



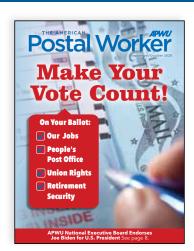
FEATURES

- 5 APWU Members Rally with **Community to Demand Congress** Save the Post Office and Stop **Delays**
- 8 Make Your Vote Count!
- 10 National and Local Officers Use Media to Spread the Word
- 13 100th Anniversary of Women's Right to Vote
- **15** APWU Holds Regional Zoom Meetings
- 15 President Dimondstein Joins Panel at the Summit For Civil Rights

Pay and COLAs in Recent **Pavchecks**

17 It Pays to Be Union! Retroactive

- **18** Election Mail Procedures
- 19 Do Your Part: Mask Up to Protect You and Your Coworkers
- 20 President Dimondstein Testifies before House Committee and **Congressional Progressive Caucus**
- **21** APWU Initiating Step 4 National Dispute Regarding DeJoy Retail Office Closures
- **26** A GRAND ALLIANCE A Grand Alliance Keeps up the **Fight**
- 27 Postal Workers Across the Globe **Show Solidarity**
- **28** Labor News
- 30 MVS Division Assistant Director Javier Piñeres Retiring
- **30** Legislative & Political Department Holds Hatch Act Training
- **31** From the Field
- **38** 2020 APWU Scholarship Winners



ABOUT THE COVER

Make a plan to vote today! To learn more about where the U.S. Presidential Candidates stand on postal and other worker issues, see page 8.

COLUMNS

PRESIDENT The People Are Proving We're No "Joke"

12 VICE PRESIDENT Make a Difference and Save Your Postal Job on Election Day

14 SECRETARY-TREASURER How COVID-19 is Affecting Union Elections

16 **INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS** Management Must Abide by the Collective **Bargaining Agreement**

25 SOUTHERN REGIONAL COORDINATOR Staying Safe

DIVISIONS

22 **CLERK DIVISION** USPS Planning to Reduce AFCS, DBCS, AFSM100, and FSS in its Mail Processing **Facilities**

23 MAINTENANCE DIVISION POStPlan Implementation's Questions and **Answers**

MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICE DIVISION 24 Taking the MVS Craft Forward One Step at a Time

DEPARTMENTS

32 **LEGISLATIVE & POLITICAL** Vote by Mail: The Postal Service Can Handle It

33 **ORGANIZATION** New Policies are an Organizing Opportunity

34 **HOMEFRONT** Disability Rates of Veterans with Dependents

35 **RESEARCH & EDUCATION** Harassment is Against the Law

36 **RETIREES** Retirement Benefit Questions

37 **HEALTH PLAN** What You Need to Know About **Mammograms**

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The People are Proving We're No "Joke"

PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

It is no joke when the U.S. President calls us "a joke." It is most concerning for our jobs and future. We are outraged that those who want to privatize the public Postal Service shamefully use the pandemic to try to accomplish their aims. We are angry that there has been no COVID-19 financial relief for the USPS, while private corporations have received \$500 billion. We are dismayed that our service to the people is being degraded by the new Postmaster General.

In defense of our jobs, our union and the USPS, APWU members have turned our concerns and outrage into action. We have contacted Congress, talked to the media, signed and circulated petitions, educated our families and friends, rallied, messaged on social media, and united with our many labor and community allies and the U.S. people.

The people have responded with an outpouring of support. The call to "Save the Post Office" has resonated throughout the land. It is impressive, inspiring and most heartening, but does not come as a surprise. The USPS is consistently rated the highest of all agencies based on the work and dedication of proud postal workers. This year the USPS garnered an astounding 91 percent public approval rating, equally from Republicans, Democrats, Independents, Libertarians or Greens. In addition, the USPS has been rated the top "brand" during the pandemic, reflecting great appreciation for our frontline, essential work.

Here are just some examples of this public "uprising," often carried out in coordination with APWU postal workers.

- Over 2 million people signed petitions to Congress to Save the Public Postal Service.
- Over 60,000 calls have been made to Congress insisting on \$25 billion emergency COVID-19 relief.
- Following a meeting of over 100 allied community organizations, 800 events were held on one Saturday in August followed by an additional 300 the following Tuesday, resulting in widespread local news coverage.
- Positive letters to the editors frequently appear in local papers across the country. Many small

business owners, civil rights, environmental and veteran organizations are speaking up. Some have produced supportive videos.

- Our Twitter following rose from 11,000 to over 200,000 in just two short weeks, underscoring the interest and concern of the people.
- The AFL-CIO has made postal emergency relief funding as one of their core legislative demands in the ongoing COVID-19 stimulus negotiations.
- Public support and interest have driven extensive and sympathetic national news coverage. Late night comedians have even taken up the fight.
- Spontaneously, there have been efforts for people to financially support the USPS by buying stamps, writing and mailing letters and buying postal gear. Singers have recorded and shared songs.
- On vote by mail issues and the need for financial relief, APWU representatives have been asked by various national organizations to make presentations and provide Congressional testimony.

All of these efforts are having an impact! The House of Representatives has passed two bills calling for \$25 billion of emergency COVID-19 relief. The Senate is now considering a similar bipartisan bill. After saying "no" for months, the White House is now talking about COVID-19 relief. PMG DeJoy has temporarily halted some of his negative policies and committed under oath to prioritize processing vital election mail.

Positive steps, yes, but not sufficient. Let's keep the "foot on the gas" to secure COVID-19 relief, permanently reverse the PMG's regressive policies and obtain proper hiring and staffing. Let's keep it in the streets to gain a bright future for the public Postal Service.

This movement has not been built by accident. The APWU continues to lead the way. We are union. We are determined. We are organized. We built the Grand Alliance. We won the *Stop Staples* fight. We understand we cannot win alone. The people are on our side. The power of the 99% will prevail over the power of the Wall Street privatizers – and that's no joke!

APWU Members Rally with Community to Demand Congress Save the Post Office and Stop Delays



In the previous issue of *The American Postal Worker*, we reported on the highly successful day of action on June 23 – with the delivery of two million petition signatures to Congress, demanding \$25 billion in emergency COVID-19 relief for the USPS. The day of action increased public awareness of the Postal Service's financial crisis.

However, as this issue goes to press, the \$25 billion in COVID-19 funding remains held up in the Senate, with Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) refusing to bring any postal legislation to the floor for a vote.

Cary, NC

As postal workers know, in

July the newly installed Postmaster General Louis DeJoy instituted a series of harmful and destructive policy changes, including: reducing hours in retail units including Saturday closings, delaying mail, slowing down service, reducing carrier delivery trips, excessive removal of mail processing equipment, arbitrarily reducing work hours and eliminating the majority of overtime.

The National APWU Executive Board immediately responded to the changes with a statement on July 20. "We will unite with the people of the country to defend their right to 'prompt' and 'reliable' service and the universal service mandate that ensures equal service to everyone – all 160 million addresses every day," the statement read.

The National Executive Board also reaffirmed their commitment to pressuring Congress "for COVIDrelated emergency relief of at least \$25 billion to make up for projected lost revenue due to the pandemic-induced economic crisis."

The public response to the delays was strong enough to compel the Postmaster General to announce a temporary halt to some of his policy changes until after the November election.

"These rollbacks would not have happened without public outcry and action. The public would not have been aware of these regressive policies if APWU leaders, members and

postal workers around the country had not sounded the alarm and led the charge,"

Senators: Do the Right Thing

Washington, D.C.





President Dimondstein after DeJoy's announcement. "While we welcome the temporary suspension of some of these policies as a step in the right direction, they are far from sufficient and the struggle in defense of the public Postal Service, our jobs and our union, is far from over."

APWU Members and Allies Rally at Post Offices across the Country

As Postmaster General DeJoy's policy changes began causing chaos and harmful delays in communities across the country, media attention on the Postal Service and the APWU rose considerably. Thousands of

messages of support came from members of the public, and APWU gained almost 200,000 new followers across its social media channels.

With the crisis facing the Postal Service gaining massive attention across the country, the APWU National organized a Day of Action to #SavethePostOffice with two simple demands: \$25 billion in emergency COVID-19 relief and a permanent reversal of DeJoy's destructive policy changes.

On Aug. 25, APWU members; labor, civil and human rights activists; community allies; and lawmakers joined together at post offices across the country to make their voices heard. An estimated 300 events were held across the country, in almost every state with thousands participating.

"The APWU National put out the call and our local leaders, members. and community allies answered in spectacular fashion," said President Dimondstein. "This is the People's Post Office and the people have shown they're ready to fight for it."

POST OFFICE CUTBACKS

Tampa, FL

"The U.S. Postal Service is a bedrock institution for every American," said Becky Livingston, Saint Louis Gateway Area Local President, to a crowd of dozens in St. Louis. "Our elected leaders must support \$25 billion in funding to make sure the Post Office can run effectively, and Postmaster DeJoy must reverse his harmful slowdown policies immediately."

In Miami, FL, Miami Area Local President Wanda Harris summed up the disturbing state of recent postal changes: "These changes are



in the middle of an election year, in the middle of a pandemic," Harris said. "All of this is happening right when the American people need us more than ever."



The sentiment was reflected in New York City. "What we're seeing is there's a slowdown and a breakdown of the mail," said Glenda Morris, a postal retiree, while standing in a crowd lining the steps of the James A. Farley post office. "A lot of people will not be able to get their medication on time... And that's not normal. That's not normal."

In Kentucky, supporters rallied in Inez, near the home of Postal Board of Governors chairman Robert Duncan. "This is his home, so he understands how important rural America is as well. We just want him to see the support," said Kentucky Postal Workers Union Secretary-Treasurer Clyde Trent.

Day of Action a Success, But the Struggle Continues

By the end of August 25, it was clear that from rural towns to major cities, people across the country are united in saving the public Postal Service. Demonstrations with one single person to those with over a hundred delivered a clear message: the USPS is our national treasure and the people will not sit idly by while it is under attack.

While the day of action was successful, the Postal Service is still in need of a \$25 billion emergency appropriation. Additionally, while DeJoy has temporarily suspended some of his policy changes, the struggle continues to make sure the USPS remains a reliable public service committed to serving the people of the country.

On August 22, the House of Representatives passed the *Delivering for America Act* (*H.R. 8015*), a standalone bill that would reverse the policy changes and provide \$25 billion in emergency funding. However, that bill, as with other legislation providing emergency COVID-19 relief to the USPS, remains tied up in the Senate. The APWU

encourages members to continue calling their senators to demand financial relief for the USPS and a reversal of the policies that have caused harmful delays. Call today at 844-402-1001.







Make Your Vote Count! Biden and Trump on the Issues

The APWU National Executive Board (NEB) endorsed Joe Biden for U.S. President on June 9, 2020. While every individual will vote their conscience, your union leadership encourages you to cast your vote for Joe Biden. The NEB came to our position by examining the records and commitments of the two candidates. We encourage you to do the same.



	BIDEN	TRUMP
Postal Privatization	Opposes postal privatization, whole or in part. Biden has pledged, in a letter to the APWU National Executive Board, "to continue the fight to protect the Postal Service from all attempts at privatization."	Plans the wholesale dismantling and privatization of the public Postal Service by selling it to private corporations for profit (June 2018 White House Office of Management and Budget Report).
Postal Collective Bargaining	Supports continued collective bargaining, the right to negotiate over wages and benefits, for postal workers. (Biden Plan for Strengthening Worker Organizing).	Calls for the elimination of the right of postal workers to negotiate over wages and benefits and to replace this with collective begging to Congress for future wage increases (Presidential Postal Task Force: <i>A Sustainable Path Forward</i> , December 2018).
Postal Retirement Benefits	Biden has stated that "The federal government should lead by example and provide high quality benefits, instead of pushing anti-worker budget adjustments designed to shift the burden of health care and retirement costs onto employees." (AFGE Candidate Questionnaire)	Supports increasing employee FERS contribution by 6 percent resulting in a huge cut in take-home pay (Presidential Postal Task Force of December 2018 and OMB policies).
Postal Services	Supports maintaining the Universal Service Obligation that guarantees every person equal access to postal services, six-day delivery and rural post offices. Supports expanded services including financial services (DNC platform). As Senator championed the <i>Mail Delivery Protection Act</i> .	Advocates for elimination of Universal Service Obligation, reducing number of days of delivery, closing post offices and raising package prices by 400 percent – driving away businesses and customers from the USPS (December 2018 Presidential Postal Task Force Report and press statements). Opposes expanded postal services such as "postal banking." Calls the Postal Service "a joke."
Emergency Postal COVID Relief	Supports funding for COVID-19 relief to ensure that the USPS does not run out of money due to the pandemic (Letter to APWU National Executive Board).	Opposes any Congressional postal relief to make up for the projected lost revenues and increased expenses due to the pandemic. Threatened to veto the entire <i>CARES Act</i> stimulus package passed in March if postal relief was included (<i>Washington Post</i> , April 11, 2020).
Tax Policy	Promotes repealing the <i>Tax Cut and Jobs Act</i> for those earning over \$400,000/year. Biden supports taxing capital gains for those earning over \$1 million, uncapping Social Security taxes on wealthy individuals, and promoting tax credits for child care and electric vehicles.	Promoted and signed the <i>Tax Cut and Jobs Act</i> , reducing tax revenue by \$1.5 trillion over ten years. The vast majority of the tax breaks were for wealthy individuals and corporations.
Vote by Mail and Voting Laws	Supports vote by mail as a way to provide safe access to the ballot box for tens of millions of voters. Biden also opposes voter suppression tactics such as "Voter ID" laws (MarketWatch, April, 24, 2020 & CBS News, July 24, 2014).	Calls "vote by mail" fraudulent and corrupt. Promotes voter suppression by inhibiting vote by mail and supporting policies that make it harder to vote. (<i>Newsweek</i> , April 3, 2020).

