

A Great Egret with white feathers and a long, pointed beak is perched on a cypress tree in a swampy forest. The tree is covered in Spanish moss. The background is a dense forest of similar trees.

THE PALMETTO FOCUS

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SOUTH CAROLINA

UNITED POSTMASTERS AND MANAGERS OF AMERICA

SC CHAPTER EXECUTIVE BOARD

PRESIDENT

Howard Brown
Columbia, SC, 29223
CELL: 903-397-9075
brownhj@bellsouth.net



RETIREE PRESIDENT

Edith Bradshaw
803-905-1311(Home)
803-315-4879(Cell)
B-shaw@msn.com

Effective July 1st:

David Murray
6 Sugaree Dr
Bluffton, SC29910
Cell: 843-597-0696

VICE PRESIDENTS

VP PAC / LEGISLATIVE CHAIR

SUSAN O'NEAL
1725 BOBCAT LN
WOODRUFF SC 29388
CELL: 864-316-4215
MYEVER42@YAHOO.COM

VP MEMBERSHIP CHAIR

KELLY STANCIL
PO BOX 864
WESTMINSTER SC 29693
CELL: 864-247-1960
KELLYS93@AOL.COM

VP EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT

SANDRA WILLIAMS
700 S CASHUA DR APT 16D
FLORENCE SC 29501
CELL: 843-472-1843
SANANTWILLIAMS@GMAIL.COM

BOARD OFFICERS

SECRETARY

MISSY LIVINGSTON
2314 OLD JOLLYSTREET RD
PROSPERITY SC 29127-8528
CELL: 803-924-2905
KGLIVING@YAHOO.COM

TREASURER

STEVE LENOIR
1555 BARNWELL DR
SUMTER SC 29154-8224
CELL: 803-565-4403
STEVELENOIR@AOL.COM

WEBMASTER

ROBERT EDWARDS
2829 SUGARBERRY LN
JOHNS ISLAND SC 29455
CELL: 864-982-8486
UPMASCEDITOR@GMAIL.COM

LEAD CHAPTER MEMBER REP

JEANETTE JOHNSON
9548 WILSON BLVD
BLYTHEWOOD SC 29016
CELL: 803-467-3154
CO_JOHNSON@YAHOO.COM

Effective July 1st:

MISSY LIVINGSTON
2314 OLD JOLLYSTREET RD
PROSPERITY SC 29127-8528
CELL: 803-924-2905
KGLIVING@YAHOO.COM

EDITOR

TAMMY JO POWELL
4 RALEIGH CT
SIMPSONVILLE SC 29681
CELL: 864-444-8282
PALMETTOPOSTMASTER@CHARTER.NET



CHAPTER PRESIDENT: HOWARD BROWN

Making a Legislative Difference: Your Voice Matters

As we move through 2025, laws and policies impacting our careers are evolving—and more changes are on the horizon. Legislative decisions don't just happen in a vacuum; they shape our workplaces, our roles, and our future.

That's why now is the time to stay informed, stay involved, and help drive change.

You might find yourself asking:

- Why the change?
- Why so many changes?
- Why this change now?
- Why wasn't I asked?



If any of these questions sound familiar—you're reading the right article at the right time.

We must be part of the change. Through unity, advocacy, and information, we can influence policies that affect every UPMA member.

How do we make a difference?

It starts with **a positive attitude** and a commitment to being informed. From there, it's about **showing up and speaking up**. This year, UPMA leaders from South Carolina visited Capitol Hill to advocate on key legislative issues, including:

- **Non-career employees' ability to buy back time,**
- **Preserving the vitality of the Postal Service, and**
- **Discussing concerns around potential privatization.**

We met at every South Carolina Representative and Senators office and were welcomed by their staff. We had real conversations, shared our priorities, and most importantly—**we were heard**.

Change happens through **informed conversations, collaborative relationships,** and **financial support of the UPMA PAC**, which helps amplify our voice where it matters most.

Take Action Today

- ✓ **Support the PAC Fund** – Every contribution strengthens our impact on the Hill.
- ✓ **Get Informed** – Learn about the key issues and how they affect you.
- ✓ **Join the Conversation** – Attend a legislative summit or training session.
- ✓ **Talk to Your Board** – Contact a South Carolina UPMA board member to get involved.

Let's move from *they* and *them* to **us and we**.

Because together, **we are better**.

Together, **we are louder**.

