THE AMERICAN
Postal Worker
APWU
July/August 2026

VOTE-BY-MAIL
KEEP IT, PROTECT IT, EXPAND IT.

Read more about APWU's Vote-by-Mail Campaign on Page 6.

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ABOUT THE COVER

Postal workers have been holding press conferences across the country to promote the importance of Vote-by-Mail. Millions of Americans rely on it, and union members are proud to make sure ballots make it to their destination on time. We are proud of the part we play in elections!

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A photo in our May/June issue showed members wearing a shirt that said 86, and another with a 47 shirt. The image was not intended to imply, endorse, or encourage violence. We regret any misunderstanding and appreciate readers' feedback.

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Vote-by-Mail Is Fundamental to Democracy

PRESIDENT JONATHAN SMITH

I would like to tell a story about my grandfather because it is a story that shaped how I look at voting and what democracy means in our country.

My grandfather grew up in Macon, Georgia, during a time when people who looked like him were denied the right to vote. He spent most of his life watching decisions get made for him instead of by him. When he finally got the opportunity to vote, he never missed an election.

One day I saw him leave the house, and he told me he was on his way to vote. I did not even know there was an election that day! He said, "I'm going to vote for the dog catcher." My grandfather voted for everything. He saw it as a privilege and an obligation.

This man understood, more than many, the importance of voting, because it was not a right that was given to him. He was almost my age when he first was able to vote. And it is why I feel so strongly about Vote-by-Mail.

This is not about Democrats. It is not about Republicans. It is not even about Independents. This is about whether every American who wants to can participate in democracy.

What is wrong with making it easier for people to vote? The answer is simple. Nothing is wrong with it. That is why our livestream in May was titled "Who's Afraid of Vote-by-Mail?"

Vote-by-Mail does not give anybody special treatment. It gives people access to vote and to have a say in who represents them. As postal workers, we understand that better than anyone.

For more than 250 years, the Postal Service has kept America connected. We move prescriptions. We move paychecks. We move birthday cards. We move letters from loved ones. And yes, we move ballots.

Our job is not to decide who somebody voted for. Our job is not to decide who should vote. Our job is to move the mail. And we do that well. The USPS reports that since 2020, postal workers delivered over 97% of ballots in federal elections to election officials within just three days. That number jumps to over 99.8% of ballots delivered within one week.

Postal workers take extraordinary pride in what we do. During election season, we take additional, extraordinary measures to ensure ballots move quickly and securely. We understand that every ballot represents a citizen's voice. We know what is at stake.

When people attack Vote-by-Mail, sometimes it feels like they are questioning the integrity of the people who dedicate their lives to serving this country.

This conversation is bigger than the Postal Service; it is about democracy itself.

DURING ELECTION SEASON, WE TAKE ADDITIONAL, EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES TO ENSURE BALLOTS MOVE QUICKLY AND SECURELY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT EVERY BALLOT REPRESENTS A CITIZEN'S VOICE.

Throughout American history, every major step forward came because ordinary people demanded a seat at the table. Workers organized. Citizens marched. Families sacrificed. People gave blood, sweat, and tears so future generations could enjoy rights they never had.

We should be building on that progress. Democracy works best when more people participate, and that is why our ad, that is being rolled out around the country (see page 6), says "Vote-by-Mail: Keep It, Protect It, Expand It."

I encourage every APWU member to get involved this election season. Register to vote. Help your family register. Help your neighbors register. Learn the issues. Participate in your union elections. Participate in your local elections. Participate in your national elections.

Do not surrender a right that previous generations fought to secure. My grandfather never took voting for granted because he knew what it felt like not to have it.

We owe it to those who came before us to protect that legacy. ■

Keith Combs Appointed Executive Assistant to the President

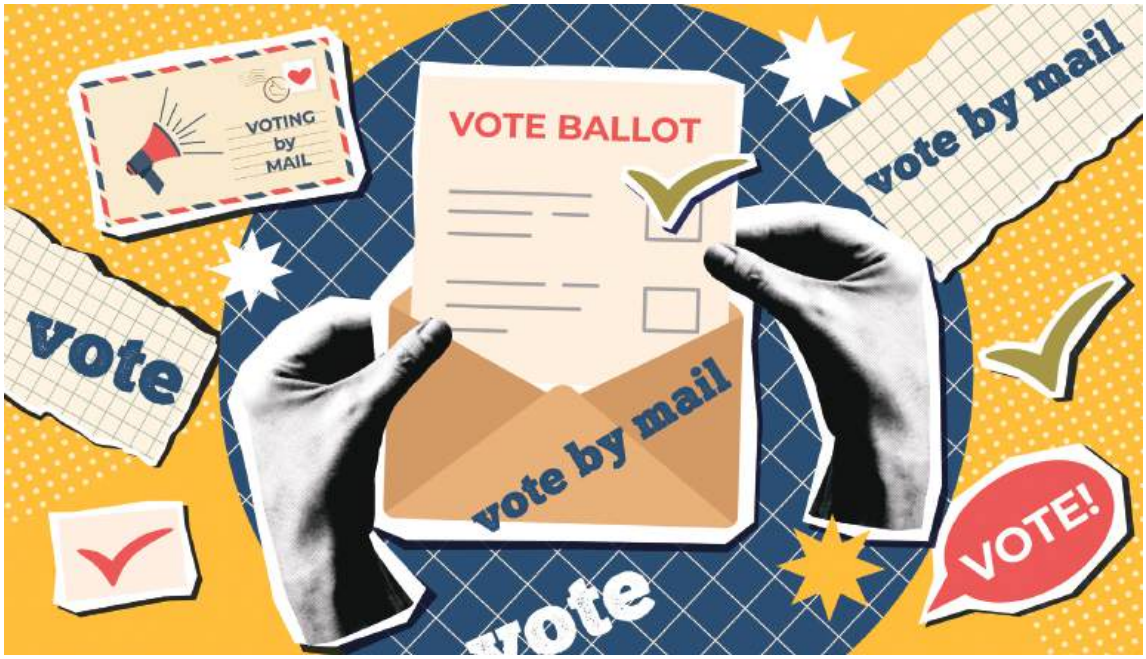
In April, President Smith appointed Keith Combs (Detroit District Area Local) as Executive Assistant to the President, helping with the programs and work of the Executive Office. Keith will help with regular communication between the APWU and USPS headquarters offices and assist with research, meetings, and review of important documents for President Smith.

Keith has been a postal worker for 30 years, starting as a letter carrier for several years before transferring to the Clerk Craft. Prior to his appointment, he served as Detroit District Area Local President.

"I'm confident that Keith will be a huge asset to the team, who is working hard for members at the Moe Biller building in Washington, D.C.," said President Jonathan Smith. "He has been a dedicated trade unionist and elected officer of his local. He knows our union and the Postal Service well, and I know he will help us win big for postal workers in our fights ahead. Welcome, Keith!"

APWU Responds to USPS Proposal to Change Vote-by-Mail

The APWU is deeply alarmed that the USPS published a proposed rule this week to begin implementing President Trump's March 31 executive order on Vote-by-Mail. The executive order is an unconstitutional attack on the millions of Americans who vote by mail and another attack in an ongoing assault on voting rights in the United States of America.



The APWU rejects the premise that the USPS had to comply with the executive order. Congress established the modern Postal Service in 1971 to be independent of the White House.

The executive order also ignores the fundamental purpose of the Postal Service and postal workers, which is to provide universal service to all. The Postal Service serves all Americans; it is not a tool for corporations or politicians to pick which Americans get which benefits.

Postal workers take our commitment to public service seriously. We are proud to keep America's mail moving and to treat it with the seriousness and respect that every postal customer deserves. That is especially true of election mail, and as postal workers, we are proud to have helped hundreds of millions of Americans exercise their right to vote by casting mail-in ballots.

There is active litigation over the executive order, and comments on the Postal Service's proposed rule can be submitted until July 2. The APWU and its members are engaged in all of the efforts to defend the Postal Service's independence and protect our fellow Americans' right to vote by mail. Stay tuned for more information on how to add your voice to our work.

POSTAL WORKERS LEAD NATIONAL CAMPAIG

Postal workers across the country are taking a leading role in defending and expanding Vote-by-Mail, launching a nationwide public awareness campaign that highlights the importance, reliability, and popularity of mail voting among American voters.

The APWU kicked off the effort in April with the debut of a new television advertisement in Ohio, marking the beginning of a broader campaign to counter growing attacks on Vote-by-Mail and reinforce public confidence in the election process. The campaign centers on a simple message: **"Vote-by-Mail: Keep It, Protect It, Expand It."**

The 30-second advertisement features a diverse group of Americans explaining why they choose to vote by mail. The campaign also includes the release of bipartisan polling data showing strong public support for maintaining and expanding access to mail voting.

According to the survey, conducted jointly by Democratic and Republican polling firms Hart Research and North Star Opinion Research, approximately one-third of Americans rely on Vote-by-Mail to cast their ballots. The polling also found that voters continue to express confidence in the Postal Service's ability to securely and accurately handle election mail. By a substantial margin, voters support preserving Vote-by-Mail as an option rather than eliminating it.

For postal workers, the issue is personal. Every election cycle, APWU members play a critical role in moving millions of ballots through the mail stream, ensuring that voters can participate in the democratic process regardless of where they live, their work schedules, or physical limitations.

APWU President Jonathan Smith emphasized that Vote-by-Mail is not a new or experimental system. Americans have been voting by mail since the Civil War, and the practice has become an essential component of modern elections. In the 2024 general election, roughly one third of voters cast ballots through the mail.

The union's campaign comes amid renewed attempts to restrict mail voting or cast doubt on its legitimacy. APWU leaders argue that such attacks undermine confidence in a system that has demonstrated a long record of reliability and security. Postal workers point to their own experience handling election

APWU Local 170 Executive Vice President Jen Lemke and President Michael Fincher wrap up their press conference in Toledo, OH.

Utah Postal Workers Union President Amy Parke shares why Vote-by-Mail is important to her.

Cleveland Area Local President Nigel Saleem opens up the first press conference of the campaign.

President Terrence Johnson of the Las Vegas Area Local responds to a question from reporters.

N TO PROTECT AND EXPAND VOTE-BY-MAIL

mail and performance data showing that nearly all ballots reach election officials within days.

The campaign expanded beyond Ohio, reaching additional states, including Nevada and Utah. At each press conference, postal workers joined voting-rights advocates to discuss the importance of Vote-by-Mail and the strong public support reflected in the national polling.

The APWU campaign has also included public discussions and educational events focused on the broader importance of voting rights and democratic participation. Through livestreams and media outreach, the APWU has sought to address misconceptions about Vote-by-Mail while emphasizing the Postal Service's longstanding role in supporting free and fair elections.

APWU members are delivering a message that extends beyond the workplace. Postal workers are not only responsible for moving the nation's mail—they are also helping ensure that millions of Americans can exercise one of their most fundamental democratic rights. By defending Vote-by-Mail and promoting public confidence in Vote-by-Mail, postal workers are reaffirming their commitment to a strong Postal Service and a healthy democracy.

"Vote-by-Mail has maintained broad bipartisan support since its inception," said Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard. "We are spreading the message to the voting public across this country, and to the Capitol Hill lawmakers who represent them, that this democratic institution must be preserved."

"Postal workers have a front-row seat to democracy in action," said APWU President Jonathan Smith. "We know firsthand that Vote-by-Mail is secure, reliable, and trusted by millions of Americans. As attacks on this vital service continue, APWU members are standing up for voters' rights and for a Postal Service that helps ensure every voice can be heard." ■

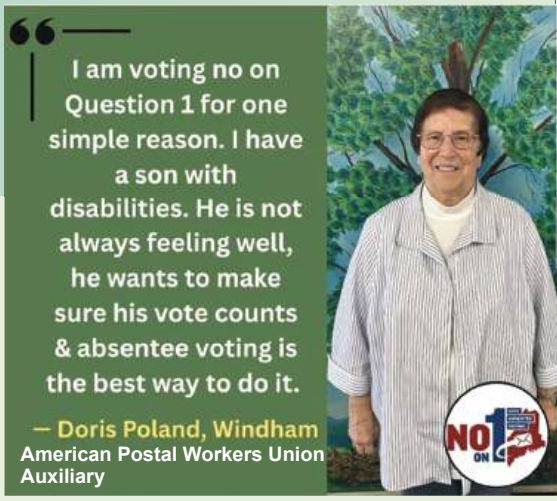
Watch our recap video of the rollout!

Savannah Local President Keith Tompkins and Retirees Unite For the Future (RUFF) smile at the podium after sharing our message in Savannah, GA.

