



2011 was a busy year for training; 2012 looks to be no different

Leadership Academy Class 13 arrived in early January for the first of three separate weeks of training at the National Labor College. Students received instruction on labor history, including an in-depth look at the history of the NALC and the events that shaped us into the strong union we are today. They also learned about leadership styles, building local unions and ethical decision-making. To tie the whole week together, they were taught how adults learn and retain information and the different teaching techniques and methods instructors can use to reach as many in their audience as possible. Following this, each student created a 15-minute teaching session that they conducted in front of their classmates.

The students returned in early March for their second week, which included segments on branch administration, fiduciary responsibilities, contractual research and analysis, Customer Connect, NALC community involvement, as well as public speaking and how to effectively get NALC's message out to their members and their communities. Of course, the highlight in Week 2 is always the three different speeches each student must give: one in front of a small group, the second before the entire class and the last at a banquet attended by their classmates and the NALC's resident national officers.

I would have to say that for myself and the other Leadership Academy faculty (Jim Williams, Jim Korolowicz and Nancy Dysart), the Week 2 speeches are one of the highlights of the entire Leadership Academy agenda. Over the course of eight hours, we get to watch the students develop and grow as leaders right before our eyes—and Class 13 was no exception.

The NALC also has continued conducting joint training with the Postal Service to certify new Step B Team members. The NALC and USPS each select candidates to attend this week-long session held at the Bolger Training Center in Potomac, MD. So far this year, we held sessions in January and March.

The Step B training is jointly conducted by NALC and USPS headquarters staff, as well as experienced labor representatives and Step B team members. Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine oversees the NALC

side of the training and has put together an NALC training team, which includes, in addition to myself, headquarters staff member Sue Wellhausen, Regional Administrative Assistants Ray Tillman and Troy Fredenburg, and current Step B Team members Jeff Fox, Robbie Gardiner, Steve Hanna, Chuck Page and Kathy Purdy. The Step B candidates are taken through a rigorous agenda and by the end of the week must be able to demonstrate proficiency in contract knowledge, verbal communication skills and writing ability or they will not be certified to handle cases at Step B.

The subject of OWCP Lost Wage Earning Capacity (LWEC) determinations is little-understood but hugely important to all letter carriers who suffer an on-the-job injury. In many cases, carriers injured on the job can end up receiving little or no compensation based upon an unfavorable LWEC determination by OWCP.

This month at the National Labor College, Assistant to the President for Compensation Coby Jones and retired Assistant to the President for Compensation Ron Watson, along with an instruction team of NALC Headquarters staff, will provide a comprehensive review of the statutory basis of LWECs, as well as OWCP's regulatory and procedural provisions. A major focus of the class will include a practical, how-to manual on winning OWCP appeals challenging LWEC determinations.

Also in April at the Labor College, the NALC will be conducting another round of basic arbitration advocacy training for 24 letter carriers selected by President Rolando, based upon the recommendations of their national business agents and the headquarters Contract Administration Unit as well as the needs of the various NALC regions.

With the national convention in Minneapolis only a few months away, NALC resident officers and headquarters staff are busily preparing for the educational workshops that are conducted before and after the general business sessions at the convention. As in the past, a wide variety of workshops will be offered for the delegates to attend. A list of the workshops and the dates and times offered will be published in an upcoming Postal Record. ☒