



PUTTING OUR VETERANS TO WORK

KEEPING OUR VETERANS IN SERVICE

Veterans Day is the day Americans come together to honor the men and women who served in our armed forces. This has special significance for the Postal Service, as many military members bring the skills they've learned from their time in uniform to a second career in a Postal Service uniform.

The USPS has long found that veterans make great employees. Ted Lidie, a retired command sergeant major for the Army, said veterans bring leadership talent and team commitment to the workplace, lessons they learned from the military. "You can't foster that in almost any other environment," he said.

Bronze Star winner Captain John Conde agrees. He won the award in 2003 for saving the lives of two wounded Iraqis by taking charge immediately after they were hit by gunfire, administering first aid and coordinating their evacuation by air to a hospital.

After his time in the Army, Conde put those same skills to work as a letter carrier and found that his new job allowed him to continue his service to the community. "Mailmen are people you can trust," he said. "We carry people's money, their medication—things they count on every day. I'm proud to serve." He also said that he applied lessons learned from the military to get his carrier tasks accomplished under pressure.

What he learned in the Army also encouraged him to give back outside of the Postal Service, so he provided medical help in the Dominican Republic. For that service, he was named as one of six 2011 NALC Heroes of the Year (*see story, page 23*).

Often, carriers the union names as heroes have a background in one of the armed forces. The 2011 National Hero of the Year, Keith McVey, who gave CPR to a man on his route, served in the Air Force. Central Region Hero David Bartaway, who prevented a robbery in the neighborhood he delivers to, is a former Marine. Jeffrey Vollmar, last year's Eastern Region Hero, who ran

into a burning building to rescue a woman, served in Lebanon with the Marines. The list goes on and on.

While there are many reasons why veterans would choose to become carriers—working in the outdoors, staying in good physical shape—they also have a better chance of landing the job.

The Postal Service, as a part of the federal government, offers veterans preference in hiring. Veterans who are disabled, who served on active duty in the armed forces during certain specified time periods or in military campaigns are entitled to preference in hiring for virtually all federal government jobs.

For all these reasons, the Postal Service is the single largest civilian employer of veterans, with 22 percent of all postal employees having served in the military.

But as military operations wind down in both Iraq and Afghanistan, more veterans are coming back stateside to resume their civilian lives during one of the worst economic downturns in recent history.

Traditionally, veterans have an easier time finding work than those who haven't served. Even during the current economic conditions, the unemployment rate for all veterans in 2010 was 8.7 percent, compared to the 9.4 percent for the general population. That's a trend that's been consistent throughout the recession.

But for younger veterans, those between 18 and 24, the numbers tell a different story. The jobless rate for them was 20.6 percent in 2010, compared to non-veterans of the same age at 17.3 percent. That also doesn't begin to consider the number returning with both physical and mental disabilities, who have a harder time re-integrating back into civilian life. Many states report seeing veterans become homeless at a rate much faster than that seen for the generation of returning Vietnam veterans.

That's why President Barack Obama and Congress are working on a series of initiatives aimed at this group, because after fighting so hard for their country abroad, "the last thing they should have to do is fight for a job when they come

The Postal Service Hires More Veterans Than Any Other Civilian Employer



Some in Congress Want to Fire Them

The Postal Service puts more veterans to work than any other civilian employer. But the Ives-Bass Bill (H.R. 2309), which the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee will vote on this week, would force the USPS to fire employees—including tens of thousands of veterans. That's American vets fired in the worst economy in decades.

Putting tens of thousands of America's veterans out of work won't fix the Postal Service. Congress talks a lot about patriotism, but there's nothing patriotic about destroying the USPS, devastating mail service, and telling our veterans they're not wanted.

TELL CONGRESS TO DELIVER FOR OUR VETERANS—AND AMERICA.



home,” Obama told a joint session of Congress in September.

Even those employed by the Postal Service are worried about jobs. With job creation a national issue, you’d think politicians would avoid the risk of putting tens of thousands out of work, especially when veterans make up a large amount of those ranks. But that’s exactly what Congress is considering with H.R. 2309, Rep. Darrell Issa’s (R-CA) bill, which would allow the Postal Service to lay off 120,000 employees, in addition to gutting the benefits of those who keep their jobs.

To help Congress remember its commitment to veterans, NALC has joined

with the American Postal Workers Union, the National Postal Mail Handlers Union, the National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association and VoteVets.org to run an advocacy ad opposing H.R. 2309 (see ad at right). The ad will be run in *Politico*, *The Hill*, *National Journal Daily* and *CQ Today*, and it calls on Congress to honor USPS veterans’ service and protect their jobs.

