

THE AMERICAN

Postal Worker ^{APWU}

November/December 2025

APWU PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN PASSES THE TORCH AFTER 12 YEARS



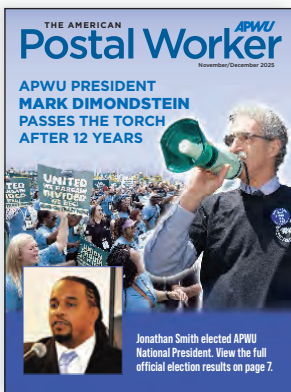
**Jonathan Smith elected APWU
National President. View the full
official election results on page 7.**



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ABOUT THE COVER

APWU President Mark Dimondstein passes the torch to newly elected President Jonathan Smith (New York Metro Area Postal Union) after 12 years of service. Dimondstein's legacy will be remembered for his vision to unify, organize, and mobilize working people.

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Carlos Paz	Josh Montgomery
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Jerome Pittman	Rick White
Dyrike Shaw	Shana Parker

SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENT

Orlando Anderson

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Onward Postal Workers! Forward APWU!

PRESIDENT MARK DIMONDSTEIN

As this is my last column, I have taken the liberty to expand my column's length to look back on my last four terms as president and look forward to the road ahead.

It has been the honor of a lifetime to serve as your president for the last 12 years. For me, the presidency was never about holding a title but rather advancing our cause. It was about building a stronger APWU and labor movement, uplifting and empowering our members, fighting for justice, and building workers' power. It was about standing with the people in defense of our national treasure — the public Postal Service.

While I am proud of the APWU's many accomplishments under my leadership, I recognize that no individual makes history by themselves. Our progress has been the work of many dedicated national, local, and state officers, thousands of activists, capable union staff, and every member who forms the strong foundation of our union. It has been a privilege to work with so many union fighters, and I appreciate their many contributions.



The record of any union leader should be judged not by personalities or talk, but by results.

In 2013, members voted for needed change, and that change was quick-

ly reflected in our fight against management's Staples privatization plan – a big step toward subcontracting all retail services. Left unchallenged by the previous union leadership, we mobilized our members and allies, took to the streets, and waged a groundbreaking and victorious campaign!

Facing ever-present threats of privatization, we built "A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service" consisting of 80 national organizations. It proved critical over the years. With countrywide mobilizations between 2018-2020, we defeated Trump's privatization plans and saved Vote-by-Mail for the 2020 election.



The memo I negotiated in 2014 led to over 100,000 life changing career conversions for Postal Support Employees (PSEs). We also resolved the ongoing PostPlan grievances, resulting in 8,000 new clerk jobs.

After inheriting a deeply concessionary 2010 Collective Bargaining Agreement that undermined career employment, established PSEs, created the divisive two-tier career pay scale, and gave up some wage increases and Cost-of-Living-Adjustments (COLAs), I was proud to be your lead negotiator in making significant gains over four national negotiations.

With those national contracts we: secured annual wage increases; protected full COLA; narrowed the gaps in the two-tiered wage structure; won an all-career workforce in Maintenance and Motor Vehicle Service; restored level 8 to the pre-2010 higher pay scale; increased Part-time Flexible (PTF) work-hour guarantees; and achieved automatic PSE conversions to career after two years. These contracts maintained and secured tremendous job security, including the "no-layoff" clause and 50-mile limits on excessing.

Working on a bipartisan basis, we passed historic legislation, including: \$10 billion in USPS Covid relief; pandemic-era Emergency Federal Employee Leave; the *Postal Service Reform Act* that eliminated the pre-funding debacle; funding for the new postal electric vehicles; and the *Social Security Fairness Act*.

Other important achievements include: negotiating comprehensive pandemic safety protocols; advancing internal and private-sector organizing; organizing Human Resources Shared Service Center (HRSSC) work-



ers into the APWU; engaging in the critical, long running battle to unionize Amazon; strengthening our Retirees Department; promoting veterans' rights; creating a Young Members' Committee; improving injury compensation training; promoting our "Stand Up for Safe Jobs" campaign; building stronger relationships and solidarity with the other postal unions; growing the union's media presence; bringing your voice to the AFL-CIO Council; opening an inspiring APWU history center; advocating for expanded services, including postal banking; improving communications with the members through our website, social media, and podcast; and investing in our future with the APWU Leadership Institute.



Guided by the APWU's constitution and convention actions, our union helped lead the way on political issues that impact working people. We rightfully supported Bernie Sanders' pro-worker presidential campaigns, demanded justice after the murder of George Floyd, and been firm defenders of voting rights and pushed to expand Vote-by-Mail. We opposed our tax dollars being used to slaughter innocent people



in Gaza. We promoted health care as a human right, raised the need for independent politics, fought for clean water and air, and opposed job-killing trade deals like the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). We defended free speech and the right to protest, demanded war dollars be brought home, and encouraged vigilance and resistance to the rising tide of tyranny and fascism.

Of course, we have not won every battle. The struggle for better staffing and service, tackling the toxic work environments, forging one postal union, and addressing the slow grievance procedure must continue.

Some may wonder why I took on the stress, long hours, slander from some detractors, and personal sacrifice that came with the presidency. Like many of you, I was shaped by others and the times we live in. I was raised by a decorated anti-fascist World War II veteran father and peace activist mother. A cousin was a hero of the underground resistance in Nazi-occupied France and executed by the fascist barbarians. Much of my family perished in the concentration and death camps of the Holocaust. My great-uncle was an outstanding leader of the progressive Fur and Leather Workers Union.

Simply put, I deeply believe in justice and freedom and that the world will be better run by workers rather than billionaires enriched by their military, tech, and medical-industrial complexes.

There is a long list of people I am grateful to for shaping me into the leader I became. Unfortunately, with limited space, I can only single out a few:

Former President William Burrus, whose support and confidence in me played a major role in my 2013 election.

Richard Koritz, my mentor, who over the years taught me to have great confidence in workers as the creators of wealth and makers of history.

Stephen DeMatteo, my executive assistant, who greatly propelled our work forward.

Melissa Dimondstein, a rock of support and an APWU activist in her own right, who volunteered countless hours for the national union. ►



I have been asked how I see my legacy - I will leave that up to others to determine. For me, it is enough to know I have given my very best, proudly stood on the shoulders of those leaders, activists (including the courageous 1970 postal strikers), and family members who came before me. That I have left the APWU stronger with more members involved. That I am a man of the people who recognizes that, while good leadership is vital, nothing can be accomplished without the members, whether in the Stop Staples fight, our legislative efforts, contract campaigns, or to protect the public Postal Service.

The union belongs to you, the members. Keep it strong! Attend union meetings and speak up. Join a union committee. Fight for safer workplaces, better staffing, and service. Stand up for each other on the workroom floor. Build maximum unity with the people in your community to save the public Postal Service in the face of ongoing serious threats. Stand in solidarity with all workers in struggle.

While no longer your president, I remain in the just struggle for strong and militant unions, living wages,



shorter workweeks, health care as a human right, a healthy planet, affordable housing, a vibrant public Postal Service, defending and expanding hard-won democratic rights, strong public education, and an independent labor party accountable to and representing the interests of working people, not billionaires.

As we commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution against the British king, let us say “no” to new kings, “no” to tyranny. Don’t play the bosses’ game of divide and conquer, pitting native-born against immigrants and white folks against people of color. Unite around our common interests and build solidarity, equality, and unity of all working people at home and abroad, no matter where we come from, how we might worship, the languages we speak, or the color of our skin. That indeed is the union way!

Ours is a class struggle - the bosses versus the workers, Wall Street versus Main Street, and capital versus labor. I pass the torch! From the workplaces to the streets, from our communities to the halls of Congress, agitate, organize, and mobilize for power and justice!

Forward APWU! Solidarity Forever! ■



A Message from President-Elect Jonathan Smith

I want to start by thanking the members who elected me to serve as the next president of the APWU. This moment is not about me—it’s about every Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle, Support Service employee, and retiree who make this union a

powerful force. Together we’ll build a future that honors our past and secures our essential place in America’s consciousness.

Our union has faced privatization threats, automation, short staffing, and political attacks. Yet we’ve stood strong—fighting, organizing, and winning—because we never forgot who we are. We are postal workers. We are public servants. And united, we are unstoppable.

As your president, I will lead with transparency, unity, and determination. Our strength lies in solidarity, and

that will guide every decision we make.

The Postal Service is evolving, but nothing replaces the reliability and trust of union labor. We’ll push for modernization that strengthens our workforce and invests in people—not profits.

We must keep the Postal Service public and accessible to every household, business, and community. It belongs to the people—not corporations or politicians—and we will defend, preserve, and improve it.

This administration will listen to locals, stewards, and every member who carries this institution. I will travel, meet with you, and ensure your voice is heard.

We’ll invest in training, fight discrimination, protect retirees, and empower the next generation. My simple promise is, I will never stop fighting for you. Let’s move forward united—for fairness, dignity, justice, and the people we proudly serve.

OFFICIAL RESULTS IN ELECTION OF NATIONAL UNION OFFICERS

Jonathan Smith Elected APWU National President

Jonathan Smith (New York Metro Area Postal Union) was elected as APWU National President in the APWU Election of National Officers when votes were tallied on Oct. 7. Debby Szeredy was reelected as Executive Vice President, Terry B. Martinez was reelected as Maintenance Division Assistant Director (A), Tony D. McKinnon, Sr. (North Carolina State APWU) was elected Southern Region Coordinator, and Kimberly A. Maurer (Twin Cities PDC Local) was elected Support Services Division Director.

Certified results for all races are printed below. Winners are identified by an asterisk; incumbent officers are denoted by "(I)" after their name. "Congratulations to Brother Smith and all those candidates who prevailed in

this election," said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. "I would also like to salute all those candidates who stood up and offered to serve. Elections like these demonstrate the power of our union's democracy. Our task now is to pull together in maximum unity and solidarity to defend our members, protect the public Postal Service, and continue to uplift the entire working class."

"I want to express my gratitude to all the candidates who participated in this election," said Jonathan Smith. "It is their dedication that makes the APWU vibrant and strong. I am humbled by the trust the membership has placed in me. I understand the profound responsibility that comes with this office, and I promise to serve all of you with integrity and dedication," he concluded.

General & Administrative Officers

President

Jonathan Smith* 13,545
AJ Jones 11,855

Executive Vice President

Debby Szeredy* (I) 13,677
Vance Zimmerman 11,427

Regional Coordinators

Southern Region

Samuel "Sam" Wood 717
Mike "Sully" Sullivan 897
Al Davison 935
Tony D. McKinnon, Sr* 1,345

Clerk Division

National Business Agents, Central Region

Chicago Region, (A)

Eric Chornoby 483
Erika L. Williams* 503

National Business Agents, Southern Region

Atlanta Region, (B)

Doris Orr-Richardson* (I) 881
Stacey Sabir Brown 439

Atlanta Region, (C)

Sandra Munoz Hernandez* (I) 783
Keenan D. Anthony 540

Dallas Region, (C)

Diann Scurlark* (I) 549
Jenie Frazier 324

National Business Agents, Western Region

Denver Region, (A)

LaMont Green (I) 285
Joyce Muhammad* 342

San Francisco Region, (A)

Joe Macias* 927
Matthew Labuda 309

San Francisco Region, (C)

Fabiola Dominguez* (I) 868
Eric A. Van Dyke 364

Maintenance Division

Assistant Director, (A)

Terry B. Martinez* (I) 1,653
Curtis Walker 1,527

National Business Agents, Maintenance Division

Central Region, (A)

Thomas Vlasek 102
John Hunt* 196
Kenny Carson 121

Eastern Region

Kenneth Lester (I) 143
Antonio "Tony" Barner 123
Steven Duckworth* 358

Western Region, (B)

Louis M. Kingsley (I) 253
Kyle Popek* 313

Motor Vehicle Service Division

National Business Agents, Central Region

Mark Krueger (I) 93
Nigel Devon Thomas* 246
Michael Mize 184

National Business Agents, Eastern Region

Shana Parker* (I) 252
John Minor 110

Support Services Division

Director

Arrion Brown (I) 116
Kimberly A. Maurer* 144

Retiree National Convention Delegates

Central Region

Bruce C. Jackson 1,242
Patrick A. Chornoby* 1,466

Western Region

Patricia A. Williams* (I) 957
Don Cheney 311

Uncontested National Officers

General & Administrative Officers

Secretary-Treasurer

Elizabeth "Liz" Powell (I), Western Nassau
New York Area Local (NY)

Industrial Relations Director

Charles "Charlie" Cash (I), Buffalo Local
(NY)

