



## Shop Steward Training School

**F**or the first time at national convention, the NALC is offering a week-long training school for shop stewards that will cover grievance handling from the investigation of an incident through the arbitration of a grievance. The school will consist of five classes, one offered each morning and repeated in the afternoon to enable those interested to attend other offerings as well. It is open to all stewards, new or experienced, as well as anyone interested in learning more about the grievance procedure and what a steward does. Monday through Thursday, all of the shop steward training school classes will be held in convention center in Ballroom A. On Friday, the school will move to the main auditorium.

As the class progresses through the week, stewards will learn about the various aspects of handling grievances from investigating, preparing and presenting grievances at Informal A, Formal A and Step B of the grievance procedure to what happens when a case goes to arbitration.

To make the theoretical practical, the class will watch a specific case as it proceeds through the grievance procedure to arbitration. The grievance, which is based on an actual event, concerns a letter carrier who is accused of throwing deliverable mail into a trash can on his route and is issued a Notice of Removal. A cast of NALC Headquarters staff and experienced stewards and trainers from around the country will present a series of scenes depicting the various stages of this grievance as it develops and moves through the grievance process. Attendees will receive a grievance file folder on Monday and will be given handouts each day to add to their folder as the week progresses, building the file as it moves through the steps of the procedure.

**Monday's** class will focus on letter carrier and steward rights as guaranteed under the National Agreement, the National Labor Relations Act and various court decisions. As these are discussed, students will observe the steward representing the carrier accused of throwing away mail during an interrogation by agents of the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) and how the steward deals with management stonewalling his subsequent requests for information and steward time.

On **Tuesday**, the class will cover grievance investigation and research. Students will learn how to properly investigate a grievance, whom to interview, what documents to review, how to record the investigation, and what research tools to use for finding support and arguments for their case. As they do, the steward in our mock removal case will begin the investigation, interviewing various witnesses and doing the footwork necessary to get to the truth of the matter.

During **Wednesday's** class, students will learn how to go about preparing a grievance for the Informal Step A grievance meeting, including how to prepare a position page, how to organize the file and how to make the meeting happen. We also will cover what to do once the meeting starts, including how to handle problems that may arise during the meeting. Students also will observe the continued development of the removal case as it is presented at Informal A and appealed to Formal Step A.

**Thursday** students will learn how to prepare and present a case at Formal Step A as well as how to make the appeal to Step B. As these topics are covered, the removal case will move through the Formal Step A and Step B meetings and ultimately be appealed to arbitration.

On **Friday**, as noted above, there will be only one class, which will be held in the morning session in the main auditorium. This class will be devoted solely to the presentation of a mock arbitration of the removal case. Students will observe the union and management advocates present opening statements to the arbitrator, direct and cross-examine witnesses and offer closing arguments as they use the evidence and arguments that were developed in the case. At the conclusion of the hearing, the arbitrator will render a decision on the case and explain how the evidence that was developed during the processing of the case and presented at the hearing affected the outcome.

**Although it is not required, it is recommended that delegates who attend the steward school try to be present during one of the classes each day to experience the entire course so they don't miss out on important developments in the mock case. See you there!** ☒