




# THE AMERICAN **Postal Worker** APWU

November/December 2020

## **ELECTION 2020: APWU Delivers for the People**







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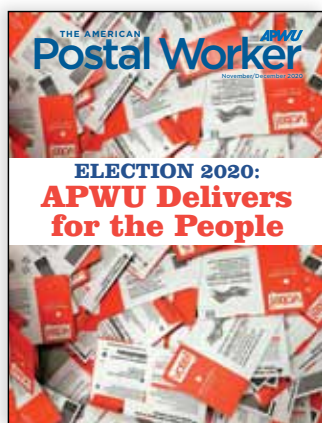
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Photograph by Elaine Thompson / AP

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Mark Dimondstein	President - Editor
Debby Szeredy	Executive Vice President
Elizabeth Powell	Secretary-Treasurer
Vance Zimmerman	Industrial Relations Director
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### SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT

Judy McCann

### OTHER NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENTS

Daniel Soto	Rufina Pagaduan
James M. Patarini	

### PRODUCED BY THE APWU COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Emily Harris	Communications Director
GO! Creative, LLC	Design and Layout



# The Struggle to Save the Post Office Continues...

## Joe Biden/Kamala Harris Elected

PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

**E**ditor's Note: The following is an excerpted version of President Dimondstein's statement to the members on the U.S. Presidential election results. In the January/February issue he will share more perspective on the election.

The APWU elected leadership applauds this [election] outcome, as does an overwhelming majority of our members.

Joe Biden was endorsed by the APWU National Executive Board based on a stark choice. We will soon have someone in the White House who supports the public Postal Service, not one planning to dismantle and privatize it. We will have a leader who champions union rights, not one proposing to eliminate our collective bargaining rights. We will have in the White House a President who respects the dedication and integrity of postal workers, not one who labels us as corrupt and a joke. We will have in the White House someone who will follow science in relation to COVID, not denigrate public health officials. We will have a President who respects people, not one who divides us by fanning the flames of racial and religious bigotry.

**SINCE ELECTION DAY WE HAVE  
STOOD WITH THE VAST MAJORITY  
OF PEOPLE IN THIS COUNTRY  
WHO EXPECT AND INSIST THAT  
EVERY VOTE WILL BE COUNTED  
AND THE RESULTS RESPECTED.**

I fully respect that our members hold many varying political beliefs and applaud all for being involved in the political process. Members worked for various candidates, participated in the APWU "Labor 2020" program, registered people to vote, talked to co-workers, family and friends, put up yard signs, made phone calls, worked the polls – and voted!

Every APWU member should be extremely proud of our role in securing the public's most precious democratic right – the right to vote.

The people were counting on us and postal workers shined. An unprecedented 65 million people cast their

ballots by mail...as the safest way to access the ballot box and exercise our cherished right to vote.

With extra hours, attention, effort and priority, postal workers moved "heaven and earth" to make sure ballots were processed, arrived on time and were counted. Every APWU local stepped up to ensure the timely delivery and processing of ballots with hundreds of our locals involved in local labor-management task forces to ensure the job was done well.

Since election day we have stood with the vast majority of people in this country who expect and insist that every vote will be counted and the results respected.

The APWU stands fully united with the entire labor movement and fair-minded people throughout the land against any attempts to subvert the will of the people, any march toward dictatorship and tyranny, with fabricated claims of a rigged election based on vote-by-mail. We recognize that great challenges will continue to face us, no matter who sits in the White House. The Biden presidency creates a better and more supportive political environment. The rest is up to us, for movements move presidents and Congress, not the other way around.

Louis DeJoy is still the Postmaster General and promises to follow through on policies that slow down mail and drive away revenue... The Postal Board of Governors...remain in place for the foreseeable future. The struggle continues for needed COVID emergency financial relief from Congress. We must remain vigilant in the constant effort for maximum health and safety in this COVID world. Wall Street postal privatizers come in all political stripes. Efforts to expand and enhance Postal Services must accelerate. Postal reform legislation is needed. Bargaining for a new union contract begins this coming year.

Let us be reminded that we have far more in common than differences.

We are union! We will stand shoulder to shoulder with each other, the other postal unions, the labor movement, our community allies and the people of the country who, on a non-partisan basis, support and trust the public Postal Service. We continue to move forward in the struggle to protect our jobs, our union, uplift all workers and the 99% and ensure a vibrant public Postal Service for generations to come. ■



## MOMENTOUS YEAR IN REVIEW

# APWU Leaders and Members On the Frontlines in 2020



From a solid new union contract to the tragic pandemic, from a new PMG and mail delays to actions in support of racial justice, through the most pivotal presidential election in modern history, 2020 proved to be one of the most eventful years in recent times.

As we did 50 years ago in the Great Postal Strike, postal workers, both active and retired, showed once again that we are up to any challenge. From our many efforts, the support of the people for the public Postal Service is at an all-time high.

### HERE ARE SOME OF THE HIGHLIGHTS OF APWU ACTIVITIES THIS YEAR.

**JANUARY:** APWU builds a coalition and delivers over 400,000 petition signatures to Postal Board of Governors for a PMG who supports the people's Post Office

After Postmaster General Megan Brennan announced her retirement, the APWU and *A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service* immediately began a petition drive demanding that the Postal Board of Governors appoint a new Postmaster General who would uphold the mission of the public Postal Service.

Over 400,000 signatures were presented to USPS Headquarters on January 6, from the APWU and allies including Social Security Works, the NAACP, the AFL-CIO, Alliance for Retired Americans, the Center for Community Change, Our Revolution and the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation.



Boxes of signatures to be delivered to Postal Board of Governors

**FEBRUARY:** APWU Hard Work Leads to USPS Fairness Act's Bipartisan Passage in the House of Representatives

The *USPS Fairness Act* (H.R. 2382) called for a full repeal of the retiree health benefit prefunding mandate in the 2006 *Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act*. This onerous mandate was responsible for 92 percent of the Postal Service's financial losses since 2007.

On Feb. 5, it came up for a vote in the House of Representatives. As a result of the diligent, continued efforts by APWU active and retired members, and our sister postal unions and allies, the bill passed the House of Representatives with overwhelming, bipartisan support: 306 'yea,' 106 'nay.' A companion bill introduced in Senate with bipartisan support stalled due to COVID-19 legislative priorities.

*continued on next page*

# MOMENTOUS YEAR IN REVIEW



Industrial Relations Director  
Vance Zimmerman (right) with APWU  
attorneys

## MARCH: New Union Contract

On March 10, following 20 months of preparation, member and local union input, the *Fighting Today For a Better Tomorrow* contract campaign, negotiations, mediation, and the interest arbitration hearings, Neutral Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg issued his binding decision on a new contract between the APWU and the USPS.

The APWU secured retroactive annual pay raises, full (and retroactive) COLA and protected the no lay-off provisions for career employees. We narrowed the gap between the lower and higher career pay scales, achieved the career conversions of thousands of PSEs and enhanced job security protections.

The favorable terms of the contract would not have been possible without the strong case prepared and presented by the APWU Industrial Relations Department and Clerk, Maintenance, and MVS Division Officers in interest arbitration, during which 32 APWU members also testified about their work.



**MARCH: APWU Immediately  
Takes Actions to Keep  
Members Safe during  
COVID-19 Pandemic**

**APWU's Successful Efforts  
Continue Throughout the Year**

Immediately upon hearing about the likelihood of COVID-19 becoming a global crisis, National APWU leaders began meeting with USPS management to discuss the Postal Service's response and plans to keep employees safe. The National APWU negotiated a series of Temporary Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and secured COVID related liberal leave policy. The USPS began issuing Stand Up Talks to postal workers on the coronavirus.

By the middle of March, the APWU launched [apwu.org/coronavirus](https://apwu.org/coronavirus) and provided information and latest news on the virus for local officers and members. The APWU ensured that proper personal protective equipment (PPE) was supplied

to postal workers and proper safety protocols were put in place by management.

When many schools and businesses closed or dramatically altered operations, APWU members continued serving their communities as essential, frontline workers. The public again saw postal worker heroes as a vital lifeline, bringing supplies and a sense of normalcy.

The APWU mourns the loss of all our fellow postal workers and union brothers and sisters who were victims of the pandemic. We extend our deep sympathy to their families and loved ones.

## MARCH: Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Great Postal Strike

Although the coronavirus forced the scheduled March commemoration event of the 1970 Great Postal Strike to be canceled, the union still released a series of materials commemorating the strike.

The APWU also produced and posted an inspirational video, telling the story of the strike from the strikers themselves. It can be viewed at [apwu.org/video-library](https://apwu.org/video-library).

Postal workers during the 1970 Great Postal Strike





**APRIL:** As the economy shut down, projected USPS financial situation became dire. APWU broadcasts need for emergency funding.



President Dimondstein appearing on MSNBC on April 13.

As the pandemic spread, the economy dived, putting the entire country into a deep recession. The loss of business advertisements and first-class mail revenue brought a projected financial crisis for the Postal Service, even while package volume was high. The Postal Service also had unforeseen expenses with the need for PPE, proper COVID-19 safety measures, and additional paid leave for those affected by COVID-19 and its impact.

On April 9, then-Postmaster General Brennan testified before Congress about the Postal Service's COVID-19 financial crisis. The bipartisan Postal Board of Governors called on Congress for \$75 billion dollars of needed emergency financial relief – \$25 billion of the request was specifically for revenue lost because of the pandemic.

Postal workers were key in getting the message out about the critical need for an emergency appropriation for the USPS from Congress. Over many months, President Dimondstein appeared in multiple national news outlets – both newspapers, radio and television – reaching tens of millions of viewers and readers.

The APWU produced a video advertisement as well as radio announcements that aired across the country, encouraging the public to urge their Congressional representatives to support the USPS (view at [apwu.org/video-library](https://apwu.org/video-library)).

Additionally, hundreds of APWU members wrote letters to the editor to their local papers, and wrote and called their representatives in Congress.



Photo by Maria LePage of Markel Photo & Video

APWU and NALC members protest in Minneapolis against racial discrimination.

## **JUNE:** APWU Members Join the Struggle for Racial Justice Following Murder of George Floyd

On June 1, President Dimondstein, Executive Vice President Szeredy, and Secretary-Treasurer Powell issued a statement forcefully condemning George Floyd's murder. "We encourage our members and locals to speak out, protest and demand justice for George Floyd's family and community," the statement read. Many members around the country joined protests for racial justice.



Group in California poses for a photo before the caravan

## **JUNE:** APWU Members Caravan for Racial and Economic Justice in National AFL-CIO Event

On June 17, the AFL-CIO held over 600 "Workers First" Caravans for Racial and Economic Justice, including a major car caravan in Washington, D.C. with more than 1,200 vehicles participating.

APWU members joined with union brothers and sisters across the country to demand the White House and Congress address the AFL-CIO's five Economic Essentials for workers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. These "essentials" include keeping frontline workers safe, protecting and expanding health insurance, job creation by rebuilding the country's infrastructure, and emergency financial relief for local and state governments, public schools and the Postal Service.

*continued on next page*

# MOMENTOUS YEAR IN REVIEW



APWU delivers 2 million signatures to Congress. Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard with box.

Car caravan in Washington, D.C.



## **JUNE: Union and Allies Deliver Two Million Petition Signatures to Congress**

On June 23, the union led the Day of Action centered on the APWU's demand for \$25 billion in emergency postal funding. It highlighted the public's strong support for the Postal Service. Following a car caravan through Washington, D.C., the APWU delivered over two million petition signatures to Congress calling for emergency postal funding. Signatures were collected by the APWU, Move-On and RuralOrganizing.org, the AFL-CIO, #Resistbot, Public Citizen, and others.

Throughout the day, APWU members across the country gained attention from local newspapers and television outlets. The event kicked off a summer of APWU action.

The union followed up with a nationwide "Call Congress" day, on July 23. Almost 30,000 calls to the Senate were made – averaging one call every three seconds. The U.S. Capitol switchboard had trouble keeping up with the volume.

## **JUNE - AUGUST: President Dimondstein Testifies Before Congress on Voting by Mail**

On June 11, President Dimondstein testified before the Congressional Committee on House Administration on Voting Rights and Election Administration, and on August 28 before the Committee on Homeland Security.

His testimony came as it became clear that the COVID-19 pandemic would lead a record number of voters to choose to vote by mail. President Dimondstein's testimony underscored that delivering mail ballots is part of the vital mission of postal workers, and is tried, tested, popular and virtually free of fraud.

## **SUMMER: International Solidarity**

We stood in solidarity with 100,000 Brazilian Postal Workers who in August went on strike against the government's efforts to privatize the Post Office. In June, we shared our common struggles in a "cross Atlantic" meeting with the leaders and members of the APWU and the Communication Workers Union of Great Britain. We addressed the September conference of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas on the situation facing postal workers in the United States and throughout the continent.

Like the pandemic, privatizers know no borders and postal workers must be united in the struggle to preserve union jobs and benefits, public services for the good of the people and help uplift workers the world over.



## **JULY - SEPTEMBER: Regional Meetings Over Zoom**

This pandemic caused every organization to alter the ways they do business and the APWU was up to the challenge.

After the APWU National Executive Board voted to postpone the 2020 APWU National Convention (to October 4-7, 2021), the Secretary-Treasurer's department worked with the Regional Coordinators to schedule five separate Regional Zoom Meetings with local, state, retiree and auxiliary leaders and activists.