Dayton Ohio Area Local President Don Adams and Clerk Craft Director Amanda Hegyl pose for a photo after a successful press conference in Dayton.

Greater Cincinnati Ohio Area Local Member Don Hoffroge speaks to reporters about Vote-By-Mail in Ohio.

Maine Fights Back Against Attacks on Vote-By-Mail



During Maine's November 2025 Referendum Election, voters cast their ballots on "Maine Question 1," which sought to significantly curtail absentee voting. Motor Vehicle Operator Kevin Ready and Window Lead Lori Poland from the Portland Area Local, and Auxiliary member Doris Poland, stepped up to defeat the measure. They helped build a coalition to educate the public and fellow postal workers about Save Maine Absentee Voting's "No on 1" campaign. We recently spoke with Lori and Kevin about their involvement.

APWU's Kevin Ready advocates for absentee voting.

"Ballot Question One was a referendum written by the far-right Kitchen Table Pac," Lori explained. "It was advertised as a voter ID requirement [bill] … And the problem was that wasn't the intent of the bill. It was 28 articles long, [but only] two of them had to do with ID. The rest had to do with changes [to] our absentee voting structure. But we're a rural state, a lot of people vote absentee… [and] our absentee voting system is pretty darn secure. It doesn't need changes… the Postal Service [makes] sure that all the extra safeguards are in place."

"Up to 40% of Maine voters vote absentee," Kevin added. "To me, the importance [of absentee voting] is the idea of bringing as many people as possible into our democracy to vote and having their voices heard. People are busy and can't get the day off on Election Day, [or] are in assisted living facilities, or are concerned about communicable diseases."

"I have a brother who's disabled," Lori added. "It is much easier for us to get him a ballot at home. Waiting in line is hard for him. So, a group of concerned people helped build the coalition. My local, the Southern Maine Labor Council, Maine AFL-CIO, [and] other nonprofits joined Save Maine Absentee Voting. Our goal was to get the word out and to let people know what this bill really was."

From labor unions to community organizations, the coalition held canvassing and phone-banking events, knocking on more than 35,000 doors and having 15,000 conversations. They spoke at the State House Labor Day Lobby Day, wrote letters to editors, tabled events throughout the state, and presented at the local union hall, empowering postal workers to join the campaign. "There's such a broad coalition of people that came together. We take it to heart because it involves a duty that we have as postal workers," said Lori. "A lot of people in our local asked, 'Can I go knock doors?' or 'Can I make some phone calls?' and that's super helpful."

A record 500,000 people voted on Nov. 4, 2025, and 65% voted overwhelmingly to defeat Question 1. "To see how decisive it was, [we hope] it took the wind out of the sails for the next time they try something like this and show that it can be done across the country, because these laws are coming up for votes everywhere," Lori concluded.

In terms of what advice Kevin would give to APWU members interested in getting involved in similar fights, "I would say pay attention, get the word out, and coordinate efforts with your local leadership and AFL-CIO central labor council. Getting the word out is the big thing. When people see what's actually being voted on and understand it, I think that we can defeat these measures. It's just a matter of voter education and turnout." ■

APWU's Lori Poland shares why Mainers should vote "NO" at a press conference in Portland, ME.

Photo by Kate Gardner

250 YEARS TOGETHER:
How the Postal Service Helped Build America

In July, the United States celebrates its 250th anniversary, and the Postal Service will celebrate its 251st.

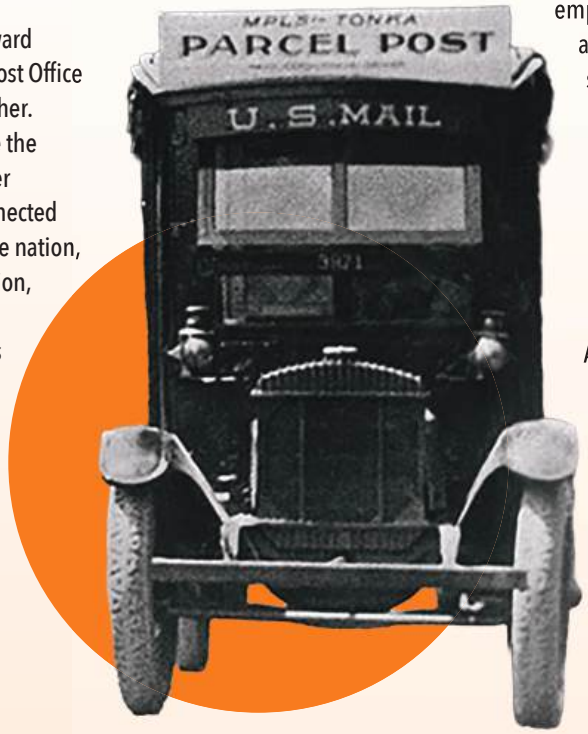
Few institutions have been as intertwined with the American story as the Postal Service. Established by the Continental Congress on July 26, 1775, more than a year before the Declaration of Independence, the Post Office was one of the first national institutions created by the American colonies. For over 250 years, postal workers have connected communities, supported democracy, and helped unite a growing nation.

As we mark this historic milestone, it is worth reflecting on how the Postal Service has helped shape American history.

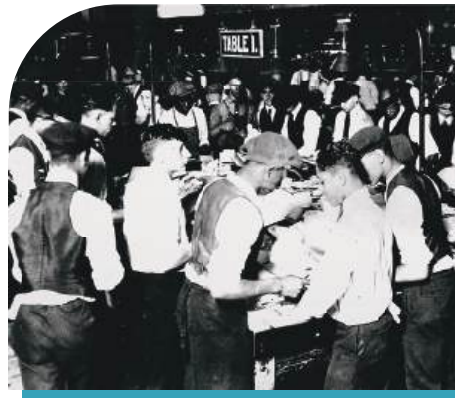
One of the earliest examples came during the Revolutionary War. The Continental Congress appointed Benjamin Franklin as the first Postmaster General in 1775. A reliable communications network allowed leaders of the independence movement to share information, coordinate strategy, and build support across the colonies. In many ways, the postal system helped lay the foundation for a united nation.

The Postal Service also played a critical role in expanding democracy. In the early years of the republic, Congress provided low postal rates for newspapers, helping spread news and political debate across the country. This ensured that citizens, even in remote communities, had access to information about their government.

As the nation expanded westward during the 19th century, the Post Office helped bind the country together. New post offices often became the first federal presence in frontier communities. Mail routes connected isolated towns to the rest of the nation, supporting commerce, migration, and economic development. By delivering communications and goods to every corner of the country, postal workers helped transform a collection of states and territories into a connected nation.



The Postal Service also helped advance equality and economic opportunity. In 1865, following the Civil War, African Americans began serving as postal employees in increasing numbers. For generations, postal jobs provided stable middle-class employment and opportunities for advancement to workers who were often excluded elsewhere. The Postal Service became one of the nation's most diverse employers and a pathway to economic security for millions of families.



More recently, postal workers have played a vital role in preserving democratic participation through Vote-by-Mail. From Civil War soldiers casting absentee ballots to modern elections involving tens of millions of mailed ballots, the Postal Service has helped ensure that Americans can exercise their right to vote regardless of where they live.

During elections, postal employees continue a long tradition of serving democracy by securely delivering election mail and ballots to and from voters.

These examples represent only a fraction of the Postal Service's contributions over the past 250 years. Through wars, economic crises, technological revolutions, and periods of national transformation, the Postal Service has remained a constant presence in American life.

As the nation celebrates our semiquincentennial, postal workers can take pride in knowing that we are part of an institution that helped build the United States itself. For 250 years, the Postal Service has connected the American people. Our history is America's history, and the future of the Postal Service remains vital to the nation it helped create. ■

TIPS AND TRICKS

for Setting Up Summer Legislative Meetings

Union members often set up legislative meetings to speak with lawmakers and advocate for policies that have an impact on workers' rights, job security, and workplace safety. At the APWU, these grassroots lobbying efforts allow postal workers to share first-hand experiences, advocate for pro-worker, pro-postal legislation, and hold our elected representatives accountable for their voting records. While Congress is on recess for the summer, it is often a good time to set up meetings in your local area. Below are some tips and tricks to setting up summer legislative meetings with your elected representatives in Congress.

NOTE: If you will be speaking on behalf of your state, local, or retiree chapter, seek authorization from your president. However, you can always speak for yourself in a personal capacity.

How to Schedule a Meeting

1. Call the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121.
2. Tell the automated operator the name of the representative or senator you are trying to schedule a meeting with.
3. Ask to speak with the office scheduler or a staffer who handles postal matters. If no one is available, ask for an email address.
4. In your email to the office:
   - » Identify yourself as a constituent and provide your address.
   - » State your role within APWU if you are calling on behalf of your local, state, etc.
   - » Give them a short summary of what you want to discuss.
   - » Make a specific request for a meeting (in person, by phone, or virtually).

PRO TIP:
If you are unable to get a meeting, attend a public event with the elected official, such as a rally or town hall, and ask the representative for a meeting directly.

How to Prepare

- Do your homework on the representative:
  - » What are their policy positions?
  - » What committees do they serve on?
- Know your issues.
- Obtain a copy of the APWU legislative priorities on our website.
- Tailor your request to their position on the issue.
- Think of a story that is personal, relevant, and took place in the district.
- If you are going as a group, assign roles early and meet in advance.
- Practice your pitch.

The Meeting

- In advance of the meeting, send a note to confirm the time and place, and list the participant names, their titles, and street addresses (within the congressional district or state).
- Introduce yourselves and establish yourselves as leaders in your community.
- Tell your relevant story and connect it to your issue.
- Arrive early and remember to be polite.

Closing the Deal

- Always make direct requests.
- Follow up with a thank you note:
  - » Summarize your ask and explain how your request is good policy.
  - » Thank them for their time.
  - » Reiterate any commitments made.
  - » Provide them with a digital copy of any legislative priority or other documents that support your request.

Labor Day Is MORE Than a Long Weekend

Labor Day is more than a long weekend—it is a reminder of the sacrifices, victories, and ongoing struggles of working people. First celebrated in 1882 by the Central Labor Union in New York City, Labor Day became a federal holiday in 1894 after years of worker activism and unrest. It stands as a tribute to the generations of workers who fought for safer workplaces, the eight-hour workday, child labor protections, fair wages, and the right to organize.

Today, Labor Day remains just as relevant. Across the country, postal workers, teachers, nurses, construction workers, and countless others continue to power our communities and economy. Their work deserves not only recognition, but respect and protection.

As working people face renewed challenges, from attacks on collective bargaining rights and public services to growing economic inequality, Labor Day serves as a call to action. The labor movement has always been strongest when workers stand together, organize, and make their voices heard.

This year, we encourage APWU locals and members to participate in Labor Day events in their communities and strengthen ties with their AFL-CIO state federations, central labor councils, and local labor organizations. Whether through parades, rallies, volunteer projects, voter outreach, or community events, Labor Day offers an opportunity to demonstrate the strength and solidarity of working people.

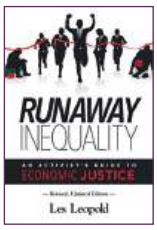
Visit *aflcio.org* to find your state federation or central labor council and reach out today to plug into their work for Labor Day 2026. When working people stand together, there is no challenge we cannot meet.

After you participate, let us know!
Send pictures of you, your coworkers, or family celebrating Labor Day by emailing *communications@apwu.org* to be featured online or in future issues of *The American Postal Worker* magazine. Remember to wear your APWU union gear! ■

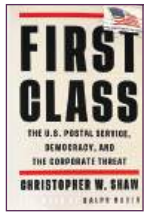
APWU's Summer Reading Suggestions

Summer is the perfect season to take a little extra time to read a new book. The APWU has compiled a short list of books we have enjoyed that can teach you more about the labor movement, our history, and why we are a solidarity union.

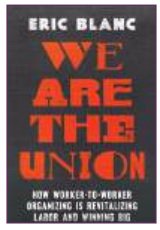
Fight Like Hell *by Kim Kelly*
Kelly outlines the familiar history of the labor movement through a new lens – marginalized groups like women, people of color, and queer workers. She takes an intersectional approach, showing once again that our struggles are all connected, no matter our workplace or identity. When working people unite, we are able to win what we need.



Runaway Inequality *by Les Leopold*
Do you find yourself working harder and longer but still having trouble making ends meet? Take some time to read this book that shows what is really going on in our economy and why it seems like the richest members of our society get richer while our dollar buys less and less each day – and what you can do about it!