Legislative/Political Director

Judy Beard (I), Detroit District Area Local
(MI)

Human Relations Director

Daleo Freeman (I), William H. Burrus,
Cleveland Area Local, #72 (OH)

Organization Director

Anna Smith (I), Portland Oregon Area Local
(OR)

Research and Education Director

Joyce B. Robinson (I), Richmond Virginia
Area Local (VA)

Health Plan Director

Sarah Jane Rodriguez (I), Phoenix Metro
Area Local (AZ)

Regional Coordinators

Central Region

Amy Puhalski (I), Western Michigan Area
Local (MI)

Eastern Region

Vince Tarducci, Philadelphia BMC Local (PA)

Northeast Region

Tiffany Foster (I), New York Metro Area
Postal Union (NY)

Western Region

Omar M. Gonzalez (I), Greater Los Angeles
Area Local (CA)

Clerk Division

Director

Lamont Brooks (I), The Northern Virginia
Area Local (VA)

Assistant Director (A)

Sam Lisenbe (I), Fort Worth Area Local (TX)

Assistant Director (B)

Ashley Cargill, Oklahoma City Area Local
(OK)

Assistant Director (C)

Robert "Bob" Romanowski (I), New Jersey
Shore Area Local (NJ)

National Business Agents, Central Region

Chicago Region, (B)

Devendra Rathore "D" (I), Fox Valley Local
(IL)

Chicago Region, (C)

James Stevenson III (I), Detroit District Area
Local (MI)

Cincinnati Region, (A)

Leo Kreyenbuhl (I), Cuyahoga Falls Local (OH)

Cincinnati Region, (B)

Michael William Funk, Jr. (I), Greater
Cincinnati Ohio Area Local (OH)

Minneapolis Region, (A)

Todd M. Elkerton (I), Saint Paul Area Local
(MN)

Minneapolis Region, (B)

Gregory Becker, Milwaukee Area Local (WI)

St. Louis Region, (A)

Sharon L. Curtis (I), Greater Kansas City
Metro Area Local (MO)

St. Louis Region, (B)

Daniel Skemp (I), Rapid Area Local (IA)

Wichita Region, (A)

Philip D. Thomas, Omaha Area Local (NE)

Wichita Region, (B)

Emily Lain Weber (I), Wichita Area Local (KS)

National Business Agents, Eastern Region

Philadelphia Region, (A)

Kim Miller (I), Keystone Area Local (PA)

Philadelphia Region, (B)

John Louis Jackson, Jr. (I), Philadelphia
BMC Local (PA)

Philadelphia Region, (C)

James DeRidder, Philadelphia BMC Local
(PA)

Washington DC Region, (A)

Rachel A. Walthall (I), Baltimore Francis
"Stu" Filbey Area Local (MD)

Washington DC Region, (B)

Pamela R. Richardson (I), Lynchburg Area
Local (VA)

National Business Agents, Northeast Region

New England Region, (A)

Bill Mazurowski (I), Hartford Local (CT)

New England Region, (B)

Scott M. Hoffman (I), Boston Metro Area Local (MA)

New England Region, (C)

Tom O'Brien (I), South Shore Area Local (MA)

New York Region, (A)

Peter Coradi (I), Brooklyn Local (NY)

New York Region, (B)

Elizabeth "Liz" Swigert (I), Queens Area Local (NY)

New York Region, (C)

Clifton W. Johnson, Long Island Area Local (NY)

National Business Agents, Southern Region

Atlanta Region, (A)

Jim DeMauro (I), Tampa Area Local (FL)

Dallas Region, (A)

Carlton Williams (I), Dallas Area Local (TX)

Dallas Region, (B)

Charles M. Tillman (I), Dallas Area Local (TX)

Memphis Region, (A)

Joe H. Jolley, Jr. (I), Nashville Area Local (TN)

Memphis Region, (B)

Pamela Smith (I), Birmingham Area Local (AL)

National Business Agents, Western Region

Denver Region, (B)

Joseph Zamenick, Jr. (I), Phoenix Metro Area Local (AZ)

Northwest Region, (A)

Brian Dunsmore (I), Portland Oregon Area Local (OR)

Northwest Region, (B)

Morning Dunn (I), Oregon Postal Workers Union (OR)

San Francisco Region, (B)

Mike Hetticher (I), Eureka Local (CA)

San Francisco Region, (D)

Chuck Locke (I), Sacramento Area Local (CA)

Maintenance Division

Director

Idowu Balogun (I), Greater Los Angeles Area Local (CA)

Assistant Director, (B)

Jason Treier (I), Lancaster Area Local (PA)

National Business Agents, Maintenance

Central Region, (B)

Jeffrey Scott Beaton (I), Greater Kansas City Area Local (MO)

Central Region, (C)

Stephanie Logan (I), Saint Paul Area Local (MN)

Northeast Region

Dave Sarnacki (I), Springfield Mass Area Local (MA)

Southern Region, (A)

John Gearhard (I), Jacksonville BMC Local (FL)

Southern Region, (B)

Carlos Paz (I), Dallas Area Local (TX)

Southern Region, (C)

Joshua Montgomery (I), Lafayette Area Local (LA)

Western Region, (A)

Hector Baez (I), San Diego Area Local (CA)

Motor Vehicle Service Division

Director

Michael O. Foster (I), Detroit District Area Local (MI)

Assistant Director

Garrett C. Langley (I), Lancaster Area Local (PA)

National Business Agents, Motor Vehicle Service Division

Northeast Region

Rick White (I), Boston Metro Area Local (MA)

Southern Region, Southeast Sub-Region

Bruce E. Amey (I), Atlanta Metro Area Local (GA)

Southern Region, Southwest Sub-Region

Dyrike Shaw (I), Dallas Area Local (TX)

Western Region

Jerome Pittman (I), San Francisco Local (CA)

Support Services Division

National Business Agent

Orlando L. Anderson (I), St. Louis Gateway District Area Local (MO)

All-Craft National Business Agents

Alaskan Area

Vacant

Caribbean Area

Samuel A. Hernández Algarin (I), Puerto Rico Area Local (PR)

Pacific Area

Michael C. Vitug, Leeward Oahu Area Local 6069 (HI)

Retirees Department

Director

Nancy E. Olumekor (I), Nation's Capital Southern MD Area Local (MD)

Retiree National Convention Delegates

Eastern Region

Cynthia A. Nesmith (I), Philadelphia Area Local Retiree Chapter (PA)

Northeast Region

Leona Draper (I), Moe Biller/Eleanor Bailey Retiree Chapter (NY)

Southern Region

Patricia Ann McGriff (I), Northeast Florida Retiree Chapter (FL)

APWU Proclamation Campaign Gains Momentum

The APWU Proclamation Campaign to honor the Postal Service's 250th anniversary is off to a great start! The campaign encourages APWU members to work with their local and state union officers and collaborate with local and state government bodies to **pass proclamations recognizing the milestone and affirming official support for the public Postal Service.**

With deep connections to every single community across the country, postal workers move mail to every home and business in America, no matter who you are or where you live. By partnering with the communities that postal workers serve, the

campaign reinforces the need for a public, independent Postal Service, while celebrating its achievements of the last 250 years.

The APWU has provided local, state, and auxiliary leaders with sample proclamation letters and encourages meetings with elected representatives to build support for local resolutions. The APWU also recommends mobilizing postal workers, customers, and community members to attend government meetings and speak in favor of the proclamations.

If you need more information or would like some help getting started, visit apwu.org/proclamations or email proclamations@apwu.org. ■

IOWA



Iowa Postal Workers Union President Kimberly Karol informed community members about the campaign before going to Waterloo, IA to get the proclamation passed. Her efforts were successful in both making the public aware of the campaign and building support before she went to city hall. On Oct. 15, the town of Waterloo livestreamed the meeting to pass a proclamation in honor of the 250th anniversary of the public Postal Service.

"I'm proud to see the support the folks of Waterloo and the [Waterloo] Human Rights Commission is providing to postal workers providing services to all our communities, including rural communities," said Karol. "Thank you for recognizing the work we do and honoring the Postal Service's role in our community too."



FLORIDA



So far, Broward Country Area Local Clerk Craft Director Gustavo Aguilar has acquired three proclamations in Florida after sending requests to six towns. He anticipates Fort Lauderdale, Coral

Springs, and Tamarac to have proclamations by mid-November.

"This campaign matters because it reminds our communities and [us], that the Postal Service is not just a delivery network; it is a vital public institution built on service, reliability, and trust," said Aguilar. "Each proclamation helps highlight the essential role postal workers have played for generations and reinforces the message that the Postal Service must remain public, accessible, and strong."

(Below) Wanda Harris, the president of the Miami Area Local, secured a proclamation from the Miami-Dade County Commission. She remarked about how relationships are important and this campaign is a good tool to help solidify existing relationships and build new ones at the local level.



MISSISSIPPI



APWU Mississippi State President George Collins took on the campaign with gusto! In tandem with his wife and APWU Auxiliary member Marion, the two started asking the leaders of cities in southern Mississippi to approve proclamations. At the time of publication, Collins helped secure over 10 proclamations in Mississippi and he anticipates many more!

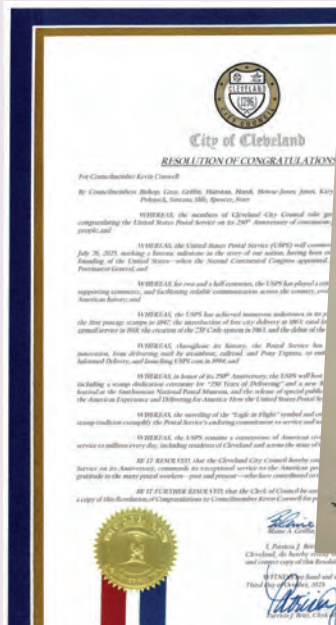
"One thing we're finding out is that the American public does not know that the Postal Service has been around for 250 years," said George Collins. "So, this is a way to get that done, because these cities that are issuing these proclamations are putting it on their Facebook page, putting it on their websites. Even the city of Biloxi put it in their monthly newsletter that went to every citizen in Biloxi, Mississippi."

OHIO

The William H Burrus Cleveland Area Local 72 worked with their Retiree Chapter to pass a proclamation for Cleveland, OH.

The president of the local, Nigel Saleem, said, "Our retirees paved the way for us to have the rights we have today. While they have retired from the workroom floor, they are still active and ready to help. Just ask!"

Bruce Jackson, the president of the retiree chapter, added, "Everyone can work on this campaign. If you voted you should definitely be out asking for these proclamations. Politicians work for us!"





Delivering for the Public and Postal Workers

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

First, I want to thank all our members who voted in our recent Election of National Officers. I will work hard for you. Many members did not vote. We will just have to work harder to communicate the importance of our union. I hope and pray that all of you have a safe and special holiday!

Our new Postmaster General, David Steiner, needs to make sure he listens to the labor unions and the public and stop the “Delivering for America” 10-year plan. The Postal Service is an essential, economic, and civic service for America. The APWU has been fighting for our workers and for our public service. We need you all on board!

Essential: The Postal Service requires sanctity and protection; it is a provider of supplies, medicines, vaccines, food, money orders, and passports. We can provide services during natural and biomedical disasters. The Postal Service should not cripple the ability to respond to national emergencies and public health crises. The mail belongs to the people, linking rural communities, families, and economies. Our services are safeguarded with the postal workers’ oath, the Inspection Service, and the Office of Inspector General’s audits and investigations. Postal workers have proven repeatedly that we save lives and are essential to America.

Economics: The Universal Service Obligation (USO) provides prompt, affordable and reliable services to the public. No matter where you live, how much money you have, or how small your town is – post offices are to remain open for your community.

Postal Banking was part of the essential, economic services we provided for over 56 years until the big banks lobbied Congress to shut down revenue-based services. Many Americans are now ensnared in debt by payday loan sharks, and over 68 million people are underbanked. There are currently 51 countries that have postal banking services. Postal banking serves the public while generating revenue that keeps our cherished Postal Service thriving.

Today, we have many ways to expand the public services we offer.

Stop the “Delivering for America Plan” 10-year plan that consolidated facilities, reduced the network, and weakened and diminished prompt, affordable, and reliable services that Americans rely on every day. We have lost customers and businesses, and we have a fractured network that no longer provides overnight services. Mr. Steiner, we need a better plan that is based on the successful services we provided years ago. Taking out all the mail cancelling and sorting machines from many of our network facilities and slowing down transportation (i.e. optimization) was a big mistake.

We have a legal and operational commitment under the USO. America and our economy depend on it.