	BIDEN	TRUMP
Workplace Safety	Has repeatedly called for doubling the number of OSHA inspectors and for implementing Emergency Coronavirus safety standards to keep workers safe (<i>Joe Biden's 4 point plan for our Essential Workers</i>).	In the COVID-19 Era, OSHA inspections have decreased and guidelines designed to keep workers safe have become nonbinding and unenforceable. The Trump Administration opposes a long overdue COVID-19 Emergency standard which would protect workers (<i>Vox</i> , July 13, 2020).
Rebuilding the Infrastructure	The Biden Infrastructure plan calls for a national program that will create millions of union jobs. This plan would replace the Postal Service's aging vehicle fleet, make new investments to combat climate change, and rebuild America's disintegrating infrastructure.	While Trump had promised a \$1 trillion infrastructure program to rebuild crumbling bridges, tunnels, dams, subways, electrical grids and water supplies, no such program has been implemented despite the House's passage of a comprehensive infrastructure bill back in July (Business Insider, September 3, 2020).
Workers' Rights to Form Unions	Biden has committed to appoint pro-labor members to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), work to eliminate the anti-union, so-called "Right to Work" laws, and restore and strengthen workplace protections on the right to union organizing and collective bargaining that are contained in the PRO Act (The Biden Plan for Strengthening Worker Organizing, Collective Bargaining, and Unions; The Nation, April 7, 2020).	Opposes the <i>PRO Act,</i> stacked the NLRB with corporate, anti-union members, and issued Executive Orders eliminating or reducing union rights for federal employees.
Minimum Wage	Supports raising the minimum wage to \$15.00/hour (Biden Plan for Strengthening Worker Organizing).	Has actively opposed raising the minimum wage by threatening to veto legislation which would gradually increase it to \$15/hour (<i>CNBC</i> , July 18, 2020).
Clean Water and Air	The Biden Plan for a Clean Energy Revolution and Environmental Justice lays the groundwork to achieve a 100 percent clean energy economy and reach netzero emissions no later than 2050. Biden also supports rejoining the Paris Agreement, an international agreement which would minimize the worst effects of climate change.	Through various Executive Orders, Trump has reversed dozens of environmental rules including: reducing toxic emission standards from power plants, cars and trucks; relaxed mercury emission restrictions; cut back protected natural areas for more fossil fuel extraction; and allowed coal companies to dump toxins into local streams (<i>New York Times</i> , July 15, 2020). Has stated that climate change is a "hoax."
Social Security	Biden opposes any cuts to Social Security, and supports raising Social Security benefits for low-income individuals and long-living beneficiaries. Biden supports having wealthy individuals pay their full share of Social Security deductions, thus putting the program on a path to solvency.	Indicated willingness to cut Social Security, including through a permanent pay roll "tax cut," which would bankrupt Social Security. The White House budget for FY 2021, called for cuts to the Social Security Disability Fund.
Health Care	Biden wants to build on the Affordable Care Act (ACA). He wants to add a public option, like Medicare, that will reduce costs and improve efficiency. His plan also calls for increased tax credits to lower health care premiums.	Has repeatedly tried to repeal the <i>Affordable Care Act</i> (ACA), including coverage for those with pre-existing conditions. He partially privatized the Veterans Affairs medical system. Trump's FY 2021 White House Budget called for cutting \$500 billion from Medicare and \$900 billion from Medicaid.
On Unity	Opposes the rise of neo-nazism and white supremacy. An example is he described the participants of the 2017 "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, VA as those, " who descended on Charlottesville with torches in hand and hate in their hearts."	Described the Charlottesville "Unite the Right" participants, one of which murdered Heather Heyer, as "very fine people."

National and Local Officers Use Media to

s the crisis facing the Postal Service began gathering large public attention in July and August, the media came to the APWU for insight on the issue. APWU National and local officers became the defenders of the public Postal Service in the press, appearing on television, on the radio, in newspapers, on podcasts and online to share what was going on inside the post office from the perspective of postal workers. APWU officers were able to direct the message towards focusing on the real cause of the mail delays and the urgent need for COVID-19 financial relief from Congress.

In national outlets including CNN, Fox News and MSNBC to local newspapers in states across the country, the APWU worked to educate the public about what must be done to Save the Post Office: Congress must pass, and the President must sign, \$25 billion in emergency postal funding, and the policy changes mandated by new Postmaster General Louis DeJoy causing harmful service delays must be reversed. Additionally, APWU leaders strongly rebutted the White House's agenda to cast doubts on the Postal Service and its ability to move mail-in ballots during the November election.

In all, national and local APWU officers gained 8.4 billion views across hundreds of outlets, helping to widely increase APWU's reach among the public. Additionally, APWU's social media channels gained almost 200,000 new followers, becoming one of the most widely followed unions in the labor movement.

Below are some highlights from these media appearances:



President Dimondstein on the COVID-induced financial crisis facing the Postal Service and the need for \$25 billion in emergency relief:

"What's before the Postal Service and the people of this country now, on the financial issue, is the COVID-induced economic crisis. The Post Office does not run on tax dollars...it runs on the revenue from postage and postal products. The COVID impact is that mail volume is falling off, at least temporarily, and the Postal Service projects a \$50 billion loss over the next ten years just due to COVID. So it's really incumbent upon Congress. They took care of the private sector at the end of March with over \$500 billion, the Post Office did not get a dime. The Post Office belongs to all of us – this is not relief for CEOs or shareholders, this is relief for the people of the country."

- America's Newsroom, FOX News, August 18.

President Dimondstein on how postal workers are affected by the harmful policy changes:

"There is a lot of dismay. Postal workers are extremely dedicated to serving the people of this country...We've been on the front lines, proudly carrying out that mission and connecting the people of the country. So anything that slows that service, that disrupts that service, that degrades that service, runs counter to everything that we stand for: Get the mail to the customer on time and treat it as if it is our own."

- Anderson Cooper 360°, CNN, August 17.



President Dimondstein, responding to the White House's attempts to cast doubts on the Postal Service's ability to handle voting by mail:

"It's dangerous, and it's very disturbing to postal workers who are very dedicated to the people of the country, and to providing prompt, reliable and efficient services. That's what the law says, and that's what we're dedicated to. We call it our DNA – to never delay mail. We're not beholden to any individual candidate or political party; we're beholden to the rights of the American people, to bind the country together, and what better way to do it than provide access to the ballot box?"

- The Last Word with Lawrence O'Donnell, MSNBC, August 13.

Spread the Word on the Postal Service

Local Leaders in the Media

"Election mail is our first priority always... I am not concerned with the ways the workers will handle the mail, I am concerned about the [PMG] rule change."

- Western New York Area Local President Lori Cash, MSNBC, July 31.

"I grew up in a culture of service, where every piece was to be delivered every day. And [DeJoy's] policies, although they've only been in place for a few weeks, are now affecting the way that we do business and not allowing us to deliver every piece every day, as we've done in the past... I see this as a way to undermine the public confidence in the mail service. It's not saving costs. We're spending more time trying to implement these policy changes."



- Iowa Postal Workers Union President Kimberly Karol, Morning Edition, NPR, August 11.



"If the mail doesn't make it to the dock, it doesn't get on the truck. So we've had mail that has been left in the plants. Then they get it on the truck the next day... We want to just do our jobs to the best of our ability and be given the resources to do that."

- Cleveland Area Local President Daleo Freeman, NBC Nightly News, August 17.

"We have an obligation to deliver all over the country in a way that private

companies don't. We have an obligation to deliver to rural areas, in Alaska, in some areas of Wyoming, where private companies wouldn't go...and now the

pandemic has seriously damaged the Postal Service. The airline industry gets \$50 billion in pandemic relief. The Postal Service goes to every house in America six days a week; the airline industry doesn't do that. Why don't we get the same kind of pandemic funding to preserve this vital service for our customers?"

- Greater Seattle Area Local Vice President David Yao, MSNBC, August 25.

"We are a service. We're not a business. So, you can't expect us to act as a business because we're there to serve the American public every day... We believe to keep the Postal Service, which is owned by the American people, on solid financial footing, then we're going to need some help from Congress."

- Indiana Postal Workers President Doug Brown, Washington Post, August 21.

"The post office was essential [when Benjamin Franklin was PMG]. It's essential now... We take our jobs very seriously. We don't want these delays. We want to deliver the mail on time."

- Cindy Heyward, Philadelphia Area Local Legislative & Political Director, NBC News, August 28.

"In my 20 years at the Service, postal employees have fostered a culture of never delaying the mail. Our unofficial mantra is mail that comes in today, goes out today – no matter what.

We are now being told to ignore that. If mail can't get delivered or processed without overtime, it is supposed to sit and wait...think about mail that arrives late in the day. Before, that mail would be processed for the next day's delivery, even if that required overtime. Today, that mail sits in the plant at least until the following evening - or longer... In the plants, meanwhile, the short staffing of clerks means it takes longer to get all the mail through the sorting machines. And under orders from DeJoy, mail processing equipment is being scrapped."

- Youngstown Local MVS Director Jim Varner, opinion-editorial in the Tribune Chronicle, August 23.

"[Postal Workers are] a proud mix – a true cross-section and representation of the American people. I still feel that thrill [of going to work], but now it is mixed with sadness. The Postal Service...has been charged to do almost impossible tasks in ways that no other business in the country has been required to do."

- Muriel Ponder, Denver Metro Area Local Legislative and Political Director, USA Today opinion-editorial, Sept. 1.









Make a Difference and Save Your Postal Job on Election Day

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

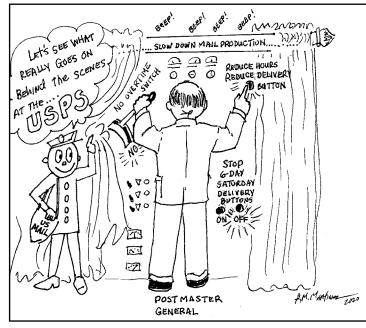
Currently, we have a U.S. President and many Senators who want to impose enormous financial burdens on the USPS. We have a President who is willing to give corporations, banks, and Wall Street stimulus money, but not the Postal Service – the highest rated government agency that serves all Americans during this pandemic. We have a new Postmaster General (PMG) with a long history of financial donations to the President's election campaign, along with many other prominent politicians.

COVID-19 has reminded America that our service is essential. We provide access to a democratic, safe and secure election through vote by mail. We are the last hope for America during a crisis: restoring communications, commerce, and helping displaced victims from natural disasters. We protect people from bio-medical and bio-hazard attacks, provide emergency medications, testing, and vaccines. We provide services that protect people and save lives.

We now have a PMG who is slowing down mail service, closing post offices and stations, reducing hours and Saturday delivery, and who wants to open doors for corporations, including Amazon. What about his own previous logistics transportation postal service business? Is he planning a transportation program that helps contractors get profitable pieces of the USPS while doing his best to end the universal services that have been promised to the public?

Over the years, we have had cuts. Did you know that 54,678 post offices have been closed? We have 31,322 post offices left. There are 10,678 zip codes that don't have a post office. By 2013, we had 402 mail processing facilities consolidated; now we have 265. These closures have caused constant overtime and high transportation costs.

