

Rolando: Challenges ahead for NALC, USPS require

‘UNITY AND A STRONG SENSE OF HOPE FOR THE FUTURE’



Above: President Rolando said that NALC would be up to all of the challenges facing letter carriers.

Right: NALC's national resident officers, trustees, national business agents and AFL-CIO delegates took the oath of office.



NALC President Fredric V. Rolando and the 27 other newly installed members of the union's Executive Council took the oath of office on Saturday, Dec. 13, at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in northwest Washington, DC.

With President Emeritus William H. Young, the installing officer, leading them, the men and women chosen to lead the NALC for the next four years recited the pledge as prescribed by the *NALC Constitution*:

"I do solemnly promise on my honor that I will faithfully execute the laws of the National Association of Letter Carriers. I will perform, to the best of my ability, the duties of the office to which I have been elected, guard all property placed in my charge and, at the expiration of my term of office, turn the same over to my successor. I will do all in my power to promote the welfare of the National Association of Letter Carriers and its members."

Rolando, who was re-elected last fall following a vote by active and retired NALC members, told those gathered that the Executive Council's responsibilities run deeper and broader than defending and promoting members' interests.

"In this, our 126th year as a union," he said, "we bear the burden of carrying on a long tradition of solidarity and progress—a tradition made possible by the men and women who built this union over multiple decades.

"We are charged with strengthening the NALC and passing it on to the generations that follow," Rolando said. "We also have the duty to fight for our fellow postal employees, and for all American workers, to create a more just, fair and democratic country."

POMP AND PAGEANTRY

In keeping with tradition, the installation ceremony started off with the presentation of colors by the Joint Forces Color Guard. Minneapolis Branch 9 President Mike Zagaros performed "The Star-Spangled Banner" *a capella* and encouraged the gathering to join him. Zagaros also led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Noting that it was her final official act as an NALC national officer, retiring Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broendel served as the affair's master of ceremonies. In her brief remarks, she extended her personal appreciation to all of the national officers with whom she had served since she first joined the National Board of Trustees in 1995, and she congratulated those who were set to be installed.

Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD) had been scheduled to attend and share some remarks, but Broendel announced with regret that the longtime friend of letter carriers had experienced car trouble on his way down Interstate 95 from Baltimore and would be unable to make the ceremony in time.

Broendel recognized some of the other dignitaries in attendance, including American Postal Workers Union President Mark Dimondstein and National Rural Letter Carriers' Association President Jeannette Dwyer, as well as representatives from the U.S. Postal

Service and the mailing industry. Representatives from dozens of NALC branches had purchased tickets to the ceremony, some making the trip from as far away as Hawaii.

Baltimore Branch 176 President Michael Smith gave the invocation.

Following the meal, President Emeritus Young shared some thoughts with the assembly, calling on each NALC member to go back to his or her home branch and encourage a fellow letter carrier to get more involved in every aspect of union activism.

Broendel then called forward the 10 resident national officers, three national trustees and 15 national business agents who make up the 28-member Executive Council. The NALC's seven elected AFL-CIO delegates were invited to the stage as well.

After administering the oath of office, Young excused the other officers and called President Rolando to the podium to deliver his second inaugural address.

NEW HOPE, NEW CHALLENGES

Rolando told the crowd that he hoped newly appointed Postmaster General Megan Brennan would be an engaged partner with letter carriers.

"As the first woman to serve as PMG, she is making history," the president said. "We are pleased to know that she served as a city letter carrier and belonged to the NALC when she first started out in the Postal Service.

"I hope we can use this transition in the leadership at both the Postal Service and NALC to chart a new, more constructive course for the future," he said. "We hope to convince her to see the Postal Service's delivery, retail and processing networks as invaluable assets to be leveraged for new services, not simply cost centers to be radically minimized."

Rolando said that many challenges lie ahead for letter carriers and the Postal Service. "Many of you are old enough to remember a time when the



Top: The Joint Forces Color Guard gave the presentation of colors.

Above: President Emeritus William H. Young installed the Executive Council before turning the podium over to President Rolando.



A crowd of several hundred attended the ceremonial dinner, held in Washington, DC.

continued existence of the Postal Service was never in doubt,” he said. “Although the public’s support of the Postal Service has never waned or wavered, we have faced a sustained assault on the Postal Service as we know it from both postal executives and political opponents over the past several years.”

The president said that letter carriers had not emerged unscathed from these assaults on USPS, but that we had successfully resisted the most damaging attacks. “Over the past four years, we have stopped disastrous postal reform legislation from advancing,” he said, “not just Representative Darrell Issa’s postal destruction bills, but also the deeply flawed and misguided Carper-Collins and Carper-Coburn bills.

“In so doing, we defeated attempts to gut benefits for injured workers and to undermine the collective-bargaining rights of all postal employees,” he said, “and we have fought off more than a dozen attempts to eliminate Saturday delivery.”

Despite our ongoing struggles, Rolando said, there remains a great measure of hope. “Given the results of the November election, we can expect to face continued attacks, particularly on our health benefits and pensions,” he said. “Nevertheless, we have some

reason for cautious optimism on postal reform, because we have had some success in changing the debate about the Postal Service and we have built an alliance with the other postal unions.

“The changing partisan makeup of the Congress does not alter the shift in the debate or the case for consensus reform,” he said. “Nonetheless, we know that the legislative challenge we face in the new Congress will be great.

“NALC and the labor movement can and must do better to mobilize working-class Americans, inside and outside our ranks, to elect a president and a Congress that will finally address the crisis of America’s workers,” the president said. “The only way to do that is to enact policies that will help workers rebuild the labor movement. Your new team of officers is totally dedicated to that task over the next four years.”

