

# Inside Headquarters

## NALC's Membership Department



**A** union depends on its members for its success, just as NALC depends on the Membership Department to serve and assist our members.

If you've ever called or visited NALC Headquarters, chances are that you talked to one of the seven staff members of the Membership Department, who keep track of members' contact information and status and also help them find information or the right place to get help with a problem. They even give tours of the building to letter carriers who come to Washington, DC.

"A big part of our job is to help carriers find what they need quickly," Membership Department Director Joseph Barbour said. "Even when they need to contact the Postal Service or the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for their problem, we can send them to the right place in those agencies and save them some frustration."

The Membership staff tracks and updates all sorts of vital information, such as a member's name, address, branch and employment status, or which members are signed up for grassroots programs like the e-Activist Network. When problems arise, the staff works to assure that each member is paying the right amount of dues, received a ballot for branch elections or is receiving *The Postal Record* in the mail.

To get the job done, the Membership staff members rely on their experience at NALC and their passion for helping people.

Make a phone call to NALC Headquarters, and you will probably reach receptionist Jeannine Greene first. Greene has a patient demeanor that helps callers

find what they need as easily as possible. She also handles logistics for the NALC's scholarship programs. Jeannine joined NALC last year after working at a law firm and a trade association in Washington, DC. A native of Washington, Greene enjoys getting away from the city to visit family in the mountains of Virginia.

When Greene takes a break, other staff members fill in on the switchboard to cover the phones. But the team effort doesn't stop there—though each Membership staff member has different responsibilities, they all keep the department running smoothly by knowing each other's jobs well, according to staff member Robin Hartman.

"We wear everyone else's hat in this department," she said. The previous Membership director, Wayne Nicely, encouraged cross-training to assure every staff member can provide the best service to members, a practice that Barbour has continued since he became director in June. Barbour, who has a total of two decades of experience with the NALC and Mutual Benefit Association, comes from a union family—his mother was a local president of the National Treasury Employees Union. (See the September 2013 issue of *The Postal Record* for more about Nicely's recent retirement and Barbour's promotion as director).

Hartman, who tracks dues changes for members who switch crafts, relies on her 10 years of experience in the Membership Department to assist members. Before coming to NALC, she served in the Air Force as a weather specialist. Hartman is also proud to be from a union family—her father, four of her six brothers and two nephews are, or once were, members of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters.

Working for NALC is a family affair for Crystal Beal too—she has the same job her mother had in the Membership Department until her mother's retirement



Joseph Barbour



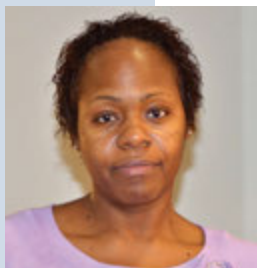
Robin Hartman



Kisha Miller



Crystal Beal



Veronica Grayson



Treva Koonce



Jeannine Greene

10 years ago. Beal joined the NALC staff in 2007. She processes new NALC members, adds carriers who sign up for the union's e-Activist Network grassroots program and keeps track of branch mergers.

Treva Koonce is happy to be part of the union cause since joining the NALC staff in 2004.

"Since I've been working here and learning what the organization is about, I'm very proud to be here," she said. Koonce, whose hometown is New Bern, NC, has two adult children and a grandson, but she says the Membership Department is her family, too.

Koonce's job responsibility involves tracking and processing dues for members receiving workers' compensation. The only job she might like better than this one, Koonce added, is carrying mail.

Like Koonce, Kisha Miller came to NALC via North Carolina, though she is a Bowman, SC, native. Miller processes retired members' information along with changes to branch dues. She joined the Membership Department in 2009 after working for the Mutual Benefit Association.

Veronica Grayson also came to the Membership Department via the MBA, where she worked for 15 years before moving to NALC in 2006. As a native of Washington, DC, Grayson knows the nation's capital well. She worked for several federal agencies before coming to work for MBA. Grayson enters data from forms into the membership database, tracks down missing information and keeps track of branch officers.

Having inherited an experienced, hard working staff, Barbour's challenge is to assure that computer technology keeps pace with their needs. Large, complex database systems like those Membership uses take time to update, but the staff meets the challenge by knowing the old systems well while they rapidly learn new ones.

"We're very fortunate the Membership staff does such a good job of keeping orderly records, assisting members and solving problems," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "I'm glad they are part of the NALC family and I'm proud of the work they do." **PR**

## Preparations under way for NALC's Hero of the Year awards

**O**n Oct. 10, the NALC will conduct its National Hero of the Year Awards luncheon, honoring specially chosen letter carriers for their heroic actions and community and humanitarian work.

This annual selection and recognition dates back to 1974. At the time, branches across the country wrote detailed reports of heroic deeds in their branch scribe articles in *The Postal Record*. As these reports increased in frequency, NALC leaders approached the Postal Service about having a national recognition event. The USPS agreed, and some 39 years later, the NALC is preparing this time-honored tradition again.

The NALC heroes are chosen by an independent panel of judges, representing the labor movement, community service organizations and emergency public services. This year's judges already have met privately to review the stories of heroism from *The Postal Record*. They examine each and every published report (Proud to Serve, Eye on the Elderly, Neighborhood Watch and Help on the Way) involving letter carriers going well beyond their normal daily duties to assist fallen customers, thwart crime and save lives of accident victims. There is one National Hero selected and three Regional Heroes of the Year, representing the Eastern, Central and Western Regions of the country. The judges also may select winners for Humanitarian of the Year, a Special Carrier Alert, and Branch Service Award for their broader work on behalf of a community or societal cause.

Each of the selected heroes is invited to Washington, DC, for several days' activities to recognize, reward and celebrate their heroic acts and good deeds performed in the community. Many bring their spouses, children and local branch president (at their own expense) to share the experience.

In Washington, they go through video, print and radio media interviews and a special private lunch with NALC President Fredric Rolando. Finally, on the third day in DC, the NALC National Heroes Luncheon presentation takes place. The NALC resident officers and departmental/letter carrier staff members are often joined at the luncheon by the postmaster general and Post Office officials, members of Congress and various labor and community leaders.

The event is a way to recognize not only individual heroes and branches, but to shine a light on all letter carriers across the country whose daily deeds and heroic actions add to the continued great respect and high esteem in which letter carriers are universally held.

Look for full coverage of the Hero of the Year awards in the next issue of *The Postal Record*. **PR**

