

Organizing update



**Brian
Renfro**

As executive vice president, one of my constitutional duties is to direct NALC's organizing efforts, and I'm proud to report that NALC is one of the best organized unions in America. In fact, we have been the best organized open shop union for many years, with more than 90 percent of all letter carriers choosing to be members. I think it speaks volumes about our organization and our history when membership in our union is not a mandatory requirement of employment as a letter carrier, yet more than nine out of every 10 letter carriers voluntarily choose to join. Such successful organizing is a result of the collaborative efforts, planning and hard work

of individuals at every level of our organization.

Last year, NALC developed and put into place a new method of tracking our organizing efforts for new employees. Each national business agent's office receives information on newly hired employees and where each will be trained and work. The NBA office, in turn, provides this information to the NALC organizer responsible for addressing each new employee during union orientation in that area. With this new process, our organizers know exactly who they will be addressing in orientation, where each will ultimately be employed and which NALC branch will represent each.

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At orientation, our organizers provide each new letter carrier with a wealth of information regarding the history of our union as well as the present-day efforts of NALC. Each organizer takes the time to answer any questions the new letter carriers may have, explaining to each of them the importance of joining NALC and ultimately asking new employees to join. Upon completion of orientation, our organizers report back to the NBA office the results of their organizing efforts. The NBA then reports those results to each individual branch for follow-up discussions with each new employee.

All new employees who join NALC receive a packet of information designed to further educate them on the importance of being an NALC member and the history of NALC, to tell them about their new job and to inform them of their rights and benefits as letter carriers. They also receive a few items they can wear to proudly display their NALC membership. Each new member receives a welcome letter from their NBA, an NALC T-shirt, an NALC lanyard, an *NALC Constitution*, a copy of the National Agreement, a reproduction of past *Postal Record* articles pertaining to city carrier assistants (CCAs), a copy of the *City Carrier Assistant Resource Guide*, a copy of *The Letter Carrier's Guide*, a copy of NALC's *City Carrier Rights & Benefits* and a copy of *Standing Together: A Short History of the NALC*. All of this information is designed to give our new members the best chance at succeeding in their new jobs.

This new process has proven to be a huge success, resulting in about 99 percent of all new letter carriers joining NALC since the process was put into place over a year ago. However, none of this would be possible without our dedicated cadre of organizers, consisting of hundreds of letter carriers throughout the country who address new letter carriers and educate them on the importance of joining NALC. Our organizing success is a direct result of their profound knowledge and ability to communicate NALC's message to new employees. I thank each of them for all of their hard work. Their efforts do not go unnoticed.

While we should certainly be proud of our recent success at strengthening our union, we have to continue to work hard to be sure we give every letter carrier the opportunity to join NALC. The structure we have in place is working well, but we must continuously look to improve it.

In addition to organizing new employees, we also need to continue our efforts to organize our non-members who, for whatever reason, chose not to join when they initially were hired or who were previously members and chose to cancel their membership. We must be sure non-members know about our history and all that we have accomplished by having more than 90 percent of letter carriers standing together. It is equally important to ensure they know how our union works.

Continuing our current effective efforts to organize letter carriers, while constantly looking for ways to improve the way we do things, is a key to NALC's success. After all, a union is only as strong as its members.