These meetings were part of the National's continued efforts to communicate with the members and build the union in these trying and challenging times.

In addition, many educational programs by the different APWU National departments are available virtually. You can go to [apwu.org/events](https://apwu.org/events) to see what educational programs are coming up.



## AUGUST: APWU Members Rally the Community and Deliver the Message to Stop Delays and #SaveThePostOffice



In July, shortly after his appointment as the 75th Postmaster General, Louis DeJoy began instituting a series of harmful policy changes that severely delayed mail processing and delivery. APWU National and local leaders sounded the alarm, pushing back against the changes.

In hundreds of interviews for newspapers, television and radio, APWU leaders called for an immediate stop to the changes and for \$25 billion in emergency postal funding. Building on this visibility and establishing the APWU as the leading truth tellers, the APWU's social media channels gained nearly 200,000 new followers.

The momentum carried into August 25, when APWU members; labor, civil and human rights activists; community allies; and lawmakers joined together at post offices across the country in a Save the Post Office Day of Action. An estimated 300 events were held across the country, with

thousands participating. The events earned hundreds of additional media stories in national outlets and local news.

Following massive public pressure led by the APWU, DeJoy announced he would suspend most of the negative changes until after the November election. In late September and early October, four federal courts issued temporary injunctions halting these changes until after the election.

Facing a public outcry focused on potential delays of election mail, DeJoy signed off on a joint task force committee with USPS management and the postal unions, including hundreds of joint committees at the local level. Postal workers once again rose to the call of duty and delivered democracy.

## JULY - NOVEMBER:

### APWU's "Labor 2020" Effort Contributes to Biden/Harris Victory

With emergency postal funding, labor rights and the future of the public Postal Service on the line, the APWU's Legislative and Political Department launched the "Labor 2020" program to mobilize voters.

Following the launch of "Labor 2020" at the APWU's Regional Meetings, the program set up [apwu.org/labor-2020](https://apwu.org/labor-2020), a central location of resources for members to get involved. The site helped members check their voter registration, register to vote, and request their mail-in ballots.

The APWU's efforts worked in tandem with the AFL-CIO's "Labor 2020" program, to get out the vote by making phone calls and sending text messages into battleground states to encourage voter registration and help voters make a plan to vote.

The work of APWU members, along with that of many other union members across the country, was key in winning many close elections in swing states.

Nevada State Secretary-Treasurer, Janet Purnell



## THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES IN 2021

Throughout one of the most eventful and difficult years in recent history, APWU members consistently showed up time and time again to meet our historic challenges. We moved "heaven and earth" to keep the country connected during the pandemic, process a record number of mail-in ballots for the 2020 election on a non-partisan basis, and responded to the attacks on the Postal Service from the highest office in the land.

Many of these challenges will continue into the new year.

Louis DeJoy is still Postmaster General, and the Postal Board of Governors, who enabled his policies that significantly delayed the mail, are still in place. Now that the election is over, DeJoy is likely moving forward with "cut and slash" policies that undermine our jobs and the public's right to good postal services.

Congress needs to be compelled to act on emergency COVID-19 financial relief for the USPS as well as addressing so many of the needs of workers in this pandemic.

As the pandemic continues to rage, health and safety of postal workers must remain in the forefront.

Our union contract expires in September 2021 as we build our unity for national negotiations that begin in June.

"The APWU will carry forward our activism of 2020 into the New Year as we face the serious challenges ahead," said President Dimondstein. "If the APWU family stays focused on what unites us, gets more involved in our union, and stays united with our many allies and the people of this country, there is no battle we can't win."

# DELIVERING DEMOCRACY

## Election Mail Committees are a Major Success

During the 2020 General Election cycle, the APWU joined a Postal Service national level task force to help guarantee that election mail was given the necessary priority to ensure that tens of millions of voters had access to the ballot box through the Postal Service – and that their vote counted. The national labor-management committee consisted of all four postal unions, management associations and top-level postal managers. The joint committee was largely a product of a public outcry regarding Postmaster General DeJoy's policies delaying mail in general and the potential negative impact on mail ballots and the election.

The committee delved into the background of what policies and procedures postal management had already put in place, including with state election officials, mail service providers and other stakeholders. Proper training for and necessary communication to all levels of the organization were addressed, including establishing procedures to quickly address any problems that arose in the field.

The most significant contribution of the APWU leadership to the national task force was suggesting, pressing for and achieving a union-management agreement that established joint local election task force committees at post offices throughout the country. The national union leaders understood that members on the frontlines know best how to process the mail and would do so expeditiously, and on a non-partisan basis. It also provided another level of transparency, resulting in reports being filed daily. Meetings took place at the local level and it gave our members a direct channel of communication to APWU National headquarters, to report any issues that they could not resolve at the local level, allowing for quick resolutions.

At every level, postal workers took processing election mail seriously and gave every single ballot first-class treatment. Postal employees worked tirelessly to make sure ballots got where they needed to go and were delivered on time. The USPS processed a record 65.5 million ballots.

"The joint committees at the national and local levels gave the APWU an opportunity to use our voices to ensure that election mail was handled securely and timely," said Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. "It also allowed us to fight back against efforts to cast doubt on the security of voting-by-mail and our ability to process ballots."

"We are immensely proud of the work done by both the national and local election mail task forces and dedicated postal workers," said President Mark Dimondstein. "The task forces were a major success and integral to securing every person's democratic right to vote by mail in this election. Postal workers delivered. Going forward, let's continue the struggle to ensure that the people receive top notch service for all their mailing needs." ■

### THE MEMBERS SPEAK

#### Testimonials from the Workroom Floor

*Editor's Note: Below are testimonials from members of the local election task force committees about what they experienced.*

*"It is an honor and privilege to serve on the Task Force . . . All of our ballots went out on time, all verifications were completed and our numbers were checked daily and matched. As an employee of USPS, it has been extremely important to me to ensure that the Postal Service redeems itself, and I hope that our facility has helped to accomplish this. I believe all elections are important, and consideration should be given to continuing this task force practice."*

Wendy Breeden, Puget Sound Area Local

*"As part of the Election Task Force this year, I was able to walk the floor at the Sacramento P&DC processing plant daily, making sure all election mail got processed correctly. I believe having this task force helped make the election more successful and strongly believe this should be a part of the process in future elections!"*

Grace Cota, Sacramento Area Local (CA)

*"We have many new hires, PSEs and young workers that have never taken part in this process, along with an unprecedented number of mail-in ballots... I think the work we did as ballot monitors made a difference. It was wonderful to send on an issue and see it being addressed the next day. We all know management tends to care more about the big picture, and we were there to cover the small details."*

Debora Larson, Member, Albany Local

*"I spent hours going through the mail, in the manual area, pulling ballots... working at the plant, part of my daily route is performing a mail search on the AFCS and the 010. After my search, I would go through the mail I located in addition to the tubs of raw mail that arrived after midnight, to assure that ballots did not sit at the plant."*

Terri Steele, Member, Birmingham Area Local (AL)



# Detroit District Area Local Issues Proclamation to Stand for Democracy

*Below is a reprint of a proclamation by the Detroit District Area Local published in October. The Baltimore Francis 'Stu' Filbey Area Local and the Nations Capital Southern Maryland Area Local passed similar resolutions.*

*"We commend the Detroit leadership, and others, for their strong statements and activism around defending democracy," said President Dimondstein. "As this issue goes to press, President Trump has yet to concede the election and promise he will leave office. It will be up to the workers and people of this country to rise up if he or his enablers attempt to override the voice of the people."*

## Choose Democracy – Take the Pledge

1. **Don't expect results election night.** Count all the votes and honor the result.
2. **Do call it a coup.** A coup is wrong and a violation of democratic norms. We know it's a coup if the government:
  - Stops counting votes;
  - Declares someone a winner who didn't get the most votes; or
  - Allows someone to stay in power who didn't win the election.
3. **Know that coups have been stopped by regular folks.**
4. **To start preparing, talk to at least 5 people who would go into the streets with you – the safest way to take to the streets is with people you know and trust.**
5. **Be ready to act quickly – and not alone.**
6. **Focus on widely shared democratic values.** No matter who you are, you can be a part of choosing democracy.
7. **Convince people not to freeze or just go along.** It's about protest and getting people to reassert core values. It's about actions like mass strikes from workers and students refusing to go to work or school until all votes are counted.
8. **Commit to actions that represent rule of law, stability and nonviolence.** Mass resistance to coups wins by using walk-outs and strikes, refusing orders and shutting down civil society until the rightful democratically-elected leader is installed. For mass movements to succeed against coups, they should refuse to do violence to the other side.
9. **Yes, a coup can happen in the United States.**
10. **Center in calm, not fear.** It's scary to believe we're having to talk about a federal coup in the United States. Let's aim for calm and avoid hyperbole. Be a reliable source by double-checking rumors and spreading high-quality facts. Breathe deeply.
11. **Prepare to deter a coup before the election.** In that spirit, Choose Democracy has created a pledge:
  - *We will vote*
  - *We will refuse to accept election results until all the votes are counted.*
  - *We will nonviolently take to the streets if a coup is attempted.*
  - *If we need to, we will shut down this country to protect the integrity of the democratic process.*

**Defend Democracy. Take the Pledge. Share Widely.**



# Ruth Bader Ginsburg, the People's Vote Discounted

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

**R**uth Bader Ginsburg's life passion was providing equality under the law. She was one of many women and some men that had the "fire in their belly" to stop discrimination. I know how Ruth felt, because I am one of those women, along with many of my union friends, who struggle to end discrimination in the workplace.

My first case was in my 20's, when I represented a woman who worked as a casual (temporary) employee for the USPS. Her supervisor gawked at her breasts and her buttocks, continuously in front of myself and our co-workers. When she refused to go out with him, he said in her last workplace evaluation that she was a terrible worker. Due to that evaluation, she lost the opportunity to become a career employee. After a three-year battle, we won. She was given a career job, back pay, seniority and benefits.

THIS HOLIDAY SEASON, I PRAY FOR ALL OF OUR STRONG ACTIVISTS AND HOPE FOR MORE MEMBERS TO STAND UP FOR EACH OTHER. PUT SOME "FIRE IN YOUR BELLY." GET OUT THERE AND FIGHT FOR THE PUBLIC POSTAL SERVICE, OUR SECOND HOME, WHERE WE WORK MORE HOURS ON THE JOB THAN WE GET TO SPEND WITH OUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS.

I, and many others, have filed cases throughout the years for workers who were discriminated against due to their sex, pregnancy status, sexual orientation, race, national origin, religion, or due to being deaf or having other disabilities. The sad part of this story is that discrimination still goes on in many USPS workplaces today. Ruth's belief, hope and her wins helped make many of us stronger. After all she has done, Ruth's dying wish was for justice, and that we make sure the people's vote counted, and the selection would be made from those we elected. On September 18, Ruth Bader Ginsburg died, fourteen days after the election began. Due to the pandemic, we were already casting early votes. No one should be given a lifetime position on the highest court of the land when we are in the process of electing our President and Senators.

Instead, the current U.S. President and Senate continued beating down people's right to have a say in who would be seated in one of the most important jobs in the federal government. Let's not forget, this is the same Senate who has allowed a bill to sit since May that would bring relief to essential workers, the Postal Service, schools, communities, small businesses, and local and state governments that are suffering in this pandemic, and being denied real financial support.

During the 2020 election the people spoke in the largest turnout since 1900. Every vote was counted and we voted for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. We must turn to Georgia for the runoff Senate elections.

This holiday season, I pray for all of our strong activists and hope for more members to stand up for each other. Put some "fire in your belly." Get out there and fight for the public Postal Service, our second home, where we work more hours on the job than we get to spend with our families and friends.

Our work must start with stopping Postmaster General DeJoy from implementing more cuts. We must work to expand our public Postal Service for ourselves, our children and our communities. We must be ready to stand in memory of Ruth Ginsburg; our revolution needs your activism. Please stay safe; we love and care about you. Have a Blessed Holiday Season. ■



*"Let us pray for the dead, and fight like hell for the living."*  
— Mother Jones



# LETTERS

Throughout the pandemic, the APWU National has received dozens of letters of support from the public, thanking us for our dedicated service. Some are edited for space and clarity.



I'm writing in support of USPS workers and to let you know of my concerns about recent negative (I think) changes to the Post Office.

I have been using USPS for years, but it was not until recently that I knew that USPS received no money from taxpayers. The COVID-19 pandemic had a big hit to the U.S. economy. This is a time when more American people rely on the USPS than ever before. Our democracy depends on the Postal Service...

We need to change now. This is not a Democrat vs. Republican issue. Everyone in America depends on the USPS....

I am glad that more Americans are aware of the crisis and started to help... I have signed various petitions and sent messages to my senators and representatives, asking them to address the issue once Congress has resumed. I have already spread the message to my friends, asking them to save the USPS together.

I really appreciate the hard work of all postal workers. It is you guys who spent so much time and endeavor to connect our country to the world... You all rock.

