

# NALC embraces AFL-CIO pledge to ‘Join. Fight. Win.’

**T**he 28th Constitutional Convention of the AFL-CIO convened in St. Louis Oct. 22-25 and representatives from NALC were there in force. Six of the seven delegates elected in 2016 at NALC’s Los Angeles convention were on hand: Providence, RI Branch 15’s Ingrid Armada; Medford, OR Branch 1433’s Denise Brooks; New Orleans Branch 124’s Lloyd Doucet; Chicago Branch 11’s Elise Foster; Los Angeles Branch 24’s Anita Guzik; and New York Branch 36’s Charles Heege. (York, PA Branch 509’s Stephen Hanna could not attend.)

In addition, NALC also was represented by President Fredric Rolando and Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine, who are AFL-CIO delegates by virtue of their offices. There also were several other NALC members at the convention, serving as delegates for state and local labor bodies.

President Rolando appeared on stage on multiple occasions as a member of the Resolutions Committee, moving for the adoption of resolutions on fighting the privatization of the Department of Veterans Affairs, promoting the rights of immigrant workers and defending voting rights in America. He also appeared as the co-chairman of the AFL-CIO executive council’s finance committee on the

convention’s final day.

The quadrennial convention was held in Missouri, a central battleground in the national fight over so-called “right to work” laws. Recently, the Missouri state legislature enacted such a law, banning union security (closed shop) clauses in state labor contracts—a traditional way to weaken labor unions by letting free riders accept the benefits of collective bargaining without paying dues. The state federation in Missouri responded by collecting more than 300,000 signatures—three times the needed number—for a 2018 ballot initiative to repeal the law. On the second day of the AFL-CIO convention, hundreds of delegates from all over the country joined phone banks and neighborhood canvassing actions to promote the repeal initiative.

The convention discussed and debated many of the most pressing issues faced by the nation’s labor movement, and it adopted the federation’s plans to promote a “Workers’ Bill of Rights” across the United States. Delegates also overcame significant divisions and reached consensus on key public policies, including the means for achieving universal health care coverage and for addressing climate change while protecting existing energy-sector jobs.

Below: NALC President Fredric Rolando delivered a report to the AFL-CIO convention.

Bottom left: NALC’s delegation to the 2017 convention in St. Louis



Two resolutions promoted by NALC and the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) also were adopted at the convention—one to promote voting by mail, which was folded into a voting rights resolution, and another to advance the concept of postal banking in America. Secretary-Treasurer Rhine addressed the convention on the vote-by-mail issue. (See a video of her appearance posted at [nalc.org](http://nalc.org).)

NALC delegates attended a variety of seminars and training workshops, including those on common-sense economics, on organizing unions to be advocates for veterans, on recruiting union members to run for public office, and many others. Reports from NALC’s delegates about these workshops, the convention and the labor movement in general will appear in the next issue of *The Postal Record*.

The current executive leaders of the AFL-CIO—President Richard Trumka, Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler and Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre—were re-elected at the convention. President Rolando also was re-elected as a vice president of the federation. **PR**