THE POSTAL SERVICE IS AN ESSENTIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CIVIC SERVICE FOR AMERICA. THE APWU HAS BEEN FIGHTING FOR OUR WORKERS AND FOR OUR PUBLIC SERVICE. WE NEED YOU ALL ON BOARD!

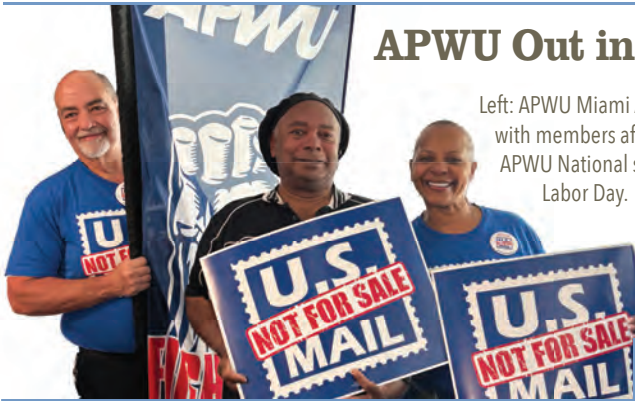
Civics: America depends on Vote-by-Mail. The APWU bargained for an Election Taskforce to include management and the unions. Together, we need to do more to expand the program to all postal facilities nationwide, to secure and deliver election mail in a timely manner, including ballots, voter registration cards, absentee voting applications, and polling-place notifications. We need to assist Native Americans in providing each person a ballot. Eight states and the District of Columbia are Vote-by-Mail states (WA, OR, CA, CO, UT, NV, VT, HI, and DC). Reverse the consolidations and let us work together with a deep review of the needs of each state in the United States, and how we can bring back overnight services. Let’s get ready to make these changes!

Members, join us in this fight to save and expand our services! ■

MEMBERS IN ACTION

APWU Out in Force on Labor Day

Left: APWU Miami Area Local President Wanda Harris (right) poses with members after delivering a rousing speech on Labor Day! APWU National sent resources to Miami to help the city celebrate Labor Day.



Right: William H. Burrus, Cleveland Area Local, #72 celebrates Labor Day in the Cleveland parade.



Trenton Run Club Raises Union Awareness

Trenton Area Local Clerk Craft Director Tony Nguyen started a running team to promote physical activity, build community engagement, increase membership, and engage both new and veteran members. The team is increasingly achieving a positive public response about union issues and the role of the Postal Service at each appearance.



APWU Auxiliary Steps Up in Time of Need

When a fire killed three family members from two APWU families, the Des Moines Auxiliary organized donation requests throughout the APWU community. Within weeks, they collected truck-loads of supplies and cash for the grieving families. Here they present a gift to the family to help them get back on their feet.



Workers Across the Country Say 'No Kings'

APWU members from across the country rally with allies on Oct. 18 to participate in the No Kings events against a rising oligarchy. Carrying signs protesting the corporate attempts to privatize our public Postal Service, APWU members show that our fights are all united and we will all stand together.





Spending Local Funds on Holiday Gift Cards Appropriately

SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

The holiday season always brings inquiries from local and state officers who contemplate distributing gift cards to their members. While there is no prohibition against spending local funds on gift cards for the membership, there are considerations to be made by local officers when making or considering motions to expend union funds. The nonprofit status of labor unions is based on the principle that unions carry out activities and functions that benefit society. This benefit is deemed to be one where the public-at-large, or substantial segment of the public, receives benefits from the functions and activities of the entity. Simply put, taking money out of the treasury to give to members would not qualify as a public benefit provided by the labor union. However, if your local offers gift cards as part of an organizing drive to increase union membership, that would be more in line with the mission of organizing workers for effective representation. Local officers should consider the following when considering the distribution of gift cards:

- What are your plans and needs for the representation of your members, and how will this expenditure affect the local's ability to perform its primary function, which is to represent the membership or your local?
- Were the gift cards budgeted? It would be improper to deplete the local's treasury for gift cards.
- Will the local be able to sustain these kind of gifts?

If your local decides to distribute gift cards, never issue cash payments or any gift that may be redeemed for cash. A properly adopted motion is required, and the gift cards must be documented appropriately and carefully tracked, with full accounting of all funds used, including receipts of all purchases made.

Preparing for the New Year!

The Secretary-Treasurer's Department is committed to providing tools and resources for officers in leadership positions to fulfill their responsibilities and remain in compliance with applicable regulations and laws. Providing in-person Secretary-Treasurer's and QuickBooks training, as well as virtual Fiduciary Responsibility training, meets the needs of newly elect-

ed officers and officers who need a refresher course. We recommend that local presidents and treasurers attend at least one training a year. When planning for 2026, be on the lookout for virtual labor-management (LM) report training with the Department of Labor (DOL). This virtual training has been very helpful for local and state officers to assist with preparing the March 2026 LM report filing for those locals with a fiscal year that ends Dec. 31, 2025. November and December is a great time to prepare for the incoming year. Local presidents and treasurers should remember to take care of important housekeeping tasks in preparation for the New Year.

Here is a quick reminder:

- Review 2025 budget and prepare a fiscal year 2026 budget;
- Shred financial records prior to 2020 (Remember you must keep financial records for five years including the current year);
- Audit financial records, which must be done at least once a year;
- Update local asset inventory and properly dispose of items and furniture that belong to the union with a properly approved motion;
- Archive membership and executive board meetings minutes for 2025;
- Prepare a calendar of activities and deadlines for 2026;
- Prepare to file DOL LM report and IRS 990 reports electronically and by the required due date!

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

Thank You For Your Leadership President Dimondstein!

Thank you President Dimondstein for a job well done during your tenure and I wish you the best during your retirement.

Happy Holidays from Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth 'Liz' Powell and all of the staff of the Secretary-Treasurer's Department. ■

Setting the Record Straight on Safety, Security of Vote-by-Mail



Union soldiers cast their Vote-by-Mail ballots from makeshift polling places during the Civil War.

The current administration, and some in Congress, have started to sow doubt about the legitimacy of Vote-by-Mail. The objective could not be clearer - they want to disrupt the 2026 midterm elections. One Senator went as far as to question the integrity of the postal workers who handle election mail. Let us be clear, attacking Vote-by-Mail is an attack on the right to vote itself. Vote-by-Mail is safe, reliable, secure, and an American tradition. As postal workers, it is incumbent upon us to set the record straight:

- 1. VOTE-BY-MAIL IS NOT NEW:** In fact, Americans have been voting by mail since the Civil War.
- 2. VOTE-BY-MAIL IS RELIABLE:** In the last election, postal workers delivered 99% of ballots on time.
- 3. VOTE-BY-MAIL IS SECURE:** In 2020, the largest Vote-by-Mail election, the federal Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Agency stated that the election was, “the most secure in American history.”
- 4. VOTE-BY-MAIL IS NONPARTISAN:** Every state has the option to vote by mail, regardless of party affiliation. In the 2024 election, the partisan divide over who voted by mail was roughly 40% Democrats vs. 29% Republicans.

For more information on the history of Vote-by-Mail, visit: bit.ly/Voting-by-Mail

Understanding Tariff Changes: Impact on Mail Volume

International mail volume into the United States collapsed by 80% on Aug. 29 when the Trump administration imposed tariffs on low-cost imports previously exempt under the “de minimis” rule. This exemption allowed packages valued under \$800 to enter the U.S. duty-free. The decline in international package volume is affecting millions of daily shipments that postal workers would normally process.

Additionally, airlines and shippers were unable to rapidly cal-

culate duties on millions of small packages, bringing international mail to a near standstill. While the Universal Postal Union has introduced a digital tool to help, 88 global postal operators have suspended or restricted U.S. services, directly impacting our members’ work.

The administration claims this policy curtails drug shipments and counterfeit goods, but it is keeping millions of packages from reaching American small businesses, working families,

and those who rely on home delivery each day. The policy may also undermine the projected \$10 billion in tariff revenue the administration promised, and is affecting revenue for the Postal Service.

IT IS KEEPING MILLIONS OF PACKAGES FROM REACHING AMERICAN SMALL BUSINESSES, WORKING FAMILIES, AND THOSE WHO RELY ON HOME DELIVERY EACH DAY.



Implementation of Pay Provisions for the 2024-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR CHARLIE CASH

Happy Holidays to all of you! No matter if you are celebrating Hanukkah, Christmas, or Kwanza, I hope you all have a wonderful holiday season!

Historically, this is the busiest time of year for the Postal Service. The work that all of you do to move holiday cards and gifts through the mail is vitally important to millions of people. Not only to the people who live in the United States, but to all those who live outside the country that people send packages and gifts to as well. Your work will deliver smiles to children worldwide, members of the military deployed around the world, and others.

As of the writing of this article, many of the new contract terms have been implemented or are scheduled to be implemented. I know the most important thing for many people is the pay increases. Pay increases went into effect on Aug. 23 and included the 1.3% increase due Nov. 16, 2024 (2.3% for Postal Support Employees [PSEs]) and \$395 per year cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for career employees. With the implementation of these pay raises, the period for retroactive pay was set as Nov. 16, 2024, through Aug. 22, 2025. Currently, the retroactive payments are scheduled for April 10, 2025. We have asked the Postal Service to speed up the payment of the retroactive pay owed. However, it takes major payroll system programming to complete. Our union siblings in the Information Technology/Accounting Services (IT/AS) division of the Postal Service are working to complete this task. With basic payroll programming completed, all other pay increases owed under the 2024-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) are set to seamlessly go into effect.

Other changes to our pay structure that require payroll system programming have also been announced. Three of these should already be in effect by the time you receive this edition of the magazine. Those are:

Grade 3 to Grade 4 upgrades — **effective Nov. 1**

Elimination of Step JJ in Grade 4 — **effective Nov. 1**

Elimination of Step-GG in Grades 5, 6, and 7 for PSEs converted to career under the 24-month MOU — **effective Nov. 1**

These changes mean that any employee in Grade 3 will be moved to Grade 4 automatically. Also, employees in Step-JJ of Grade 4 will move to Step-II. Employees who are currently in Step-GG in Grades 5, 6, or 7 will automatically move to Step-FF.

HISTORICALLY, THIS IS THE BUSIEST TIME OF YEAR FOR THE POSTAL SERVICE. THE WORK THAT ALL OF YOU DO TO MOVE HOLIDAY CARDS AND GIFTS THROUGH THE MAIL IS VITALLY IMPORTANT TO MILLIONS OF PEOPLE. NOT ONLY TO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE UNITED STATES, BUT TO ALL THOSE WHO LIVE OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY THAT PEOPLE SEND PACKAGES AND GIFTS TO AS WELL.

The next payroll changes to go into effect will be the changes to the PSE pay structure. On Dec. 13, the new PSE “steps” will go into effect. PSEs will now have a starting Step-A. After being on the rolls for 26 weeks, they will move to Step-B with a \$0.50 per hour pay increase. Additionally, for PSEs assigned to Level 4 Remotely Managed Post Office (RMPOs) (remember, these PSEs are not subject to automatic conversion), after having been on the rolls for 208 weeks, they will move to PSE Step-H (the letter “H” was simply chosen as a programming decision) with an additional \$1.00 per hour pay raise. Any PSE who has met the 26-week threshold will automatically be moved to Step-B and any Level 4 RMPO PSE who has met the 208-week threshold will move to Step-H automatically. The Postal Service had a deadline of Jan. 10, 2026, to implement the pay structure changes listed above. They were implemented sooner than expected.

It is now time for all of us to be diligent and fight to see that our CBA is enforced and holds the Postal Service at all levels accountable when they violate the agreement. You can find a PDF of the agreement at apwu.org/industrial-relations. The printed version is currently in the hands of the printer, and we expect hard copies to be available in the coming month.

Solidarity! ■



Season's Greetings

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

Your Paycheck Says It All - It Pays to Be Union

APWU-represented employees are seeing larger paychecks at the end of this year thanks to the APWU-negotiated 2024-2027 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

The July 2025 Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA) is \$0.39 per hour – **adds up to an extra \$811 per year** for APWU-represented full-time employees.

Career postal employees will also receive a union-won general wage increase (GWI) equal to 1.3% of base pay, effective Nov. 15. The pay increase will appear in paychecks dated Dec. 5. This is *not* the negotiated retroactive payment for the

pay increases due for the “stopgap” period of Nov. 16, 2024, to Aug. 22, 2025, which are tentatively scheduled to be included in paychecks dated April 10, 2026.

Non-career employees, such as Postal Support Employees (PSEs), will receive an additional 1% or a 2.3% GWI, as they do not receive COLA. However, when a PSE is converted to career, the COLAs will be built into their salary. According to the 2024-2027 CBA, PSEs will also receive a new step, effective Dec. 13.