Our PMG has plans to cut the Postal Service even further, compromising our national, public, and essential infrastructure. This will affect communities and jobs everywhere. The previous PMG slowed down first-class mail delivery by 3-5 days; now people are reporting first-class delays of up to 14 days. This is frustrating postal consumers. We cannot let the Board of Governors and the new Postmaster General destroy the world's finest postal system.



Cartoon drawn by Ruben Martinez, Assistant Clerk Craft Director for the San Antonio Alamo Area Local

Vote Early!

If you want to save your Postal Service job, save your benefits, your retirement and the public Postal Service for your family, your friends, your young children, your community, and your country, you must **vote early**.

Find out about early state election rules now! Go to *voteathome.org*, click on voter center, click the box to request your mail-in ballot and learn about your state rules. You can also find help on voting by mail at *vote411.org*.

Apply for an absentee ballot as early as possible, and send back your ballot as early as possible. Track your ballot, and make sure it is delivered to the correct election office by the November 3, 2020 deadline. Vote early for a president, vice president, senators, and house representatives who can save your job and your country. Help as many people as possible to vote by mail, early!

Suffragettes organized with the National Woman's Party are arrested as they demonstrate next to the White House

100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY **OF WOMEN'S** RIGHT TO VOTE

"Organize, agitate, educate must be our war cry."

- Susan B. Anthony, women's rights advocate



he 19th Amendment extending the right to vote to women in the U.S. Constitution had its 100th anniversary on August 18. The crucial amendment states: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

The Amendment's passage was the end of a very long battle fought by suffragettes for over seventy years, starting in 1848 in New York, at the Seneca Fall Convention. Thousands of women, and men, marched in the streets and held demonstrations across the country to change the law so women could vote, and through the right to vote help bring needed change to the status of women in general. Supporters wrote letters and columns published in newspapers and magazines with large readerships. They coordinated with their natural allies; Antislavery leader Frederick Douglass for example was a strong supporter of women's suffrage. Tens of thousands of supporters spoke with the public – at rallies, public and private organizational meetings, and oneon-one in the streets and in social situations. During that struggle, many were arrested and assaulted.

The tragic Triangle Shirt Waist Fire in 1911, in which 150 working women perished due to unsafe conditions, sharpened the need for the women's right to vote. Clara Leimlach, leader of shirt waist workers and suffragette succinctly made the case: "The manufacturer has a vote; the bosses have votes: the foremen have votes, the inspectors have votes. The working girl has no vote. When she asks to have a building in which she must work made clean and safe, the officials do not have to listen. When she asks not to work such long hours, they do not have to listen... That is why the working

woman now says that she must have the vote."

However, while the 19th Amendment did give women access to the ballot, this access was not equal for all women across the country. In the segregated Jim Crow South, Black women faced poll taxes, literacy tests and other harsh efforts from lawmakers to keep them from voting. Those attempting to exercise their right to vote were often met with violence and arrest. They were also met with indifference from many white leaders in the suffragette movement.

Black women's struggle for the right to vote continued for the next 40 years, before the 24th Amendment, banning poll taxes, was ratified in 1964, and the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965, was signed into law, outlawing literacy tests and expanding federal oversight of voter registration.

Participate in the 2020 Federal Election

With the public Postal Service, unions and working families under attack, it is important that all APWU members exercise their democratic right to vote this fall.

The Legislative & Political Department has tools available on the union website for you to register to vote, find information about voting by mail in your state, and find your polling place if you choose to vote in person. Go to apwu.org/ labor-2020, enter in your name and address to get started.

Also available on the page is a link to volunteer to work at polling places on November 3. With the pandemic, states are facing a record shortage of election workers. Together, we can help ensure access to the ballot box. Postal employees know what it means to serve this country during times of need. Help defend democratic rights by becoming an election poll worker. 📕

How COVID-19 is **Affecting Union Elections**

SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

OVID-19 has impacted APWU's local and state elections, which were scheduled to take place throughout the months of the pandemic. As a result, local and state officers have been unable to schedule in-person membership meetings and participate in state conventions. During this crisis, the Department of Labor (DOL) issued several advisories, one of which is specifically applicable to union elections.

The DOL Advisories regard public disclosure reporting in areas affected by the coronavirus (COVID-19), and union elections if a local or state affiliate has to cancel or postpone their convention when there is an election requirement. The Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) recognized that due to the disruption caused by COVID-19, it may be difficult or impossible for some unions to conduct timely union officer elections. OLMS issued an advisory stating that affected labor unions, whose principal office is located in the affected areas or whose reportable activities occurred in those areas, must make a good faith effort to conduct elections as required under the LMRDA in those affected areas. However, if local and state affiliates are unable to comply, they would be required to hold the election when reasonably practicable on a certain date.

If constitutional provisions mandate elections take place, the Department of Labor will require local and state affiliates to determine a reasonable date and subsequently begin the nomination and election process; this is not optional.

To assist local and state officers in complying with LMRDA provisions to conduct elections, the Secretary-Treasurer's Department held Zoom trainings for local and state officers. Local officers can choose to utilize Zoom for membership meetings and local nominations. However, the local

LOCAL OR STATE UNIONS IN AFFECTED AREAS MUST MAKE A GOOD FAITH EFFORT TO CONDUCT ELECTIONS AS REQUIRED UNDER THE LMRDA.

election is required to be conducted by secret ballot. State officers have the ability to utilize Zoom to facilitate their state convention and hold elections.

Congratulations to the Indiana Postal Workers, the first state affiliate to utilize Zoom and successfully hold their state convention and election. It can be done!

Compliance with LM-2, LM-3 and LM-4 **Report Filing**

The DOL extension to electronically file required LM reports due to COVID-19 ended on June 30. Locals who did not submit by June 30 are considered delinquent by the DOL. Filing LM reports is a legal requirement to remain in compliance with the LMRDA. It is not optional! Local and state affiliates can incur serious ramifications if compliance is not adhered to. Local and state presidents will continue to be contacted if it is determined their LM report is delinquent according to the DOL.

If assistance is needed with Zoom or LM report filing, contact Annette August-Taylor at aaugust@apwu.org. ■

Secretary-Treasurer Powell Honored with Shirley Chisholm Breakthrough **Leader Award**

On July 30, Secretary-Treasurer Powell was honored with the 2020 Shirley Chisholm Breakthrough Leader Award, named after the "unbought and unbossed" 1972 presidential candidate. The award was presented as part of The Summit for Civil Rights, an annual convening of civil rights leaders across labor, government, academia, faith and law to "respond to the powerful and dangerous intersection of enduring racial disparities, widening economic inequality, and rising political polarization throughout our entire society."

The Summit honored Secretary-Treasurer Powell for her work as "a trailblazer, a mentor and a powerful role model and ally for all working women and men fighting to break through the barricades of gender, race and class that have too long walled off opportunity in America."

"We have to continue the struggle for economic and social justice and for civil and human rights, while bonding together to protect our legacy, so that our youth can have a future," said Secretary-Treasurer Powell.

APWU Holds Regional Zoom Meetings

he National American Postal Workers Union greatly appreciates all of your terrific work in these difficult times. From health and safety challenges to the pandemic's economic impact on the public Postal Service and our jobs, we are facing immense difficulties - but also great opportunities. This pandemic has caused every organization to alter the way business is normally done and such is the case with our union, causing the postponement and rescheduling (to October 4-7, 2021) of the 2020 APWU National Convention and the postponements/cancellations of state conferences and conventions, and retiree chapter meetings.

In the current environment, it was impossible to communicate with the leaders, activists and members the way we have become accustomed to and we are unable to have face to face conventions and conferences to give reports, share information, take questions, hear the debates and receive ideas and suggestions.

In order to continue all of our vital efforts to communicate with and build the union in these trying and challenging times, APWU Secretary-Treasurer Powell and her staff coordinated and scheduled five (5) separate Regional Zoom meetings, with the assistance from Regional Coordinators Stone, Foster, Jones, Gonzalez and Beasley. The Regional Zoom meetings included reports from the Regional Coordinators, President Dimondstein, Executive Vice President Szeredy, Secretary-Treasurer Powell, Industrial Relations Director Zimmerman, as well as Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle Service and



Support Services Division Directors & Assistant Directors, National Business Agents, Headquarters Department Directors, the Health Plan Director and the APWU Auxiliary. Questions were entertained each day at the conclusion of the reports.

The Regional meetings were held in July, August and September. On the last day of each Regional meeting, President Dimondstein gave closing remarks.

"Though the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact the lives of APWU members, our families, and our communities, the APWU is committed to finding solutions to keeping our union running strong," said President Dimondstein. "I want to commend Secretary-Treasurer Powell and the Regional Coordinators for creating and setting up the regional Zoom meetings, successfully bringing members together and building solidarity."

President Dimondstein Joins Panel at the Summit For Civil Rights

n July 31, as part of The Summit for Civil Rights (written about on page 14), President Dimondstein joined a panel, titled "Who's Profiting?," to discuss how business interests and privatizers use racial discrimination and segregation as a tool for profit-making. President Dimondstein joined the panel along with featured speaker Keeanga Yamahtta - Taylor, assistant professor of African-American Studies at

Princeton University, and Prentiss Dantzler, Assistant Professor in the Urban Studies Institute at Georgia State University. The panel was moderated by University of Kentucky School of Education Dean Julian Vasquez Heilig.

In his remarks, President Dimondstein discussed how the diverse workforce and strong unions in the public sector are obstacles for Wall Street in their attempts to privatize public services. He also raised that "if the Post Office was to be privatized, unions would be broken, good jobs would be gone, equal pay for equal work would be gone, and dignified retirement would be gone, so that a few companies could make huge profits," President Dimondstein said. "The people would lose the 'small d' democratic right of postal services, no matter who we are or where we live."

Management Must Abide by the Collective Bargaining Agreement

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR VANCE ZIMMERMAN

t has been a different summer for all of us. Every member of the APWU has been touched by the COVID-19 pandemic in one way or another. Yet all of you continued to provide essential postal services to the public admirably and with dedication. The USPS also got a new Postmaster General who implemented changes and policies that severely degraded the services we provide. But you were not deterred; you still worked hard for the public.

The public recognized us for our dedicated work and stood up against the degrading of the service we provide and of our jobs. If we were all in the same room, I would ask you to give yourselves a round of applause for what you have done during the pandemic and the fight to protect the people's Post Office!

THE PUBLIC RECOGNIZED US FOR OUR DEDICATED WORK AND STOOD UP AGAINST THE DEGRADING OF THE SERVICE WE PROVIDE AND OF OUR JOBS.

With Postmaster General DeJoy taking the reins of the USPS, the people saw their service degraded and the mail slowed down. We work hard to get all the mail out every day, but PMG DeJoy put policies and procedures into place without understanding how we do our jobs and how the mail is processed, moved and delivered. PMG DeJoy also made these changes without consulting with the unions or getting any feedback on how the changes could impact our collective bargaining agreement with the USPS. Let us be clear – not a single decision he makes or policy he implements can usurp the tenets of our contract.

For example, overtime. All of us know that overtime was reduced. We also know that no manager or supervisor in the Postal Service would make such a decision without a higher directive – in this case from the PMG's office. Just because he said "no overtime" does not mean the Post Office can ignore the overtime pecking orders of our LMOUs or Article 8. It does not mean that the Postal Service can ignore and violate the employee classification limitations of Article 7 and the various Memorandums

of Understanding (MOUs) that are in place as part of the collective bargaining process.

In some locations where overtime was reduced, the USPS started using temporary assistants in all crafts in lieu of overtime, even if there were not COVID-19 related absences. The contract does not allow for this! The overtime desired list (OTDL) still must be used before these assistants are used and COVID-19 absences must be occurring. PSEs cannot work more than 8 hours in day without using the OTDL, and PSE caps still cannot be exceeded. No matter the PMG's "cost cutting, post office saving" policies – the contract cannot be violated.

We all must watch for violations and insist the contract be enforced. Grievances must continue to be filed and postal management, including the PMG, must be held accountable!

New Local Memorandum of Understanding for Members at Large

In the last few months, the Local Memorandum of Understanding for Offices Without a Local Union Structure was finalized and signed. This LMOU provides significant rights to those employees whose offices are not represented by a local – often known as Members At Large.

The LMOU is especially helpful regarding leave. For example, it guarantees at least one person off on annual leave per APWU craft, per week (excluding December). This is especially important if management tries to deny leave because the postmaster of the small office is also on leave. The LMOU requires that requests for incidental leave be acted upon within 72 hours. If not, the leave is considered approved. The LMOU also defines a specific pecking order for backfilling of bargaining unit employees on leave. The LMOU can be found on the APWU website under "Frequently Requested Resources" on the "For Locals" tab.