BANDING TOGETHER

It doesn’t take an act of Congress to strengthen the labor movement, Rolando said. “Our goal should be to organize every new letter carrier who is hired by the Postal Service, and that means organizing city carrier assistants.”

CCAs make up 15 to 20 percent of the letter carrier bargaining unit, the president said, noting that non-career letter carriers traditionally have been more difficult to organize. “However, our branches cannot simply accept a

permanently lower level of membership among CCAs without permanently weakening our union,” he said. “That’s because all future career letter carriers will come from today’s pool of CCAs.”

And there is good news on that front, Rolando said. “Our level of organization among CCAs now surpasses 80 percent, higher than the level among the transitional employees of the past.

“Still, the organizing gap between CCAs and career employees must be closed for the NALC to be as strong as we need to be to meet the challenges ahead,” he said. “The new Executive Council of the NALC is committed to doing just that.”

And all of this activity is performed with an eye toward 2016, Rolando said, when the next round of bargaining for a new contract with the Postal Service begins.

“We will focus on seeking an agreement that rewards carriers for their hard work,” he said. “It is also important that we seek to facilitate innovation and growth in the Postal Service by negotiating creative, win-win arrangements to meet the growing demand for e-commerce deliveries.

“We want to help the Postal Service become the dominant delivery company in residential America,” Rolando added, “an affordable, efficient public service utility with a career full-time workforce earning a solid, middle-class standard of living.”

LOOKING AHEAD

With a wry laugh, Rolando noted that what he said at the installation four years ago was still true: “The challenges of the next four years will be among the most difficult our union has ever faced.

“Yet, as leaders, we must also be planning for the longer-term future of the union,” he said. “We will attend to that task as well during this term of office.”

To that end, the president said he planned to reconvene a special review committee in 2015. “At the

last two national conventions, we initiated a dialogue within the union about structural reforms that may be necessary to adapt to changing circumstances and to improve the NALC’s effectiveness.”

Digging deeper, he said, the committee will study various recommendations. “My hope is that the committee can produce a report that the Council can debate and decide on which proposals to bring to our 70th biennial convention in Los Angeles,” Rolando said. “I am very confident that we will do what it takes to keep the NALC strong and united for many decades to come.”

The president reflected on the responsibility the national officers take on as they assume office. “Even as we fight to secure the job security and defend the standard of living of our members,” he said, “we must also defend the Postal Service as an indispensable public institution.

“The goals I have laid out tonight are ambitious ones,” Rolando said. “To achieve them, our union must aspire to the greatest possible strength. But we also need unity and a strong sense of hope for the future: the key ingredients for solidarity and power.”

NALC and the other postal unions are the last, best line of defense for affordable, universal postal services in this country, he said, adding that the new Executive Council will fight tirelessly to preserve and strengthen the Postal Service for the American people.

“In this room and across the country,” Rolando said, “we have the talent, the skills and the values to meet any challenge that comes our way. And we have a tradition of more than 125 years to draw on.

“I have great hope for the future, because I have great faith in all of you,” the president said. “I also have great faith in the men and women who were sworn in tonight. So should you.” **PR**



Retiring Secretary-Treasurer Jane Broendel thanked the union members once more before finishing her final official act.

National Rural Letter Carriers’ Association President Jeannette Dwyer was one of the special guests who were on hand to offer congratulations to Rolando and the other members of the Executive Council.



Profiles of NALC national officers 2015-2018



President
Fredric V. Rolando

Fredric V. Rolando was re-elected president of the National Association of Letter Carriers in 2014 following national balloting held among the union's active and retired members.

A member of Sarasota, FL Branch 2148, Rolando began his letter carrier career in 1978 in South Miami as a member of South Florida Branch 1071. He served the branch as a steward from 1979 until 1984, when he moved to Sarasota and soon became Branch 2148's chief steward.

"I got active in the union because of the antagonistic way management treated letter carriers," Rolando explained.

In 1988, he was elected president of Branch 2148 and held that post until 1999. From 1992 to 1999, Rolando also served as a part-time regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Atlanta Region 9, and he was director of education for the Florida State Association of Letter Carriers from 1993 to 1999. He was named a full-time RAA for Region 9 in 1999.

Rolando was first elected to national office by acclamation at the 2002 Philadelphia Convention as director of city delivery, having been appointed to that post in February 2002 by President Vincent R. Sombrotto to fill a vacancy.

As city delivery director, Rolando had an opportunity "to become familiar with many of the specific issues that affect letter carriers, both common and

unique to different areas of the country," he said. He took a leading role in preparing the union for "future city delivery issues, which will likely include transitions necessitated by changes in the Postal Service itself."

Rolando's election as NALC executive vice president by acclamation at the 2006 Las Vegas Convention was another affirmation by his fellow letter carriers of their confidence in his abilities as a leader on the Executive Council.

As executive vice president, Rolando focused on working with the USPS to restructure delivery routes of mail carriers in a manner that protected their contractual rights as employees while allowing the agency to have the flexibility to meet the financial challenges posed by changing communications technology and the economic crisis.

In July 2009, Rolando was sworn in as the 18th president of the National Association of Letter Carriers following the retirement of William H. Young. In 2010, Rolando was elected president by acclamation during the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim.

Rolando has a Bachelor of Science degree in criminology and psychology from Florida International University. He and his wife, Jolene, reside in Fredericksburg, VA, and they have two daughters and two sons.



Executive Vice President
Timothy C. O'Malley

Timothy C. O'Malley was re-elected as executive vice president of the National Association of Letter Carriers in 2014 following national balloting held among the union's active and retired members. He was first elected to this position by acclamation in 2010 during the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim.

