Operators (MVOs) are required to maintain a commercial driver's license and must comply with federal Department of Transportation (DOT) rules and regulations. TTOs are also required to have a Class A endorsement to operate a combination vehicle, while MVOs are required to maintain a Class B endorsement for vehicles five tons and above with air brakes.

PVS drivers are required to undergo random urinalysis drug and alcohol screenings at DOT clinics. MVS employees are some of the safest commercial drivers in the United States.

Director Foster further testified that vehicle maintenance employees work at Vehicle Maintenance Facilities (VMF) and maintain the entire postal fleet of approximately 232,602 vehicles.

The majority of VMF employees are automotive technicians found on levels 8, 9, and 10 of the pay scale. They perform routine and complex repairs and maintenance on all types of motor vehicles used in the postal fleet, from tractor trailers to sedans. Because they repair, maintain, and test drive tractors and large cargo trucks, many of our automotive technicians maintain CDLs with air brake endorsement. VMF technicians are supported by a range of employees, from Mechanics, Garagemen, Body and Fender Repairmen, Tire Repairmen and their own clerical employees.

Following Director Foster's presentation and testimony, he introduced ten MVS members who traveled from around the country to Washington, DC to testify in the proceedings. They are Motor Vehicle Operators, Tractor Trailer Operators, Lead and Automotive Technicians and Storekeepers.

Both TTOs and MVOs gave testimony explaining that they are more than just delivery van drivers, and that they

perform a wide variety of work with vast responsibilities. Much of their work is performed with little to no supervision at all, trusted to make daily decisions that ordinary delivery drivers rarely do.

In addition, our Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) drivers testified that besides safety, one of their main concerns is the Postal Service and its customers as they transport a significant amount of mail and revenue in the back of their trucks. As previous PVS panels have done, they left the Interest Arbitration Panel with a clear sense of the value PVS is to the Postal Service and the communities it serves.

Following the PVS panel, Director Foster introduced panelists from the Vehicle Maintenance Facilities. VMF employees testified that they work with vehicles of all makes and models. Their work is so diverse that one day they might be working on the transmission of a Ford and the next day the engine of Dodge Ram. Additionally, much of the postal fleet is so old that replacement parts are often difficult to find, making the work that much more challenging.

Without the testimony of our APWU panelist members, the Postal Service would paint a picture less favorable to the union's position. There is no question, after hearing testimony from Postal Service's Chief Operating Officer, that the Postal Service would prefer to portray the Motor Vehicle Craft as nothing more than delivery drivers and Jiffy Lube oil-changers.

There is no question that the diversity and professionalism of the MVS Craft members represents a bargain to the Postal Service as the Motor Vehicle Service Craft is the essential link that ties mail processing and customer service together.

The MVS Division officers would like to commend the Motor Vehicle Service Craft panelists for their presentation and willingness to assist our craft in the integral process of interest arbitration.

Many thanks to those who testified: Tiwana Rogers, Michael Nazzaro, Auvelio Connor, Christina Smith, William Santiago, Michael McDonald, Luis Fabila, Mervin Gooch, Wade Jackson, and Leo Wesolowski. ■

Hollingsworth Contract Ratified



Director Steve Brooks

On Sept. 11, new APWU members working at Hollingsworth LLC, a private-sector distribution company, ratified the terms of their initial collective bargaining agreement (CBA).

Negotiating an initial contract is a very challenging hurdle to cross. APWU members who have worked under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement with the Postal Service since the 1970s just worry about successor agreements, and if any of the working conditions will be changed.

The agreement between the APWU and Hollingsworth did not come easily. The Postal Service awarded the company a contract for Mail Transport Equipment Service Center (MTESC) work in July of 2016. Hollingsworth took over the contract from a company called PAE. PAE was an APWU-organized unit with members belonging to the Detroit District Area Local.

When the work was awarded to Hollingsworth, the company moved the operation from the Detroit area to a facility in Temperance, MI- approximately 50 miles from the original site. With this move, Hollingsworth refused to recognize the union and the represented employees. They rejected the attempts we made to transition the PAE employees to employment with Hollingsworth.

Long story short, the APWU filed NLRB charges against the company. It was not until Sept. 2017 that the parties came to a settlement on the matter. As part of the settlement, Hollingsworth agreed to recognize the APWU as the sole representative of the bargaining unit. In addition, the employees from the former company, PAE, were offered employment opportunities in the Temperance, MI facility. In Feb. 2018, the parties began the negotiation process to reach terms of a collective bargaining agreement.

The APWU proposed that we adopt many of the terms that had been agreed to in the prior PAE contract, but Hollingsworth was not open to that proposal. That meant we were starting from a blank piece of paper – creating new language for every article we desired.

We think that the Postal Service is hard to deal with, and they are, but they are nothing compared to this company. Imagine having to come to terms with a company that had no desire to have their employees represented by a

union, let alone request that they change their established work rules per our proposals. Every request we made was resisted. The negotiation process seemed to never end.

In Nov. 2018, we found out why the company was resistant, and delayed in making their decisions. In private industry, whenever a contract period is expiring the company, or employee of the company, can file a petition for decertification with the NLRB. In this case, we believe the company encouraged a worker to file a petition. This petition meant that a union vote had to take place to determine whether or not the employees would continue to be represented by the union.

Fortunately, in Dec. 2018 the majority of the employees of Hollingsworth voted to retain union representation. The APWU conducted meetings with these employees and learned what tactics the company was using to try to get rid of the union. I think you can imagine the lies the company was telling the employees about what union representation could and could not do for them.

WITH THE CERTIFICATION VOTE OUT OF THE WAY, AND THE COMPANY REALIZING THAT THE APWU WAS THERE TO STAY, WE CONTINUED TO MEET WITH MANAGEMENT AND NEGOTIATE THE TERMS OF A COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.

With the certification vote out of the way, and the company realizing that the APWU was there to stay, we continued to meet with management and negotiate the terms of a collective bargaining agreement. Again, it became a struggle to get language that we needed to ensure that our represented bargaining unit members had decent protections under the agreement.

