

THE AMERICAN **APWU**  
Postal Worker

September / October 2022

**Our 2022 COLAs:  
\$1.81/hour**

**APWU** DATE 2022

**PAY** **APWU MEMBERS** \$ **1.81/hr.**

ONE DOLLAR & EIGHTY ONE CENTS **EXTRA** PER HOUR DOLLARS

**MEMO** **COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENTS SECURED  
IN OUR 2021-2024 UNION CONTRACT**



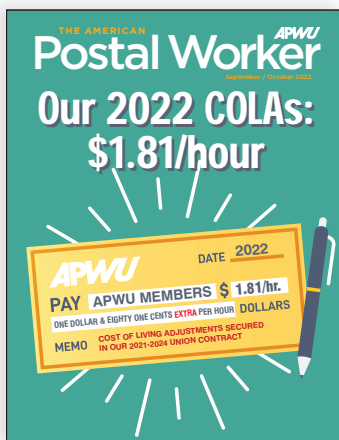
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Thanks to our new union contract, which preserved a full Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA), our two COLA increases for 2022 total \$1.81/hr for all career employees. See page 5

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# “Union Strong, All Day Long!”

**PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN**

**I** was proud to give the keynote “State of the Union” speech, excerpted below, at the just completed APWU national convention:

“I am honored to come before you to share our work over the last four years.

Together, we are marching forward and building an activist, winning union.

“In June 2018, former President Trump advocated for the complete privatization of the Post Office, selling it to corporations for private profit.

We built an impressive national fightback campaign. We educated, we took it to the streets, we took it to Capitol Hill, we took it to the airwaves. A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service proved instrumental in the fightback. We have defeated those plans for now.

“This year, APWU members ratified a new outstanding main collective bargaining agreement, with an overwhelming 94 percent ‘yes’ vote. The new contract secured annual wage increases, full COLAs, new work guarantees for PTFs, new career conversion opportunities for PSEs, enhanced our job security, no-lay provisions and generally uplifted postal workers of all crafts.

With high inflation, our COLA takes center stage. The second career COLA under our new contract amounts to a whopping \$1.18/hour. This is in addition to the first COLA of sixty-three cents/hour in January. Be proud that the APWU is the only postal union that has maintained full COLA.

“We achieved historic postal legislation with the passage of the Postal Service Reform Act. This law eliminates the devastating pre-funding retiree health benefit mandate of 2006, provides future health care savings to individuals and the Postal Service with Medicare integration, while ensuring that all our health care coverage for active employees and retirees remain part of the Federal Employee Health Benefit system.

The APWU negotiated a series of COVID MOUs and the liberal leave policy that enabled our members to take care of themselves and their families and make the workplace as safe as possible.”

“We led a campaign that mobilized millions to achieve \$10 billion in Congressional COVID relief for the USPS. We secured postal worker coverage under the Emergency Federal Employee Leave. We successfully advocated for better appointments to the Postal Board of Governors.

Through the determined efforts of local and state officers and stewards, we have aggressively carried out the hard and needed work of enforcing the contract. We encourage new and young workers to step up as future activists and leaders; we strengthened the work of the Retirees Department and improved cooperation among the four postal unions; we campaigned for expanded services including postal banking.... We published the first ever “Guide to Veteran Rights and Benefits.” We improved communications with the members. We engaged in solidarity with other unions and workers.”

“We rallied the country to ensure the USPS treated mail ballots with the priority they deserve and ensured 65 million voters had secure access to the ballot box during a pandemic. Congratulations to all for delivering democracy!”

“We just completed our building union power organizing campaign with 5,000-plus new members! Over 200 workers at HRSSC organized with the APWU in 2019.”

“While we have taken pro-active steps including in negotiations, to address the entrenched hostile work environment...we must ensure that all workers are treated with respect and dignity.”

“No matter who sits in the White House, Wall Street is still Wall Street and the threat of privatization will continue. We must remain ever vigilant in the defense of our union, good postal jobs and our national treasure.

“Let us continue to gain courage and take heart from our forefathers and mothers of the great postal strike, our victorious “Stop Staples” fight, our historic mobilizations of 2020, the dynamite new union contract and historic legislation, and the new militant uprisings of workers in many industries.”

“Union Strong, All Day Long,” as the struggle for justice continues! ■



# Second COLA = Record Breaking \$1.18/hr

## The First Two COLAs of New Contract Combined Equal \$1.81/hr

**I**n accordance with the 2021-2024 Collective Bargaining Agreement (union contract), career employees represented by the APWU will receive a \$1.18 per hour Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA), effective August 27, 2022.

The adjustment is the result of a rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) – one of the federal government's measures of inflation. It will appear in paychecks dated September 16, 2022 (Pay Period 19-2022). This new COLA represents an annual increase in pay of \$2,455 for all full-time career employees.

The COLAs are in addition to general wage and step increases. This is the second COLA under the 2021 union contract. The first, effective February 2022, amounted to \$0.63 per hour or \$1,310 annually. The first two COLAs received as a result of our new union contract equal \$1.81/hour for career employees (\$3,765.00 a year for Full-Time Regulars.)

Postal Support Employees (PSEs) do not receive cost-of-living increases, but upon conversion to career will receive the COLA adjustments as part of their base wages.

Soaring inflation is hurting working people with rising prices on basic necessities including gasoline, food, transportation, and housing. Inflation is largely being driven by an economy concentrated in the hands of a few powerful and greedy corporate monopolies that have the power to raise prices, with little fear of competition.

This rising inflation underscores just how important the continuation of our negotiated COLA is in the outstanding new union contract. By mobilizing together, we secured this important safety-net against rising prices: union power in action.

The COLA is our best protection against inflation. Postal Workers are some of the few U.S. workers who receive COLA increases. Even in the postal world, we are the only postal union that has maintained full COLA in our union contract.

And even if the prices of goods decrease, with fuel for example, workers still keep our COLA increases. Those gains are locked in and become part of our base salary going forward.

“At times of high inflation, our union-won COLA is invaluable to ourselves and to our families,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “It’s always a struggle to keep these COLA provisions. In every national contract bargaining round, management wants to put a stop to it or downgrade it to a ‘partial COLA-formula.’ Every postal worker should be proud that we fought hard and prevailed to keep full COLA in our latest contract, approved with a 94 percent ‘yes’ vote. It pays to be union!”

Go to [apwu.org/pay-information](https://apwu.org/pay-information) to view pay scales.



## RETRO PAY

As the APWU was preparing collective actions in response to the unacceptable delay in retroactive payments won in the 2021-2024 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA), postal management finally provided the union with firm dates the payments will be received by postal workers in APWU represented crafts.

The retroactive payments will appear as a pay adjustment on paychecks received October 28, 2022. “Those in management responsible for overseeing these payroll changes had so little respect for postal workers that they apparently thought a May 2023 date for the retroactive payments would somehow be acceptable. This was outrageous,”

said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “Postal workers

earned this pay, we deserve it, and we’re not in the business of giving management interest-free loans on the back of our labor.

“This delay in retroactive payments was unacceptable to everyone in our union,” said APWU Director of Industrial Relations Charlie Cash. “While we’re glad to have dates to look forward to, we have filed a national-level grievance seeking an appropriate remedy for all affected postal employees for this unwarranted delay.”

The CBA includes the following pay increases that must be paid to workers retroactively:

**Effective November 20, 2021:** General wage increases of 1.3 percent

**Effective Nov. 20, 2021:** Additional 1 percent pay raise for PSEs (who do not receive COLA)

**Effective September 25, 2021:** New pay scale for Grade 11

**Effective Feb 26, 2022:** Sixty-three cents/hour COLA, for career employees

**Effective April 9, 2022:** Fifty cents/hour increase for the PSEs

Each of the above adjustments was included in our new wage scales, **effective on June 4, 2022**, with the exception of the 50 cents/hour due to the PSEs.

The retroactive payments due to workers consist of the above adjustments on hours worked from June 4, 2022 back to the effective dates above, and between April 9 and July 30 for the PSE fifty-cent increase.

We will keep members updated on the grievance regarding this unacceptable delay.



# Update on Management's Network Modernization Plan

**W**hile a series of previous management plans included “modernization” of the postal network, the USPS is taking aggressive steps to implement changes to the network contained in their 10-year plan known as *Delivering for America*.

There are many rumors, questions and concerns surrounding these new developments.

Solely for informational purposes, here is what the APWU knows thus far and initial steps taken by the union leadership.

In early summer, management apprised the four postal union presidents regarding the general concepts of these plans. There were no details regarding impact on jobs, possible excessing, or even firm specifics on management's plans.

In broad strokes, their plans consist of realigning the mail processing network with a “three-pronged” approach: building a number of new large processing plants; expanding a number of other plants; and reconfiguring many existing plants. On the delivery side, management is planning to create large carrier units called Sorting and Delivery Centers (SDCs) capable of handling package sorting equipment.

Following these initial discussions, the APWU insisted on meetings solely between the APWU leadership and management.

The first meeting was held on July 12, 2022 where management presented their plans for the new SDCs. Representing the APWU were President Mark Dimondstein, Industrial Relations Director Charlie Cash, Clerk Division Director Lamont Brooks, Maintenance Division Director Idowu Balogun and MVS

**THE PLAN CONSISTS OF BUILDING A NUMBER OF NEW LARGE PROCESSING PLANTS; EXPANDING A NUMBER OF OTHER PLANTS; AND RECONFIGURING MANY EXISTING PLANTS.**

Division Director Mike Foster. The meeting was once again short on management details. The APWU raised a number of serious concerns regarding impact on jobs, potential excessing, and customer service. In response to questions on job staffing, management admitted their “modeling” was flawed. Management did verbally commit that no retail operations will be curtailed by the movement of carriers out of existing facilities. While management has the right to build new buildings, the APWU leadership is united that any changes in operations must be done in accordance with our union contract. The APWU has put management on notice that at the very least they must postpone any SDC plans into next year to both abide by contractual provisions and to provide the APWU genuine input.

Following this meeting with management, the National APWU held two meetings with the local union leaders at facilities that would be impacted by proposed SDC changes. Included in the meetings was the National Executive Board, the Assistant Craft Directors and the NBAs in the impacted areas. The APWU leadership will continue these regular meetings to share whatever information obtained at APWU headquarters, as well as to gather information from the affected locals.

Since the APWU has not been provided information necessary to determine how these changes will ultimately affect the workers or ser-

vice to the public, the union initiated a series of information requests. Thus far management has failed to respond.

In addition, the APWU is still awaiting a promised meeting on the mail processing operations. The only three locations for new processing plants that the union has been notified of are Atlanta, GA; Charlotte, NC; and Indianapolis, IN, once again with no impact studies or concrete timetables.

Even if and when network changes occur, the union contract affords employees significant protections. APWU career employees with six years of service have no lay-off job security protections and those with less than six years who were on the rolls on September 20, 2021 are protected from lay-off during the term of the 2021-2024 union contract. No employee can be excessed more than 50-miles from their current installation. Furthermore, any potential excessing outside of the craft/installation must involve proper and timely notification to the APWU Regional Coordinators and notification to the local president for any excessing within an installation.

We will keep the members up to date as these management plans come more into focus. Guidance from each division director will be shared as appropriate for each craft. The goal of the leadership is to protect jobs, limit negative impacts on employees and improve service to the public. ■



## Bill to Repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision and the Government Pension Offset Nears Floor Vote

**I**n July, H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, attained 290 cosponsors in the U.S. House of Representatives. According to House rules, if a bill receives 290 cosponsors, and keeps those cosponsors for 25 legislative days, it will receive a vote on the floor of the House of Representatives.

Because of this rule, and the Congressional August recess, we are anticipating a floor vote in late September or early October.

The Social Security Fairness Act would repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). WEP

and GPO, enacted in 1983 as a way to restructure Social Security, has unfairly reduced millions of employees' hard-earned retirement benefits. These two provisions penalize individuals for their previous employment under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS), even though they met the requirements to receive Social Security benefits.

The APWU Legislative Department is working closely with Congress to make sure that this bill receives a vote and passes in the House of Representatives. Its Senate companion bill, S. 1302, has currently gained 40 cosponsors. We urge everyone to contact their members of Congress

and ask them to support the Social Security Fairness Act to end this unjust attack on our CSRS retirees. ■

### Contact Your Members of Congress and Ask Them to Support the Social Security Fairness Act

To check if your House Representative is a cosponsor, please visit: [www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov).

If they have already signed on, thank them! Call the Legislative hotline at 844-402-1001 to be connected.

After a brief message from APWU President Dimondstein, you will be asked to enter your zip code, where you will then be automatically directed to your representative.

## Office of Personnel Management Data Breach Lawsuit Settles


**T**he Office of Personnel Management has settled the class action lawsuit over data breaches of federal and postal employees' personal information between 2013 and 2015.

You are a Class Member if your personal information was compromised in the breaches of OPM's systems in 2014 and 2015 or the breach of OPM contractor Peraton's systems in 2013 and 2014; and if, after May 7, 2014, you incurred out-of-pocket expenses or lost compensable time to do things such as monitor or protect your identity, freeze or unfreeze credit reports, or respond to an identity theft incident.

Class Members with valid claims may receive \$700 or the actual amount of the claim—whichever is higher—up to \$10,000. A completed claim form must be submitted online or by mail postmarked no later than December 23, 2022.

To learn more about the settlement, including who qualifies and how to file a claim, visit the website: [www.OPMDataBreach.com](http://www.OPMDataBreach.com) or call toll-free 1-855-917-3567.





# Function 1 Staffing MOU Secures New Career Positions

**“THIS AGREEMENT IS ANOTHER IN A SERIES OF STAFFING MOUS THAT ARE SECURING MORE CAREER POSITIONS AND POTENTIALLY IMPROVING SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC,” SAID APWU PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN.**

PSEs discuss issues regarding career conversion during their workshop preceding the 26th Biennial National Convention.

**O**n July 27, 2022, APWU officers and USPS management agreed to an additional Function 1 Staffing MOU that will convert 2,404 PSEs in 157 Installations to career status.

PSEs “will be converted based on their relative standing on the PSE rolls” within the affected installations. The converted PSEs will become unencumbered full-time regulars in Function 1 in these installations.

The MOU also states, “If there are former PSEs in the 157 facilities identified by the Postal Service consistent with the attached table that were converted to full-time flexible (FTF) or part-time flexible (PTF) positions due to the 24-month automatic conversion and placed in Step GG, such FTFs or PTFs will be moved to Step FF no later than September 10, 2022.”

“This agreement is another in a series of staffing MOUs that are securing more career positions and potentially improving service to the public,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “These conversions will be life-changing for the PSEs affected. It’s an outstanding example of the union at work and I salute Industrial Relations Director Charlie Cash and Clerk Craft Director Lamont Brooks for their tremendous work winning this agreement.”

The MOU also includes a list of the 157 affected installations and the number of PSEs that will be converted to career status in each of them. The MOU, the list of installations, and a set of Questions and Answers are available at [apwu.org/clerk](https://apwu.org/clerk). ■



# A Successful Convention, and Motivation to Grow our Local and State Power

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

**A**PWU National Conventions are always uplifting for everyone, and the 26th Biennial Convention was all that and more. This is our union democracy in action. I was honored to chair during some of the discussions on our resolutions during three of the four days. Overall, I believe our delegates were in the driver's seat, voting on the needs for a better future for our workers and for our communities. It was clear that delegates were sick of the degraded service standards that continue to get worse, the raising of postal rates, and concerned about the future consolidation and closure plans of DeJoy and its effect on our jobs and our communities.