First Class: The U.S. Postal Service, Democracy, and the Corporate Threat *by Christopher Shaw*
This well-researched book highlights the importance of our public Postal Service, how we facilitate democracy in America, and why corporations want to privatize our service. Learn more about our great national resource and a vision for how to protect and expand it.



We Are the Union *by Eric Blanc*
This recently published book illustrates how worker-to-worker organizing can exponentially grow the power of working people to overcome economic exploitation, racial injustice, and authoritarianism at work and beyond.

MEMBERS

Auxiliary: Auxiliary members Tammy Mize, Robin Ely, and Wendy Kempke collect over $11,000 for COPA at the Michigan State Convention in April.

Blackhawk, CO: Postal workers in Blackhawk, CO rally with friends and family to support their community's post office before the Colorado State Convention on May 14.

Philadelphia: APWU Eastern Region Coordinator Vince Tarducci, NBA James DeRidder, and House Rep. (PA-02) Brendan Boyle speak at a press conference supporting the Kensington PO located in Philadelphia's busy Fishtown neighborhood, currently dealing with leasing issues.

IN ACTION

North Carolina: Members at the North Carolina State Convention receive union updates and attend training sessions.

Minnesota: Members at the Minnesota Convention participate in the labor history class, learning about the 1912 Bread and Roses Strike, Charlie Luth and the 1894 Pullman Strike, and the 1934 Teamsters Strike.

Keep Going to Find Your Place in Your Union!

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT DEBBY SZEREDY

"The Struggle Continues" is a famous quote often cited by legendary former APWU National President Moe Biller. He was not talking about struggling within our own union. The struggle was all of us together, fighting to make sure our members and our communities are valued and our services to the public continue.

When I'm in the field or on the road traveling to state conventions, I hear the ugly stories about how management is causing a toxic work environment. A toxic work environment often creeps into our union environment when management tries to turn us against each other. Instead, we need to support each other and stand together in our union because we are stronger together. The struggle should never be within the union. Don't fall for them trying to divide us. If that is what you are experiencing in your local or state, start thinking about ways to strengthen your union. We need to find ways to value each other and work together to change the toxic workplace. It can change when rank-and- file members build our power against harassment, bullying, and discrimination together with local officers and stewards.

Union work is family work, it is not about titles, money or ego. It is about working together to be proud of our postal work, respected, and to help build living wages, better benefits, full staffing, and a safe work environment. We cannot be a mighty union if we don't stand and participate together.

If you are experiencing a hostile workplace, attend union meetings, share your experiences, learn about other's experiences and discuss how to transform the toxic work environment. We deserve to come to work without fear of hostility and reprisal. During the "Good and Welfare" portion of your union meetings, discuss strategies to change our toxic work environment instead of living with it every day of our lives.

Here's an example: If you have an abusive supervisor, members at the union meeting could agree to file a *PS Form 1767 Report of Hazard, Unsafe, Condition or Practice* every day they are exposed to being attacked or see or hear someone else come under attack by the supervisor. Request to see your steward to discuss and make a copy of every PS Form 1767 every day for one month, including management's response, and provide a witness statement. Make sure a copy of your PS Form 1767 is sent to the District Safety Office Manager by your steward. All these documents will be collected from the many members to present at the next Labor-Management meeting. Make sure you have rules to address submitting agenda items at least a week before the meeting so that management can come to a meeting prepared to discuss the supervisor causing a toxic work environment. Have rules in place to record and submit the minutes from each side and the right to have corrections and additions that allow both the union and management to sign the minutes, as agreed, within a few days after the meeting, and then post the minutes to members on the union bulletin board.

WHEN I'M IN THE FIELD OR ON THE ROAD TRAVELING TO STATE CONVENTIONS, I HEAR THE UGLY STORIES ABOUT HOW MANAGEMENT IS CAUSING A TOXIC WORK ENVIRONMENT. A TOXIC WORK ENVIRONMENT OFTEN CREEPS INTO OUR UNION ENVIRONMENT WHEN MANAGEMENT TRIES TO TURN US AGAINST EACH OTHER.

Keep the pressure on and have strategies that members will participate in month after month until management resolves toxic workplaces. ■

Across the country, hundreds of post offices are at risk of permanent closure, and the APWU is mobilizing to stop it. On the June APWU Livestream, APWU Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy hosted the show to talk about our campaign to fight back against post office closures. She invited APWU members from around the country to join and share their stories about why they are involved in the fight and how they have been successful.

More than 414 post offices in 48 states are currently on the USPS 2026 suspension list. Some have been shuttered for years, with several closures dating back to 2017. Last year alone, the Postal Service permanently closed 564 previously suspended locations. The APWU argues that these closures eliminate good-paying jobs, undermine universal mail service, and strip communities of a vital public resource.

"We are demanding that these post offices stay open to serve the communities who rely on us," said Vice President Szeredy, who oversees the campaign. The union has launched a dedicated webpage at *apwu.org/nopostofficeclosures* where you can find a state-by-state suspension list, petitions, talking points, and an organizing toolkit.

The campaign has already achieved exciting victories. California Area Local 960 President Sara Wilson, Clerk Craft National Business Agent James Stevenson, Sacramento Area Legislative Director Local Rayni Ramirez, and APWU Auxiliary President Trisa Mannion joined to share how they are fighting back and winning back post offices in their communities.

We know that communities have the legal right to appeal post office closures to the Postal Regulatory Commission, but we can only fight back if they know that right exists. Getting the word out, Szeredy says, is the first step to winning. Watch the entire livestream on APWU's YouTube page. ■

Prepare Now for the 2026 APWU National Convention

The 2026 APWU National Convention is fast approaching, and delegates are encouraged to make the most of their convention experience by registering for pre-convention workshops and ensuring all travel and convention preparations are complete.

The APWU Research and Education Department will host 24 pre-convention workshops beginning Friday, Aug. 14, at the Los Angeles Convention Center. The workshops, which include both full-day and half-day sessions, are designed to provide valuable training and resources for union activists, stewards, officers, and members. Topics range from arbitration and contract enforcement tools to leadership development and other essential union skills. Classroom space is limited, and many workshops are expected to fill quickly, so delegates are encouraged to register as soon as possible.

Convention activities begin before the opening gavel on Aug. 17. Division meetings, the Retirees Conference, a legislative briefing focused on the 2026 midterm elections, and the "Bridging the Gap" panel discussion will all take place during the weekend leading up to the convention.

The APWU National Convention is the union's highest decision-making body, where delegates debate resolutions, establish policy, and help chart the future of our union. Do not wait until you arrive in Los Angeles. Register for your workshops, review the convention information, and come prepared to fully participate in shaping the future of the APWU. ■

Trustee Audits and Retaining Financial and Election Records

SECRETARY-TREASURER LIZ POWELL

The *Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act* (LMRDA) requires labor organizations to meet basic standards and fiscal responsibility. These requirements pertain to financial reports and elections. Section 206 of the LMRDA requires the retention of financial records specifically for five years. Therefore, all types of financial records, beginning with the year 2021 to the current year, must be maintained and retained to comply. To ensure that your union's funds and other assets are properly accounted for and used solely for the benefit of your union and its members, every local and state affiliate should have trustee(s), whether they are elected or appointed. Trustees provide financial oversight and other specific duties, including auditing financial records and union assets. Trustees should facilitate an audit of financial records at least once a year or in accordance with the frequency outlined in the local or state constitution and bylaws.

Trustee Audit Check List:

- Receipts journal
- Disbursement journals
- Cancelled checks and check stubs; a copy of cancelled checks should be provided with the bank statements
- Bank statements
- Certificates of Deposits verified
- Dues Check Off (DCO)
- Vendor invoices
- Petty cash verified /receipted
- Checking and savings account(s) verified in the name of the local/state affiliate
- Credit card statements.
- Vouchers for all union expenditures with original receipts attached
- Bank deposit and transfer receipts.
- DOL and IRS annual reports filed/verified
- Insurance coverage-workers' compensation
- Inventory all fixed assets annually (and as needed)

It is important to keep all electronic documents, including recordkeeping software, used to prepare and retain financial data and records. It is important to ensure that you have a backup storage plan in place for your electronic documents and financial records. Financial records contain information protected by the *Privacy Act*, therefore the only method to discard financial records is to shred them. It is permissible to shred any financial records prior to the year 2021.

Are there criminal provisions if any person willfully violates the provisions of the LMRDA? Absolutely! Any person who willfully makes a false entry in, or willfully conceals, withholds, or destroys, books, records, reports, or statements required to be retained, can be fined up to $10,000 or imprisoned for up to one year, or both. The Secretary-Treasurer's Department provides virtual training to ensure that local and state presidents and treasurers are aware of their responsibilities. Virtual training is also available for trustees who provide required financial oversight of the funds used for the sole benefit of the members and the union.

Election records must be preserved and retained for one year from when the ballot count has been certified. The LMRDA requires all election records to be retained, including membership eligibility lists, copies of nomination and election notices, voting instructions, return envelopes, marked, challenged, unused ballots, and tally sheets. The election official designated in the Constitution and Bylaws is the custodian of the election records. If there is no designated election official, the treasurer should retain the election records.

Fiduciary Responsibility and Secretary-Treasurer Training

The Secretary-Treasurer's Department provides virtual fiduciary training for local officers who are unable to attend fiduciary training during the pre-convention workshops. We recommend that local and state presidents and treasurers attend at least one Secretary-Treasurer's Workshop per year. To schedule virtual Fiduciary Responsibility training, contact Annette August-Taylor, Executive Assistant to the Secretary-Treasurer, at 202-842-8528 or email *aaugust@apwu.org*. ■

WORKERS UNITE at the AFL-CIO Convention

Legislative-Political Director Judy Beard, Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell, Minneapolis Local Vice-President Selena Edwards, President Jonathan Smith, and Legislative-Political Secretary Ian O'Malley pose at the APWU Vote-by-Mail booth.

Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell answers for APWU during the AFL-CIO roll call!

Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond and President Liz Shuler are re-elected to their positions in the AFL-CIO.

Minneapolis Area Local President Greg Teigland, Human Relations Director Daleo Freeman, Reasearch and Education Director Joyce Robinson, and APWU Young Members Committee Rep. Eric Chornoby vote in favor of a resolution.

President Jonathan Smith interviews attendees about Vote-by-Mail.

APWU leaders and delegates proudly attended the AFL-CIO convention from June 7-10 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. APWU President Jonathan Smith, Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth "Liz" Powell, Central Region Coordinator Amy Puhalski, Western Region Coordinator Omar Gonzalez, Legislative and Political Director Judy Beard, Human Relations Director Daleo Freeman, Research and Education Director Joyce Robinson, Minnesota State President Greg Teigland, and APWU Young Member Committee Representative Eric Chornoby attended as delegates.

In the exhibit hall, the conversations were just as meaningful as anything happening on the main floor. President Smith stopped to talk with union members from across the country, asking them about their union's fights, and telling them about our campaign to protect Vote-by-Mail. Postal workers have fought for years to protect public mail service, have safer workplaces, and stop workplace harassment. At the convention of 65 affiliated unions representing workers across entirely different trades, President Smith found a common through-line. We are all fighting to win fair wages, safe working conditions, and dignity on the job. These fights belong to all of us. That recognition, that our struggles are connected, is what gives a gathering like this its real weight.

Through sessions and workshops, workers shared strategies and inspirational stories, like how organizing drives worked to recruit new members, how to talk to coworkers who are skeptical about joining their unions, and how to stand strong when management pushes back.

What the AFL-CIO shared through the week showed something that corporations and anti-union forces spend enormous resources and money trying to obscure: when working people stand united, we are extraordinarily powerful. Together we can shape what our economy looks like and who it is built for. ■

How We Prepare for Contract Negotiations

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DIRECTOR CHARLIE CASH

The APWU is approximately one year out from the start of contract negotiations for what is commonly known as the "main agreement." In the Industrial Relations Department, it is never too early to begin preparation for contract negotiations. Many of you have heard me say that this department begins preparing for the next contract negotiations the day after the membership ratifies a new contract. Now, I want to try to present a bit of an "under the hood" look at what leads up to the opening of negotiations.

Article 43 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) controls the opening of contract negotiations. Approximately 120 days before the expiration of the contract, we will prepare a letter that is then sent to the Postal Service from President Smith invoking our right to open negotiations. Negotiations will then officially open approximately 90 days before the expiration of the current contract. We are required by law to notify the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) of our intent to negotiate a new CBA.

That is the simple mechanics of opening negotiations. The Industrial Relations staff and the APWU's Contract Negotiations and Special Projects Manager track all the contracts we cover and the dates we are required to send opening letters. The APWU has four contracts with the Postal Service and multiple private-sector contracts. Having a single person handle this work as part of their duties is invaluable to the APWU.