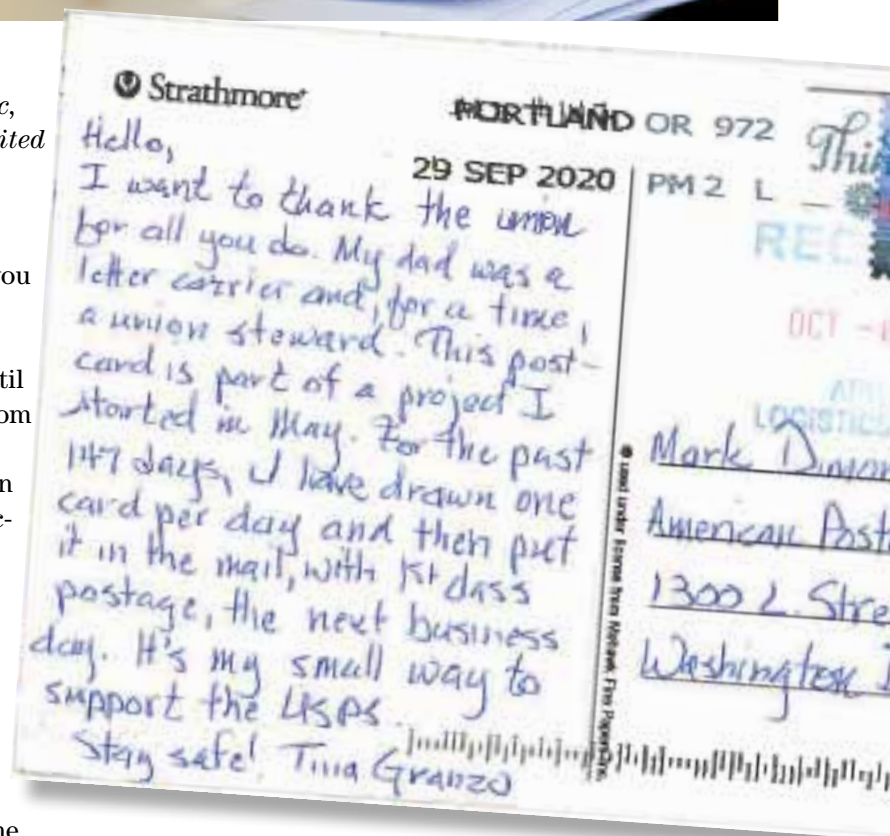
Sincerely Yours,  
Kenneth Pat, La Jolla, CA

We get our prescriptions, receive and send out bills, and vote by mail. And of course, we send out Christmas cards, a personal tradition I do not want to give up. None of this would be possible without the reliable delivery of the mail by the federal workers of our local USPS. I am grateful to all of you.

My father was a career member of the U.S. Army, so we spent many years in countries other than the U.S. My parents were able to vote while overseas, because of the infrastructure and reliability of the USPS.

Our postal system needs to be protected and respected. It is one of the finest in the world... Thank you for the service the USPS workers have provided in all neighborhoods and rural communities around this country.

Ruby Herrick, Sacramento, CA



We love our post office in Camden, right in the middle of town. We see each other there, mailing letters and even bills, packages and cards. We are fond of the clerks who are themselves part of the town. It is part of the living social center that we all depend on, to stay in touch with each other and the world.

I find it unbelievable that there are people in Congress who think we shouldn't have a Postal Service, are trying to starve it out by unfair legislation, when it is such a heartwarming part of our community, and all the other communities in the country.

Beedy Parker, Camden, ME

I am just one of many, many Americans who are so thankful for your hard work, dedication and determination in your delivery of our very important mail, medications and packages. Thanks seems to be such a small gesture but please don't be discouraged as we are with you in thought and spirit.

Pat Arnold, Crystal, MN



SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

# Wage Increase Set for November 21

A salary increase that was negotiated as part of the 2018-2021 Collective Bargaining Agreement will take effect on November 21, 2020 (pp-25). Career employees will receive a raise of 1 percent and Postal Support Employees (who are not eligible for cost-of-living allowance adjustments) will receive a raise of 2 percent.

Coinciding with the raise will be a dues increase, in accordance with Article 16.2 (a) of the APWU Constitution and Bylaws. Union dues for career employees will be increased by 66 cents per member, per pay period, with 44 cents of the increase going to locals and state organizations and 22 cents going to the national union; dues for PSEs will increase by 39 cents per member, per pay period, with 26 cents of the increase going to locals and state organizations and 13 cents going to the national union. The raise in dues will be reflected in paychecks dated Dec. 11.



## National Convention October 2021, Resolutions and All Craft Conference

Preparations are ongoing for the October 2021 APWU National Convention and All Craft Conference. Local and State officers should pay close attention to information in the *American Postal Worker*, email correspondence and information posted on [apwu.org](http://apwu.org). Deadlines pertaining to the acceptance of resolutions printed in the convention book, as well as other important information to assist local and state organizations with budgeting and planning for dates covering September 30 through October 7, 2021, will be provided in the new year.

## Local Elections

In compliance with Department of Labor (DOL) guidelines, local and state organizations should have held local and state elections. While the DOL-recognized locals may need to delay required elections because of the pandemic, elections are still required to take place on a certain date to be in compliance with DOL guidelines.

Local unions have the ability to use Zoom to facilitate nominations and state organizations are able to conduct nominations and elections during their convention. If you are a local or state officer who wants to become familiar with Zoom in preparation for their local or state election, contact the Secretary-Treasurer's Department for information and assistance. ■

## What We Should be Doing This November and December

As 2020 comes to a close, locals are reminded to take care of important housekeeping tasks in preparation for the new year. Here is a quick reminder of what locals should be doing this November and December:

- Review 2020 budget and prepare a 2021 budget of your fiscal year ending December 31, 2021.
- Shred financial records prior to 2015 (remember you must keep financial records for 5 years plus the current year).
- Update local asset inventory and properly dispose of old and broken equipment and furniture with a properly approved motion.
- Archive the minutes of membership and executive board meetings for 2020.
- Prepare a calendar of activities and deadlines for 2021.

Locals that need assistance with these tasks should contact the APWU Secretary-Treasurer's office at 202-842-4215 or contact Annette August-Taylor, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer, [aaugust@apwu.org](mailto:aaugust@apwu.org).



# 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. 21 and runs through Jan. 15, 2021.

The APWU encourages members to donate to a cause close to them if they are able to do so. "This year, 2020 has hit our homes and communities especially hard," President Dimondstein said, "CFC contributions are a way APWU members can easily give."

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, many people in the country face the dual challenge of recovering from natural disasters, including wildfires, hurricanes, and tornadoes. In the wake of these natural disasters, 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 co-workers rebuild their lives after natural disasters strike.

To support PERF via the CFC, designate #10268.



## APWU SCHOLARSHIPS

The deadline for applying for the 2021 E.C. Hallbeck Memorial Scholarship, Vocational

Scholarship, and Best Essay Award is March 31, 2021. 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. Go to [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) to learn more.



# Stepping up in a Challenging Year

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR VANCE ZIMMERMAN

**A**s 2020 comes to an end, we reflect on the many challenges throughout the year we have faced. These include the COVID-19 pandemic, drastic changes to mail service implemented and then partially reversed by Postmaster General DeJoy, and a contentious election season.

You all stepped up when called upon. When the pandemic first overtook the country, you worked hard to keep the mail flowing — especially the heavy increase in the number of parcels that our customers needed as they sheltered at home. When Postmaster General DeJoy instituted his ill-conceived changes to the mail system that drastically slowed the mail down, you all stepped up to educate the public and fight back against them. You rallied our communities and got them involved. You worked to ensure vulnerable citizens still received their prescriptions and other important mail pieces. You showed the PMG and other government leaders that the Postal Service is beloved and should not be a “political football.”

When you were called upon to make the 2020 election successful, you stood up, took on the challenge and delivered 65 million ballots from and to state and local election offices. When you all saw where ballots were getting bogged down, you sounded the alarm again and helped to get them moved. Your actions on local task forces for election mail was vital.

As a member of the APWU, I am proud of the work you all did during these challenging times. I want to personally thank the national officers, state and local officers, shop stewards, and of course the frontline members for everything that you did. Your efforts can only be described as heroic.

## Annual Salary Increases to Come

Even with all this going on, we still have a contract that must be followed and enforced. Part of that contract is our annual salary increases.

On November 21, 2020 the third and final general salary increase will become effective. It will then show up on paychecks dated December 11, 2020. The final increase will be 1.0 percent of the salary effective on September 20, 2018. PSEs will receive an additional 1.0 percent as well, totalling 2 percent (PSEs do not receive cost of living

allowance increases). Overall, employees will have received 3.4 percent in salary increases under the 2018-2021 National Agreement, excluding cost of living allowance (COLA) adjustments for career employees or any extra pay increases for PSEs.

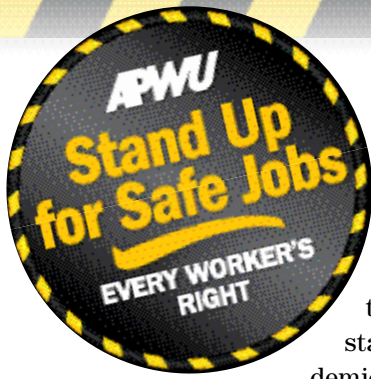
Even though this is the last general salary increase under the contract, that does not necessarily mean we are done with pay increases. Under the current agreement, there is a possibility of two additional COLAs for career employees. Because the date a COLA becomes effective is based on the release of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) data, we do not know the exact dates yet. However, typically the effective dates are in March and September. COLAs are based on changes in the CPI. Currently the CPI is rising, which will lead to a pay increase. You can see the most recent COLA update on the APWU website at [apwu.org/cola-employees-covered-national-agreement](http://apwu.org/cola-employees-covered-national-agreement).

**WHEN YOU WERE CALLED UPON  
TO MAKE THE 2020 ELECTION  
SUCCESSFUL, YOU STOOD UP, TOOK ON  
THE CHALLENGE AND DELIVERED 65  
MILLION BALLOTS FROM AND TO STATE  
AND LOCAL ELECTION OFFICES.**

Employees represented by the APWU are the only USPS employees who still receive a FULL COLA. Other employees only receive a portion of the COLA based upon their length of career service. Members of other crafts only receive COLAs in relation to what percentage they make of that craft's top step. If a new employee's starting salary is only 49 percent of the top step of their craft, they only get 49 percent of the COLA (simply put: \$49 of every \$100 of COLA). Even the most junior APWU career employee receives a 100 percent dollar-for-dollar COLA. Over the lifetime of a career this can equate to tens of thousands of dollars in pay, retirement, TSP contributions, and matching TSP funds. That is why keeping full COLA has and always will be a priority for the APWU.

**Solidarity!** ■





# APWU Standing Up for Safe Jobs

The safety of all postal employees is one of the most important issues that the APWU faces. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the APWU led the charge to meet with the Postal Service, implement cleaning and hygiene protocols at all post offices, make sure personal protective equipment (PPE) was (and is still being) provided, and negotiate the numerous Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) that have helped protect all of us.

“Safety enforcement at all postal facilities, no matter the size, is something everyone must take seriously,” said Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman. “We know that management sometimes views the importance of safety only when convenient. Of course, we know safety is not a matter of convenience, but a something that must be considered on a daily basis every time we go to work.”

To that end, additional Regional Safety and Health Representatives have been appointed to represent the APWU, assist the Regional Coordinators with safety issues in their respective regions, and assist local and state officers as necessary. Local officers should contact their Regional Coordinators when safety issues arise so that a Regional Safety and Health Representative can assist.

## Central

Steve Vaughn  
Dave Childers  
Michelle Elliott  
John Hunt

svaughn@apwu.org  
dchilders@apwu.org  
melliott@apwu.org  
jhunt@apwu.org

## Eastern

Tom Molanick  
Victor Fields  
Nannette Corley  
Kim Miller

tmolanick@apwu.org  
vfields@apwu.org  
ncorley@apwu.org  
kmiller@apwu.org

## Northeast

MaryLou Polverari  
Artie DeGennaro  
Michelle Nadeau  
Rick White

mpolverari@apwu.org  
adegennaro@apwu.org  
mnadeau@apwu.org  
rwhite@apwu.org

## Southern

Don Barron  
Katina Range  
Leonard Dennison  
Muriel Holmes

dbarron@apwu.org  
krange@apwu.org  
ldennison@apwu.org  
muriel.holmes@apwu.org

## Western

Patricia Sartain  
David McSulla  
Ashley Sorensen  
Jon Grumet

psartain@apwu.org  
dmcsulla@apwu.org  
asorensen@apwu.org  
jgrumet@apwu.org

## Knowing Our Rights: COVID-19

One key aspect to ensuring our health and safety at work is knowing our rights when it comes to being exposed to COVID-19 and subsequently quarantined. We have the right to be paid if any of us are placed on quarantine by the Postal Service due to a “close contact” at work.

On October 21, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) updated their definition of “close contact” for COVID-19.

Previously, the guidance stated that a person who was within six feet of someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 for 15 consecutive minutes should be considered a “close contact.” However, if the person who tested positive and the “close contact” were wearing face coverings, they would not have to be quarantined.

Based on studies of the disease and contact tracing, the CDC changed their guidance. Now a “close contact” is defined as:

- A person who has been within six feet of a person who tests positive for COVID-19 for a **cumulative total** of 15 minutes in

a 24-hour period. Meaning, if a person is around another for two minutes at start of shift, 10 minutes in the breakroom later, and then three minutes at end of shift, that is 15 total cumulative minutes, and they must be quarantined.