Prior to his election as executive vice president, O'Malley served for five years as director of the NALC Health Benefit Plan. President William H. Young appointed him to that post in 2005 to fill a vacancy, and during the 65th Biennial Convention in Las Vegas, O'Malley was elected Health Benefit Plan director by acclamation. During his time at the Plan, O'Malley worked with the national president and the national trustees to increase both the benefits and member participation in the Plan.

O'Malley brings a substantial amount of experience to his position as a national officer. He became a letter carrier in Philadelphia at age 18,

just 12 weeks after the 1970 wildcat strike. NALC members in the City of Brotherly Love played a significant role in that walkout.

When O'Malley started as a letter carrier at age 18, he also became a member of Philadelphia Branch 157. O'Malley served as a shop steward for 10 years; he was later elected branch trustee and health benefit representative. He served as Branch 157 vice president from 1985 to 1988.

O'Malley then served as Philadelphia branch president from January 1989 up to his election as Philadelphia Region 12 national business agent (NBA) in 1998 during the 61st National Convention in Las Vegas.

He was re-elected to serve the letter carriers of Pennsylvania and south and central New Jersey as NBA by acclamation in 2002, during the 63rd National Convention in his hometown of Philadelphia.

O'Malley and his wife, Sue, have three sons, two daughters and seven grandchildren.



Vice President
Lew Drass

Lew Drass was elected national vice president in 2014 following national balloting held among the union's active and retired members. He was first appointed to that position earlier in the year by NALC President Fredric Rolando to fill a vacancy, another milestone in a steady history of union service.

In 1977, Drass began his postal career as a clerk in Riverdale, MD. He transferred to the letter carrier craft in 1981 and joined the NALC's Lanham, MD Branch 4819. Two years later, Drass became a shop steward, and served Lanham letter carriers in that position until 1989. That year, he transferred to Huntsville, AL, and moved his membership to Huntsville Branch 462.

In Huntsville, Drass served as assistant newsletter editor and Muscular Dystrophy Association

coordinator from 1990 through 1992.

In 1993, Drass became Branch 462 president and chief shop steward, jobs he held until his first election as Memphis Region 8 national business agent (NBA) in 2002. Along the way, he also served as an Employee Involvement facilitator (1995-1996) and, starting in 1997, as a local business agent. He was re-elected Region 8 NBA by acclamation at the 2006 Las Vegas convention.

Before his first election to national office, Drass was director of education for the Alabama State Association of Letter Carriers from 1995 to 1997, its vice president from 1997 to 2001, and its president from 2001 to 2002. He has also served as an arbitration advocate since 1997.

In 2010, Drass was elected director of city delivery by the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim.

Nicole R. Rhine was elected NALC secretary-treasurer by acclamation in 2014 during the union's 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

Rhine, a member of Lincoln, NE Branch 8, became a member of the NALC as soon as she joined the letter carrier craft, attending branch meetings and state conventions regularly.

"I couldn't wait to become a member of the union," she said. "I learned at an early age what unions stood for and could accomplish because my mother worked at a packing plant and belonged."

At the branch level, Rhine served stints as assistant steward and steward. She was elected branch secretary in 1998, a role she held until her election as branch president in 2004. For three years starting in 1998, Rhine was also the Nebraska State Association of Letter Carriers' legislative representative, until her election as state association president in 2001.

Rhine was a St. Louis Region 5 arbitration advocate from 1999 to 2006. In 2006, she was appointed as a regional administrative assistant (RAA) by NALC President William H. Young to fill a vacancy. Then, in 2009, NALC President Fredric V. Rolando appointed her national assistant secretary-treasurer to fill a vacancy. That appointment was affirmed in 2010 when Rhine was elected assistant secretary-treasurer in 2010 during the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim.

"It was my desire to educate letter carriers of their rights and to defend them when those rights were violated that inspired me to assume my other union roles over the years," she said. "I am excited about the opportunity to serve the membership as a whole after being able to do so previously at the local, state and regional level."

Rhine holds a journalism degree from the University of Kansas.



Secretary-Treasurer
Nicole Rhine

Judy Willoughby was elected NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer in 2014 following national balloting held among the union's active and retired members.

Willoughby said she got involved in the union soon after she started her postal career in 1980 "because I saw management routinely violate the contract and abuse letter carriers," something that inspired her to serve as a shop steward for West Coast Florida Branch 1477 from 1981 to 1983. She continued to serve as a steward when she transferred to Tallahassee, FL, in 1984 and moved her membership to Tallahassee Branch 1172.

"I felt the only way to stop management was to become educated and develop the skills to help all letter carriers and protect the collective-bargaining agreement the union had fought so hard to achieve," she said.

Willoughby later served Branch 1172 as trustee and vice president. She then held the position as branch president for almost 12 years, up until NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto appointed her an Atlanta Region 9 regional administrative assistant (RAA) in 2000. She had also been a Florida State Association of Letter Carriers executive board member for District 5 as well as FSALC director of education.

In the Sunshine State, Willoughby served in several appointed NALC positions in the North Florida District (now called the Gulf-Atlantic District), including as an Employee Involvement facilitator, as a member of the local joint steering committee, on the joint route inspection team, and as Delivery Point Sequence coordinator. In addition, she has been an arbitration advocate since 1988, and she served as a local business agent for many years.

In 2004, Willoughby became the NALC's first female national business agent (NBA) when NALC President William H. Young appointed her as Region 9 NBA to fill a vacancy. She was elected to that position by acclamation at the 2006 Las Vegas Convention and again at the 2010 Anaheim Convention.

