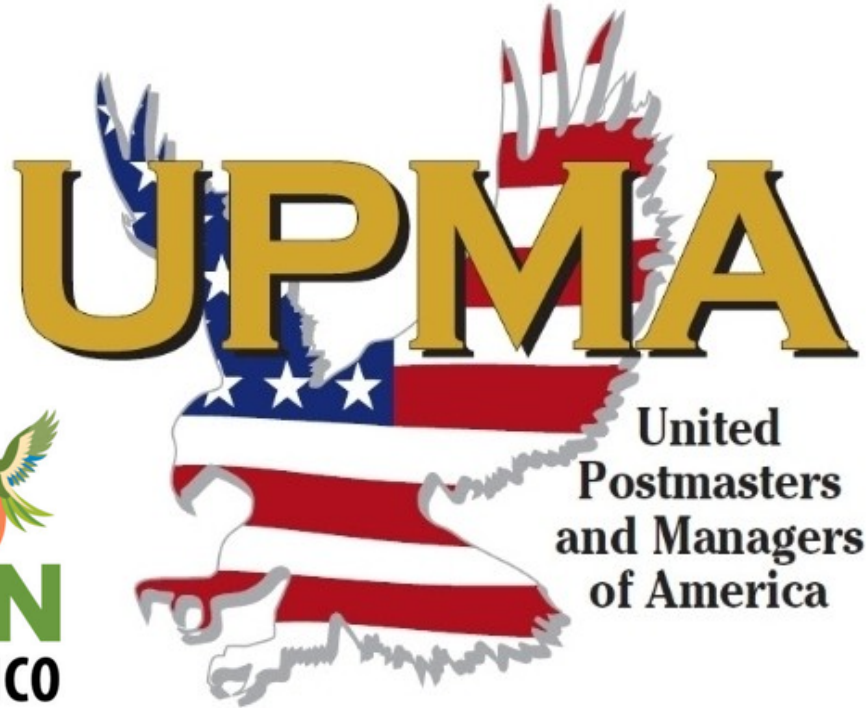


The Massachusetts
BayStater

UPMA 10TH ANNUAL
**NATIONAL
CONVENTION**
AUGUST 1-7, 2026 • PUERTO RICO



September 2026

Greetings Fellow Postmasters, Managers, and Supervisors,

They say time flies when you are having fun. If that is true, then I must be having the most fun a person can have! It is hard to believe, I am already into my fourth year as President of our great chapter here in Massachusetts, and I can't say enough how proud I am to have been in this role for all this time. In this issue, you will see many articles and photos recapping our unbelievable National Convention in Puerto Rico. All I will say is if you didn't make it, then you missed out on one of the best weeks I've seen in my 22 years as a member of UPMA. UPMA now stands at over 40,000 members strong, the largest management organization representing EAS and associate members. I hope you enjoy the photos and stories of our experience.

With that said, are you taking advantage of all the opportunities UPMA is offering right now? Whether you are a new EAS employee, acting in an EAS role, or have been one for many years, there are many options to help you further your career. UPMA is offering a KSA/Interview skills program. This program pairs you with highly experienced UPMA members that can review and critique your KSA's, do mock interviews, etc. Hundreds of members have already taken advantage of this program. If you are seeking extra help to assist you with moving up the ladder, check out the Career Development tab on the national website (Unitedpma.org), or download the mobile app to your phone.

While UPMA is now the largest management organization, there are still a lot of opportunities for EAS employees here in Massachusetts to become members. We have many in the processing plants as well as many new EAS that may not have seen or been given the opportunity to join. If you see a new EAS or one that may benefit from becoming a member, don't hesitate to reach out to them and encourage them to become a member. It is still free for all EAS for their first year of membership.

Craft employees are also eligible to sign up and take advantage of the career development tools for \$3.00 a PP. For signing them up, you will receive a check for \$100.00 for each new EAS and \$50.00 for each associate member.