Together, **we make change happen**.

Howard Brown,
President





UPMA is proud to support career advancement in collaboration with the USPS. Therefore, we are offering **ALL UPMA MEMBERS**, regardless of their current job title, a **\$30 registration rebate** for attending the 2025 USPS Career Conferences.

Simply follow these three easy steps:

- 1** Visit the UPMA booth to receive your rebate form
- 2** Complete and mail to the UPMA National Office
- 3** Attach your registration payment receipt and a copy of the badge you received at registration

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3!

Once the UPMA National office receives your rebate form and has verified your membership, your reimbursement check will be on the way!

CHAPTER EDITOR: TAMMY JO POWELL



Empowering Careers, One Profile at a Time:

If you've ever wondered what real postal mentorship looks like in action—look no further than the National KSA Career Development Team.

Formed by the vision of National UPMA President Tony Leonardi and led with passion by Alabama's Debra Alums, this powerful team brings together current and retired postal professionals from across the nation. Their mission? To help fellow members unlock their full potential through career development, tailored coaching, and one-on-one mentorship. And South Carolina is stepping up in a big way.

As a proud team lead of this dynamic team, I've seen firsthand the transformation it inspires. Here in South Carolina, we've built a strong and dedicated team of leaders including Wanda Watts, Robert Edwards, Samantha Gregory, and Rosemarie Grapp—each of whom volunteers their time not for recognition, but for the joy of watching others succeed. I want to give them a heartfelt shout-out. This work takes heart, and these individuals bring it every day.

But the impact of this team isn't just felt in the Palmetto State—it's nationwide. One shining example comes from Ohio, where retired member Paul Joseph recently shared a powerful story that speaks to the heart of what we do.

Paul began mentoring an associate member whose eCareer profile was, frankly, quite basic. She had applied to 11 positions with no interviews to show for it. But with Paul's guidance—refining her KSA statements, suggesting online safety training to enhance her credentials, and giving her practical tips for career growth—her profile was transformed from overlooked to outstanding.

Paul encouraged her to attend a local eCareer Conference, which she hadn't considered. Inspired, she came prepared with copies of her profile for interested leaders and brought her daughter, another Postal employee, who left eager to join UPMA. Mentorship creates ripples that become waves.

This story is far from unique. Across all four regions of the KSA Team, volunteers are helping postal employees:

- Build competitive eCareer profiles
- Discover hidden strengths and skills
- Navigate the application process with clarity
- And most importantly—believe in themselves

This isn't about "tweaking a thing or two." This is about changing lives. It's about confidence, preparation, and support—all things our team delivers with heart.

With South Carolina's own **Career Conference coming up July 19**, there's never been a better time to get involved. Whether you need help navigating your next step or want to lend your time to support others, this is your moment.

Let's follow the lead of Paul, Wanda, Robert, Samantha, Rosemarie, and so many others who are lighting the way. The KSA Career Development Team is more than a program—it's a movement.

Let's do this, South Carolina. Our future is waiting.

Tammy Powell
Editor



CHAPTER SECRETARY: MISSY LIVINGSTON

A Message of Thanks and an Invitation to Engage

I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank everyone who attended the **2025 South Carolina State UPMA Convention**. This year's event, held in **Rock Hill on April 11-12**, was two full days of valuable training, meaningful fellowship, and strong connections. Your participation and enthusiasm helped make it a great success.

If you couldn't attend this year, we hope to see you at our **2026 State Convention in Hilton Head!** Be on the lookout for more details as the date approaches—it promises to be another rewarding experience.

Looking ahead, we're excited for the **National UPMA Convention in Dallas, Texas, from August 9-15, 2025**. If you've never attended a national conference, you truly don't know what you're missing. From top-notch training sessions to opportunities to connect with fellow members from across the country, the experience is both educational and inspiring.

Personally, I can't count the number of friendships and professional relationships I've gained through UPMA. Attending conferences and engaging with the organization has been a turning point in my career. The training I've received through UPMA has helped me grow into a stronger leader and a more effective employee.

If you're interested in attending the national convention—or becoming more involved in UPMA—please reach out to any **South Carolina UPMA board member**. We'd love to have you join us and help shape the future of our organization. Your voice matters, and your engagement makes a difference.

Let's keep building, growing, and leading—together.