As assistant secretary-treasurer, one of Willoughby's many goals will be to focus on continuing education to assist branch and state officers in their administrative operations and duties. "In addition, increased communication and transparency should be a high priority at every level of the NALC," she said. "I look forward to working with all members."

An Army veteran, Willoughby holds two associate's degrees from St. Petersburg Junior College and also attended the University of South Florida. She and her husband, Ken, are the parents of an adult son, Jeff.



Asst. Secretary-Treasurer
Judy Willoughby

Brian Renfroe was elected NALC director of city delivery in 2014 by acclamation during the union's 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia. NALC President Fredric Rolando had appointed Renfroe to that position earlier in the year to fill a vacancy.

Renfroe is a second-generation letter carrier who began his career in 2004 in Hattiesburg, MS, where he joined NALC as a member of Hattiesburg Branch 938. Just two years later, Renfroe was elected vice president of Branch 938. He also served as shop steward until 2008, the year his branch elected him president.

"As the son of a letter carrier, I grew up learning about the issues letter carriers have faced over the years," he said. "At a young age, I had a deep appreciation for the hard work and sacrifice of the men and women of our union and its positive impact on my father's job and my family. I quickly got involved in

my branch because I felt a responsibility to do all that I could to keep moving forward and improving the jobs and lives of letter carriers. I still feel that responsibility."

In addition, Renfroe served as a local business agent and arbitration advocate for the NALC's Memphis Region 8, which covers Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Tennessee. Renfroe worked extensively on route adjustments in his home state and focused much of his time on training members at the branch, state, and regional levels.

In 2011, the Mississippi State Association elected Renfroe its president. A few months later, President Rolando appointed Renfroe to work at NALC Headquarters in the Contract Administration Unit, where he focused on city delivery issues. In 2013, Rolando appointed Renfroe as a special assistant to the president.

Renfroe is a graduate of the NALC Leadership Academy, having attended Class 6 in 2008.



Dir. of City Delivery
Brian Renfroe



Dir. of Safety and Health
Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

Manuel L. Peralta Jr. was declared the NALC's director of safety and health in 2014 by the union's national election committee after the committee determined that a competing candidate's nomination submitted during the union's 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia had not met the requirements for certification under the terms of the *NALC Constitution*. Peralta had first been elected director in 2010 during the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim.

Peralta was hired as a letter carrier in 1979 at the Brookhurst Station in Anaheim, CA, and he quickly joined Garden Grove Branch 1100. In 1980, he was trained and appointed as a shop steward, later moving to become a branch trustee. Peralta also served, until 1990, as an equal employment opportunity (EEO) representative, handling complaints through all steps including formal hearings before EEO Commission.

In 1985, Peralta became Branch 1100 vice president; four years later, he became executive vice president. During this period, he served as NALC co-chair of the Employee Involvement steering committee in Long Beach.

In 1990, NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto appointed Peralta as a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 1, which covers California, Nevada, Hawaii and Guam. Peralta was elected Region 1 NBA by acclamation during the 2006 National Convention in Las Vegas.

"From the beginning of my involvement with the NALC," Peralta said, "I have worked to learn the contract, learn what our members need, to learn how to put a good grievance file together, to learn how to present grievances through the steps of our procedures and then to learn how to best present our cases in front of arbitrators. My hope through the years has been—and continues to be—to teach these skills to others and to inspire others to get hooked on representing our members like I was inspired by all my union mentors."

Peralta attended the California State University at Fullerton. He has been married to his wife, Gina, for more than 38 years. "I could not have dedicated myself to the demands of representing the membership without her total support," Peralta said. "She has raised my adult son Michael, my adult daughter Amy—and me."



Dir. of Retired Members
Ron Watson

Ron Watson was declared the NALC's director of retired members in 2014 by the union's national election committee after the committee determined that a competing candidate's nomination submitted during the union's 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia had not met the requirements for certification under the terms of the *NALC Constitution*. Watson has served as director since his appointment by NALC President Fredric Rolando to that role in 2013 to fill a vacancy.

Watson was president of Corvallis, OR Branch 1274 for more than 10 years, as well as a part-time regional administrative assistant (RAA) and a local

business agent until 1999, when he became a full-time RAA in Region 2.

In April 2004, NALC President William Young named Watson as assistant to the president for compensation, a position he held until his retirement in December 2006.

Watson is an acknowledged expert on workers' compensation issues, and has continued to work on these issues for NALC as the need has arisen, including in testimony before congressional committees.

With the appointment of Watson, the Retired Members Department now has oversight over the Compensation Department.

Myra Warren was elected by acclamation during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia to serve a third term as director of the union's Mutual Benefit Association (MBA). She was appointed to this post in 2005 by President William H. Young to fill a vacancy.

Warren began carrying mail in Dallas and joined the NALC at orientation in 1981. "My passion has always been to help the helpless and defend the defenseless while continuing to educate myself so that I can share my knowledge with others," Warren said. "The NALC has afforded me the opportunity to pursue my passion."

As a member of Dallas Branch 132, she was a shop steward, a Step 2 designee, an equal employment opportunity (EEO) representative, an AFL-CIO delegate and an elected financial secretary. For six years, she served as local business agent specializing in Office of Workers' Compensation Program (OWCP) issues, and she handled Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) cases. Warren also held several elected positions on Branch 132's building committee and ultimately served as that committee's president.

In 1996, NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto appointed Warren regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Dallas Region 10, which covers Texas

and New Mexico. In 2002, Sombrotto appointed Warren as NALC assistant secretary-treasurer to fill a vacancy. She was later elected by acclamation during the 2002 Philadelphia Convention to a full term as assistant secretary-treasurer.