One of the greatest benefits of being a UPMA member is representation. We have a team led by Sylvain Labelle of qualified Chapter Member Reps. Should you find yourself in need, Sylvain and his team are only a call away. My hope is that you will never need this service but know that it is available and we are ready to help in any way we can. I compare this to having insurance on my home or vehicle. Hopefully I don't find myself in a situation where I need it, but thankful for it in case the unthinkable happens.

Lastly, a reminder is that all members should reach out to their local RVP if you are faced with a difficult situation. While we cannot get involved with the daily operations, we can assist with larger scale issues. Send your concerns to your RVP listed on the back page, or directly to any E-Board member. We compile the information and bring it to senior management for possible solutions. We work in a chaotic environment where things spiral out of control through little fault of our own. Use your membership or network to work on finding solutions to your problems. That is what we are here for!

I hope everyone has enjoyed their summer and had some time to spend with family and friends. By the time you receive this, fall will be upon us. Time passes by faster than we'd like it to. Don't let it go by so fast; you forget to take time for yourselves. Take time to enjoy the things that make you happy.

Regards,
President Rob



Great time at the National Convention in Puerto Rico

By the time you read this article the National Convention has gone by. I do encourage everyone to attend one of these in the future. This is a great opportunity to network and meet new people. There were members who work at HQ, POOMs, Managers, Chapter Member Representatives and fellow EAS in attendance. Retirees are also a great asset to meet. I have been attending these events for the last 5 years and know people from every state on the east coast and have started to branch out around the country. These events have great training sessions about retirement, labor, power Bi, etc and also some free time for some sightseeing. I was able to tour Old San Juan and take a tour of the oldest Rum distillery in Puerto Rico. The next National Convention will be in Salt Lake City, Utah, the last week of July 2027. You can visit the National UPMA website www.unitedpma.org for more information. While you are on the National UPMA website, you can look at the career development section if you need KSA and interview preparation assistance.



Sylvain Lebel
Interim EVP

Greetings MA UPMA Members

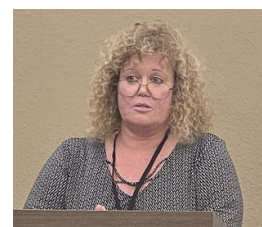
I hope everyone is having a fantastic summer so far. Remember that no matter how busy life may get be sure enjoy the weather and make memories with friends and family. Summer months go too quickly. I am just returning from our 10th National UPMA Convention which was held in beautiful Puerto Rico. This is my 3rd time at a national convention, and it is a true highlight of the year. There were 1078 in attendance, which was made up of 407 active members, 302 retirees and 369 guests. The MA Chapter had 12 active members, 9 retirees and 6 guests registered.

We got to hear from our 76th Postmaster General David Steiner who I find is a very charismatic speaker. He did let us know that after Peak, if Congress still is unwilling to help the Post Office, he will have to present a plan to reduce the days of service and closing stations. This is something he doesn't want to do. He believes everyone should be working together to make a better workplace and that there should be a culture of mutual respect.

We also heard from numerous other speakers, received valuable training on a variety of topics and got a chance to network with our peers. Networking can be invaluable, as there is always a time when we may need to reach out to someone if we are unsure of how to complete something. It was so nice to reconnect with friends that you may only see in person at events like these. If you have been thinking about attending and want some more information, please don't hesitate to reach out to me. Next year the convention is in Salt Lake City and in 2028 Traverse Michigan.

Respectfully,

Kim Donahue
Secretary Treasurer



HEAR YE! HEAR YE! HEAR YE!
2027 MASSCHUSETTS STATE CONVENTION ANNOUNCEMENT

BIG NEWS: The 2027 MA state convention has been scheduled

WHEN: Friday, May 7 & Saturday, May 8, 2027

PLACE: Red Jacket Beach Resort
1 South Shore Dr
So Yarmouth MA

INFO: Registration and hotel information will be available in the next issue of The Baystater.