“These negotiated increases can only happen because of the

“YEARS OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND UNION SOLIDARITY HELPED US SECURE THESE RAISES, OUR TWICE-A-YEAR COLAS, AND MUCH MORE.”

strength of our collective endeavors,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “Years of collective bargaining and union solidarity helped us secure these raises, our twice-a-year COLAs, and much more. Great work, APWU negotiations team!” ■



ENROLL DURING

November 10 - De

Open Season Hotline | Call: 800.PIC.APWU | Email: ope



HIGH OPTION



Low copays, low deductibles, and 100% coverage for many in-network services

- ✓ Preventive care and screenings
- ✓ Lab tests (covered blood work performed at LabCorp and Quest Diagnostics)
- ✓ Maternity care and support
- ✓ Quit for Life® tobacco cessation program
- ✓ Maven maternity program
- ✓ Accidental injury outpatient services within 72 hours
- ✓ Generic oral diabetes medications
- ✓ Visits to a registered dietician/nutritionist

Your cost (in-network)

- \$10 for a virtual visit (\$0 for first 2 visits) • \$30 for urgent care
- \$25 for office visits, including specialists • \$10 for retail non-specialty Tier 1 drugs

What's new for 2026

- ★ Up to \$200 for custom orthotics from any podiatrist
- ★ 100% coverage for in-network male sterilization

APWU
HEALTH PLAN



YEARS S

Trusted for ge

Here for you today. Re

Proudly serving the Postal v

2026 PREMIUMS FOR HO

Self

PSHB enrollment code 23A

Biweekly	Monthly/Retiree
\$107.15	\$232.16

Self Plus One

PSHB enrollment code 23C

Biweekly	Monthly/Retiree
\$216.18	\$468.38

Self & Family

PSHB enrollment code 23B

Biweekly	Monthly/Retiree
\$275.94	\$597.87

Medicare Advantage:

- \$0 copays for covered services
- \$60 quarterly over-the-counter item allowance
- \$100 monthly Part B premium subsidy
- Vision eyewear allowance benefit

Scan the QR code to learn more about the APWU Health Plan and its competitive premiums and comprehensive benefits!



G OPEN SEASON

December 8, 2025

penseason@apwuhp.com | Website: openseason.apwuhp.com



★ CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION ★

A Personal Care Account (PCA), low costs, and 100% coverage for many in-network services

- ✓ Preventive care and screenings
 - ✓ Maternity care and support
 - ✓ Breast cancer screenings
- ✓ Quit for Life® tobacco cessation program
 - ✓ Maven maternity program

Your cost (in-network)

- No upfront deductible, coinsurance or copay until you exhaust your PCA
- Receive a discount on prescriptions when you use OptumRx® Home Delivery

Health Plan-funded PCA

Your own PCA helps pay for medical expenses. Each year, the Plan adds:

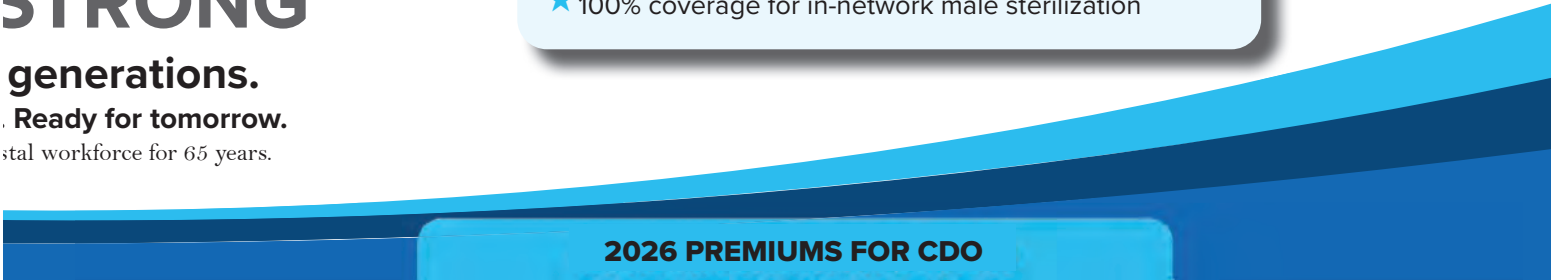
- \$1,200 for Self coverage
- \$2,400 for Self Plus One or Self & Family coverage

What's new for 2026

- ★ Up to \$200 for custom orthotics from any podiatrist
- ★ \$25 wellness incentive for a colonoscopy or Cologuard
- ★ 100% coverage for in-network male sterilization

STRONG generations.

Ready for tomorrow.
stal workforce for 65 years.



2026 PREMIUMS FOR CDO

Monthly rates

Self
PSHB enrollment code 23D
\$197.39

Self Plus One
PSHB enrollment code 23F
\$429.01

Self & Family
PSHB enrollment code 23E
\$468.02

★ Special biweekly rates for career APWU bargaining unit employees enrolled in PSHB for more than one year ★

Self
PSHB enrollment code 23D

Less than 1 year & PSE	★★★★★ More than 1 year
\$91.10	\$18.22

Self Plus One
PSHB enrollment code 23F

Less than 1 year & PSE	★★★★★ More than 1 year
\$198.00	\$39.60

Self & Family
PSHB enrollment code 23E

Less than 1 year & PSE	★★★★★ More than 1 year
\$216.01	\$43.20

APWU Members Convene for

APWU members began arriving in Las Vegas on Oct. 3 for the 2025 All-Craft Conference, a combination of the divisions' general sessions, trainings, and workshops – including Secretary-Treasurer's Training, the Young Members' Conference, and the Legislative, and Retirees conferences. It featured a gathering of APWU veterans, and presentations on private-sector organizing and climate justice. President Dimondstein gave some of his last official speeches while in office, reminding members to fight hard to protect postal workers, the public Postal Service, and to stand strong against authoritarianism in these dark times.

Secretary-Treasurers' Training

APWU secretary-treasurers gathered for Secretary-Treasurers Training, which included sessions on locals' Dues Check Off (DCO) procedures, maintaining Excel DCO files, 1187 Authorization for Deduction of Dues, and the audit process per pay period. Secretary-Treasurer Powell greeted attendees and outlined the goals and objectives of the conference. She emphasized the importance of their position, stating, "This union is built on the trust of our members. Your role as a financial officer is vital in upholding that trust. You are a guardian of the union's integrity." Attendees then split into breakout sessions for Fiduciary Responsibilities and QuickBooks training.



Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell and Annette August-Taylor present during the Secretary-Treasurer's training at the All-Craft Conference.

Honoring APWU President Mark Dimondstein

The exhibit hall opened on Oct. 4, for attendees to visit and engage with APWU vendors and campaigns. At midday, Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell, and Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard unveiled a surprise display for retiring APWU President Mark Dimondstein, featuring photographs and videos from his 12 years at the helm of the APWU.



APWU President Mark Dimondstein poses with Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard and Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell, after being surprised by a booth honoring his work on behalf of postal workers.

"Fighting for Our Future" Legislative & Political Conference

On Oct. 5, the Legislative Conference engaged members in workshops and regional breakouts, followed by a general session and panel discussion.

Delegates attended workshops providing them with the knowledge and resources to enact change at the grassroots level and prepare for the fights ahead and met with their respective regional coordinators on legislative issues. Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard gave updates on the federal government shutdown and encouraged members to continue fighting to protect working people. A panel of representatives from community and national organi-

for 2025 All-Craft Conference



Young Members' Conference

APWU young members met for their second conference, organized and directed by the Young Members' Committee. Their session began with activities that allowed attendees to share their experiences as young workers and network with each other. Committee presentations were interactive and gave attendees the tools to fight for their future as postal workers and union members, including on union leadership skills, the importance of organizing, and the APWU's nonpartisan Committee on Political Action (COPA).



APWU young members practice speaking at the mics on the floor to make their case in high-pressure situations.

zations discussed the topic of "Fighting for Our Future" – the conference's theme. Panelists included: Jamal R. Watkins from the NAACP; Augustus Wood from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign School of La-

bor and Employment Relations; Sondra Cosgrove from Vote Nevada; and the former president of the Communications Workers of America, Larry Cohen.





ALL-CRAFT CONFERENCE

The 2025 All-Craft Conference began on Oct. 6. The Clerk, Maintenance, Motor Vehicle Service (MVS), and Support Services Divisions discussed important updates and train members to support and uplift their coworkers and postal services.

Maintenance Division



Maintenance held its general session, where Director Idowu Balogun discussed updates to the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM), Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) in the new national agreement, and notable Step-4 arbitrations, including the Part-time

Regular Cap Violation, Maintenance Capable vs. Non-Maintenance Capable, Promotion Cancellation, and the pending case on the Small Delivery Sorter (SDUS).

National Business Agent (NBA) Dave Sarnacki highlighted new contractual gains and recent MOUs, while Assistant Director Treier addressed updates to tools workers use in the field, and Assistant Director Martinez provided a history and information about the National Center for Employee Development (NCED), including MOUs that expanded meal purchases covered by USPS per diem and guaranteed amenities. Martinez also discussed national subcontracting cases pending arbitration.

The officers also discussed Handbook MS-47 Maintenance Procedures and Personnel Guidelines, and the USPS-proposed replacement of the USPS 955 examination.

The Importance of Private-Sector Organizing

APWU private-sector organizers Rich Shelly and Lori Cash discussed the importance of organizing in the private-sector mailing industry, such as Amazon. The panel featured Amazon worker Laurie Masterson, who shared her experiences fighting back against Amazon's anti-union campaign. The support for private-sector organizing was strong.

Support Services Division



Support Services Director Arrion Brown spoke about the importance of organizing postal workers in the private sector, emphasizing how organizing on all fronts protects our membership, and noting the dangers postal workers face if we do not organize the private sector.

Amazon worker Laurie Masterson shared knowledge about having organizing conversations with coworkers. Director Brown spoke about the benefits of a strong, organized labor movement, what workers have accomplished in the past, and where we go from here.

Support Services NBA Orlando Anderson taught the importance of effective grievance writing, including details of the grievance procedure, fighting against discipline, and tips and best practices of filing grievances.

Motor Vehicle Service



The Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) Division gathered to discuss recent gains, sharpen enforcement, and map the next phase of the fight to protect MVS work.

MVS Director Michael Foster updated members on cases,

settlements, and provided tools for local enforcement. He highlighted work returned to the craft and pilot programs that can create new union jobs. He noted ongoing efforts tied to major awards and Step-4 matters and reminded locals to continue holding management accountable. Assistant Director Langley discussed expanded driver training, increasing the number of driver safety instructors, and aligning training with what is happening in the field.

The general session closed with a clear message: MVS members are stronger when they stand together, and reaffirmed that progress rests on unity, vigilance, and action.



Clerk Division



Clerk Division Director Lamont Brooks greeted attendees and recognized Assistant Director Lynn Pallas-Barber for her decades of service as she prepares for retirement. He remarked that her unique tenacity “will never be replaced.” Pallas-Barber was hon-

ored with cheers and a standing ovation. She reflected on 11 years at APWU Headquarters and 56 years with the Postal Service. “I didn’t get here because I’m a sweetheart,” she said, thanking Brooks for his leadership and urging delegates to continue the fight to protect clerk work.

Pallas-Barber delivered her final report, recounting ongoing battles over the implementation of management’s *Delivering for America (DFA)* plan, the RI-399 process, and disputes over the filling of residual vacancies. She discussed other issues, including PSE compliance violations and wounded warrior leave. Assistant Director Lisenbe discussed the TSA PreCheck pilot program, which is currently in eight locations, while Assistant Director Romanowski provided training on reversion and abolishment grievances, outlining powerful strategies to empower locals to win awards that preserve jobs.

Director Brooks delivered his report highlighting the significance of the recent Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) settlement, provided updates on pilot programs, and the role expanded services will play for the future of Clerk Craft jobs.

The Washington State APWU introduced a resolution to support upgrading scanners from MDD to MDD-TR models, which passed unanimously by voice vote. The day’s discussions reinforced that the strength of the Clerk Division lies in its unity, vigilance, and commitment to defending the work that keeps the Postal Service running.



APWU Veterans Fight for Veterans’ Rights and Health Care

Human Relations Director Freeman held a gathering of APWU veterans, addressing veteran issues and organizing against the current administration’s attacks on veterans’ rights and health care.

APWU National Veterans, Guard, and Reservist Information Specialist (VGRIS) Robert La Foe, highlighted the dangerous changes to veteran health care that may drastically increase costs and implored veterans to stay up to date on legislation that could harm them.

APWU’s Negotiations Support and Special Projects Manager Michael Macho discussed concerns with legislation in Congress affecting veterans and encouraged members to stay vigilant.