- If both parties are wearing face coverings, it no longer eliminates the need to quarantine. Even if wearing face coverings, they must quarantine.

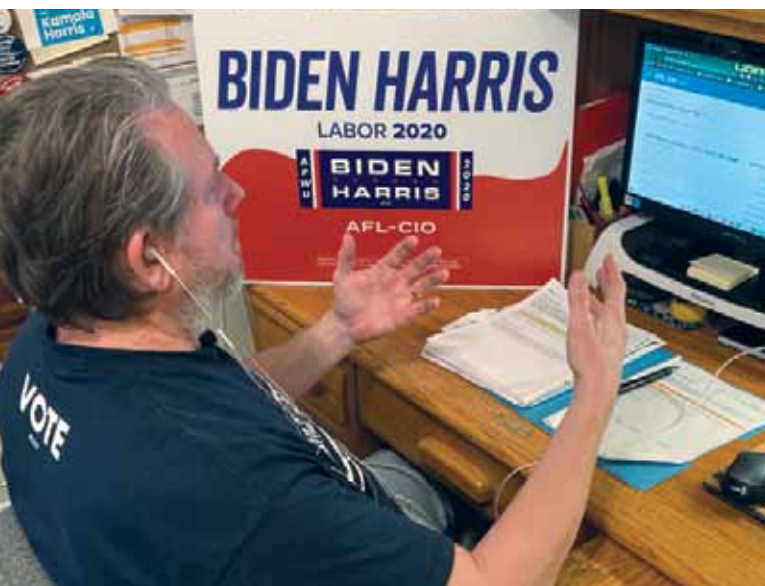
Based on this guidance, the USPS also updated their close contact tracing programming. The guidance now calls for quarantines if employees meet the CDC criteria. If an employee must be quarantined, the Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act (FFCRA) allows the Postal Service to place the employee on *emergency paid sick leave (EPSL)* to quarantine. In this case, the EPSL will be at full pay. Postal Service policy in the “close contact tracing program” states that employees who have used EPSL will be placed on administrative leave.

Employees who are not paid properly in these situations need to contact their local union officers or stewards for assistance.

# APWU Members Give Their



APWU of Florida Legislative and Political Director Martha Shunn-King, phone banking from Florida



Mark Sarcone, member of Des Moines Area Local, phone banking



(From l-r) Mary Ellen Thomas, Cassandra Mukhtar, Sabrina Larsen, and Dianna Calimlim, members of Salt Lake Area Local, wearing Vote by Mail shirts produced by the Legislative & Political Department and sent to Labor 2020 volunteers.

In the face of continuous attacks on the Postal Service, voter suppression, and a pandemic, the APWU's Legislative and Political Department launched Labor 2020 – our campaign to mobilize voters, elect leaders who will work to better the lives of working families, and guarantee the future of the public Postal Service.

"APWU members knew that the fate of the Postal Service and the working class were at stake in this election," said President Dimondstein. "That's why we worked tirelessly to elect Joe Biden and Kamala Harris."

The APWU kicked off our Labor 2020 campaign at all five APWU National Regional Conferences, beginning in July. As part of our campaign, we launched the Labor 2020 page on [apwu.org](https://apwu.org). There, we placed resources to help members and their families check their voter registration status, register to vote, request their mail-in ballots and make a plan to vote. Through the website, members also recorded messages telling us what this election means to them with our Labor 2020 Video Tool.

We worked in unison with the AFL-CIO Labor 2020 campaign. Together, we promoted National Voter Registration Day (encouraging our members to check their registration status), asked members to become election workers, and made thousands of phone calls into battleground states.

Our Labor 2020 campaign was especially urgent, given the level of election misinformation coming from the country's highest office. In an effort to discourage voter turnout and suppress the vote, President Trump undermined our democratic process by attacking the Postal Service's ability to securely deliver mail-in ballots with false claims that vote-by-mail leads to voter fraud.

The APWU fought back against this kind of election misinformation by creating a Vote-by-Mail 101 webpage to make sure voters could confidently mail in their ballots. We also disseminated an in-depth candidate comparison, pub-





# All in Labor 2020 Campaign

lished in the last issue of *The American Postal Worker*, covering issues from collective bargaining and postal privatization to health care and Social Security. When the National Executive Board voted to endorse Joe Biden in this election, we made candidate information widely available so members could see for themselves who would be on the side of workers and the Postal Service.

## Record Participation

In this election season, we are proud to report a record number of APWU members were engaged in the electoral process.

Members made calls into critical battleground states with several programs, including AFL-CIO's Labor 2020 program and its constituency groups' programs. Other retirees and members worked voluntarily and independently with the Biden campaign to get out the vote.

As we drew closer to Election Day, we sent thousands of texts to fellow APWU members and their households, reminding them to make a plan to vote. Not only did members make calls and send texts, but they also volunteered to become election workers to ensure a safe and fair election for voters.

"APWU's Labor 2020 campaign successfully mobilized voters and helped elect a leader who has promised to preserve our union jobs and public Postal Service," said Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. "We want to thank the National Executive Board, national officers, local and state officers, retirees, and auxiliary members for all their hard work this election cycle. We especially want to thank members for making calls, sending texts, sharing their reason for voting with our video tool, and volunteering as election workers. Labor 2020 and this election would not be possible without postal workers." ■

**THANK  
YOU  
UNION  
MEMBERS**

Missouri APWU members Kirk Schroeder, David Musterman, John Zamudio, Henry Rice, Mercedes Mosley, Beth Zamudio, Mia Smith, Kymberlie Calmese and Robbie Robinson with MO State Sen. Jill Schupp (center, holding sign) and MO State Rep. Deb Lavender (to the right of Schupp)

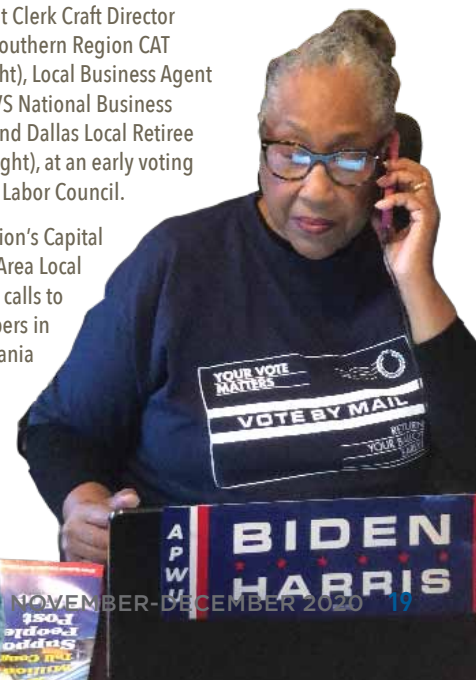


Nathan Grant from the Dayton Ohio Area Local attending the "Soul of America" bus tour.



(above) Dallas Area Local Assistant Clerk Craft Director Katina Range (front left), APWU Southern Region CAT Liason Angela Ellington (front right), Local Business Agent Margarite Rosas (middle left), MVS National Business Agent Dyrike Shaw (back right), and Dallas Local Retiree President Lewis Fulbright (back right), at an early voting rally hosted by the Dallas Central Labor Council.

(right) Freida Seward, Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local retiree making calls to union members in Pennsylvania



# Partner with a health plan that helps you protect what's most important.



Access to the large nationwide Digna network, featuring more than 18 million healthcare providers with no referral needed. Stay in-network to save on deductibles, copays and coinsurance.



Members pay in-network; \$15 copay for virtual visit; \$25 copay for office and specialty visits; \$30 copay urgent care facility; 15% coinsurance for other treatment and tests.



Preventive care is paid at 100%; pay nothing for annual physicals, screenings such as mammograms and colonoscopies and immunizations when performed in-network.



Care and treatment paid at 100% include in-network maternity care and delivery, labs performed at LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics, outpatient accidental injury when treated within 72 hours.



New! \$25 copay for most insulin and \$0 copay for generic oral medications, formulary blood glucose test strips and lancets for the purpose of lowering your blood sugar; pharmacy benefit administered through Express Scripts includes low member cost share. Tier 1 \$10 copay; Tier 2 25% (\$300 maximum) and Tier 3 45% (\$300 maximum).

HIGH OPTION

## High Option Premiums 2021

Insurance type	Insurance code	Postal	
		APWU CAREER (self+spouse)	self+spouse (per spouse)
Self Only	471	\$1,200.00	\$650.00
Self Plus One	472	\$1,800.00	\$1,000.00
Self and Family	473	\$2,400.00	\$1,300.00



# APWU

## HEALTH

### 2020 Open Season Nov. 9 -

The APWU Health Plan covers COVID-19 pandemic. Open Season will be communicated virtually. The Health Plan has provided a complete list of services. See your optician for more information. See your optician for more information.

- Call the Open Season Helpline at 800-410-APWU
- Email general Open Season questions to [virtualseason@apwu.org](mailto:virtualseason@apwu.org)
- Visit the Health Plan's website at [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org) and click on Open Season
- Join our virtual Open Season event on Tuesday and Thursday at [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org) for details. <http://www.apwu.org>

The Health Plan responds to this year by providing members with enhanced benefits and access during the COVID-19 pandemic. Enhancements included in the following COVID-19 visit list:

- Testing
- Office visits, urgent care, emergency room visits (in-network)
- In-network inpatient and outpatient care
- Telehealth visits
- Waived inpatient prior authorization

The Health Plan is proud to provide members with enhanced benefits and access during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## A Medicare Advantage plan designed for FEHBP. Take advantage of it.

To qualify for enhanced Medicare Advantage benefits you must be:

1. Enrolled in the APWU Health Plan High Option
2. Enrolled in Medicare Parts A and B

There's so much to take advantage of:

- No deductible, coinsurance or copays
- No need to coordinate primary and secondary payers
- Prescription drug coverage throughout the Gap stage and Catastrophic coverage stage
- \$50 Medicare Part B monthly subsidy





(800) PIC-APWU | WWW.APWUHP.COM  
virtualopenseason@apwuhp.com  
#BetterTogether

## PLAN Open Season Dec. 14

Continues to respond to the  
Open Season information will  
by this year. The Health  
Plans to keep you  
below.

Online for more information

Open questions to:

apwuhp.com

Website at www.apwuhp.com;

Open Health Plans every  
during Open Season (visit  
or register today at  
virtual-open-season-

ed to the pandemic earlier  
members with enhanced  
this challenging time.  
100% coverage for the  
Treatment:

centervisits and  
that resulted in testing  
outpatient care/treatment

Short-term requirements

to provide service to our  
you need us the most

### CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION



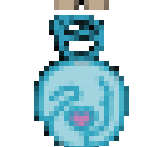
Access to the large nationwide UHC network, featuring more than a million healthcare providers; no referrals needed. Stay-in-network to save on deductibles, copays and coinsurance.



One of the first consumer-driven plans in FGHHR. It's the plan that pays you back! In January each member gets a Personal Care Account (PCA) that is funded by the Health Plan - \$1000 Self only and \$2400 for Self Plus One and Family Use your PCA to cover healthcare expenses like medical, prescriptions, dental treatment and vision and more; no upfront deductible, copays or coinsurance. Your PCA rolls over; dollars not used in a calendar year can be carried over to subsequent years.



Provider-run hospital HMO when performance is low. PCA roll-over automatically added to your PCA when you complete your physician.



Member-run and delivery hospital HMO when performance is low.



With this comprehensive plan you and your family are covered for medical care, virtual visits, prescription drugs, hospital stays and surgery, lab and X-rays, physical therapy, wellness programs, behavioral health, and much more!

### Consumer Driven Option Premiums 2021

Postal



member type	member code	APWU CAREER IN FGHHR AS CAREER MORE THAN ONE YEAR (silver+ug)	APWU CAREER IN FGHHR AS CAREER MORE THAN ONE YEAR (silver+ug)	PAID (silver+ug)	self-pay (silver+ug)
Self-Only	001	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$12.00
Self Plus One	002	\$17.00	\$17.00	\$17.00	\$17.00
Self and Family	003	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$22.00	\$22.00

## Plan benefits and programs include:



#### Provider Network

See any doctor you want and pay the same cost share as long as they accept Medicare patients and the plan



#### UnitedHealthcare®

##### HomeCare

Get an annual in-home preventive care visit at no extra cost with a health care practitioner



#### UnitedHealthcare Hearing

Receive a hearing exam and get access to a wide selection of custom-programmed hearing aids — available in-person at any of our 5,000 UnitedHealthcare Hearing providers nationwide or through home delivery



#### SilverSneakers®

Stay active and have fun with a free fitness program

# Alternative Delivery and Access Point Program



Assistant Director Lynn Pallas-Barber, Director Lamont Brooks and Assistant Director Sam Lisenbe

**M**embers will recall the APWU's successful *Stop Staples* fight to prevent the Postal Service from utilizing Staples stores to offer certain postal products and services through its Retail Partner Expansion and Approved Shipper programs. The APWU prevailed in this battle, thanks in large part to the involvement of thousands of APWU members, our sister unions, and working men and women throughout the country.