We are always collecting data. This department is the custodian of adopted Labor-Management Resolutions. We possess every Labor-Management Resolution that has been adopted since 1986, and we make sure that we review them as part of our preparations to understand what the membership is asking us to negotiate and to help us craft negotiation strategies.

It is not just the resolutions we have to review and understand. We must understand the financial situation of the Postal Service. We do this by collecting their financial reports from the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), making information demands of the Postal Service, reviewing Office of Inspector General (OIG) reports, and other public sources. In order to make well-thought-out and defensible proposals, we have to understand this information. This also includes understanding mail volumes and its trends. We gather data on work hours, employee numbers, overtime usage, and other internal data. Data is vital to our success in negotiations.

WE ARE ALWAYS COLLECTING DATA. THIS DEPARTMENT IS THE CUSTODIAN OF ADOPTED LABOR-MANAGEMENT RESOLUTIONS. WE POSSESS EVERY LABOR-MANAGEMENT RESOLUTION THAT HAS BEEN ADOPTED SINCE 1986, AND WE MAKE SURE THAT WE REVIEW THEM AS PART OF OUR PREPARATIONS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT THE MEMBERSHIP IS ASKING US TO NEGOTIATE AND TO HELP US CRAFT NEGOTIATION STRATEGIES.

But our research is even more than just examining the data regarding the Postal Service. We also examine the trends in the overall economy of the United States. We look at wage trends across all sectors of labor in the private sector, with a specific focus on the industries that compare to the work that the members of the APWU bargaining units perform. We collect data on inflation every month and look at the Consumer Price Index (CPI). We utilize that information to make well-thought-out financial proposals to the Postal Service. Analyzing unemployment data and hiring trends is also important. One other data point we collect is postal uniform costs. We also follow the other postal union contract negotiations and see how those contracts get settled. Whether we agree with it or not, the terms of the other postal union contracts do come into play, especially if we were to end up in interest arbitration.

With all this data in hand, the APWU can be well prepared for negotiations. We will be ready, and we will fight to get the best contract we can obtain in 2027!

Solidarity! ■

The Importance of Calling 911 and Learning CPR

Medical emergencies can happen anywhere; it is important to stay vigilant and know what to do in case of emergency. For postal workers, one of the most important things to remember is that every employee has the right to call 911 during an emergency.

Remember – it is not just medical emergencies. In any case of emergency, postal workers can and should call 911 for fire, police, or emergency medical assistance. The Administrative Support Manual "Article 273.133 Emergency Actions" says that you can and should call for fire or police assistance in an emergency. The Employee Labor Relations Manual "Article 866.3 – Emergency Procedures" says that the recommended first step for handling medical emergencies is to call 911. After emergency services have been contacted, you can also notify management or other parties who may be able to help.

In an emergency, every second counts. Delays in contacting emergency responders can reduce the chances of a positive outcome for someone experiencing a heart attack, stroke, cardiac arrest, severe injury, or other serious medical conditions.

Emergency medical services have the training, equipment, and experience to provide advanced care that cannot be administered on the scene by coworkers or bystanders alone.

Knowing that you have the right to make the call empowers workers to act quickly. Rather than waiting for someone else to respond, workers can ensure that professional medical assistance is on the way as soon as possible.

If a person is unresponsive, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) can play a critical role in helping someone survive until emergency responders arrive. Once you have called 911 and requested assistance, put your phone on speaker— the 911 dispatcher is specifically trained to walk you through exactly what to do.

CPR Certification Is an Additional Safety Precaution

CPR is one of the most valuable emergency response skills a person can learn. CPR is a lifesaving technique used when someone's heart stops beating, or they stop breathing due to cardiac arrest, drowning, choking, electrocution, or other medical emergencies. By performing chest compressions and, when appropriate, rescue breaths, CPR helps maintain blood flow and oxygen delivery to the brain and vital organs until professional medical assistance arrives.

Immediate CPR can significantly improve survival rates and reduce the risk of permanent brain damage. Since many cardiac arrests happen outside of hospitals, bystanders are often the first people available to help. Learning CPR also increases confidence and preparedness, enabling people to react quickly and effectively in stressful situations.

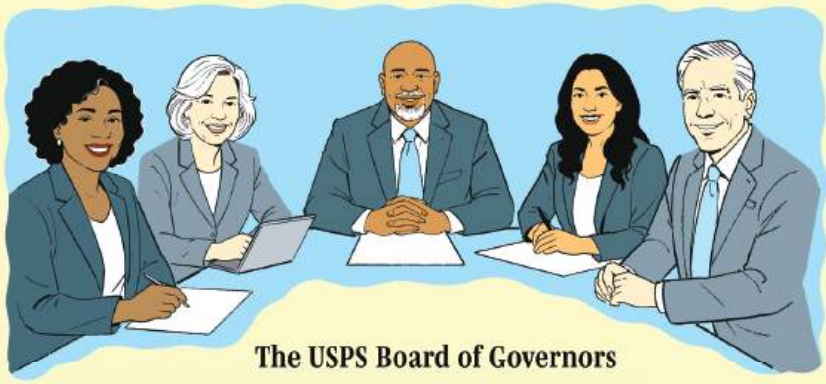
KNOWING THAT YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE THE CALL EMPOWERS WORKERS TO ACT QUICKLY. RATHER THAN WAITING FOR SOMEONE ELSE TO RESPOND, WORKERS CAN ENSURE THAT PROFESSIONAL MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IS ON THE WAY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Becoming CPR certified is a simple process that is available to most individuals. Certification courses are offered by organizations such as the American Red Cross, the American Heart Association, hospitals, community centers, and workplace safety programs and can be completed in a single day. These courses teach participants how to recognize emergencies, assess a victim's condition, perform high-quality chest compressions, provide rescue breaths, and respond appropriately until emergency medical personnel take over.

CPR certification is generally valid for two years and should be renewed regularly to ensure skills remain current. By learning and maintaining CPR certification, individuals gain the ability to provide immediate assistance during life-threatening emergencies and make a meaningful difference in their communities. ■

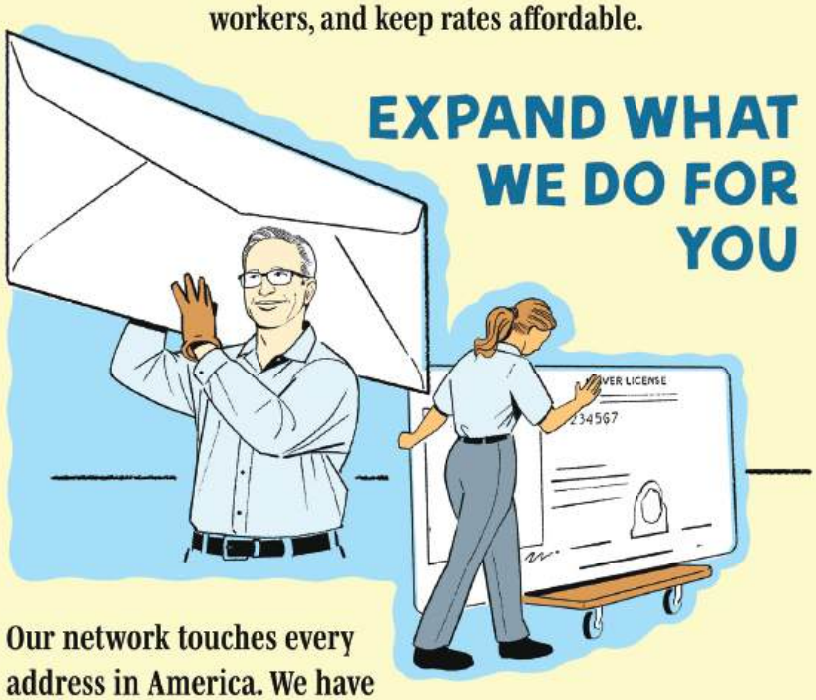
PROTECT OUR PU

POSTAL LEADERSHIP THAT SUPPORTS YOUR VISION



The USPS Board of Governors sets the strategic direction for the entire Postal Service. We need a Board, a Postmaster General, and postal management at all levels that believe in a vibrant public Post Office, that can expand services, protect workers, and keep rates affordable.

EXPAND WHAT WE DO FOR YOU



Our network touches every address in America. We have the infrastructure to support communities of every size with their specific needs. Driver's licenses and hunting licenses in rural communities. Postal banking, government services, new revenue — we have the infrastructure. Let's use it.

The Postal Service is the life. Every community h own, and every home an on USPS' universal deliv and conduct its affairs. ability to touch every co why can't your post offic Let's put the Post Office our communities.

BLIC POST OFFICE

DEMOCRACY

Not everyone can make it to the polls on Election Day. Vote by mail is convenient and easy to use. Why would we take away this important resource for voters who depend on it?

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AFFORDABLE SERVICES

A public Post Office keeps rates affordable; we serve as the low-cost anchor that keeps private companies like UPS and FedEx honest. Privatization would mean price hikes, worse service, and a threat to good, union jobs.

Learn more at APWU.org

What Happened With That Job?

Assistant Director **Ashley Cargill**, Assistant Director **Robert Romanowski**, Director **Lamont Brooks,** and Assistant Director **Sam Lisenbe**

Working at the Postal Service, many employees develop a pattern – report to work five days a week, 40 hours each week, and perform basically the same or similar duties every day. Employees also get used to seeing, for the most part, the same coworkers and supervisors. Periodically, employees check the available duty assignments that have been posted for bidding to see if they might want to make a change, but whatever job they are doing, they usually become accustomed to a certain repetition of work each day. Some clerks may not realize that there are other jobs in the Postal Service that could prove to be an interesting change.

Positions such as Data Collection Technician (DCT) and Address Management Systems (AMS) Technician do not often become available. They are Level 7 best-qualified jobs, which require the necessary KSAs (Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities) to meet the minimum qualifications. Positions like Bulk Mail Technician (BMT), Mailing Requirements Clerk (MRC), and Human Resources (HR) Clerk are also Level 7 but are senior-qualified jobs. These positions are fewer in number compared, for example, to Mail Processing Clerks (MPCs) or Sales and Service Associates (SSAs).

It is essential that locals pay particular attention to these types of positions. Certainly, not every postal facility will have these jobs, but if there have been duty assignments in which one or more of these positions existed in your office, you should determine if they are occupied, were reverted or abolished at some point, or inexplicably vanished.

As mail volume continues to decline, the Clerk Division has strived to find new and diverse types of work opportunities to maintain and expand the craft. As we tackle that challenging task, existing work in the Clerk Craft must be protected. The positions mentioned above are not typical of the duties performed by an MPC or SSA, so many times, duty assignments like these are out of sight, out of mind. That does not mean their work is insignificant. It is just not as noticeable as traditional distribution and window duties.

It is noteworthy that many BMTs, MRCs, DCTs, HR Clerks, and AMS Techs are very desirable duty assignments. Most are on Tour 2 with weekends off, in addition to the Level 7 pay. They are worth preserving whenever possible.

We suggest that locals investigate whether they have or have had any of these positions. Of course, all duty assignments should be monitored to maintain information on the jobs in each bid cluster. However, some positions discussed in this article have tended to "disappear" because of their unique scenarios of working out of sight of most employees. An examination of prior bid postings can be beneficial, even if the union must submit a request for information regarding the history of any past duty assignments.

AS MAIL VOLUME CONTINUES TO DECLINE, THE CLERK DIVISION HAS STRIVED TO FIND NEW AND DIVERSE TYPES OF WORK OPPORTUNITIES TO MAINTAIN AND EXPAND THE CRAFT.

If an established duty assignment, such as the positions discussed in this article, no longer exists, the cause must be determined. Keep in mind the time limits in Article 15 may be relevant, or it could be a continuous violation, depending on the circumstances. Article 1, Section 6 may apply, provided the duty assignment became vacant, was not reposted, and management is now performing the duties. The provisions of Article 1.5 concerning the assignment of non-supervisory, non-managerial work would help.

There are other ways to fight for the reposting or recreation of a duty assignment. Article 37.3.A.1 requires management to utilize all available work hours to create desirable duty assignments. With assistance from the Maximization and Desirable Duty Assignment Tool (MDAT) program, work hours can be charted accurately, and the hours that supervisors performed bargaining unit work can be incorporated to prove that a desirable duty assignment exists and should be posted for bid. Contact your local steward for further information. ■

Maintenance Opportunities: Can Management Reject You for Attendance or Safety?

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

For many postal employees, a Maintenance Craft position represents an opportunity for better pay, hours, increased job security, and a long-term career path. That is why the process of filling Maintenance vacancies is so important.