Melissa Livingston
Secretary



CHAPTER TREASURER: STEVE LENOIR



UPMA was the first Postal group PMG DeJoy spoke to after being sworn in as the nation's 75th Postmaster General and the last group on he addressed before resigning on March 28, 2025. We were privileged to have PMG DeJoy speak to our members on March 17, in Arlington, VA for 1 hour 20 minutes. As in previous speeches he talked about changes made during his watch and how bad things were before he arrived.

He cut loose on the Postal Rate Commission (PRC) saying "The PRC needs to go. They have a first-grade education in what needs to be done and a doctorate in the unnecessary."

He also spoke about the Trump Administration's DOGE effort. Doge officials contacted him for a meeting, and he told them he was available for a half hour on Monday evening at 7:30 PM.

He gave examples of areas he shared with Doge on how the Postal Service can save money. The list included:

- **USPS has 300 billion in CSRS Fund- we should be allowed to invest it.**
- **Workman's comp. program- we are spending 400 million a year.**
- **Unfunded congressional mandates- if we are required to maintain Universal Service congress should fund it.**
- **Counterfeit postage- we are losing 20 billion a year**
- **Post office lease renewals- "We are getting hijacked."**
- **55% of post offices don't cover cost and 65% of routes are not profitable**
- **Leveraging our infrastructure- better use of our post offices and partnership with other Government agencies.**

Before closing he said he was planning to stay for 3 years but stayed 4.5 years. "I came to love the place, as I leave, I'll be watching and will be a proponent for the Postal Service."

He told us he planned on staying through June to work with the new PMG. Eight days later he announced his immediate resignation. It makes you wonder what happened that week to change his mind about staying for another three months.

Our new PMG, David Steiner, former CEO of Waste Management, will assume office following the completion of background checks and the confirmation process. It remains to be seen whether he will proceed with the existing 10-year plan or introduce his own strategy. Only time will tell. For over 250 years, this beloved institution has a rich history of serving all Americans, regardless of economic standing. Intercity and rural areas that a private company will not touch. While we will have to adapt to changes in the marketplace, we are praying our new leadership will understand the "public service" mission of the postal service while also leveraging our business potential through our network of post offices and last mile reach.

This is my final article as an SC UPMA officer. After much reflection, I chose not to seek re-election as State Treasurer. The role of Treasurer carries significant responsibility. Managing chapter funds and ensuring transparency has been a privilege—and a duty I've taken seriously. I leave knowing that commitment has been honored.

Over the past four decades, I've been active in the League of Postmasters, NAPUS, and UPMA. These organizations have enriched my life in countless ways—through friendships, professional growth, and yes, even love (after all, it's where I met my wife, Beverly).

It's been an honor and privilege to serve on the UPMA board and Beverly and I look forward to remaining active in the future.

Steve Lenoir
Treasurer



CHAPTER VP AND MEMBERSHIP CHAIR: KELLY STANCIL

On the Move — And Time to Get Involved!

I hope this article finds everyone well and thriving! This year has been full of “firsts” for me—and I might be a little overly excited about all the incredible experiences I’ve had so far. But when you see what we’ve accomplished together, I think you’ll agree: 2025 is shaping up to be an unforgettable year.

Membership Momentum: Exceeding Expectations

We started the year strong—and we’re just getting started! In January, the National UPMA team challenged us to sign up 43 EAS and 32 Associate members. As of May 27th, we’ve already brought in 65 EAS and 31 Associates! This success wouldn’t be possible without your support, dedication, and outreach—thank you all for the work you’ve done to grow our UPMA family. Every new member strengthens our voice, our mission, and our future.

Legislative Summit: My Eye-Opening First Trip to Capitol Hill

In March, I had the incredible opportunity to attend the UPMA Legislative Summit in Washington, D.C.. It was powerful to hear from national leaders and to walk the halls of Capitol Hill, meeting with representatives and senators from South Carolina. One issue that really hit home for me was HR1522—the bill proposing the ability for part-time employees to buy back their time toward retirement. Like many of you, I spent nearly a decade as an RCA before becoming a career carrier. The chance to buy back that time could mean retiring with 30+ years of service at our minimum retirement age. This is why PAC contributions matter. They support the efforts that keep our priorities front and center in Washington. If you haven’t yet donated, I encourage you to consider it—it truly makes a difference.