Retirees Conference



Retiree Director Nancy Olumekor welcomed delegates and honored those who have passed since the last conference, including a special ceremony for union activist and retiree chapter member Yolanda “Yoggi” Riley, who passed away in 2025.

The Alliance for Retired Americans Executive Director Richard Fiesta gave a presentation, followed by a presentation on the APWU Health Plan by Health Plan Director Rodriguez and Michelle Hatmaker.

Director Olumekor recognized retiree chapters that have been chartered for 30 years, then President Dimondstein and Secretary-Treasurer Powell signed charters for newly established retiree chapters.

Legislative and Political Director Beard addressed delegates about the federal shutdown, stressing the impact it could have on senior health care if not settled by the end of the year.

Delegate Bobby Donelson of the Southwest Coastal Area Local introduced a resolution to amend the APWU Constitution to include the Retirees Director on the Health Plan’s Board of Directors. After several proposed changes to the resolution, it was passed unanimously and will be brought to the 2026 National Convention. ■

Historic Settlement Reached on Time and Attendance Collection System Duties



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

On Sept. 30, Clerk Division Director Lamont Brooks reached an agreement with the Postal Service regarding Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) duties. “TACS entries and TACS allied duties are clerk craft bargaining unit work in all Postal facilities/installations Level 18 and above where clerks are employed,” the first line of the settlement agreement states. This historic settlement signals a finality to what has been a persistent issue for the Clerk Division and a financial headache for the Postal Service.

Over the past several years, despite Step-4 settlements, Question and Answer agreements, and a missive to field management from USPS headquarters officials, all of which assigned TACS duties to the clerk craft, local management continued to perform TACS work. These violations led to numerous grievances, resulting in millions of dollars paid to bargaining unit clerks.

The 2010-2015 Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) set the stage for this crucial settlement agreement. In that contract, the parties created Lead Clerks and agreed that non-supervisory, non-managerial duties would be assigned to the appropriate bargaining unit. As a result, work such as TACS duties has been gradually reassigned to the clerk craft, but this did not occur without the APWU fighting for each and every duty.

Some highlights of the TACS settlement agreement include:

- TACS entries and TACS allied duties are clerk craft bargaining unit work;
- Exception: Postmasters in Stand-Alone Level 18 post offices perform TACS duties, but that counts as one hour of their allotted 15 hours of bargaining unit work each week;
- Postal Service installation heads or their designees must ensure there are sufficient clerks trained in the Online Course – TACS Lead Clerk Training;
- The Postal Service has 120 days from the date of this agreement to provide the appropriate clerks with access to TACS and enterprise Resource Management System

(eRMS) and furnish them with limited access to OT Admin and Rural Management Support System (RMSS);

- A total of \$4,241,000 will be distributed to Lead Clerks identified by the union. Grievances filed over a supervisor’s performance of TACS duties in facilities that did not qualify for a Lead Clerk will be closed, along with certain national-level disputes related to TACS bargaining unit work.

- The settlement does not apply to TACS cases where the parties have arbitrated on the merits and await a decision, cases where the parties have an arbitration award on the merits but the remedy has not been adjudicated (including non-compliance with a settlement or arbitration award), or cases where the parties have reached a settlement agreement on the merits, but the remedy has yet to be determined or is in dispute. However, the agreement resolves all other TACS/Lead Clerk-related issues.

“I congratulate Clerk [Division] Director Lamont Brooks for his tireless efforts in addressing the TACS disputes,” said APWU President Mark Dimondstein. “This new national settlement is a big step forward in protecting Clerk work and securing jobs. Well done!”

“I am proud and excited that we have achieved one of the Clerk Division’s primary goals, which was to acquire all TACS bargaining unit work for the clerks we represent,” Director Brooks exclaimed. “This was a difficult and lengthy negotiation process, but the result is additional work for our craft. I want to thank Assistant Directors Lynn Pallas-Barber, Bob Romanowski, and Sam Lisenbe for their assistance in reaching this settlement. Additionally, I thank our Clerk Division National Business Agents and the many locals whose dedication and hard work facilitated the achievement of this agreement,” he concluded.

Locals are encouraged to communicate with the appropriate manager or supervisor to determine the number of Lead Clerks that will be required to perform the TACS entries and allied duties, in addition to the tour, crafts, sections, etc. that will be assigned to each Lead Clerk. ■

Successful Maintenance Craft Conference in 2025



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

We successfully completed the 2025 APWU All-Craft Conference, held in Las Vegas, NV. The Saturday before the conference, we attended the Maintenance Council meetings. The conference itself took place on Monday, with Maintenance Regional Breakouts on Tuesday, and Maintenance Division workshops on Wednesday. During the conference, guest speakers addressed members and held a meaningful, lively debate about all of the Maintenance Craft issues among the body, ending in solidarity and with an agreement to return home and continue to conduct the business of the union. Below is a summary of events:

Director Balogun acknowledged all the local and state Maintenance Craft directors under the age of 30, and celebrated Abby Moyer of the Des Moines Area Local as the youngest Maintenance director at just 22 years old.



Assistant Director **Terry Martinez** opened the conference,

welcoming delegates, before being led in prayer by NBA Carlos Paz. Martinez introduced the Division National Business Agents (NBAs). Director Balogun introduced Assistant Directors Terry Martinez (A) and Jason Treier (B) and acknowledged staffing assistants and arbitration advocates in attendance.

NBA Jeff Beaton introduced a motion to rename the Maintenance All-Craft Conference to the "Craig Fisher Maintenance Conference" in honor of NBA Craig Fisher's years of service.

Maintenance Division Officer Reports

Director Balogun discussed notable Step-4 national arbitrations from the past year, including the part-time regular (PTR) cap violation, maintenance capable vs. non-maintenance capable, promotion cancellation, the pending small delivery unit sorter (SDUS) jurisdiction, proposed new maintenance exams, and EL-304 handbook cases.

Director Balogun acknowledged the Maintenance Craft National Negotiating Team before turning it over to

NBA Dave Sarnacki, who discussed the gains won in the new contract.

Terry Martinez addressed USPS notifications on the SDUS jurisdiction, Jason Treier discussed the new Field Maintenance (FMO) application and revised MS-47 Handbook, and Director Balogun reported on newly proposed maintenance exams. Martinez provided a history of the National Center for Employee Development (NCED) and MOUs achieved by the APWU, improving members' experiences, like purchasing food with per diem and guaranteed amenities. Martinez also discussed national subcontracting cases pending arbitration. Director Balogun concluded with the following parting remarks, "If you can be anything, be kind."

APWU Wins National Arbitration Protecting Pending Qualification, Saved Grade, and Retreat Rights!

On Aug. 13, Arbitrator Newman ruled that positions awarded to promoted employees who are in "pending qualification" (PQ) status to receive training are not ongoing vacant duty assignments and cannot be reverted if subsequent staffing changes cause a reduction in staffing.

"This decision is a major victory for the Maintenance Division and the APWU crafts as a whole. Arbitrator Newman's award finally resolves this issue and affirms that our members' rights must be respected," said Maintenance Division Director, Idowu Balogun. For more information, visit apwu.org/maintenance.

Arbitrator Newman ultimately remanded the issue of remedies to the parties, retaining jurisdiction should further hearings be necessary to identify affected employees and determine appropriate relief. Potentially harmed employees include those who were promoted pending qualification and were forced to return to their former occupational group (without saved grade and retreat rights) solely because a new staffing package was generated after the promotion that identified a reduction in the number of authorized positions in the occupational group(s) that the employee was promoted pending qualification to. If you believe you may have been affected, please email Maint-HQ-Update@apwu.org ■

Protecting the Work



Director Michael Foster and Assistant Director Garrett Langley

The 47th Motor Vehicle Service Director's Conference commenced on Monday, Oct. 6.

Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) officers, stewards, and members from across the country gathered to discuss, debate, and address the many issues faced by both the craft and the APWU.

One of the major issues we discussed during the conference was the fight to protect MVS Craft work. The USPS "Delivering for America (DFA)" plan derives much of the estimated savings from transportation of mail, including the reduction and, in some areas, elimination of evening closeouts at associate offices. A major concern (and contractual violation) is the transportation of bulk mail by postal employees not in the MVS Craft to and from various post offices and processing and delivery centers.

The transportation of bulk quantities of mail is exclusively assigned to the MVS Craft operators.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Postal Service and the APWU regarding "General Principals on Sorting and Delivery Centers," bullet point number 4, reaffirms this rule:

"Bulk quantities of mail transported between mail processing facilities and S&DCs will be performed by Postal Vehicle Service employees unless such work was previously subcontracted. In addition, the transportation of bulk quantities of mail to/from an S&DC to/from the retail units/box sections that letter carriers were removed from will be performed by PVS employees. The parties will continue to meet for the purpose of discussing bringing subcontracted PVS work 'in house.'"

This MOU restates the rules and regulations of the transportation of bulk mail. It is the responsibility of the MVS Craft to enforce the contract and protect our work. In locations where mail is being transported, which is virtually every Post Office and facility throughout the network, we must document what craft is transporting the mail if not performed by Postal Vehicle Service (PVS) or Highway Contract Routes (HCRs). In large part, this will be done by our MVS

Division directors and stewards, getting on the docks and documenting who is bringing the mail in and how much. This is the best way to monitor and protect our craft work. If a letter carrier is transporting mail between the Sorting and Distribution Center (S&DC) and the spoke offices that are not from their prescribed route, a grievance must be filed. These investigations will obviously need time to be thoroughly investigated and documented, under the provisions of Articles 17.3 and 31.3, steward time and requests for information, which will be essential in determining whether violations exist.

The MVS Division had an excellent turnout of both seasoned and new union representatives in attendance at the All-Craft Conference, which is an excellent opportunity to network with others who may be experiencing similar concerns and problems. It is also a great opportunity to engage with APWU national officers. The MVS Division held a full day of training on a range of subject matters, including how to combat subcontracting in PVS and the Vehicle Maintenance Facility (VMF), as well as training on annual bidding, hold downs, maximization, and crossing occupational groups.

That Monday night, as is tradition, the MVS Craft held our Motor Vehicle Banquet that included dinner and entertainment. This was a very well-attended event by all crafts.

The MVS General Session was held on Tuesday, Oct. 7, with reports by the national directors and each regional NBA.

On Wednesday, there was training on DOT procedures and all MVS Craft job descriptions. The training was well received, and national officers answered all inquiries by attendees who lined up to ask questions. We hope all of the attendees received the tools and guidance we provided and were anxious to return home with the newfound knowledge and training on how to protect MVS jobs and work when a contractual violation occurs.

"Keep on Truckin'" ■

Support Services All-Craft 2025



Director Arrion Brown

The Support Services Division 2025 All-Craft training consisted of information on building the labor movement, grievance writing, a solidarity action with Amazon worker Lauri Masterson, who is organizing a union in her workplace, and craft breakout sessions over three days.

Support Services Director Arrion Brown greeted attendees and read the agenda for the morning session, titled “Organizing for Support Services, the APWU, and the Labor Movement.”

Director Brown spoke about the importance of organizing and moved into the first item of the agenda, which covered relevant sections of the APWU Constitution and Bylaws that support the Division’s organizing goals.

The next topic on the agenda covered how organizing protects our membership, and the dangers postal workers face if we do not organize the private sector. To that end, Director Brown spoke about the legal requirement for wage comparability, a part of the *Postal Reform Act of 1970* that mandates that USPS compensation must be comparable to the private sector.

This led Director Brown into the next topic on the agenda, which was the basics of organizing, including tips on how to have an organizing conversation, how to be a good listener, and “aiming for the bullseye,” which is an organizers goal of changing the attitudes of those on the outside who may initially be hostile or disengaged from unionizing closer to the center of being a core activist. An interactive class activity allowing attendees to write their own organizing conversation using what they had learned from the organizing conversation discussion followed this agenda point.

The morning session concluded with a discussion about the benefits of a strong, organized labor movement, what workers have accomplished in the past, and where we go from here.

“The potential in organizing the private sector and how to organize ourselves all gets us to a broader definition of what we can do for the labor movement – we want a strong, organized labor movement,” exclaimed Director

Brown. “So, what has a strong, organized labor movement accomplished over the years?”

Director Brown then provided examples of labor organizing wins of the past, including the San Francisco General Strike in 1934 and more currently, how tens of thousands of labor activists from the Korean Metal Workers Union and the Teachers Union in South Korea in 2024 halted a martial law declaration within six hours



Missouri Postal Workers Union Support Services Craft Director Mia Smith at the 2025 APWU All-Craft Conference.

made by then-President Yoon Suk Yeol, who attempted to suppress what he called “anti-state forces.”