The 2018-2021 Collective Bargaining Agreement is also now available on both the website as well as in print form. Copies of the spiral bound book can be purchased on apwu.org through the "APWU Store" link.

Register to vote and then do it! Solidarity! \blacksquare

It Pays to Be Union! Retroactive Pay and COLAs in Recent Paychecks

A s this issue goes to press, most APWU members received their retroactive pay in their paychecks dated September 4. This retroactive pay is the back pay entitled from the 2018 and 2019 pay increases and Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs) from November 2018 – April 2020, as part of the 2018-2021 Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Additionally, career employees received a COLA increase of \$208 per year (\$0.10 per hour) starting August 29, 2020, which was reflected in their paychecks on September 18. Postal Support Employees (PSEs), who do not get COLAs, received a \$0.20 per hour pay increase in May 2020.

During negotiations and Interest Arbitration, management tried to eliminate these earned benefits, arguing to convert COLAs into a one-time lump sum payment. However, the union prevailed, and full COLAs were preserved for the duration of the contract, including retroactive payments. The APWU is now the only postal union that has protected and maintained full COLAs.

"These hard-won retroactive payments and cost of living adjustments would not be part of this agreement without the work of members agitating on the work room floor, testifying in Interest Arbitration hearings, and participating in our contract campaign," said Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman. "I want to thank all of the members who participated for their efforts in securing this vital part of our contract."

"I also want to thank our APWU sisters and brothers in the IT/AS unit, who had to extensively reprogram the payroll system to make sure all

hours, differentials, and pay/step levels were properly included in the retroactive pay," Industrial Relations Director Zimmerman continued. "They did this all while also reprogramming the payroll and time keeping system for the additional leave available under the *Families First Coronavirus Recovery Act* (*FFCRA*). I want to thank them for their work during the COVID-19 pandemic to see that we are all paid properly."

"The commitment of members to the Fighting Today for a Better Tomorrow campaign was key in earning a good union contract that includes retroactive pay and full COLAs," said President Mark Dimondstein. "Now, we must renew our commitment to One Team, One Fight, as we protect these hard-earned victories against hostile management, cuts to service, and attacks from privatizers."

The retroactive pay was included with your regular paycheck, not sent as a separate check. Retirees will receive retroactive pay for the hours they were actively employed and worked during the period of November 24, 2018 until their retirement date if their retirement date was prior to April 10, 2020. If they retired after April 10, 2020, they would receive pay for hours worked during the full retroactive pay period. This check will be sent to their last office of record.

Additional Pay Increase November 2020

Additionally, effective November 21, the basic annual salary for each step will be increased by 1.0 percent for career employees and 2.0 percent for PSEs (PSEs do not receive COLAs).

Speak to Your Co-workers About Joining the APWU

It is through our collective strength that it "pays to be union." Your union is the reason for your recent salary increase, and retroactive pay check. The APWU also provides every postal worker a voice on the job and the ability to enforce a safe workplace.

Now is the time to speak with your coworkers about the importance of being union. Management did not just "decide" to give postal workers a raise and retroactive pay.



It is easier than ever for a nonmember to join. Have them go to apwu.org/join (or scan the QR code), and fill out their information today. If you have any questions, contact the Organization Department at organization@apwu.org or 202-842-4227.



Election Mail Procedures **ELECTION MAIL Authorized by the U.S. Postal Service **YOU pilay a vital role in the Vote-By-Mail process.

Election Mail should be treated as First-Class Mail and expedited through the network with timely processing. Willful delay of absentee balloting material or other election material is a violation of policy, ethics, and the law.

Expedited processing and delivery of election related mail is crucial to our democratic process. It is critical that all ballot mail is handled correctly to avoid any negative impact on election results or the Postal Service.

- Be alert for the red Tag 57 and green Tag 191, even though their use is optional. Political mail, with or without the use of a Tag, must be expedited.
- Any delays in processing of political campaign mail must be reported.

Election Day — Final Sweep

A final sweep of post offices and plant locations is required, allowing the voting registration officials in a state or the District of Columbia to collect any late Bus Reply Mail (BRM) ballots.

All Business Reply Mail will be made available to Registrar of Voters for collection from their PO B via Caller Service pickup – even if the BRM mail I been invoiced.

Handling Absentee Ballots with Insufficient or No Postage

Do not let ballots be delayed for any reason. are not subject to the normal postage due proced and should never be delayed due to insufficient pe

Absentee ballots are handled differently than oth unpaid or short-paid mailpieces. Absentee ballots dressed to an election office, with or without suff postage, must be delivered. The ballots must not delayed, detained or held for postage payment.

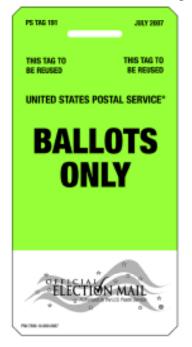
It is very important that ballots are identified and processed timely to ensure ballots are returned to election offices within the allotted time for the vote to be counted.

Your attention to detail makes Vote-By-Mail work!

Tag 57



Tag 191







DO YOUR PART: Mask Up to Protect Yourself and Your Coworkers

s the COVID-19 pandemic continues, research is pouring in on the vital importance of wearing a mask to slow the spread of the deadly virus.

During this pandemic, postal employees have continued to deliver on their vital mission to provide mail services what connecting the nation, but it has not come without difficulty. As the virus attacks the entire country, many of our coworkers have succumbed to illness, had to quarantine, and some have even died.

Wearing a mask or face covering is an active way that we can stay safe at work, while continuing to serve our communities. Masks act as a barrier which prevent the exchange of respiratory droplets that can carry the virus. The Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states, "Masks are a critical preventive measure and are most essential in times when social distancing is difficult."

Although, state requirements vary, your union's strong position is that wearing a mask can help mitigate the spread of coronavirus, and should be worn to protect you and your fellow workers.

Wearing a mask or face covering is one tool to ensure the United States Postal Service can continue to safely serve through snow, rain, heat and pandemic. Do your part to Stand Up for Safe Jobs!

Postal Service Issues Mask Stand-Up Talk

On August 20, the USPS issued a new Stand-Up Talk regarding masks. It states:

To help ensure your safety and wellness, the Postal Service reminds you of the following:

- Al employees are required to wear face coverings when there is a state or local order or directive to do so.
- All employees are required to wear face coverings including those who do not deal directly with the public – when they cannot achieve or maintain social distancing in the workplace.
- You should adhere to social distancing guidelines (6 feet) whenever possible while on delivery routes, at retail counters, and within the postal workplace: in plants, on docks and in lunch and break rooms.
- Practice proper hygiene by washing your hands often for a minimum of 20 seconds. When soap and water aren't available, use a 60-percent or higher alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

It is notable, however, that the parties do have a disagreement regarding face coverings. Industrial Relations Director Vance Zimmerman has clarified, "that the USPS indicates that employees can wear any cloth face covering of their choice including ones they procure/purchase themselves. The APWU is not in agreement with this statement. The APWU believes that the ability to purchase/procure/wear your own face covering is not limited to just cloth face coverings." The APWU supports the USPS policy of following mask mandates in jurisdictions that have active mask requirements in place.

President Dimondstein Testifies before House Committee and Congressional Progressive Caucus

resident Mark Dimondstein testified at two hearings conducted by the U.S. Congress, before the Congressional Progressive Caucus (CPC) on Aug. 20 and the House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security on Aug. 28. At the hearings, he called for the passage of \$25 billion in urgent COVIDrelated funding for the Postal Service, and opposed the White House's agenda to degrade service and sell the USPS off to privatizers. President Dimondstein also forcefully pushed back against any doubts that voting by mail is safe and effective, or that postal workers would be able to handle the increase in ballots.

"The Postal Service projects that it will suffer \$50 billion in lost revenue over the next ten years due to COVID-19 and will likely face a cash shortfall as soon as March of next year," President Dimondstein said to the CPC. "Simply put, because the USPS normally runs its operations with zero tax dollars, the pandemic related lost revenue places the continuity of postal essential services at serious risk.

"We have worked, along with many others, to secure a minimum of \$25 billion in emergency COVID-19 relief, a bipartisan, unanimous request of the Postal Board of Governors," he continued.

"We face a president that calls us 'a joke,' rails against the tried and true practice of voting by mail, and thus far stands in the way of COVID-19 financial relief while corporations received \$500 billion plus in the CARES Act stimulus package," President Dimondstein continued. "Our members come from all walks of life and political persuasions. But we are united in rejecting these attacks."

"CLAIMS THAT VOTE-BY-MAIL IS RIFE WITH FRAUD ARE NOT ONLY SIMPLY FALSE, THEY'RE ALSO AN OFFENSE TO THE POSTAL WORKERS WHO TAKE OUR OATH OF OFFICE AND OUR COMMITMENT TO PRESERVE THE SANCTITY OF THE MAIL..."

"The increase of mail ballots expected can be easily handled, even if all 150 million voters in the country receive and return their ballot by mail," President Dimondstein said to the Homeland Security Committee. "On a daily basis, postal workers collect, sort and deliver nearly

500 million pieces of mail. During a typical holiday season, we handle as many as 3 billion cards and letters in a week.

"Five states conduct their elections entirely by mail. Since 2000, more than 250 million votes have been cast by mail. In Oregon's 19 years conducting all-mail elections, more than 100 million votes have been cast with only 15 cases of voter fraud, less than one per year," President Dimondstein continued. "Claims that vote-by-mail is rife with fraud are not only simply false, they're also an offense to the postal workers who take our oath of office and our commitment to preserve the sanctity of the mail seriously."

Former Postal Board of Governors Vice Chairman David Williams Exposes BOG's Unorthodox Selection of Louis DeJoy



David C. Williams testifying before the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee in 2019.

Former USPS Board of Governors Vice Chairman David Williams and Inspector General of the USPS also testified to the Congressional Progressive Caucus on August 20, describing the White House's attempts to turn the Postal Service into a political tool, and explaining his reasoning for resigning from the Board.

Williams described Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin's efforts to leverage the Treasury Department's line of credit to the USPS into more political power. "The Secretary was keenly interested in labor agreements, postage pricing generally and especially the volume discounts being given to the Postal Service's largest customers: Amazon, UPS and FedEx. The Postal Service replied to early demands from the Secretary explaining that his demands were illegal, but the concerns were ignored," Williams testified.

Williams spoke about his feeling that DeJoy "did not strike [him] as a serious candidate," during the interview process.

"I resigned from the Board of Governors because I was convinced that its independent role had been marginalized, and that representations regarding an independent postal service for the nation were no longer truthful," Williams concluded.

APWU Initiating Step 4 National Dispute Regarding DeJoy Retail Office Closures



ecently, management at retail post offices throughout the country unilaterally posted signage on the entrances of their facilities stating their offices would be closing for lunch periods and/or retail hours would be reduced. Weeks later a number of retail facilities posted signage stating their offices would be closed in their entirety.

In response, the APWU Clerk Craft initiated National Dispute No. HQTC20200330. To this date there has been no official notification provided or discussions with the APWU on these changes. This is bad faith bargaining.

The closures also conflict with the Postal Operations Manual, 126.42 Change in Retail Hours, that states the following:

If the needs of the community have changed, the postmaster should use recent Window Operations Survey (WOS) reports as well as customer feedback to determine if a change in service hours should be considered. If the postmaster determines a change in service hours are warranted, he/she must obtain approval.

Permanent changes in the hours of operation must be approved by the district manager, Customer Service and Sales. Once approved, the area retail office must notify Headquarters

Retail Operations of the change in hours of operation at a minimum of 30 days in advance of the change. Do the notification, via e-mail, using the "Notification of Proposed Change in Office Hours" located at http://blue. usps.gov/wps/portal/officehours.

Additionally, the Minimizing Excessing MOU states, "Employees will have the opportunity to voluntarily transfer pursuant to the provisions of the Memorandum of Understanding Re: Transfer Opportunities to Minimize Excessing. For purposes of this identified opportunity, the restrictions in item 7 of that MOU is lifted so that withheld vacancies are available."

The same MOU further states, "the Postal Service will review its operations 1) to create new and/or more efficient assignments within the installation that might lessen the excessing need and 2) to look for scheduling opportunities to offer assignments which are consistent with local operation needs and reduce / eliminate the need to excess."

The Article 12.5.B.2 MOU states, "the parties agree that Article 12.5.B.2 shall be amended to include the need to identify duty assignments within the appropriate radius currently held by PSE employees which shall be made available for the reassignment of excess career employees."