State Convention Recap: Learning, Laughter & Leadership

In April, we held our South Carolina State Convention—and what a fantastic event it was! We received training from district management on key tools and hot topics, including FMC & SST, 360, WebEES, DPM, and LTM. We also had a lot of fun with door prizes and games that helped us raise funds for PAC. I’m especially proud to have played a role behind the scenes this year—it was an honor to help organize the event and to be re-elected as Membership Chair. Thank you for your support!

Rock Hill 3-Digit Meeting: Connection & Community

In May, we hosted our first 3-digit meeting in Rock Hill, complete with a classic fish fry! We connected with many of you, listened to the challenges you’re facing in your offices, and did our best to provide answers—or committed to finding them. We’re planning more events across the state, so stay tuned—we’ll be in a town near you soon!

What’s Next: Join Us in Clemson!

Mark your calendars for the Career Conference in Clemson this July! I’d love to meet you in person, hear your concerns, and connect faces with names. Bring your questions, bring your energy—and bring a friend! We’ll have free prizes and a special giveaway for new members who sign up during the event.

Final Thoughts

This year is moving fast, and so are we. With so much change happening—from the PMG appointment to potential retirement shifts to DOGE diving into postal finances—we need to rally together. Now is the time to get informed, get connected, and get involved.

Together, we protect our future. Together, we grow stronger. Let’s keep moving forward—and I’ll see you in Clemson!



Kelly Stancil
Vice President
Membership Chair



CHAPTER VP PAC CHAIR: SUSAN O'NEAL



Halfway There: A Postal Journey Through 2024!

Can you believe we're already halfway through the year? It feels like just yesterday we were wrapping up the chaos of peak season and dodging those early January chills. Maybe time really does fly faster the older we get—or maybe it just feels that way when you're always on the move like we are in the Postal Service.

So much has happened in just a few short months. We powered through 2024's peak season, breezed past the February mail survey, and marched straight into spring. Along with pollen and allergies, spring brought rural route inspections, school awards, graduations, and the welcome arrival of summer—filled with family reunions, vacations, and, if we're lucky, a little downtime.

Back in March, I had the honor of attending another Legislative Summit on Capitol Hill. As part of the South Carolina Chapter, we visited the offices of our district representatives and discussed key legislation like Title 39 and H.R.1522, which would allow postal employees to buy back non-career years. These are real issues that affect real people—us— and we offered our assistance in any way we could be of service to their office and constituents. As PAC Chair for the SC Chapter, I want to remind everyone: political advocacy doesn't happen without support. There are many ways to contribute to our Political Action Committee—at conventions, through PostalEASE, or by check, cash, or credit card. Retirees and credit union members of Signature and APCU even have easy-to-use authorization forms. These donations help us support Congress members who prioritize our interests. Because let's face it—if we're not at the table, we're on the menu.

April brought us together in Rock Hill for our UPMA State Convention, and what a great turnout it was. The training sessions led by Kenny Cobos, Ashley Watts, and Willie Anderson were outstanding. Darwin Adams shared our national message, updated us on membership, and presented proposed bylaw amendments. Every year I'm reminded just how valuable these conventions are—not only for the training and career development but for the camaraderie. The friendships and networking opportunities are just as important as the information you take home.

One of my favorite things about being a member of UPMA and attending conventions is the knowledge you gain to help advance your career. I regret not being involved sooner as I can see how it helps people progress to the next level. And now there is a KSA team to help employees that desire to move up. Another is the coworkers you meet in person from all over the country. Being able to share stories of success with people that understand the daily challenges of moving the mail. When you think you have seen or heard it all you find out something new. As fellow employees and managers we all have our struggles and triumphs and strive to do the best we can for the United States Postal Service.

I am honored to have been with the postal service for almost 30 years. My employment has provided for me and my family, and I know our job is important to so many that count on us for their essentials. I am now looking forward to our National Convention in August in Dallas Texas, it is not too late to register and attend. All the information is on our website. I hope to see you there.

Until next time be safe out there and stay hydrated.

Susan O'Neal
Vice President, PAC



3-DIGIT MEETINGS

ALERT!

If you were unable to attend the 3-DIGIT MEETINGS earlier this year, there's no need for concern. We have scheduled several additional sessions across the state, presenting a valuable opportunity for your participation.

Please mark your calendars for the following dates:

- August 26th - Columbia Area
- August 27th - Myrtle Beach Area
- August 28th - Charleston Area

The UPMA National President will be in attendance at all three meetings, making this an event you won't want to miss.