Special events occurred after the convention sessions, such as Wednesday's "Protecting Ourselves and Our Workplace, Organizing Young Workers on Union Power and Climate Justice" workshop. Two young workers, Teresa Marie Oller and Travis Epes from the Portland Area Local, OR, led the workshop.

APWU has updated our Climate Justice Network, and we've collaborated with the Labor Network for Sustainability (LNS) to conduct organizing surveys for the Young Workers Listening Project. We will meet again via Zoom in the next six weeks to discuss results of the survey and future actions we can take.

Climate justice includes getting rid of fossil fuel pollution from one of the largest postal fleets, providing jobs and training to our workers, while protecting our country. The postal service can participate in climate justice by providing solar on postal plant roofs, postal solar jobs, protecting workers' lives and our community from natural disasters, and toxic, hostile environmental exposures at work. If you're interested in signing on to the network, contact me at [dszeredy@apwu.org](mailto:dszeredy@apwu.org) or by office phone 202-842-4250, and we will add you to the network.

Thanks, Teresa and Travis, for your willingness to bring worker power back on to the workroom floor, and to provide assistance to reaching out to our Young Workers to actively participate.

During the pre-convention workshops I, along with our second senior NBA Shirley Taylor from the Western Region, facilitated a Leadership Development Workshop. We had Union Activists that were very eager to share

and participate in ways to develop old and new leadership skills that could be shared at the local level. The leaders that attended also wanted our members to stand up, support, and be activists and bystanders against the hostile work environment. So many of our APWU family have had to deal with hostile work environments for oh-so-long!

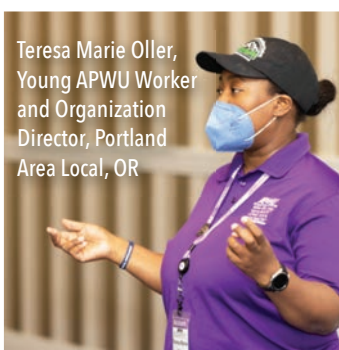
Our local and state leaders need your support and love. Union work is God's work. It is spiritually and morally all about protecting our postal family, protecting democracy, and providing safe living wage jobs into the future. I want to personally thank NBA Shirley Taylor for an awesome job at the Leadership Development Workshop. ■



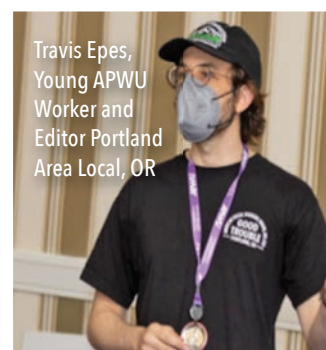
Debby Szeredy, Executive Vice President and Shirley Taylor, Western Region National Business Agent



Leadership Development Workshop



Teresa Marie Oller, Young APWU Worker and Organization Director, Portland Area Local, OR



Travis Epes, Young APWU Worker and Editor Portland Area Local, OR



## STATEMENT OF APWU PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN in Response to Recent Remarks by Postmaster General Louis DeJoy on Future Postal Staffing

In a recent presentation before the neoconservative American Enterprise Institute, Postmaster General (PMG) Louis DeJoy outlined his views of the future direction of the United States Postal Service.

One remark from the Postmaster General during a discussion following his prepared speech created headlines that deeply concern postal workers and the American Postal Workers Union. The PMG said that, through attrition and retirements, the USPS “may need to get 50,000 people out of the organization” in the next 10 years to “break even.”

Let me be perfectly clear with our members: Prior to the PMG’s remarks, postal management had never discussed any such proposals or plans on the future size of the postal workforce or of the APWU bargaining unit. In fact, over the last two years the APWU and postal management have reached a number of settlements that increased much-needed staffing in Function 1 mail processing, creating 10,000 new clerk craft jobs. We are currently pressing management to agree to increase staffing in Function 4 Retail. We also reached a number of agreements, including in the recently ratified contract, resulting in tens of thousands of PSEs being converted to career positions. These are welcome developments and a testament to the powerful campaigns our union has led to demand management invest in the staffing and retention policies necessary to ensure we provide the quality service the public deserves.

THE BEST WAY TO GET THE POSTAL SERVICE BACK TO BREAK EVEN IS TO FOCUS ON IMPROVING SERVICE QUALITY, EXPANDING AND ENHANCING SERVICE, AND GROWING THE POSTAL SERVICE’S ROLE IN A FAST-CHANGING ECONOMY – INCLUDING GROWING WITH LONG-NEEDED STAFFING.

I’ve spoken with the PMG since his remarks and made clear to him our position: without postal workers, there is no USPS. We make it work and we’re committed to fulfilling our mission of providing essential services to the country. The best way to get the Postal Service back to

break even is to focus on improving service quality, expanding and enhancing service, and growing the Postal Service’s role in a fast-changing economy – including growing with long-needed staffing.

WE WILL OPPOSE FUTURE JOB REDUCTIONS THAT AFFECT THE LIVES OF THE POSTAL WORKERS WE REPRESENT, GOOD LIVING WAGE UNION JOBS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS AND DIMINISHES THE GOOD SERVICE THE PEOPLE DESERVE.

If it’s management’s intent to weaken our union, attack our pay and conditions, or eliminate family-sustaining union postal jobs, the PMG will get a strong fight from the APWU. But let’s also be clear about one thing – we don’t bargain with newspaper headlines.

When PMG DeJoy was hired, we made clear that our union would judge the PMG based on his actions. When he degraded service in the summer of 2020, we opposed his actions and led the fight back which forced management to abandon the worst of those policy changes.

When PMG DeJoy introduced management’s 10-year “Delivering For America” plan, I called it “the good, the bad, and the ugly.” There were elements of the plan we supported, like efforts to grow the USPS’s market share in the booming e-commerce business, advocating for six-day delivery and for a better path to career jobs for our non-career members. And we vowed to use every resource of our union to fight elements of the plan we opposed, like cuts to service standards and retail hours of operation.

We will oppose future job reductions that affect the lives of the postal workers we represent, good living wage union jobs for future generations and diminishes the good service the people deserve. Rest assured that any such management actions will be met with unbridled opposition of the APWU – the same kind of fightback, allied with the labor movement and the people of our country, that won the “Stop Staples” campaign, defeated the privatization plans of the White House in 2018 and compelled the USPS to do right in relation to vote by mail during the 2020 election. ■



# A Welcome Return for the APWU Biennial National Convention

SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

## APWU 26th Biennial Convention

The delegates in attendance at the 26th Biennial Convention showed up and stepped up through the challenges that COVID-19 may have presented to ensure that the convention was successful. Congratulations to everyone who participated.

As the Secretary-Treasurer, it is the responsibility of my department to plan and execute the convention.

The convention committee members, craft conferences and convention delegates met to discuss, debate and adopt resolutions that will provide our national officers guidance in contract negotiations. Constitutional resolutions that were also adopted by the delegates will amend the current constitution. Those resolution changes will take place and an amended APWU Constitution and Bylaws will come into effect and be available for members.

## Secretary-Treasurer Training

At the end of the Convention, the Secretary-Treasurer's department held a Fiduciary Responsibility and QuickBooks training for local Secretary-Treasurers. I like to say that the fiduciary responsibilities training teaches locals what they have to do financially. The QuickBooks training shows them how to do it.

The trainings covered the requirements of the Department of Labor, our national constitution and other legal responsibilities. It also covered a range of financial topics for locals, including financial planning, account management, COPA funds, budgeting and accounting, audits, expenses, and insurance. With QuickBooks, attendees learned how to use the software to manage accounts, write checks and prepare reports.

## APWU Bonding Renewal Coverage 2022-2025

Effective August 1, 2022 the bond premium was deducted from the local dues check-off (DCO). Local and state affiliates should have received their original bond certificate with correspondence from the Secretary-Treasurer's Department. It is important to remember the premium deducted from the DCO should not be reported as income received by the local. All bonds and bond changes are



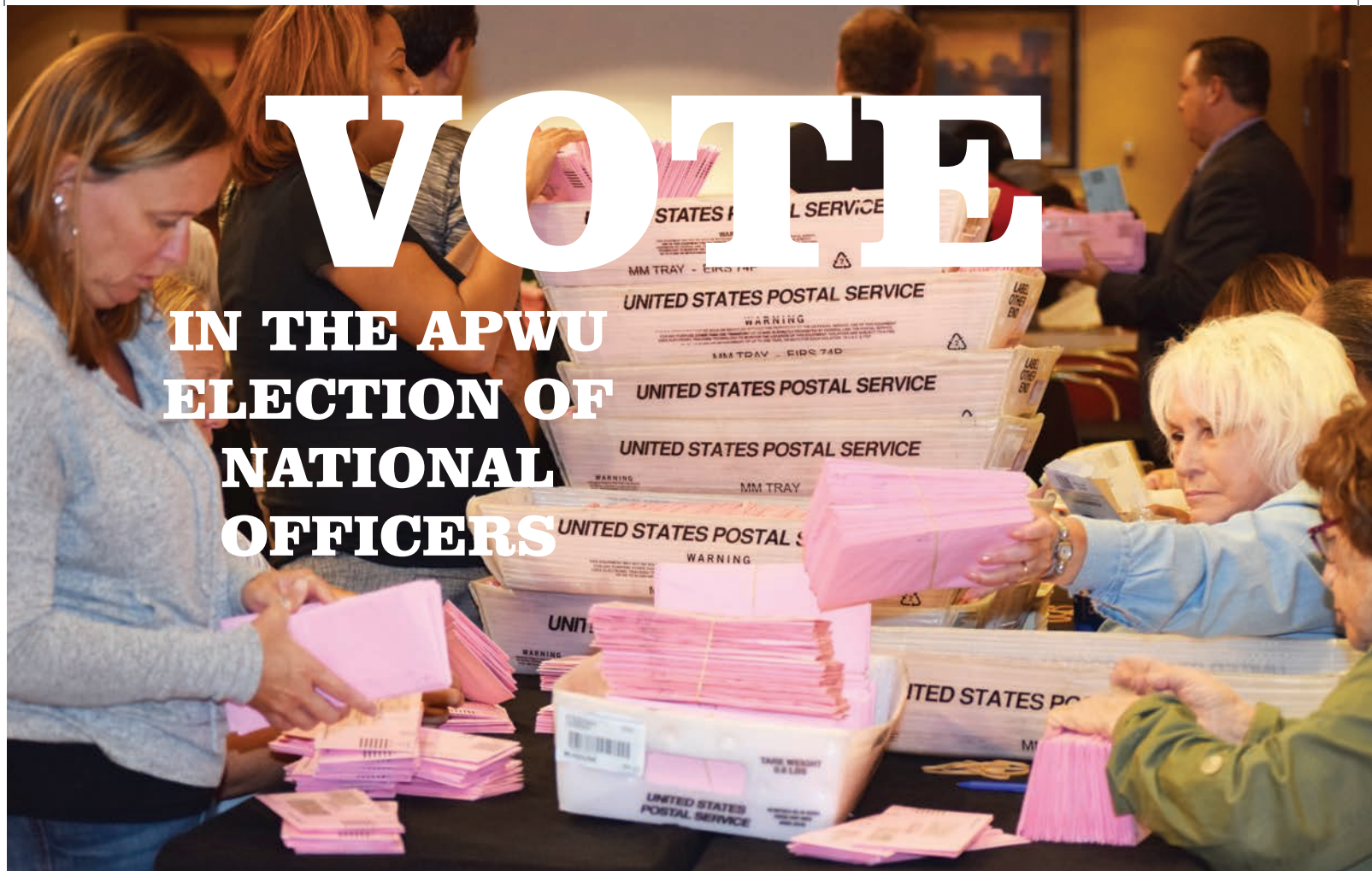
continuous and will be renewed automatically at the expiration of the three-year period.

A requirement of 501(c)(5) organizations is to maintain compliance with the Labor Management Reporting Disclosure Act (LMRDA). Sec. 502 (a) of the LMRDA states:

*Every officer, agent, shop steward, or other representative or employee of any labor organization (other than a labor organization whose property and annual financial receipts do not exceed \$5,000 in value), or of a trust in which a labor organization is interested, who handles funds or other property thereof shall be bonded to provide protection against loss by reason of acts of fraud or dishonesty on his part directly or through connivance with others.*

National APWU automatically pays for coverage of \$5,000 for each local. However, it is strongly advised local officers obtain bond coverage of 100 percent of all liquid assets. Examples of liquid assets are those assets that are quickly and easily negotiable, such as cash-on-hand, deposits in any type of financial institution, certificates of deposit, U.S. Treasury securities, corporate stocks and bonds, and accounts and loan receivables. Property of a relatively permanent nature, such as land, buildings, furniture, and fixtures, are not considered a liquid asset. All bond coverage changes must be mailed to the Secretary-Treasurer's department. ■





# VOTE

## IN THE APWU ELECTION OF NATIONAL OFFICERS

**B**allots for the American Postal Workers Union's 2022 election of national officers will be mailed to all eligible APWU members on Sept. 14. The ballots must be returned to and received in the designated post office box by 2 p.m. (EDT) on Wednesday, Oct. 5. To be eligible to vote, a member must be in "good standing" according to the official records of the national union on June 17 of the election year.

Direct election of union officers has been a hallmark of the APWU's democratic tradition.

Exercising the right to vote is a simple matter of marking the ballot— which will be mailed to your home – and returning the completed ballot in a postage-paid envelope.

Please take part in the process by filling out and mailing in your ballot as soon as you receive it. And please encourage others at your worksite to exercise their rights as well.

### No Ballot?

Members who have not received a ballot by Sept. 19 are asked to notify their local or contact the American Arbitration Association between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. (EDT), Monday through Friday, at 800-529-5218, to request a duplicate. Duplicate ballots may also be requested by visiting <https://electionsaaa.org/ballotrequest/APWU>.

To receive a duplicate, members must provide their name, address, employee ID number and the last four digits of their Social Security number, along with the name of their local and their craft.

The Election Committee will take custody of the ballots at 2 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 5, and transport them to the Hyatt Regency Washington, 400 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C., 20001, where they will be counted. As soon as they become available, unofficial election results will be posted at [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org). ■

*Correction:* In the July/August 2022 edition of the magazine, an uncontested incumbent national officer was omitted from the list in "Ballot Placement Set for the Election of APWU National Officers." The uncontested national office is: National Business Agent Clerk Division New York Region (B) Elizabeth "Liz" Swigert (I), Queens Area Local (NY)

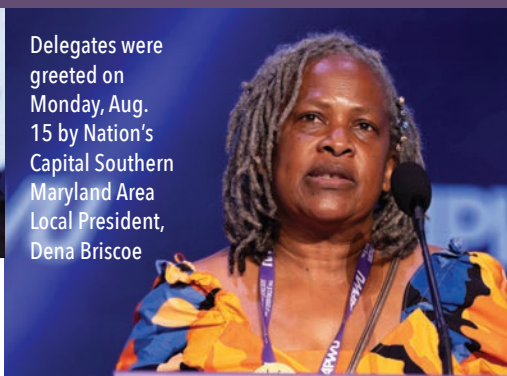
# APWU 26th Biennial National Convention

## FOUR-DAY GATHERING INVIGORATES

President Mark Dimondstein's State of the Union Address



Delegates were greeted on Monday, Aug. 15 by Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local President, Dena Briscoe



Executive Vice President, Debby Szeredy on day one of convention



**M**ore than two thousand APWU members gathered in National Harbor, Maryland Aug. 15-18 for the union's 26th Biennial National Convention. The convention is the union's highest decision-making authority, placing it at the heart of our union democracy.