The afternoon session consisted of an in-depth presentation by Support Services National Business Agent Orlando Anderson on

the importance of effective grievance writing. He went over the details of the grievance procedure, fighting against discipline, and taught tips and best practices of filing grievances.

Support Services Division members also attended the private sector organizing discussion with Lauri Masterson. There was a breakout session for Information Technology/Accounting Services (IT/AS) on stalled contract negotiations, which have stalled due to management not wanting to agree to any of the improvements the union has proposed, and a breakout for Operating Services, where attendees discussed the problematic history of contract negotiations, including the very limited accomplishments gained for the craft since it was added to the 2010 APWU-USPS main agreement.

The Support Services Conference was very exciting. We are looking forward to the attendees applying the knowledge that was obtained in organizing and grievance writing in their actions in the future. ■

NORTHEAST REGION COORDINATOR

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



Tiffany Foster, Northeast Region Coordinator

Thank You, Happy Holidays, and Looking to the Future

First, I want to thank the members of the APWU Northeast Region for your continued support and confidence in me during the 2025 APWU Election of National Officers, which allowed me to continue representing you as your Northeast Region Coordinator. It is an honor and a privilege that I don't take lightly, and I look forward to continuing our work together.

Happy Holidays

The holiday season will be upon us, and the Northeast Region national officers, administrative staff, and I wish all the members and retirees of the APWU and your families a happy, healthy, and joyous holiday season.

The Future

For a long time, I have been concerned about the fate of our union, its existence, and its future relevance, but my fears are starting to diminish.

At the 2025 APWU All-Craft Conference in Las Vegas, NV, I attended the Young Members' Conference, where I saw and met the future leaders of the APWU. They are bright, fierce, and confident.

Shanice Edwards, president of the Virgin Islands Area Local, and Alison Dumouchel, vice president of the Central Massachusetts Area Local, are the representatives for the Northeast Region. Shanice introduced APWU President Mark Dimondstein for his final speech at the Young Members' Conference, and Ali delivered an exceptional presentation on the Postal Service, our political role, its impact on the union, and more. Shanice and Ali represented the Northeast Region well. We are very proud of them.

The Young Members' Committee created the program and chaired the conference. It was clear to me that they understood the importance of a strong union and their role in it. They talked about

creative ways to engage new employees and why our union must be active in politics. It made me proud to witness the future in action.

Fight for Our Rights

Our freedoms and rights are under attack. No matter what your political affiliation. There is no denying it. If you are not part of the 1%, these regressive and aggressive policies and laws will affect you, whether you believe it or not. If not personally, I bet you or someone in your family knows someone who is impacted.

My last article was about why unions should be involved in politics. I hope that, with everything happening in the world today, members have had a change of heart and understand that everything is interconnected. We must come together and fight together, because as Frederick Douglass said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will."

Roger Baldwin, the co-founder of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) said, "Silence never won rights. They are not handed down from above - they're forced from the pressures below."

That is how progress was made in this country. The people demanded their rights and were willing to fight for them. What are you willing to do?

Lastly, this article is being published after President Dimondstein's retirement from the APWU, but I want to say that he has always been an advocate for the people, rising up against those who wanted to maintain power and control over the least of these. I know he will still be in the streets in the struggle.

On behalf of the Northeast Region, thank you, President Dimondstein, for 12 years of leadership. ■



Judy Beard, Director

Fighting for Our Future!

Fourth Biennial Legislative Conference Convenes

The APWU Legislative and Political Department held its national Legislative Conference on Oct. 5 in Las Vegas, NV. With the constant attacks on working people and the ever-looming threat of privatization, the conference theme of “Fighting for Our Future” could not be more relevant. Attendees participated in several workshops with spirited engagement. “Legislative Advocacy and Lobbying” gave attendees a fundamental understanding of the state of play in Congress as well as helpful tips when meeting with their elected officials; “Understanding the Hatch Act” provided critical information about the rules that postal workers are bound by concerning political engagement, and how we can still be involved in the process; “Reshaping Democracy at the State and Local Level” took a deep dive into the different ways that we can enact change within our immediate communities in a time when the federal government is at a standstill; “Media Relations” provided the necessary tools to utilize the media in building support for our issues; and “History of the Labor Movement” showed how we can drive member engagement and enthusiasm by reforging the connection between our past struggles and our current fights.



The conference moved forward with regional breakouts that focused on the elections of significance in each region, noteworthy ballot measures, the APWU’s

nonpartisan Committee on Political Action (COPA), and discussion on how to break through the political noise and get more members involved in legislative issues.

Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard updated the conference on the current fights at hand and how we found success this year in beating back the recent

attacks on our retirement

benefits and privatization

attempts. APWU Presi-

dent Mark Dimondstein

followed with remarks on

the legislative success of

the union, and the impor-

tance of solidarity.

A dynamic panel engaged the general session with power-

ful anecdotes of how they

became engaged in

the fight to empower

people and their

communi-

ties to enact

change and

build power.

The special

guest panel-

ists were:

Jamal R. Watkins, NAACP senior vice president of Strategy and Advancement; Augustus Wood, assistant professor at the School of Labor and Employment Relations University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign; Sondra Cosgrove, executive director and chair of the Board for Vote Nevada; and Larry Cohen, former president of the Communications Workers of America (CWA). Each panelist gave words of encouragement to attendees to remember who they are fighting for and to use that to drive themselves to action.

The conference rounded out with a salute to outgoing President Mark Dimondstein, thanking him for all of his leadership in our legislative fights over the last 12 years. ■

ORGANIZATION

Organizing at the End of the Year



Anna Smith, Director

As we approach the end of the year, it's the perfect time to reflect on our organizing efforts and set our sights on 2026 goals that will carry us into the new year stronger than ever. We often hear that "union organizing is the lifeblood of our strength," but what does that really mean to you and me? Organizing is how we grow our union, and as we grow, we become a stronger force to be reckoned with. It's through organizing that we protect our rights, expand our collective voice, and ensure that every postal worker is part of the fight for fair wages, safe workplaces, and dignity on the job.

AS WE CLOSE OUT THE YEAR, I WANT TO THANK EACH OF YOU FOR YOUR DEDICATION AND THE HARD WORK YOU'VE PUT INTO STRENGTHENING OUR UNION. CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWLY ELECTED LEADERS, TO THOSE WHO WERE REELECTED, AND TO THOSE RETIRING AFTER YEARS OF SERVICE.

Over the past year, many locals have worked hard to grow their membership and strengthen participation within their locals. But our organizing work never ends. Right now, during the peak hiring season, we can't afford to miss the opportunity to bring every new employee into our union.

Every year, thousands of Postal Support Employees (PSEs) are hired during our peak holiday season. With over 150,000 PSEs converted to career positions already, these new workers are our future career employees. Statistically, about 80% of the PSEs hired during peak season will continue their employment at some point after their break in service. For a PSE's APWU membership to be automatically reinstated once rehired within 180-days after the conclusion of their current term of employment, the original application must have been submitted and entered. Since we only get one opportunity for new hire orientation, and PSEs may be brought back to different facilities, holding onto membership applications at the local level can result in applications never being submitted

And if your local is skipping orientations altogether, that is a disservice not only to the new hires coming into the APWU, but to all of us. In short, during our peak season, do not delay sending in membership applications (Form 1187s).

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

The Columbus Area Local (OH) has made impressive strides in member engagement and organizing through the innovative use of their website. Maintenance Craft Director and Local Editor Cameron Taylor shared how the local has transformed its website into a valuable tool for both current members and new recruits.

This year, the local launched "Members Only" and "Stewards Only" sections that require users to create an account where membership is reviewed before approval. In just a few short months, nearly 200 of their more than 1,100 members have already registered. The site includes seniority rosters for all crafts, postings, and results for the Clerk Craft in their Processing and Distribution Center (P&DC) and City Stations, and convenient tools such as contact forms that automatically send messages to the appropriate people and Delivery Bar Code Sorter (DBCS) staffing statement submissions. These updates have made the website more functional and engaging, so much so that some nonmembers have joined the APWU just to gain access.

The local also created an email newsletter that now reaches over 800 members, with more than half regularly opening each issue. Website traffic has increased from 2,214 visits in 2023 to over 16,000 in 2025.

This is a great example of how locals can use technology and consistent communication to build engagement, strengthen organizing efforts, and add value for members. Excellent work, Columbus Area Local!

As we close out the year, I want to thank each of you for your dedication and the hard work you've put into strengthening our union. Congratulations to our newly elected leaders, to those who were reelected, and to those retiring after years of service. I look forward to working together as we build on our organizing successes. Wishing everyone a joyful holiday season and a strong start to 2026! In Union Solidarity. ■



Joyce B. Robinson, Director

APWU POWER Convention Donates a Whopping \$31,036 to COPA

“APWU POWER: Fighting for Our Future!” was the theme that kicked off the Post Office Women for Equal Rights (POWER) 22nd Biennial National Convention in New York, NY. Facilitators offered workshops on a wide range of subjects, and participants received an abundance of information to share with their locals and states.

Highlights

Gale A. Brewer, District 6 member of the New York City Council, welcomed delegates and guests and encouraged them to visit the many attractions in New York City. She spoke of the challenges that women in public office face and commended APWU POWER for speaking out on women’s issues.

The highlight of the convention occurred with inspiring video addresses by U.S. Representatives Jasmine Crockett (TX-30) and Ayanna Pressley, (MA-07). They spoke about the difficult times in today’s politics, especially for women and emphasized the importance of women fighting back against attempts to undermine their rights.

The convention’s opening day keynote speaker, U.S. Representative LaMonica McIver (NJ-10), stated that the women in POWER must remain focused on reproductive freedom, pay equity, affordable health care, and electing more women to leadership positions. She emphasized that the fight for women’s equality is ongoing and referred to recent political attacks on women’s rights. She commended the women of APWU POWER for “Getting things done and getting things done well.”

APWU President Mark Dimondstein addressed the delegates via Zoom about the political climate in this country. He talked about the attacks on Social Security and federal jobs, the push for privatization of the Postal Service, eroding voter rights, the bigotry and racism running rampant today, the disregard for unions, and President Trump’s disrespect for the law. He encouraged delegates to remain vigilant and continue the fight.

The convention held a memorial service for the POWER sisters who passed away since the last convention and lit candles in their remembrance.

A motion was made and passed unanimously to name the convention Josie McMillian’s APWU 22nd Biennial National POWER Convention!

The Northeast Region knocked the Eastern Region off its high horse, reclaiming the “COPA Award,” by contributing \$7,716 to the APWU’s non-partisan Committee on Political Action (COPA). Other region totals were: Southern \$6,800; Eastern \$6,700; Western \$6,500; and Central \$3,320; Grand Total of \$31,036.

National APWU Awards presented: the Elizabeth “Liz” Powell Executive Award to Tanya Jackson (Brooklyn Local), the Joyce B. Robinson Leadership Award to Antoinette Robinson (Kansas City Golden Jazz Retiree Chapter), and the Nilda Chock Pioneer Award to Yolanda Elder (Greater LA Area Local Retiree Chapter). Also, Joyce B. Robinson received numerous awards for her outstanding work and dedication to APWU POWER; outgoing POWER Coordinators received awards, and the POWER Coordinator’s Award went to Nadine Claude-Lewis, Southern Region.

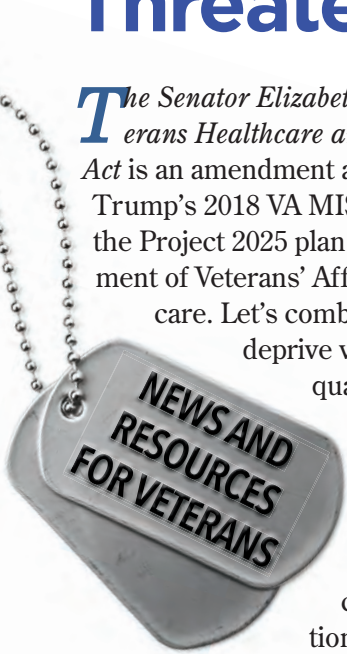
Newly elected APWU POWER Coordinators:

- Wendy Smith-Scales, Central Region,
Email: peekaboo4two@yahoo.com
- Antionette Hill, Eastern Region,
Email: antoinettehill79@yahoo.com
- Alice Eppenstein, Northeast Region,
Email: oliveandcrax@comcast.net
- Nakesha Williams, Southern Region,
Email: nakeshabwilliams@gmail.com
- Dawn Gray, Western Region,
Email: dawngray.apwu@gmail.com

The POWER sisters left the convention energized with a renewed commitment to help the APWU fight to change the political climate in this country in 2026! A special “thank you” goes out to the New York Metro Area Postal Union and the Brooklyn Local for hosting a most successful and productive convention!

