

## Contract Negotiations Begin

### *APWU Negotiating Team Delivers Remarks on Opening Day*

On June 22, contract negotiations began with opening statements from Industrial Relations Director and chief spokesperson Vance Zimmerman, Executive Vice President Debby Szeredy, Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell, and President and lead negotiator Mark Dimondstein. Postmaster General DeJoy also delivered remarks during the opening session. Members across the country tuned into the virtual broadcast over Zoom, and ‘Geared Up’ wearing stickers, wristbands and union shirts on the work room floor.

In his remarks, Industrial Relations Director Zimmerman emphasized the sacrifices APWU members made on the front lines of a global pandemic. He stressed that the APWU’s priority is delivering a good contract that rewards this hard work. “The people we represent were declared ‘essential employees’ during the COVID-19 pandemic,” Industrial Relations Director Zimmerman said. “Through it all, employees moved the mail, brought vital goods including medicine, paychecks, Social Security payments, birthday gifts, cards, letters, and even the stimulus payments to the American people.”



*Philadelphia BMC Local Sticking with the Union!*

“We want to see the employees we represent rewarded for their hard work, dedication and sacrifices to their home, health, and their families,” Industrial Relations Director Zimmerman continued.

Vice President Szeredy then introduced the union’s core bargaining committee. In addition to the President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer and Indus-



*Bakersfield Area Local (CA) members ‘Stickered Up’ for APWU – Our Union, Our Contract, Our Future*



*President Dimondstein delivers remarks during Opening Day on June 22*

trial Relations Director, the core committee includes Clerk Craft Director Lamont Brooks, Maintenance Craft Director Idowu Balogun, MVS Craft Director Michael Foster and Support Services Director Steve Brooks. Secretary-Treasurer Powell read statements from AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, NAACP President and CEO Derrick Johnson, and actor and activist Danny Glover.

President Dimondstein then delivered his Opening Day remarks, outlining the APWU’s goals in negotiations and reinforcing the negotiating team’s commitment to *APWU – Our Contract, Our Union, Our Future*.

“As postal workers pour our lifeblood into the institution and its mission, we should be justly compensated for our hard work and enjoy an ever-improving standard of living,” President Dimondstein said. “We should be provided a safe workplace, free from hostile work environments and sexual harassment, and after concluding our careers, enjoy a secure and dignified retirement.”

“The key to the Postal Service’s bright future is the hard work and dedication of hundreds of thousands of postal workers – from those who sell postage and accept packages, to those who sort medicine and catalogues, to those who transport the mail and repair the vehicles, to those who maintain the equipment and facilities, to those who deliver the mail,” President Dimondstein continued.



*‘Stickered up’ in Tulsa, OK!*

President Dimondstein’s full remarks are available to read on [apwu.org](http://apwu.org).

# Union Secures Third Historic Staffing Agreement

On June 21, the American Postal Workers Union and postal management signed a major new agreement to address longstanding understaffing issues in mail processing functions at the Postal Service.

Under the terms of the new agreement the Function 1 mail processing staffing will be increased with 3,741 new career positions. The agreement also establishes the additional conversion of at least 3,641 PSEs to career. In total the agreement will result in 7,400 PSE conversions. These conversions will take place no later than August 14, 2021 and will be applied to 245 installations throughout the country as determined by management.

As part of this agreement, and in an effort to improve service provided to the public during the holidays, the APWU has agreed to extend by two pay periods (four weeks) the 2021 “Holiday Peak Season” in Function 1.

“This agreement is another milestone in our priorities of securing career positions for postal workers and providing top-class service to the public,” said President Mark Dimondstein. “We’ve been relentless in urging management to address staffing issues. This agreement is another big step in the right direction and will undoubtedly better the lives of thousands of PSEs and help us better serve the people of the country.”

This new agreement is the third in a series that increased total clerk craft career staffing by approximately 10,000 jobs, and created the conversion of 14,000 PSEs to career.

The union remains committed to addressing similar ongoing staffing issues in Function 4 (retail) and will continue to press management to address the problems of understaffing.

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## Supporters at Virtual Rally Join the Fight for APWU – Our Contract, Our Union, Our Future



*Nation’s Capital Southern Maryland Area Local members at a watch party for the Virtual Kickoff Rally on June 21*

On June 21, APWU members, allies, and postal supporters from around the country tuned in to a Virtual Kickoff Rally ahead of the Opening Day of negotiations for a new USPS/APWU contract. The rally, emceed by Secretary-Treasurer Elizabeth “Liz” Powell, built momentum and solidarity heading into negotiations.

The event featured 24 speakers, including APWU national officers, other labor and civil rights leaders, supporters and allies. The virtual rally reached thousands of viewers across the APWU’s digital channels.

President Dimondstein capped off the evening by reminding viewers the importance of unity and solidarity. “Management has to listen to us because we

have power and leverage starting with the members of our union,” he said. “Building our solidarity starting with each other on the workroom floor, no matter what craft we’re in, no matter what our category is, whether we’re non-career, whether we’re career, whether we’re part-time flexible PSE or full-time regular, we have to be unified.”

“Solidarity is not a one-way street, it’s a two and three and four-way street. And I’m proud that the APWU has a history of solidarity,” President Dimondstein continued. “So, brothers and sisters, as we enter collective bargaining, it’s important to realize that we’re not alone.”

APWU members can watch the full rally on [apwu.org](http://apwu.org) or on [youtube.com/apwucommunications](https://www.youtube.com/apwucommunications).