The gathering took place following an unprecedented four-year gap after the COVID pandemic caused the cancelation of the 25th Convention in 2020.

The twin themes of the week were "The Struggle for Justice Continues" and "Union Strong, All Day Long," reflecting the backdrop of a resurgent labor movement and a growing global threat to democracy.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler joined us to highlight our unique and vital position on the front lines of democracy. "You are not only making sure that people get their ballots but also their letters, paychecks and subscription medications," she said.

The AFL-CIO president also emphasized the organizing power of unions working together. "We need to rise up and capture the energy of this moment that is leading people to organize in all kinds of companies and in all kinds of industries."

Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell, provided delegates with a report on her work managing the union's finances, the National Convention, the administration of national officer elections, advice and support for local union constitutional and financial issues, union staff, member dues and more.

"As we work together to oppose the anti-worker assault that is sweeping the country, organize the 40,000 plus non-members, and represent our members, now is the time for all of us to join together as proud members

Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell reports back to delegates



of the American Postal Workers Union. That is our mission!" she said.

APWU President, Mark Dimondstein then gave his "State of the Union" address, in which he outlined our accomplishments and the challenges that we will face together

as a union (*see page 4 for excerpts*). He said, "The weather will be stormy at times. But we have the good and sturdy ship called the APWU built with many hands over generations of struggle."

## APWU Members Participate in Pre-Convention Workshops

Over 1,000 members took part in twenty educational workshops and trainings on Friday, August 12. The workshops were organized by the Research and Education Department and its director, Joyce Robinson.

The workshops and trainings covered a wide range of issues, including contract enforcement, innovative organizing, fundamentals of labor law, communications for locals from the Postal Press Association, as well as social justice and racial equality.

Members participate in the Fundamentals of Labor Law Workshop





# – the Democracy at the Heart of Our Union

## S DELEGATES, SETS UNION PRIORITIES

### Craft Conferences Get to Work

On August 13-14, APWU Divisions - Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle Services (MVS) and Support Services - along with the Retirees, held their respective conferences, which discussed issues and resolutions specific to their memberships.

At the Clerk Craft Division Conference, Director Lamont Brooks led members in discussion on how to continue the protection and expansion of craft jobs, eliminate the multi-tiered wage system, and ways in which members can be proactive against workplace harassment and safety issues.

Delegates learned about projects under development including a RI-399 training manual, a “PSE conversion opportunities decision tree,” and mentoring new national officers to retain institutional knowledge and help future generations in their battles with management.

During the Maintenance Division Conference, led by Director Idowu Balogun, members discussed the new Collective Bargaining Agreement, upcoming resolutions, and updates since the last convention. Delegates from across the country raised the impact of management understaffing of maintenance jobs.



Lamont Brooks,  
Clerk Division Director



Mike Foster, MVS Director



Retirees Director Olumekor chairs the Retirees Conference

Debate was held over the lack of job vacancies, availability of training classes, testing procedures, workplace safety, and promotion possibilities within the craft.

The MVS Division Conference, led by Director Mike Foster, focused on resolutions that addressed delays in job postings, conversions, and the need for training for workplace safety.

At the Support Services Division Conference, Director Steve Brooks and delegates discussed recently ratified contracts, tips for negotiating a new contract, and the differences between private sector negotiating and bargaining with the USPS. The conference also included a Questions and Answers session on what it's like working in each of their different bargaining units.

### Strategic Planning at Retirees Conference

Retirees discussed pertinent issues such as retiree benefits, Social Security, and healthcare. They considered resolutions and amendments to present to the convention, including the successful constitutional amendment for greater representation of retiree chapters at future national conventions. ►



Steve Brooks,  
Support Services Division Director



Idowu Balogun,  
Maintenance Division Director



## Young Workers are the Future

On the eve of the 26th Biennial Convention, 100 of the union's young workers (age 35-and-under) gathered to discuss their involvement in the APWU and what can be done to serve young members' needs. Omar Gonzalez, Western Region Coordinator and Youth Committee chair, asked the following questions: "What do you expect from your union?" and "What would you like to see more from your union?" For many in the room, it was their very first convention, and they had a lot to say.

The number one answer was training. Members from various locals expressed their desire for more training opportunities at every level. Jalissa Harris of the Greater Cincinnati Area Local explained, "we can fight for our members and do the good work, and be well-trained in the information we need to handle the issues that we, as APWU members, experience at post offices daily."

Professional leadership development, addressing workplace safety, and job protection were also discussed. Emphasizing the strength of our union, Chelsey Stubbs of the Lincoln Land Area Local, stated, "We've got a contract to protect our jobs, we got to stand up for it."

"Foundation is everything," said Che Magwood of New York Metro Area Local. He encouraged comradery, mentorship, and the importance of worker solidarity, saying, "that's how we make the union better".

Travis Smith of the Chicago Area Local, shared how forming interpersonal relationships with members had a positive impact on his life, stating, "My union treats me like family. It's special to be a part of."

National officers, regional coordinators and young workers of the past provided words of wisdom, and affirmed that the future of the APWU is indeed in good hands. Young workers are motivated and ready to take on leadership roles, strengthen the union and better serve our membership.



Che Magwood  
(right): Foundation is  
everything

## POWER Awards Outstanding Women

On August 15, Research & Education Director Joyce Robinson hosted a Post Office Women for Equal Rights (POWER) Caucus that highlighted outstanding women of our union.

President Mark Dimondstein addressed the group. He applauded the energy and the spirit of the POWER sisters.

POWER Awards of Appreciation were presented to the outgoing POWER Regional Coordinators Darcy A. Woods, Central Region, Tanya Jackson, Northeast Region, and Bernadette Baker, Southern Region.

An honorary award was given to POWER sister Erica Cole who suffered from long term COVID and was forced to resign.

The following awards were presented by Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell to notable women:

- Elizabeth "Liz" Powell Executive Award – Tiffany Foster
- Joyce B. Robinson Leadership Award – Lynn Pallas-Barber
- Nilda Chock Pioneer Award – Bettye Maddox

President Mark Dimondstein and Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard presented a COPA Award to Joyce Robinson for POWER's cumulative COPA participation during the 2020-2022 cycle. Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell gave closing remarks.



POWER Caucus meets



Delegate and Young  
member Nequita Brown  
(California Area Local)





## Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez addresses APWU Convention Delegates

In an address to delegates, Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) thanked postal workers for our many contributions during the pandemic. “You saved our elections by processing millions of mail-in ballots in 2020, through today, despite impossibly hostile conditions.... You saved countless lives and livelihoods during a global pandemic with your work,” she remarked.

While many people in Congress claim that progress is impossible, she pointed out that “what other people call impossible is another day on the job” for APWU members!

With growing support for labor unions, Rep. Ocasio-Cortez said, “What was impossible a year or two ago is now possible today, and it is important that we recognize that, because far too many people use the word ‘impossible’ to signify what is really just a lack of political will and political imagination.”

## Biden to Postal Workers: You are Essential

President Joe Biden sent a video greeting to delegates. The 46th U.S. President lauded our history and our work as essential to the country.

“It’s simple,” he said, “The American people believe in you. The Congress believes in you. The women and men of our Postal Service are essential to our health, our economy and our democracy.”

## Rep. Brenda Lawrence ‘We Kept it Moving’

After a warm welcome from Legislative & Political Director and fellow Michigander Judy Beard, Congresswoman Brenda Lawrence brought the convention to its feet with

a stirring address. Rep. Lawrence reflected on her 30-year postal career and how it prepared her for work in Congress. “I was trained as a public servant in the United States Postal Service,” she said. “And I know how to fight.” ▶



## Elected Officials Address Convention

Elected officials from across the political spectrum addressed the convention in a sign of the influence and importance of postal workers and our legislative-political program on the national stage.

## Home-State Senator Welcomes APWU

Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) welcomed delegates on Monday. In a rousing speech, he highlighted our recent wins to defend the USPS and pass postal reform legislation. “It really is because of all of you and your persistence and determination and advocacy over time,” Van Hollen said. “You never gave up, and you got that across the finish line.”

## Fitzpatrick: USPS Fairness Act Finally Ends Prefunding Mandate

Representative Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) spoke about his work as a postal advocate in championing the Postal Service Reform Act. “[it] will finally end the unfair prefunding mandate for the USPS. Probably the most pressing financial problem facing the agency,” he stated.

## 30-year Postal Worker, Rep. Lawrence Made Honorary APWU Member.

Following her address, the convention showed its appreciation for Rep. Brenda Lawrence. A delegate from Michigan, noting that the Congresswoman began her postal career as an APWU member, moved that the convention name her an honorary member of the APWU. The hall burst into applause as the motion carried.



Many formal resolutions were debated Thursday



The most important business of the convention was to debate and decide resolutions and constitutional amendments.

### Labor-Management Committee

The first set of resolutions came from the Labor-Management Committee, co-chaired by Ken Fajardo, Albuquerque Local, and Wanda Harris, Miami Area Local, which primarily focused on proposals for future contract negotiations. They debated and voted on many meaningful resolutions addressing bargaining demands.

Among the adopted resolutions were several dealing with demands for additional types of paid leave. One such resolution number 30, calls on the APWU to bargain for a sick leave donation program similar to the system for donating annual leave. A pair of resolutions, 33 and 34, were adopted, calling on the union to bargain for paid maternity leave and paid parental leave for postal workers.

Resolutions that dealt with postal workers' clothing allowance, Resolutions 62 and 70, were both adopted by the convention. Resolution 62 calls for the union to bargain for an increase in the clothing allowance for outdoor work in cold weather regions, whereas Resolution 70 calls for the APWU to bargain for a VMF cold weather clothing allowance consistent with NALC's allowance.

Another successful resolution, Resolution 43, called for

the elimination of Article 12.1.A language regarding probation, and for the union to represent employees from day-one in regard to separation from service. Other successful resolutions addressed bereavement leave and ensuring union notification of the reason for separation of a PSE. The Labor-Management Committee concluded its report after delegates acted on resolutions addressing hazard pay, the USPS mystery shopper program, wage increase demands, and other bargaining matters.

Several additional resolutions were introduced throughout the day. The Labor Management Committee recommended improvements to the holiday pecking order, while the Legislative Committee sought to make election day a paid holiday. Both resolutions were supported and passed by the convention body.

### Amendments to the APWU Constitution

Resolutions before the Constitution Committee, co-chaired by Keith Combs, Detroit District Area Local, and Kim Miller, Keystone Area Local, addressed issues pertaining to retired members, the work locations of national officers, and the procedures governing the election of officers, among other issues. Changes to the APWU Constitution require a two-thirds vote to pass.

Whether to increase retired members' representation at convention was one of the major issues discussed on Wednesday. Speakers presented impassioned arguments on all sides of the issue before the final vote was called.



Delegates vote on resolutions from the Constitution Committee

## COMMITTEES



With the support and encouragement of President Dimondstein, Retirees Director Nancy Olumekor, and other national officers, delegates settled upon a compromise resolution that both addressed the desire of retired members to be better represented at the convention, while recognizing the equity concerns raised by other delegates. Ultimately, the convention passed an amendment to Article 6 of the APWU Constitution, which entitles each local retirees' chapter and each state retirees' chapter one credentialed delegate to convention.

Olumekor thanked the convention for the spirited debate and the recognition of retired members' contributions to the union. "This year, the APWU Retirees Department celebrates its 30th anniversary," she said. "We thank you for your love and support."

Another robust debate during the Constitutional Committee's work was on the matter of restoring the second Clerk Craft National Business Agent position in the Wichita Region. The convention supported the resolution submitted by the Nebraska Postal Workers Union.

Convention also made a change to the Constitution regarding the succession of the Support Services Director in the event the position falls vacant. The resolution provides that the Division's National Business Agent shall assume the Director's position in the case of a vacancy.

### Formal resolutions

The Formal Resolutions Committee, co-chaired by David Yao, Greater Seattle Area Local, and Teresa Oller, Portland Oregon Area Local, presented its report.

Delegates engaged seriously with the resolutions before them, debated with a shared passion for improving the union and the lives of APWU members, and filled the hall with energy throughout the day's proceedings.

Issues such as support for the Green New Deal, backing postal banking, statehood for Washington, DC, the right to strike for both public and private sector workers, and the APWU's recognition of November 27 as "Public Post Office Day" were brought forth and supported by the body.

### Resolution Passes to Remove Postmaster General DeJoy

Delegates overwhelmingly supported Resolution 139, which resolved that: "this body urges that Postmaster General Louis DeJoy either resign or be removed from office, to be replaced by a Postmaster General who is committed to support a strong, public postal service, and who will defend it from attack rather than attacking it.

That APWU publicize the decision of this delegation within 30 days of the close of this convention."

Formal Resolution 146, which resolved that the body oppose and eliminate the undemocratic Senate filibuster was referred to the Legislative Committee, chaired by Sinikka Melvin, West Virginia Postal Workers Union. Delegates concurred with the resolution to "work in broad coalitions with like-minded organizations and individuals to defend voting rights, a women's right to reproductive rights and choice, and other key fundamental rights by eliminating the undemocratic Senate filibuster."

### The National Executive Board Committee

The National Executive Board (NEB) Committee reported on resolutions referred to the National Executive Board for action by the delegates. The resolutions related to negotiated service contracts, addressing sexual harassment in the USPS, membership rights for full dues paying members, and re-establishing a full-time, trained, Safety and Health position at APWU Headquarters.

### Division Committee Resolutions Passed "In Toto"

Resolutions were finalized with reports from the Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle Services, and Support Services Division's committees reporting to the body. Motions were made in each instance to pass the resolutions "in toto" according to the will of the respective craft and division conference bodies. The motion to accept "in toto" passed for each of the committees. ►





It's going to take pickets and a lot of community support to bring Starbucks to the bargaining table - Jaz Brisack

## Starbucks Workers are Brewing Success

Starbucks Workers United organizers Jasmine Leli and Jaz Brisack spoke to delegates about their hard-fought organizing campaign, which is spreading like wildfire across the country. Since March of this year, more than 400 Starbucks locations have either petitioned for or won union elections.

"We're your first interaction in the morning, and we love what we do. We deserve better," said Jasmine Leli, as workers mobilize to seek better safety provisions, pay, and health benefits.

Jaz Brisack recounted some of management's union-busting tactics. "The day after we filed our union petitions at the first three stores, all of Starbucks corporate got on a plane to Buffalo and stayed there for four months," she said.

Brisack reiterated the importance of solidarity among working people: "It's going to take pickets and a lot of community support to bring Starbucks to the bargaining table. We're counting on you all."

## Amazon Workers are Stepping Up

Delegates heard from Christian Smalls, President of the Amazon Labor Union (ALU). Chris Smalls defied the odds, leading the organizing of approximately 7,500 workers at the JFK8 plant on Staten Island, NY into a union, the first Amazon organizing win in the U.S.

Smalls described his work on the day-by-day organizing campaign, distributing flyers at the bus stop outside the plant while his fellow workers initially ignored him. "The thing about organizing is being there when the workers are ready." Eventually the campaign gained momentum, garnering 200 signatures a day.

Workers at the plant won their fight to form a union on April 1 of this year.

Jennifer Bates, along with her co-workers Isaiah Thomas and Ken Carter, spoke on the Amazon organizing campaign in Bessimer, AL. With help from the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU), she spearheaded the organizing drive at her facility.

Bates described her motivation for organizing as being for more than her, but for her co-workers and those beyond the walls of Amazon. "This is not just for me; we are paving the way for the ones coming behind us and we will not stop until we get it done."