The closures are also in violation of past awards, including:

- The July 13, 2013 Goldberg 12.5.B.2 National Award, which states the parties must identify the duty assignments after the creation of the duty assignments under Article 37.3.A.1 and the Minimizing Excessing MOU;
- The Das Article 37.3.A.1 Duty Assignments national arbitration decision dated July 24, 2020, that contractually obligates the USPS to post for bid additional new duty assignments using all available work hours (including PSE hours).

"We are giving the Postal Service the opportunity to correct the violations, in an effort to avoid any disruptions to APWU-represented employees, prevent negative customer service issues, and to alleviate any monetary remedies that may be suffered by the Postal Service," said Clerk Craft Director Lamont Brooks.

"Further, the APWU is requesting that the Postal Service cease and desist violating the Collective Bargaining Agreement," Brooks continued. "USPS management must rescind all proposed retail lunch window closings, reduced window hours and retail office closing notices, and any resulting action. The Postal Service must return to the status quo, and make the union and affected employees whole, to include, but not limited to all lost wages and benefits."

CLERK DIVISION

USPS Planning to Reduce AFCS, DBCS, AFSM100, and FSS in its Mail Processing Facilities



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

Please be advised that pursuant to Article 15, Sections 2 and 4, of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the APWU is initiating a Step 4 Dispute, No. HQTC20200290.

The issues and facts involved in this dispute are as follows:

On June 17, President Mark Dimondstein received a general interest notification letter from USPS Contract Administration Manager Rickey Dean, stating, as a result in the reduction of letter and flat mail volume, the Postal Service is planning to reduce the number of Advanced Facer Canceler Systems (AFCS), Delivery Bar Code Sorters (DBCS), Automated Flat Sorting Machine 100s (AFSM100), and Flat Sequencing Systems (FSS) in its mail processing facilities. The subject reduction is anticipated to take place over the next several months. There is a planned reduction of six hundred and seventy-one (671) pieces of equipment throughout the country.

These reductions are in violation of the following:

- Article 5, Prohibition of Unilateral Action
- Article 4, Technological and Mechanization Changes, Section 1. Advance Notice
- Article 12, In the event there would have been/was an Article 12 impact, as a result of the reduction of 671 pieces of equipment, Article 12.5.B.3 states, "The Union shall be notified in advance (as much as six (6) months whenever possible), such notification to be at the regional level, except under A.4 above, which shall be at the local level."

The APWU asserts the Postal Service knew this should have been an Article 12 National Notification, and the Postal Service deliberately left out that there would be an Article 12 impact to the bargaining unit because they failed to provide APWU with advanced notice at all levels of the organization.

Additionally, the Minimizing Excessing MOU states, "The Postal Service will review its operations 1) to create new and/or more efficient assignments within the installation that might lessen the excessing need and 2) to look for scheduling opportunities to offer assignments which are consistent with local operation needs and reduce/eliminate the need to excess."

Furthermore, the Article 12.5.B.2 MOU states, "The parties agree that Article 12.5.B.2 shall be amended to include the need to identify duty assignments within the appropriate radius currently held by PSE employees which shall be made available for the reassignment of excess career employees".

THE USPS MUST BARGAIN WITH THE APWU IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT, AND MAKE THE UNION AND AFFECTED EMPLOYEES WHOLE, TO INCLUDE, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, ALL LOST WAGES AND BENEFITS.

Notably, in the June 17, 2013 Goldberg 12.5.B.2 National Award, the parties must identify the duty assignments after the creation of the duty assignments under Article 37.3.A.1 and the Minimizing Excessing MOU.

The Das Article 37.3.A.1 Duty Assignments National Arbitration Award decision dated July 24, 2020, reaffirms that the Postal Service is contractually obligated to post for bid additional new duty assignments using all available work hours (including PSE hours).

- Article 30.B of the Collective Bargaining Agreement defines sections within the installation.
- In the event of any excessing as a result of this notice, the APWU cites all of the applicable excessing provisions, MOUs, etc. and related Craft Article(s).

Accordingly, the APWU has initiated National Dispute No. HQTC20200290, and are requesting that the Postal Service cease and desist violating the Collective Bargaining Agreement and rescind all notifications nationally, regionally and locally to the union that relates to the automation equipment (machine) reduction/removal/elimination, and any resulting actions.

The USPS must bargain with the APWU in accordance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement, and make the union and affected employees whole, to include, but not limited to, all lost wages and benefits. ■

POStPlan Implementation's **Questions and Answers**



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

n July 13, 2020, the parties at the Headquarters level agreed to the following Q and A regarding POStPlan Installation (condensed for space):

What is the formula for the computation in the MOU, Re: Subcontracting Cleaning Services?

The interior square feet of the APO and all associated RMPOs are added together and the results are divided by 18,000.

The exterior paved and unpaved square feet of the APO and all associated RMPOs are added together and the results are divided by 500,000.

Add the final numbers from 1 and 2. If the number is 1 or more, the installation will be cleaned by Maintenance Craft Custodial employees.

If the calculation is 1 or more, does that require a full-time custodian in the installation?

The number of full-time or part-time regular custodial hours for the installation can be found on Form 4852, Workload Analysis Summary. The determination on whether to hire a FTR or PTR equivalent to the number of hours on the 4852 is management's discretion. FTRs must be hired to the greatest extent possible.

When the calculation in the MOU is less than 1, is the postmaster still required to provide the computation to the local or state union president?

Yes, the calculation must be provided.

What is the process of filling custodial vacancies in the APO/RMPO environment?

Filling vacancies must be done in accordance with Article 38 and the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM).

Once a new maintenance job is created, who can apply for it?

The job must go through the normal process of filling vacancies in the Maintenance Craft.

Can a current custodian be required to drive and use his/her own vehicle?

No. The custodian can elect to have duties added to their duty assignment and must have informed the postmaster by April 10, 2020, of the decision. After April 10, 2020, the option to elect to have the duties added is no longer available.

If the current custodian opts out to having driving and POV added to qualifications, what happens to the additional hours at the facilities where the custodian is not domiciled?

Hours will be assigned to other bargaining unit employees in accordance with the MOU regarding two hours or less of contracted out custodial duties. Once the position is vacated, the notice of intent for the custodial position should be posted with a driving requirement and the custodial duties returned to the Maintenance Craft.

If the current custodian decides not to opt in for driving and POV requirements, will Line H requirements and/or remedy apply to APO/RMPO?

Line H requirements and/or remedy only apply to offices maintained by Maintenance Craft custodial employees.

What is the involvement of local/state presidents who represent the installation in this process?

Presidents should be proactive in creation and area coverage of duty assignments.

How is travel time accounted for when developing a staffing package?

Annual travel time will be listed as a line item on PS Form 4852, Table C – Supplemental Project Hours, but will not be used when determining if Line H obligations were met at the end of each fiscal year.

What compensation will custodians receive for driving between facilities?

Employees will receive higher-level pay when driving a Postal Service vehicle. Mileage reimbursement is added when driving a POV. When the tour is ended, custodian will continue to be paid in accordance with the Agree-

Are driving and POV requirements applicable to non-POStPlan installations/facilities?

No. This agreement applies to POStPlan Installation/ facilities ONLY.

MOTOR VEHICLE SERVICE DIVISION

Taking the MVS **Craft Forward** One Step at a Time



Director Michael Foster and Assistant Director Kenneth Prinz

he MVS Craft continues to grow. It is by no accident that our craft is taking positive strides. The struggles the Craft has faced over the years are no secret, but they have never been a deterrent for our members or prevented us from engaging in a fight to save the craft.

It is important to recognize where we have been, to know the direction we are taking. Approximately eight years ago, PVS was on the verge of elimination. It all started in California.

California CARB Case

On June 7, 2012, the Postal Service notified the APWU that after carefully considering the relevant factors under Article 32, the Postal Service had made the decision to subcontract PVS in all Pacific Area mail facilities in the state of California. The Postal Service cited a 2008 law by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) as the reason for their decision.

On March 4, 2013 after a lengthy arbitration, Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg decided that Article 32.1.B applied to the California mode conversion, and the MOU on Contracting or Insourcing of Contracted Services applied to all highway transportation, including the service controlled by Article 32.2.

Mode Conversion of 162 PVS Sites to HCR

Shortly after Arbitrator Goldberg's Award regarding the California CARB case, on April 26, 2013 the USPS notified the APWU that the Postal Service was considering the subcontracting of the highway movement of mail in approximately 162 PVS sites nationwide.

After the APWU filed a national dispute, the parties went before Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg again. This time, he ruled the USPS may not contract PVS work, or engage in Article 32.1.B consideration of contracting out work, that had a significant effect on the bargaining unit without first complying with the Motor Vehicle Craft (MVC) Jobs MOU. Additionally, he found the Postal Service had violated Article 32.1.B and the MOU by failing to comply with the procedural requirements of those provisions when considering the contracting out.

APWU Seeks Transparency in VMF Labor Cost

The struggle for transparency the Motor Vehicle Service Division has been waging with the Postal Service regarding vehicle maintenance labor costs goes back more than ten years. In March 2014, the APWU requested the current VMF labor cost per hour rate when determining the feasibility of subcontracting.

In response to the union's inquiry, the USPS took the position that the methodology and policy for calculating the VMF labor cost per hour rate was based on local fact circumstances and on a case-by-case basis.

After NLRB charges and subsequent Step 4 settlements, the USPS informed us that VMF managers could use four different labor rate sources when preparing a cost comparison. The manager could use the Workhour Rates for that Fiscal Year published by Finance, the rate in SEAM system, the rate in Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW), or a rate calculated by the local manager.

These rates used by each facility can be found in the thumb-drives provided at the ACC. They should be used to challenge any decision by local management to outsource VMF bargaining unit work. ■

Kenneth Prinz New National MVS Craft Division Assistant Director

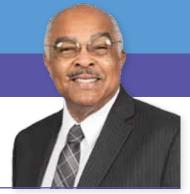
The MVS National welcomes Kenneth Prinz as our new Assistant Director. Brother Prinz comes to Headquarters after serving as Eastern Region MVS National Business Agent, since 2010. He also served the Philadelphia Area Local for over 25 years and as the Motor Vehicle Craft Director for the Pennsylvania Postal Workers Union for over 20 years.

"I have had the privilege of working with brother Prinz for many years and have always found Ken to be of the highest integrity, and passionate towards MVS issues and the labor movement," said Director Foster. "Ken's commitment, work ethic, and dedication will be immeasurable in continuing the tradition of the hard-working Assistant MVS Directors. I look forward to protecting the future of MVS members, and their families, with Ken Prinz and the rest of the MVS Council."

SOUTHERN REGIONAL COORDINATOR

ALABAMA | ARKANSAS | FLORIDA | GEORGIA | LOUISIANA | MISSISSIPPI | NORTH CAROLINA SOUTH CAROLINA | OKLAHOMA | TEXAS | TENNESSEE

Staying Safe



Kennith Beasley, Southern Regional Coordinator

Te all have been affected by the health and safety issues related to COVID-19. The uncertainty around when the pandemic will end continues to plague our everyday lives. The invisible virus seems to leave us defenseless.

There is also the added stress of our seemingly discombobulated, ill-advised, and misguided right-wing leaders who are actually putting finance before the health and safety of the American public. Hopefully, common sense and the belief "if my neighbor is at risk then I'm at risk as well" will win the day.

When Good is Not Good Enough

The health experts keep telling everyone to wear face masks in order to stop the spread of the virus. Many refuse and do not seem to realize the potential danger and harm of not wearing a mask. We should always listen to the health experts' instructions.

Normally in the past when there was a widespread crisis of this sort, people drew closer and always tried to help each other. We should cooperate and use personal protection equipment (PPE) as advised. Think of your coworkers' welfare as well as your own - it will pay off in the long and short runs. We must stand up in defense of decency, normalcy, and humanity for ourselves and for generations to come. The quality and value of our future depends on what we do now.

I would like to quote Edmund Burke, who said "the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men and women to do nothing, and say nothing." In defending against the threats to our safety and our livelihood with President Trump's attacks on our public Postal Service, we have to step up our political offense and defense.

Information is Power

I want to commend the Southern Region NBAs, local, and state presidents for reaching out to the district and regional managers and me. They have been instrumental in persuading management to involve employees on the workroom floor in COVID-19 teleconference conversations, information and messaging.

The safety and health information is about the precautions and preventative measures for employees' protection, because the information is constantly changing. As of yet, there is no proven vaccine or cure for the virus. Information and knowledge are our major weapons to protect ourselves from the dangers of the coronavirus.