Veterans Day is more than just a day to remember what the men and women who serve and have served in our armed forces have done for us; it’s a reminder of the commitment that we have to them to make sure they have an opportunity to continue their service. ☒

THE [CALL] FOR DELEGATES TO attend NALC’s 68th Biennial Convention in Minneapolis next summer was being printed and prepared to mail soon after this magazine went to press. NALC Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broedel, who oversees convention arrangements, said the call will be accompanied by a delegate allotment card advising each branch of the maximum number of

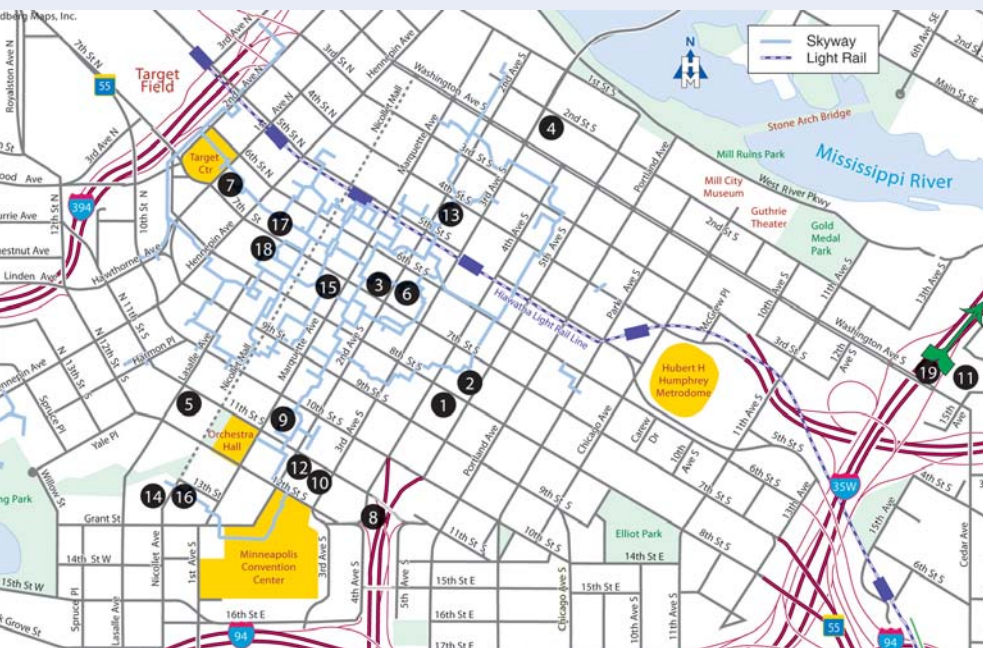
delegates it may send to the convention.

The delegate count is determined by the branch’s active and retired membership as of Oct. 1. A branch is entitled to one vote and one delegate for each 20 members or fraction thereof. Each state association has two delegates-at-large.

Again this year, there will be an online procedure for making housing reservations. The NALC has made

special arrangements with 19 hotels to accommodate letter carrier delegations attending the convention. Their locations and room rates are shown below. The Hilton Hotel Minneapolis will be the NALC Headquarters Hotel during the 2012 gathering.

The room rates for NALC-block hotels have been set so branches can begin budgeting for the convention. ☒



Convention hotels and rates

- 1 Best Western Normandy Inn & City Place Suites* \$124 single/\$129 double
- 2 Comfort Suites Minneapolis Downtown \$139
- 3 Crowne Plaza Northstar* \$159
- 4 The Depot Minneapolis, Renaissance \$169
- 5 Doubletree Suites By Hilton \$159
- 6 Grand Hotel Minneapolis \$249
- 7 Graves 601 Wyndham* \$199
- 8 Hilton Garden Inn \$159
- 9 Hilton Hotel Minneapolis (HQ Hotel)* \$195
- 10 Holiday Inn Express & Suites Downtown* \$159 single/\$169 double
- 11 Holiday Inn Minneapolis Metrodome* \$134
- 12 Hotel Ivy \$199
- 13 Hotel Minneapolis, Autograph Collection \$209
- 14 Hyatt Regency Minneapolis \$189
- 15 The Marquette* \$199
- 16 Millennium Minneapolis* \$189
- 17 Minneapolis Marriott City Center \$171
- 18 Radisson Plaza Hotel Minneapolis* \$189
- 19 Ramada Plaza Minneapolis* \$139

* Union hotels