Bessimer Amazon workers have faced a brutal union-busting campaign from management. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) threw out the first, tainted election, after the company went so far as to have the USPS install a mailbox in front of the facility to allow bosses to spy on employees as they cast their mail-in union ballots.



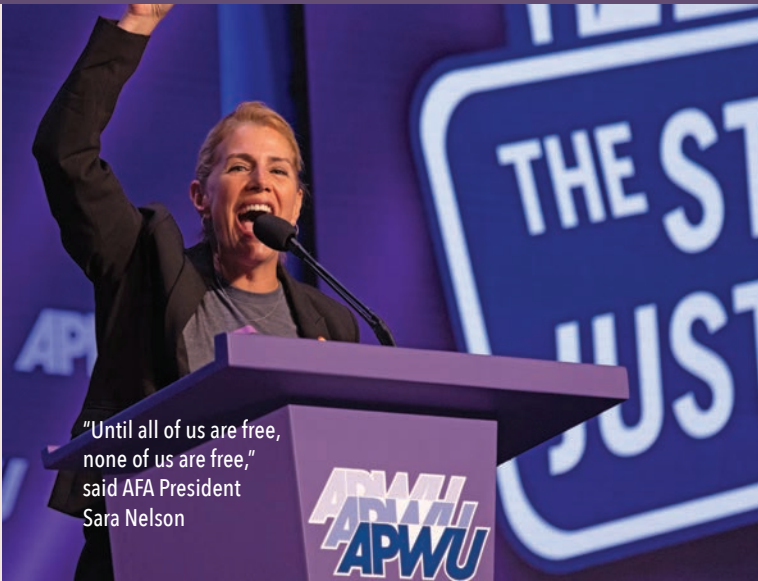
Christian Smalls: Being there when workers are ready is key



Jennifer Bates, Ken Carter and Isaiah Thomas are still fighting for a union at their Bessemer, AL Amazon Facility



## GRASSROOTS ORGANIZING



Despite similar high-pressure tactics from management in the re-run election, the outcome is so close that, five months on, the result has still not been certified.

### Striking Miners Stand Strong

Dedrick Gardner of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), addressed delegates on the ongoing strike at Warrior Met Coal mines in Central Alabama. When the mines' previous owners were facing bankruptcy, Gardner and his fellow workers made numerous sacrifices to their hours, pay, and working conditions.

The now-profitable company has declined to repay the workers' sacrifice, refusing to pay a livable, dignified wage or address the numerous threats to the miners' safety. 850 UMWA-represented employees have been on strike at Warrior Met for almost 18 months, determined to hold the line until an agreement and dignified working conditions are met. "You must fight and you must stand strong. One day longer, one day stronger!"

### Worker Solidarity for All

National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU) President Paul Hogrogian gave a message of unity between postal unions. "I was proud to sit with your delegation at the opening of your contract negotiations some time ago. It sends a message to the Postal Service management that we are united."

Association of Flight Attendants Union President Sara Nelson addressed the convention on day two. Nelson's union is in the middle of a battle to organize the last major airline with non-union flight attendants – Delta.



She held up the APWU as a "smart union" that understands how to build power for working people. She said that, in order to exercise that power, "we find our common demands, and we push back against every effort to divide us, to distract us from what we need to accomplish, and to demoralize us from taking action."

The theme of union solidarity spread internationally, as delegates heard from British and Spanish trade union leaders Pepe Sayagués (Unión General del Trabajadores - UGT) and Dave Ward (Communication Workers Union – CWU).


"I think people have finally realized, from across the whole of the world... that if trade unions don't come together, then it's always going to be working people that pay the price" said Ward, whose union is currently embroiled in a wave of industrial strikes and disputes involving communication workers across Britain. "People are saying enough is enough." ►

### APWU Pledges to Support Workers and their Families

Convention delegates voted unanimously to pass resolutions in support a multi-union campaign to spread the organizing efforts and victories at Amazon facilities (#141) and in support of Starbucks Workers United (C.S.S.1.).

APWU pledged support for the Amazon, Starbucks and Warrior Met workers, presenting each with a monetary donation of \$5,000 to assist in their organizing efforts.

Delegates also took up a collection for the victims of Kentucky's flash flooding in July. APWU matched the contribution, bringing the total donation to \$25,438.26.

A photograph of a panel discussion. Three people are seated at a table with microphones and water bottles. A woman stands at a podium to the right, speaking into a microphone. The background is a plain wall.

Diana Philip, Democracy Initiative: Everyone should have the same voting rights

### Delegates Defending Democracy

The Legislative & Political Department hosted a panel discussion on democracy, voting rights and the January 6 insurrection. Participants discussed what led to the events of January 6, the voter suppression that has followed, and how we can fight back.

“It’s an ongoing threat to our democracy and it is election sabotage,” said panelist Rob Weissman, President of Public Citizen.

Panelists gave their perspectives on the increasing voter suppression in many states, including limits to vote-by-mail, voter intimidation, poll taxes, and gerrymandering, which disproportionately affect people of color and working-class communities.

Panelist Diana Philip reiterated the need for standardized voting laws to make sure everyone enjoys the same right and opportunity to vote, including the right to vote-by-mail.

Richard Koritz, NALC Activist and APWU Solidarity Representative, spoke of the democratic accomplishments of the Black-led Reconstruction era and the white supremacist violence that destroyed it. “Ignorance of Reconstruction and its tragic aftermath may doom us to repeat such bitter life experiences.”

On the Tuesday of Convention, Leon Russell, Chair of the NAACP Board of Directors spoke about deepening the partnerships that we have built, including A Grand Alliance and the Save Our Public Postal Service campaigns. “We understand that together we have the power to make a change in public policy,” he said.

### Putting Theory Into Practice

On Tuesday, more than a thousand members took action together to draw attention to attacks on vote-by-mail and the wave of voter suppression laws.

APWU Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell opened the rally saying, “There is no power like postal power... Are you ready to fight for democracy and vote-by-mail?”



### APWU Will Fight Rising Fascism

Delegates passed Formal Resolution 142, which resolves to work to deepen the education of our members on the dangers of rising fascism to postal workers and our union. It encourages all local and state organizations to engage in the struggle to defend union rights and all democratic rights in opposition to rising fascism and emphasize that working class unity and solidarity is the path forward to winning our common goals.

Rev. Graylan Hagler added “Democracy is about access - access to vote, access to speak, access to stand up, access to be heard, access to make demands. We don’t intend to do anything less.”

The Democracy Initiative’s Charly Carter called postal workers heroes, saying, “Because of you everyone had those votes counted, demonstrating that vote-by-mail works,” a sentiment that was reiterated by Markus Batchelor from People for the American Way who said, “In 2020 you demonstrated in a very real way how you help our democracy run, how you help some of the most isolated and marginalized people in our community.”

“The Voting Rights Act of 1965 is disappearing,” said APWU Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard. “They’re stealing our voting rights. And we’re going to stand up and fight back!”

APWU Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy encouraged APWU members to bring their activism back to their communities, saying “When you get home, form a committee to get out the vote so we can win in November.”





Dr. Fegan: Universal health care is your fight

## Health Care is a Human Right

Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy introduced Dr. Claudia Fegan, Chief Medical Officer of Cook County Health and the national coordinator of Physicians for a National Health Program. With pride, Szeredy noted that the APWU is a longtime supporter of Medicare for All.

Dr. Fegan spoke about the urgent need for a single payer health care system in the U.S. and debunked myths about the affordability of a national health program, noting that the U.S. already spends more than \$4 trillion a year on health care. “The United States is the only industrialized country in the world that does not guarantee universal access to health care,” she said. “We already spend enough money to guarantee access to everyone. Yet medical debt is the number one cause of bankruptcy.”

Dr. Fegan concluded the address by saying, “No country has ever won universal health care without the support of labor. This is your fight! This is your fight!”

## Celebrating the Great Postal Strike

A historical video honored the workers and legacy of the historic wildcat strike and the formation of the APWU.

It described the events that led up to the strike, which, within days spread to 200,000 postal workers in over 30 states.

When an anchor for CBS News challenged Chicago postal worker Greg Boyles for breaking the law, he said “I don’t care. I know it is against the law...if they want to put me in jail, put me in jail, but they haven’t got a big enough jail to put all of us in.”

President Nixon activated the National Guard, which proved inept at delivering for the people as the movement of letters, business mail, financial transactions, and government documents ground to a halt.

When the Postmaster finally agreed to return to the bargaining table, postal workers won a retroactive 6 percent wage increase, and combined with Congressional action, on August 12, 1970 the Postal Reorganization Act was signed into law, giving workers an additional 8 percent wage increase and the right to bargain collectively over wages, benefits, working conditions and instituted a binding arbitration process.

Millions of workers have since reaped the benefits from the historic actions of the postal workers who joined in solidarity to fight for their collective rights. ►

On Thursday, the 26th Biennial National Convention drew to a close. The Bulk Mail Centers Conference took place on Friday, Aug. 19 and Secretary-Treasurer’s trainings took place on Aug 19 and 20. Delegates returned home invigorated and ready for the struggle: Union Strong, All Day Long!

“I would like recognize the tremendous work of our Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell and her staff for their often-unseen preparatory work to make this convention a success,” said President Mark Dimondstein.



Hands off our voting rights, say APWU members

The convention recognized participants of the Great Postal Strike of 1970, some of whom were present as delegates including Tom LaFauci, Charlotte Area Local.



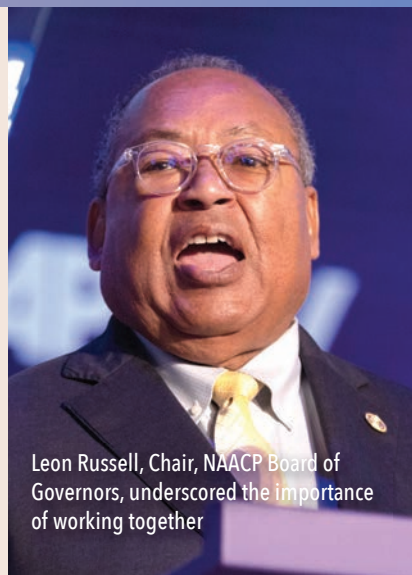




AFL-CIO President, Liz Shuler addressed delegates on day one



Elise Bryant, President, Coalition of Labor Union Women, led the convention in a round of union songs after an inspiring speech



Leon Russell, Chair, NAACP Board of Governors, underscored the importance of working together



Young worker Jada Anderson was one of many first-time delegates



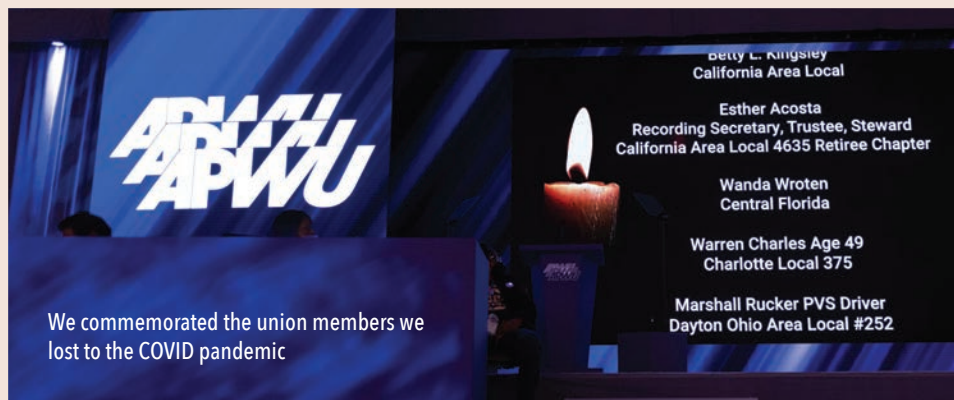
AFL-CIO Secretary Treasurer Fred Redmond spoke up for democracy at our rally on Tuesday



As the highest decision-making authority in the union, the national convention took votes on resolutions and constitutional amendments through the week.



Legislative & Political Director Judy Beard rallies members in the fight for fair elections.



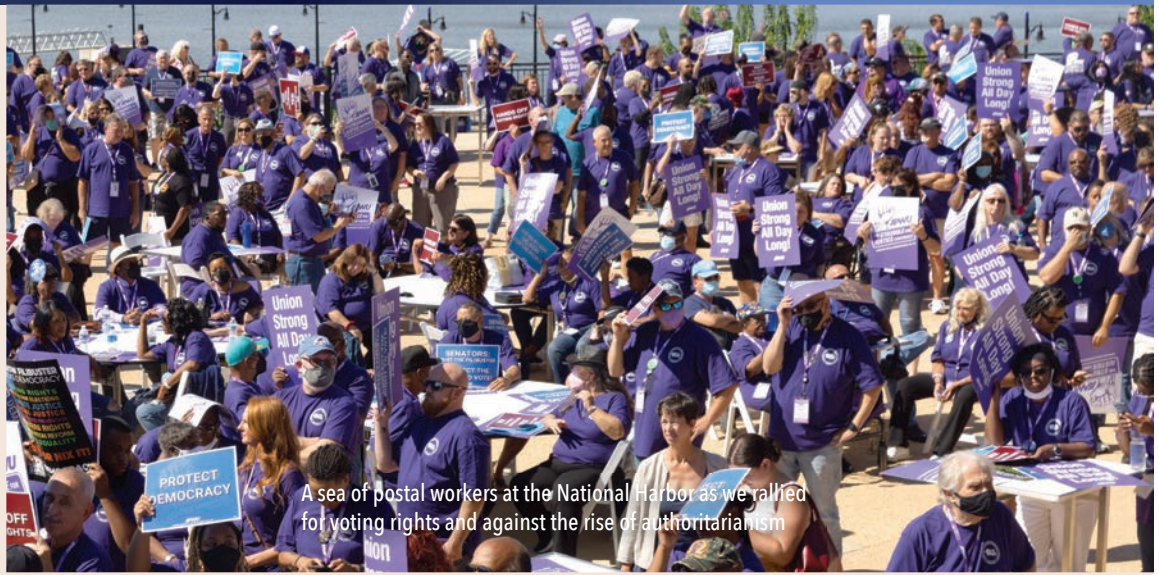
We commemorated the union members we lost to the COVID pandemic

- Betty L. Kingsley  
California Area Local
- Esther Acosta  
Recording Secretary, Trustee, Steward  
California Area Local 4635 Retiree Chapter
- Wanda Wroten  
Central Florida
- Warren Charles Age 49  
Charlotte Local 375
- Marshall Rucker PVS Driver  
Dayton Ohio Area Local #252



Delegates took part in a wide range of pre-convention workshops including one on Article 37.3.A.1 & MDAT Training





A sea of postal workers at the National Harbor as we rallied for voting rights and against the rise of authoritarianism



The Convention wound up business with the singing of our union anthem "Solidarity Forever"



The retirees conference took place on Saturday and Sunday





# “Amazing” Convention Sets Our Priorities

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR CHARLIE CASH

**T**he 2022 Biennial National Convention has just concluded and it was amazing! Due to COVID-19, the APWU had been unable to hold a National Convention since 2018. It was great to be together with more than 2,000 APWU family members in National Harbor, MD, where we met to debate the issues facing our union, and to hear the will of the delegates. It was an honor to be there as your Industrial Relations Director.

The delegates didn't always agree on every issue. There was healthy debate amongst the delegates, but at the end of each convention day we all left as friends and dedicated members united in our cause to defend our collective bargaining agreements and to move the APWU forward.