By developing an initial union contract, a base agreement is established that the workers evaluate over time, and build upon in future agreements. That is the position we have been in with our USPS contracts for years.

Now that we have a base established for this Hollingsworth group, we are ready to continue building. ■



Kenneth Beasley, Southern Region Coordinator

Many Battles Ahead

First and foremost, I would like to thank all of the members who participated in this year's election. I would also like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to those who entrusted me to a third term as their Regional Coordinator.

Congratulations to all of the APWU officers who were elected and re-elected in this APWU National election. We must all now hit the ground running together with a new beginning, while fighting the good fight on behalf of our members.

It is often said in politics that when running for an office of any kind, animus can be created within the ranks of the contenders. There is also an old saying in politics that there is "no permanent enemies and no permanent friends." My philosophy is that we are all members of this great union and therefore, we are all winners and all friends. We can ill afford to be anything otherwise.

PAEA

We all want to live in a secure environment based on the American dream. However, we currently live in a fast-paced society of uncertainty, facing issues that effect APWU members, other postal employees, and communities at large. We are fighting the devastating effects of the 2006 Postal Accountability Enhancement Act (PAEA). All across the country, we have been picketing, calling, and writing our members of Congress to repeal the PAEA and take this burden off the backs of postal workers. Thirteen years after the PAEA's passage, the fight to repeal the disastrous prefunding mandate continues. We will be successful if we keep the pressure up!

Climate Change

I think that many of us are concerned about environmental and global warming issues. On behalf of present and future generations, these issues must be dealt with. There has been a proliferation of environmental abnormalities (hurricanes, tornadoes, unseasonal warming, etc.) that could possibly threaten our future generations. We have an obligation to protect Mother Earth by being conscious when faced with the decision between money and a healthy environment.

Health Care

Statistics say that 27.5 million United States citizens do not have health insurance, with millions more underinsured. Under our current system, we are constantly fighting for lower premiums and more coverage during every contract negotiation. Universal healthcare is a right, and the fight for it should be a responsibility for all Americans.

Other Battles Ahead

Other than the above-mentioned issues, there are many more battles that we must fight. Matters such as the proposed sale of the Postal Service to private corporations, subcontracting, and understaffing all deserve as much attention. No one can fight these battles as well as you. Let us go forward together, be serious, and never give up. ■

I will not miss the chance to give my high regards and adulation to outgoing Eastern Region Coordinator Mike Gallagher for his outstanding and exemplary work. As a fellow National Executive Board member, I saw how his input, actions, and command of postal issues showed the extent of his vast knowledge.

The membership, and his colleagues alike, are better off because of the work he did for APWU. I wish him and his family the best in his retirement. Furthermore, I want to give kudos to Ron Suslak for his time as the Northeast Region Coordinator following the retirement of John Dirzius. Ron was stellar in the fulfillment of the duties of the position.

In addition, I, along with Central Regional Coordinator Sharyn M. Stone and Western Region Coordinator Omar Gonzalez, welcome the newly elected coordinators, Tiffany Foster of the Northeast Region and AJ Jones of the Eastern Region, to the National Executive Board. We all are looking forward to working with you, in taking the APWU forward to more victories.

Yours in Solidarity!



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.

"There is more to a progressive union than achieving and enforcing a contract. We have to do better when it comes to the plight of others. We must direct some of our energy and fight in our communities as well. How can we as postal employees expect the public to back our issues and agendas if we do not get involved with and or address theirs? Getting out in the communities can give us a chance to show that we as postal workers do not just care about delivering the mail but that we also have compassion for the people in whom we are entrusted to provide the delivery service to. What better way to get the word out that the U.S. MAIL IS NOT FOR SALE than to be working hand in hand with our community members... Together, with the public's help, we can save our postal service."

—Benita Anthony, Jacksonville BMC/NDC Local (FL) 7041
Director of Research & Education, *The Local View*

"The cries of privatization are growing stronger and more strident. If you think it couldn't happen, think again. We have to start making better choices. We have to elect politicians who have our best interests at heart. We have to pay attention to the bills affecting the Postal Service that are in the House and Senate. Don't be afraid to write to these people whom you have elected to represent you. There is strength in numbers. We need to work together as a union to make sure our voice is heard."

—Shelia Patton-Harris
Saint Louis (MO) Gateway District Area Local Editor
Press On

"In the past 50 years, postal workers have a proud history of winning major fights – from the Great Postal Strike of 1970 to saving 6-day delivery, to keeping post offices open, to stopping Staples and defeating the McHenry Amendment to outlaw postal banking. Fighting against privatization is a fight we can and must win. The fight is ours and the time is now!"

—Chuck Zlatkin
New York Metro Area Postal Union Director of
Communications
The Union Mail

"Last month people who worked at the plant were all given shirts by management that said #postalproud in very small print on the front. After receiving the shirts we were told on Tour 2, via standup, that we all had to wear our shirts on that following Friday. The reason they wanted everyone in 'uniform' was so management could take a picture, which in my opinion is antiunion propaganda, to show all their higher ups how 'happy we all are' in Tucson. Happy enough to even take a picture showing how satisfied we are and how much we support what management is doing from top to bottom. We all know that is anything but true and I spoke to our members and then hit our Facebook page.

The message was clear and concise. If you're happy with [local management and the work environment] then by all means wear the shirt you were given... If you are not, wear a union shirt or a red shirt to show we are more than just pawns in their little games.

Long story short, so many people showed up in union gear they canceled our part of the photo and decided to just take the picture with local management only...

We are much stronger when we are united. This was a clear indication of that. Maybe next time they will think twice and know that buying a shirt is not a substitute for fair treatment, good wages and a safe work environment."