RETIREEES' CORNER

WHAT: FALL RETIREE MEETING

WHEN: OCTOBER 15, 2026 AT 11:30 AM

PLACE: THE POST OFFICE PUB, 1 RAY ST, NORTH GRAFTON

INFO: WATCH YOUR MAIL FOR THE REGISTRATION FORM

Donna Legro
Retiree President



We are home from the 10th National Convention which was held in beautiful Puerto Rico. Instead of writing about all that was offered there, I will say I agree with everyone's opinion expressed throughout this issue of The Baystater. MA had 12 actives, 9 retirees and 6 guests registered. MA also had 5 first timers, some active and some retired members.

National Retiree Elections for 2027-2028: Linda Gurka from Michigan was elected National Retired Secretary and Shelly Hays of Missouri was elected National Retired Treasurer.

The retirees voted to adopt the proposed amendment to the UPMA Retired National Bylaws Article 1, Section 1(e) which reduces the number of Legislative committee members from 4 to 3. The rationale was that 3 members are sufficient to keep retired membership informed of legislation affecting them.

Dues reminder: Bylaw changes passed in 2025 that affect the retirees' dues.

January 1, 2026, \$7.00 per month (\$84 per year)

January 1, 2027, \$8.60 per month (\$103 per year)

January 1, 2028, \$10.00 per month (\$120 per year)

January 1, 2029, dues increase will revert to the past practice of aligning with the COLA increase.

Postmaster Relief and Associate Member dues will be set at \$3.00 per pay period and shall not be subject to any COLA adjustments.

Rationale: These changes were made to more closely align the dues of the members of UPMA Retired with the cost of operations of the UPMA national organization.

Future national conventions:

2027 – July 24-30, Salt Lake City, Utah

2028 – July 30-August 5, Traverse City, Michigan. TAKE NOTE: This convention will run from Sunday-Saturday, which is a change from the usual Saturday-Friday.

Candidates for elections to be held in 2027 emerged during the national convention:

Rosa Gonzales is running for National Retired President for 2028-2029

4 Anita Pfiefer is running for National Retired Vice President for 2028-2029

A Blast from the Past

For those of you who may not know me, my name is Bernie Duggan, Retired Postmaster from Lowell MA. Additionally, I was the MA State President of NAPUS, now UPMA.

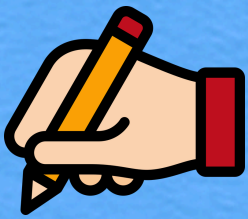


During my career I was very active in our organization and really enjoyed State Conventions, Legislative Summits, and National Conventions. The best part of being involved was the friendships I made along the way. I've been retired 20 plus years and attend State and National Conventions when I can. This year I did both!

My recent trip to Puerto Rico was especially enjoyable. I was able to spend time with friends from my days working as well as meeting today's Postmasters from Massachusetts who are the backbone of this organization. Additionally, I met new friends either at the social gatherings, the golf tournament or simply just hanging around. It truly was a wonderful experience.

I did attend general sessions as well as retirees' meetings. They were both interesting and informative. But what I heard from those still working and the speakers made me happy to be retired. Your jobs are not easy!

If I can leave you with one message – get involved with UPMA. Attend your chapter meetings. Try to attend the state and/or national conventions. They are worth it for networking if nothing else. Try attending the legislative summits if possible because it's such a great learning experience.



Keith Miller
Editor



Well, we made it through another prime time! I know it has been challenging for many offices that have been short-staffed, but we made it through. Now, we must turn our attention to peak season, with the holiday season right around the corner and a whole new set of challenges ahead.

Hopefully, this year will be better than last year—and, hopefully, there will be a lot less snow!

I truly appreciate all the great articles I received from our members this year. I know I couldn't use everyone's article, but I'm so glad I had the opportunity to see and read so many different perspectives and stories from our members.

Remember, this is your magazine! I enjoy putting it together, and I especially enjoy reading everyone's articles. But if I don't receive any articles, all I can send out are blank pages!

So, if you ever have something you'd like to share, please send it in. I would love to read it and, hopefully, include it in your magazine. Your stories, ideas, experiences, and thoughts are what make this publication special.