**"THE APWU BELONGS TO YOU, THE MEMBERS OF THE APWU. EVEN IF YOU WERE NOT A DELEGATE TO THE 2022 NATIONAL CONVENTION, YOU CAN PARTICIPATE IN DIRECTING WHAT YOU WANT YOUR LEADERS TO NEGOTIATE IN THE FUTURE".**

One of the important tasks at the National Convention is the report of the union Labor-Management Committee. I want to thank the committee for their hard work. Prior to convention, local and state organizations vote on and submit resolutions to be debated and voted on at the National Convention. These resolutions are what the membership of the APWU would like the contract negotiators to attempt to achieve in national negotiations. The Labor-Management Committee goes through each resolution, examines the effect each resolution may have on the contract and the membership, and then makes a recommendation to the delegates of the National Convention on whether a resolution should be supported by the delegates (concurred) or not (non-concurred). From these resolutions, the leadership of the APWU determines what will be negotiation priorities to submit in upcoming contract negotiations.

I was asked a question at the conclusion of the National Convention that I would like to address here: “How soon will the things we voted on be implemented?” This is a really good question. I know when I first started at the Postal Service over 25 years ago that I didn't quite know how everything worked in the union-management relationships.

The answer is that the labor-management resolutions will only become effective if we are able to successfully negotiate them with the Postal Service. Some resolutions have been APWU demands for many years; Some were new. It is now the job of the APWU negotiating team to review the resolutions that were passed from, not only this convention, but also from previous conventions; prioritize them, and develop proposals to present to the Postal Service and attempt to negotiate them. The Industrial Relations Department has already begun to compile the recently passed resolutions into our book of adopted labor-management resolutions, making sure it includes the most current contract desires of the delegates to the National Convention. Preparation for future national negotiations is an ongoing process. This is one of the very first steps we take to prepare for the next negotiations.

The APWU belongs to you, the members of the APWU. Even if you were not a delegate to the 2022 National Convention, you can participate in directing what you want your leaders to negotiate in the future. Each resolution had to be submitted to the convention through a local or state organization. There will be another convention in 2024 where another round of labor-management resolutions will be voted on. At your local membership meetings, you have the right to submit resolutions that your local can vote on, and if passed, are then submitted to the national convention, where they are debated and possibly adopted. Any member can do this! I encourage all of you to participate! If you want to write a resolution for future consideration, please reach out to your local officers and ask them to help you to write it up. It is your right as a member to be a part of the most democratic union in the country! ■

**Solidarity Always!**





# Keep Safe From Strain Injuries at Work

**W**orking at the Postal Service requires frequent lifting, pushing, pulling, and twisting in many of the jobs we do each day.

Some of the most common injuries APWU-represented employees incur are Musculoskeletal Disorders (MSD) and Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSI).

These types of injuries can be painful and debilitating. Not only can they lead to lost time at work, more importantly, these injuries can have a direct effect on your personal lives at home and affect all your interpersonal relationships.

To help prevent these types of injuries, it is recommended:

- Do some kind of warm-up and stretching at the start of each day
- Make sure to take your allotted breaks in order to rest—it is wise to do some stretching
- Respect any pain you feel and stop whenever activities cause pain!
- If you need to lift a heavy parcel, tray, or sack, don't be afraid to ask for help!
- Use provided carts, Mail Transport Equipment (MTE), pallet jacks, hamper tilters, etc. to make your jobs easier
- **DO NOT USE DAMAGED EQUIPMENT!** Using damaged equipment can increase your chance of injury
- Use proper lifting techniques:
  - > Keep elbows close to your body and the load as close to your body as possible



- > Place the item you are lifting at the “power zone” height, which is about mid-thigh to mid-chest while maintaining a straight spine alignment whenever possible.
- > Avoid twisting! Especially when you are bent forward during a lift. Turn the load by moving your feet rather than twisting your body.
- > Team lift anything more than 50lbs or anytime you feel that you need additional help, no matter the weight of the object.

#### Things to remember:

- Always “Red Tag” damaged equipment and **DO NOT USE!**
- Fill out and submit PS Form 1767 when you see safety hazards or when management insists you work in an unsafe manner or pace
- Report all injuries to management, complete necessary forms to protect yourself, and get the injury benefits you may be entitled to. ■

**If you have questions about the form, need help completing one, or can't find one in your office, contact your local union representative. For more information on reporting hazardous and unsafe conditions, visit the APWU website at: [www.apwu.org/1767](http://www.apwu.org/1767) or text “SAFETY” TO 91990 for a link.**

# Reporting Back on Four Years and Looking to the Future



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

## Where We've Been

Since 2009, the USPS has wanted to cut our workforce and reduce the retail footprint using Contract Postal Units (CPUs), approved shippers, and reducing/closing retail operations, which, if successful, would have reduced mail processing and retail/customer service clerks to under 50,000 clerks in each case. However, the clerk complement was 154,061 in 2011; as of 2022 there are 155,895 employees in the craft -- an increase of 1,834 clerks.

We fought off plant consolidations, attempts to contract-out retail operations, the subcontracting of mail processing, and attempts to reduce or close retail operations. We must face the reality that we are not writing letters, mailing bills, or buying postage like we used to and must shift to customer service, packages, and alternative products and services. We must take back non-managerial and non-supervisory work from EAS employees to create more work opportunities and higher paying jobs.

## Where We Stand

Article 37.3.A.1 states, "Every effort will be made to create desirable duty assignments from all available work hours for career employees to bid." This language has resulted in the creation of new duty assignments, the maximization of PTF clerks, overturning reversions and abolishments, the creation of more desirable duty assignments, and defeating the excessing of clerks.

Article 37.3.A.1 has changed the way the USPS performs Function 4 audits based on earned hours. The USPS is relying on clerk observations. It is very important for clerks to properly perform all of the duties in their position description. The USPS is switching from the timeclock method to utilizing sensor technology and scanners, for more accurate operational moves.

It is important that we apply the Enhanced and Expanded Services MOU, Job Audits MOU, Clerical Work MOU, New Positions and New Work MOU, and the Clerk Craft Jobs MOU to expand our work opportunities. The new 2021 CBA resulted in the Article 8 Task Force MOU, which provides the necessary language to challenge understaffing. The Filling Residual Vacancies MOU provided for all the improvements requested by the delegates

at the 2018 convention. PSEs now have automatic conversion rights in all offices except level-4 RMPOs in POST-Plan. In exchange they were given 26 hours of additional annual leave. PTF clerks received a one-time opportunity for full-time conversion.

Currently, there are no national-level RI-399 disputes. The parties are waiting on an arbitration decision for the final dispute involving the Automated Delivery Unit Sorter (ADUS). And with the assistance of NBA Bernie Timmerman, we have developed a training manual to assist locals with RI-399 jurisdictional matters.

**WE FOUGHT OFF PLANT CONSOLIDATIONS, ATTEMPTS TO CONTRACT OUT RETAIL OPERATIONS, THE SUBCONTRACTING OF MAIL PROCESSING, AND ATTEMPTS TO REDUCE OR CLOSE RETAIL OPERATIONS.**

In Function 7, we negotiated a pilot Telework Agreement at the Customer Care Centers, Customer Retention Team sites, and for the Mailing Requirement Clerks (MRCs). We are pursuing pay upgrades for MRCs and other work opportunities for BMEU clerks, resulting from the reduction of work from Seamless Acceptance.

In Function 4, we are pursuing additional products and services, including passport duties, where we have been negotiating for a higher-level duty assignment. The USPS proposed a new retail clerk position to perform these duties, however it was for level-6 pay. We will challenge the pay-level under sections 233 and 234 of the ELM.

We have also enforced crossing-craft grievances related to injured employees from other crafts, have won Lead Clerk and TACS grievances, including the return of TACS work to the clerk bargaining unit, and were successful with the Jobs MOU, where the USPS failed to post 400 duty assignments, for the PMR/PSE violations in the small offices, Postmasters in level-18 offices, and the improper use of the End of Day button. We will continue to work with Industrial Relations to provide a good, safe, and healthy work environment, free of hostility and harassment, and with dignity and respect. ■



# Successful Maintenance Division Conference



Assistant Director Terry Martinez, Director Idowu Balogun and Assistant Director Jason Treier

**T**he 2022 APWU National convention started on Monday, August 15, 2022 and lasted for four days. We participated in Maintenance Council meetings on Thursday, August 11 and pre-convention workshops (MS-1 staffing issues and Article 12 in the Maintenance Craft) on Friday, August 12. We were addressed by several guest speakers during the convention itself.

The Maintenance Division Conference, chaired by Maintenance Division Director, Idowu Balogun, convened on Saturday, August 13, and met for two days; together as a group on Saturday, and in separate regional breakouts on Sunday, August 14. Director Balogun gave his report on Saturday morning and, after lunch, Assistant Directors Terry B. Martinez and Jason Treier gave their reports and updates.

On Saturday afternoon we discussed all 2022 submitted maintenance craft resolutions. These resolutions were fully debated by the entire body of attending delegates of the maintenance craft conference for four hours.

**WE HAD A FULL DISCUSSION,  
HEATED DEBATES, AMENDED  
RESOLUTIONS, AND CONCLUDED  
IN SOLIDARITY.**

We had a full discussion, heated debates, amended resolutions, and concluded in solidarity. Resolutions consisted of issues surrounding wage level upgrades, field maintenance, duty assignment reposting and excessing, promotions, custodial staffing, higher level details, maintenance examinations, and non-bargaining unit detail restrictions.

On the final day of the national convention a motion was made, seconded, and accepted to accept the recommendations "in toto" and was so ordered. For more information and training materials, delegates can access the flash drive that was distributed at the national convention.

Special thanks to the Maintenance Division Resolutions Committee:

Dana Coletti (Chair), Manchester Area Local

Dave Simmons, Central NY Area Local

Joe Joyce, Boston Metro Area Local

Rose Marti Jablonski, 480-481 Area Local

Shelton Thomas, North Alabama Area Local

Jason Behrens, Cascade Area Local WA

## **Shirley Taylor BMC Conference:**

The 2022 Bulk Mail Center (BMC) Conference convened at 10:00 am on August 19, 2022 in National Harbor, MD.

The conference was chaired by Assistant Maintenance Division Director, Terry B. Martinez and Co-Chaired by Dena Briscoe of Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local. APWU President Mark Dimondstein addressed the delegates, followed by Multiple national officers. There were over 120 attendees. Regional Coordinator A.J. Jones welcomed the delegates to the Eastern Region on behalf of the five regional coordinators.

**THE 2022 BMC CONFERENCE WAS NAMED  
IN HONOR OF RETIRING NATIONAL  
BUSINESS AGENT SHIRLEY TAYLOR.**

The following BMC related issues were fully debated and addressed by the Clerk Division Director Lamont Brooks, Maintenance division Director Idowu Balogun, Motor Vehicle Division Assistant Director Kenneth Prinz and attendees during the Conference; keying qualifications, CRT, PIVR, SIPS, FRS and annex custodial staffing.

The body voted that the next BMC conference will be hosted by the Kansas KAW Valley Area Local in 2023. The 2022 BMC conference was named in honor of retiring National Business Agent Shirley Taylor. ■

# 44th Annual MVS Directors Conference



Director Michael Foster and Assistant Director Kenneth Prinz

The 44th Annual MVS Directors Conference was held on August 13-14 in National Harbor, MD, followed by the APWU's 26th Biennial National Convention. MVS members throughout the country received training on MVS issues and were provided Step 4 reports.

The Motor Vehicle Service Division received 10 contractual resolutions that were reviewed by the MVS Resolutions Committee. The delegates discussed, debated, and referred the resolutions to the national convention and the resolutions were adopted "in toto". The MVS Committee consisted of the following members: Darryl Gause, Atlanta Metro Area Local Chairperson; Cassandra Black, NY Metro Area Local Vice Chairperson; Michael Crum, Keystone PA Area Local; Steven Clinton, Portland Oregon Area Local; Luis Millan, Houston Area Local; Ross Rahman, Greater LA Area Local; Faron Williamson, Omaha Area Local.

## THERE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN NOTICEABLE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE 2019 PETERBILT MODEL 348.

The MVS Committee made either a Concurrence or Non-Concurrence recommendation to the MVS Craft Conference. The conference adopted six of the nine resolutions to be proposals for contract negotiations in 2024. The adopted resolutions consist of the following:

- Article 39.2.A.1, posting or reverting a position be changed from 28 days to 14 days.
- Employee's bid position will be posted for bid if in a 204B detail for more than 120 days in a 12-month period.
- Article 39.1.B.7.e, PTFs will be converted to FTR within one pay period.
- Article 39.2.A.7, when requested by the Union all FTR VMF duty assignments shall be posted once each calendar year.
- MVS CDL holders be given the option to return to work after completing a tour without having no-less-than 10 hours off duty.
- Driver Safety Instructors with a CDL "A" be upgraded to level-10.

## Peterbilt Cargo Van First Article Testing

The APWU received notice that the Postal Service would be taking an option to purchase 447 additional Peterbilt Cargo Vans, model 548.

The First Article Testing was held on July 19, 2022 in Marshall, Michigan. The following APWU members participated: Shana Parker MVS Craft Director, Philadelphia PA; Peggy Wilcox, MVS Craft Director, Phoenix AZ; Tony Brooks, MVS Craft Director, Michigan; and Ken Prinz, Assistant Director, MVS Division.

There appears to have been noticeable safety improvements over the 2019 Peterbilt model 348. The cab area has more room, spanning nearly 82-inches wide, including a floor space lowered by 4 inches. The 6-inches lower grille crown and increased hood slope provides a 63 percent larger windshield for better visibility. There is also a larger door window and lower beltline. A 2-inch lowered dash shows a digital display of pop-up notifications that communicate warnings and suggested actions. Night-mode produces a subtle color change which improves night vision and reduces window glare.

The model 548 will provide navigation and a backup camera. The automatic light sequence for pre-checks was a big hit with the First Article members.

Pursuant to Article 39.3.B the APWU submitted the following issues on the model 548:

- The safety chain on the lift gate needs to be larger, to make it easier to fasten.
- The lift gate handle needs to be larger to allow a hand through.
- The yellow grab handle for the cab would be a beneficial option so that drivers do not have to use the steering wheel.
- Handles on the back of the truck should be larger. This would help with safety when raising the lift gate with large equipment.
- Height clearance decals inside and outside of the truck were missing.

We will provide the Postal Service's response when it becomes available. ■



# Union Democracy Sets the Agenda



Director Steve Brooks

**W**e just completed our 26th Biennial National Convention, which was held in National Harbor, MD. The delegates engaged in meaningful and spirited debate over the resolutions put before them.

The APWU arguably has the most democratic process of any of the unions I am aware of for determining the items to bring forward in contract negotiations. Local and state organizations across the country have a time frame in which to submit proposed resolutions to the National for consideration at the National Convention.

The National provides a template format for the organizations to follow when developing a resolution. A screening committee is appointed, consisting of APWU officers from different areas of the country. They review the resolutions and determine which committee the resolution should be directed to for review.

The committees are the: Labor-Management, Clerk Division, Maintenance Division, Motor Vehicle Division, Support Services Division, Formal Resolutions, Legislative, and Constitution Committee.

If a committee feels that the resolution belongs elsewhere, they will refer it to the appropriate committee. Otherwise, they will review the proposed resolution and determine: 1) whether or not the resolution was adopted at a previous convention; 2) whether or not they concur with the resolution. The committee chair reports whether they concur or not concur to the delegation at the convention. This is where the debate on the resolution begins.

