

Food drive set for May 13

Once again, letter carriers are preparing for the largest single-day food drive in the country. The Letter Carriers' "Stamp Out Hunger" Food Drive is Saturday, May 13.

One in 8 Americans, including millions of children, senior citizens and veterans, are unsure where their next meal will come from. Letter carriers have helped meet the need by collecting food that postal patrons leave near their mailboxes on the second Saturday of each May.

NALC branches deliver the food to local food banks, which often face shortages in spring and summer because holiday donations have been depleted. And when summer comes, most school meal programs are not available, so the need for food grows. That makes the timing of the letter carrier food drive crucial.

Since the first national food drive in 1993, active and retired letter carriers, with the help of volunteers from their communities, have collected a total of 1.82 billion pounds of food.

"Letter carriers go out on their routes and see, up close, what their communities need," NALC President Brian L. Renfro said. "We step up to meet these needs by filling the shelves of local food pantries. After 30 years, our commitment to the largest one-day food drive in the United States is intact and, in fact, still growing."

Our national partners help make the annual food drive possible. The national partners are the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, Vericast, United Way Worldwide, the AFL-CIO, Valpak, the Kellogg Co. and CVS Health. These partners help through such ac-

tions as sponsoring the specially marked post cards, donating thousands of pounds of food and thousands of dollars to food pantries, donating bags that letter carriers distribute to customers to put their contributions in, gathering volunteers, or getting out the message about the food drive. Since the food drive relies on volunteers all working together on a single day, publicizing the event is a big part of its success. NALC Headquarters and branch food drive coordinators use various means of communication to publicize the event.

The digital communications team at Headquarters is already busy spreading news and reminders on social media, including the event's official social media accounts on Facebook at facebook.com/StampOutHunger and on Twitter at @StampOutHunger. To find or send messages about the food drive on either platform, use #StampOutHunger.

NALC's Communications and Media Relations Department also promotes news media coverage about the food drive before, the day of, and after the event by distributing news releases and through individual outreach to newspapers, television stations and radio outlets nationwide. Meanwhile, branch food drive coordinators promote the effort on the local level.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused the cancellation of the in-person collection of food in 2020 and 2021 before it resumed last year. In its place, NALC held virtual donor drives, creating



online donation and promotion tools for branches. The virtual donor drive was so successful that it will continue as a supplement to the traditional food collection. For more information about the virtual drive and how to get involved, including tools that make raising funds online easy, go to nalc.org/community-service/food-drive/2023-donor-drive.

After the big day, it'll be time to measure our success. To do that, branches need to report the pounds of food they collected to NALC Headquarters by June 1. The official results form can be found on the Food Drive Tool Kit page at nalc.org/food, in the "For Food Drive Coordinators" section, along with information on sending photos.

Letter carriers who have questions about the food drive should contact their branch or regional food drive coordinator. Food drive coordinators with questions may contact Christina Vela Davidson, assistant to the president for community services, at 202-662-2489 or at cdavidson@nalc.org. **PR**