Warren brings both a spirited commitment to serving the members and a determined sensibility to her duties. She also has a great interest in the legal system and holds a degree in paralegal studies.

Warren's passion and belief in her work has been rewarding. "I am blessed with a zeal for educating and helping people," she said. "It has been immensely satisfying to provide members with the tools necessary to defend, protect and cover themselves and their families. My goal is to continue steadfast in my responsibility as a union representative, and to inspire women and young members to take the initiative to seek out information through mentors, meetings, and so on. It's equally important to encourage members to share their knowledge, to strengthen the letter carrier craft and the NALC for the future."

Warren's husband, David, is a fellow letter carrier from Tyler, TX Branch 493, who transferred to Baltimore Branch 176 in 2008. They have three adult children—Herbert, David and Tiffani—as well as three grandsons—Corey, Herbert II and Marquis.



Dir. of Life Insurance
Myra Warren

Brian Hellman was re-elected director of the National Association of Letter Carriers' Health Benefit Plan by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

Hellman, an Army veteran, began his postal career in January 1980 in New York City as a clerk; he became a city letter carrier in 1982 and joined New York City Branch 36. After seeing how aggressive managers badgered carriers, he got active in the NALC, taking on the job of shop steward at the FDR Station in 1985, a post he held until he became a New York Region 15 regional administrative assistant (RAA) in 1994. He also served Branch 36 as assistant health benefits/compensation representative from 1990 to 1992 and as the branch health benefits representative from 1992 to 1994. He took office as

Region 15 national business agent (NBA) in 1998.

In 2002, President Vincent R. Sombrotto named Hellman director of life insurance to fill a vacancy. Hellman was subsequently elected to that position by acclamation during the 2002 Philadelphia convention, and he pushed the Mutual Benefit Association to develop new products consistent with good business practices.

President William H. Young appointed Hellman director of safety and health in January 2005 to fill a vacancy. During the National Convention in Las Vegas in 2006, he was elected to that position by acclamation. Hellman was first elected health benefits director in 2010 during the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim.

Hellman is the father of two boys and a girl.



Dir., Health Benefit Plan
Brian Hellman

With more than 20 years of experience as a national trustee to rely on, Larry Brown continues his commitment "to serve the best interests of the letter carriers who have placed their confidence in me."

Brown has served as president of the Los Angeles Branch 24 since 1989. In 2014, he was elected to a sixth term as a national trustee and is serving his fifth term as chairman of the three-member NALC Board of Trustees following national balloting held among the union's active and retired members.

Brown began his union career as a shop steward at Highland Park Station in 1973 and served in that capacity right up until his election as Branch 24 president. He also was the branch's Mutual Benefit Association representative from 1981 to 1989.

A tireless community activist, Brown is vice

president of the Los Angeles Federation of Labor and chairman of the Los Angeles Labor Community Services, AFL-CIO, and he sits on the advisory committee of the Los Angeles Trade Technical College.

Brown also plays a prominent personal and leadership role in political affairs as the NALC's congressional district liaison for Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA 35th) and as an active member of the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee.

Along with safeguarding members' interests as a trustee, Brown says he also feels a duty to "always be working toward electing government representatives who best serve the needs of our membership."

Brown's wife, Carolyn, is also a letter carrier and a Branch 24 member. They have three daughters and a son.



Trustee (chair)
Lawrence D. Brown Jr.

Randy Keller was elected to a fifth term on the NALC Board of Trustees in 2014 following national balloting held among the union's active and retired members. He continues to bring to his role a no-nonsense New England determination to keep the union strong so it can defend the membership and advance the cause of letter carriers.

For 20 years, Keller served as president of Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25. He became a letter carrier in 1982, joined the NALC and got involved after "witnessing management's disrespect and abuse of letter carriers," he said.

A disabled veteran who was an active-duty Marine from 1964 through 1968, Keller served in Vietnam from 1965 through 1966 and eventually rose to the rank of sergeant. After joining the Postal Service, he became a shop steward in his home

post office in Reading, MA, in 1984. He served Branch 25 as Mutual Benefit Association representative, Step 2 grievance designee, and branch executive board member before being elected branch president in 1990. He continues to serve as an arbitration advocate.

Under his leadership, Branch 25 has exercised its political muscle effectively in the congressional districts it covers, playing a critical role in nailing down House seats for good friends of letter carriers.

Keller has a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Boston State College, with a minor in business administration, and he has an associate's degree in business administration from Manatee Junior College.

Keller has three adult children: two daughters, Jennifer and Joy; a son, Grant; and three granddaughters, Riley, Ashley and Audrey.



Trustee
Randall L. Keller

A 30-plus-year history of union leadership reached a new height for Mike Gill when he was first elected a national trustee by acclamation at the 2006 Las Vegas Convention. He was elected to a third term in that post in 2014 following national balloting held among the union's active and retired members.

Gill, a veteran member of Miami's South Florida Branch 1071, started his career with the USPS in 1973.

"As a second-generation letter carrier, I understood the importance of the NALC," Gill said. "I saw the need to assist my fellow letter carriers because of the injustice that took place on the workroom floor," particularly on behalf of carriers who were frustrated or exploited in their dealings with "unrea-

sonable" postal managers.

In 1981, Gill was elected Branch 1071's treasurer. Nine years later, the branch membership voted him in as executive vice president, and in 2002 he was elected branch president. The branch, one of NALC's largest, is also one of the best organized in the nation.

As a national trustee, Gill has three main goals: to strive to improve the work life of letter carriers; to help make the NALC strong as it addresses the challenges it faces, from Congress to collective bargaining, from its political action fund to the e-Activist Network; and to educate the membership about the importance of staying involved in all of these areas.

