



National Association of Letter Carriers

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Dear Branch President,

Last spring, we collected a record 80 million pounds of food in the 24th year of our Letter Carriers' Food Drive. Over the history of the food drive, letter carriers have collected more than 1.5 billion pounds of food with last year being our 13th consecutive year of surpassing 70 million pounds collected. While we have certainly gained experience and confidence through our accomplishments, we must remain ever vigilant in our commitment to continuing the good work of helping those in need.

The 2016 food drive brought exciting changes with the addition of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union to our team of national partners. The results proved that having partners with passion, energy and resources that bring out the best in our work is key to our success. This year I am happy to report that we've add another like-minded partner to our team, - the return of the AARP Foundation. The AARP Foundation had been with our food drive for several years, providing many resources to help us help those in need, especially to the demographic of their focused work, elder Americans. We are excited to have them join us, along with all our 2016 national partners who are returning. Through the commitment of this exceptional team of national partners, the 2017 food drive postcards are completely funded. This means we can all focus immediately on planning and organizing a successful food drive and celebrate our 25th Anniversary year.

In light of the enormous success of the 2016 food drive, all letter carriers in every participating branch should consider themselves winners. You and your members worked tirelessly in your communities to make a difference for millions in need. And as we saw in our final tally, the competitive spirit of the food drive is alive and well as a repeat national champion, Central Florida Branch 1091, took top honors

for food collections among all NALC branches, collecting over 2.2 million pounds of food. That's a new all-time record by any branch, simply incredible

Our continued efforts in the fight against hunger in America has made us all too familiar with the staggering numbers of people in need. The availability of nutritionally adequate and safe food, or the ability to acquire such food, is limited or uncertain for 1 in 6 Americans, many of whom are in households with at least one person working. These are the households of single-parents with young children, grandparents helping to raise their grandchildren, college students or households with a military veteran. These are folks who are doing everything *right*, often working more than one job but still unable to make ends meet. They share the same values and dreams as we do.

Our extraordinary history of filling local food shelves in communities across the country is possible because of the dedication and hard work of leaders such as yourself. In order to continue to build on that success, we must foster the growing involvement of partners and inspire letter carriers. Many hands make light work, and together as a team, we'll rise to meet the need for food.

There is also a reason to celebrate. In 2017, the Letter Carriers' Food Drive is commemorating our 25th Anniversary! That's a quarter century of delivering help and hope to those in need. You and your members should all be proud to have contributed so much to so many in the communities we serve. Congratulations!

NEW THIS YEAR - REGISTER ON LINE! Branch Presidents can go to the Members Only portal (at NALC.ORG). Set up your account access and click on the Stamp Out Hunger logo. Complete all information fields, then click "Submit". You'll get immediate confirmation of your registration and postcard order. For additional assistance logging in, contact NALC's Membership Department at (202)662-2836.

You'll also be able to request the *Partnership Opportunities Materials*, a package of important items to help make a professional pitch to potential local food drive sponsors. Materials include a DVD and brochure as leave-behind information for the business-owners you meet, presenting them an opportunity to partner with the food drive. Just circle "yes" next to *Partnership Opportunities Materials* and they will be sent to you as soon as possible.

If you are unable to register online, please complete the enclosed food drive registration form and mail it, by March 1, to:

**NALC Food Drive
100 Indiana Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001-2144**

Your branch food drive coordinator will then be mailed important resources and information designed to help with all areas and experience levels of the food drive. You can also request the Partnership Opportunities Materials by checking the box on the form.

You have a committed and experienced team of brothers and sisters who are ready to help you with whatever you need. The food drive is supported by regional and state food drive coordinators who can assist you in a more direct way, answering questions and discussing all of the elements of preparation. You are never more than a phone call or e-mail away from support. (Full contact list enclosed.)

There are many new and exciting things happening right now that are sure to make our 2017 Letter Carriers' *Stamp Out Hunger* Food Drive, our 25th Anniversary year, one that meets a real need and makes us all proud. This is one way of giving back to the cities and neighborhoods we serve. It's our time to shine, and I know I can count on your commitment and leadership.

Please join us and register for the 2017 Letter Carriers' Food Drive.

Fraternally,



Fredric V. Rolando
President