

Right: The leadership and staff of the MDA greeted the entire NALC Executive Council with applause.

Below: The Executive Council poses for a promotional photo as part of MDA's Make a Muscle campaign.

## Executive Council meets with MDA, pledges support

**D**uring a long week of travel and meetings in Arizona, the entire NALC Executive Council made a special trip to the national headquarters of the Muscular Dystrophy Association in Tucson on May 17 and came away recharged for the efforts to raise donations.

Meeting in Phoenix, the Executive Council took a day out of its busy schedule to make the two-hour ride to Tucson. When the union's leaders got off the bus, they were welcomed by the MDA staff with a round of applause.

"They clapped as every one of us got off the bus," President Fredric V. Rolando said, "and it was clear that they weren't just thanking us, but thanking all NALC members for the hard work we do year-round to raise funds for this important medical research."

NALC and MDA have a long history, as in 1953 NALC became MDA's first official national sponsor, and to this day it remains the union's only official charity. MDA is a charitable health organization working to defeat more than 40 neuromuscular diseases. From its Tucson headquarters, MDA administers its nationwide network of outpatient clinics and a worldwide research program.

After a tour of the extensive facilities, the NALC leaders were treated to a presentation that showed just where NALC's donations go. Two medical researchers spoke about the work they're doing to find ways to combat MS-related illnesses.

"It was refreshing to hear from actual researchers, who spoke to how vital each dollar raised is," Rolando said. "More than 75 percent of all money raised goes directly to research, so

every bit helps extend the effort to find the cure."

MDA President and CEO Jerry Weinberg informed the Executive Council that the upcoming Labor Day Telethon would be Jerry Lewis' last, but that he would remain on the board of directors to help guide the organization. In turn, Rolando spoke about the preparations for the upcoming "Fill the Satchel" campaign and the national bowllathon Nov. 6.

The satchel campaign, planned for Sunday, Oct. 2, will be similar to the International Association of Fire Fighters' annual "Fill the Boot" MDA fundraiser. NALC is currently working on the promotional materials, such as posters and banners.

"We're committed to making this campaign as big a success as our bowllathon," Rolando said.

After the presentations, the national business agents recorded video promotions for the upcoming campaigns. The clips will be used at state conventions and branch events.

It was nighttime by the time union leaders returned by bus to Phoenix. Over the next few days, as the Executive Council meeting continued, the 10 resident national officers, 15 NBAs and three trustees, with consultation from key staff members, discussed the pressing issues facing letter carriers. On the table was the need to push for co-sponsors for H.R. 1351, Rep. Stephen Lynch's (D-MA) bill to fix the Postal Service's finances, and the need to clarify the union's position on Sen. Tom Carper's (D-DE) S. 1010 legislation, which also deals with the finances, but contains a number of provisions NALC can't support (*see story, page 4*).

The Council also made preparations for the upcoming round of contract negotiations with postal management, slated to start on Aug. 18. And it discussed the most recent memoranda of understanding on Delivery Unit Optimization (DUO), the joint route adjustment process and others. ☐