Gill and his wife, Denise, are the parents of two adult children, Brett and Katie.



Trustee
Mike Gill



Region 1 NBA
Christopher Jackson

Christopher Jackson originally began his career with the U.S. Postal Service as an LSM clerk in 1981. He became a letter carrier in 1982 in Downey, CA, later transferring to Riverside where, under the guidance of Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 officer Manuel L. Peralta Jr. (then a full-time officer), the inception of his career defending letter carriers took place when he became a shop steward in the Riverside Rubidoux Station.

Jackson's high-level skill sets and expertise helped further his career, allowing him to serve as an NALC Joint Route Inspection Team co-leader from 1993 through 2000 for San Diego District North, where he concurrently served on the Employee Involvement Local Joint Steering Committee

and as the NALC's DPS coordinator. At the same time, he was also an area steward, through 2001.

His being well-versed in contract language led him into arbitration advocacy by 1999. By the close of 2001, he was serving Branch 1100 as a full-time officer, holding the office of vice president through 2005. At that time, he was appointed to the position of regional administrative assistant (RAA) for San Francisco Region 1, until his election a national business agent for Region 1 by acclamation at the National Convention in Anaheim in 2010. He was re-elected to that post by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

Jackson is the proud father of two Cal State Fresno students—Krystina and Emmanuel.



Region 2 NBA
Paul L. Price

Paul Price, the national business agent for Pacific Northwest Region 2, believes that turning "ho-hum" unionists into life-long activists can be the key to a successful future, not only for the NALC but also for every working letter carrier.

Price, a member of Portland, OR Branch 82, was re-elected by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia. He joined the union "my very first day of orientation" in 1985 on the advice of his father, Richard, who had also served as a shop steward and Branch 82 officer. Price became a branch trustee as well as steward—for three years, he was his father's steward at Rose City Park station. He became an arbitration advocate in 1992 and also worked as a local business agent from 1990 to 1994. In 1994,

he was appointed regional administrative assistant (RAA), serving until his first election as Region 2 NBA by acclamation at the Philadelphia convention in 2002.

Along with enforcing carriers' rights, "my emphasis continues to be to devise ways to capture the interest of the uninvolved union members so that they become life-long activists," said Price, who attended Portland State University.

Noting that his father needed to work two jobs to make ends meet, he said, "We don't have to do that today, thanks to the union. Our members, including the younger ones, need to know that and be vigilant to protect that."

Price is married to Sarah Price and has a daughter, Teal.



Region 3 NBA
Michael Caref

Michael Caref grew up in a union household, and he said that after he became a letter carrier in 1994, "it didn't take long to see why letter carriers have a need for a union."

Caref was elected national business agent (NBA) for Chicago Region 3 in 2014 following balloting held among his region's active and retired members. Before that, he had served from 2010 to 2014 as vice president of Chicago Branch 11, one of NALC's largest branches. But he began his career as a union activist in 2000, serving for 10 years as a steward for Chicago's Ravenswood Station.

Caref has also served as the Illinois State Association of Letter Carriers' Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) coordinator from 2001 to 2009,

and he was a delegate-at-large from 2011 to 2013.

In addition, he has been an Employee Involvement (EI) team member and a member of the Joint District Safety Team. He has participated in all of the various route adjustment processes over the years, and he is an arbitration advocate. Caref also is a 2008 graduate of the NALC Leadership Academy. He now serves the letter carriers for Region 3, which covers the state of Illinois.

"I will work tirelessly with the officers and members in the region to make the NALC stronger and to better serve the letter carriers who make up this great union," he said.

Caref is the father of five children: Anthony, Alanis, Solstice, and twins Cassius and Clay.



Region 4 NBA
Roger Bledsoe

Roger Bledsoe is the national business agent (NBA) for Denver Region 4, which serves the letter carriers of Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming. President William H. Young appointed him NBA in May 2009 to fill a vacancy; he was elected to that position by acclamation during the 2010 Anaheim Convention and again during the 2014 Philadelphia Convention.

Bledsoe, a member of Oklahoma City, OK Branch 458, became a letter carrier and NALC member in 1980. Since then, he has served as shop steward as well as his branch's director of safety and health, trustee and recording secretary. Later, he worked with the U.S. Postal Service as

part of the Union-Management Pairs program and on the Oklahoma District's Dispute Resolution Team. He also has served as an arbitration advocate.

In 1998, President Vincent R. Sombrotto named Bledsoe a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 4. Now, as an NBA, Bledsoe wants "to see that every letter carrier is treated with dignity and respect," he said.

Bledsoe has studied at Rose State College in Midwest City, OK, as well as at South Oklahoma City College. He and his wife, Melinda, have two daughters, Brooke and Jessica. Jessica and her husband, the son of a Goshen, IN, letter carrier, are the parents of Bledsoe's granddaughter, Cadence.

Mike Birkett joined the Postal Service in July 1984 as an APWU-represented clerk but transferred to the letter carrier craft just two months later and immediately joined NALC.

Birkett, a member of Dubuque, IA Branch 257, was elected national business agent (NBA) for St. Louis Region 5 by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia. At the time, he was a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 5, having been appointed to that position by NALC President Fredric V. Rolando in 2009.

Prior to joining the Postal Service, Birkett served in the U.S. Army from 1974 to 1977, where he worked as a military police investigator. He was a Teamster from 1980 to 1984; during that time, he attended Central Texas College, the University of Iowa and the University of Dubuque.

Soon after he became a letter carrier in 1984, Birkett became a steward for Branch 257. In 1986, he was elected branch president and served in that

capacity until 1996. Birkett also served two stints as a local business agent—1991 to 1995 and 1999 to 2009—and he was the district representative for the Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers from 1992 to 1996.