The APWU negotiated a specific order for filling Maintenance vacancies, outlined in Article 38.8 of the National Agreement and the Joint Contract Interpretation Manual (JCIM), designed to ensure that opportunities are awarded fairly and consistently.

Unfortunately, problems often arise when management reaches the step that requires consideration of employees on the In-Service Register. Across the country, employees have been denied entry into the Maintenance Craft because management cited alleged attendance or safety issues from their current positions.

Does management have the contractual authority to do that? The answer may be found in the bargaining history of our most recent National Agreement.

During negotiations for the 2024–2027 National Agreement, the APWU achieved a significant victory by strengthening the language governing Maintenance Craft selections. Previously, management was only required to "consider" certain transfer requests. The APWU secured language requiring management to "select" qualified employees, substantially reducing management's ability to rely on subjective reasons to block employee movement into Maintenance positions.

At the same time, the Postal Service proposed language that would have expressly allowed management to reject employees on In-Service Registers based on attendance and safety records. The APWU rejected that proposal. That should tell us something. If management already possessed the authority to deny employees for attendance or safety reasons, there would have been no reason to seek additional contract language. Parties do not negotiate for rights they already have. The Postal Service asked for that authority and did not receive it.

Despite this, management continues in many locations to deny employees Maintenance opportunities using standards that were never negotiated into the National Agreement. Members who are denied placement into the Maintenance Craft should not simply accept management's decision at face value. The contract language and recent bargaining history raises serious questions about whether such denials are contractually permissible.

The APWU fought hard to expand opportunities for postal workers seeking careers in the Maintenance Craft. When management attempted to gain explicit authority to reject employees based on attendance and safety concerns, your union stood firm and rejected the proposal.

The lesson is straightforward: negotiated rights matter. When management seeks authority at the bargaining table and fails to obtain it, that failure matters. As APWU members, we must remain vigilant in protecting our negotiated rights and ensuring that Maintenance Craft opportunities are awarded according to the contract—not according to standards management unsuccessfully attempted to negotiate.

New Maintenance Exams - Skilled Maintenance Assessment

On June 17, 2025, the Postal Service met with the APWU to discuss their intent to phase out the 955 Maintenance exam and implement a series of new exams in its place. Instead of the Revamped Maintenance Selection System (RMSS), the new system would now be titled Skilled Maintenance Assessment (SMA) and would include the following exams:

- Exam 961: Level 5 – Building Maintenance Custodians
- Exam 962: Level 7 – Maintenance Mechanic
- Exam 963: Level 9 – Mail Processing Equipment Mechanic
- Exam 964: Level 9 – Building Equipment Mechanic/ Area Maintenance Technician
- Exam 965: Level 10/11 – Electronic Technician/ National Support Technician

This process began in August 2023 when the Postal Service conducted voluntary working sessions with employees. In August 2024, the Postal Service began pilot testing the new exams. They deemed the pilot program a success and moved forward with national level discussions. Employees that volunteered to take the new exams described them as more difficult than the 955 exams, but not as difficult as the original exams prior to RMSS.

As this issue went to press, we were still in discussions to negotiate a fair and reasonable settlement. ■

MVS Challenges USPS Changes to CDL Drug and Alcohol Testing

Director **Michael Foster** and Assistant Director **Garrett Langley**

Since 1995, the Motor Vehicle Service (MVS) Craft has challenged and bargained with the employer over the drug and alcohol testing processes and procedures pertaining to any MVS employee who is required to maintain a Commercial Driver's License (CDL). The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) under the Department of Transportation (DOT) mandates 50% of USPS employees in safety-sensitive positions be tested annually for drugs, and 10% of USPS employees in safety-sensitive duty assignments be tested annually for alcohol.

The APWU has been notified under the provisions of Article 19 of the intended changes to "Management Instruction PO 720-2010 Alcohol and Drug Testing of Employees with a Commercial Driver's License (CDL)." This Management Instruction (MI) had been the subject of a previous National Dispute and underwent multiple revisions before the parties could negotiate and agree to PO 720-2010-1, which is presently in effect. One of the revisions the APWU successfully negotiated for included changes to the level of discipline in the event of a positive drug test; the requirement for "up to a last chance agreement," instead of "up to removal" was not initially included. In many cases, management went straight to the removal of an employee who had a positive drug test, as written in the previous version. *The Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991*, which brought about the testing requirements, also mandated that the employee be assisted in rehabilitation. Postal Service commercial motor vehicle operators have a lower positive drug test rate than the logistics industry's national average for safety-sensitive positions.

The USPS has always committed and agreed that the DOT CDL rules for postal employees would "Follow or Mirror" DOT rules.

MI-720-2010-1 has specific procedures to comply with the FMCSA and DOT requirements, such as the roles of the Medical Review Officer (MRO) and the Designated Employer Representative (DER). MI-720-2010-1 also details how often training is required for employees holding a CDL, as well as management training requirements. The APWU was recently notified of the Postal Service's intent to amend the current MI-720-2010-1. We have filed both Article 15 and 19 disputes challenging these changes as not fair, reasonable, or equitable, and that the previous MI was discussed and mutually agreed upon by the parties. We have requested to meet with the Postal Service to discuss these changes that directly affect the wages, hours, and working conditions of the employees holding a CDL with the intent of preserving the rights previously negotiated for our members.

We will continue to strive for compliance with the requirements set forth by law and the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

MVS Management Performing Time and Attendance Collection System Duties

We have received constant reports from the field regarding management continuing to perform Time and Attendance Collection System (TACS) duties in the Vehicle Maintenance Facilities (VMFs) across the country. The MVS Craft has filed a Step 4 Dispute challenging the continued violation of Article 1.6 Performance of Bargaining Unit Work. The VMFs across the country are generally a part of the larger installation and meet the Article 1.6 criteria, and the internal management separation between Fleet Management and Logistics, regardless of what the local fleet management may claim, does not allow supervisors to perform the inputting or recording of time. This is long established as bargaining unit work.

The Clerk Craft has numerous settlement agreements that TACS is bargaining unit work. The MVS Craft position has not changed regarding TACS duties. This work cannot be performed by management. We are not trying to take that work from the Clerk Craft, but we will not stand by and watch as management continues to perform bargaining unit work. We, as the APWU, must stand together and fight together. Management's continued violation of Article 1.6 is unacceptable and must be challenged.

When We Fight, We Win ■

Progress at the Table, Strength in Solidarity

Director **Kimberly A. Maurer**

As your Support Services Division Director, I am committed to continuing to work across the bargaining table. I want to share updates on several important matters affecting our members. From national-level disputes, ongoing work involving Albuquerque Mail Service (AMS), B&B Trucking, and the new Information Technology/Accounting Services (IT/AS) contract to negotiating a Telework MOU that we can be proud of, our mission remains the same: to fight for fair treatment, stronger protections, and meaningful gains for every member we represent.

I am committed to reviewing national-level disputes and will work diligently to resolve them. Our commitment has not changed. The issues raised are not abstract contractual matters; they affect the working conditions, job security, and the respect our members deserve on the job. Where management has resisted even modest improvements, we will continue pressing those concerns and do our best to ensure that Support Services members benefit from every economic and contractual advance secured through the national agreement.

Our efforts with AMS are also moving in a positive direction. As we work toward a first contract, we remain focused on building a strong foundation that protects workers and establishes clear rights on the job. First contracts set the standard for how workers will be treated, disputes will be resolved, and how dignity and fairness will be enforced in the workplace. We are encouraged by the progress made so far and will continue working to secure an agreement our members can stand behind with confidence.

At B&B Trucking, our members' voices were heard. After a 2025 Tentative Agreement (TA) was rejected, it was clear that members expected more, and rightly so. Returning to the table was a demonstration of union democracy in action. When members speak, we listen and continue to apply pressure to B&B Trucking executives to return to the negotiating table to achieve a fair and reasonable contract.

We recently reached an important milestone in IT/AS. The members of IT/AS have officially ratified their new collective bargaining agreement by 97% of voters. Thank you to members for their participation throughout the bargaining process and for exercising their right to vote on the agreement. The agreement represents the result of sustained effort, careful preparation, and the determination to secure economic improvements for members. In addition, discussions over telework and related memoranda have reflected just how important flexibility, stability, and member input remain across IT and ASC operations. As always, a TA is an important step, but the membership's review and voice remain central to the process. The new union contract will be posted soon in the APWU Contract Database.

AS WE LOOK AHEAD, THE 28TH BIENNIAL APWU NATIONAL CONVENTION WILL BE AN IMPORTANT MOMENT FOR OUR UNION AND FOR THE FUTURE OF THE SUPPORT SERVICES CRAFT.

As we look ahead, the APWU's 28th Biennial National Convention will be an important moment for our union and for the future of the Support Services Craft. Scheduled for Aug. 17 through Aug. 20, at the Los Angeles Convention Center, the national convention is the highest decision-making body of our union and the place where delegates come together to debate priorities, vote on resolutions, and help chart the APWU's course for the years ahead. It is also an opportunity for members to strengthen relationships across crafts, share ideas, and reaffirm the values that keep our union strong.

For Support Services members, the convention is a chance to ensure our voices are heard on the issues that matter most to our craft. With approximately 2,000 delegates expected to participate, the convention will provide a powerful forum to discuss resolutions, prepare for the challenges ahead, and build the necessary unity to protect our members on every front. I look forward to standing with all of you as we honor our past, fight for our future, and continue building a stronger union together. ■

History of the Eastern Region and the National Convention

Eastern Region Coordinator **Vince Tarducci**

Hello, and for those who don't know me, my name is Vince Tarducci. For my first article for the APWU magazine, I thought I would share some background information about myself. I started my postal career in 1980, working at the Philadelphia BMC. As a 19-year-old, I was very green to union issues, but I learned quickly thanks to the postal veterans who took me under their wing. In 1989, I became the local's youngest president when my mentor Mike Gallagher passed the gavel to me. I was fortunate to hold the position for the next 27 years, learning so much in such a well-organized local that climbed to 99% organized.

In 2016, I became a Clerk Craft National Business Agent (NBA) for the Philadelphia Region, a position I held until 2025, working under Division Director Lamont Brooks for the last two terms. This past November, I became the Eastern Region Coordinator. I have followed in the footsteps of both AJ Jones (2019-2025) and my mentor Mike Gallagher (2007-2019). AJ and Mike did a tremendous job as coordinators, but those in the Eastern Region and throughout the country already knew that. AJ and I had a great transition, I learned so much about the position. Obviously, I have some huge shoes to fill and have tried to do so to the best of my ability since taking office last November.

The APWU has had six Eastern Region Coordinators since its formation, starting with Bob Kephart, Phil Fleming, and Jim Burke— all from the Philadelphia PA Area Local, followed by Mike, AJ, and me.

One of the issues we oversee with constant diligence is Article 12, specifically Article 12.5.C.5, regarding the threat of excessing outside an installation. During my nine years as a Clerk Craft NBA, I assisted Eastern Region Coordinators Mike Gallagher and AJ Jones, and Northeast Region Coordinators John Dirzius and Tiffany Foster in matters involving Clerk Craft excessing events. A portion of New Jersey currently falls under the Northeast Region, so we overlap with some locals in those areas.

Participating in the 2026 Biennial National Convention

The 2026 National Convention is upon us, and APWU delegates will assemble in Los Angeles, CA, to address issues that will help our great union move forward. We will passionately debate constitutional proposals, contract issues, and resolutions. My advice, especially to the newer delegates, is to embrace the opportunity with eyes wide open. Read those resolutions and become informed, and ask seasoned leaders questions, because becoming engaged will make you a better leader.

MY ADVICE, ESPECIALLY TO THE NEWER DELEGATES, IS TO EMBRACE THE OPPORTUNITY WITH EYES WIDE OPEN. READ THOSE RESOLUTIONS AND BECOME INFORMED, AND ASK SEASONED LEADERS QUESTIONS, BECAUSE BECOMING ENGAGED WILL MAKE YOU A BETTER LEADER.

My first National Convention was in 1984 in Las Vegas, and I chose not to miss a beat. In fact, I volunteered to stay around representing my local when there was a motion to have a roll-call vote where every local in alphabetical order by state went to the microphone, casting a vote to suspend all other convention business to vote on, to the best of my recollection, changing the APWU logo from the shield to a different APWU logo.