—Michael Moriconi, Tucson Area Local (AZ) Clerk Craft Director, *The Pulse*

APWU Members Gather in Las Vegas for All-Craft Conference

The Legislative & Political Department, Bulk Mail Centers, and Young Members Committee also Held Day-Long Events



On Friday, Oct. 25, APWU members from across the country began arriving at Bally's Las Vegas Hotel for the 2019 All-Craft Conference (ACC). The week included many trainings and workshops across all crafts, as well as the Legislative & Political Conference on Sunday, Oct. 27, the Bulk Mail Center (BMC) Conference on Thursday, Oct. 31, and a new Young Members Meeting on Saturday, Oct. 26.

"I'm proud of the work we've accomplished this week," said President Mark Dimondstein. "The trainings, workshops, and general sessions provided important knowledge to members. I look forward to the work ahead as we continue building a stronger union."

ALL-CRAFT CONFERENCE



Clerk

General Sessions and workshops in each of the four crafts and Retirees Department began on Oct. 28. At their General Session, the Support Services Division addressed the individual issues

and concerns of the Division's units, including the Postal Service's attacks on postal wages during negotiations, and their belittling of Support Service members' specialized skills.

"We had a very good General Session," said Director Steve Brooks. "The attendees were excited and did not hesitate to interact in the open forum on issues within their respective units."

At the Maintenance Craft General Session, Craft Director Idowu Balogun provided updates on the status of the craft since the previous ACC in 2017. Director Balogun also discussed the MS-1 settlement and the implementation of TL-6 handbook.

"I'm proud of this great conference. It was the biggest we've seen in recent years, with over 400 in attendance, including several local presidents, and a lot of first-time attendees," Director Balogun said. "The sessions were very informative and we learned a lot from each other."

During the MVS Craft's General Session, Director Michael O. Foster and Assistant Director Javier E. Piñeres gave detailed reports on current Step 4 grievances, as well as National settlements and recent meetings with USPS Management.



Motor Vehicle Service

"We've had a very successful conference," said Director Foster. "We are letting [local craft directors, stewards and members] know the critical juncture we're in with the demands that the Postal Service wants to get from the Motor Vehicle Service Craft, and PVS specifically, as far as interest arbitration."

The Clerk Craft's Oct. 30 General Session had a theme of passing the torch and moving forward with strength and direction. "I look forward to our members taking the lessons from this conference and bringing them back to the workroom floor," said departing Clerk Craft Director Clint Burelson.

Lamont Brooks, the craft's new Director, detailed his plans for the future. "The meeting was excellent. I see a new, reinvigorated Clerk Craft division," Brooks said. "One family fighting together for all!"



Support Services

LEGISLATIVE & POLITICAL CONFERENCE

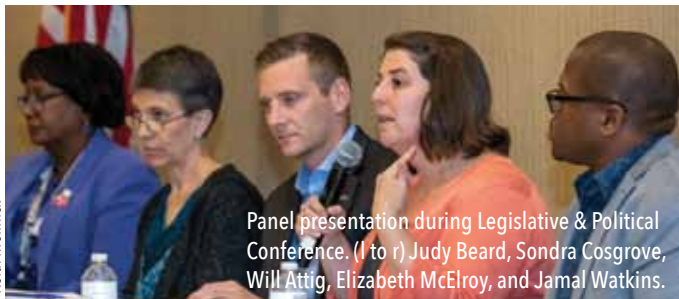


The Legislative & Political Conference had a clear theme throughout the day of trainings and workshops: how to edu-

cate, engage, and activate members to build power and win lasting change.

“We must enforce worker class protections and rebuild our power base,” said Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. “To do these things, we must exchange knowledge and skills to fight for our shared values. Because when we fight for them, we win.”

The conference concluded with a General Session and panel, *Rising Up and Fighting for Our Values in the 2020 Election*. The panel featured President of the League of Women Voters Nevada Sondra Cosgrove, Executive Director of the Union Veterans Council Will Attig, Deputy Director for AFL-CIO Mobilization Hub Elizabeth McElroy, and the President of Civic Engagement at the NAACP Jamal Watkins.



Panel presentation during Legislative & Political Conference. (l to r) Judy Beard, Sondra Cosgrove, Will Attig, Elizabeth McElroy, and Jamal Watkins.

Panel members echoed the day’s theme, showing the importance of looking past winning elections as an end goal and instead as a means of gaining and winning power.

“When we work to elect people to office at any level, it’s not so they can achieve their goals, it’s so that they can help us achieve ours,” McElroy said.

Members left the conference with organizational tools and knowledge needed to help build a movement to grow power through legislative actions. “We, the people, have the power to make a difference, if we can learn to come together and use all of our resources,” said Taylor Vinson, of the Amarillo Local (TX). “Our unity and our voices are the most powerful thing working in our favor.”

RETIREES CONFERENCE

The Retirees Conference centered on a theme of coming together with working members and officers to build power in the fight against postal privatization, attacks on Social Security and Medicare, and other issues facing retirees.

“We have discussed issues that are important to retirees, as well as working members, and we will return home to our chapters ready to rejoin the fight,” said Retirees Director Nancy Olumekor.



Retirees
Keith Mellnick

YOUNG MEMBERS MEETING

The Young Members Committee started the week of trainings and conferences with an exciting all-day training, featuring speakers, workshops, and breakout group discussions on issues young members face on the workroom floor. A theme of the day was bridging the gap between older and younger members and passing institutional knowledge between generations.

“The enthusiasm and cooperation between our young members and our seasoned members is something I’ll never forget,” said Young Member Ashley Sorensen, of the Salt Lake City Area Local.



Young members at
Young
Members
Meeting

BULK MAIL CONFERENCE

On Thursday, Oct. 31, the Bulk Mail Center (BMC) Conference was held. Attendees included representatives from nearly all 21 Bulk Mail Centers, also known as National Distribution Centers (NDCs).

The following BMC issues were discussed and debated: PSE usage and overtime, Non-Traditional Full-Time day assignments in Function 7, staffing, MVS schedule examiner settlement, deployment of a new fleet of heavy vehicles, clothing allowances, and safety issues. ■

CWA Members Strike and Win New Contract

During negotiations for a new contract for over 20,000 of its workers, communications giant AT&T stalled the process. Recognizing the need for an organized response to the company's unfair labor practices, at midnight on Aug. 24, the workers – members of Communications Workers of America (CWA) – walked out.