Earlier this year, the Postal Service notified the APWU that it was implementing a new plan called the Alternative Delivery and Access Point Program. Under this program, the Postal Service initially utilized a select number of Target stores in the state of Iowa to allow customers to drop off or pick up packages at these locations. For example, a customer expecting a package can ensure that it will remain in a secure place, where they are planning to business already rather than lay on a front porch for an extended period of time. Another Target store in Los Angeles was later added to this program in July 2020.

Beginning in August, over 1,000 Staples stores nationwide also began to offer the Alternative Delivery and Access Point Program. Prior to implementation of this project, we met with Postal Service officials, who offered certain assurances that this program would not be a repeat of previous attempts to use Staples to take work from postal employees. Among these promises were: 1) the program will be used solely for customers to drop off or pick up a package; 2) packages will be kept in a secure location at

**CHECK WITH YOUR LOCAL OR STATES UNION TO SEE IF YOU HAVE A TARGET OR STAPLES STORE NEAR YOU THAT IS CURRENTLY ON THE LIST. A QUICK VISIT MAY BE IN ORDER, TO SEE TO IT THAT THEY ARE OFFERING ONLY PICK UP AND DROP OFF PACKAGE SERVICE.**

that business; 3) these stores will not provide or sell postal products or services; 4) no employees at these stores will be involved with the program, other than handing off a

package to a customer after ID is shown; and 5) letter carriers with one of these stores on their regular routes will deliver and pick up the packages.

If the program is operated as management suggests, it can be a new pathway for the Postal Service to compete with UPS and FedEx, who already offer these services at several businesses. UPS has been offering this service at Staples for quite some time. Customers who shop at Target and Staples stores will at least have an option to use the Postal Service rather than one of our competitors.

**IF THE PROGRAM IS OPERATED AS MANAGEMENT SUGGESTS, IT CAN BE A NEW PATHWAY FOR THE POSTAL SERVICE TO COMPETE WITH UPS AND FEDEX, WHO ALREADY OFFER THESE SERVICES AT SEVERAL BUSINESSES.**

Nevertheless, members are advised to beware of the recent history between the Postal Service and Staples and their past efforts to provide and sell postal products and services. Your Clerk Craft National Business Agents have been provided with a list of all Target and Staples stores who are currently participating in the Alternative Delivery and Access Point Program up to this point, but management has informed the APWU that it intends to expand this program nationwide and the approximate 1,100 Target and Staples stores already offering these services may not be the end of the line.

Your officers at the national level will continue monitoring this situation. That includes visiting some of these businesses to ensure that the Postal Service keeps its promise to only allow these stores to offer pick up and drop off services of packages that will remain in the mail stream, worked by postal employees, and delivered by postal carriers. Check with your local or state union to see if you have a Target or Staples store near you that is currently on the list. A quick visit may be in order, to see to it that they are offering only pick up and drop off package service. ■



# National Support Technicians ET 11 LMOU Negotiation



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

**T**he Local Memorandum of Understanding (LMOU) below was discussed and developed by the APWU and USPS pursuant to the 2015 National Agreement, Article 38.7.F and the MOU Re: Electronic Technician PS-11 (NTSN Technician).

The LMOU is applicable only to the employees of the Electronic Technician PS-11 (or ET-11) occupational group of the Maintenance Division, APWU and the Maintenance Technical Support Center (MTSC):

*The parties at the Headquarters level agree to further extend the deadlines for negotiation of the terms of the Local Memorandum of Understanding, under the 2018 National Agreement. Due to the unique nature of the Maintenance Technical Support Center's installation.*

*The undersigned agree to an extension of the timeline for negotiating LMOU as follows:*

- January 12, 2021 – Negotiation Period Begins
- March 15, 2021 – Negotiations Period Ends
- April 6, 2021 – Appeals to Impasse Due
- May 14, 2021 – Completion of Impasse Discussions
- July 6, 2021 – Completion of Impasse Arbitration

*Initial proposals must be exchanged within the first twenty-one (21) days of the thirty (30) consecutive day implementation period. Each party reserves the right to determine the method and location of meeting when they alternate hosting of the other party.*

*During the year, the parties have agreed to amend the Leave Requesting Procedure in Section V, Item 9, as follows:*

*9) A copy of the approved PS Form 3971 will be returned to the employee via postal-provided email should the request be within the annual leave slots determined above. The highest preference selection available will be granted to each employee, by seniority. After the initial round of selections, a second round of selections will be conducted, in the order submitted, provided two or more selections were submitted by the employee.*

*a) Choice period selections shall be submitted by the employee no later than 1600 CTZ on December 1st.*

*b) These selections shall be acted on and returned to the employee as soon as possible but no later than five (5) business days after December 1st. The parties agree that this process will be implemented for Choice Leave Selection for Leave Year 2021, and incorporated in the LMOU.*

*Finally, the parties agree that this agreement may not be cited in any forum for any purpose, except for its own enforcement, and may not be used as precedent or to show either parties' intent in other matters.*

We currently have three ET-11 Technicians, two National Business Agents and Director Balogun preparing internally for the upcoming negotiation. If you are an ET-11 Technician, we would like to hear from you regarding the success and shortcomings of the current NST LMOU for the Negotiations Team to consider. Please email us at [Maint-HQ-Update@apwu.org](mailto:Maint-HQ-Update@apwu.org).

Thank you in advance for your correspondence. ■

## Promotion Pending Qualification extension expired on October 27

Due to the Postal Service's COVID-19 travel restrictions and the temporary closing of the National Center for Employee Development (NCED) in response to the pandemic, the time between March 18 and ninety days following the re-opening of NCED will not count towards the Article 38.5.C.3 one year period for Maintenance Craft employees to be in a promotion detail assignment pending the satisfactory completion of the necessary training.

NCED started offering classes on July 27, 2020. Based on the above agreement, October 27, 2020 is the conclusion of the ninety days extension. Please make sure that Form 50s are processed accordingly.

# At ODDS with USPS on DOT Changes



Director Michael Foster and Assistant Director Kenneth Prinz

**T**he APWU disagrees with the USPS on recent changes to the Department of Transportation (DOT) Commercial Driver's License (CDL) physicals, and the establishment of a Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse, a database administered by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). The Clearinghouse will contain information about violations of the FMCSA's drug and alcohol testing for CDL operators, which includes Postal CDL operators. The Clearinghouse procedures are required by the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (MAP-21).

These disputes are examples of the problems encountered when the USPS contracts out responsibilities that should be performed by postal employees.

The union received notification of the changes for CDL employees in May 2020. The Postal Service contracted with Caduceus USA Medical Services (Caduceus) to replace multiple contracts they held with various medical providers. The USPS notified the APWU that they will schedule DOT physicals appointments through Caduceus. We challenged these changes as necessary subjects of bargaining prior to the decisions being made.

Through its contract with Caduceus, the Postal Service has violated two settlement agreements: Case Number Q15V-4Q-C 18046276/HQTV20170529 (Oct. 23, 2019 agreement), and Case Number Q10V-4Q-C 16367308/HQTV20160209 (May 15, 2020 agreement). The APWU initiated a Step 4 national dispute addressing violations.

An October 23 Agreement resolved several disputes regarding the Postal Service's administration of the DOT physical examination of employees. Among the settled issues was whether postal employees would be required to sign forms authorizing the release of medical records to the Postal Service when reporting for their DOT physicals. The parties agreed that:

*The FMCSA does not require the medical examiner to provide a copy of the medical examination report to the employer, **therefore employees will not be required to sign a release for medical records.***

The Postal Service's contract with Caduceus also subjects postal employees to an additional level of medical review that is clearly prohibited by the October 23 agreement. According

to the agreement, when an employee is found medically fit by a certified examiner, there is no further review necessary.

Despite this agreed-upon limitation on the review process, the Postal Service's contract with Caduceus unilaterally imposes new review requirements on employees. When the DOT physical appointment is complete, the medical examiner is instructed not to discuss the determination (Qualified/Not Qualified/Conditional) with the employee, but fax the DOT Card to Caduceus. Caduceus will send the DOT Card to the employee's supervisor, who will deliver it to the employee.

Another national dispute was settled on May 15 related to the Postal Service's policy toward DOT and FMCSA medical examination requirements. In the Agreement, the parties agreed that the USPS would "instruct the medical contract unit performing the Department of Transportation (DOT) medical examinations that all drivers holding a CDL are excluded from the DOT interstate requirements, and the only CDL requirement for Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) positions is an intrastate CDL, provided the driver has self-certified to their state." Wishing everyone a safe and Happy Holiday Season! ■

## Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administrative Clearinghouse

The Postal Service provided a letter in late April 2020 to inform employees with a CDL that Congress directed the Secretary of Transportation to establish a new program named "Clearinghouse."

The Clearinghouse is a secure online database providing employers, state licensing agencies, and enforcement officers with real-time information about CDL holders' violations of the DOT drug and alcohol testing rules. The APWU submitted multiple requests for information about the FMCSA Clearinghouse rules and regulations plus consent forms. Before the parties could meaningfully discuss the form, USPS program management began using the consent form and requiring MVS drivers to sign it or risk being disqualified from their job. The union has filed a Step 4 national dispute to demand to bargain over the Clearinghouse consent form and the underlying program they implemented.



# Virtual Bargaining During a Pandemic



Director Steve Brooks

**T**he year 2020 has been a trying year for the Support Services Division. The pandemic has changed the way we do business. This is especially true for contract negotiations. Normally we would conduct negotiation meetings face to face, break off into committee meetings, and conduct small group sessions.

We have utilized the Zoom meeting process to some degree, but it has proven to be challenging. There are technical issues that come up, and the process of exchanging physical proposal documents and counterproposals is slowed down using this process.

This year we had three separate collective bargaining agreements and extension agreements expiring. We also had a wage-only renegotiation for a private sector unit and an initial agreement negotiation for a newly organized group of employees at the Human Resource Service Center in Greensboro, NC.

## Postal Nurses and IT/AS

We were also able to come to agreement using Zoom for a new collective bargaining agreement between the Postal Service and the Postal Nurses.

Additionally, we had an extension agreement through July of 2020 for our IT/AS group that has expired. We have been using combination of Zoom and in-person meetings to come to another agreement. At this point, the parties have not determined whether to go for a full agreement or another short-term extension. The parties are still quite a bit apart on some monetary issues.

## Private Sector

Using the Zoom process, we were able to come to an agreement on a wage increase for the represented group of employees performing Mail Transport Equipment Service Center work for a private sector company called Hollingsworth LLC.

In September we traveled to Little Rock, AR and conducted negotiations with a new group of company representatives associated with a consolidated group of private sector drivers. Salmon Companies was purchased by a new group formerly called Hovestol and

Eagle Express, that is now called 10 Roads Express. We were able to come to terms, but currently are waiting for the parties to agree on new language regarding health benefits.

## HRSSC

The most challenging negotiations have been with our newly organized group of postal employees at the HRSSC. This negotiation is unique in that we have never negotiated terms for employees that are currently EAS employees and now are becoming a group that is undergoing a collective bargaining process.

Historically with postal employees, there are many differences in wages and benefits between bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit employees. The trick for this negotiation is trying to achieve the best of both worlds in a new and unique collective bargaining agreement.

We attempted to start these negotiations through Zoom, but encountered a few technical difficulties. We decided we would have to do the majority of our sessions in person. I think this was the best thing to do, because the parties negotiating this contract had not met each other and many have not been involved in the negotiation process for any collective bargaining agreement.

For me, it is always best to be across the table from the party you are negotiating with, so that you can see their reactions to your proposals. Body language can tell you a lot about how a person is reacting to what you are proposing.

We have made some strides in the non-economic issues of this tentative agreement. Once we have these issues worked out, we will get to the tough stuff – the wage demands. This group has been drastically underpaid for the work that they perform. It is because of how poorly they have been treated that they made the decision to seek out union representation.

I am sure that we will be able to come to terms with the Postal Service for an improved wage and benefit package for this group. This may take some time, but it will happen. ■

## NORTHEAST REGIONAL COORDINATOR

NEW YORK | NEW JERSEY | CONNECTICUT | MAINE | NEW HAMPSHIRE | MASSACHUSETTS |  
RHODE ISLAND | VERMONT | PUERTO RICO | THE VIRGIN ISLANDS



Tiffany Foster, Northeast Regional Coordinator

# We Were Built For Times Like This

I want to take this opportunity to say thank you to the postal heroes who are working on the front lines daily, continuing to provide much-needed service to the American people during the COVID-19 pandemic. 2020 has been a rough year for everyone.

Only three months into the new year, COVID-19 forced us to change how we went about our daily lives. It made us alter how we interact with one another. As I write this article, the Northeast Region has suffered a loss of thirty-three (33) sisters and brothers to the coronavirus. Please pray for their families and the families of everyone who lost a loved one to this deadly disease.

**EVERY VOICE FROM WITHIN OUR UNION  
MADE THE WORLD RECOGNIZE THE  
EXCELLENT AND ESSENTIAL WORK WE DO  
IN BINDING THIS COUNTRY TOGETHER.**

Think of others. Please wear your mask, social distance and wash your hands regularly. We are relying on each other to stop the spread of this virus.

In addition to the COVID-19 pandemic, during this historic 2020 election cycle, people doubted our ability to process the enormous amount of ballots the Postal Service would receive, but we did it. Postal workers take pride in their work. The people chose leaders who care about the Postal Service, democracy, civil and human rights.

