

# Service is what letter carriers do



**Brian L.  
Renfroe**

**W**hen I think of a word that best describes what letter carriers and our union do, the word “service” always comes to mind. Every activity we engage in centers on service. We provide service to our customers daily. We also serve our communities in many other ways beyond delivering mail.

At the end of March, we were privileged to hold one of the most extraordinary events of every year—NALC’s annual Heroes of the Year awards luncheon. I have had the opportunity to take part in this special event and be around our recognized heroes for the past 14

years. Every year, I am blown away by the courageous and selfless acts that our heroes have performed.

One common thread among these heroes is that they each think what they did was no big deal. They express the idea that anyone would’ve done what they did. Nothing demonstrates the spirit of service of letter carriers more than their humility when talking about the incredible deeds they have done.

This year’s group of heroes was incredibly special. The acts for which each was recognized varied from actions that saved lives while on their route to special projects that helped their communities. Each of our heroes did a fantastic job sharing their stories during the luncheon. Their authenticity and spirit left a mark on all of those in attendance.

While we are always thrilled to honor our Heroes of the Year, they represent just a small portion of the heroic acts that letter carriers across the country perform daily. This magazine highlights those stories in each issue in the “Proud to Serve” section. We should all be proud of the ways our members look out for the communities where we serve.

**Our union has a history of banding together to do things** that benefit our communities in an organized way. Perhaps the best and most impactful example of these efforts is NALC’s annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. The food drive is taking place around the time this magazine hits homes.

For decades, our one-day food drive has fed more people who suffer from hunger than any other effort of its kind. We are excited to continue the food drive in 2024 and continue to grow it in the future.

The COVID-19 pandemic took a toll on our food drive, as it did on most things in our lives. We were unable to hold the food drive in 2020 and 2021 for safety reasons. The food drive resumed in 2022 and 2023, but the amount of food we have collected has dropped from pre-pandemic levels. We have work to do to make the food drive as successful as possible, and thus maximize the impact on those in need.

We thank our national partners: 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, Kellanova and CVS Health. We are especially grateful to our branches for their hard work promoting the food drive. To grow, we have to increase resources necessary to get the word out to our customers. I am happy to report that the labor community has stepped up their support for our efforts. Our brothers and sisters in other unions around the country are coming on board. Together we can and will make our food drive record-setting in the future.

I want to thank all of the letter carriers around the country for their hard work on the day of the food drive. Our jobs are already difficult, but they become particularly difficult on that day with the added burden of picking up food. But one thing is common at every office in the country on the second Saturday in May—the attitude of service. Our members put in the extra work, work together, and take immense pride in what we do to help the people we serve.

---

**“I want to thank all of the letter carriers around the country for their hard work on the day of the food drive.”**

---

**On a personal note, I want to express my deepest appreciation** to the thousands of NALC members who have offered support and encouragement during my recovery from alcoholism. I reached one year of sobriety on April 17. I have never been healthier, more energetic, and more optimistic about the future of our union. I am forever grateful to the members of our union for your love and support.

If you are reading this and you or someone you know is struggling, help is out there no matter who you are or what your responsibilities may be. Go get that help. If you do not know how to do that or where to go, reach out to me. If I can do it, you can, too.