In closing, “Let’s pray that in this holiday season, love replaces hate, faith replaces fear, and people remember the bond we all share!” ■

Dangerous New Trump Bill Threatens Veterans' Health Care



The Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans Healthcare and Benefits Improvement Act is an amendment and another extension of Trump's 2018 VA MISSION Act, and part of the Project 2025 plan to privatize the Department of Veterans' Affairs' (VA) provided health care. Let's combat this devious betrayal to deprive veterans of getting top-quality health care. This law

does not improve health care experiences; it actually does the opposite by forcing veterans to use private community care providers. The definition of improvement is to make something better than it

was before. When a law is created that eliminates thousands of VA jobs and replaces trained and experienced workers with private care providers with limited experience in carrying out the serious and complicated task of caring for veterans' medical and mental health needs – that's not improving health care, that's destroying the top-quality health care experience that only the VA can provide.

On Aug 4, the VA, which is led by Trump-appointed VA Secretary Doug Collins, issued the following press release:

"The Department of Veterans Affairs today announced it will improve Veterans' access to health care by extending the length of new VA community care authorizations to one year for 30 standardized types of care.... The change means Veterans referred by VA to community care for eligible standardized types of care will receive 12 full months of uninterrupted treatment at VA expense.... Community providers will be empowered to manage care with fewer administrative barriers... Veterans

are encouraged to contact their local VA Medical Center Community Care Office for questions to see how these new updates may affect their care."

(Note: The 30 types of care it references include practically every type of medical/mental health care that VA medical centers nationwide already provide.)

This doesn't sound like improving the health care experience, it sounds like privatization!

What is the VA MISSION Act?

The VA MISSION Act is legislation Congress passed and President Trump signed into law during his first term in 2018. It requires all VA medical centers to implement the following changes:

- Streamline and improve community care;
- Establish a new urgent care benefit;
- Expand caregivers eligibility;
- Strengthen the VA's workforce;
- Strengthen the VA's infrastructure.

Through the MISSION Act, the VA has additional opportunities to enhance high-quality health care to our nation's Veterans.

The 2025 Senator Elizabeth Dole 21st Century Veterans HealthCare and Benefits Improvement Act, coupled with Trump's 2018 MISSION Act, and the Project 2025 plan to privatize veteran health care, is already in place, meaning VA health care is on a fast track to total privatization.

Our APWU Home Front articles will continue to provide our entire Union Veteran Council leadership and our APWU veterans' family with updated, honest, and truthful information regarding VA issues and benefits. ■



Daleo Freeman, Director

Reflecting on 2025

As we close out the year, the Human Relations Department reflects on a year of growth, education, and advocacy. Our annual Human Relations Educational Assembly in Houston, TX, was a resounding success, with over 230 attendees gathering to discuss critical topics such as injury compensation, employee assistance programs, veterans' rights, and social justice. The assembly provided a platform for education and training, and we were proud to have so many members, activists, stewards, and officers in attendance. Our solidarity and commitment to advancing postal workers' rights have never been stronger.

Throughout the year, we successfully trained a significant number of members, activists, stewards, and officers, enhancing their knowledge and skills in various areas, including the Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP). Additionally, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services are available to postal employees and their families. We also advocate for equal employment opportunities and provide guidance on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) process. We also administer the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF) to support postal employees affected by natural disasters.

Notably, our Veterans, Guard, and Reservist Information Specialist (VGRIS) representative, Robert "Bob" LaFoe has been a leading advocate for veterans' rights and benefits, generously sharing his expertise and knowledge with our members through various forums and training sessions. His dedication to supporting veterans has been invaluable, and we are grateful for his tireless efforts.

Recently, our department, including representative LaFoe, participated in the All-Craft Convention in Las Vegas, NV, where we had a booth and engaged with members on upcoming issues, including veterans' concerns and benefits. We appreciate the opportunity to connect with our members and look forward to continuing our work in the new year.

As we look ahead to 2026, we are committed to building on our progress and continuing to provide excellent

training and support for our members. We will focus on empowering and educating our members on critical issues, including civil rights, veterans' rights, and economic and social justice. Our goal is to expand our training programs, increase member engagement, and advocate for policies that benefit postal workers and their families.

AS WE LOOK AHEAD TO 2026, WE ARE COMMITTED TO BUILDING ON OUR PROGRESS AND CONTINUING TO PROVIDE EXCELLENT TRAINING AND SUPPORT FOR OUR MEMBERS...OUR GOAL IS TO EXPAND OUR TRAINING PROGRAMS, INCREASE MEMBER ENGAGEMENT, AND ADVOCATE FOR POLICIES THAT BENEFIT POSTAL WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

We are proud of the progress we have made and look forward to the opportunities ahead. To our members, we thank you for your dedication and hard work. We wish you a prosperous and productive new year, filled with joy, health, and success. Let's continue to build unity and solidarity as we strive for a brighter future for all postal workers.

The Human Relations Department is dedicated to serving our members and advocating for the rights of postal workers. We are grateful for the opportunity to serve and look forward to continuing our work in the new year. By working together, we can achieve great things and build a brighter future for all postal workers. Thank you for your continued support and participation. We are looking forward to a successful 2026!

As we move into the new year, we would also like to extend our congratulations to the newly elected officers and representatives of the APWU. We look forward to working with you and supporting your efforts to advance the interests of our members. Specifically, we congratulate President Jonathan Smith on his election and look forward to collaborating with him and the rest of the leadership team to achieve our shared goals. ■

A Tribute to Yolanda "Yoggi" Riley (July 1946-August 2025)



Nancy Olumekor, Director

Yoggi Riley was a leader, mentor, and fighter on behalf of postal workers for almost 60 years. In September 1967, Yoggi began working as a special delivery messenger at the Post Office. Yoggi held numerous positions in her local. Her leadership was tested in the mid 1990s when management attempted to change the craft of special delivery messengers and deprive messengers of their right to be represented by the APWU. During this crisis, she sprang into action, helped confront management, and enlisted the support of the national union. The national union reached an agreement with management that all messengers would remain in their union of choice. This was a great victory for postal workers.

Shortly after this big win, Yoggi started working with the Retirees Department to conduct retirement seminars and help workers prepare for retirement. This was almost 10 years before she retired.

Yoggi was also devoted to her family – she was a wife, mother, and grandmother. The time and energy she gave to coaching children's baseball and t-ball was so well known that the community renamed the playing field across from her home after her. Her retirement from the USPS was recognized in "A Tribute to Yoggi Riley" by former House Representative Howard Berman (CA-28), which was published in the Congressional Record during his time in office on Feb. 14, 2006. Representative Berman asked his colleagues in the House to join him in saluting Yoggi Riley, congratulating her on her retirement, and wishing her success in all her future endeavors.



Yoggi expanded her activism in 2001 by joining the National Active and Retired Federal Employees (NARFE) association as an active employee and a member of the San Fernando Valley-Van Nuys Chapter. Later, she also served as Secretary at the Federation of Retired Union Members (FORUM), which is a part of the AFL-CIO Los Angeles Federation of Labor, and was an active member of the California Alliance of Retired Americans.

After over 25 years, the APWU Retirees Department salutes Yoggi Riley for her years of service to the APWU Retirees Department as a retirement planning instructor, counselor, and advisor to thousands of postal and federal employees; she had direct contact with APWU members from coast to coast. In retirement, she not only served the APWU as part of the Retirees Department, but she also remained active in her local. Yoggi help to form the SFVAL Golden Oldies Retiree Chapter, serving as its president since it was chartered in August 2012.

In addition, she held the elected position of Secretary-Treasurer in the local; her most recent position in the local was as the Legislative Director which afforded her the opportunity to stay active and focused on fighting for retirees' and workers' rights as well as to regularly write a column "Old Reasoning" in the local's newspaper.

Yoggi 's plate was more than full. During the last retirement seminar held on Zoom on Aug. 16, 2025, Yoggi participated and shared her closing words, **"Lastly, do not live your life for retirement; retirement is just another stage of life that we can all look forward to!"**

When I think of Yoggi, I am reminded of the lyrics to this song: *"If I can help somebody as I pass along, If I can cheer somebody with a word or a song, If I can show somebody that they are traveling wrong, then my living shall not be in vain!"*

The family requests that if you wish to make any donation, please make it in honor of Yolanda Riley at: ranchosanantonio.org/?form=FUNAEWWGEVM. ■

HEALTH PLAN



Sarah Jane Rodriguez, Director

‘Supporting the Fighters, Admiring the Survivors, Honoring the Taken, Never Giving Up Hope.’

Since 1993, American Cancer Society (ACS) Making Strides Against Breast Cancer events have united communities, companies, and individuals with a collective goal to end breast cancer as we know it, for everyone. Over the past three decades, the Making Strides program has grown into the nation’s largest and most impactful breast cancer movement - and APWU Health Plan has been able to join the movement. We have been supporting Making Strides for Breast Cancer, Baltimore chapter, for over five years.

“Thanks to supporters like APWU Health Plan, ACS is here to ensure no one has to feel alone at any point on their cancer journey, from detection and diagnosis, through treatment and survivorship, and, for some, the end of life. In 2024, trained ACS team members answered about 360,000 calls and chats to provide support to people facing cancer and their families. Breast cancer remains the number one cancer type for which people request information through our helpline.”

There are more than four million breast cancer survivors in the United States today, including those who have completed treatment and those still undergoing treatment. Early detection is important and can save lives. Both our High Option and Consumer Driven Option cover routine mammograms at 100% when performed with an in-network provider. Get your mammogram!

For both the 2024 and 2025 October walks, APWU Health Plan has been the Start Line sponsor. This is an opportunity that we do not take lightly. We are proud to support our community. As a Start Line sponsor, with the help of

UnitedHealthcare (partnering vendor), we make a financial donation, provide walkers with healthy and energizing snacks, and participate in the walk to help spread awareness. These three to five-mile noncompetitive walks provide a supportive community for courageous breast cancer survivors and people living with metastatic breast cancer, caregivers, and families alike.

We are proud to represent APWU Health Plan and create awareness! Look for us on the Start Line!! ■



Canadian Union of Postal Workers Strike for Contract

The *Canada Post* labor dispute over a good contract continues, with postal workers shifting to a rotating strike (striking at different locations on different days), which they say has a history of winning major gains for postal workers. The decision comes after another unratifiable proposal from management that was worse than the one workers rejected in August. The union representing postal workers, Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW), says they are simply trying to negotiate a collective agreement that will “strengthen public services, protect good jobs, and build a sustainable post office that will serve Canadians, no matter where they are located, for generations to come.”

CUPW is fighting a two-front battle. While *Canada Post*, which is a gov-

ernment-owned corporation, makes insulting offers at the table, an anti-worker government has been intervening in their strike actions. This is the second CUPW strike for a good new contract. The first began on Nov. 15, 2024, but was suspended when the government, which has ultimate authority over *Canada Post*, called strikers back to work. Clearly, workers are the only ones taking up the mantle against privatization and for good public services.

In contrast to the CUPW’s vision for a robust public postal service, *Canada Post*’s latest contract proposals offer a look into the future of what they think

postal services should look like; a privatized and less efficient “gigified workplace” using part-time contractors, outsourcing work to franchises, providing less services to the public, closing post offices, ending door-to-door delivery, and using cluster boxes for mail.

Just like us, our union family to the north is fighting for good, public postal services and good union jobs for the workers who provide them. This should be a warning to all that cuts to service and threats to job security are in the playbook that postal privatizers will use in the United States. ■

Solidarity with Palestine Postal Service Workers Union

On Sept. 30, our union family in the Palestinian Postal Service Workers Union (PPSWU) sent the APWU a message asking for our support and solidarity in the months ahead. Facing genocide in Gaza and further destruction from the Israeli army, despite a tenuous ceasefire agreement, Palestinian postal workers need our help in Palestine need our help now more than ever. We have printed their message to us (see right) and encourage you to send a letter of solidarity by visiting apwu.org/postal-solidarity. ■



نقابة العاملين في الخدمات البريدية / فلسطين
Palestinian postal Service Workers Union-(PPSWU)



Palestine on 30. September .2025

**TO: Mark Dimondstein.
National President
American Postal Workers Union, AFL-CIO**

Dear comrades,

We reach out to you from Palestine in these darkest of times. We are living under fire, without our wages, without food, without education. Life is being pushed to a standstill, and each day the struggle to survive grows heavier.