The COVID-19 pandemic made the American people see us and hear us. Our role and importance in this country is front and center, as our vital service that people rely on is put in jeopardy. Every voice from within our union made the world recognize the excellent and essential work we do in binding this country together.

The Northeast Region was hit hard by COVID-19, not just within the Postal Service. I want to give a special shoutout to the local and state leaders, National Business Agents, Stewards, Regional Safety and Health Com-

mittee, P.O.W.E.R Sisters, and retirees in the Northeast Region for not missing a beat when you were called to action. You made sure employees had Personal Protective Equipment. You made certain work locations were properly cleaned when a positive COVID-19 case was reported. You organized rallies. You spoke to the news media. You called your senators. You wrote articles in the newspapers. You paid for radio ads. You did it all. I am proud to be part of the Northeast Region.

### The Future

As essential workers with a solid union, we were not faced with the same fate as our family members and friends during the pandemic. We still had a job and health insurance. We even had additional rights negotiated for us outside of contract negotiations.

As I said in my first *American Postal Worker* article, you have to know where you come from to know where you are going. The APWU has a video on YouTube in recognition of the 50th Anniversary of The Great Postal Strike. Everyone should take a look at it. You can view it at [bit.ly/3oWBz7a](https://bit.ly/3oWBz7a).

I say all this to say, the future of the APWU rests with those of us that are too young to retire. Where would we be if no one stood up to be a union representative? Where would we be if those union sisters and brothers fifty years ago didn't say 'enough is enough' and went on strike?

Have you ever thought about what the APWU will look like in the future? Who is the future? Will the APWU have the same standing amongst other unions? Will the APWU continue to be a powerful force in the labor movement? Where do you see our organization in the next five years, ten years or twenty years?

We all need to start thinking about these things. I do all the time, and I know my fellow Coordinators Sharyn Stone, Central Region; AJ Jones, Eastern Region; Omar Gonzalez, Western Region; and Ken Beasley, Southern Region do as well. ■





# 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 (PPA). For more information on the PPA, visit [apwupostalpress.org](http://apwupostalpress.org) or email [ppa@apwupostalpress.org](mailto:ppa@apwupostalpress.org).

"If you were in charge of the USPS and had a \$30,000,000 stake in a delivery business competitor with the USPS, which side would you be cheering for? Donald Trump has placed a political donor with a very profitable conflict of interest in charge of the USPS. Billionaires salivate at any opportunity to profit from taxpayers and the public good...military contracts, VA contracts, prisons...the USPS (welcome to the oligarchy). Privatization is not about efficiency. It is about making money; profit for the few at the cost of all others. How do you push through these 'improvements' to public institutions? Loyal donors to the cause of greed and selfishness. The fox is in the henhouse."

- Ted Volkmer, Nebraska Postal Workers Union Editor,  
*The Nebraska Postal News*

"By now, our members should have received their retroactive payment in their checks. The APWU fought for those pay increases and retaining a full COLA. The APWU fought for and won two step increases back for the second-tier wage earners. The APWU negotiated COVID leave benefits and liberal leave policies for our members to deal with illness and child care issues related to COVID. The APWU negotiated several Memorandums of Understanding with the USPS which took aggressive actions to protect the safety and health of our members during this pandemic. If you aren't a member of the union but have benefitted from all those benefits and protections negotiated by the APWU, please, turn to your co-workers who are dues-paying members and thank them. Thank them for paying your share. Thank them for bearing all the financial weight of fighting for your rights, benefits, hours, wages and working conditions while you happily reap the rewards of their contributions."

- Nicole Burnett, Central New York Area Local President,  
*Salt City Post*

"We're the union. Not just the officers and stewards. Right now, those fighting for our jobs and battling rife corruption in high places do not need us just saying: 'Well, what about my officers?' Instead, we need to be saying: 'What about me? What can I do to help all of us?' Now maybe you don't feel you're cut out to be a steward, or a leader. You don't have to be. Just be there. Support them any way you can. Write to your congressmen or women. Sign petitions. Promote awareness of what's going on."

-Joy Goldberg, Board of Trustees Chairperson Brooklyn (NY) Local,  
*The Brooklyn Bridge*

"We as postal workers can no longer afford to sit back and do nothing while the Postal Service crumbles at our feet. We must get involved to save this institution. We can no longer wait for others to do the work for us. If we do not stand up and fight for our jobs, why should others? At the very least, we all need to stay informed of what some politicians and the PMG want to do to us. This is not about Republicans vs. Democrats. This is about protecting our jobs and providing the service the American people depend on us to deliver their mail and packages."

- Paul McKenna, APWU of Wisconsin President,  
*The Badger Bulletin*

"During this pandemic, anyone who believes in the right to vote should enthusiastically embrace voting by mail. Without it, tens of millions of voters will be denied the opportunity to safely exercise their cherished right to vote. When postal workers go to work every day, our commitment is not to politicians or political parties; it's to the people in every community across this country who are proud to serve in this election season and for years to come."

- Ivy Jones, Raleigh (NC)  
Cosmopolitan Area Local  
Legislative Director,  
*The Rank & Filer*

## ASHEVILLE, NC NURSES WIN LARGEST HOSPITAL UNION VICTORY SINCE 1975

**O**n Sept. 17, registered nurses (RNs) at Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC won their union election in a landslide, with nearly 70 percent of votes cast in favor. Over 1,800 nurses at the hospital will now be represented by the National Nurses Union (NNU), following a year-long campaign to win collective bargaining rights.

The victory is a major landmark for labor in the South. According to the NNU, the election win is the first for any private sector hospital in North Carolina, and the largest hospital union victory in the South since 1975. Additionally, the victory is the largest union election win of any kind in the South in 12 years.

During the union drive, nurses faced strong anti-union activity from the hospital owner HCA, the largest hospital system in the country. Mission RNs were forced to wait six months for the NLRB election and conduct the campaign during the dangerous circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Following HCA's takeover of Mission two years ago, cost-cutting measures led to larger nurse-to-patient ratios, and patient care became more difficult as large numbers of hospital staff were let go. The pandemic not only reinforced the difficult situation for RNs at the hospital, but also fostered strong solidarity between nurses, as they fought for strong health protections in the midst of the union campaign.

## Philadelphia Teachers Win Strong Tentative Agreement Following Strike Threat

On Oct. 21, the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT) won a tentative agreement on a one-year contract, after tense negotiations followed the previous contract's expiration on August 31. The 13,000-member union, affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), won pay raises and preserved step increases as part of the contract.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues, Philadelphia has maintained remote schooling, but, as this issue goes to press, plans to gradually reopen in-person classes in November. When the Philadelphia School District attempted to strong-arm the union into accepting an unsatisfactory safety plan for reopening, PFT President Jerry Jordan planned to call for a strike authorization vote. If the strike had occurred, it would have been the first for Philadelphia teachers in decades. Instead, the union won strong safety terms following the strike threat.

The PFT's strike threat follows the July 28 resolution passed by the National AFT Executive Board that supported the use of strikes as a last resort to protect students and educators during the COVID-19 pandemic. After the success of dozens of teachers and school worker strikes throughout 2018-2019, education employees are reaping the benefits of that collective power. School boards across the country know the vote to strike is not an empty threat.



Registered nurses at Mission Hospital in Asheville, N.C., took part in a National Nurses United action on Aug. 24, calling on the federal Occupational Health and Safety Administration to inspect all HCA-owned-and-operated hospitals and issue citations for "willful violation" of workplace safety hazards.

"We fought together through petitions, actions to address our concerns over patient care conditions, and the need for better protection against the virus and we were able to win victories," said Amy Waters, a pediatric ICU RN. "Staying active kept our unity, and the promise of a collective voice to win greater improvements."

Following the election victory, Mission RNs will now turn to negotiat-

ing their first union contract. "This victory is just the beginning," said Alex Kimbro, a recovery room RN at Mission. "We are looking forward to bargaining for a fair contract to improve patient safety, as well as competitive wages to keep Asheville nurses working here in our community. We are more than ready to win the next chapter too." ■

## Association of Flight Attendants-CWA Demand #ReliefNow as Payroll Support Program Expires

In the May/June issue of the *American Postal Worker*, we reported on the inclusion of the Payroll Support Program (PSP) in the *CARES Act* stimulus package signed into law in March. The \$32 billion fund kept airline workers in their jobs as the industry saw steep declines in demand during the pandemic. However, the PSP expired on Sept. 30, and as a result, airlines began furloughing tens of thousands of workers.

Throughout the summer and fall, the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA-CWA) lobbied legislators to pass an extension to the PSP, and gained majority support in both chambers of Congress. However, as this issue goes to press, negotiations to extend the program as part of a further stimulus package and as a standalone bill have stalled.



AFA-CWA President Sara Nelson speaking at a #ReliefNow rally in Washington, D.C. on September 9

In response, AFA-CWA members organized #ReliefNow actions in cities across the country, including Washington, DC; Newark, NJ; Chicago, IL; Toledo, OH; Philadelphia and Allentown, PA; Atlanta, GA; Seattle, WA; Charlotte, NC; Salt Lake City, UT; Houston and Dallas, TX; Miami and Orlando, FL; Cleveland, OH; Detroit, MI; Minneapolis, MN; Denver, CO; and Los Angeles, CA. AFA members rallied with members of the public, other union members, and allied organizations to demand an extension to PSP and support for furloughed airline workers.

“Now is the time. There is no retroactivity that Congress can apply to the human toll caused by delayed relief,” wrote AFA-CWA President Sara Nelson in a letter to Congress on Oct. 20. “Inaction is simply not an option when we can keep people in their homes, lock-in enhanced unemployment, direct checks, support for jobs and services we count on in our cities, and our small businesses.”

APWU members are encouraged to join the #ReliefNow effort and contact their members of Congress and senators to demand a PSP extension. More information is available at [afacwa.org/extendpsp](http://afacwa.org/extendpsp). ■

## Bolivian Labor Unions Lead the Struggle to Restore Democracy

Bolivia has some of the greatest mineral wealth in Latin America, yet remains one of its poorest countries. It has one of the largest lithium reserves in the Americas. Lithium is the key resource in fueling the electric car batteries of the future.

Elon Musk, the billionaire anti-union co-founder and CEO of Tesla, the premier U.S. electric car manufacturer, stated in July 2020 that “we will coup whoever we want.”

He was referring to the violent military-backed October 2019 coup in Bolivia, which overthrew the democratic-socialist Evo Morales-led popular government. Over 14 years, the Morales government tripled the GDP, reduced the poverty rate by half and nationalized a number of industries including oil and gas (with plans to nationalize the

lithium mines) with the financial benefits used to uplift the population.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka joined international labor organizations “in condemning the military interference in Bolivia’s election process.” Trumka shared that, “Morales reduced widespread poverty and fought for the inclusion of the indigenous majority. Bolivians must be able to vote peacefully and freely in new elections.”

Morales, who had formally been an agricultural workers union leader, was driven into exile and the pro-corporate Jeanine Anez was “appointed” as interim president. Responding to strong protests following the coup, she promised to hold new elections in January 2020. This promise was reneged upon numerous times.

Labor unions of Bolivia, including the Federation of Miners, began to mobilize against the delays of a new election. Bolivian union members, along with thousands of peasants and indigenous people mobilized mass protests, including bringing the country to a standstill with roadblocks and mass marches to force the long-promised new election. In response to the protests, and threats by the Bolivian Trade Union Center for a general strike, the Legislative Assembly finally set October 18 as the date for the general election.

Luis “Lucho” Arce, the former Minister of Economy under the Morales government, handily won the election with 55% of the vote. The workers and the people have ensured the restoration of democracy.



## Continuing Our Work in a New Administration

**T**he past four years have been perhaps the most critical since the founding of *A Grand Alliance to Save our Public Postal Service* in 2013. The Trump administration, following decades of corporate-backed hostility to a public Post Office, had pursued an increasingly aggressive attack on our national treasure.

While a changing political landscape means the Trump administration's hostility will soon be behind us, supporters of our public Postal Service cannot let down their guard. We should take this moment of transition to reflect on the important role the Alliance played, celebrate our successes, and also critically analyze the threats that remain to a most vital national institution.

From the early days of the outgoing administration, it was clear that President Trump was no friend of the public Postal Service. His early appointees to the Postal Board of Governors were almost uniformly business-friendly chief executives, with little to no previous interest in the preservation and expansion of the public Postal Service. As the financial crisis caused by the unprecedented retiree health benefits prefunding mandate deepened, the outgoing administration refused to champion needed reforms to free the Postal Service from the crippling mandate.

Instead, the administration echoed bogus fears of an impending "taxpayer bailout" of the Postal Service. By June 2018, the White House was on the record openly proposing the privatization of the Postal Service. In December 2018, the White House Task Force, having barely consulted postal workers or the millions of customers who rely on affordable, reliable universal service, proposed a series of draconian cuts that would have made the mail slower, less dependable and more expensive. It even suggested doing away with the collective bargaining rights of postal workers.

And most recently, as the pandemic took hold and further rocked the Postal Service's finances, the administration stubbornly blocked much-needed emergency funding for the Postal Service. The President called the people's Post Office "a joke" and again called for massive price increases that would have driven millions of customers out of the system.