Birkett was Branch 257's health benefits representative for more than 15 years, the branch Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) coordinator from 1986 to 2009, and the branch Food Drive coordinator for 11 years. He worked as a part-time RAA from 1995 to 1999, and he has been an arbitration advocate since 1995.

From 2003 to 2009, Birkett served as president of the Iowa State Association. As an RAA, he has conducted numerous training classes on a variety of subjects in throughout the region, which covers Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska.

Birkett has been married to his wife, Cheryl, since 1980; they have three adult children: Nicole, Brett and Blair.



Region 5 NBA
Mike Birkett

Patrick Carroll was re-elected Kentucky-Indiana-Michigan (K-I-M) Region 6 national business agent (NBA) following balloting held among his region's active and retired members. The member of South Macomb, MI Branch 4374 had first been appointed to that position by President William H. Young in 2005 to fill a vacancy.

Carroll held a number of elected and appointed positions in Branch 4374, including steward, chief steward, sergeant-at-arms, editor and treasurer, before beginning a 10-year run as branch secretary in 1981. He has also served as an arbitration advocate, and he was active on many fronts, including

training, intervention and dispute resolution, as well as legislation, having served as a congressional district liaison for many years.

For six years, he served as an executive board trustee for the Michigan State Association of Letter Carriers. In 1991, he was elected president of Branch 4374, an office he held until his 2002 appointment by President Vincent R. Sombrotto as regional administrative assistant (RAA) for the 18,000-member Region 6.

Carroll attended Eastern Michigan University and Lawrence Institute of Technology. He and his wife, Grace, have two adult children: Lisa and Christopher.



Region 6 NBA
Patrick Carroll

Chris Wittenburg was re-elected by acclamation in 2014 as national business agent (NBA) for Minneapolis Region 7, which serves the letter carriers of Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. In 2009, President William H. Young appointed Wittenburg NBA to fill a vacancy; Wittenburg's re-election came during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

Wittenburg says he became an activist with St. Paul Branch 28 because he wanted his fellow

letter carriers to work in a safe and fair work environment.

Wittenburg served as a shop steward from 1990 to 2002. He has also been his branch's sergeant-at-arms as well as its social and entertainment chair.

In 2002, he was elected branch vice president, an office he held until 2006, when President Young appointed him as a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 7.

Wittenburg and his wife, Linda, have two adult children, Jillian and Daniel.



Region 7 NBA
Chris Wittenburg

Pete Moss was re-elected the national business agent (NBA) for Memphis Region 8 by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

In 1984, Moss became both a letter carrier and a member of Gulf Coast Merged Branch 1374, headquartered in Gulfport, MS. It wasn't long before he became active in branch leadership—that same year, he was elected branch secretary, a post he held for two years.

The members of Branch 1374 recognized Moss' leadership qualities, first electing him branch president in 1986. He served in that office for 16 years, through 2002.

For the last six of his years as branch president, Moss also held the office of president of the Mis-

issippi State Association of Letter Carriers.

In 2002, Moss was appointed regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 8, which serves letter carriers in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee. Three years later, the entire Gulf Region bore the brunt of historically devastating Hurricane Katrina in the fall of 2005. Moss was among regional and local leaders dedicated to helping restore order to the area wrecked by the storm's force, helping to locate and assist letter carriers who were displaced in the aftermath of the hurricane.

He was first elected NBA in 2010 during the 67th Biennial NALC Convention in Anaheim.

Moss is the father of two adult daughters, Meghan and Kristen.



Region 8 NBA
Pete Moss



Region 9 NBA
Kenneth Gibbs

Second-generation letter carrier Kenneth Gibbs was elected national business agent (NBA) for Atlanta Region 9 by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

Gibbs, a member of Brunswick, GA Branch 313, said he grew up in an NALC household—his father, Kenneth Gibbs Sr., had served as Branch 313 secretary-treasurer when the younger Gibbs was branch president, and Kenneth Jr. served as a T-6 on his father's letter route.

The former Glynn County, GA, school teacher was hired as a letter carrier "in 1980 and immediately joined the NALC," he said.

Gibbs has served Branch 313 as Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) coordinator, sergeant-at-arms, joint route inspection co-leader, health benefits representative, trustee and vice president.

In 1990, Gibbs ran for branch president and won. He served as president until 2003, when NALC President William H. Young appointed him

as a regional administrative assistant for Region 9, which serves letter carriers in Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The same method of progression of volunteering, being appointed to and being asked to run for office worked at the state and regional levels, too: Gibbs has served as recording secretary for the local joint Employee Involvement (EI) steering committee, as a regional arbitration advocate and local business agent, as district representative on the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) advisory committee and as a back-up Step B team member.

He has also held several offices with the Georgia State Association of Letter Carriers (GSALC), including president from 2002 until his appointment as a Region 9 RAA.

Gibbs has an Associate of Science degree from Brunswick Junior College. He and his wife, Linda, have three daughters—Angel, Angelina and Angela—and five grandchildren.



Region 10 NBA
Kathy Baldwin

Kathy Baldwin serves as the national business agent (NBA) for the letter carriers of Dallas Region 10, which serves both Texas and New Mexico. She was appointed NBA in 2009 to fill a vacancy, and was elected to that post by acclamation at the 2010 Anaheim Convention.

She was re-elected in 2014 following balloting held among her region's active and retired members.

Soon after becoming a letter carrier and joining the NALC, Baldwin, a member of Beaumont, TX Branch 842, served both as the branch's secretary from 1985 to 1990, and also as a shop steward for the last three of those years.