Workers held dozens of pickets across the nine states in AT&T's Southeast region – Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. Striking workers included customer service representatives and technicians who install, maintain and support the vast telecommunications network in the region.

Four days after the strike began, CWA negotiators emerged with a “handshake deal” on a tentative agreement, bringing the work stoppage to an end. On Oct. 1, CWA announced that its members had ratified the five-year agreement, which provides significant pay raises, as well as improvements in pension, retirement, and job security. The contract also includes no increases to health care costs for workers.

“CWA members in the Southeast were united behind our bargaining team,” said CWA District 3 Vice President Richard Honeycutt. “We were able to negotiate substantial improvements to our contracts because our members were truly willing to do whatever it took, including going on strike to protest the company's unfair labor practices, in order for us to reach a fair agreement.” ■



AT&T strikers in Atlanta, GA

photo courtesy of CWA



CWU members at the strike vote

photo courtesy of CWU

UK Postal Workers Overwhelmingly Vote to Strike Against Royal Mail

In late September, the Communication Workers Union (CWU) held a strike authorization vote for employees of Royal Mail in the United Kingdom. With over three quarters of the members voting, a whopping 97 percent voted to strike.

The strike will be the first work stoppage at Royal Mail since the service's privatization in 2013.

“This [strike] result sends a clear message to Royal Mail Group – our members will not stand by as you rip up their terms and conditions and destroy the service they give to the public and businesses of the UK,” said CWU General Secretary Dave Ward. “We are very proud of our members today. They have stood by their union in record numbers and given hope to workers across the nation.”

The strike authorization comes just a year after CWU and Royal Mail reached agreement on a contract that guaranteed pay raises, shorter work weeks, and protections for workers' pension plans. However, Royal Mail has failed to live up to their end of the agreement. The company abandoned negotiations to reduce the work week by more than an hour and recently announced plans to split the package business, a move that would lead to thousands of workers losing their jobs.

The strike will occur during the run-up to Christmas. Further updates will be provided in the next issue of the American Postal Worker and on apwu.org. ■



80,000 Kaiser Permanente Workers Win New Contract After Strike Threat

On Sept. 16, almost a year after the expiration of their contract with health care giant Kaiser Permanente, the Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions announced that over 98 percent of the 80,000 workers organized in the coalition voted in favor of striking. The strike would have been the largest in the United States since the Teamsters strike against UPS in 1997.

The threat of a strike forced Kaiser to meet the demands of its workers. The coalition announced a new tentative agreement on Sept. 25.

"Our new contract recognizes the skill and dedication we bring to our work, and the guaranteed raises and protected benefits give us the peace of mind to focus on caring for our patients," said Jessica Rodriguez, an emergency department technician at Kaiser Permanente in Oakland. "We are also proud to have negotiated an agreement that is focused on the future and making sure patients have access to highly skilled and trained caregivers in the years to come." ■

Chicago Education Workers Strike for the Community

On Oct. 17, following months of negotiations that resulted in an impasse, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) employees began a strike with over 30,000 workers hitting the streets.

The successful 2012 Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) strike included only teachers. This time, CTU members were joined on the picket line by around 7,000 members of SEIU Local 73 who make up the support staff in CPS, including bus aides, custodians, and classroom assistants.

After 11 days, CPS finally met the workers' demands in new five-year contracts for each union. Like the teachers' strike in Los Angeles earlier in 2019, the CTU/SEIU 73 strike's

central demands concerned the students of CPS. Workers were demanding nurses in every school, smaller class sizes and more funding for counselors – as well as living wages for support staff. Workers also won their demand that the city address housing costs and provide support to the more than 17,000 homeless students in CPS.

"These kids deserve all the resources. They deserve social workers, they deserve psychologists, they deserve therapy, they deserve better meals," Mueze Bawany, a 12th grade teacher at CPS's Roberto Clemente High School, told *Jacobin*. "Bargaining for the collective good makes sense." ■

40,000 Child Care Providers Gain Collective Bargaining Rights in California

After a campaign lasting more than 15 years and multiple vetoes on previous legislation from the state's governors, home-based childcare providers in California have finally won collective bargaining rights. On Sept. 30, Governor Gavin Newsom (D) signed AB-378, the *Building a Better Early Care and Education System Act*, into law.

Approximately 40,000 workers currently care for children who receive subsidized childcare from the state of California. The law grants those providers the ability to negotiate with the state for pay, quality of care standards, and increases to the subsidy system that has gone underfunded for years.

Currently, the median income for childcare workers receiving government subsidies in California is only \$12 an hour, with 58 percent of those workers relying on government assistance programs to support their own families. Only 15 percent of home-based childcare providers receive health care from their job.

While collective bargaining rights are only just now written into law in the state, workers do not have to start from scratch to form a union: many childcare providers in California are already members of Child Care Providers United (CCPU), a statewide partnership between SEIU Locals 99 and 521 and the United Domestic Workers/AFSCME Local 3930.

"This is truly a historic day for childcare providers. This means we will have the power to fundamentally change what it's like to work in early childhood education in California," said Carolyn Carpenter, an Oakland family childcare provider and CCPU member. "Every worker should have the opportunity to form a union, no matter what work they do." ■



California ‘Experiments’ with Postal Banking

The early 20th century Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis coined a phrase when he referred to the states as “laboratories of democracy.” Brandeis noted in his opinion that a state “may, if its citizens choose, serve as a laboratory; and try novel social and economic experiments without risk to the rest of the country.”

California has just started a new experiment in freedom from the big Wall Street banks with the passage of AB-857 into law. The bill, signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom (D) in September, will allow cities and counties across California to establish public banks. The new law makes way for California to become only the second state in the country – after North Dakota – to establish public banking.

A grassroots organization called The California Public Banking Alliance was the driving force behind AB-857’s passage, building on the momentum of a narrowly defeated ballot measure in Los Angeles that would have led to a city-owned and operated bank. The Alliance expanded the ballot measure to cities and counties across the state.