Each delegate at the convention has the opportunity to go to a microphone and express their opinion on the resolution and state whether they are for or against the resolution. They may also offer an amendment to the original resolution. If they offer an amendment, the terms of that amendment are voted on by the delegates as either accepting or declining the amended resolution.

After all is said and done, the body of the delegation has the final say on whether or not a resolution is passed. If a resolution is concurred with, its terms will need to be negotiated in the next round of contract negotiations.

At this convention the Support Services Division had a couple of Constitutional resolutions that were submitted.

Both were concurred at the Convention. One resolution was to change the language under Article 21 (a) Succession of Officers and Vacancies. The current language in the Constitution states that the President, with the majority approval of the National Executive Board, will appoint a Director of Support Services should the position become vacant mid-term. The convention resolved that that the Support Services National Business Agent will automatically take over as the Director of the Division. This language matches that of the Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Divisions, in that it specifically identifies who will assume the Director position.

Another concurred resolution was in Article 12 Section 2 (b), which eliminated the language that stated that a local president or secretary must sign a nomination petition in order for a member to be eligible to run for the offices of director or national business agent in the Support Services Division. Several of the Support Services locals do not have an official Secretary position. Now that we have eliminated that restriction, the President and any one other officer of the local can sign a petition.

As Support Services members know, there is currently an election for the NBA and Director positions and I felt that the language in the Constitution should be changed to provide clarity in the election process.

## IT/AS Contract Approved by Members

Another truly democratic process followed by the APWU is that of the contract ratification process. When tentative terms of a new Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) are reached between the Negotiating Committee and the USPS, those terms are sent to the APWU members covered under that CBA for review and vote. The voting process is called a ratification process.

While we were at the convention a ratification process was taking place. On Wednesday August 17, 2022 we received word that the terms for a 36-month CBA were ratified by vote of the membership. Not only were the terms agreed to, they were overwhelmingly agreed to with a 96 percent “yes” vote. At this time the new contract is being signed and will be effective upon signature of the parties. ■

## EASTERN REGIONAL COORDINATOR

DELAWARE | MARYLAND | NEW YORK | NEW JERSEY | PENNSYLVANIA | VIRGINIA |  
WEST VIRGINIA | WASHINGTON, D.C.



AJ Jones, Eastern Regional Coordinator

# Delegates Unite at National Convention

**C**ongratulations on a spirited National Convention; our members were well represented and the delegates united for the good of the union. Another one for the history books! I would like to thank Nation's Capital Southern Maryland Area Local, its President Dena Briscoe, and members for generously hosting.

Many issues were debated at the Convention and Craft Conferences. I am proud of the Eastern Region delegates for a job well done. I would also like to recognize all delegates for their unwavering unionism. Please visit [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org) for a Convention summary.

### COVID-19 Remains

COVID-19 remains and is certainly playing a role in our daily lives. New variants show that the virus can mutate to become more infectious, even after vaccinations and boosters.

Daily MMO cleaning, Stand-up Talks, and deep cleaning after a positive case has been identified in a facility are crucial. Remember, Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice can be used, and must be completed to document deficiencies. Grievances must be filed to address these serious concerns. This may be repetitious, but we must stay focused.

### Workplace Humanity

Everyone has the basic right to report to work without the fear of reprisal, harassment, bullying, intimidation, and threats. I hear from members about degrading and disrespectful treatment from management in the workplace. We must engage the employer in discussion at all levels to send a strong message that it won't be tolerated!

Our National Task Force has begun meeting in an effort to lead the way. Please reference our Educational Brochure published this year, called "Improving Your Workplace Environment". **For additional information and access to references, visit <https://apwu.org/fighting-workplace-harassment> or text HARASSMENT to 91990.**

Respecting one another is a mutual right and a starting place to have humanity in the workplace.

This positive approach will hopefully foster healthy working relationships. If you experience a hostile work environment, contact your local union representative, and complete a Form 1767 (Report of Hazard, Unsafe Condition or Practice). Hostile work environments are considered unsafe conditions and a 1767 is appropriate. Managers are required to keep these forms on the workroom floor, easily accessible for all. Remember to keep a copy of the completed form for your records, to share with your local union.

### Article 12 on the Horizon

Under the USPS 10-year plan, changes are coming and we have to be prepared to not only fight for new work, but defend our current work and ensure others are not performing our work all at once. When we learn of violations in the field, grievances must be filed to document them and assist in the event that the USPS issues an Article 12 Notification.

When a regional notification of Article 12.5.C.5 (excess outside craft or installation) is received by the regional coordinator's office, a regional meeting must take place. Until then, management cannot enter discussions locally.

### Article 12.5.B.3 of the contract 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.***

### Article 12.5.A.4 states:

***4. reassign within an installation employees excess to the needs of a section of that installation;***

Both of these provisions are extremely important and must be enforced by the union to hold management accountable. If an argument is made by the USPS that it was not possible, they must meet a burden demonstrating their reasoning.

As we prepare to take on new challenges together, my colleague coordinators: Central Region Coordinator Sharyn Stone, Western Region Coordinator Omar Gonzalez, Southern Region Coordinator Ken Beasley, and North East Region Coordinator Tiffany Foster are committed to fighting back against any attacks on the APWU. ■





## FROM the FIELD

Below are quotes from various APWU local and state publications throughout the country. All the publications listed are part of the Postal Press Association (PPA). For more information on the PPA, visit [apwupostalpress.org](http://apwupostalpress.org) or email [ppa@apwupostalpress.org](mailto:ppa@apwupostalpress.org).

"Regarding the contract, have you ever heard someone say: 'This contract does not benefit me. It's the same stuff we always get.' So let me give you some insight into contract negotiations. ... First, we must fight to keep what we already have! Just because it is written in our current contract, and contracts from many years past, does not mean we will automatically get it in the next contract. Every time at negotiations, management wants to eliminate our no-layoff clause. They want to eliminate pay raises or allow an increase at a much lesser percentage amount. We continue to fight for the safety of all employees, representation for all employees, and everything in between. Second, we negotiate for more benefits and better benefits. I really appreciate the APWU negotiation team for their successful negotiations that have led to our new contract. We all have greatly benefitted from all of our contracts, from the first contract to the most recent. So, let's not take our contract for granted (again)."

--Tonya Freeman, Raleigh (NC) Cosmo Area Local Vice President,  
*The Rank & Filer*

"We are union members because unions are essential to a democracy which fights for good paying jobs and protects workers from abuses by management. Good paying jobs means people are able to buy products, homes, cars, and all the things that most of us now take for granted, especially when someone else fought for those conditions. ... It is important to honor the men and women who fought to win benefits we enjoy today. Let us be reminded of the many activists who put their lives on the line and we must understand more than ever that the struggles continue for our future. When you stand up for justice either at the postal service or supporting others, you are not only doing the right and decent thing, you are growing and strengthening unions which is good for the country."

--Greg Jones  
Indiana Postal Workers Union  
Motor Vehicle Service Craft Director  
*The IPWU Dispatch*

"Over the next four months, we have the opportunity to vote in three critical elections. There will be primary elections for state and federal government candidates. There is an election for our national union officers in September. And there will be the November 8 election to determine who governs us locally and nationally. I will show up and I hope you will too. I know it feels like every election is labeled the most important election of our lifetime but this time November feels bigger. As a state and nation, we have seen some extraordinary things happen in the past six years. I do not believe it matters which side of the aisle you align with when you look at our recent history; some crazy has settled in and does not look like it will go away without our voices. As much as I believe in peaceful protest, I think our November vote is our loudest voice. ... Learn, engage, commit to voting and let's get through another election year. Make our union, state, and federal voices heard. If you don't participate, you don't deserve to complain. Elections have consequences. Let's not be a consequence of inaction."

--Elaine Dunlap  
480-481 Area Local (MI) editor  
*The Union Communicator*

"All of us union members carry the weight of those co-workers who are not members. They want the answers that you get from your stewards and officers but don't want to pay for it. That isn't right! ... It's up to all of us to get those clerks who are not members to become members, not through coercion but through facts of what the union has done and continues to do for all of us. Granted, there are some very stubborn clerks who will not join, have been asked multiple times and still refuse but continue to enjoy all of the benefits of the APWU's hard work, with most recently a new contract that includes raises, back pay and full COLAs! Something that another steward said to me when a nonmember asked him a question: he told him to 'go get your answers from management!' We should all try to increase our membership so that we can continue to fight for workers' rights, better wages, better benefits, better and safer working conditions and for dignity and respect in the workplace, just to name a few areas that your union is working on for you. So, if you know of any coworker who has not joined, ask them if they would like to join. We'll get them the paperwork."

--Hanna Bailey  
Central New York Area Local Clerk Craft Director  
*Salt City Post*

# LABOR NEWS



## Medieval Times Workers Seek Recognition at the Roundtable

On July 15, workers at a Medieval Times in Lyndhurst, NJ voted 26 to 11 in favor of forming the theater chain's first ever union of performance knights, squires, cast members, and stable hands. The workers petitioned to join the American Guild of Variety Artists (AGVA).

The workers organized in an effort to improve pay and working conditions, but most importantly, they wanted to focus on issues of safety, as performances involve jousting, horseback riding, and other stunts where workers have sustained chronic injuries.

"We look forward to working with management to create a fairer, safer, and more enjoyable Medieval Times," said workers in a statement. "Together, we will build a workplace that allows us to thrive while doing the work we love."

Less than a week later, workers at Bowmans Castle in Buena Park, CA became the second Medieval Times location to petition to form a union, after a supermajority vote of their 50 workers, also in favor of joining the AGVA.

## Kaiser Permanente Workers on Strike

In August, more than 2,000 mental health professionals at Kaiser Permanente began an open-ended strike at several locations in Northern California, picketing for increased staffing and to put an end to their patient wait times for appointments, which can often range from four to eight weeks, according to the National Union of Healthcare Workers (NUHW).



## American University Staffers Win Tentative Deal After 5-Day Strike

More than 500 workers at American University (AU) in Washington, DC reached an agreement with management on a new contract after five days on strike.

"I am proud to have stood arm-in-arm with my colleagues over the past few days," Roshan Abraham, a first-year advisor reported to Inside Higher Ed. "The gains we have made through the agreement are life-changing."

Staff, including administrative staff, counselors, advisors, technicians, and coordinators voted 91 percent in favor of strike action. They walked out on Monday Aug. 22, seeking improvements to low wages and unfair working conditions.

Hundreds of new students joined the worker protest on the fourth day of action, staging a walk-out during their orientation convocation, chanting "Pay your staff!" A tentative agreement was reached on the fifth morning of the strike.

## Starbucks Memphis Seven

Starbucks has been ordered to reinstate seven fired worker-organizers, known as the "Memphis Seven," by a federal judge in Tennessee. The case, submitted by officials from the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), was overseen by U.S. District Judge Sheryl Lipman who said that the NLRB "provides evidence consistent with the theory that Starbucks discriminatorily applied its policies to the Memphis Seven when terminating them."



## Auto Parts Workers Vote 100 Percent Union 'YES'

On August 19, auto parts workers at Dakkota Integrated Systems, a facility in Hazel Park, MI voted unanimously, with 100 percent of the vote (179-0) in an election to join with the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) local 140.



## Video Game Testers Press Continue on Activision Blizzard Union Drive

In July, Quality Assurance (QA) video game testers at Blizzard Albany in New York filed a petition with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to form a union, with 19 of the 20 employees signing union cards with the Communications Workers of America (CWA). They are following in the footsteps of the Santa Monica, CA-based Raven Software QA video game testers who voted to unionize in May. Raven Software is a division of the larger Activision Blizzard video game company.

"There are issues in the video game industry that often go unaddressed because our work is considered a passion instead of a job," Blizzard Albany associate test analyst Amanda Laven said in a statement. "Quality assurance workers deserve fair treatment and proper compensation for the work we do which is why we chose to form a union."



## Berkeley REI Win Union Vote

Workers at the REI store in Berkeley, CA have voted by 56-38 in favor of forming a union with the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW).

The outdoor recreation workers overcame the retail chain's union-busting efforts, alleging understaffing, overwork, favoritism and racism from managers. They are calling for REI, a retail co-operative, to live up to the progressive values that it espouses.

Michael, an employee at the Berkeley store, said he voted "yes" because: "I want to see REI stay true to the values it holds itself to and to the legacy of its founders. That means providing everyone with the support and knowledge needed to do their job; a place everyone feels safe to come to work every day, and wages people can survive on."

## Delta Workers Fight for Fairer Skies

Flight attendants at Delta Airlines, the only major airline company in the United States whose 23,000 flight attendants are not unionized, are seeking to join the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA (AFA-CWA) after the pandemic has proven just how important it is for workers to have the labor protections provided by a union. Workers are seeking improvements in pay, conditions, and schedules that have consistently been short-staffed.

Delta has historically opposed any unionization attempts made by its workforce, with only 20 percent of its workforce of pilots and dispatchers being represented by a union, compared to other major airlines, which are at least 80 percent represented.

"Delta is a company that has long union-busted, has deep roots in union-busting, and it is integrated into everything the company does," said Sara Nelson, president of the AFA-CWA.



## UK Postal Workers Walk Out

115,000 UK postal workers at the country's privatized mail company, Royal Mail, walked out on strike on Aug. 26. The action brought 1,500 Royal Mail workplaces to a halt after years of soaring company profits and declining pay. As the American Postal Worker went to press, further one-day strikes were planned for Aug. 31, and then Sept 8 and 9. Delegates to our 26th National Biennial Convention expressed solidarity with our UK union siblings at the Communication Workers Union (CWU), holding up signs of support in the CWU's iconic pink color.

## Amazon Walkout at California Air Hub

Workers at Amazon's largest air hub in California, known as KSBD, staged a walkout on August 15 demanding higher pay and improvements to safety conditions. About 150 employees of the San Bernardino facility, who have organized under the name Inland Empire Amazon Workers United, participated in the walkout and more than 900 workers from the location have signed a petition for better pay and better safety precautions related to "suffocating" heat.

## LEGISLATIVE & POLITICAL



Judy Beard, Director

# Our Work Continues: APWU Biennial National Convention, Congress' End-of-Year Actions and the 2022 Elections

**D**uring our National Convention, the APWU Legislative and Political Department hosted a midterm election briefing that focused on our election efforts this upcoming November.

Eddie Acosta, a national campaign coordinator with the AFL-CIO, spoke about what is at stake in this election and laid out the AFL-CIO Labor 2022 program. APWU union counsel, Mindy Holmes, made a presentation on the Hatch Act, an election-related federal law that postal workers must abide by. Finally, we gave attendees information about how to participate in APWU's midterm election program. The large turnout at the meeting showed that APWU members are fired up and ready to register and turn out a record number of voters this cycle!

Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Brenda Lawrence, and Brian Fitzpatrick, along with Senator Chris Van Hollen and President Joe Biden, also addressed the convention. They each thanked APWU members for our heroic efforts during the pandemic, and for getting ballots processed during the 2020 election.

### Congressional Action

During the convention, President Biden signed into law the historic Inflation Reduction Act. The wide-ranging law allocates a total of \$3 billion for the USPS to purchase an electric fleet. More specifically, \$1.29 billion is available for the next nine years to purchase zero-emission delivery vehicles and \$1.71 billion is available to design, purchase, and install the needed infrastructure, such as charging stations.

Aside from the direct benefits to the Postal Service, this bill also makes the largest investment in addressing climate change in our nation's history. Additionally, this legislation addresses both the ever-increasing cost of health care and rising inflation, while fixing the tax code to ensure that corporations will pay a fairer share in taxes.