I would like to thank everyone that has sent me photos of the Puerto Rico trip. Photos used in this issue are from Nathalie Labelle, Thomas Driscoll, Cathleen Forster, Lorna Edie, Jean Burchill, and Martha Casey.

Having just returned from the UPMA 10th annual National Convention in Puerto Rico, it will take about four pages to talk about this trip. For those of you that didn't make it, you missed out. Over 1000 postmasters and managers gathered for this event, and I confess, you hardly saw all the guests. This place is just gigantic.

This resort has 18 restaurants, several outdoor pools, a water park, golf course, and on top of that, a private island with breathtaking views and great beaches. This will mark the first time that I have not ventured outside the resort area. There were simply so many things you could do in one place.

Instead of talking about the convention, I would like to talk about the UPMA Auxiliary Chapter. I was elected to the position of Executive Vice President for the chapter this year. One of my core functions of the job is to recruit members to join us.

Many of you probably never heard of the Auxiliary Chapter of UPMA, some of you may have knowledge about the chapter but aren't sure how the chapter works. Please allow me to explain our mission.

The National Auxiliary to UPMA was established with the common goal to help the postmasters, managers and supervisors. The Auxiliary supports, promotes, and protects their concerns, while providing their spouse, partner, family and/or friends, with an organization of friendship and fellowship.

To quote our Treasurer Shayne Francis, "being part of the Auxiliary can be a great way to get families involved in UPMA and the National and local chapters. We generally plan and organize a room with snacks, and at the National Conventions, we offer a way for families to share the experience. We have social outings for family members, and while UPMA members are in their meetings, we offer fellowships and fun."

At this year's national convention, I was honored to announce two scholarship winners. Two young ladies from different states were selected by our scholarship committee. Each of them will receive a \$1,000 scholarship from the Susan Hui Memorial Scholarship. They are Richmond-May Herring from Kentucky, and Samantha Kouba from New York.

I would be remiss not to congratulate Michelle Minot who was elected to the position of Vice President of the Auxiliary Chapter of UPMA. Michelle is from the great state of New Hampshire. She has been very active in our chapter for the past couple of years, provided numerous great ideas and, not surprising, her son Emmet belongs to our group B.R.A.T.S., which stands for bringing real attributes to society. Michelle's husband, Mike serves on the NH UPMA Chapter Executive Board.

I am attaching the UPMA Auxiliary Membership form. The fee for a primary member is a measly \$10.00 a year, and each additional family member is \$5.00 a year for all the benefits and chances to win a scholarship. Come join us. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 978-549-3360, or richmeista67@gmail.com

Respectfully,

Richard Hui
National Member Representative, UPMA
National Auxiliary Chapter UPMA Executive Vice President.



UPMA Auxiliary Membership

Please complete the Auxiliary membership application below. Be sure to include the complete mailing address. This will be sent to the Primary Auxiliary member. Membership dues are \$ 10.00 for the primary member and \$ 5.00 for each additional family member. **Return the completed form and payment to:**

UPMA Auxiliary PO BOX 64 Lumber Bridge, NC 28357. Thank You

Primary Auxiliary Member		valid through 2026-2027
NAME _____ (Last Name) (First)		Renewal ☐ New Member ☐
EMAIL ADDRESS: _____		
MAILING ADDRESS _____ (Street/PO Box/Apt. #) (City & State) (Zip +4)		
Phone () _____ Local Chapter Member Yes No State _____		
___ Family Member ___ Retired Postmaster ___ Postmaster, Manager or Supervisor ___ BRATS age 6-21 ___ Affiliate Member		

Additional members:

Name	Auxiliary or BRAT	City/State

Send Money with Zelle®
Scan in your banking app to pay



Amount paid _____ Zelle _____ Cash _____ Check _____

We survived the summer! I hope everyone has had a chance to enjoy the beautiful Cape Cod summer during one of the busiest seasons we have experienced.

