

Veterans helping veterans



Assistant to the President for Community Services
Christina Vela Davidson

First and foremost, I want to thank Sandy Laemmel and Detroit Branch 1 for their gracious help with the Veterans Group homeless care kit project, as well as for the union hall that I almost took over for a few months for all the prep work. Thanks, too, to all the delegates who stopped by the veterans booth to write a few generous words for the vets—your expressions of gratitude and kindness were gifts in themselves. And finally, a great big thank-you to all who worked the booth and who helped with the project.

Together, we filled 2,000 kit bags with two meals, water bottles, toiletries, T-shirts, hoodies, combs and more. These items and some of the bags were donated to us from several companies, including Gleaners, CVS Health, Cigna, Thorlo, KR Branding, Mosaic and American Comb Corp., as well as several local NALC branches. The bags were donated to four transition homes for homeless vets: Michigan Veterans Foundation, Emmanuel House, Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries and Volunteers of America. In addition, extra items filled 12 larger postal Gaylord boxes that we distributed among the four homes.

The numbers were inspiring

What an awesome experience! Brothers and sisters, you showed solidarity—the number of volunteers who kept coming in and were in line waiting was remarkable. Everyone there seemed eager to help and to enjoy themselves. The room was full of great vibes. So many veterans spoke about the project for days and months, both before and after, which filled my heart with joy. I'm looking forward to Hawaii in 2020.

Even though there only are a few photos here, I want to thank all who shared their pictures with me and on social media.

I also want to let everyone know that the Veterans Group has more than 11,000 members. However, there still are tens of thousands of veteran brothers and sisters out there who are not part of the group. Being a veteran and a letter carrier is an honor and shows how those who have left the armed forces continue to serve America proudly. I encourage all branches to choose a veteran brother or sister to head up a branch veterans group and to start your own project or group meeting where veterans can share stories and bond.

Thanks again for your hard work on the homeless project. Your ongoing help and volunteer efforts are what makes everything NALC does successful. When we all work together, we never will fail. Always remember, brothers and sisters: Serving you is my job, and serving our communities is all of our jobs.



Top: There was no shortage of helping hands in Detroit for the Veterans Group project. **Above:** Mr. Jackson, l, from the Volunteers of America in Detroit, lifts up one of the bags for homeless vets, r.

Veterans Group memorabilia

Below are items for sale only for members of the Veterans Group. The brown Veterans Group shirts are also still available. These items would make a great gift from a branch to its veterans; call the Supply Department at 202-662-2873 to order. All proceeds go toward future Veterans Group projects.



Veterans Group challenge coin, front and back shown; \$10.

Veterans Group 2018 convention T-shirt, front and back shown; \$15



Drawstring bag, \$10

Window decal, \$1

