

➤ Postal Union Alliance Fights to Stop Closings Consolidations

In March of this year, the NPMHU joined with the American Postal Workers Union (APWU), the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC), and the National Rural Letter Carriers Association (NRLCA) to form the Postal Union Alliance. The Alliance was created as the four largest postal unions made a commitment to unite together and fight the unprecedented issues facing postal employees today. That commitment includes an effort to protect all postal jobs and all postal-related services, whether a proposed action affects all crafts or only one.

Some of the important issues that the Alliance is currently working on together include: the preservation of six-day and door-to-door delivery, the fight to stop the closings and/or consolidations of mail processing facilities now planned for 2015, and the ongoing efforts to limit, if not eliminate, any further privatization of postal services. A National-level work group has been established which meets regularly to develop strategies on ways to

address these issues. The members of this work group include Debby Szeredy, Executive Vice President of the APWU; Brian Renfroe, Director of City Delivery for the NALC; David Heather, Director of Steward Operations for the NRCLA; and Teresa Harmon, Contract Administration Representative for the NPMHU.

On June 30, 2014, the Postal Service announced that Phase II of its Network Consolidation activities, which previously had been placed on hold in January 2014, would resume in January 2015. The notification provided to the postal unions included a list of 82 facilities that would be impacted. Since that time, the work group has been focusing on ways to fight these consolidations/closings.

Over the summer, during the fourth week of August, the APWU led a joint webinar for coalition organizers at the 82 sites that are scheduled for consolidation or closure. This was the first time in several decades that the four unions

officials. The local coalitions are being formed not only with other unions, but also with community organizations whose purpose is to inform, educate and generate public support. Many of the impacted facilities at the time of the webinar had established their coalitions and had actively been working throughout their communities.

The hard work of the local coalitions is paying off, as 51 Senators and more than 160 Members of the House of Representatives have sent a letter to the leaders of their respective appropriation committees calling for a one-year moratorium on the USPS plans for the closure and consolidation of mail processing plants. The legislative departments of all four postal unions are working together to increase support for this moratorium.

Also at the National level, the work group is looking into the possibility of having economic studies performed for certain areas where facilities are being closed or consolidated. Being considered as the initial locations for these studies are New Orleans, LA; Tucson, AZ; South Dakota Central, SD; Youngstown, OH; and Mid-Hudson, NY. In addition, a webinar is being planned for September 23, 2014 for the organizers at these five facilities, to assist them in mobilizing their coalitions and their community supporters.

There also are ongoing discussions at the National level with the goal of coordinating grievances and possible legal actions that will seek to terminate, restrict, or delay some or all of the planned closings or consolidations. The exact contours of these efforts are still in the early planning stages, but additional information will be mailed to the Local Unions and posted at www.npmhu.org as it becomes available.

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(l-r) Teresa Harmon NPMHU National CAD representative, David Heather, Director of Steward Operations, NRLCA, Jeremy Goldberg, National Field Director, NALC, Brian Renfroe, Director of City Delivery, NALC, James Yates, Assistant to the President for Contract Administration, NALC and Debby Szeredy, Executive Vice President of the APWU.