We are very excited to announce several new Postmaster appointments. Please join us in welcoming Amana Parker, Postmaster of West Dennis; Michael Imbeau, Postmaster of South Yarmouth; Bob O'Connor, Postmaster of Buzzards Bay; and Matt Niederberger, Postmaster of Nantucket to the Postmasters of Cape Cod and Islands family. We look forward to formally recognizing these outstanding achievements at our next chapter dinner meeting on September 24, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Dino's Sports Bar and Restaurant.

Thank you as well for your support of our 65-mile fundraising bike ride in July from Philadelphia to Atlantic City. Our team proudly wore postal jerseys and raised more than \$4,000 for the Families Behind the Badge Children's Foundation, which provides critical support to the families of fallen or critically injured first responders throughout the Greater Philadelphia and South Jersey region. In short, it was a busy and successful summer. We are grateful for our chapter community's generosity and proud to celebrate our new Postmasters' accomplishments.

Jack Tompkins
RVP 025-026



Office Transfer Make Sure You Do it Right

As a person who is new to doing office transfers let me share some advice:

1. Do NOT accept stamp stock/unit reserve without counting it yourself. If you accept stamp stock/unit reserve and it is not accurate, you are now accepting the debt. You will be held responsible for paying the debt off. A few missing rolls of stamps or a couple of books might not seem like much, but it does add up quickly! There is a way to initiate a letter of demand in the process of transferring the stock/office to the person that is releasing the office.
2. Please make sure you do the checklist that are sent to you before the office transfer. This allows for a smooth and quicker office transfer.
3. Please reach out to the people who are trained to do office transfers if you have questions! Monique O'Malley, Sylvain Labelle, Rebecca Lemerise, Devashree Shah, Amanda Kicza, Robin Driscoll, Michael Raymond, and Melanie Smith. If you are not sure who does office transfers in your area, please feel free to reach out to me and I can give you that information or answer any questions you might have.

If you follow these 3 simple suggestions, your office transfer will go smoothly.

Monique Omalley
RVP 013-016



Hello fellow Postmasters and Managers,

After spending years in the Postal Service, I've definitely had my share of frustrating days. Staffing issues, customer complaints, deadlines, policies, reports—you name it. There are days when you leave work exhausted and wonder why you do it. But then there are the moments that remind you why you stayed.

For me, it's the people and the sense of community. It's seeing a customer you've known for years walk through the door, helping an employee through a difficult situation, or watching your office come together when things get crazy. The Postal Service isn't always easy, but it has given me some great experiences, friendships, and memories along the way.

I also think there's something special about the role our offices play in our communities. We see people on some of their best days and sometimes on their worst. We celebrate with them, listen to them, and occasionally become the person they stop in to talk to even when they don't need anything to be mailed. Those little interactions can be easy to overlook when we're busy, but they are a big part of what makes this job meaningful.

So, when the days get long and the challenges seem never-ending, I try to remind myself to look at the bigger picture. There will always be difficult days, that's part of the job—but there are also plenty of good ones. I'm proud to be a Postmaster, proud to be part of this organization, and grateful for the people I've met along the way.

Until next time. Keep doing what you do, keep supporting one another, and hopefully find a few reasons to smile along the way!

Best regards,
Giana Stachulski
RVP 017-019



FREE KSA Assistance to all UPMA Members!



Visit the Career Development section on unitedpma.org for the training video and guidelines. Use the KSA Assistance portal, and your Area Team Lead will assign an Assistant to meet your needs.



JOIN NOW
to take advantage
of this amazing
opportunity

For information regarding online meetings for your members, email:
Earl Husbands at ehusbands@unitedpma.org
or Debra Alums at debraalums53@gmail.com

**KSA Team Leads are
Available to Conduct
ZOOM meetings**

- State Conventions
- Plant Days
- 3-Digit Meetings
- Area Conference

MEMBERS' EXPERIENCES NATIONAL CONVENTION

Editor's Note: I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone that submitted articles and pictures from the 10th UPMA National Convention in Puerto Rico. Due to the volume of articles and pictures, I had to make the decision to take excerpts from some articles in order to fit as much as possible in this issue of The Baystater. Below are the excerpts in alphabetical order.