Mismanagement Puts Most Trusted Agency Status in Question

In a survey conducted this year in April, the Pew Research Center indicated a 91 percent favorable view of USPS. This is overwhelmingly higher than all other government agencies. We do a good job and could do the job much better if Postmaster General DeJoy would stop trying to hinder postal operations. Intentionally delaying mail, decommissioning machines, understaffing and lack of congressional funding are all examples of high-level management blocking postal operations.

Alleged Mail Fraud to Undermine Postal Service and Election

Note that investigations, both governmental and private, have shown that voter fraud is extremely rare when voting by mail. It has been proven through the years that the most secure form of voting is by mail. Computers can be hacked, but the mail cannot. When citizens put their ballots into the Postal Service receptacle, they know that the mail is protected by the postal inspectors, OIG, and postal employees. Voting by mail has the integrity that democracy depends on. Every American can conceivably easily vote by mail, because the ballots go to every residence.

Regional Coordinators Sharyn Stone, AJ Jones, Tiffany Foster, Omar Gonzalez and myself, all want you to know that the safety, health, and the well-being of our union members is one of the top priorities along with other union obligations and responsibilities. The stakes are high, and despite the many challenges we face, we remain committed to achieving world-class results for our members. As activist Stacey Abrams says, "when we fight, we win."

Yours in Solidarity.



A Grand Alliance Keeps up the Fight

he many signatory organizations of A Grand Alliance L to Save our Public Postal Service continue organizing and mobilizing in defense of our national treasure. The Postal Service has faced a multi-faceted and escalating series of crises through the course of 2020. At each turn, the Grand Alliance has ramped up its support, bringing postal workers and a diverse array of allies together in the critical struggle to save the public Postal Service.

In the latest evidence of the value of the Grand Alliance, we saw incredible participation from many Alliance partners in the August 25 Save the Post Office Day of Action that brought thousands of supporters to demonstrations at 300 post offices across the country. From the many allies in the labor movement, to the financial reform advocates, the Alliance helped mobilize their members from union halls, in church pews and in the netroots to join the day of action. Together they helped amplify the call for \$25 billion in emergency funding for the Postal Service and a reversal of postal management's mail-delaying policies.

The incredible participation in the August 25 Day of Action was encouraged by yet another organizing leap by the Alliance, together with many other organizations as well. Just a week prior to the Day of Action, nearly 400 people representing more than 100 organizations joined an organizing call led by a Grand Alliance and signatories APWU, Public Citizen, Take on Wall Street and the Democracy Initiative.

The group discussed the threats facing the Postal Service and organized the extraordinary outrage the country's shown in this moment toward the Day of Action and beyond. Since then groups including People for the American Way, Color of Change, MoveOn and many others have continued the work of coordinating communications strategy, sharing lobbying targets and messaging their members and constituents on what is at stake.

If you have not already, postal workers and APWU locals are encouraged to reach out to local chapters of Alliance signatories and deepen your relationship at the local level. Together, postal workers and the Grand Alliance can continue to mobilize and organize to "protect and enhance vibrant, public postal services now – and for many generations to come."

Study Reveals Koch-backed origins of attacks on USPS

Since its inception, the Grand Alliance has sought to reveal the corporate-backed attacks on the public Postal Service and the shine a light on those who advocate postal privatization. A recent report, produced by True North Research for Alliance signatory In the Public Interest, traces the decades-long attack on the public post office back to a familiar name: Charles Koch, the billionaire chairman of Koch Industries and the country's most infamous benefactor of far-right, pro-privatization schemes.

The report, with the straightforward title of *The Billion*aire Behind Efforts to Kill the U.S. Postal Service traces Koch's privatization agenda back to the 1970s, when he, along with his brother David, began financing libertarian causes. As early as 1976 the Libertarian Party called for the abolition of the public Postal Service.

True North's research continues through the modern era, noting the Koch-backed interests which long supported the "King of Privatizers" James Miller III, including his advancement to in the early 2000s as the chair of the Postal Service Board of Governors. The report notes that Koch interests, with Miller's support, backed the retiree health benefit prefunding mandate which has crippled the Postal Service and starved it of necessary funds.

And critically, the report notes that Koch-backed interests to this day are opposing the urgently needed COVID-19 relief pending in Congress. Americans for Prosperity, the crown jewel in Koch's political network, is urging vulnerable Republican senators to vote no on the HEROES Act and "expressly opposing any efforts to 'bailout the Postal Service."

The full report, exposing the billionaire interests behind the attacks on USPS, can be viewed at *inthepublicinterest.org*.

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.

Postal Workers Across the Globe Show Solidarity

s APWU members rallied the public to save the Postal Service, they were not only supported by thousands of community allies in the United States, but also by our international postal brothers and sisters. Fellow unions around the globe shared messages and words of support.

Tweets and messages included those from postal workers in Canada, the United Kingdom, South Africa, France, and Finland. The Brazilian postal union also shared a message of solidarity, right now 100,000 postal workers in the country are striking against privatization and cuts to benefits (see page 28). The messages show that the crisis facing the United States Postal Service is not just felt by the people in this country. The world is watching, and our international postal family is with us.

In a post, UNI Global Union General Secretary Christy Hoffman emphasized the agenda of privatizers to undermine the USPS. "The intentional degrading of the post office is undermining the physical and financial health of Americans while attempting to strip people of their

most basic right in a democracy," Hoffman said. "Furthermore, this appears to be part of an overall right-wing plan to undermine government, including popular, necessary services like Post."

"APWU members were proud to see the solidarity from our postal brothers and sisters around the world," said President Dimondstein. "Similar attacks on the United States Postal Service are faced by postal workers everywhere. Only in solidarity can we preserve and protect the services that are so vital to people across the globe."



Postal Union FENTECT The People's Post Office US Mail: Not For Sale The US Mail Not for Sale is a worker led campaign to fight attempts to sell the public Postal Service to the highest bidder Support from Canadian Union of Postal Workers Atlantic Region √P usmailnotforsale.org Education and Organization Officer Toni MacAfee C) 12

Support from

Brazilian

A FENTEGT -



Dave Ward @DaveWardGS - Aug 14 Seeing the love for postal workers in the US and in the UK over the last few months it's clear #Covid19 has seen the public realise who keeps our nations running. After this, let's make sure we build a world for the millions not the millionaires. #5aveThePostOffice 0.11 t7 108

Support from Communications Workers Union (UK) General Secretary Dave Ward (posted as the media was starting to focus on the PMG's mail delays)





Ammattillitto PAU (SPAU Sitto - Aug 25

In Solidarity

Trade Unions

Support from postal union PAU (Finland)

LABOR NEWS



Brazilian Postal Workers on Strike Against Privatization, and to Preserve Benefits

on Aug. 1, the collective bargaining agreement between Brazil's postal workers and state-owned postal operator Correios was suspended following a decision from the country's Supreme Court. While the country's postal union federation, FENTECT, was in negotiations with Correios (abbreviated as ECT) throughout July, management unilaterally decided, upon suspension of the contract, to strip postal workers of over 70 benefits present in the agreement. These benefits include maternity leave, daycare allowances, health care provisions, and overtime pay.

In response to ECT's stripping of benefits, nearly 100,000 postal workers voted to strike, and stopped performing their duties on August 18. In addition to fighting for the benefits stripped from their negotiated collective bargaining agreement, postal workers are also striking against Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's plans to privatize the post office. As in the United States, postal services are mandated by Brazil's constitution, and only the public postal service delivers letter mail.

Management's decision to strip postal workers of their earned benefits is a step towards the government's eventual plan to fully privatize postal services in the country. The government's efforts to sell off postal services to privatizers also comes as revenue from e-commerce has risen sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mediation between FENTECT and ECT management was unsuccessful, and the strike remains ongoing as this is-

Brazilian postal workers on strike.

sue goes to press. In an August 25 statement, FENTECT committed to expanding and intensifying the strike,

sue goes to press. In an August 25 statement, FENTECT committed to expanding and intensifying the strike, promising to completely paralyze the country's postal services until the benefits in the contract are restored.

"The Bolsonaro government seeks at any cost to sell one of the great assets of Brazilians, the Correios. We are responsible for one of the essential services in the country," said FENTECT General Secretary José Rivaldo da Silva. "Privatizing is preventing thousands of people from having access to this service in the corners of [the] country, from north to south, at a much lower cost than those applied by other companies."

"The ECT leadership sought this strike, removed rights in the middle of a pandemic and pushed thousands of workers into a strike in the worst crisis that the country is experiencing. We lost many companions to COVID-19 due to the company's neglect," da Silva continued. "We fight for the just. We fight for our lives and jobs to be preserved."

"The APWU proudly stands with our postal brothers and sisters striking in Brazil," said President Dimondstein. "Like the pandemic, privatizers know no borders, and postal workers must be united in the struggle to preserve union jobs and benefits, and public services for the good of the people."

Maine Shipyard Workers Ratify New Contract After Successful Strike

In the previous issue of The American Postal Worker, we reported that 4,300 workers at Maine shipyard Bath Iron Works had gone on strike, refusing to give in to management's demands for an increase in subcontracting and changes to shift preferences. Over 87 percent of the workers, unionized with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) Local S6, voted in favor of the strike.

Following the ten-week strike that began on June 22, Local S6 tentatively agreed on a new collective bargaining agreement, and 87 percent of workers voted in favor of ratifying the new three-year contract.

The new contract preserves strong language against subcontracting and protects seniority rights, the two largest issues in dispute during the strike. The contract also maintains a no-layoff clause for 2020.

The Bath Iron Works shipyard is contracted to build destroyers for the U.S. Navy. The shipyard is owned by General Dynamics, the fifth-largest defense contractor in the country. The company earned over \$39 billion in revenue in 2019.

"This strike was a testament to the culmination of Local S6 leadership, our negotiating committee and the incredible power of solidarity shown by our membership," said IAM Local S6 President Chris Wiers. "We successfully protected our contract language with respect to subcontracting and seniority."

Walkouts for Black Lives and NBA Players' Wildcat Strike.

The Washington Post reported that on July 20, 2020 in 200 U.S. cities, "Thousands of U.S. workers walk out in 'Strike for Black Lives.'"

The walkout involved members of the SEIU, Teamsters, AFT, CWA and dozens of other labor and community groups.

Leaders of the action demanded that business and political leaders take a stand that "Black Lives Matter" and connected the fight for racial justice to the need for unions, healthcare, higher wages and more workplace protections from the coronavirus.

Many participants held a moment of silence for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, the time George Floyd had the knee of the police officer on his neck that took his life.

One month later, National Basketball Association (NBA) players engaged in a wildcat strike, refusing to take the floor during the basketball playoffs in defense of racial and social justice. They were quickly joined by players in other sports, including the WNBA, Major League Baseball and Major League Soccer. They returned to work after 48 hours, having gained commitments from the Wisconsin state government for a special hearing on police reform (Milwaukee Bucks players started the wildcat) and team owners committing to opening their arenas as safe polling stations in the 2020 general election.



Child Care Workers demonstrating after their filing was submitted in Feb. 2020.



40,000 Child Care Workers Win Union in California

n the November/December 2019 issue of *The Ameri-*Lcan Postal Worker, we reported on California Governor Gavin Newsom (D) signing AB 378, the Building a Better Early Care and Education System Act, into law. The law granted child care providers who receive subsidies from the state the ability to negotiate with the state for pay, quality of care standards, and increases to the underfunded subsidy system.

On July 27, the 40,000 subsidized child care workers took the next step in their 15-year campaign for collective bargaining rights, officially winning their union. Over 97 percent of the workers who sent in ballots voted in favor of unionizing.

These workers will be represented by Child Care Providers United, a statewide partnership between AFSCME Local 3930/United Domestic Workers (UDW) and SEIU Locals 99 and 521. Workers will now move on to negotiating a collective bargaining agreement with the state of California.

"This has been a long time coming," UDW Assistant Executive Director and AFSCME Vice President Johanna Hester said in a statement. "This win gives 40,000 family child care providers in California the opportunity to bargain for higher pay, better training and increased access to care for every child who needs it."

National MVS Assistant Director Javier Piñeres Retires from APWU



ffective August 31, national MVS Assistant Director Javier E. Piñeres retired after nearly two decades as an APWU officer. Javier began his postal career in 1984. He served the San Jose Area Local (CA) holding multiple positions over the years, and in 2011, began serving the National as the Western Region MVS NBA.