Details for each location will be shared as we finalize the arrangements. Please stay tuned for forthcoming emails containing more information.



The recent 3-DIGIT meeting held in Bluffton, SC, was a resounding success. We experienced a strong turnout, with both existing and new members in attendance. The engagement was exceptional, and the food was delightful.



CHAPTER RETIREE PRESIDENT: EDITH BRADSHAW

🌿 A Season of Reflection, Connection, and Gratitude
By Edith Bradshaw Retiree President

Hello, fellow Retired Postmasters!

As I write this, summer is upon us—a season filled with sunshine, family gatherings, and unforgettable memories. Many of us are enjoying travels or celebrating milestones as our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren graduate from kindergarten to college. These are the moments that warm our hearts and remind us of what truly matters: connection and legacy.

🌸 A Special Spring: State Convention in Rock Hill

In April, we came together in Rock Hill, SC, for our State Convention. A heartfelt thank-you to all the retirees who traveled from near and far to attend the Retiree Memorial and Luncheon on Saturday. The meeting was uplifting, the fellowship was meaningful, and the entire convention was filled with great speakers, training, and camaraderie.

It was truly a time to reconnect and reflect—and I'm grateful we shared it together.

★ Looking Ahead: National Convention in Dallas

Now it's time to look forward to the 2025 National Convention in Dallas, Texas. If you've seen the details in the national magazine, you know the Texas Chapter is rolling out the red carpet for us! Even better news: the active Executive Board is offering stipends to help cover your travel expenses. Attendees can receive anywhere from \$500 to \$1,000 just for registering and showing up. It's a fantastic incentive—and an even better opportunity to stay involved.

👉 Save the Date: Fall Retiree Luncheon

Our Fall Retiree Luncheon is scheduled for October 2025. More details will be shared as we move into the fall season, but I sincerely hope you'll plan to attend. It's our way of giving back to our retired members and celebrating the legacy we've built together.

🌱 Help UPMA Grow: Your Voice Still Matters

Even in retirement, our role in strengthening UPMA continues. Recruiting new members—both active and retired—is vital to keeping our organization strong. And there's a bonus:

- 🏠 \$50 for each Associate member you recruit
- 🏠 \$100 for each EAS member

Let's continue to build our community and keep UPMA thriving for generations to come.

💬 A Heartfelt Farewell

This will be my final article for the Palmetto Focus as your Retiree President. I want to thank every one of you for your support, your kind words, and your commitment during my time in this role. It has been an honor to serve. I hope I've kept you informed, inspired your involvement, and represented you with care and dedication.

💖 Until We Meet Again...

Whether it's at the National Convention in Dallas or our Fall Luncheon in October, I look forward to seeing you. Let's continue to stay connected, stay engaged, and support one another in this next chapter of life. Warmest regards,

Edith Bradshaw, Retiree President, South Carolina UPMA



CHAPTER VP AND EDUCATION CHAIR: SANDRA WILLIAMS

Leadership: Built, Not Born

Being a good leader isn't something you're simply born with—it's something you build, day by day, moment by moment. Leadership is less about titles and more about trust, influence, and the courage to grow. It's a skill, not a status—and like any skill, it takes self-awareness, continuous learning, and real-world practice to refine.

True leaders don't have all the answers, and they're not afraid to admit it. They own their mistakes, learn from them, and lead by example. Humility is their foundation, and resilience is their fuel. Setbacks don't stop them; they shape them.

But perhaps the most inspiring quality of a strong leader is their desire to lift others up. Great leaders don't just want to shine—they want to light the way for others. They mentor, they support, and they celebrate the success of their team. They know that leadership is not about being the best in the group but doing what's best for the group.

Whether you're managing a team, guiding a colleague, mentoring a subordinate or simply setting a positive example in your workplace, remember leadership is a journey. Stay curious. Stay accountable. And most of all, stay committed to the growth of those around you.

Because in the end, leadership isn't about standing at the front—it's about bringing people forward with you.

Sandra Williams
Vice President, Education



CHAPTER LEAD MEMBER REP: JEANETTE JOHNSON

The UPMA Way: Leading with Integrity and Purpose

As with any successful organization, in the United Postmasters and Managers of America, we believe a foundation of respect, responsibility and integrity are crucial pillars of great leadership. Preventing disciplinary issues is not just about enforcing rules- it's about fostering a positive environment and building a culture where employees feel supported, motivated, committed and proud of their work. A strong work ethic complements this by ensuring individuals consistently strive to do their best.