Thankfully, at every turn, the members of A Grand Alliance and masses of supportive postal patrons across the country pushed back and fought to save the Postal Service. We petitioned the Board of Governors, rallied in the streets and in front of post offices, made tens of thousands of calls to Congress and delivered millions of petition signatures to leaders in Washington, D.C.

Put simply, they wanted to steal the Postal Service. Together, we stopped them.

But we are not out of the woods yet. The Postal Service continues to face daunting financial challenges. It remains unclear if a new Congress is prepared to deliver the kind of reforms the postal public needs. Louis DeJoy, who in his earliest weeks as Postmaster General proposed a series of damaging changes to postal operations and policy, is still Postmaster General. He cannot be immediately removed by the Biden administration.

And most critically, while the forces that have long advocated postal privatization lost a champion in the White House, they remain an ever-present and powerful force in American politics, with benefactors in both major political parties.

Members of A Grand Alliance must remain vigilant. We must be prepared to continue organizing and mobilizing against every threat to the public Postal Service. We must also be prepared to articulate a positive vision for a robust public agency – we must fight for what the Postal Service ought to be.

That's why the first order of business in the new year will be a major policy conference, to develop and build a plan to win a People's Postal Agenda. Stay tuned to APWU and *A Grand Alliance* websites and social media platforms for more details in the coming weeks. ■

**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](http://www.AGrandAlliance.org).

# President Dimondstein Speaks in Defense of the Public Postal Service at Global Trade Union Forum

**A**s part of World Day for Decent Work on Oct. 7, the Global Union Federations (PSI, UNI, IndustriALL, ITF, BWI and EI) and the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (TUCA) hosted an international forum under the theme of “What’s Public Stays Public.” The forum featured speakers from around the globe, advocating for the protection of public services and decent work in the public sector. President Dimondstein was invited by UNI Global Union, which APWU is affiliated with, to speak on the ongoing struggle to protect the U.S. public Postal Service.

“We are public servants, committed to the mission of the public United States Postal Service – to bind the people together through affordable and universal mail service,” President Dimondstein said. “In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, frontline postal workers, along with all essential workers, have demonstrated once again that it is the working class that makes the world go round... For decades, right-wing forces, fueled by Wall Street interests and private delivery companies, have tried to defund and degrade the public Postal Service, all with the aim to dismantle and sell it to private interests, to maximize private profit.”

President Dimondstein also explained why protecting the public Postal Service is so vitally important not only for postal workers, but for all working people.

“Good family sustaining and community building union jobs will be destroyed if the Postal Service

is privatized...[and] the people would lose their democratic right to universal and low-cost postal services,” President Dimondstein said. “Winning our fight to save the public Postal Service is essential to advancing our movement’s broader struggles to empower workers and to expand our commitment to economic and social justice for workers everywhere.”

Following the event, a declaration was released outlining the principles of the Forum:

*What is public should stay public for all citizens, with transparency and real participation of society in decision-making, and increasingly aimed at serving the people, especially women, girls, children, youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, people of African descent and indigenous peoples...*

*Public companies and universal public services, in addition to being basic human rights, are fundamental to the processes of economic development, social justice, income redistribution and to serve the most needy population...*

*TUCA and the International Trade Union Federations, together with our national trade union centrals and national unions, will continue to fight every day against privatization and for democracy, becoming stronger and uniting with more solidarity in the trade union movement, locally and globally.*



The declaration concluded with the Forum’s demands, including:

- A “New Social Contract, with decent work and universal access to public goods and services.”
- For the governments around the world to be democratic, with “a public budget at the service of society, and for tax justice.”
- Against “corporations assuming control of public companies.”
- That “what is public remains public, because if it is public it belongs to all of us!”

The full Forum can be viewed at [bit.ly/3mVmsZQ](https://bit.ly/3mVmsZQ). President Dimondstein’s remarks begin at 1:21:47. ■

## President Dimondstein and Other Postal Workers Participate in Catholic Labor Network Virtual Event

On September 24, President Dimondstein also spoke on a panel hosted by the Catholic Labor Network (CLN). The panel, part of the CLN’s “Workers Speak Out” series, featured President Dimondstein, Western New York Area Local President Lori Cash, and Philadelphia Area Local Legislative & Political Director Cindy Heyward discussing the issues facing the Postal Service. The panel participants shared the challenges workers continue to face in delivering service to the people of the country during the pandemic.



# Advancing Postal Banking in a New Political Landscape

A changing political landscape offers new opportunities for the *Campaign for Postal Banking* to advance an agenda for expanded postal financial services.

Of course, simply electing politicians who say they support us is only part of our struggle to secure and expand the public Postal Service. We must also hold them accountable to their commitments. In this case, the Democratic National Convention adopted a platform that includes postal banking and other helpful considerations for the USPS.

In a section on ending poverty, the platform noted the Campaign's key analysis about the need to reform the country's financial system, saying "One in four American households are either unbanked or underbanked, putting them at risk of losing money due to exorbitant fees or usurious interest rates." The platform further committed to support "affordable, transparent, and trustworthy banking services that are language-accessible for low- and middle-income families," including postal banking.

The platform noted the need to strengthen the Postal Service's finances in a number of ways. It said: *We will also support... exploring options to enable unbanked and underbanked Americans to access financial services through the Postal Service.*

The Biden administration must be held accountable to these commitments. The new administration can advance these goals in two ways: First, they must appoint pro-postal Governors to the Postal Service Board who support expanded services – including financial services. Second, they must work with Congress to deliver emergency COVID-19 relief for the USPS and give the Postal Service the opportunity to grow its role in our communities.

## Postal Banking on the Move in Congress

Thankfully, in the final months of the 115th Congress, lawmakers in both chambers showed they are prepared to advocate for postal banking. While none of the legislation was perfect or complete, they indicate a growing interest on Capitol Hill to move toward a more robust postal financial system.

In March, Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH) introduced a bill that proposed a "Fed Accounts" digital wallet, essentially a personal checking account housed at the Federal Reserve that could be accessed at post office locations around the country.

In September, Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Bernie Sanders (I-VT) re-introduced the *Postal Banking Act*, which would establish low-fee savings and checking accounts at a postal bank. Their bill also included low-interest loans that could be made available through the postal system. Their bill has yet to receive a vote.

In July, in the House of Representatives, Reps. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH-9) and Bill Pascrell (D-NJ-9) introduced an amendment to an appropriations bill that would fund and require the Postal Service to implement a postal banking pilot program, testing many of the expanded financial services the Campaign has called for. Their amendment passed the House and will likely be a "political football" in December's budget fight.

Finally, in October, Reps. Rashida Tlaib (D-MI-13) and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY-14) introduced legislation encouraging the formation of public banks at the state and local levels. These public banks could also interact with Fed Accounts, postal banking and other similar initiatives.

While none of these vehicles will become law before the new Congress is seated in January, they indicate the type of the legislative action postal banking advocates could expect in the years to come.

## Our role

The apparent support from lawmakers is only a product of our campaigning. Together, we must continue our struggles to stave off postal privatization, secure needed COVID-19 relief for the USPS and push postal management and leaders in Washington to reimagine a bolder role for the Postal Service. We know that systemic inequities in the country's financial system won't disappear with a new President and a new Congress. We must continue building our coalition to hold them accountable to their promises and build a brighter world where everyone has access to the low-cost financial services they need. ■

**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](http://www.CampaignforPostalBanking.org).





Judy Beard, Director

# Continuing the Momentum in the Georgia Runoff Elections

**M**embers of the American Postal Workers Union understood what was at stake this election. Amid attacks on the Postal Service, active voter suppression and a pandemic, we voted to defend our public Postal Service and our union jobs – but these were not the only issues on some of our minds when we voted. Many of us voted for a solution to the ongoing pandemic, expanded health care, action on climate change, justice for all regardless of race, gender, or sexual orientation, and religion. Together, we elected Joe Biden and Kamala Harris as the next President and Vice President of the United States of America. Though we celebrate this victory, our fight is far from over.

We must maintain our momentum and turn our efforts towards Georgia. There, not one but two consequential Senate races are still underway. Since no candidate in either race was able to earn more than a 50 percent majority of votes in the November election, special runoff elections on January 5 will now decide the winner. One race is between the incumbent David Perdue (R) and challenger Jon Ossoff (D). The other is between the incumbent Kelly Loeffler (R) and challenger Rev. Dr. Raphael Warnock (D).

These races do not just affect Georgia. They are important for the entire country. Under Mitch McConnell (R-KY), the current Senate Majority Leader, Congress refused to support the Postal Service, protect our union jobs, and pass a COVID-19 relief bill that this country deserves. If Mitch McConnell keeps his leadership role in the Senate, there will be no movement on the issues that are important to postal workers and our families. That is why we must do everything in our power to elect new senators in the Georgia runoffs. With two new senators and the incoming Biden administration, it is our best shot of securing real support for the Postal Service and working people.

Important dates are fast approaching in Georgia. The deadline to register to vote in the Georgia runoffs is December 7. Early voting starts on December 14. We have placed those details on [apwu.org](https://apwu.org) and identified ways you can help out. If you are a Georgia resident voting in the runoff elections, you can also find resources to register to vote, check your registration status, and request a mail-in ballot.

### Continuing Our Work in the “Lame-Duck” Session

While ballots were still being certified, Congress began its “lame-duck” session, the final session in which departing congressmembers and President Trump may officially influence policy. The session started the week of November 9 and lasts until January 3. After that, newly elected congressmembers will be sworn in, beginning a new Congress and President-Elect Joe Biden will be sworn in on January 20. However, before that can happen, two key policy areas will likely be addressed in the lame-duck:

First, there is a looming funding deadline. Government funding will run out on December 11, 2020. If a new measure is not passed through either a Continuing Resolution (CR) or a full appropriations bill, the government will shut down.

Second, Congress will resume talks on the next COVID-19 relief package. While the House passed a stimulus bill back in May – and again in October – the Senate and the House must pass an identical bill before a bill can be signed into law. During this lame-duck session, we will continue to fight tooth and nail to ensure that any stimulus bill includes postal funding.

**IMPORTANT DATES ARE FAST APPROACHING IN GEORGIA. THE DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE IN THE GEORGIA RUNOFFS IS DECEMBER 7. EARLY VOTING STARTS ON DECEMBER 14. WE HAVE PLACED THOSE DETAILS ON [APWU.ORG](https://apwu.org) AND IDENTIFIED WAYS YOU CAN HELP OUT.**

While we carry out our legislative agenda, I hope every member makes time to care for one's self, your family and the people dearest to you.

Enjoy the holiday season. ■



Anna Smith, Director

# A 'New Normal' at End of 2020

**W**ho would have thought what we considered the “norm” at the beginning of 2020 would look so different today? Ringing in the 2020 New Year was in some manner similar to ringing in the New Year back in 2000. The significance of the number 2020 seemed to have this cool new vibe to it. No longer in the teens and great things were going to happen in 2020. We were looking forward to the New Year with a new perspective on life, setting goals and off to new adventures.

Well that did not work out so hot. Who would have thought our lives would change so drastically, and go in different directions by the end of the year?

**EVERY DAY, YOU CAN READ HOW PEOPLE ARE SAYING THEY WANT THINGS TO GET BACK TO NORMAL. THE REALITY IS WHILE THERE MAY BE EVENTUALLY BE A VACCINE FOR THIS, THERE WILL NOT BE ANY GOING BACK. IN MANY ASPECTS OF OUR LIVES GOING FORWARD THE NEW “NORM” WILL LOOK MUCH DIFFERENT.**

We were all thrust into this new way of life, managing everyday tasks while maintaining our households, and trying to keep our composure together through it all.

By year-end, many organizations had to find new ways to meet. Those who may have been doing things maybe a little “old school” – swearing off virtual meetings and electronic communication other than a telephone call – were all of a sudden forced to invest in technology upgrades. The most technology stubborn are learning how to answer calls thru their computer and shop online. Deciding whether you were going to show your face on Zoom, have a still picture, or just have your name appear were decisions you possibly made in 2020.

Every day, you can read how people are saying they want things to get back to normal. The reality is while there may be eventually be a vaccine for this, there will not be any going back. In many aspects of our lives going forward the new “norm” will look much different.

What has not and will not change is our union’s fight to preserve the gains we have struggled tooth and nail for. This includes livable wages, regular work hours, safe working conditions, annual and sick leave pay, seniority rights, overtime pay and provisions, and paid holidays.

This fight will still be there in 2021. Just because the occupant of the White House is changing does not mean our fight is over. We cannot let the movement and support for the Postal Service die and its employees take a back seat.

### Join Together to Take United Action

Our future as postal workers will be dependent on our strength, and that comes from us standing on the same side, being on the same team. We will continue to be tested by forces who will attempt to divide us. None of us will be able to take on these forces standing alone. In unity there is strength.

As an APWU member, your active participation in our union is vital. Participation is not about just paying your dues. If you have not logged into the APWU Members Only section of the website before today, I encourage you to do so now at [apwumembers.apwu.org](https://apwumembers.apwu.org).

Once you have logged in, you can not only view Members Only communications, your local union contact info, and update your address, but you will also have the opportunity to select how you can actively participate in the APWU. Select “Help in the fight” and check the areas that interest you.