CONSENSUS:

The El Conquistador Resort was beautiful, stunning, breathtaking, pristine, amazing, massive, and had it all. There were large meeting rooms, several pools, hot tubs, a water park for families, pickle ball, tennis and golf right on the premises. There was also a private ferry to a private island.

There were many diverse restaurants, bars and quick sweet treat stops.

The live music was top notch. The entertainment was fantastic.

Sightseeing adventures included Old San Juan, Walkway of the Presidents, Fort Castillo San Felipe del Morro, Catedral of Basilica Menor de San Juan Bautista, El Yunge National Rainforest, Casa Bicardi Distillery, Ron del Barrilito Rum Distillery, and Museums.

Hats off to Puerto Rico! What a blast! Great applause to everyone involved in the programming!

Everyone should attend the 2027 national convention in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Koren Ahern – Active, Repeat Attendant

I highly encourage you to attend at least one convention. It is a fantastic opportunity for networking. You leave with fulfilling new connections. It becomes an unforgettable memory.

Kathy Callahan – Retiree First Timer

I could never imagine the warmth and camaraderie we experienced as a group.

The patriotism experienced with our brothers and sisters throughout the entire room was very moving. The unified singing of the Star-Spangled Banner, the recognition of our veterans represented by all branches of the military and singing in unison “Proud to Be an American”. How fortunate we all were to encompass the spirit, that feeling of love for God and Country as one.

We also came away with a new love and appreciation for our UPMA family

We were greeted every morning with a “Hola” from a Parrot named Casey born in 1927.

Ryan DiEoreo – Active, Repeat Attendant

I was filled with comradery and excitement. I had some incredible conversations from folks from New Jersey, New York, Florida, Colorado, Maine, California, and of course Puerto Rico and Massachusetts! A lot of people share the same vision to fix many of the incredibly overwhelming and unique problems we face. Questions were vetted through Area Coordinators to be asked to the amazing speakers of Postmaster General, Deputy PMG, AVP's, CRDO and VP of Retail. This created a level of professionalism that I was impressed with. We all need to grow and develop ourselves. A national convention or state convention is an avenue to do that.



Tom Driscoll – Retiree First Timer, Repeat Attendant

What a blast! Great travel with such a wonderful group. So glad my buddy Joey (Torcia) was right next to me as we “retired” first timers paraded across the stage and recited our name, office and how long we have been retired. With both hands and fingers, Dr J correctly calculated exactly 10 months! I would have been lost without him. Cathy picked “Lorenzo” as her favorite horse and wanted to take him home and ditch me on the dusty trails.



Steve Gauthrie – Active First Timer

Hats off to Puerto Rico!

I witnessed the pride the Puerto Rico delegation had from the start to finish of the convention. The pageantry of colors, the local bands grand entrance, and the dancing characters brought out the pride and energy from young and old. The people of Puerto Rico revealed to the 1,000+ in attendance that they know how to have a good time.

The convention leaders showed how much planning is involved to orchestrate such a massive event from daily training sessions, nightly social events and delegate voting sessions. We witnessed that it takes a village to plan this convention. To all who volunteered their time to help with raffles for PAC, state raffles and table events, we salute you!

Martha Hodgerney - Retiree First Timer

"It feels like a Class Reunion"

I was awed by this large-scale production in Fajardo, Puerto Rico as well as the huge leaves on the trees in the El Yunque National Rainforest!

My goal was to meet other UPMA retirees and learn how this organization works on a higher level. A few of our MA UPMA retired members were first timers out of a group of almost 300. I enjoyed wearing my "Rookie" shirt again, on this 10th Anniversary. I especially enjoyed spending time with colleagues from past years and future leaders also.