Many delegates were passionate about this on both sides, which led to a pause in the scheduled convention proceedings to take the vote. There would be no need for every delegate to hang around while all that would take place, so I volunteered to represent our local. I took that time to read everything on our table and soak everything in while the voting took place. This will be my 21st Biennial National Convention, and truthfully, I look forward to every one of them, enjoying how APWU debates everything. I'm proud to say that I had my share of participation at the microphone, but that is something I attribute to my mentors and other passionate delegates. So, my suggestion as I close, **fight like hell to protect your future!** ■

Judy Beard, Director

Meeting With Members of Congress this August

Every August, members of both the House of Representatives and the Senate spend most of the month at home in the districts or states they represent. This is because Congress is on recess and not in session, meaning they are not working in Washington, D.C. This year, members of the House of Representatives are not in session from July 24 to Aug. 30, and members of the Senate are not in session from Aug. 8 to Sept. 13.

This time away from our nation's capital provides local and state unions an opportunity to interact with our representatives and senators. **APWU leadership encourages locals, states, and retiree chapters to meet with their members of Congress in August!**

After getting approval from your local, state, or retiree chapter president, gather a group of APWU members. When scheduling a meeting, your group should have a direct request in mind. While you can always find APWU's latest fight by visiting our website at *apwu.org* or calling our Legislative Hotline at 844-402-1001, here are three of the biggest issues we're currently fighting for:

Issue #1

Promoting Financial Reforms for the Postal Service

On May 1, 2026, the four postal unions signed a letter addressed to members of Congress regarding the Postal Service's finances. This letter, found in the Legislative Action Center on the APWU website, asks Congress to increase the USPS's borrowing authority and approve a new investment strategy for USPS retiree health and pension funds. The USPS's current $15 billion borrowing authority has not been increased in decades, and its investments currently sit in U.S. Treasury securities, which do not have high annual returns.

Issue #2

Gaining Support for House and Senate Resolutions Against Postal Privatization

Selling the Postal Service to the highest bidder would not only lead to a reduction in service and higher postage rates but also place postal workers' health insurance, retirement benefits, collective bargaining rights, and jobs in jeopardy. House Resolution 70 and Senate Resolution 147 both express the support in Congress for taking all appropriate measures to ensure that the Postal Service is not subject to privatization.

Issue #3

Adding Cosponsors to the Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 1522)

Postal workers who begin their postal career as temporary employees are currently not allowed to make contributions to their retirement benefits until they become USPS career employees. This bill, if signed into law, would correct this injustice by providing career employees with the opportunity to make catch-up contributions to their retirement benefits and earn credit for the time they worked as temporary postal employees.

READY TO TAKE ACTION?

Scan the QR code shown here to access APWU's Legislative Action Center, which has many ways you can turn your energy into real action. When it comes to meeting with your members of Congress, go to the Action Center to find your representatives, read our detailed guide with best practices, and even view the congressional calendar!

Find "Tips and Tricks for Setting Up Summer Legislative Meetings" on Page 8.

Organizing Starts With a Conversation

Anna Smith, Director

What's the most effective way to grow our union? We have contractually negotiated union bulletin boards. We have flyers. We connect with our coworkers through emails, texts, and social media. While all these tools help keep members informed and connected, none of them can replace a face-to-face, one-on-one conversation.

Growing our union starts with relationships. When we take the time to talk with our coworkers, listen to their concerns, and understand what matters to them, we build trust. Those conversations help us build trust and grow our membership. Those conversations also help us understand what is keeping someone from joining the APWU. Sometimes the question being asked is not the real concern. A question about dues may actually stem from frustration with a steward or another union member.

Unions have used the same organizing principles for generations: listen, identify issues, agitate around those issues, and ask coworkers to take action. Those conversations are the foundation of successful organizing. Of course, these conversations do not always happen when we expect them to; like if a coworker catches you in the break room, asks a question on the workroom floor, or brings up union membership while heading out the door. While the quick responses below are no substitute for a genuine organizing conversation, they can help keep the discussion moving and open the door to a deeper conversation about union membership.

Organizer's Corner

"I'm already represented. Why should I join?"

I hear this one a lot. My response is usually pretty simple: we are stronger when more of us are involved. The more members we have, the more strength we have when issues come up on the workroom floor and when it is time to negotiate our contract. Joining is not about someone else representing us, it's about all of us working together to protect what we have achieved and making improvements.

"I don't have the money to join."

Everyone's financial situation is different, and of course it's important to respect that. But when I hear that, I usually ask people to think about what they are getting in return. The wages, benefits, leave, and protections we have won together over the years are worth far more than the cost of dues.

"I don't use the union."

This is one of the comments I hear most often. My response is usually that you use what we have achieved together every day you come to work. Your pay, your leave, your health benefits, your seniority rights, and the protections in our contract are all things you rely on every day. Those are not extras. They are part of your job, and we have them because we stood together and fought for them.

"I'm going to retire soon."

That is exactly why your membership matters. To join the APWU Retirees Department when you retire, you must be an APWU member at the time of retirement. For a small annual cost, retirees stay connected, stay informed, and have people fighting to protect the retirement benefits they have spent a career earning. Retirement does not mean those benefits stop needing protection.

"Do I have to join?"

Our wages, benefits, leave, and workplace protections are not here because management wanted to give them to us. We have them because we stood together and fought for them. If we want to keep what we have, it takes all of us.

Growing our union is not about having all the answers. It is about listening, building relationships, and understanding the concerns behind the question. Every conversation is an opportunity to connect with our coworkers, strengthen our membership, and build a stronger union. ■

Obtain a Free Copy of Your Credit Report

Joyce B. Robinson, Director

The *Fair Credit Reporting Act* (FCRA) requires the nationwide credit reporting companies — Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion to provide a free copy of your credit report, at your request, once every 12 months. The report includes information about where you live, your bill payment history, and whether you have been sued or have filed for bankruptcy. Nationwide credit reporting companies sell this information to creditors, insurers, employers, and other businesses that use it to evaluate your applications for credit, insurance, employment, or buying or renting a home.

Contacting the Credit Reporting Companies

There is a central website, a toll-free telephone number, and a mailing address through which you can order your free annual report. To order, visit *annualcreditreport.com*, call 1-877-322-8228, or download the Annual Credit Report Request Form from the website and mail it to the address provided. The law allows you to order one free copy of your report from each of the nationwide credit reporting companies every 12 months. Ordering a report from a different agency every four months helps to ensure the accuracy of the information in your report.

Provide your name, address, Social Security number, and date of birth. If you have moved in the last two years, include your previous address. To maintain the security of your file, the credit reporting company may ask you for information that only you would know. Your report will be processed and normally mailed to you within 15 days.

Beware of Imposter Websites

Only *annualcreditreport.com* is authorized to give the free annual credit report you are entitled to under the law. Other websites that claim to offer "free credit reports" and "free credit services" are often not legitimate. Services are not free and are automatically charged to a credit card after a trial period. If you get an email, see a pop-up ad, or get a phone call from someone claiming to be from *annualcreditreport.com* or the three nationwide credit reporting companies, do not reply, click on any link, or give personal information. It is probably a scam. Forward any such email to the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) at *spam@uce.gov*.

Correcting Inaccurate or Incomplete Information

Write the credit reporting company, list the name of the company, and the information that is inaccurate. After the company receives notice of a dispute, it must investigate, review the relevant information, and report the results back to the credit reporting company. If the company finds the disputed information is inaccurate, it must notify all three nationwide credit reporting companies so they can correct the information in your file.

When the investigation is complete, the credit reporting company must give you the written results and a free copy of your report if the dispute results in a change. This free investigation report does not count as your annual free report. If an item is changed or deleted, the credit reporting company cannot put the disputed information back in your file unless the company verifies that it is accurate.

The FTC works to protect consumers by preventing fraudulent, deceptive, and unfair business practices in the marketplace, and to provide information to help consumers spot, stop, and avoid them. To file a complaint, visit *reportfraud.ftc.gov* or call (1-877-382-4357). ■

Source: Federal Trade Commission

THE REPORT INCLUDES INFORMATION ABOUT WHERE YOU LIVE, YOUR BILL PAYMENT HISTORY, AND WHETHER YOU HAVE BEEN SUED OR HAVE FILED FOR BANKRUPTCY. NATIONWIDE CREDIT REPORTING COMPANIES SELL THIS INFORMATION TO CREDITORS, INSURERS, EMPLOYERS, AND OTHER BUSINESSES THAT USE IT TO EVALUATE YOUR APPLICATIONS FOR CREDIT, INSURANCE, EMPLOYMENT, OR BUYING OR RENTING A HOME.

APWU

U.S. MAIL NOT FOR SALE

Protect the Public Post Office

Keeping Communities Connected!

APWU is holding a national day of action on

Tuesday, July 28

APWU members and locals are uniting with the public to stop attacks on our public Postal Service! We are coming together to demand pro-postal leadership of the USPS, to defend Vote-by-Mail, and to address the long-term funding needs of the Postal Service.

Sign up to host an event on apwu.org

Don't forget to send your photos to communications@apwu.org

Collaboration and Focus: Our Priorities

Daleo Freeman, Director

Brothers and sisters, let's talk about how we get through each day to build something better for tomorrow. We all want the same basic things from our job. We want good days. We want safe days. We want stress-free days. We want to do our work, be treated with respect, and go home with enough left in us for our families. That is not too much to ask. And the way we get there is together.

That is why collaboration and focus must be our priority. It is the difference between a shift that wears you down and a shift where you feel like someone has got your back.

Focus is just as important. There will always be distractions and things trying to pull us into different corners. Focus is how we respond to that. We must focus on what matters most: taking care of each other, keeping the workplace safe, and treating every member with dignity. When we are focused on those things, we do not waste time and energy on what divides us. We put that energy into what unites us. The Human Relations Department is a conduit to that agenda. Our job is to connect you with the help and support that keeps you standing.

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a conduit of support when life gets heavy. Your job can wear on you. Things at home can weigh on you. The EAP is there for counseling, resources, or a confidential place to talk when the stress will not let up. Our department makes sure you know it is there. We help bridge the gap between needing help and getting it without judgment or shame. Just one union member helping another find the door. Because collaboration means we do not let a brother or sister struggle in silence.

For Veterans' Affairs, we are the conduit of the respect and resources that our veteran members have earned. Many of us put on another uniform before this one. We came home with skills, pride, and sometimes wounds you cannot see. The Human Relations Department works to connect our veterans to benefits, claims assistance, and programs that honor that service. We make sure the sacrifices of our veteran brothers and sisters are recognized in this workplace. Focus means we do not forget them. Collaboration means we stand with them.

THE EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) IS A CONDUIT OF SUPPORT WHEN LIFE GETS HEAVY. YOUR JOB CAN WEAR ON YOU. THINGS AT HOME CAN WEIGH ON YOU. THE EAP IS THERE FOR COUNSELING, RESOURCES, OR A CONFIDENTIAL PLACE TO TALK WHEN THE STRESS WILL NOT LET UP. OUR DEPARTMENT MAKES SURE YOU KNOW IT IS THERE.

For the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP), we are the conduit for when you are hurt. Nobody comes to work expecting to get injured, but when it happens, the paperwork, the deadlines, and the process can feel like a second injury. Our department helps connect injured members to the information and support they need to get through OWCP. We help you understand your rights and stay connected to the union while you heal, because focus means we do not leave injured members behind. Collaboration means we carry each other until we are back on our feet.

The Human Relations Department connects our members with what they need. Inclusion means you belong here, hurt or healthy, new or retired, veteran or not. Contribution means your well-being matters to all of us. Ownership means these programs are ours, and we use them to take care of each other. So, brothers and sisters, let's keep choosing each other and keep collaboration and focus our priorities. Check on the person next to you. Share what you know about EAP if someone is struggling. Thank a veteran and make sure they know where to turn. Support an injured member so they do not feel forgotten. We do not have to be perfect; we just have to stand together. One conversation. One helping hand. One act of looking out. That is collaboration. That is focus. That is union. ■

Sarah Jane Rodriguez, Director

Get Your Mammogram Screening

Schedule your mammogram today

Thinking about any type of cancer can be unsettling, but the best way to prevent breast cancer is to have regular mammogram screenings every 1 to 2 years starting at age 40. If you've never been screened or it's been a while since your last screening, talk to your provider about what's right for you.

Even if you have no symptoms and no known risks for breast cancer, having regular mammograms is important because they can find breast changes that could be cancer years before physical symptoms develop.

YOUR HEALTH PLAN COVERS REGULAR SCREENINGS 100% WHEN YOU SEE A NETWORK PROVIDER.

What is a mammogram?

A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast that can check for breast cancer, even if you don't have any symptoms.

Why get a mammogram?

Women who have regular mammograms are more likely to have breast cancer found early, are less likely to need aggressive treatment — like surgery and chemotherapy — and are more likely to be cured.

How much does it cost?

