



Ernie Grijalva
Local 302 President



Felandria A. Jackson
Local 305 President



Glenn Berrien
Local 307 President

inspiring address after the nominations were over. A longtime ally of the Union and champion of worker's rights, Rep. Davis spoke about the importance of organized labor and raising the minimum wage. "Anyone working in [fast food or in] barbeque pits definitely needs to make \$15.00 an hour. They need to make \$15.00 a minute."

Davis also talked about the large strides made by women and minorities, and how crucial diversity is to progress, and that it is imperative for the Union to keep fighting its fight in the face of its critics, as progress is never certain.

"You are a society of united mail handlers. You are a society of brothers and sisters who have come together. There are those who are trying to take that away from you," he said. "We have to make use of what we have, which is the power to decide, the power to vote."

Following Davis' address was a short video on collective bargaining and the Report of the National Officers. The actual written report is

reproduced in full later in this magazine. In short summary, however, President Hogrogian and Secretary-Treasurer Gardner pointed out repeatedly that "the state of the Mail Handlers Union is excellent."

As they report, the National Union continues to prevail in national and regional arbitrations, to make progress in national bargaining, and to support important legislative action on Capitol Hill. On a more internal level, the National Union is operating smoothly and efficiently, and for the first time in years seeing the potential for growth in revenue. Additionally, the NPMHU is more connected than ever before with its sister postal unions, with LIUNA, and with the AFL-CIO and the rest of the labor movement.

President Hogrogian tied this back to the Convention's theme. "That's what makes this Union great – the Power of You, all of You. The members also need a strong union, so we need each other. Thanks to you, thanks to all of you, we're going to accomplish great things."

After a lunch break, delegates welcomed to the stage Montana Senator Jon Tester. A huge postal advocate, Tester talked about all he had done with the NPMHU in mind. "When it comes to the Postal Service, it's pretty simple. I want what you want," Tester said. His home state of Montana is especially reliant on the Postal Service, as its rural, mountainous terrain is often bypassed by the private sector. "This is a good government issue, a constitutional responsibility," he said to an enthused crowd. "I'm

willing to partner with anyone who's willing to roll up their sleeves and get to work."

Another leader addressing the delegates was Illinois Representative Tammy Duckworth. A veteran and staunch labor advocate, Duckworth is currently in a race for the U.S. Senate from Illinois. She asked the delegates for their support, and left them with some inspiring words. "I wouldn't be there today if it wasn't for the hard work of labor all over this nation for decades," she said. "I stand shoulder to shoulder with labor, you can count on me. We have a nation to protect, we have a citizenry to serve. No one knows how better to serve than our veterans and our Mail Handlers."

The Union also arranged video messages from important leaders and allies who could not attend the Convention in person. Among those were AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka and Congressman Gerald Connolly of Virginia. Both sang the praises of the Postal Service, and discussed the importance of postal reform legislation and Union solidarity.

Last on the docket for Tuesday was an informative presentation from Aetna representative Brad Corban. Corban and his counterparts at Aetna administer and underwrite the Mail Handlers Benefit Plan (MHBP) – the health plan available to all Union members and their families, as well as other federal and postal employees. He reported that all three plans – the value, consumer, and standard – are in good shape. In fact, the health plan has seen modest growth for the first time in years. Much of this is thanks to the advocacy and marketing efforts of the Local Unions.

Wednesday, August 24

Delegates began the third day of the Convention by casting votes in the Primary Election for Officers, as the seats for Central and Western Region Vice President necessitated a secret ballot vote. While the Election Committee processed the hundreds of votes cast before 2:00 p.m., delegates convened in the Imperial Ballroom for yet another day of proceedings.

The day began with an invocation from Tom Staniec, a delegate from Local 318 and a native of Chicago. He was followed by another special guest



Aetna Director of National Accounts, Brad Corban reports on the Mail Handler Benefits Plan MHBP®



National President Paul Hogrogian and National Secretary-Treasurer Mark Gardner present Rep. Tammy Duckworth with NPMHU Convention keepsake box after keynote speech