The work to pass public banking brought together city and county councils, labor unions, civil rights organizations and banking reform advocates. AB-857 supporters included the California Labor Federation; the cities of Los Angeles, Long Beach and San Diego; the National American Postal Workers Union; and the California State APWU.

Like the Bank of North Dakota currently does, cities and counties in California can now create public banks that would partner with other financial institutions to invest in community-oriented programs – providing affordable loans and lines of credit to local businesses and nonprofits for local economic and social development programs.

“This new law prioritizes communities and neighborhoods by empowering localities to use public dollars for their own public good: from investing in affordable housing projects and building new schools and parks, to accessible loans for students and businesses,” said State Assemblyman Miguel Santiago (D-53), one of the bill’s principal authors.

“It’s pretty obvious that the Wall Street system of wealth distribution has created an income inequality crisis,” Santiago said in a statement. “Instead of making rich men even richer, our resources should be invested in community development: parks and green spaces, free commu-

nity college, new schools, smooth roads, and cleaner air.”

While the new law does not have an explicit role for postal banking, it nonetheless marks an important milestone in the broader movement to build a financial system that works for working families. Allowing cities and counties to charter their own public banks would save local communities millions of dollars in fees that go to the big commercial banks – where public funds are currently banked. As public institutions, the directors of the nonprofit city and county banks would be democratically accountable in a way that Wall Street executives are not.

Growth in public banking could also pave the way for postal banking as well. The new California law will establish public banks that finance public projects – essentially a bank for public agencies or other financial institutions – but it doesn’t initially foresee retail banking services that individual consumers might need. The Postal Service is well situated to partner with public banks to meet the needs of household users.

“The passage of this historic law paves the way for public banking organizers across the country,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “We salute those who supported this effort for demonstrating once again that the people of the country have a real appetite for alternatives to Wall Street’s predatory abuses. It’s time now for the Postal Service to get on board, expand its offering of financial services and help build a financial system that works for working people.”

In the days following the passage of the law, the city council of Los Angeles announced plans to begin the establishment of the first public bank there. Other cities and counties are expected to follow in the months to come. ■

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.



Judy Beard, Director

Voter Suppression

The 2020 election is closer than we think. This election is critical and we are asking everyone to start taking action now to ensure every person is able to cast a vote on Election Day. Voter suppression is a prevailing problem in this country. It affected almost 17 million Americans between 2016 and 2018. Everyone should educate themselves on how it can affect them. It can take many forms, including:

- Voter roll purges,
- Cuts to early voting,
- Closing polling places in heavily minority communities,
- Restrictive voter ID laws.

Every APWU member, regardless of political affiliation, should check their voter registration status to ensure they are still showing as an eligible voter. There are several reasons a person might have been purged from the rolls, including: name change, home address change, or because they had not voted in recent elections.

Every local can assist in making sure all of their members are registered to vote by notifying their members who are showing up as potentially unregistered. This list can be obtained by local presidents and secretary-treasurers via the Members-Only section of the website (where these two officers obtain the DCO's). The potentially unregistered voter list is obtained by the APWU from the AFL-CIO and is updated quarterly.

We also recommend those who live in states that have permanent absentee voting or no excuse absentee voting submit their application for a ballot as early as possible. Not only will this serve the purpose of checking your voter registration, it will ensure you have your ballot in advance of Nov. 3, 2020 so you will not have to worry about the issues that typically arise on Election Day.

Any member who wants to check their voter registration status should visit vote411.org. ■

Second Legislative Conference a Success!

The APWU Legislative & Political Department hosted its second, national biennial conference in Las Vegas, NV. on Oct. 27. Workshops focused on the core ways APWU members – active and retired – could get engaged and support our legislative priorities. Attendees explored how to get more involved via lobbying their representatives, engaging with their Central Labor Councils (CLC) and State Federations, writing op-eds and letters to the editor, and using digital media.

Under the theme of *Rising Up and Fighting for our Values in the 2020 Election*, a panel discussed the need to use our collective power to enact change at the local, state, and national level and elect pro-labor candidates.

To read more about the Legislative & Political Conference, as well as the rest of the All-Craft Conference, see page 32.



Attendees of the COPA captain training discussed the importance of COPA and the value of increasing *COPAmatic* contributions.



Rhodesia Assad (right) engages with participants at the Anti-Privatization workshop.

Joining the APWU Just Got Easier



Anna Smith, Director

Organizing is a daily responsibility that should be shared by everyone. These days it seems as if most everyone has a mobile device of some sort. Now with the **new online join tool** every one of us can be an organizer! Sign up a non-member in minutes!

I am excited to announce that we are now able to accept membership applications (1187s) online from current APWU Bargaining Unit employees! The “Join APWU” option on the home page of our website will allow a non-member to complete the entire process from their phone or computer.

The response has been great in just the last few short weeks since launching the tool. New members have been signing up and making the decision to stand with us. After speaking with them, I found out that they felt the process of joining online was very simple.

**NEW MEMBERS HAVE BEEN
SIGNING UP AND MAKING THE
DECISION TO STAND WITH US.**

During the application process, there is also the opportunity for new members to express their desire to play an active role in the APWU by selecting various areas of interest or expertise. This information is then forwarded to their local or state presidents. Also displayed will be their bi-weekly dues amount.

Once the electronic 1187 is submitted, a confirmation email containing the completed 1187 will be emailed to both the new member and the Organization Department. In addition, the Department will be mailing their local or state organization a copy of the 1187.

Form 1187s received through the online procedure will automatically be entered into our system, thereby expediting their processing time.

In some instances, new hires, and those transferring from other unions may not be able to use the online process until the Postal Service has notified APWU Headquarters that the employee is officially on the rolls in our bargain-

ing unit. We are continuing to work on making the online option available in these circumstances as well as an avenue for APWU-represented private-sector employees. In the meantime, these employees can still utilize the hard copy or online PDF version, and return it by mail, email, or fax.

