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Postal Service, Postmaster General celebrate 'America's Partnership' *National Postal Customer Council Day features satellite broadcast from Texas*

ARLINGTON, TX – The Postmaster General of the United States announced expanded support and new publications for the nation's 200 Postal Customer Councils during a national satellite broadcast today.

Postmaster General John E. Potter addressed more than 15,000 mailing partners and customers across the country during a coast-to-coast broadcast from the Arlington Convention Center, emphasizing the collaborative nature of the work of the Postal Service with Postal Customer Councils (PCCs).

"We traveled around the country, asking you what you thought and what you needed from us to strengthen this partnership," Potter said. "We listened to you. We heard you. We took action for you."

With more than 100,000 members, PCCs have an important role in helping the Postal Service add value and make the mail work better for customers.

The Postal Customer Council™ is a network of community-based business mailers and representatives of the U.S. Postal Service, who gather regularly to discuss and resolve local mailing issues. On both the national and local levels, Postal Customer Councils work to continually improve service and communications.

Last summer, Postal Service executives and program managers conducted 20 focus groups with PCC members across the country to better understand the needs of this growing network.

Potter pledged the support of district managers, plant managers and executive-level postmasters and marketing managers at future PCC meetings. A new, monthly electronic newsletter will debut. The "PCC Insider" will keep members updated on issues affecting the Postal Service and mailing industry partners. Taking another lead from the focus groups, Potter announced a new publication, "Mail Pro," combining the best features of two existing hard-copy publications, "Memo to Mailers" and "Mailer's Companion," and adding new content.

"Our goal is to give you direct access, through your meetings, to every resource we have that can support you," Potter said.

Describing the current proposal to increase rates as a "difficult choice," Potter stressed that timing was a key issue for the Postal Service. Announcing the proposed rate changes well in advance of their Spring 2007 implementation was intended to give business customers and consumers time to prepare, update software and make necessary changes to processing systems. The independent Postal Rate Commission is expected to make a recommendation on the rate case next March.

"The heart of the rate case is more efficient preparation, packaging and presentation of the mail," Potter said. He added that a Federal Register Notice focusing on mail preparation issues would be published next week.

Staying relevant in a rapidly changing business environment is key to the future success of the Postal Service, Potter said. Leveraging the accessibility and convenience of the Internet is one of the ways the Postal Service is achieving this goal. Citing the successful partnerships with eBay and Netflix, the Postmaster General explained that **usps.com** replaces a trip to the Post Office for a number of services. Paying for postage through Click-n-Ship and scheduling a Carrier Pickup are two ways the Postal Service is making services quick, easy and convenient.

“The next time you go to your computer, you’ll have your Post Office,” Potter said.

Stressing the high cost of mail that can’t be delivered, the Postmaster General also encouraged PCC members to use the most current, accurate address information and to take advantage of Postal Service products and services designed to reduce the cost and frequency of undeliverable mail.

Addressing is the “first step” to barcoding, Potter said, sharing information on the new 4-State Customer Barcode and updating the audience on the availability of OneCode™ – Confirm and Address Correction Service based on the new barcode.

He was joined during the broadcast by Pat Donahoe, Deputy Postmaster General and COO, from Green Bay, WI; and Anita Bizzotto, Chief Marketing Officer and Executive Vice President, from Miami, FL. Postal Service officers and executives were in attendance at PCC Day events across the country.

Two workshops also were offered at each of the day’s events: strategies for eliminating costly, undeliverable mail and information on the proposed rate case.

National PCC Day also showcases the work of PCCs and includes a series of awards recognizing outstanding service and individual achievement. The following award winners were announced:

- PCC Industry Member of the Year: Lou Ann Warren, PCC Industry Co-Chair, Dallas PCC
- PCC Postal Service Member of the Year: Sandra Calos, Customer Relations Coordinator, Greater New York PCC
- PCC of the Year (two categories): Cincinnati PCC; Central Wisconsin PCC
- Communications Program Excellence: Greater St. Louis PCC (gold); Milwaukee PCC (silver); Fort Worth PCC (bronze)
- Education Program Excellence: Greater St. Louis PCC (gold); Greater New York PCC (silver); Fort Worth PCC (bronze)
- Grow Your Business Excellence: Two gold awards: Fort Worth PCC, Dallas PCC; Greater New York PCC (silver); two bronze awards: Miami-Dade County PCC, Middle Tennessee PCC.

More information on Postal Customer Councils and National PCC Day can be found at ***usps.com/nationalpcc***.

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Since 1775, the Postal Service and its predecessor, the Post Office Department, have connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits more than 144 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider delivering to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of \$70 billion, it is the world’s leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world’s mail volume—some 212 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves 7 million customers each day at its 37,000 retail locations nationwide.