The atmosphere was a reunion for many members who attend national conventions yearly. The vendor sponsors were great! Thousands of dollars were raised through raffles and donations for PAC, scholarships, future convention sites, and UPMA leadership campaigns. Money was also raised for El Comedor de la Kennedy a local food providing charity. The energy from the National Convention brings new ideas for future meetings.

Thank you MA UPMA for this opportunity to share a phenomenal experience!

Monique O'Malley – Active First Timer

What an experience it was!

I met retired postmasters from our area; I met current postmasters and supervisors from all over the United States. The knowledge and information I gained from the convention and the people I met will help me grow as a USPS employee. I encourage you to attend a convention. It will be an experience you will never forget!

Devashree Shah – Active First Timer

The absolute highlight of the trip started right at the beginning during the first-timer meeting. Walking into a national event can feel overwhelming, but attending this meeting made me feel incredibly special and welcome. Veteran leaders took the time to guide us, answer our questions and make us feel like an important part of the organization.

The best part of the convention was the chance to talk to the Postmasters from different states. Even though we live in different places, we all share the same daily challenges. I learned so much just by listening to stories and tips from managers from every corner of the nation. We have a massive support system nationwide.

I left Puerto Rico feeling energized and proud. I am returning home with useful tools, great memories and a new network of friends who are always ready to help.

Joe Torcia – Retiree First Timer, Repeat Attendant

At the retiree meetings we talked about recruiting new members, retiree dues and healthcare benefits. Many healthcare providers had vendor tables and were answering questions and providing needed information. There were many other tables set up with helpful information for retirees.

The best food was at the local restaurants that we were able to walk to. The evenings were fun filled with entertainment, such as tropical nights, Pirates of the Caribbean night, a banquet, and live bands that were amazing. Even as a retiree, it is always a great time and an amazing opportunity to attend the national convention. You get to know and connect with people from all over the country.





Editor's note: We love when 1st timers come to any event. Please let's make this even larger next year. State conventions are really a great way to meet other members of Massachusetts UPMA. See you at the Red Jacket in 2027!

2026 State Convention 1st Timer Members!!

This was my first time attending the UPMA State Convention, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity. I am excited to share my experience from this wonderful event. The convention provided an excellent opportunity to learn, connect with fellow postal leaders, and share ideas.

One of the highlights of the convention was hearing from several inspiring speakers. Their presentations provided valuable insights into leadership, communication and the importance of mental health care in today's workplace. I found their message both informative and motivating and they reinforced the importance of supporting one another in our professional and personal lives.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone who supported my candidacy for the UPMA Secretary/Treasurer position. While the election did not turn out as I had hoped, I am truly honored by the confidence and trust shown by those who voted for me. Your encouragement and support meant a great deal to me. The experience strengthened my commitment to UPMA and I look forward to continuing to serve and support our organization in any way I can. Overall, the convention was a rewarding and memorable experience.

Devashree Shah
Postmaster North Brookfield



Attending my first UPMA Convention! This was a great experience for my career. I was able to see the structure of UPMA and how business is handled. It was great to see the honor and pride my fellow peers and retirees have in the USPS. The manor in which the convention was held was very professional and organized. Everything from the registration process up to the final morning conclusion. This was a great networking experience as well, getting to put a face to a name that you read in emails. Sitting in and voting on national and state bylaws and learning what each bylaw does and means was a great experience as well. This year's convention location at Great Wolf Lodge was great! Many great moments with family and coworkers. I look forward to many more UPMA conventions to come. Thank you for letting me be a part of this community!

Thomas Monahan
Supervisor Customer Service
Whitinsville PO





JOHN DOUDS

FOR

UPMA National President



- PROVEN LEADERSHIP



- INDEPENDENT THINKING

- A STRONG FUTURE FOR EVERY MEMBER

A PROVEN DEDICATION TO UPMA MEMBERS

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- National Vice President— Voting Independently for the Good of All Members
- National PAC Chair — Breaking Fundraising Records!
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- Making UPMA Members My Priority

★ **I respectfully ask for your vote and the
opportunity to serve as your next
National President.** ★

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