

We hit the ground running



**Jamie
Lumm**

NALC education programs were off to a fast start in 2015. On Jan. 11, the members of Leadership Academy Class 19 were welcomed to their first week of training at the Maritime Institute just outside of Baltimore. During that week, the students learned about U.S. labor history, starting with the Industrial Revolution and the steelworkers lockout at Homestead, PA, in 1892, and the struggle of the Pullman porters during the 1920s and early 1930s to organize and establish the first African-American labor union. We concluded that segment with an in-depth look at the history of the NALC. The students also learned that week about teaching techniques and each gave a 15-minute teaching presentation

on a subject of their choosing. They also were exposed to several other subjects during their first week at the Academy, including leadership styles, group dynamics, and the *NALC Constitution* and bylaws. Their week concluded with a class on the history of NALC contract negotiations taught by President Emeritus Bill Young and Chief of Staff Jim Sauber.

No sooner had the Leadership Academy students hopped on the shuttle to return home, then NALC was back at the Maritime for training on the new route adjustment process (CDRAAP) training. Beginning on the Martin Luther King holiday and running through the following Friday, more than 360 NALC Route Evaluation and Adjustment Team members, District Lead Team members, Carrier Optimal Routing (COR) technicians, as well as some national business agents (NBAs) and regional administrative assistants (RAAs) attended one of the two two-day sessions conducted by NALC Director of City Delivery Brian Renfroe and his staff, which included Patty Joseph, Jim Yates, Tim McKay and Art Hardin.

The following week, we were back out at the Bolger Center in Potomac, MD, to conduct joint Dispute Resolution Team training with the Postal Service to 19 union and 19 management students who hoped to become certified as Step B representatives. In addition to myself, the NALC facilitators were headquarters Contract Administration staff member Sue Wellhausen and current Step B Team members Anita Lewallen (Oklahoma/Arkansas District), Warren Wehmas (Northland District), Jeff Fox (Northern New Jersey District) and Steve Hanna (Central Pennsylvania District). All but three of the students successfully completed the program and were certified as Step B representatives.

After a week to catch our breath and get caught up on other matters, we were back out at the Maritime Institute to conduct the first of at least four arbitration advocacy classes to be conducted early in 2015. NALC Vice President Lew

Drass headed up a team of trainers that included CAU staffers Shawn Boyd, Greg Dixon and Mark Sims in addition to your director of education. The prospective advocates began their studies on Sunday evening, learning about all aspects of preparing for and presenting a grievance at arbitration. On Thursday, we conducted mock arbitration hearings where they presented cases before mock arbitrators. On Friday, they presented a second case. The “arbitrators” who assisted us in that first week were Charlie Miller, national advocate and retired president of Branch 1100; Mary Martinez, retired advocate and Region 2 RAA from Branch 79; Jim Korolowicz, retired national assistant-secretary treasurer, advocate and former Region 6 NBA; and Pete Goodman, retired longtime advocate (950-plus cases) from Branch 2309. The training concluded on Saturday.

More training is planned for the upcoming months. Leadership Academy Class 19 will return for its second week in mid-March and for its third week in early June. Three more weeks of advocacy training are scheduled between late March and the end of May. Other educational opportunities for NALC activists and representatives are in the works and will be announced in the future, including the dates, location and subjects of the national rap session, so stay tuned to the NALC website (nalc.org) the *NALC Bulletin* and *The Postal Record* for details.

Good luck, Chuck

I would be remiss if I didn't say something about the USPS retirement of longtime NALC representative and good friend, Chuck Page. Chuck served as the Step B representative on the Connecticut Valley DRT team for more than 10 years. Prior to that, Chuck served his branch as steward, vice president and president, and served Region 14 as regional administrative assistant. I first met Chuck about seven years ago when we both served as facilitators in the joint Step B training, and I grew to appreciate his knowledge and teaching ability. Not only is he a great instructor, but he loves the NALC and cares for its members. For example, a few years ago, an NALC student became so ill at the DRT training that he was unable to drive home to Long Island, NY. I was concerned about how we would get him home, but without hesitation, Chuck, who had flown in from New Haven, CT, volunteered to drive the sick student home to Long Island.

Chuck is one of those unsung NALC heroes whom I've had the privilege of getting to know over the years, and I always enjoyed working with him. However, after 36 years as a letter carrier, 33 of which as an NALC officer, steward or Step B representative, Chuck was ready to slow things down a bit, so in January he retired from the post office. Chuck has assured me he will stay involved with the NALC, representing and assisting letter carriers whenever he can, and we should all be grateful for that. But I will miss his professionalism, humor and wit at the Step B training sessions. I wish you all the best, good friend.