



Time to get serious

The National Association of Letter Carriers is recognized in the labor community as one of the most credible unions in the country. Our reputation has been forged by a membership that has always stood up for what is right and just. Our well-educated cadre of officers and stewards has always acted with dignity and respect when enforcing the terms of the National Agreement, our contract. We have established our workplace credibility with postal management at all levels.

We have also established our credibility with members of Congress and even presidents throughout the years. Having a grassroots legislative network that is nationally recognized puts us at the head of the class when it comes to mustering up support for a particular issue or candidate on Capitol Hill. We have built a strong and steady foundation from which we have secured a decent living for the 300,688 members of our union.

Our 86,980 retired members have been the catalysts over the years in securing, among other things, retirement and health benefits coverage for those who dedicate their careers to the U.S. Postal Service. Ours is a story of success, but it has not come easily. Many of our retirees can tell you how difficult it was *before* we had collective bargaining, and they can tell you what it was like to put their careers on the line in 1970 to enact collective bargaining as part of postal reform. They can also tell you how very important it is to have good friends in Congress that we can rely on.

Now is the time to get serious again! We have just heard the good news that Senate bill S 662, the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, has been successfully passed by the Senate with unanimous consent. We are just steps away from securing the means necessary to ensure the viability of the Postal Service for years to come. It is time for *everyone* to step up to the plate. Pay close attention to the information sent out by the e-Activist Network and *take action* when you are urged to do so. Do not wait for someone else to do it for you. If we fail by one vote, you will regret not having done your part for the rest of your life!

In 2005, just 18,668 members made a contribution to our political action fund, COLCPE. As previously men-

tioned, we currently have 300,688 members. Even “fuzzy math” tells you that there are 282,020 members that have not heard the message. Without their support our chances of passing this legislation—that is so vital to our futures—will be difficult. We have worked too hard, for too long, to come up short now. If we are to be successful we will need to be there for the very people who hold our fate in their hands, the men and women of the United States Congress. We have long established our credibility with all of them, and now is the time to cash in on what we have worked so hard for.

In 2006 we will be launching a new program in an attempt to get our message out to every one of our members. We will be asking our National Business Agents and our state and local branch officers to see that there is a “COLCPE coordinator” in every branch. Those COLCPE coordinators will be responsible for seeing that everyone is informed of our goal and why it is so vitally important for us to be politically involved at all levels. We *must* get more support for our COLCPE fund or we will come up short in our fight to preserve the Postal Service. You can bet that UPS and FedEx are going to be *big* players in this final leg of our postal reform marathon! The big difference between them and us is that we cannot utilize any union funds for this purpose. We must rely solely on the voluntary donations of our members.

The message is clear and we are approaching the finish line. If you have not yet taken advantage of the opportunity to support COLCPE through payroll deduction or Electronic Fund Transfer, *now is the time to get serious!* ☒

NALC Retirement Department
Toll-free number: 1-800-424-5186

Available Monday, Wednesday and Thursday only
from 10 a.m. to noon and from 2 to 4 p.m. (Eastern time)
This toll-free number is answered ONLY during these hours on the days indicated.

If your question concerns hospitalization and you are a member of the NALC Health Benefit Plan, call 1-888-636-6252.