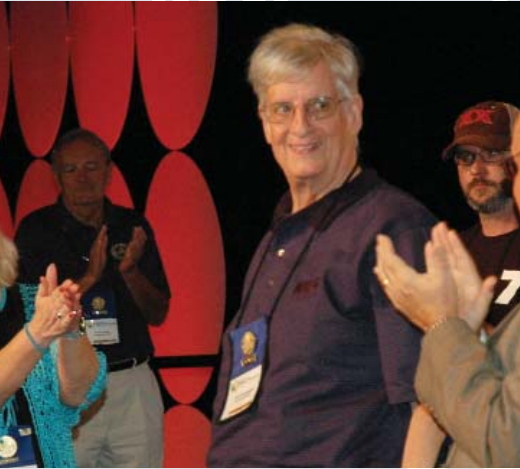


# Staff comings, goings and recognition



**NALC Director of Public Relations Drew Von Bergen received a standing ovation from the convention delegates in Anaheim, as the union recognized him for his work coordinating the NALC Food Drive.**

**S**everal staff changes have taken place recently at NALC Headquarters, some related to the union's communications efforts, others to information technology.

Drew Von Bergen, longtime Director of Public Relations, has retired. Von Bergen, who helped create the union's annual food drive in 1991 and subsequently served as national coordinator, was lauded at the NALC Anaheim convention in August for his work on the drive.

Von Bergen, who had reported for United Press International for 23 years and served briefly as press secretary for Ohio Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, was hired in 1988 as the NALC's first Director of Public Relations. His major duty was to publicize the union's centennial in 1989, and neither Von Bergen nor the man who hired him, President Vincent Sombrotto, envisioned the job lasting more than a couple of years.

At Sombrotto's direction, Von Bergen set up a pilot food collection program.

"I just started doing it, and I never stopped," Von Bergen says. He spent about half his time on the food drive, while also dealing with the media, putting out the *NALC Bulletin*, and handling the Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF), which he also helped create for Sombrotto.

Another veteran staffer, Sean McCormally, who was Director of Communications and managing editor of *The Postal Record*, also retired recently after 18 years.

Philip Dine was hired in August by President Fredric Rolando as Director of Communications and Media Relations, a new combined position. Dine is responsible for the union's internal communications with members as well as getting its message out to the news media and public.

Dine spent 28 years as a journalist in New England, the Midwest and Washington, DC. In 2008 he wrote the book "State of the Unions: How Labor Can Strengthen the Middle Class, Improve Our Economy, and Regain Political Influence."

Over the past couple of years, Dine has spoken to various unions about how they can revitalize themselves, including through more effective communications and political engagement. He also has been a guest on CNN, Fox, CNBC, MSNBC, C-Span, National Public Radio

and other news outlets, explaining labor's perspective.

The community service part of Von Bergen's job has been assumed by Linda Giordano, who at President Rolando's request will coordinate the food drive, Muscular Dystrophy Association fund-raising, National Heroes of the Year, PERF and Carrier Alert. She had been the assistant to Rolando and, before that, to President William Young.

Before being hired at NALC Headquarters in 1997, Giordano worked as a local business agent in Region 1 and as president of Canoga Park, CA Branch 4006. She began as a letter carrier in 1981.

Assisting Dine in the Communications Department is Rick Hodges, who was hired in May as a writer/editor for *The Postal Record*, the *Bulletin* and other publications. His duties include handling the Branch Items section of *The Postal Record*.

Hodges, who has a legislative background, has spent most of his career in communications positions with non-profits in Washington. He also has written for magazines and worked for several years at the Air Line Pilots Association.

## IT Department

Steven Czechanski retired in May as Director of Information Technology but has been helping out until a successor is chosen. Hired in 1987 to run the new IT Department, his first major task was to get the union's computers to share data.

Czechanski had previously worked eight years in hospital information systems and before that worked for a company installing or upgrading the early generation of computers at many unions.

Paul Murray was hired in August as a programmer/software developer to help maintain computer software systems. Murray has 22 years of experience as a software developer and consultant with his own firms and for other companies.

He replaces Dan Gallagher, a 10-year employee who retired as the programmer for dispute resolution and arbitration, among other areas. Previously, Gallagher ran IT operations for a telemarketing shop and was operations manager for the Libertarian Party. ☒