In 1990, Baldwin was elected Branch 842 president, a position she held until her appointment

as a Region 10 RAA in 1999. Throughout the early 1990s, she was a co-chair of both the Employee Involvement Local Joint Steering Committee and the Local Joint Route Adjustment Task Force. Between 1994 and 1999, she also served as a Region 10 local business agent and an arbitration advocate.

A fervent supporter of the Letter Carriers' Food Drive, Baldwin was the Branch 842 coordinator from the drive's inaugural year through 1998. She has also attended every state and national convention as a delegate since 1985.

Baldwin, who studied liberal arts at Beaumont's Lamar University, is the mother of two adult sons, Chris and Jesse, and is the grandmother of four grandchildren: Gabi, Jason, Clint and William.



Region 11 NBA
Dan Toth

The son of a letter carrier, Daniel Toth was re-elected Cincinnati Region 11 national business agent (NBA) by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia. President William H. Young had initially appointed Toth to that post in May 2009 to fill a vacancy.

Toth first became active in the defense of letter carriers when he took a shop steward position with Lorain, OH Branch 583 in 1984, and he has been working on behalf of his brother and sister letter carriers ever since.

Toth served Branch 583 as a local business agent and arbitration advocate, trustee and vice president, eventually rising to become branch president. He also served as director of education for the Ohio State Association of Letter Carriers.

In May 2005, President Young named Toth a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 11, which serves the letter carriers of Ohio and upstate New York.

Toth studied industrial psychology at The Ohio State University. He and his wife, Nancy, have two adult sons: Russell and Matthew.



Region 12 NBA
William J. Lucini

William Lucini was elected to a third term in 2014 as Region 12's national business agent (NBA) by acclamation during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

By then, the Navy veteran had already rolled up more than 30 years of postal service, including a decade's worth of experience in the NBA's office, both as a regional administrative assistant and as the NBA since January 2006, when President William H. Young appointed him to the office to fill a vacancy.

Lucini started his postal career in 1975 as a distribution clerk in Philadelphia. It took five years before he transferred to the carrier craft.

Lucini was assigned to the Jenkintown Post Office in 1980 and he joined the NALC. In less than a

year, "the steward asked me to be his assistant and I became the steward in 1983," he said. Jenkintown later merged with Philadelphia Branch 157 and Lucini's commitment to the union remained steadfast. In 1986, he was asked to serve as branch retirement and death benefit trustee. He was later elected to two other positions, serving four years as trustee and three years as Health Benefit Plan representative.

NALC President Vincent R. Sombrotto named him a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 12 in 1995.

Eight months after President William H. Young appointed him Region 12 NBA, the 2006 Las Vegas Convention elected him to that spot by acclamation.

Lucini and his wife, Judy, have a son, Jeffrey.

Tim Dowdy brings to his position as the national business agent (NBA) for District of Columbia Region 13 a dogged perseverance that has been honed over more than 30 years of service, with 17 of those years devoted to fighting for members' rights in Virginia Beach, VA Branch 2819. Dowdy served the branch as a shop steward and in several branch officer positions.

"I got involved with the union because I observed a frequent absence of fairness and competence among supervisors, and a frequent absence of integrity when it came to honoring the national contract," he said. "I've stayed involved all these years to reverse the negative effects these things have on carriers and their families."

A three-term president of the Virginia State

Association of Letter Carriers, Dowdy began his postal career in Virginia Beach in 1977. He served as a local business agent for 11 years, working with three predecessor NBAs.

Dowdy had served as a full-time regional administrative assistant for five years when NALC President William H. Young appointed him NBA to succeed Richard Gentry, who retired at the end of 2004. Dowdy was first elected by acclamation to a full term as NBA by the 2006 Las Vegas Convention, and re-elected by the Anaheim Convention in 2010 and the Philadelphia Convention in 2014.

"We will step forward and fight for what is right, and improving the work lives and standard of living of letter carrier families is fighting for what is right," he said.



Region 13 NBA
Timothy Dowdy

First elected as national business agent (NBA) for New England Region 14 in 1998, John Casciano was re-elected to a fifth term by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

Casciano began his postal career as a clerk in Boston in 1980, switching to the carrier craft in 1982, when he became a member of Boston Branch 34. He served as shop steward for 10 years beginning in 1984 and filed grievances on numerous issues. He was elected area steward in 1989, became a local business agent in 1990, and then served as Branch 34 vice president until his elec-

tion as Region 14 NBA. At the branch level, he also served as a grievance Step 2 representative, route inspection representative, and was an advocate in over 100 arbitrations.

Educated in Boston's Catholic school system, Casciano has also studied courses at the George Meany Center for Labor Studies near Washington.

Casciano and his wife, Kathy, were married in 1972. They have two grown children, both proud union members—a daughter, Jessica, who is a member of the American Postal Workers Union, and a son, John Jr., an International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers member.



Region 14 NBA
John J. Casciano

Larry Cirelli was elected to a third term as Region 15 national business agent (NBA) by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia.

The New Jersey letter carrier started out as a member of Jersey City Branch 42 before transferring to New Jersey Merged Branch 38. From branch to region to the NBA's office, Cirelli held a variety of elected and appointed positions. Notable among these was a seven-year run as a shop steward starting in 1986.

From 1993 to 1996, he was an Employee

Involvement facilitator, and in 1997, he served as Route Inspection Teams leader for Branch 38. A year later, he began five years of service as a Dispute Resolution Process Step B representative. He went on to become a regional administrative assistant for Region 15 before his election as NBA in 2006.

In his latest role as a member of the NALC's Executive Council, Cirelli continues to strive to give each letter carrier a voice—as well as an ear to hear it.

Cirelli has two sons.



Region 15 NBA
Larry Cirelli