Although significant legislation has passed, Congress has more work to do. To keep the government open, the Senate must either pass the House's appropriations bill,

draft and pass their own bill, or pass a continuing resolution to keep the government open before funding expires in approximately one month.

Congress is also working on finalizing two bipartisan pieces of legislation, which would safeguard our elections. The first bill, the Electoral Count Reform Act, would prevent the Vice President or state electors from refusing to certify the election without cause, and prevent them from overturning the popular vote of a state to elect a candidate of their choosing. The second bill, the Enhanced Election Security and Protection Act, adds protections to poll workers to help insulate them from intimidation, and includes several reforms to election mail to ensure ballots are processed properly.

**THE LARGE TURNOUT AT THE MEETING SHOWED THAT APWU MEMBERS ARE FIRED UP AND READY TO REGISTER AND TURN OUT A RECORD NUMBER OF VOTERS THIS CYCLE!**

APWU members continue to fight for Congress to move on the USPS Shipping Equity Act, a bill that would allow USPS to ship alcoholic beverages directly to consumers.

On July 19, APWU joined other postal unions to host a USPS Shipping Equity Act action day. Over 1,000 calls were made to compel members of Congress to co-sponsor the bill. We encourage all members to continue to call the Legislative Hotline at (844) 402-1001 to help end this unjust discrepancy.

### 2022 Elections

In 2022, voters will decide who will serve in the 118th Congress. Issues like defending the USPS, preserving Social Security, protecting workers' rights, investing in infrastructure, addressing climate change, and expanding voting rights are on the line. For resources on how to get involved, please visit our website at [www.apwu.org](http://www.apwu.org) and click on "Legislative & Political" under "Our Union." ■





Anna Smith, Director

# Local Organizing – the Fund That Pays for Itself

**A**s local and state officers bring their 2023 budgets to September and October meetings, it is important every local creates a budget for organizing.

This summer, in our Building Union Power organizing drive, we recruited 5,000 new members. But the work cannot stop there if we are going to keep strengthening as a union.

One of the things that really stood out when I looked at the numbers, is the gap between locals that have invested in member organizing, and those that have let it slide over the years. Many locals have membership density of more than 90 percent, but there are some that are still down at 50 percent.

Of course, it's easier for some locals to organize members than others: geography, the history of the local, and many other factors can play a role. But we can all control what we do about it. A lot of locals don't have organizing budgets. Let's change that.

The budget should be whatever the local can afford – whether it's just a hundred dollars or thousands – it's always worth making the start.

That money can be spent on loss-time, on the cost of travel to worksites, or for home visits. Many locals hold breakroom informational events; having an organizing budget means that you can afford some refreshments or t-shirts.

If the local or state union doesn't have a budget to pay for those things, then how will it fund that work?

Think of it as an investment that will pay itself back many times over the years. A dollar spent on recruiting a new member to the union might bring back many more dollars as they become contributors to the cost of bargaining our union contract, servicing, mobilizing, and maintaining a labor union.

But it is about more than making sure that everyone pays for their fair share of the union's work. Building our membership also builds our solidarity. It means that we have all made the commitment to have each other's backs. That commitment pays off when it's time for us to hit the streets to defend our jobs or mobilize together to secure a good contract.

If you want advice on the budget or how to organize in your local or state organization, please feel free to reach out to me at [asmith@apwu.org](mailto:asmith@apwu.org). I have resources that your local can use for organizing on the Organization Department section of the website [apwu.org/organization](http://apwu.org/organization).

**THE BUDGET SHOULD BE WHATEVER  
THE LOCAL CAN AFFORD – WHETHER  
IT'S JUST A HUNDRED DOLLARS OR  
THOUSANDS – IT'S ALWAYS WORTH  
MAKING THE START.**

## Young Union Organizers Inspire Convention


One of the highlights of our National Biennial Convention in August was hearing from workers organizing new unions in places like Starbucks and Amazon.

I was inspired by their excitement and commitment to the cause of labor. They have risked their jobs and livelihoods to build new unions up from the workroom floor. In the case of one of the Amazon workers – Chris Smalls of the Staten Island Amazon facility that voted “yes” to form the Amazon Labor Union earlier this year – it literally cost him his job, when he was fired for his union activity.

The National Convention passed resolutions in support of this organizing at new workplaces, especially at Amazon. We should all support this new wave of union organizing. It helps those workers and, in the long-run, it helps us too. It raises wages across the board and makes bosses everywhere respect the power of the union movement.

What started as a handful of Starbucks workers in three stores in Buffalo, NY has now won unions at hundreds of stores across the country. Let's take inspiration from that example and use it to move forward in our own organizing at the USPS. Remember that together, we are powerful! ■

## How COLA Affects Your VA Disability Payments



**T**he July 2022 Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) recorded the single largest increase in the history of the American Postal Workers Union. But for veterans who receive compensation for service-connected disabilities, that's not the end of the COLA impact. COLA directly affects benefits such as Social Security and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability payments.

The annual Social Security COLA increase is based on the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W), which is measured by the Department of Labor (DOL). Both the annual VA disability pay and military retirement COLA pay adjustment are tied to the Social Security rate change, which will be announced by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics on October 13, 2022.

The 2023 COLA is based on the third quarter (July, August, September) average CPI-W index in 2022 over the 2021 third quarter average.

The DOL takes a snapshot of the costs of a select group of goods and services and compares those costs to the previous year. If there is an increase, retirees and veterans with service-connected disabilities receiving government benefits see a bump in their monthly payments for the upcoming year. If those costs go down, the government payments remain the same in the upcoming year.

According to VA, nearly 5.2 million veterans receive disability compensation, with an average annual benefit of \$18,858 as of 2021.

With inflation at 40-year highs, some economists have expressed that disabled veterans with a VA disability rating of 10 percent or more can expect to see anywhere from an 8.9 percent to 10.5 percent COLA increase on their January 2023 VA compensation payments.

Overall, the CPI-W increased 9.1 percent over the last 12 months.

Thus, a 9.1 percent COLA increase is the first month's data point (of three) for determining the final 2023 COLA increase for VA disability pay. This means that everything depends on the numbers in the next two months.

Based on national inflation data, an early projection by The Senior Citizens League (TSCL), a seniors' advocacy group, estimates rates will rise by 9.6 percent. That increase would be the highest veterans have seen since 1981, when it went up 11.2 percent in response to inflation at the time.

The estimate from TSCL is based on the CPI through July. But with two months left to go, the ultimate increase could vary slightly from the projection. According to TSCL, if inflation runs higher than the recent average, the COLA could be 10.1 percent, and if inflation runs lower than the recent average, the COLA could be 9.3 percent.

A recent CNBC report also indicated that military retirees and veterans receiving disability payments from the VA could see a record monthly check increase thanks to the pace of inflation. The anticipated record increase would be the second consecutive year for such increases. For 2022, the raise was 5.9 percent, which followed an average 1.5 percent increase over the 10 previous years.

What this means for 2023, is that even if the index level doesn't go up any higher in the next two months, veterans receiving disability compensation from the VA would still see their monthly disability compensation go up by \$13.89 at a 10 percent service-connected disability rating, to as much as \$303.22 for a 100 percent rating. But again, everything depends on the numbers in the next two months.

The COLA amount paid to veterans and their survivors is effective Dec. 1, 2022 and will be reflected in January 2023 compensation payments.

Once announced, we will post the 2023 Social Security COLA annual increase rate on our website, where it can be viewed at <https://www.apwu.org/cola-social-security-recipients>. ■

*Source(s): Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)  
The Senior Citizens League (TSCL)*





Daleo Freeman, Director

# Human Relations Department Moving Forward

## Convention Report

The 26th Biennial Convention was very inspiring and it was a pleasure to see all of those who came out to exercise their constitutional right to a voice and vote, collectively participating in this democracy. The delegates' votes dictate to the APWU Leadership how they would like this great union to move forward in a direction that addresses all members and all crafts, no matter their career status- active or retired.

Each delegate shared a responsibility to participate in the work that had to be done at this convention as a representative of their local union. I am confident that, for new Convention delegates, this experience afforded them an eye-opening opportunity to see this great union at work. Even as a seasoned delegate, the chance to speak on the floor and engage in discussions/debate about various current issues was exciting and rewarding to me. There's always something new to learn, and I'm happy that I was given the opportunity to voice my opinion through voting.

Like many others, I left the convention feeling encouraged, reinvigorated, ramped up and ready to continue the good fight.

The dynamic union activists from Amazon and Starbucks gave delegates reasons to continue the fight, chanting, "When we Fight, We Win." We voted with enthusiasm to go on record in support of their worker organizing campaigns. Together, we will stand united with our fellow labor workers for fair wages and benefits and a safe work place.

## Regional Resource Assistants

We are moving forward with our intended programs to assist our members across the country on Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) claims and other issues.

On July 28, we met Antonio "Tony" Rios, Director of Federal Employees', Longshore and Harbor Workers' Compensation, OWCP U.S. Department of Labor, and

his staff. Mr. Rios, who manages the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA), addressed present and future plans to better assist our members with concerns related to OWCP.

We also established regional resource assistants. I would like to thank all of the local and state presidents, along with our regional coordinators, for their assistance in recommending APWU members from all across the country to serve as Regional Resource Assistants, training locals and states on OWCP Policies and Procedures.

Recently, we had the opportunity to meet with all the Resource Assistants to outline the program and plans for the future. We are excited and ready to get to work for the members as a team. The selected resource assistants love their work, and vow to carry out their duties both competently and enthusiastically. The assistants' names, contact information and represented regions will be made available as soon as possible. Until then, please continue to contact your local or state union officials for assistance; the Human Relations Department will assist as needed.

## Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The EAP continues to be a valuable resource for members and their families, when promoted properly. Through constant talks with the Postal Service and all parties represented on the committee at the National Level, we have been able to get the postal service to agree to expand districts to help accommodate areas in need of more assistance.

We will be reaching out to locals to provide names of past and present committee members who have served or continue to serve on the committees. My efforts are aimed towards promoting unity and making this the most successful committee that provides services to our members.

*"Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."*

Frederick Douglass ■



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

# Federal Domestic Violence Laws

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been an alarming rise in domestic violence and intimate partner violence. In 1994, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”). This Act, and the 1996 additions to the Act, recognize that domestic violence is a national crime. In 1994 and 1996, Congress also passed changes to the Gun Control Act making it a federal crime to possess a firearm and/or ammunition while subject to a qualifying Protection Order and to possess a firearm and/or ammunition after conviction of a qualifying misdemeanor crime of domestic violence.

### Is a Domestic Violence Crime a Felony?

Domestic violence crimes are felonies. It is a federal crime under the Violence Against Women Act (“VAWA”) to: (1) cross state lines or enter or leave Indian country and physically injure an “intimate partner,” (2) cross state lines to stalk or harass or to stalk or harass within the maritime or territorial lands of the United States (this includes military bases and Indian country), and

**GENERALLY, THE FEDERAL LAW RECOGNIZES AN INTIMATE PARTNER AS A SPOUSE, A FORMER SPOUSE, A PERSON WHO SHARES A CHILD IN COMMON WITH THE VICTIM, OR A PERSON WHO COHABITS OR HAS COHABITED WITH THE VICTIM.**

(3) cross state lines to enter or leave Indian country and violate a qualifying Protection Order.

In a “VAWA” case, the Court must order restitution to pay the victim the full amount of loss. These losses include costs for medical or psychological care, physical therapy, transportation, temporary housing, child care expenses, loss of income, attorney’s fees, costs incurred in obtaining a civil protection order, and any other losses suffered by the victim as a result of the offense. Victims are encouraged to keep a record of all expenses caused by the domestic violence crime.

### What is a Qualifying Domestic Violence Misdemeanor?

Possession of a firearm and/or ammunition after conviction of a “qualifying” domestic violence misdemeanor

is a federal crime under Section 922(g)(9). Generally, the misdemeanor will “qualify” if the conviction was for a crime committed by an intimate partner, parent or guardian of the victim that required the use of attempted use of physical force or the threatened use of a deadly weapon. The United States Attorney’s Office will examine your case and determine whether the prior domestic violence misdemeanor conviction qualifies according to the law.

### Who is an Intimate Partner?

Generally, the federal law recognizes an intimate partner as a spouse, a former spouse, a person who shares a child in common with the victim, or a person who cohabits or has cohabited with the victim.

### Victims’ Rights

A federal domestic violence victim has the following rights under 42 U.S.C. Section 10606(b):

1. The right to be treated with fairness and with respect for the victim’s dignity and privacy;
2. The right to be reasonably protected from the accused offender;
3. The right to be notified of court proceedings;
4. The right to be present at all public court proceedings related to the offense, unless the court determines that testimony by the victim would be materially affected if the victim heard other testimony at the trial;
5. The right to confer with the attorney for the Government in the case;
6. The right to restitution, and
7. The right to information about the conviction, sentencing, imprisonment, and release of the offender.

If you or someone you know are the victim of a domestic violence crime, contact one of the following agencies for help: Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 or National Coalition Against Domestic Violence at 1-303-839-1852. Also, contact your local police department. Don’t suffer in silence; you are not alone. ■

*The text in this article is from the U.S. Department of Justice Website.*



## RETIREES



Nancy Olumekor, Director

# APWU Retirees Still Fighting for Justice

### Mid-Term Elections - Use Your Voice and Your Vote

The mid-term elections are approaching. Use your voice to let the candidates running for Congress – both the House and the Senate – know that you and your family will only vote for those candidates who are committed to protecting your hard-earned benefits, your federal pension (CSRS or FERS), Social Security, Medicare, as well as health insurance and life insurance.

**TALK TO YOUR FAMILY, YOUR NEIGHBORS, YOUR FRIENDS AND OTHER LIKE-MINDED REGISTERED VOTERS. EDUCATE THEM ON THE ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO YOU. ASK YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS TO VOTE FOR THOSE CANDIDATES WHO WILL SUPPORT OUR ISSUES. JOIN WITH OTHERS WHO ARE WORKING TO ELECT CANDIDATES IN YOUR AREA WHO WILL SUPPORT OUR ISSUES IN CONGRESS.**

Tell the candidates running for Congress in your area that you will only support candidates who are opposed to privatizing the Postal Service and federal agencies such as the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), and the Social Security and Veterans Administrations. Review the incumbent candidates' voting records on these issues and other issues of importance to you. If they haven't supported our issues in the past, let them know that you will not be supporting them during the mid-term elections. If the candidate doesn't have a voting record, then ask them questions, ask them for a commitment to support our issues, which include protecting our federal pensions, Social Security, and Medicare. Ask them to support legislation to improve the standard of living for seniors and retirees, as well as the standard of living for all working people.

Take ten minutes to write a letter or a send postcard to your elected representatives in the House and the Senate. Tell them why this election is important to you, your family and your future. Then, make that telephone call to your members of Congress at 1-202-224-3121 or use the APWU Legislative Hotline 1-844-402-1001 to call Capitol Hill. Remind them that you are a registered voter; you are a postal retiree with a federal pension; you will only support candidates who will protect your federal pension, benefits, the postal service and federal agencies.

These issues are of paramount importance in this election for postal and federal retirees, senior citizens, and postal workers. We need to make sure that we elect candidates who are going to protect our livelihood and our federal pensions and benefits.

Talk to your family, your neighbors, your friends and other like-minded registered voters. Educate them on the issues of importance to you. Ask your family and friends to vote for those candidates who will support our issues. Join with others who are working to elect candidates in your area who will support our issues in Congress.