As part of your recommended preventive care, your health plan covers annual mammograms 100% at specific ages when you see a network provider.

When you have a mammogram due to a new or existing condition, such as a lump that you discovered, it's considered diagnostic care, so you may be charged.

Need a doctor?

Visit apwuhp.com.

Call APWU Health Plan at **800-222-APWU (2798)** or **800-622-2511 (TTY)**; 8:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m. ET, Monday-Friday

Call your primary care doctor, gynecologist or imaging center to schedule your screening today.

Preventive care has its rewards

When you complete your mammogram, you'll earn $25 for your PCA. Each of your covered dependents can also earn $25 for your PCA when they complete their mammogram.
(Consumer Driven Option only).

APWU HEALTH PLAN TOGETHER. BETTER HEALTH.

Scan to learn more about APWU Health Plan Preventive Care or go to our website at apwuhp.com/preventive-care

SCAN ME

Preventive Care

Hank Greenberg Reflects on the History of the National Postal Press Association

(The original interview with founding Postal Press Association (PPA) President Hank Greenberg was conducted by former PPA President Tony Carobine in 2004, reprinted with edits for length and clarity by current PPA President Dena Briscoe to commemorate 62 years of the Association)

I started my postal career in 1960 as a distribution clerk in Miami, Florida. Not long after that, I became a local union editor. At that time, our union – and our members – had very few rights. This was before labor-management agreements, before many of the protections people now take for granted. I believed there was no better way to reach, inform, and inspire members than through the union newspaper. The respect union publications have today didn't happen overnight – it came from years of dedication by editors who believed in the mission.

In 1961, at the Florida state convention, I organized a meeting of editors across the state. We shared ideas, offered suggestions, and encouraged one another. [APWU] newspapers across Florida improved in quality and content practically overnight. Seeing that kind of transformation convinced me that editors working together could accomplish something much bigger.

Believe it or not, the conversations that eventually led to the formation of the [PPA] began in a furnace room in the basement of a Miami hotel during the 1964 United Federation of Postal Clerks convention. Editors weren't given much recognition back then, and we couldn't even get a meeting room. Fourteen of us squeezed into that basement, but the enthusiasm was electric. We went back to our delegations, determined to push for a resolution to form a national press association – and that spark became the PPA.

Getting that resolution adopted was a superhuman effort. The national leadership didn't want an independent press association, and many delegates didn't see its value. For days before the vote, we talked to hundreds of delegates individually, trying to explain why it mattered. When it finally passed, delegates from all over the floor came to celebrate with us. It was one of the most electrifying moments I've ever experienced.

I never imagined the PPA would become as respected and recognized as it is today. The names of those early editors may be lost to history, but they accomplished something miraculous. Every rank-and-file member and union officer has benefited from their work.

The relevance of editors hasn't decreased. Today, members are flooded with information from everywhere: television, radio, magazines, and the internet. The real challenge now isn't producing information; it is ensuring meaningful information reaches people. That makes the editor's role more important than ever.

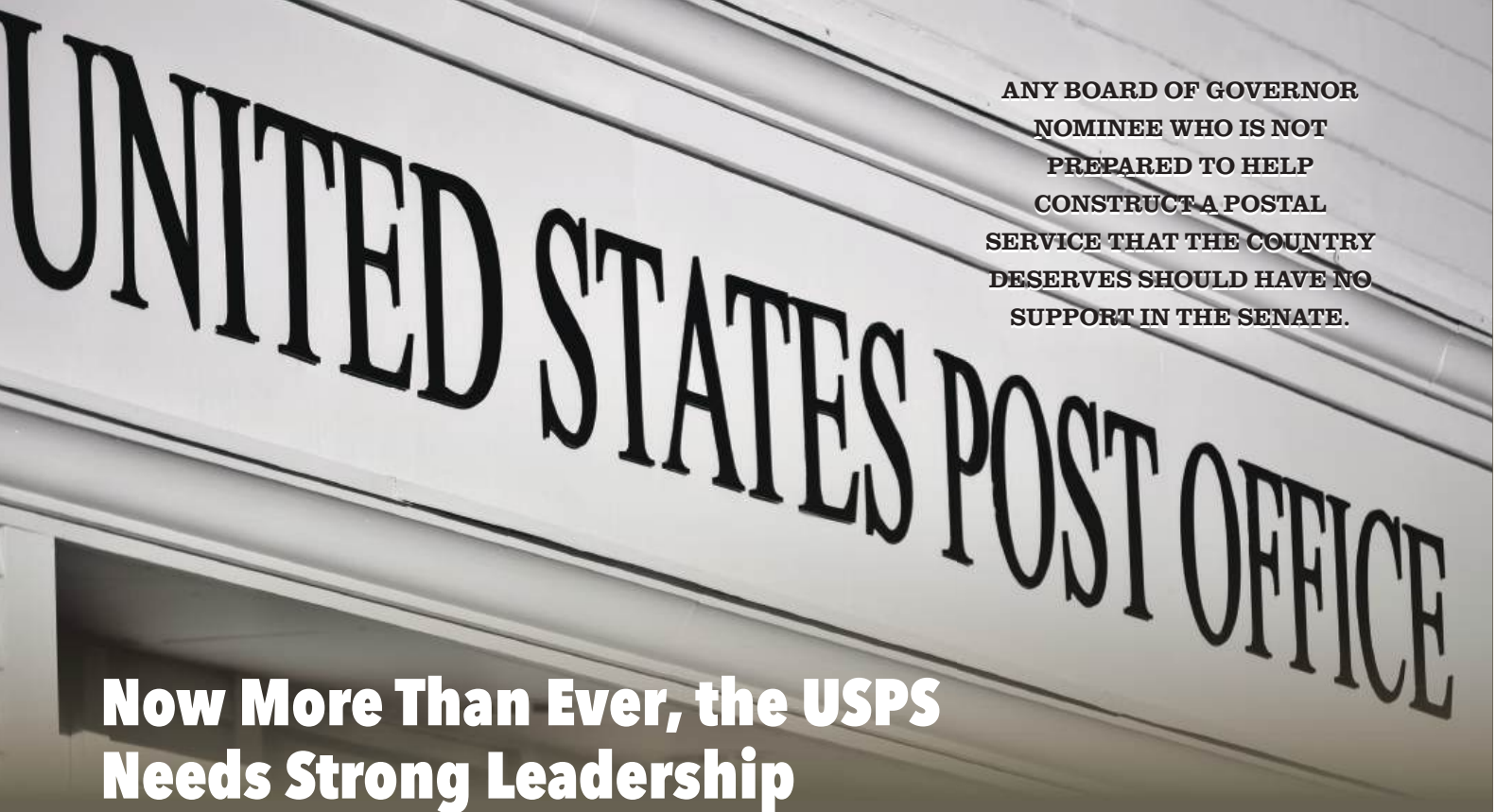
For new editors, my advice is simple: don't hesitate to call on the PPA. You're tapping into decades of experience, dedication, and integrity. And never assume you know it all. [I was] a postal editor for over forty years… and [I was] still learning, still asking questions. The more you learn, the more members benefit.

As for printed union newspapers, some people think electronic communication has replaced them. I disagree. Hardcopy publications still matter. They're permanent, portable, and comfortable to read. I use computers as much as anyone, but there's something valuable about holding a publication in your hands.

Looking back, I feel honored to have been part of this journey. What started in a basement with a handful of editors became a national organization that continues to strengthen unions and empower members. That's something worth celebrating for generations to come.

Hank is proud that the PPA continues to stand strong after more than 60 years. To become a member of, or learn more about, the PPA, visit www.apwupostalpress.org or call PPA President Dena Briscoe at (202) 438-4463. ■

THE REAL CHALLENGE NOW ISN'T PRODUCING INFORMATION; IT IS ENSURING MEANINGFUL INFORMATION REACHES PEOPLE. THAT MAKES THE EDITOR'S ROLE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER.



ANY BOARD OF GOVERNOR NOMINEE WHO IS NOT PREPARED TO HELP CONSTRUCT A POSTAL SERVICE THAT THE COUNTRY DESERVES SHOULD HAVE NO SUPPORT IN THE SENATE.

Now More Than Ever, the USPS Needs Strong Leadership

The United States Postal Service is a national treasure. When the country celebrates its 250th birthday this July, the post office will be celebrating its 251st. Through that entire history, the Postal Service has contributed so much to American life, connecting communities, enabling commerce, and animating the rich civic life that marks the democratic ideals upon which our country was founded.

As we mark these important anniversaries, the Postal Service faces a difficult and uncertain future. Service has eroded to unacceptable levels. The public deserves better. Postal workers confront hostile workplaces and a refusal to uphold our collectively bargained rights. We demand respect. And the Postal Service itself is in a precarious financial position. There are solutions at hand, but they will require focus.

Now, perhaps, more than ever, the Postal Service is in need of strong leadership. Postal leaders must be prepared to take on the hard work of improving service, improving working conditions, and securing sustainable funding of the universal service every American community deserves.

Next week, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee will hold nomination hearings for President Trump's four nominees to the Postal Board of Governors (BOG). The BOG is the body legally entrusted to direct the Postal Service, including hiring and firing the Postmaster General.

The APWU has made clear to the Senate our expectations for the Board nominees. The BOG, the Postmaster General, and all of postal management should have a shared commitment to undertake the work needed to improve service and chart a path to future success for the Postal Service. Some of that work will happen at L'Enfant Plaza, some of it at the bargaining table, and some of it in the halls of Congress.

Now is not the time for political agendas, sweeping cuts to postal services, or privatization schemes. Any BOG nominee who is not prepared to help construct a Postal Service that the country deserves should have no support in the Senate.

The APWU will follow their hearings and keep members apprised of developments concerning the Postal Service's leadership and fostering the rich civic life that sustains the democratic ideals upon which our country was founded. ■

Inspector General Report Shows Appetite for EXPANDED SERVICES

The APWU welcomes the release of the Postal Service Office of Inspector General's (OIG) recent white paper, *Expanding Access to Government Services Through the Postal Network*. The report confirms what postal workers have long known: no other institution in America is better positioned to connect people with essential public services than the United States Postal Service.

With more than 31,000 retail locations, a trusted workforce, and a presence in every community in the nation, the Postal Service is uniquely equipped to serve as a true government storefront. The OIG's report shows opportunities and an appetite to expand services beyond traditional mail delivery, to include partnerships with state, local, and tribal governments to improve access to government programs, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

...NO OTHER INSTITUTION IN AMERICA IS BETTER POSITIONED TO CONNECT PEOPLE WITH ESSENTIAL PUBLIC SERVICES THAN THE UNITED STATES POSTAL SERVICE.

For years, the APWU has advocated for expanded public services at the Postal Service. From postal banking to enhanced licensing and identification services, we have argued that the nation's postal network represents an underutilized public asset capable of delivering tremendous value to the American people. The OIG's findings reinforce that vision and provide a practical roadmap for making it a reality.

The report points to a range of possibilities, including identity verification services, self-service DMV kiosks, collocated government offices, broadband infrastructure support, and emergency response capabilities. These ideas share a common goal: making government services more accessible while strengthening the long-term financial stability of the Postal Service.

Importantly, the report notes that the *Postal Service Reform Act* of 2022 expanded USPS authority to work with state, local, and tribal governments. This presents a significant opportunity to develop new partnerships, generate additional revenue, and increase the value of the Postal Service to the communities it serves.

For postal workers, expanding government services is about more than revenue. It is about strengthening the public Postal Service and ensuring that every community, regardless of geography, income, or population density, has access to essential services. Postal employees already serve as trusted public servants. Building on that trust to deliver additional government services is a natural extension of our mission.

The APWU also agrees with the OIG's recommendation that the USPS develop a comprehensive strategic roadmap for government services. A coordinated plan will be essential to identifying opportunities, securing resources, engaging potential partners, and ensuring that any expansion is implemented successfully.

As these discussions continue, APWU members have an important role to play. Postal workers understand the needs of their communities better than anyone. Members can help identify opportunities for new services and educate our communities about the value of the postal network, and advocate for policies that strengthen the Postal Service's role as a public institution.

The future of the Postal Service is not limited to delivering mail and packages. It includes expanding the services that Americans rely upon and leveraging one of the nation's most trusted public networks to meet evolving community needs. The OIG's report offers a compelling vision for that future, and the APWU looks forward to working with policymakers, community leaders, and postal employees to help make it a reality.