A guide to the “join online” procedure is available on the website apwu.org/organizers-tool-kit for review/download to aide you in assisting others.

Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. As always, I value your feedback.

Organizing in 2020

Let organizing start with you and others will follow. As we kick off a new year, challenge yourself to be that person who takes a stance to organize. Even if you’re the first, others will follow. Don’t let the fight for the right to organize be for nothing. Remember you are the union!

Work with your local leaders to set the goals to be stronger tomorrow that we are today. As we come to the end of the year, and local and state leaders begin their budget planning for 2020, it is past time to make organizing a priority. Having a budget, and a plan to organize will make all the difference. Remember we are the union and it is only as strong as we make it. ■

Thank you

I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation for your support and vote in the 2019 APWU National Election of Officers. It has been, and will continue to be, a privilege to serve the membership. By working together, we have made some great strides in organizing, and I look forward to working with all of our local, state, and national leaders to keep the momentum going.

We have a lot of hard work ahead, but I have faith we can work through any obstacle that we face by standing together, united!



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

'Gaining Strength from Our Past, to Fight for Our Future!'

APWU POWER Convention Donates \$20,916 to COPA

Gaining Strength from Our Past, to Fight for Our Future was the theme that kicked off Post Office Women for Equal Rights, APWU POWER's, 40th Anniversary and 19th Biennial National Convention in Chicago. Workshops were offered on a wide range of subjects.

Highlights

The Honorable Melissa Conyears-Ervin, City Treasurer of Chicago, gave a heartfelt welcome address. She stated that organized labor had played an important role in the Chicago Elections and thanked the Chicago Local for its support.

The convention keynote speaker was Karen Kent, President of Unite Here Local 1, representing hospitality workers. She discussed the 4,000 workers who participated in an organized strike in Chicago after contract negotiations broke down in March 2018. Sister Kent stated that she was moved by the overwhelming enthusiasm of the women in the room and spoke of the struggles that women have to face on a daily basis. She encouraged the women to keep up the good fight!

Next, APWU President Mark Dimondstein spoke of Chicago and its deep roots in unions. He talked about tax hikes; voter suppression; buying and selling of elections; a criminal minimum wage; bigotry and racism; Postal Banking; the disregard for unions, and stopping the privatization of the Postal Service. President Dimondstein ended by thanking the delegates for their service to the union.

The convention held a memorial service for the POWER Sisters who had passed away since the last convention and wore ribbons in honor of several of the deceased pioneer sisters who helped to organize and played an important role in APWU POWER's growth.

Following the memorial service, a motion was made and passed unanimously to name the convention the Josie McMillian's Convention!

The Eastern Region dominated the competition by contributing \$5,620 to COPA, taking home the "COPA Award." Total contributions were **\$20,916**. The prestigious National APWU Awards presented were: The Elizabeth "Liz" Powell Executive Award to Pamela

Richardson (NBA), the Joyce B. Robinson Leadership Award to Marilyn "Mo" Merow (Retired NBA), and the Nilda Chock Pioneer

Award to Kaye Strawther (Fort Worth Area Local). The POWER Coordinator's Award went to Darcy Wood, Central Region.

Special Crystal Flame Awards were presented to: Judy Beard, Princella Vogel, and Margaret Glass for being in attendance at APWU POWER's first meeting in 1970.

Special Recognition POWER Regional Awards were presented for outstanding and dedicated service to: Paulette Lindsey, Central Region; Nancy Olumekor, Eastern Region; Neysa Coleman, Northeast Region; Gloria Rice, Southern Region; and Rosa Faye Marshall, Western Region.

The POWER sisters left the convention energized with a renewed commitment to help APWU fight to change the political climate in this country in 2020!

I express my deepest appreciation for the membership's continued support and extend my best wishes for "A Happy, Healthy, and Peaceful New Year!" ■



APWU POWER Coordinators: Sherry McKnight, Tanya Jackson, Erica Cole, Research and Education Director, Joyce Robinson, Bernadette Baker, and Darcy Wood.

New POWER Coordinators

The newly elected APWU POWER Coordinators are:

Darcy A. Wood, Central Region - Email: Dwood@gkcmal.org

Sherry McKnight, Eastern Region -
Email: McKnight_Sherry@yahoo.com

Tanya D. Jackson, Northeast Region -
Email: tanyaapwu251@gmail.com

Bernadette Baker, Southern Region -
Email: bbdette44@aol.com

Erica Cole, Western Region - Email: ecole@apwuslc6.org

VA Policy Violates Veterans' Privacy

The dictionary defines 'private' as "belonging to, restricted to or intended for an individual person." With that it has long been understood and additionally codified in numerous laws that medical records, including those belonging to veterans, are private and protected. They cannot be released, with rare exception, without a patient's written consent. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), however, has recently taken another position based on its interpretation of the Mission Act.

The VA intends to automatically enroll all its registered veterans into Health Information Exchanges (HIE), a system that is being managed by the Sequoia Project/Healthway, Inc., a third-party administrator. HIE will permit numerous government agencies and private organizations to access veterans' private medical records without their written consent, unless the veteran revoked their enrollment using VA Form 10-0484 or Form 10-10164. To opt out, forms had to be received in person or by mail at the veteran's respective local VA Release of Information Office by Sept. 30.

One problem is the VA only provided one business day before the designated deadline for its 2 million registered veterans to act in response to this massive VA privacy policy change. Further VA Form 10-10164, which replaces form 10-0484, had no legal effect until October – so even if it was submitted timely it could arguably not be honored.

Veterans who missed the deadline might also reasonably assume submitting the Opt-Out of Sharing Protected Health Information Through Health Information Exchanges form after-the-fact would prove sufficient. The VA, however, is not processing any revocations for the purpose of opting out individuals who they intend to initially opt in based on its September filing deadline. Another disconcerting wrinkle is veterans who sign this form may not realize they are actually opting themselves into the system. The form requires veterans to opt into HIE before they can be opted out.