While discipline can sometimes be necessary, a proactive approach is far more effective. The goal should be to create a culture where discipline is the exception, not the norm. That starts with proactive leadership: setting clear expectations, leading by example, and creating a workplace rooted in trust and accountability.

Preventing discipline begins with clear, consistent leadership and a supportive work culture. Often, communication is the key. When we communicate clearly and consistently, we empower our teams to succeed—and we strengthen the foundation of our organization.

Let's lead with purpose, coach with compassion, and create a culture where excellence comes naturally. Our expectations of ourselves should be no less than that of our own leaders. That's the UPMA way!

Jeanette Johnson
Senior Chapter Member Rep





UPMA

United Postmasters and Managers of America

Career Development Benefit

- **Networking** – UPMA offers networking opportunities from 3-digit meetings and Chapter Conventions to Area Conferences and National Conventions. This is a great avenue for contacts with subject matter experts (SME's) from all aspects of Postal operations.
- **Training** - UPMA provides training in a variety of ways. Chapter and National Conventions offer workshops on current USPS programs and USPS Leaders provide information and answer questions. A national website - unitedpma.org - provides online training videos and national ZOOM training on current interest topics.
- **eCareer Assistance** – UPMA has initiated a new national program to coach members on the development of an eProfile and eCareer for beginners and provide mentorship critiquing member's current eCareer's. The Career Development section on the National website provides the USPS Guidelines and UPMA Advice. An entry portal for member name, contact information and current job location will connect you with a Personal Assistant. Simply answer a few questions that allow determination of the level of assistance that is required. "Have you created an eProfile?" and "Have you applied for an EAS job?" will give us that information. You will receive a phone or email contact to discuss the next steps of either sending your current eProfile and eCareer for review or how to begin the process of creating these documents.

Follow the Career Development path, on the back of this card, to the **eCareer/KSA Assistance Program**.

"You don't have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great." - Zig Ziglar

Follow these steps to the **USPS Guidelines**, **UPMA Advice** and the **eCareer/KSA Assistance Program**:

Go to Unitedpma.org; Career Development

There are two choices under this tab. In **Guidelines**, you will find 3 USPS documents with instructions on creating an eProfile, eCareer and submitting an application for promotion.

The **UPMA Advice** booklet is also located in this section. We suggest that you read it first as an overview of what the USPS specifically addresses. This information will allow you to set up your eProfile and be ready to work on your eCareer when you have decided on the type of EAS position you would like to apply for. The requirements for Supervisor positions or Postmaster positions may be similar for practicing your KSA's, but you **MUST CHECK THE QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FROM THE SPECIFIC JOB POSTING BEFORE APPLYING AS SOME DO VARY**.

In **KSA Assistance**, you will find the portal to connect to a qualified Assistant who will coach, guide and mentor you through the eProfile and eCareer process. Integrity is a priority, so Assistants do not create or write your KSA's. They educate, suggest, encourage, and support your work until you have developed at a minimum, an eCareer that will provide you with the best opportunity to reach the interview level.

When you are ready to take advantage of this benefit enter your information in the portal (EIN, Name, Phone, Email, Current Job Position and State). Answer the questions about having an eProfile and having applied for an EAS position. A space for any comments is available. Here you may request a quick review, enter your work hours for contact availability or other beneficial comments. An Assistant will contact you to coach you through this accomplishment.

This is not an easy task. We recommend the **Situation, Task, Action, and Result (STAR) format**, which is not required but provides the easiest way to demonstrate your Knowledge, Skill, and Ability (KSAs) for a qualification. Rewrites are normal to make your STARS shine. UPMA provides the benefit of these Assistants for support and advice, as you invest in your career.



To receive your refund for the \$30 registration fee, please mail this form with the required documentation to the UPMA National Office within thirty (30 days) of the conclusion of the conference. If you have questions call the National Office at 703-683-9027

Date: _____

I attended the USPS sponsored Career Conference in:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Enclosed please find a copy of my registration receipt as well as a copy of the name badge, I received at the conference.

Mail to: UPMA National Office
8 Herbert St.
Alexandria, VA 22305-2628

Internal UPMA use:

Member: Yes, ___ No ___ Charge to 807.02

Approved by: _____

Title: _____



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