You all know that what is happening in Gaza is a genocide, a war crime, and the starvation of an unarmed people. The situation in the West Bank is no less dire, with constant restrictions on the Palestinian people, the cutting of public employees’ and postal workers’ salaries, daily settler attacks, and Hundreds of metal gates controlling movement. All of this injustice occurs with the support of the United States government.

Our friends and fellow fighters in the US for justice and humanity in Palestine are taking some of the greatest stands in history in response to what is happening, standing with the Palestinian people in their struggle for dignity and rights. Support from unions around the world has been a lifeline for Palestinian workers and unions, giving us strength and morale during these dark times. The PPSWU deeply appreciates the efforts of the APWU and others in building the National Labour Network for Ceasefire, pushing to end the war in Gaza, demanding an arms embargo, and working to change U.S. policy toward Israel.

In conclusion, we know and acknowledge that without your struggle we would face death, crushed by the Israeli war machine. Your presence and solidarity are vital to our very survival. We call on you to continue supporting the path of peace, to help stop the war, and to secure for us a dignified and peaceful life in Palestine. In the months ahead, we will need your solidarity more than ever. Together, we can defend workers, defend peace, and justice.

In solidarity,

**Mohammed Adnan Dowd,
PPSWU national president,**



LABOR NEWS

UNI Global Union



Municipal Workers in India Win Landmark Victory

After a more than six-year campaign led by UNI Global Union affiliate, Rashtriya Mazdoor Sangh (RMS), approximately 10,500 municipal contract workers in Pune, India, have won higher pay, paid leave, and job protections. The Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) workers, who provide essential services in sanitation, security, driving, water supply, health, and gardens, had endured job insecurity and exploitative working conditions for years. Despite their vital services, they had been denied mandatory bonuses and holiday wages, received no paid leave, experienced hostile work environments and arbitrary terminations, which reflected the deep inequality and a lack of dignity within a system meant to uphold public welfare. This victory restores legally entitled provisions as well as the dignity and recognition they deserve as vital contributors to the city's functioning.

Prosecutors Downgrade Charge Against SEIU Labor Leader David Huerta

On Oct. 17, Federal prosecutors in Los Angeles (LA) downgraded a charge against Service Employees International Union - United Service Workers West (SEIU-USWW) President David Huerta from a felony to a misdemeanor. Prosecutors claim Huerta attempted to impede federal agents during an immigration raid near downtown LA on June 6. He was arrested that day and charged with conspiring to impede an officer, a felony offense that holds a sentence of up to six years in federal prison. He now faces one misdemeanor count of obstruction of a federal officer, which has a maximum sentence of one year in prison. Mr. Huerta and his supporters have described the accusation as a baseless attempt to intimidate those who speak out against President Trump and are calling for the charges to be dropped. "I am being targeted for exercising my constitutional rights for standing up against an administration that has declared open war on working families, immigrants, and basic human dignity," said Mr. Huerta in a statement. "If the goal was to instill fear, it has failed."



Houston Hotel Workers Ratify Agreement, Ending Months-Long Strike

Hotel workers represented by Unite Here Local 23 at Hilton Americas-Houston ratified a historic agreement, ending a 40-day strike, the first hotel strike in Texas history. The contract secures historic wage increases, job protections, improved workload limits, and safety provisions for the hotel's housekeepers, laundry attendants, and stewards.



Ashley See, SEIU

Coal Miners Protest Delayed Protections

Current and former coal miners and victims of fatal lung diseases, such as Black Lung, gathered in front of the Department of Labor (DOL) headquarters in Washington, DC on Oct. 15, to protest against the delayed implementation of the "Silica Rule" passed in June 2024 to reduce silica dust exposure in mines, protect miners from fatal diseases, and create enforceable protections for mineworkers. Black Lung can be caused by the inhalation of silica dust, a byproduct in mining when rocks are ground to extract mineral deposits like coal. The 2024 ruling, passed by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), was the first-ever regulation on silica dust and ordered mine owners to comply by April 2025. However, the Trump administration is blocking mine unions and medical associations from defending the safety rule in court.



From Bellingham to Las Vegas: Unity Is Strength

We write this A Grand Alliance column from Las Vegas, where APWU members came together at the All-Craft Conference to continue the work to build our great union.

A Grand Alliance participated in the conference exhibit hall with a U.S. Mail Not for Sale booth. We provided information about the local proclamations campaign, distributed information about the privatization threat, and asked for feedback on the campaign against a corporate takeover of our public Postal Service.

Thank you to everyone who visited. If you would like to share your thoughts on the U.S. Mail Not for Sale campaign, complete our survey at: usmailnotforsale.org/survey.

One highlight of the conference was the presentation given by Laurie Masterson, an Amazon worker in Bellingham, MA, who attended with APWU organizers Rich Shelley and Lori Cash.

In 2024, Amazon became the largest private-sector delivery company in the United States. While the Postal Service remains the country's largest delivery service, a recent report by Pitney-Bowes predicted that Amazon could surpass it by 2028.

Union membership in the United States has been in decline since the 1970s, when the “Powell Memo” launched corporate America’s all-out attack on working people, our living standards, and our right to organize a union. The confidential memo to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, written by corporate lawyer Lewis Powell, urged companies to fight back against a “broad attack” on the free-enterprise system. That long-term decline impacts us all – pushing down wages everywhere and hurting unionized workers’ ability to bargain for good contracts.

So why is union membership declining? It is not because people do not want unions. While seven out of every 10 people in the United States have a favorable opinion of labor unions, only one out of every 10 workers is a

member of a union.

The truth is, corporations are more powerful than ever. Companies spend billions of dollars on targeted psychological pressure campaigns against their own workers and aggressive legal strategies against those workers’ unions. They are willing to spend big to block workers’ right to a shared voice because it allows them to keep wages down and corporate profits up.

In Bellingham, the psychological pressure started almost immediately when workers first showed their public support for a union. “They started two hours after we openly wore our shirts,” explained Masterson. “In every bathroom stall, we have this little plastic screen that they can put updated news and resources on, and everything in that bathroom was all anti-union.”

The anti-union propaganda machine includes messages in the break room. Every TV screen in the facility was churning out anti-worker messages, increasingly focused on distortions about the APWU.

Workers started forming a union because, as Masterson describes it, Amazon has a “corporate structure that is consistently trying to push us to produce more for less money every chance and opportunity they get, while making it sound like they’re doing us a benefit.”

The human toll of Amazon’s style of anti-worker attacks is terrible. “I have worked with four people who are working [at Amazon] homeless, not due to drugs or alcohol addiction, but due to the economic depression that they’re in,” Masterson revealed. “They’re not earning enough to afford an apartment ... It is just crazy. It really is.”

But the answer to the greed of giant corporations like Amazon is organized labor, and Masterson is confident that workers will come out on top in the end – not just in one plant but in facilities across the region and the country. The company will fight but as she says, “They can’t afford to fight us all once we join forces.” ■

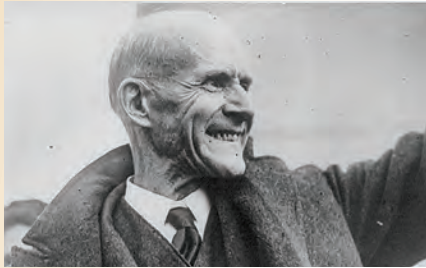
A Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Postal Service is a broad coalition of national, state and local organizations including the NAACP, Vote Vets, Jobs with Justice, National Council of Churches, and Rainbow PUSH. These groups have come together to take a stand against the unprecedented assaults on the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

Looking Back: This Time in Our Labor History

Eugene Debs - A Leader for Working People

November 5, 1855: American trade unionist, social and economic political activist, and cofounding member of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), Eugene V. Debs was born in Terre Haute, IN.

Debs' parents were immigrants from the Alsace region of France and worked as grocers in the United States. At the young age of 14, Debs dropped out of school to work in the rail yards, where he quickly became a locomotive fireman. He was a member of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen (BLF) and



served as grand secretary-treasurer and editor-in-chief of the union's magazine.

After leading the BLF through the major, but unsuccessful,

Burlington railroad strike, Debs recognized the need to pivot from the craft-based structure of the BLF, and in 1893 formed the first industrial union in the United States – the American Railway Union (ARU), serving as its founding president.

Debs gained national recognition leading the ARU's 1894 Pullman Strike – a nationwide strike and boycott of the Pullman Palace Car Company, which had just cut workers' wages. However, President Grover Cleveland intervened, issuing an injunction to end the strike with the justification that it was disrupting mail delivery and interstate commerce. Debs defied the injunction, leading to his arrest, imprisonment, and the dissolution of the ARU.

Left cynical about the state of the government, which sided against workers for corporate interests, Debs spent his time in prison studying the works of socialist thinkers.

Upon his release in 1895, Debs supported populist Democratic presidential candidate William Jennings Bryan. After Bryan's failed bid for the presidency, Debs realized that the needed change for everyday working-class Americans could not be achieved by either of the two major political parties. In 1898, he helped form the Social Democratic Party, which later became the Socialist Party of America following a merger with disaffected elements of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

Debs was also one of 40 socialists and trade unionists who formed the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) during its founding convention in Chicago in 1905. He remained active in the early years, advocating and organizing for the Socialist movement. He ran as the Socialist Party's candidate for U.S. president five times between 1900 and 1920, promoting workers' rights, women's suffrage, and abolishment of child labor. Debs' final run for president occurred during a 10-year prison sentence for denouncing World War I under the *Espionage Act*. He campaigned for free speech and against political repression.

On Christmas Day 1921, President Harding commuted his sentence. Debs spent his remaining years advocating for peace, prison reform, and social justice until he passed away in October 1926. ■

Mark Dimondstein to Lead Eugene V. Debs Foundation

Retiring APWU President Mark Dimondstein has accepted an offer to serve in a part-time, voluntary role as president of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation, based in Terre Haute, IN. Dimondstein will serve the remaining two years of a vacant three-year term. Since 1962, the foundation has promoted the legacy and relevance of American trade unionist and political activist Eugene Debs. The Debs' residence became a museum owned by the foundation in 1964 and has since served as a revered memorial site for individuals, unions, school groups, and other organizations to honor Eugene Debs. Each year, the

foundation presents its Annual Debs Award to an individual or organization that best exemplifies the spirit and legacy of Eugene Debs. This year's award was presented to Senator Bernie Sanders.

"I'm honored to serve as the next president of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation," said Dimondstein. "It is fitting that I had a Eugene Debs poster hanging in my office," he continued. "His vision for labor and working people is the same one that I have, and I firmly believe that we must keep history alive so we can prepare for the battles ahead."



ENROLL DURING OPEN SEASON

November 10 – December 8, 2025

Open Season Hotline

Call: 800.PIC.APWU (8:30am - 6pm ET)

Email: openseason@apwuhp.com

Website: openseason.apwuhp.com



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Ready for tomorrow.

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Self

PSHB enrollment code 23A

Biweekly	Monthly/Retiree
\$107.15	\$232.16

Self Plus One

PSHB enrollment code 23C

Biweekly	Monthly/Retiree
\$216.18	\$468.38

Self & Family

PSHB enrollment code 23B

Biweekly	Monthly/Retiree
\$275.94	\$597.87

CONSUMER DRIVEN OPTION

Monthly rates

Self

PSHB enrollment code 23D

\$197.39

Self Plus One

PSHB enrollment code 23F

\$429.01

Self & Family

PSHB enrollment code 23E

\$468.02

★ Special biweekly rates for career APWU bargaining unit employees enrolled in PSHB for more than one year ★

Self

PSHB enrollment code 23D

Less than 1 year & PSE	More than 1 year
\$91.10	\$18.22

Self Plus One

PSHB enrollment code 23F

Less than 1 year & PSE	More than 1 year
\$198.00	\$39.60

Self & Family

PSHB enrollment code 23E

Less than 1 year & PSE	More than 1 year
\$216.01	\$43.20

Two plans. One extensive network.

All members receive 100% coverage for some in-network services.

- ☒ Preventive care and screenings
- ☒ Maternity care and support
- ☒ Breast cancer screenings
- ☒ Tobacco cessation program
- ☒ Lab tests – covered blood work performed at a LabCorp or Quest Diagnostics (High Option only)
- ☒ Accidental injury outpatient services within 72 hours (High Option only)
- ☒ No primary care provider requirement
- ☒ Freedom to use in-network and out-of-network providers

Consumer Driven Option

In January, the Health Plan funds a Personal Care Account (PCA) members can use for covered medical services. Members are covered 100% until the PCA is exhausted. The Plan funds the PCA with \$1,200 for Self Only and \$2,400 for Self Plus One and Self and Family.

This is a summary of benefits and features. All benefits are subject to the definitions, limitations, and exclusions set forth in the Health Plan's PSHB Brochure