Thank you for all you do each and every day! Happy and safe holidays to you and yours! ■

Reminder for local leaders during our peak season, do not delay sending in Membership Applications (1187s). In order for membership to be automatically reinstated when a PSE is rehired within 180-days after the conclusion of their current term of employment, the original application must have been submitted and entered.

# Suicide Prevention Bills Signed into Law



**O**n October 17, a pair of bills designed to help prevent veterans' suicide were signed into law.

Both measures received substantial support from veterans' groups in recent months, and passed through Congress without any significant objection.

*S.795, the Commander John Scott Hannon Veterans Mental Health Care Improvement Act of 2019*, is named for a retired Navy commander who died by suicide in 2018 at age 46. The bill will offer up to \$174 million over the course of the next five years to state and local groups that provide suicide-prevention services to veterans and their families. Suicide among veterans has historically been disproportionately higher than the rest of the U.S. population, with an estimated 20 veterans and service members dying by suicide each day, according to the latest statistics from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The bill makes updates related to VA transition assistance, mental health care, medical care for female veterans, and telehealth care. In doing so, the bipartisan bill has the potential to reform mental health care at the VA, and improve veterans' access to lifesaving mental health services.

Lawmakers believe the program will create better collaboration between the organizations and the VA, and that it will result in earlier identification of veterans who are at risk of suicide, giving mental health providers more time to intervene.

VA Secretary Robert Wilkie praised the new law's key improvements in efforts to better reach veterans in times of emotional or mental instability. The legislation comes at a particularly dire time, as experts speculate the ongoing coronavirus pandemic is worsening mental health problems for everyone across the country.

General James C. McConville, the Army's Chief of Staff, said the pandemic was taking a toll on the mental health of soldiers and could be a factor in this year's increase in suicides in the service.

In addition to improving suicide prevention research, services and programs, the new law also requires the VA to establish a plan for boosting its mental health staff and creates a scholarship program to increase staff at Vet Centers. It mandates the VA to research hyperbaric oxygen therapy as a possible treatment for mental illness, as well as the possibility that living at high altitudes increases suicide risk.

This law also orders the Government Accountability Office (GAO) and the VA Office of Inspector General to initiate investigations into a host of issues, including one on the VA mental health workforce and others on VA Vet Centers and the effectiveness of the agency's suicide-prevention outreach.

After several months of negotiations, the legislation passed through Congress with the support of both Democrats and Republicans. During negotiations, a measure was omitted that would have addressed firearm safety as a method of suicide prevention. The provision would have directed the VA to train health care workers how to talk with suicidal patients about the dangers of having easy access to guns and how to safely store them. According to the latest VA data, firearms are used in nearly 70 percent of veteran suicides.

*S.2661*, known as the *National Suicide Hotline Designation Act of 2020*, was also signed into law. This bill requires the Federal Communications Commission to designate 9-8-8 as the universal telephone number for a national suicide prevention and mental health crisis hotline, for use by both veterans and civilians.

Multiple suicide prevention hotlines will be united under the 9-8-8 number within the next two years. Until then, veterans can still reach the Veterans Crisis Line at 800-273-8255, and then press 1, or via text at 838255. ■

*Sources: Military Times, Stars and Stripes*





Joyce B. Robinson, Director

## Getting Your Money Back from a Product or Bad Service

**D**uring the holiday season, we often purchase products or pay for a service that we are disappointed with or do not perform as advertised. To assist you in getting your money back, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the federal government's consumer protection agency, lists strategies on its website that will help.

1. **Return Item to the Store or Website** - Talk to a store employee or manager, or if you bought the item online, insure and return it with a return receipt requested, as soon as possible. "Explain the problem and what you would like the company to do. Keep a record of all conversations — who you spoke with and when, and what action they promised," the FTC says.
2. **Call Customer Service** - If you don't receive results, the next step would be to call the company on the phone to speak with a customer service representative or manufacturer. Advise them of what occurred when you tried to return the item or what was wrong with the service. Most companies have a "Contact Us" number listed on their website.
3. **Write a Letter** - If a call does not work, write a letter. Describe the problem with the item you bought or the service you purchased. Do not write an angry, sarcastic, or threatening letter. Send your letter by certified mail with a return receipt requested. Here is a sample complaint letter from the FTC's website:

*(Your Address)*

*(Your City, State, Zip Code)*

*(Date)*

*(Name of Contact Person)*

*(Title)*

*(Company's Name)*

*(Street Address)*

*(City, State, Zip Code)*

*Dear (Contact Person):*

*On (date), I bought (or had repaired) a (name of the product with the serial or model number or service performed). I made this purchase at (location, date, and other important details of the transaction). Unfortunately,*

*your product has not performed well (or the service was inadequate) because (state the problem). To resolve the problem, I would appreciate your (state the specific action you want). Enclosed are copies [Never send originals] of my records (receipts, warranties, cancelled checks, contracts, model and serial numbers, etc.) concerning this purchase/repair.*

*I look forward to your reply and a resolution to my problem. I will wait (set a time limit) before seeking third-party assistance. Please contact me at the above address or by phone (home or cell numbers with area codes).*

*Sincerely,*

*Your Name*

*Account Number, if applicable*

4. **Use Social Media** - Post your experience on social media. Explain the problem clearly and reasonably. According to the FTC, the company may respond quickly to your problem to avoid negative perceptions.
5. **Seek Outside Help** - If your phone call, letter or social media post does not work, file a complaint with your state attorney general or local consumer protection office, you may want to contact your local Better Business Bureau, and/or file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission at 202-326-2222.

If you have tried the strategies listed and you are not happy with the result, you might want to consider small claims court. Some businesses require consumers to arbitrate their disputes and waive their right to go to court. Check your contract or product packaging for details.

For more information on the above, visit [consumer.ftc.gov](http://consumer.ftc.gov).

As this is the last article of the year, I would like to thank postal employees for the outstanding job that you do going to work during this pandemic to serve the American people. I wish you and your loved ones a new year filled with peace, good health, and happiness. Stay safe and be blessed! ■

# Still Fighting for Justice: Continuing to Use Our Voices for What's Next



Nancy Olumekor, Director

**Y**es, the voice of retirees, and everyone else, was heard in the 2020 elections. We must still do the work to protect our federal pensions, benefits and the Postal Service. Retirees and postal workers will continue to let Congress know that we expect them to protect our hard-earned benefits – our federal pensions (CSRS or FERS), Social Security, Medicare, health insurance and life insurance, and we expect them to protect and preserve the Postal Service by supporting and passing legislation to accomplish these goals.

There are still millions of CSRS annuitants waiting for Congress to pass legislation to repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO) in order to provide us with a fair return on our investment in the Social Security system. Many CSRS annuitants worked and contributed into the Social Security system at the same rate as other non-CSRS annuitants who contributed to Social Security, yet CSRS annuitants are denied an equitable benefit for those contributions. It is time for the *Social Security Fairness Act* to become the law.

Retirees are also being short-changed by the method used to calculate our COLA. The method is based on 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 takes money out of seniors' pockets by using the spending habits of urban and clerical workers as the factor instead of the using the spending habits of the elderly. Using CPI-W and calculating consumer spending habits of people who work does not accurately reflect the spending patterns of those who are retired or disabled.

To collect data on the inflation rate faced by consumers in the marketplace, the federal government collects data on costs for what they call the "market basket" of goods and services. According to The National Committee to Preserve and Protect Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM), research shows that elderly people have higher costs for "market basket" categories such as health care and housing while urban and clerical workers have higher cost expenses for such things as

education, clothing, and transportation. The NCPSSM also writes that "not only do health care expenditures steadily increase with age but health care costs have also consistently risen much faster than other 'market basket' categories."

"The CPI-W does not take these critical differences in the elderly population into consideration," the NCPSSM says. The CPI-E represents the most accurate measure of the inflation affecting our nation's seniors.

It is incumbent upon workers and retirees to do everything we can to achieve a fair COLA by encouraging Congress to pass legislation that will calculate retirees' COLA based on CPI-E. Continue to write letters, postcards and emails and call Congress at 1-202-224-3121. Remind Congress what our paramount issues are as postal retirees, senior citizens and postal workers. ■

### Thank You for Your Service

Thank you to my sister and brother postal workers for showing up and moving the mail in service to America. Thank you to all the veterans and all the active military personnel for your service; thank you to all the essential workers who are our families, our friends, our neighbors for your continued service.

As I reflect on 2020 it is clear to me that I must never miss an opportunity to say "Thank you." I am mindful of the friends, families and loved ones that APWU members and retirees have lost this year, including our first Retirees Director John R "JR" Smith, as well as the other great unionists who helped build APWU. Without their service and commitment we would not be here.

Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, Good Health and Happiness in the New Year to all.

Thank you for allowing me to serve you.



Sarah Jane Rodriguez, Director

# Get Ready for Open Season During a Pandemic

**T**his Open Season comes with many challenges. Your health and safety is our number one priority. I have two big recommendations for you this Open Season: get your flu shot and, if possible, go virtual!



### Take your best shot at avoiding the flu this season.

The flu affects millions of people each year and can result in severe illness, hospitalization and even death. A flu shot is your best defense to help to protect yourself and the people around you from seasonal flu. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes it is likely that flu viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both be spreading this fall and winter (during Open Season). In this context, if you are able, getting a flu vaccine will be more important than ever. It will not only reduce your risk from flu but also help conserve potentially scarce health care resources.

**I HAVE TWO BIG RECOMMENDATIONS  
FOR YOU THIS OPEN SEASON:  
GET YOUR FLU SHOT AND,  
IF POSSIBLE, GO VIRTUAL!**

Protect yourself and your family with a flu shot. The CDC recommends annual flu vaccinations for everyone six months and older (with few exceptions). Getting an annual flu shot is an effective way to:

- Help prevent the seasonal flu,
- Reduce the severity of illness if you do get the flu,
- Decrease the risk of hospitalization and possible death,

- Help avoid exposure to COVID-19 virus by going to doctor, urgent care, or emergency room due to severe flu case.

### Virtual Health Plan Open Season

Virtual is the new normal. The health industry is using new technology to create virtual platforms for human interaction. The APWU Health Plan continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic within this new reality of people meeting online instead of in person. Open Season information will be communicated virtually this year. The Health Plan has provided new platforms to keep you well informed. See your options below:

- Call the Open Season Hotline at 800-PIC-APWU: An APWU HP representative will answer your questions. Please be patient as call volumes may be higher than normal. For shorter wait times, call early during Open Season; don't wait until the last week.
- Email general Open Season questions to [virtualopenseason@apwuhp.com](mailto:virtualopenseason@apwuhp.com): Avoid the wait by emailing your questions! This email box is for general questions about the Health Plan. Do not include personal health information.
- Visit the Health Plan's website at [apwuhp.com](http://apwuhp.com); click on "Open Season." The website offers a great source of information – organized in a user-friendly methodology. Find the 2021 premiums, access the provider directory, view the benefits at a glance and watch informational videos and much more!
- Join our virtual Open Season Health Fairs every Tuesday and Thursday from November 9 – December 14. These virtual health fairs are live chats, and designed for questions and answers through the Go To Meeting room. You ask the question and the APWU Health Plan will provide an answer! Visit [apwuhp.com](http://apwuhp.com) for details or register today at: [www.apwuhp.com/virtual-open-season-health-fairs](http://www.apwuhp.com/virtual-open-season-health-fairs).

Together. Better Health! ■



**APNU**

[illegible]

Partner with a health plan that helps you protect what's most important.



OPEN SEASON HOTLINE

## HIGH OPTION



**PRECEDENCE** Organizational Health means that a solid foundation provides. No referrals needed.

In-network you pay: \$0-copay for urgent visit, \$25-copay for office and specialty visits, \$200-copay urgent care facility, 80% reimbursement for other treatment methods.

**Medicare Advantage**, \$25-copay for most visits and \$0-copay for genetic and medications, including. Most glasses and visits and include for the purpose of keeping your Medicare.

Monthly care and preventive care and screenings with network providers, plus treatment at LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics, and outpatient accident injury within 72 hours are paid at 80%.

### High Option Premiums 2021

Enrollment type	Enrollment code	Postal	
		APWU Career (Biweekly)	Retirees (Monthly)
Self Only	471	\$108.00	\$304.00
Self Plus One	472	\$307.50	\$448.00
Self and Family	473	\$508.50	\$678.00



## CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION



Nationwide UHC network featuring more than a million healthcare providers. No referrals needed.

In January each member gets a Personal Care Account (PCA) that is funded by the Health Plan.

- \$1200 Self only
- \$2400 Self Plus One
- \$2400 Self Plus One and Family

Monthly care and preventive care and screenings are paid at 80% when treatment is outside. Near \$25-million incentive when you complete your annual exam.

Coverage for medical care, virtual visits, prescription drugs, hospital stays and surgery, labs and X-rays, physical therapy, wellness programs, behavioral health and more!

### Consumer Driven Option Premiums 2021

Enrollment type	Enrollment code	APWU Career in FERS as Career more than one year (Biweekly)	APWU Career in FERS as Career less than one year (Biweekly)	Postal	
				PSE (Biweekly)	Retirees (Monthly)
Self Only	424	\$118.00	\$118.00	\$118.00	\$322.00
Self Plus One	426	\$322.00	\$322.00	\$322.00	\$448.00
Self and Family	425	\$518.00	\$518.00	\$518.00	\$678.00