Fortunately, VA Form 10-10164 is not the only way veterans can tell the VA they do not want their health information sent to the Exchange. Veterans who are wary of the potential secondary repercussions of the form might instead consider sending a letter to their local VA Release of Information Office instructing the agency not to release their records without their express written consent. They might also instead choose to identify specific information, entities or circumstances where release would otherwise be permitted, e.g. to hospitals in case of a medical emergency.

In an effort to stop implementation of the agency's decision to share veterans' health information without consent, a lawsuit was filed on behalf of the Military-Veterans Advocacy and three veterans, case number 19-CV-2956. In response, the VA produced a declaration to the court at an emergency hearing on the motion, indicating it will not move forward with health information sharing using Health Information Exchanges under its new privacy rule until January 2020.

THE VA INTENDS TO AUTOMATICALLY ENROLL ALL ITS REGISTERED VETERANS INTO HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGES (HIE)...

This is a strategic victory for veterans, allowing additional time for veterans to submit opt out letters revoking their automatic enrollment into HIE, and allowing other possible legal action to unfold. The VA had planned to implement the new procedures as early as this month.

To follow veterans' privacy news as it develops, visit disabledveterans.org.

Thank You for Your Service. ■

– Human Relations Department

  **Veterans Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**



Sue Carney, Director

OWCP Online Claim Filing

All postal employees who are injured on duty will soon have the option of filing Office of Workers' Compensation (OWCP) claims online through the Employees' Compensation Operation and Management Portal (ECOMP). This is a long overdue option that will finally bring the Postal Service into compliance with a Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) regulation requiring all federal agencies, including the USPS, to offer employees electronic claim filing directly with OWCP by December 31, 2012.

A segment of ECOMP, Web Enabled Electronic Document Submission (WEEDS) was initially introduced to postal workers in 2012 as an online tool to assist with claims processing and document tracking, but it alone did not satisfy the federal mandate. WEEDS allows claimants, representatives, medical providers and employing agency staff to upload documents into existing claim files. Claims Examiners are able to view the newly submitted information within four hours. Documents are assigned a Document Control Number (DCN) as proof of receipt and for tracking purposes.

This feature remains available without registration under the expansion of online services but claimants will need to provide their OWCP case file number, date of injury and other personal identifiers to take advantage of this portion of the user-friendly system. As an added security measure, these identifiers must precisely match the existing file information.

DOL reports ECOMP filing is more secure than paper-based filing and permits more efficient data management. Benefits for claimants include an improved ability to track the status of forms and documents submitted through ECOMP, faster claim adjudication, expedited delivery of FECA medical and compensation benefits, and quicker OWCP nurse intervention assignments for employees who are unable to return to work because of workplace disabilities.

The Postal Service has established a staggered Area rollout for its Districts. Employees should not attempt to use the electronic filing application before their District is online. Once implemented, postal management should inform injured workers that e-filing is available. If, however, an employee prefers paper forms and manual filing, management must accept and process paper claim forms.

Refusal may subject them to a fine of not more than \$500 or 1 year in prison, or both (ELM 542.33).

To use ECOMP, claimants must create an account with a unique user ID and passcode. They will need to provide personal information including their Social Security number, their private email address (not postal) and their immediate supervisor's work email.

After logging in, employees will have access to their personal ECOMP Dashboard; they will be able to file new traumatic injury and occupational disease claims, and track documents submitted through ECOMP with the document's ECOMP Control Number (ECN). They will also be able to submit new forms, such as a CA7 Claim for WLC directly from an existing claim in their dashboard, and be able to file for scheduled awards. In these instances, a claim number will also be required.

Upon employee submission, all new claims (CA1, CA2) will be forwarded to their immediate supervisor for completion of the agency portion of the form. Employees and supervisors will be required to sign and date a paper copy of the form following a short review that is conducted by a USPS Health and Resource Management specialist. The paper form will be retained in the employee's USPS compensation file. The employee's online submission date, not signature date is tattooed on the e-form and will be relied upon to hold the Postal Service accountable to all FECA timely submission deadlines.

ECOMP is maintained by the Department of Labor and is easily accessed through its public internet site. To register, find user guides, video tutorials and to learn more visit <https://www.ecomp.dol.gov>. ■

Rollout Dates

Postal Area	Rollout Date
Cap-Metro	08/21/2019
Pacific	09/30/2019
Western	11/04/2019
Northeast	12/11/2019
Great Lakes	01/23/2020
Eastern	02/12/2020
Southern	03/16/2020

APWU Retirees Still Fighting for Justice



Nancy Olumekor, Director

COLA 2020

Is 1.6 percent a fair Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for Seniors?

It is projected that the average increase in benefits will be \$24 and that the average Medicare B premium will increase by \$8, with a net COLA of \$16 per month for most seniors.

Retirees are short-changed because their COLA is calculated using the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) instead of the Consumer Price Index for the Elderly (CPI-E). Using CPI-W short-changes the seniors by not considering the spending habits of elders. Elders have higher costs for things such as health care and housing, while urban and clerical workers have higher costs related to expenses such as education, clothing, and transportation.

We must enlist everyone we can to help us stop this unfair calculation. It is incumbent upon retirees to continue to work to achieve a fair COLA, by pushing Congress to pass legislation that will calculate the COLA based on CPI-E. Currently in Congress there are several pending bills that include using the CPI-E to ensure a more accurate adjustment.

Beginning in January 2019, Senator Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) and Representative John Larson (D-CT-1) introduced S. 269 and H.R. 860 the *Social Security 2100 Act*, which increases benefits and institutes the CPI-E.

In February 2019, *The Social Security Expansion Act*, S. 478 and H.R. 1170, was introduced by Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) and Representative Peter DeFazio (D-OR-4). The legislation expands Social Security benefits by using CPI-E to calculate a more accurate COLA, as well as other improvements.

The *Fair COLA for Seniors Act* H.R. 1533 introduced by Representative John Garamendi (D-CA-3) in March 2019, will “provide for cost-of-living increases for certain federal benefits programs based on increases in the Consumer Price Index for the elderly.”