Assistant Director Piñeres has been a tenacious defender for the MVS Craft, being instrumental in countless arbitrations, several national contract negotiations, and two landmark cases that reversed the tide of subcontracting for MVS jobs.

In June of 2012, USPS announced the contracting out of its entire California Postal Vehicle Service. As Western Regional NBA, Javier spent countless hours reviewing each site, route, and proposed contract. He

created cost comparisons, found cost savings, and honed CBA arguments to fight for each and every PVS position.

MVS Division Director Michael Foster appointed Piñeres to be MVS Division Assistant Director in 2013. "As I have told the MVS delegates numerous times at National Conventions and seminars that you never know who is observing your work as an union official. I had followed Javier's career as both a local officer and NBA and I saw a work ethic, and dedication that led me to believe that he could become a leader of the MVS Division," said Director Foster.

"For seven years we fought side by side in our challenges of contracting out efforts, and regressive proposals, and attempts against an employer who continuously fails to recognize

the value of MVS Craft employees," Director Foster continued.

"Javier is a proven leader who has served the Craft proudly and will be greatly missed. I totally respect his decision to dedicate the next chapter of his life to spending more time with his wife Elaine, his sons Nick and Chris. Thanks for the support and friendship brother, Keep On Truckin," said Director Foster.

"On behalf of the entire membership, I thank Brother Piñeres for his many years of dedication and service to the APWU. In part due to his efforts, the union has remained vigilant in the fight against subcontracting and the struggle to protect living-wage, union jobs," said President Dimondstein. "I wish Javier and his family the very best, and a long, happy and healthy retirement."

Legislative & Political Department Holds Hatch Act Training for Members

WHAT IS PARTISAN POLITICAL ACTIVITY?

- The Hatch Act regulates how you take part in partisan political activity.
- Any activity directed at the success or failure of a political party. candidate for partisan political office, or partisan political group.
- It does not generally include:
- Activity relating to nonpartisan elections or candidates
- · Discussing current events, including candidates and issues
- Most advocacy relating to legislative proposals
- Registering to vote, voting, or participating in voter registration drives

Slide from Hatch Act Zoom Webinar Training

n July 22, the Legislative & Political Department held a Hatch Act Zoom webinar training for APWU members. The training was sold out, with over 250 national and local leaders participating.

Postal workers are required to adhere to the Hatch Act, a federal law passed in 1939 that limits certain political activities and restricts postal and federal employees from engaging in partisan political activity while on the clock, or on postal or federal property.

With the November 3 General Election quickly approaching, it is vital that all members know their rights and responsibilities pertaining to the Hatch

For more information on the Hatch Act, as well as a list of permitted and prohibited activities, members are encouraged to visit apwu.org/hatch-act. ■



FROM the FIELD

Below are guotes 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 or email ppa@apwupostalpress.org.

"You hear often that we are 'essential' employees for various instances. This time it seems different. You are so important with what you do every day for everyone. You take in, you sort, you transport and deliver the mail every day... These letters are from someone who might not be able to communicate due to illness; cards that may be wishing that grandchild a happy birthday when that grandparent cannot be there to wish them that in person. That parcel filled with goodies from the auntie to her favorite nieces and nephews that she cannot hug right now. The medicine that is crucial for survival no matter where the recipient lives anywhere in the United States. You keep the machines maintained to assist us in being efficient so we can survive as an essential business. You keep the building clean to protect us all from the germs that are making us ill, so that we can continue to come to work and serve our nation... Many time people do not know what all you do and you do not get recognized for it often enough."

> Debbie Battle, Oregon Postal Workers Union Secretary-Treasurer, Oregon Stater

"Regardless of your political views we need to take action and make all elected officials hear our voice. It is important that all of you contact your elected officials and let them know how important our roles as postal employees are. We have been going to work and doing our jobs. Getting vital information and meds out to our customers; delivering products of companies so they can still earn money. But during this time, our president has refused to give us help and has called us a 'joke.' I don't see anything about our jobs as a joke, especially when I see or hear of our members and even nonmembers getting sick with this COVID-19. Get your friends and families to contact their elected officials as well. These are very important times for us. The decisions made in the near future will impact us forever."

> - Clyde Trent, Kentucky Postal Workers Union Secretary-Treasurer, The Kentucky Postal Worker

"Regardless of political beliefs, all APWU members should be able to agree on the following; saving the USPS, supporting our union, and defending postal worker job security, wages, and benefits. The last thing we need is for the President to use his mishandling of the coronavirus pandemic to dismiss the gravity of the USPS financial situation... Members of the Senate need to hear about your support of the Postal Service during these hard times. Now is the time for heroes to assemble and place that call that could ultimately save your career."

- Chris Czubakowski, APWU of Wisconsin Director of Legislation, $Badger\,Bulletin$

"If you are not already [registered to vote], I hope you will use your right to have your voice heard. If you're like me and still have many years to go before retirement, I hope you will use that voice to fight for your job. It scares me to think what may happen to our career if we do not get as many people involved in this fight as quickly as possible. Remember, it is not just a president who enacts change; we need to have every one of our elected officials fighting for our jobs! Research your candidates, call them, go to town halls, and ask them if they are willing to stand up for the United States Postal Service and its employees!"

- Melissa Parker, Kansas Postal Workers Union member, The Jayhawk Fed

"For many Americans, the only normalcy during this pandemic is mail delivery. Medicines, goods, electronic equipment – necessities for daily living – travel through the mail-stream. Masks, gloves, hospital equipment and protective gear come through the USPS – the only network that touches every single address, regardless of location or income. ... In a time of intense loneliness and separation, letters and parcels bring love and comfort. When travel bans prohibit visits to family and friends, the mail keeps people in touch... Many who live in rural areas, elderly people, poor people, are unable to communicate electronically. The Postal Service

- Flo Summergrad, New York Metro Area Postal Union Editor, The Union Mail

is their lifeline."

LEGISLATIVE & POLITICAL DEPARTMENT

Vote by Mail: The Postal Service Can Handle It



Mail-in voter fraud is a conspiracy. The real problem is voter suppression.

With the Nov. 3 election fast approaching, fighting voter suppression remains one of the American Postal Workers Union's top priorities. We believe that every citizen should exercise their right to vote this election and every election. Unfortunately, it is no secret that voter suppression tactics have been used repeatedly in American elections. As much as we would like to believe we have come a long way from the days of poll taxes and literacy tests, voter suppression persists.

The most marginalized and disenfranchised among us are the most likely victims of voter suppression. Those targeted include black and brown people, seniors, people with disabilities, low-income communities, immigrants and college students. Common voter suppression tactics include implementing voter ID laws, changing polling place hours and locations, closing polling places, maintaining inaccessible polling places, purging voter rolls, and gerrymandering. This election season, we have even seen voter misinformation campaigns carried out via social media and robocalls.

Amid the ongoing pandemic, there are those in power weap-onizing this crisis to discourage people from voting. Many Americans, particularly the elderly and immunocompromised, are concerned about their health and safety and are on the fence about going to the polls. However, some voters are reluctant to use the alternative, vote-by-mail, because of the lies they have heard undermining the Postal Service's ability to process their ballot. Scaring people from voting by attacking this country's most beloved institution is disgraceful and another form of voter suppression.

The Postal Service has ample capacity to handle election mail. Since the Civil War, the Postal Service has delivered ballots and enabled this country's democratic process. In 2016 alone, 139 million people exercised their right to vote, with over 30 million people voting by mail. Every ballot received first-class treatment in that election. The current Postmaster General has made that same commitment for this November 3rd election. As with any high-volume season, the Postal Service will make the necessary adjustments to process and deliver vote-by-mail

applications and incoming/ outgoing ballots. Voters can rest assured that postal employees will treat ballots with the utmost care and concern.

Presently, we have leaders fear-mongering about the integrity of voting by mail, claiming that it will lead to



voter fraud. There is no evidence that voting by mail has ever led to an increase in voter fraud. Generally, voter fraud is *extremely rare*—the rate of voter fraud overall in the U.S. is only 0.00006%. In the face of a pandemic, mail-in ballots are integral to ensuring voters can vote safely and confidently. The Postal Service will continue its more than 150-year tradition of enabling the American people to safely and securely vote by mail.

We all have a role to play in protecting the integrity of our elections and combating voter suppression. We must speak up against lies spread about voter fraud. Let friends and family members know that voting by mail is safe and secure. Together, we can elect leaders who will fight for voting rights. Help defend our democracy by sharing this important election information far and wide:

- Register to vote and make sure you're *still* registered to vote. You can check your status by visiting *apwu.org/labor-2020*.
- Ask friends and family members to check their voter registration status.
- Encourage eligible voters you know to vote by mail.
- Request your ballot early for those of you who will not automatically receive a ballot.
- Mail your ballot in early.
- Vote for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, who have been endorsed by APWU's Executive Board (see page 8 for more information).

ORGANIZATION

New Policies are an Organizing Opportunity



Anna Smith, Director

s concerned postal workers, we have been hearing a lot about delaying-mail policies, reduction in hours, gutting automation and the end of postal operations as we know it. It feels like in a matter of weeks everything changed.

The new outsider Postmaster General (PMG) issued policy changes directing employees not hold postal trucks one minute past their schedule; to leave mail that could have been processed and delivered that day to be worked and/or delivered the next day. The PMG has cancelled most overtime and management has gutted postal automation units. All of this significantly changes whether we are able to move the mail effectively and timely.

This affects not just postal workers, but all the people of this country who rely on prompt, reliable, cost-effective mail services.

Turn Frustration into Work Floor Activism

Postal workers are frustrated and angry at this violation of our core purpose. As the APWU educates with the media and fights back in the streets, you can speak about the policies with your coworkers and use the opportunity to organize. The pandemic has limited our ability to gather in our churches, community centers, union halls, etc. However, the one place where we, because of our 'essential worker' status, do gather (albeit at a distance) is at work at the post office.

Article 23 of the CBA allows us to engage in official union duties related to collective bargaining. Collective bargaining includes the issues of wages, hours and working conditions, which the new policies are already affecting. Breakrooms, cafeterias, lunch rooms and outside patios are excellent places to set up Union Information Centers. They are common areas we can use for a common purpose that can also allow for the required social distancing.

The effective use of these areas actually allows us to be proactive at work without being on the work floor. If a manager tries to challenge the use of these areas for our common purpose, be sure to point them to ELM 911.1 that allows you to participate in union activities without fear of penalty or reprisal. In fact, postal policies (ELM 924.32) allow us to organize in these non-work areas.

Information and Activities, We Can Advocate

Set up your tables. Make it presentable - maybe add some candy or goodies. Be sure to include some of the following materials on your table:

- APWU Pocket Folder with Welcome Booklet that includes a wide array of information about the APWU, including a brief history, our structure, and some of the many benefits available to union members
- PSE Brochure, and Career Craft fliers
- Lanyards, retractables and badge holders
- Local t-shirts or APWU merchandise
- ABA, VBP, AFLAC, Union Privilege benefit packets
- Save Our Service information
- Congressional contact information

If you need assistance obtaining some of the above materials be sure to reach out to the Organization Department, organization@apwu.org or 202-842-4227. If we do not have it, we can help get you pointed in the right direction.

We have to have conversations with our coworkers members and non-members. We have to encourage our members to get involved in the fight to protect our jobs, and stressing with non-members the importance of being on the same side.









Despite the pandemic the **Greater Los** Angeles Area Local recently launched an Organizing & Membership Appreciation Drive with a target of 200 new members visiting all facilities and stations while practicing proper safety precautions. As this issue goes to press, 90 new members have already joined. Welcome to APWU!

HOME FRONT

Disability Rates of Veterans with Dependents

Ithough most veterans are aware that they are entitled to compensation for their service-connected disability, many are unaware that the amount of compensation increases based on their marital status and number of qualifying dependents. If you have a 30 percent or higher disability rating from Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), you can add your dependents to your disability compensation and be eligible for a higher disability payment.

Dependents you can add to your benefits compensation include:

- A spouse (including common-law marriages);
- Children (including biological children, step children, and adopted children) who are unmarried and either:
 - Under the age of 18,
 - Between the ages of 18-23 and enrolled in school full time, or
 - Who were seriously disabled before the age of 18;
- Parents, whose income and net worth are below the limit set by law.

If you haven't submitted a claim for disability compensation yet, you can add your dependent(s) as part of the claim application process. If VA rates your disability at 30 percent or higher, your dependent(s) will automatically be factored into your award. If you have a 10 to 20 percent disability rating, you will not receive a higher rate – even if you have a dependent spouse, child, or parent.

