

Pre-conference Workshops

Wednesday, July 19

(A) Where do I Begin?

So you've been named editor of your union's publication. Now what? Come find out in this session that is primarily for individuals new to editing a union publication and for local or state organizations interested in establishing or reestablishing a publication for their members. Included will be an overview of the reasons an organization needs to communicate and the ABC's of how to get started. With an extensive record of involvement in labor communications, the workshop leaders will share their experiences with participants.

(B) Building a 21st-Century Labor Movement through Social Justice Unionism

When daunting forces are arrayed against us, how can we build the power we need to shape a brighter future for workers? Along with many allies, postal workers are seeking and finding innovative new ways to build power and defend essential public services during challenging times. This workshop developed exclusively for APWU members asks what values, strategies, alliances, and tactics are enabling workers to beat the odds in campaigns to reshape their jobs, unions, and communities – while standing up for the public good. We'll look at both historic and recent case studies of contract and issue campaign victories to extract key lessons we can put to work in our own local communications and organizing.

(C) Legal Issues: Who Pays for What I Say?

Who does a union publication belong to? Do libel and copyright laws affect your freedom of speech and freedom of the press? What are the benefits of establishing an editorial policy? How do union election laws apply to union publications and websites? *Legal Issues: Who Pays for What I Say?* will address these questions and others with a presentation on the issues of editorial policies, responsible journalism, libel, copyright and union elections.

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Thursday, July 20 – Saturday, July 2

(D) Communications for Member Involvement and Union Building

In today's multi-media environment, union editors have the opportunity to make their publications the centerpiece of a strategic communications system that builds a stronger union. This highly interactive workshop will walk through the steps of assessing your local's communications needs and capacity, analyzing what messages and media best motivate members, considering pros and cons of print, electronic, and face-to-face formats, developing a distribution/communications network that reaches all members, and integrating the newsletter into an overall communications plan.

(E) Using Social Media as a Communications Tool

This session will teach you the do's and don'ts of social media for union communication. Discussed will be developing an overall strategy and why social media should be a part of your plan. Also covered, the best practices when using Facebook and Twitter, and how to integrate social media content with printed newsletters and other communication resources. No experience required, only a desire to learn about how to connect with your online members. Bringing your computer to this workshop is encouraged!

(F) Newsletter Production: Giving Your Paper a Makeover

The emphasis of this workshop will be to examine and evaluate overall design of your publication from nameplate to mailing block and everything in between. This unique design seminar will stimulate your creative skills and help you reinvent (or invent) a publication that your members notice. Through a publication review you'll be able to see and discuss successful new designs for various types of publications. **(Note: Participants should bring a copy of their publication to this workshop.)**

(G) Influencing Public Support: Developing a Strategy for Getting Your Message Out

Public support can help an organization achieve its objectives. *Influencing Public Support: Developing a Strategy for Getting Your Message Out* will help you build a positive public image for your local or state union by looking at: how to publicize your union's contributions to the community; ideas for regularly making the union visible to the public and why seeking media coverage only to publicize the union's problems could be disastrous. Also discussed will be the preparation of press releases, developing media contacts, interviews, and other tactics to use for establishing and maintaining a positive and progressive public image.

(H) Writing and Editing for the Union Communicator; a.k.a. How to write more gooder

Give your readers news they can use, features about people they know and stories on issues they care about. This valuable hands-on workshop will examine why we include local news and features in our communications and how they build credibility, readership, and member engagement. Through a host of exercises you will learn how to write timely, relevant news stories, eye-catching headlines, and high-interest features that help members connect their experiences to union priorities. This workshop is a must for anyone that communicates with the membership through the written word. **(Note: The length of this workshop requires using two workshop choices. Therefore only make three workshop selections on the registration form if attending this workshop.)**

(I) Upgrading Your Website Presence

An engaging website is an essential building block of an effective on-line presence. Internet searches for your organization from potential members, news reporters, elected officials and others will lead straight to your website which can leave strong and lasting first impressions. So what messages do our websites send? Why do so many sites fall into disrepair, showing outdated information or broken links? How can we maximize the effectiveness of the sites we maintain and use them as tools to build our organizations and communicate our mission? In this fast-paced interactive workshop we will examine best practices for developing and maintaining union websites, discuss the nuts and bolts of developing the best site for your needs, and consider ways to use other on-line and print media to drive traffic to your site.

(J) Public Speaking: Becoming an Effective Spokesperson

To win at the media game there are two principles you need to master. You must develop a focused message and you must deliver your message in a believable way. This principle, along with others will be examined at this workshop, including tactics for getting our message across, regardless of the questions asked or whether the interview is on television, radio, or in print. Part of this hands-on workshop will include a role playing exercise whereby some of the participants are videotaped in an actual interview situation and critiqued on their presentation.