Contact your local Central Labor Council or your local union office to help. Volunteer to make telephone calls, knock on doors to help elect candidates who will support our issues in Congress.

Then, last but certainly not least, VOTE. Vote early, if you can; vote by mail or vote in-person. Then help someone else get to the polls to VOTE on election day Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2022. ■

**Join APWU Retirees Department online on the "Members Only" page. Dues are \$3.00 monthly. Also, print your membership card at the same page.**

**If you have retirement questions contact us by email at [RetireeQandA@apwu.org](mailto:RetireeQandA@apwu.org)**

**Send all other inquires for the Retirees Department to [Retiree2@apwu.org](mailto:Retiree2@apwu.org)**

# 2022 National Convention



Sarah Jane Rodriguez, Director

Every other year, the APWU Health Plan looks forward to the APWU National Convention as it gives us a chance to connect with union members from all around the nation. It's an exciting event, and this year's convention didn't disappoint!

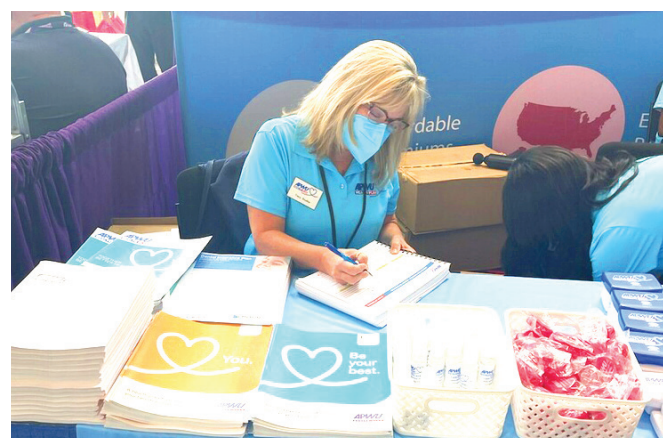
The APWU Health Plan participates in these events to offer our support to the APWU delegates, showcase our benefits, and provide health and wellness activities. For this national event, we also brought our vendors - Cigna, Express Scripts, and United Healthcare - to help staff the booths and provide health information to the attendees. We had a busy week!

During the pre-convention workshops, Organization Director Anna Smith and I provided a training class that was well-received.

Throughout the entire week, many delegates, union members and Health Plan representatives visited our booth with questions about our two plans. We heard many questions; most we were able to answer on the spot. For questions of a personal or complicated nature, we followed up with detailed responses after the conclusion of the convention. We met so many people who had been with our plan for many decades and that had great things to say about us. We connected with many new hires who were eager to learn more about our two plans and interested in attending our online webinars that we present during open season.

During the pre-convention, I was able to address the retiree delegation. They showed a lot of interest in our Medicare Advantage program. We took the time to walk them through all the added benefits they would get at no extra cost. During the retiree breakfast, United Healthcare coordinated blood pressure checks, and during the pre-convention, Cigna offered chair massages during conference breaks for the attendees.

Other health and wellness activities included flu shots, COVID-19 vaccines and boosters that were administered onsite by CVS personnel. As the Health Plan for APWU, our concern is always creating ways to educate and protect our members. Prevention is one of our primary solutions to better health. Convention bags were filled with COVID-19 over-the-counter test kits - just another



preventive measure as we continue to live through the pandemic. United Healthcare provided 2,500 test kits.

Some of the convention highlights included t-shirt and first-aid kit giveaways and online trivia. The Health Plan did a sweepstakes drawing for those that participated in the survey. The online quiz provided a platform for delegates to learn more about the Consumer-Driven Option, which includes a substantial, contractually-negotiated premium reduction for the APWU Career bargaining unit employees (in FEHB for one year).

Thank you to all the delegates that came by and participated in our events. We wish you good health until we meet again at the next event!

All in all, this year's National Convention was a great success and the APWU Health Plan team enjoyed meeting, supporting and educating our members. ■



# Remembering our Former Union Leaders



## Raydell Robert Moore

Raydell Robert Moore, former Western Region Coordinator and National Executive Board member, passed away on August 15 at age 95. He was one of the longest serving elected national officers with over 35 years as an official of the APWU and its predecessor unions.

Brother Moore began his postal career in June of 1952. Prior to the Great Postal Strike of 1970, he held the positions of Executive Vice President of the Long Beach Local in 1963, and in 1964 became the Executive VP of the California National Postal Union and National Postal Union Regional Representative. After the formation of APWU, he was appointed as APWU's National Representative (1971) and Western Regional Coordinator in 1977. Raydell Moore retired in 2001.



## Gerald Mack "Andy" Anderson

Gerald Mack "Andy" Anderson passed away at the age of 99 on August 23rd. A decorated WWII veteran, Brother Anderson was a part of the second wave of the D-Day Omaha Beach landings to help liberate Europe from what he called the "evil" of Fascism.

In 1958 he joined the United States Post Office in Springfield, IL. He became active in the United Federation of Postal Clerks and held positions at the local, state, and regional levels. In 1978, he was first elected to national office as Executive Aid, Clerk Craft, a position that was later changed to Assistant Director Clerk Craft Division, in which he served until his retirement in 1986. Skilled in mediation and arbitration, he fought tirelessly for the membership.



## Paul Hern

Paul Hern passed away on August 6th at the age of 72. Brother Hern was elected as a Clerk Craft National Business Agent in the Cincinnati region in 2001 and served in that position for 12 years until he retired.

He began his postal career in Columbus OH, then transferred to Cincinnati in 1978 where he became active in the union after management fired him for taking paternity leave to care for his newborn child. (At that time there were no FMLA protections.) Following his reinstatement, he served as a frontline shop steward for 17 years before being elected NBA. Upon his retirement he shared: "We've got a great union. Keep it going!"

"The APWU family mourns the recent loss of three former union officers," shared President Mark Dimondstein. "We extend our heartfelt condolences to their families and loved ones. We deeply respect and appreciate their many contributions in building our fine union, improving the lives of postal workers and advancing the cause of labor."

## Alliance Charged Up for Electric Fleet

**M**embers of A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service are fighting to win a new union-made, electric fleet of delivery vehicles for the Postal Service.

In August, Alliance partners and others rallied at L'Enfant Plaza, urging the Postal Service leadership to ensure the next generation delivery vehicle fleet is union-made and includes as many electric vehicles as possible.

Flanked by a trio of inflatable dinosaurs, rally-goers held signs saying "100% Union-Made Electric Postal Vehicles" and "No Dead Dinosaurs for Fuel, Go Electric!" They were joined by Bob Lynk, president of UAW Local 578, which represents workers at the OshKosh Defense plant in Oshkosh, WI.

Just days later, the *Inflation Reduction Act* (IRA), became law. The bill provides \$3 billion for Postal Service electric vehicles (EV) and charging infrastructure.

Before passage of the *IRA*, the Postal Service had increased its commitment to make at least 40 percent of the new fleet electric. Now, we must ensure USPS uses the new funding to further increase its EV purchase, and to build the trucks with family-sustaining union jobs. ■

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



## Rep. Ocasio-Cortez Promotes Postal Banking at APWU Convention

**A**ddressing the APWU 26th Biennial National Convention, Rep.

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY) lauded the progress our campaign has made in getting the USPS to launch a few small check cashing test sites.

While the proof-of-concept test is modest in scope, it could lead to even more progress, she told the convention. "They said ... that the influence of big bank lobbyists was just too powerful to overcome," she recalled. "Those four pilots are our mustard seeds. They will bloom into a national revival of the national postal banking system in the United States."

Rep. Ocasio-Cortez, who signed our petition for postal banking, said: "Nearly 30 percent of Americans do not have access to affordable financial services, and you all will provide it to them." The first bill she authored after entering Congress was the Loan Shark Prevention Act, which called for postal banking.

### Postal Banking Draws Crowds at Convention

At our APWU National Convention booth, delegates got updates on the campaign, shared ideas on how to take action and learned more about what's at stake in winning expanded postal financial services. A downloadable campaign flyer is available at <https://bit.ly/CPBflyer>

### Big Bankers Oppose Pilots

In June, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) opened a docket on whether the test of paycheck-cashing service happening at four USPS locations was in compliance with the law governing postal products and services. The big banks didn't miss a chance to show their opposition to expanded postal financial services.

In their filing, the American Bankers Association (ABA) claimed that these tests lack explicit congressional approval and sought to use the PRC to stop it. They joined a barrage of attacks from other big-monied interests and right-wing think tanks.

The very same Wall Street interests who refuse to provide financial services to millions of people feel threatened by this modest first step toward expanding postal financial services. Their opposition is a sign of the vast transformational potential of this initiative.

All supporters of postal banking and expanded postal financial services should remain vigilant as the PRC proceedings continue. There may soon be a moment when a public mobilization will be necessary to move the PRC to do the right thing and ensure postal management is resolved to continue and expand the program.

Check <https://apwu.org/postal-banking> to learn more about the Campaign for Postal Banking. ■



# 10 Roads Express Workers Vote APWU Union Yes!

**T**ruck drivers for 10 Roads Express in Harrisburg, PA have voted to join the American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO. The 100 drivers in Harrisburg join nearly 1,000 drivers from 10 Roads Express throughout the U.S., who are already part the APWU.

The drivers, led by their internal organizing committee, stood strong in solidarity against a concerted anti-union campaign based on lies, illegal threats, and retaliation. They did the difficult collective work necessary to win!

## A New Day Has Dawned

With the win, the Harrisburg-based drivers have a real voice and power to bargain with management over everything related to wages, hours, and working conditions.

Bill Hamilton, an 18-year veteran mail-haul driver, said “Together, we will fight to secure things such as fair work rules, seniority rights, bid-

ding rights, job security, and more. Most importantly, we will not accept being treated with anything less than the dignity and respect that we, as professional drivers, deserve.”

APWU President Mark Dimondstein said, “Congratulations to the workers on this important victory and welcome to the APWU Family! The drivers’ determined organizing made it happen. We all benefit when working people come together and strengthen their collective voice in

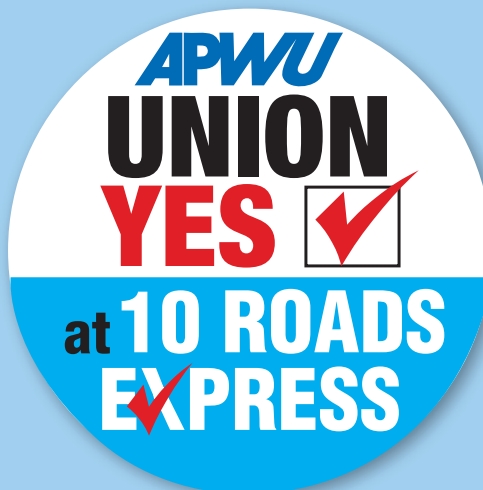
a union. I salute all who supported the campaign, especially lead organizer Rich Shelley, Support Services Director, Steve Brooks, Keystone Area Local President Kim Miller, and Industrial Relations Director Mike Crum.”

Workers’ focus will now turn to their bargaining priorities. They will also work expeditiously to set up their new APWU local, write their union constitution, and elect their new union officers.

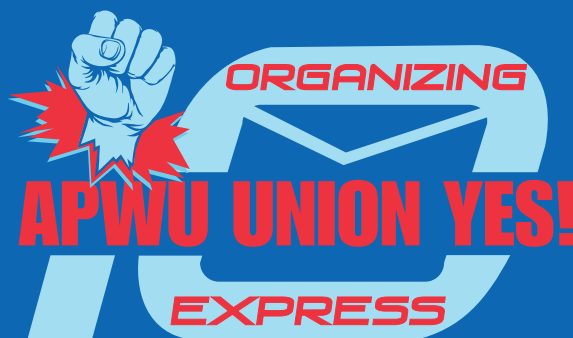
“The APWU is committed to supporting all workers in the postal/mail/package industry who seek to organize a union,” shared President Dimondstein. “More unionization in our industry builds power for all of us.”

If you have family members, friends or neighbors who work in the non-union private mailing industry, and are interested in joining the APWU, please contact the Organizing Department or fill out the contact information form found in the link below.

[www.apwu.org/private](http://www.apwu.org/private)



**“TOGETHER, WE WILL FIGHT TO SECURE THINGS SUCH AS FAIR WORK RULES, SENIORITY RIGHTS, BIDDING RIGHTS, JOB SECURITY, AND MORE. MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE WILL NOT ACCEPT BEING TREATED WITH ANYTHING LESS THAN THE DIGNITY AND RESPECT THAT WE, AS PROFESSIONAL DRIVERS, DESERVE.”**



# 2022 APWU SCHOLARSHIP

**T**he APWU proudly presents the winners of three scholarship programs: the E.C. Hallbeck Memorial Scholarship, the Vocational Scholarship and the Best Essay Award for 2022.

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

**Albert Wylie**, Grandson of **Pedro Tapia, Jr.** of the San Antonio Alamo Area Local



**Dakota James**, Son of **Joni James** of the Idaho Postal Workers Union



**Lena Perry**, Daughter of **Richard Perry** of the Northeastern Illinois Area Local

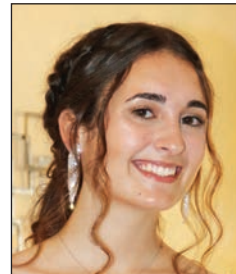


**Ethan Barnum**, Grandson of **Kimberly Noreen** of the Minnesota Postal Workers Union

**Matthew Jasienski**, Son of **Henry Jasienski** of the Scranton Area Local



**Megan-Marie Card**, Daughter of **Kenneth Card** of the Providence Area Local



**Nicole Wong**, Daughter of **Johnny Wong** of the San Fernando Valley Area Local

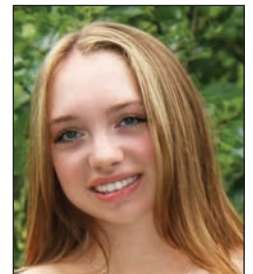


**Payton Adams**, Daughter of **Debra Adams** of the Oklahoma Postal Workers Union

**Rohit Mantena**, Son of **Lakshmi Mantena** of the North Jersey Area Local



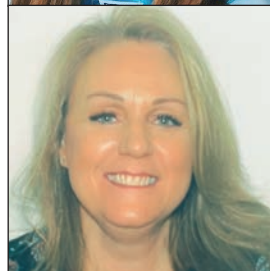
**Victoria Babish**, Daughter of **John Babish** of the Keystone Area Local



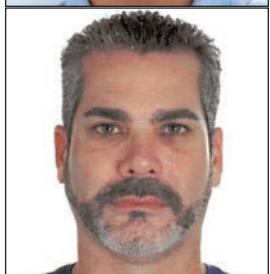


# WINNERS

## VOCATIONAL WINNERS



**Lindsey Labbe**, Daughter of **Lea Labbe** of the Greater Connecticut Area Local



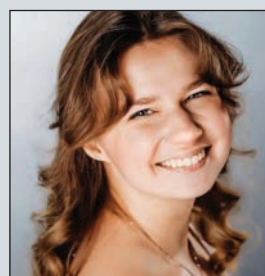
**Sebastian Ortiz-Rojas**, Son of **Alexys Ortiz** of the Puerto Rico Area Local

**Tyson Dostal**, Son of **William Dostal** of the Mankato 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 tax-deductible donation may specify "Hallbeck," "Vocational" or "Best Essay."

## BEST ESSAY WINNER



**Bethany Taullie**, Granddaughter of **Joan Taullie** of the Pueblo Area Local

# Union Strong, All Day Long!

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