H.R. 2654 was introduced in May 2019 by Representative Linda Sanchez (D-CA-38) as the *Strengthening Social Security Act of 2019*, which also adopts the CPI-E as “the

applicable Consumer Price Index for Elderly Consumers,” along with other improved benefits.

Make an Action Plan

1. Make a list of your family, neighbors, friends and other like-minded registered voters and educate to them on the importance of using the CPI-E when calculating the COLA for the elderly.
2. Plan a day of action, for CPI-E. That could be writing letters and postcards or making telephone calls to Capitol Hill, 202-224-3121.
3. Ask your representatives to cosponsor legislation on CPI-E and to help move the bill along.
4. Explain why this legislation is important to you, your family and your community.
5. Share your story and your affiliations with other constituency groups such as veterans, church or community organizations, and the union.
6. Establish a relationship with your representative and thank them for supporting our issues. ■

Resources: National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

Thank You!

First, I thank our veterans and all of our active military personnel for their service on behalf of all of us.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the membership of the APWU over the past three years. Thank you for re-electing and continuing to support me in the true spirit of unionism. I extend special thanks to those of you who offered words of encouragement of any kind to me. I cannot do this work without your support!

As I look back over the past three years, I am mindful of all of the friends, families and loved ones APWU members and retirees have lost - many great unionists who built this union and without their great work we would not be here.

In closing, I wish each of you Happy Holidays, Good Health and Happiness in the New Year. In Solidarity.



John Marcotte, Director

How to Support Someone You Know Who Is Misusing Opioids

Editor's Note: This article is a reprint of an article produced by Beacon Health Options, Inc. written by Beth Landau. It has been cut for space. The complete article can be found at <https://bit.ly/2JSN0tK>. For questions about APWUHP services and coverage offered please go to apwuhp.com.

People do not think it could happen to their family or friends. They think only other people misuse opioids: people on the news or people who are weak or bad. But people from all backgrounds can misuse opioids. They are not bad or weak. They are the people we know. They are our family members or friends. Opioid misuse has become a national crisis.

Recognizing opioid misuse

Not all opioid use is misuse. Some people safely use opioids their doctors give them. In some cases, legal opioids can help treat acute, or short-term, pain. People may use opioids after surgery or an accident.

How can you tell if someone is misusing opioids? There are many signs, including:

- Changes in how he looks, acts, and relates to other people
- Changes in physical or behavioral health...
- Missing work or school
- Poor work or school performance...
- Switching groups of friends
- Slurred speech or stumbling...
- Taking opioid medicine after her injury or illness is healed...

How to help

You cannot fix opioid misuse for someone else. It is not easy to stop misusing opioids. A person's body becomes used to opioids. They change the way the brain handles pain and pleasure. After a while, the body needs the opioid to function. The person may need more and more opioids to feel good. This creates a cycle that is hard to break...What kind of help can you give? Your role is to give kind support.

- Let the person know you care, and offer your support.
- Talk to him about your concerns.
- Let her share her thoughts and feelings. Do not assume you know how she feels.
- Let him know that he is not alone. Urge him to seek help. Encourage him to talk to a doctor about it, even if he does not think it is a problem. Offer to take him to a support group. Many religious and nonreligious groups offer substance misuse support.
- Help her find treatment choices. Different insurance plans cover different services. The insurance provider can give her information. There are many types of treatment programs. Offer to help her pick a place to start.
- Try to ease his mind about what opioid misuse treatment looks like. The most common image is of a cold-turkey detox – suddenly stopping the opioid and going through a withdrawal. Though detox followed by a 12-step program is still common, it is generally not the best method. This is also called “abstinence-only”. “Abstinence-only” approaches may work for some but not all. Everyone who misuses opioids deserves to understand all treatment options including medication-assisted treatment (MAT)...
- Help reduce stigma. There is a lot of negative judgment about substance misuse... Common stereotypes show people who misuse opioids as bad, lazy, or dangerous. This makes it hard to see the person instead of just the misuse. People may be prejudiced against these stereotypes. That leads to unfair treatment and unkind words or actions. It makes people who misuse opioids feel ashamed and depressed. This makes them avoid seeking help and makes it harder to stick with treatment.
- Be aware of your own beliefs and stereotypes. Avoid judging the person. Be kind and open-minded. Make it clear that you see the person, not just the misuse...■



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APWU career: Premiums **reduced** for both the High Option and Consumer Driven Option.
All other categories: High Option premiums **reduced** and Consumer Driven Option premiums stay the same.

HIGH OPTION PREMIUMS 2020

100% COVERAGE IN-NETWORK

- Preventive care and screenings
- Maternity care
- Accidental injury outpatient services within 72 hours
- Lab tests (covered blood work performed at LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics)
- Visits to a registered dietician/nutritionist
- Health management programs: diabetes, weight management, pregnancy and tobacco & e-cigarettes cessation programs

HIGH OPTION HIGHLIGHTS

- \$25 for office visits, including specialists
- \$15 for virtual visits
- \$30 for urgent care centers
- \$10 for retail Tier 1 drugs — non-specialty

Smart90: Fill maintenance drug prescriptions at a retail network pharmacy

	Enrollment code	Postal		
		PSE biweekly	APWU career more than one year in FEHB biweekly	Retiree monthly
High Option Self Only	471	*	\$96.13	\$215.38
High Option Self Plus One	473	*	\$192.74	\$432.77
High Option Self and Family	472	*	\$250.36	\$558.89

CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION PREMIUMS 2020

100% COVERAGE IN-NETWORK

- In January, the Health Plan funds a Personal Care Account (PCA) members can use for covered medical services. Members are covered at 100% until the PCA is exhausted. 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 & e-cigarettes 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 \$5,300 Self Only and \$10,600 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

Consumer Driven Option Self Only	474	\$68.96	\$17.16	\$149.42
Consumer Driven Option Self Plus One	476	\$149.88	\$46.41	\$324.75
Consumer Driven Option Self and Family	475	\$163.51	\$54.45	\$354.27

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