If you have already submitted your claim and have received a 30 percent or higher disability rating, the fastest way to add a dependent is online through eBenefits (*ebenefits.va.gov*).

Currently, you cannot add parents or spouses through common law marriages as dependents through eBenefits. To add a parent as a dependent, you must fill out VA Form 21-509, Statement of Dependency of Parent(s). To add a spouse from a common-law marriage as a dependent, you must fill out VA Form 21-686c, Declaration of Status of Dependents.

VA may pay you back to the date of your marriage or the birth of your child if you had already received your 30 percent or higher disability rating at that point and:

- Notified VA within one year of the date the dependency arose, and
- Responded within one year to VA's request for any additional information needed to confirm your dependent(s).

If it has been longer than a year since your marriage and/ or birth of your child, VA may only pay you back to the date you submitted your dependency claim or, in some cases, only up to one year before you submitted your dependency claim.

VA will track your child's age based on the date of birth you provide when filing your dependency claim. When your child turns 18, they will be removed from your disability compensation if they are not attending school.

If your child is turning 18 and will still be in school (either high school or college), you can update their school information in eBenefits. Simply log into your eBenefits account, click "Add or Remove Dependents" under the "Apply" section on the home page, and select "Update Dependents."

Veterans' Compensation Cost-of-Living Adjustment Act of 2020 (H.R. 6168)

On May 28, the House of Representatives passed a cost-of-living (COLA) increase for veterans' benefits in 2021, so long as Social Security and COLA increase as well. This bill directs the VA to increase, as of December 1, 2020, the rates of VA disability, additional compensation for dependents, the clothing allowance for certain veterans with disabilities, and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation for surviving spouses and children.

While Social Security benefits are automatically adjusted annually to keep pace with inflation, Congress must pass legislation every year to provide a COLA for veterans and surviving family members receiving these types of compensation from VA.

As this issue goes to press, *H.R.* 6168 has moved to the Senate's Committee on Veterans Affairs, which must pass the bill before it can move to the Senate floor for a vote.

RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Harassment is Against the Law



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

arassment is a form of employment discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, (ADEA), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, (ADA). The U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines harassment as "unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information. Harassment becomes unlawful where: 1) Enduring the offensive conduct becomes a condition of continued employment, or 2) The conduct is severe or pervasive enough to create a work environment that a reasonable person would consider intimidating, hostile, or abusive."

Offensive Conduct

To be unlawful, the conduct must "create a work environment that would be intimidating, hostile, or offensive to reasonable people." The EEOC's examples of offensive conduct include "offensive jokes, slurs, epithets or name calling, physical assaults or threats, intimidation, ridicule or mockery, insults or putdowns, offensive objects or pictures and interference with work performance."

Employer Liability for Harassment

The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, a supervisor in another area, an agent of the employer, a co-worker, or a postal customer. The victim does not have to be the person harassed, but can be anyone affected by the offensive conduct. The Postal Service is liable for harassment by a supervisor that results in a negative employment action such as termination, failure to promote or hire, loss of wages and/or when the supervisor's harassment results in a hostile work environment and the Postal Service did nothing to prevent and promptly correct the harassing behavior.

The Postal Service will also be liable for harassment by employees or non-employees over whom it has control (e.g., independent contractors or customers on the premises), if it knew, or should have known about the harassment and failed to take prompt and appropriate corrective action.

What to Do If You Are Harassed?

If you are offended by the conduct of a manager or another employee:

- Tell the harasser that their behavior is unwelcome and **object verbally.**
- If the harassment does not stop, talk to your shop steward or contact another local union officer.
- Report the incident(s) to a supervisor, manager, or postmaster.
- Keep a diary **at home** of incidents, dates, times, places, behavior, what was said and of all witnesses.
- Tell friends, family and co-workers about the harassment.
- If the supervisor, manager or postmaster is doing the harassing, file a grievance and an EEO Complaint. Insist that the "proposed solution" does not adversely affect you. Insist that the harasser be the one who is inconvenienced or moved.

What If It Does Not Stop?

Harassment is a form of employment discrimination that violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Article 2. Section 1, of the Collective Bargaining Agreement between the USPS and APWU. The EEOC's anti-discrimination laws prohibit harassment against individuals in retaliation for filing a discrimination charge, testifying, or participating in an investigation, proceeding, or lawsuit or opposing employment practices that they reasonably believe discriminate against individuals,

If the problem cannot be resolved, file a grievance against management to document that the Postal Service knew about the harassment and was given an opportunity to stop it. In addition, file an EEOC complaint within 45 days of the incident by calling 1-888-336-8777. If the alleged harasser's behavior included assault and battery or rape, file criminal charges with the police and consult an attorney. Also, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is available to give employees emotional support for problems that may result from being harassed. Contact the EAP at 1-800-327-4968.

References: EEOC's Harassment webpage (*eeoc.gov/harassment*) and the USPS Policy on Workplace Harassment.

RETIREES

Retirement Benefit Questions



Nancy Olumekor, Director

hat will happen to your federal retirement benefit should you resign/separate from the USPS prior to being eligible to retire depends on several factors, starting with how much creditable federal service you have when you leave.

Active duty military service credit can be considered towards retirement eligibility, however, federal employees must complete a minimum of five years of civilian federal service covered by FERS retirement deductions to meet the minimum requirements for a FERS retirement benefit.

Leaving because of disability or under a Voluntary Early Retirement Authority (VERA) is not applicable to the below scenarios. Also, if you have less than five years of creditable civilian service, you're not eligible for a retirement benefit and you can take a refund of your Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) contributions.

If you resign/separate with five or more years of service, your retirement benefit will be based on years of service when you leave and your age at the time you apply for the retirement benefit as follows:

- If you leave with 5 or more years of service, you are eligible for a deferred retirement benefit at age 62 or later.
- If you leave with at least 5 years but less than 10 years of service, you're eligible to apply for retirement at age 62. The benefit is calculated as 1% times your high-3 years average salary times the years and months of service.
- If you leave with 10 years but less than 30 years of service, then when you reach your minimum retirement age (MRA, age 55-57 based on year of birth) you're eligible for a reduced retirement benefit, which is calculated the same as above, except there is a 5% reduction for each year you are under age 62.
- If you leave with 20 years but less than 30 years of service, then you can avoid the 5% per year reduction, if you wait until you reach the age of 60 to apply for the retirement benefit.

If you leave with 30 years or more of service, then you be will eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit when you reach your MRA (age 55-57).

When you reach your MRA or later and you resign/ separate before you have enough service for an unreduced immediate retirement you may still receive a retirement benefit as follows:

- If you're at your MRA with less than 10 years of service, you're eligible for a deferred retirement at 62, as explained above.
- If you're at your MRA with at least 10 years but less than 30 years of service, you're eligible for an immediate, reduced FERS retirement benefit with the age penalty applied. You are also eligible to receive credit for your unused sick leave balance and the calculation is the same as above.
- If you're at your MRA with at least 10 years but less than 20 years of service, if you wait until age 62 to apply the retirement benefit, the age reduction penalty will be eliminated.

For all questions on retirement, send emails to: RetireeQandA@apwu.org.

Elections Matter

Our way of life, our current and former employer, our families, our health and our future are under attack. We must all come together now to help our fellow country men and women.

As union and community activists, as people of goodwill who have worked long and hard to build this country, we must do everything within our power to make sure our families, our neighbors, our friends, and our co-workers vote by mail or in person in this next election for Joe Biden and those other candidates who support us and our issues!

HEALTH PLAN

What You Need to Know **About Mammograms**



Sarah Jane Rodriguez, Director

embership in an APWU Health Plan has you covered! Although the fight against the novel COVID-19 virus continues to dominate the news cycle, this is a reminder that it has never been more critical to maintain our overall good health.

One of the most important ways to achieve optimum health is to participate in annual screenings. For women age 40 and over, this includes a mammogram. A mammogram is an X-ray picture of the breast. During the procedure, your breasts are compressed between two surfaces to spread out the tissue. Your doctor examines the images to look for signs of cancer.

A 3D mammogram (breast tomosynthesis) is an imaging test that combines multiple breast X-rays to create a three-dimensional picture of the breast. When used for breast cancer screening, 3D mammogram machines create 3D images and standard 2D mammogram images. Studies show that combining 3D mammograms with standard mammograms reduces the need for additional imaging. Both screenings are covered at 100% when using an in-network provider.

Why Should I Get a Mammogram?

Mammography can be your best defense against breast cancer because it can frequently detect the disease in its early stages, often before it can be felt during a breast exam – in some cases three years earlier (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). Research has clearly shown that mammography can increase survival rates from breast cancer.

When Should I Get a Mammogram?

Many women begin mammograms at age 40 and have them every one to two years. Professional groups differ in their recommendations. The American Cancer Society advises women with an average risk to begin screening mammograms yearly at age 45 until age 54 and then continue every two years (American Cancer Society, 2020). The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recommends women start testing every two years beginning at age 50 until age 74 (U.S. Preventative Services Task Force, 2016). However, these groups all agree that women can choose to start screening at age 40. The APWU Health Plan covers mammograms starting at age 35.

Will I Need Further Testing?

The radiologist looks for evidence of cancer or noncancerous (benign) conditions that may require further testing, follow-up, or treatment. Possible findings include:

- Calcium deposits (calcifications) in ducts and other tissues
- Masses or lumps
- Asymmetric areas on the mammogram
- Dense areas appearing in only one breast or one specific area on the mammogram
- New dense area that has emerged since your last mammogram

If the radiologist notes areas of concern on your mammogram, further testing may include additional mammograms, known as compression or magnification views, as well as ultrasound imaging or a biopsy to remove a sample of breast tissue for laboratory testing. Some situations require diagnostic magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) in areas where the current imaging with mammography or ultrasound is negative, and it's not clear what's causing a breast change or abnormality.

Please consult your doctor to understand your options and treatment plan. If you receive a cancer diagnosis, you can access our nationwide network, including Cancer Centers of Excellence. For a complete list of providers go to https://www.apwuhp.com/our-plans/see-providernetworks/.

Breast cancer screenings

Mammograms are important for women because treatment is more likely to be successful and less costly when breast cancer is detected early. Mammograms are covered for women age 35 and older.

- Mammograms are covered at 100% when performed in-network.
- Routine mammograms (including 3D mammograms) are covered for women age 35 and older; as follows:
 - From age 35 through 39, one during this five-year period
 - From age 40 through 64, one every calendar year
 - At age 65 and older, one every two consecutive calendar years.

2020 APWU

RSHI

The APWU proudly presents the winners of three scholarship programs: the E.C. Hallbeck Memorial Scholarship, the Vocational Scholarship and the Best Essay Award for 2020.

Hallbeck winners will receive a \$2,000 award each year for a period of four years to be used in an undergraduate program.

The Vocational Scholarship winners will receive up to \$3,000 for three years of study in a trade, technical, industrial or vocational school. The Best Essay winner will receive a one-time award of \$2,000.

Winners are selected from applicants who are the children or grandchildren of current, retired or deceased APWU members.

HALLBECK WINNERS

Kevin Ahrens, son of

Robert Ahrens, of the

New York Metro Area Local

Henry Gravning, son of Mary Gravning, of the Milwaukee Area Local



Cameron Noval, son

South Jersey Area Local

of Steven Noval, of the

son of Davinee Daniels. of the North Central FL Area Local





Jenna Raup, daughter



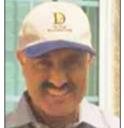
Cylia Srmek, daughter of Bret Srmek, of the 604-605 Area Local





Zander Sadorra, son of Anthony Sadorra, of the Redwood Empire Area Local





Amandip Chauhan, daughter of **Davinder** Chauhan, of the Sacramento Area Local

Heavyn Lee, granddaughter of Sheila Tynes, of the Miami Area Local





Syalomee Pradhan, daughter of Baiju **Pradhan**, of the Boston Metro Area Local



WINNERS

VOCATIONAL WINNERS





Ivy Brown, daughter of James Holmes, of the Madison Wisconsin Area Local



Joshua Lusk, son of Thomas Lusk, of the Colorado Springs Area Local





Justin Smith, son of Robert Smith, of the Youngstown Area Local





The scholarships are funded by donations, and the APWU is extremely grateful for contributions by union members. To make a contribution, please send a check or money order to: APWU Scholarship Fund, 1300 L Street NW, Washington DC 20005. Your taxdeductible donation may specify "Hallbeck," "Vocational" or "Best Essay."

BEST ESSAY WINNER





Emily Del Grosso, daughter of Richard Del Grosso, of the Central NY Area Local

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Paul Kilduff
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