Read OIG Report

Together, we can build a stronger Postal Service, create new opportunities for postal workers, and ensure that the nation's postal network continues to serve the public for generations to come. ■

Los Angeles Stadium Workers Ratify Contract, Averting World Cup Strike

photo courtesy of Unite Here Local 11

On June 10, SoFi Stadium workers in Los Angeles, California, voted 99% in favor of ratifying a tentative agreement with Legends Global, which manages the stadium's hospitality services. The negotiated agreement averted a strike, authorized by 96% of members, which had the potential to disrupt the FIFA World Cup soccer tournament's June 12 opening game. The nearly 2,000 UNITE HERE Local 11-represented workers, who include dishwashers, concession workers, bartenders, and servers, secured salary increases and protections against subcontracting and automation. The workers also had concerns with the role of federal immigration enforcement officers at the games, refusing to comply with FIFA's request to allow ICE to collect their sensitive private information, such as nationality and home addresses, which were a part of the security plans for the soccer tournament. "We won everything we asked for," said union spokesperson Maria Hernandez. ■

Steelworkers Ratify 3-Year Multi-State Contract with Arconic

United Steelworkers from USW Local 105 ratified a tentative agreement with aluminum maker Arconic on May 27. The three-year contract covers 3,400 workers across four plants, including Riverdale, Iowa; Lafayette, Indiana; Alcoa, Tennessee; and Massena, New York. The contract secured significant wage increases for workers, protected health care, strengthened scheduling, job security, retirement security, and workplace protections. "The unity of our membership across all of the Arconic locations gave us power to negotiate more secure jobs with improved wages and excellent benefits," said USW International Vice President Ramirez in a press release. "When union workers stand together in the name of fairness and justice, there are no limits to what we can accomplish." ■

photo courtesy of SEIU Wisconsin

Wisconsin Nurses Vote to Join SIEU

Nurses at St. Mary's Hospital in Madison, Wisconsin, voted by an 89% majority in favor of unionizing with SEIU Wisconsin on June 11. The vote, administered by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), was the largest representation election in Wisconsin in more than 25 years. Union-supporting nurses organized to form a union after concerns they raised over procedures, staffing, and compensation were largely ignored by St. Louis-based nonprofit chain SSM Health, which oversees the hospital's operations. "The landslide election is part of a growing national trend of healthcare professionals — including nurses, doctors, and others — organizing unions to have a strong voice in improving patient care, staffing, and retention," SEIU Wisconsin stated in a press release. "With our union, we now have a strong voice to negotiate a contract with the policies, staffing, and retention we need," said St. Mary's labor and delivery nurse Emily Berceau in the union's press release. ■

photo courtesy of UAW

UAW American Axle Workers Ratify 4-Year Contract, Ending 10-Day Strike

On June 14, UAW Local 2093 members in Three Rivers, Michigan, voted 80% in favor of ratifying a new, four-year contract with the Dauch Corporation, formerly known as American Axle, a major supplier to General Motors. The tentative agreement, reached on June 11, ended a 10-day strike and won substantial pay increases for workers over the duration of the agreement. In 2008, American Axle workers agreed to significant wage cuts as the company faced financial struggles due to the Great Recession and a broader crisis in the American automotive industry. However, when the company recovered and profits rose, worker pay was not restored. The contract also includes additional paid days off and does not include any concessions on healthcare costs. "UAW Local 2093 showed one thing to be truer than ever: strikes work," said UAW President Shawn Fain in a press release. "And American Axle proved something else to be as true as we've always known: the industry can afford our demands. From the time we walked off 10 days ago to this tentative agreement, the company has more than doubled the money on the table. Labor is our power, and we can't sell ourselves short in this economic crisis we're facing." ■

UK Medicine Packaging Workers Secure Pay Increases, Ending Weekly Strikes

Unite, a UK trade union, struck a deal with Amcor Packaging on June 8 to increase medicine-packaging workers' pay by 12.3% over three years, ending a series of weekly strikes. The walkouts began on May 18, which initially occurred once a week on Mondays, but escalated to three days a week before the agreement was reached. The plant, based in Cramlington, England, prints foil pharmaceutical packaging for major companies including GlaxoSmithKline, AstraZeneca, and AbbVie. Workers had previously rejected an initial offer of a 4.1% pay increase, citing years of below-inflation wage increases and the cost-of-living crisis. "Congratulations to the Cramlington Amcor workers who took strike action for better pay and won. Once again, Unite's total dedication to improving jobs, pay, and conditions is paying dividends for our members," said Unite General Secretary Sharon Graham. ■

photo courtesy of UNI Global Union

300 Striking AFSCME Workers at Illinois State University Approve Contract, Ending Month-Long Strike

Following up on our reporting of the Illinois State University strike in the last issue of *The American Postal Worker,* more than 300 striking building, grounds, and dining service workers at Illinois State University (ISU) voted overwhelmingly to approve a new contract to end their nearly month-long strike by 95%. After six meetings with a federal mediator, AFSCME and ISU reached a tentative agreement on a new five-year contract, which was ratified on May 6. "This struggle was about fair pay, and we won that. Even more importantly, it was about respect, and we earned it," said AFSCME Local 1110 President Chuck Carver. ■

A GRAND ALLIANCE
TO SAVE OUR PUBLIC POSTAL SERVICE

Why Rural Postal Services Are a Lifeline

In 2025, as the White House proposed privatizing the USPS, Iowa farmer, Chris Petersen, was alarmed. Living 20 miles from town, the Postal Service is a vital connection for him.

"I'm on different pills and we get them in the mail so we're not running the town every day. We order [vaccines] for the hogs … mail ordered out of Kansas. If the Post Office wasn't delivering and picking up the bills and everything else, it would take lots of time ...hours per week and the gas money and the driving time and everything else," he warned.

The support of rural communities is vital for us. Elected officials from rural districts will cast key votes on the future of USPS financing. For many rural communities, that mail carrier delivery or village Post Office might be the only local service they regularly receive.

A recently updated report from The Institute for Policy Studies shows just how important the Postal Service is to rural areas.

Good Jobs

The report found that in the 15 states with the largest share of their population in rural areas, roughly 75,238 people work directly for the Postal Service. The total mailing industry employs more than 761,000 people and generates nearly $146 billion in revenue per year in these 15 rural states.

On average, postal workers are paid over $9,000 a year more than comparable occupations—and that's only looking at pay, not pensions or benefits.

Rural Services

The Postal Service is often the only daily delivery service in many rural areas, and it's the most cost effective. Many for-profit carriers like FedEx and UPS add surcharges for rural and remote deliveries. Studies found that these surcharges apply to 102 million Americans (about 31% of the population).

The USPS delivers an estimated 1.2 billion prescription drug shipments a year. This is a vital service for rural communities, where residents are increasingly likely to live long distances from the nearest pharmacy. The number of pharmacies in rural communities declined 5.9% between 2018 and 2023. Veterans, 2.7 million of whom live in rural communities, receive 84% of their prescriptions by mail.

Vote-by-Mail

Vote-by-Mail is a vital lifeline for democracy in rural areas, and it is important that we defend it.

In 2024, the USPS securely delivered 99 million ballots to and from voters. The report notes that "Rural residents rely particularly heavily on the mail-in option, in part because polling sites are often long distances from their homes. Nationwide, half of rural county polling sites serve an area greater than 62 square miles, compared to just 2 square miles for urban sites."

When We Unite, We Win

Speaking about his farm and rural community, Chris Petersen summed it all up: "The Postal Service is essential to a functioning economy. And you know, it's about everything I've been talking about here to help make the economy work; to help it function."

The fact that we can be found all over the country, helping sustain the very communities we live in, is a big part of the reason we can and must win our campaign to safeguard the Postal Service against private corporate greed.

Read the full report at *usmailnotforsale.org/ips.* ■

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

Newport News Shipbuilders Strike

July 30, 1999 – Nearly 9,000 shipbuilders represented by United Steelworkers (US) Local 8888 in Newport News, VA, returned to work after ratifying a new 58-month contract, ending their 117-day strike at the Newport News Shipbuilding (NNS). Workers walked off the job, chanting "88, Close the Gate" at midnight on April 5, 1999, as the contract expired and after negotiations stalled over wage increases, workplace inequality, a successorship clause, and workers' substantially lower pensions than those at other USW-represented facilities. It was the first strike against the company in 20 years and halted nearly all production at the massive shipyard that builds nuclear aircraft carriers and submarines for the U.S. Navy.

Negotiations began in January 1999, approximately three months before the expiration of their then-current contract, which, in 1995, froze wages and surrendered two holidays and 10% of workers' vacation time to help the financially strapped company become more competitive. It locked workers into 1993 pay rates, while inflation had risen 12.3% and Virginia's average manufacturing wage had risen 17.7% over the previous six years.

Driven by its successful spinoff from Tenneco in 1996 and a strategic exit from the risky commercial shipbuilding business to focus on lucrative Navy contracts, the NNS was on much stronger financial footing by 1999, and workers demanded their fair share. They held round-the-clock picket lines throughout the sprawling facility and lobbied Congress, criticizing the U.S. Navy for reimbursing the NNS for its use of strikebreakers and security. Hundreds of steel workers traveled to the company's annual stockholder meeting in Richmond, VA, to hold informational pickets.

Further complicating negotiations was an unsolicited offer from major defense contractor General Dynamics to buy the shipbuilding company. The USW demanded a successorship clause, proposing that any new company would have to assume the union contract or bargain over a new agreement. The Pentagon ultimately opposed the February bid, ending the deal.

During the strike, the USW filed unfair labor practice (ULP) charges alleging that a May "final" offer was illegal because the parties were not at a legal impasse, the NNS unlawfully threatened members in an attempt to implement portions of its final offer, and it attempted to bribe members to abandon their bargaining positions. The USW president also filed a complaint with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration over nuclear safety hazards.

In May, federal mediators stepped in to help resume direct negotiations. Beginning July 7, after a series of separate meetings with the mediators, the parties held round-the-clock negotiations until July 23, when they reached a tentative agreement, which members ratified on July 30, ending the strike. The new agreement secured significant wage and pension increases, guaranteed promotions, new health care provisions, a successorship clause, and restrictions on subcontracting bargaining-unit work.

Los Angeles Labor History: Convention Special

Los Angeles Unified School District Teachers' Strike

In January 2019, more than 30,000 educators from the Los Angeles Unified School District, represented by United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA), began a historic walkout lasting from Jan. 14 to Jan. 22. The work stoppage protested low pay, large class sizes, staffing shortages, and the proliferation of charter schools. It was the first teachers' strike in the district in 30 years. Following six days of crowded rallies, the union and the school district reached an agreement on Jan. 22, 2019, ending the strike. The contract included salary increases, full-time librarians for middle and high schools, a commitment to provide full-time nurses for every school, and the establishment of 30 public community schools.

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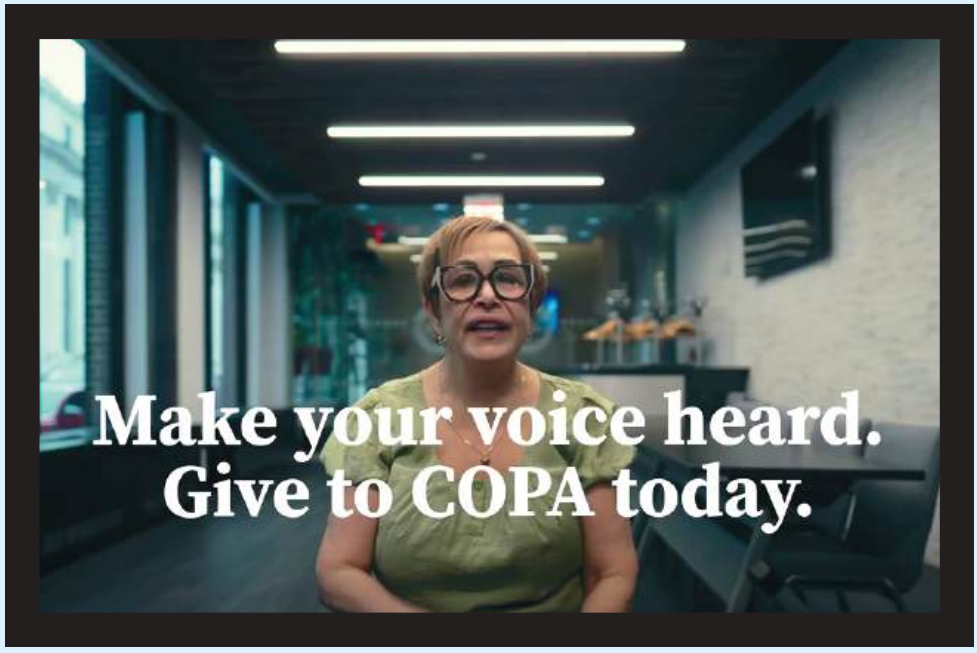

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