

Leadership Academy graduates urged to use training to serve letter carriers



NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Paul Barner presided over the graduation ceremony.

After three weeks of classroom training, the Leadership Academy participants prepared to move on to a week of work in their national business agents' offices.

NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Paul Barner presided over the graduation ceremony of the 30 members of NALC Leadership Academy Class 24. The ceremony was held at the Maritime Center in Linthicum Heights, MD, a few miles south of Baltimore, on May 24.

Barner, a graduate of Leadership Academy Class 3, talked about the transformative effect the Academy can have on a letter carrier, starting with the anticipation before arriving.

"You start thinking, 'What can I do to impress the instructors and the rest of the group? How am I going to contribute? How's everyone going to look at me and feel about me?' So then you come to the Leadership Academy and you struggle together. You learn together. You work together. You lift each other up. And before long, that 'I' changes to 'we.' And now it's 'What can we do to look better? What can we do to help each other?'"

The commencement event capped several months of intensive training on the skills necessary for union members to become effective leaders. Under the tutelage of their mentors—established NALC leaders such as branch presidents—the students combined three

separate weeks of classroom learning at the Maritime Center with take-home assignments and special projects.

Barner made special notice of the daily instructors who are with the students for all three weeks. They are Director of Education Jamie Lumm; Assistant to the President for Contract Administration Mark Sims; retired Region 7 National Business Agent Chris Wittenburg; Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 Executive Vice President Keisha Lewis; and Information Center Director Nancy Dysart. The students and instructors took a moment to recognize Dysart, who retired from NALC shortly after, in June.

"Those leaders challenge you. They mentor you. They answer your questions. They spend time with you. They parent you. That's part of the transformation. And that's what I challenge you to take back to your branches," Barner said, "because now you're part of that leadership group."

"You've struggled. You've been asked to step out of your comfort zone. You've succeeded. And you've found that you can do things that you probably did not think you could do before. What we ask is that when you go back to your branches, you do not go back to your branches with the idea that you're there to take over. That you go back with the same type of mentorship, the same type of leadership from these individuals who I've just mentioned. That you do what you can to help your branches."

"If you do that, you will be successful."

Barner encouraged the graduates to think about what it means to be a good leader when they return to their branches and state associations. "Maybe a good leader is someone who gives credit instead of takes credit," he said. "Maybe a good leader is someone who doesn't ridicule but mentors with compassion. Maybe a good leader is someone that puts forth the interest of





the group before self-promotion.

"I can tell you this: The title doesn't make the leader, the person makes the leader and the person makes the title. I challenge you to go back to your branches and to your states, and I am certain you will succeed. You've been given the tools to do that and now it's up to you to make that happen."

After the commencement, the graduates were assigned to work at their national business agents' offices for a week to learn in a different environment.

The 30 participants (listed below) now add their names to an ever-lengthening list of graduates of the Academy. During their classes, students took part in often lively discussions on such subjects as the National Agreement and the union's legislative agenda. They also learned more

about the Dispute Resolution Process, strategic planning, branch financial responsibilities, retirement issues, DOIS and route protection, workers' compensation, effective negotiation techniques, getting NALC's message out and dealing with the news media.

A number of NALC officers and Headquarters staff members are tapped to teach classes on a wide variety of topics.

Each week of the Academy also included an emphasis on effective written and oral communication skills in such forums as membership meetings, awards ceremonies and dinners, as well as written reports and oral presentations about their take-home projects.

The application period for participation in the Leadership Academy in 2020 is open until Aug. 31. The form is available at nalc.org/leadership. **PR**

Above: NALC Leadership Academy Class 24

Below: Beth Lloyd of Southeast Pennsylvania Merged Branch 725 receives her certificate of completion.



NALC Leadership Academy Class 24 graduates

Steve Amrhein
Indianapolis, IN Br. 39

John J. Barbery Jr.
Providence, RI Br. 15

Richard Brown
St. Louis, MO Br. 343

Gary DeGrijze
Long Island Merged,
NY Br. 6000

Jason Drost
Portland, OR Br. 82

Jacob Evans
McAlester, OK Br. 1166

Accacia S. Hammonds
Dothan, AL Br. 1630

Justin Hill
Emerald Coast, FL Br. 4559

Jerome "Jay" Jackson
New York, NY Br. 36

Louise Jordan
San Antonio, TX Br. 421

Roger Kies Jr.
Martins Ferry, OH Br. 1061

Michelle Kool
Grand Island, NE Br. 390

George Laham
Hartford, CT Br. 86

Beth Lloyd
Southeast PA Mgd. Br. 725

Andrea Lopez
Central California Br. 231

Johnna Lush
Minneapolis, MN Br. 9

Christopher Pascale
Green Bay, WI Br. 619

Jacob Petrick
Fond du Lac, WI Br. 125

Winston Purchase
Downers Grove, IL Br.
1870

Andy Riffle
Canton, OH Br. 238

Bryan Sanders
Denver, CO Br. 47

Janine Singleton
Dallas, TX Br. 132

Brittany Erin Slavin
Vancouver, WA Br. 1104

Amanda Tetro
Anniston, AL Br. 448

Aishia T. Tolson
Newark, DE Br. 1977

Estevan Velasquez
Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100

Nicole Wheatley
South Macomb, MI
Br. 4374

Dominique O. White
Chicago, IL Br. 11

Steven Wiley
Bux-Mont, PA Br. 920

Tamika S. Williams
Tidewater VA Br. 247

Krysten D. Wilson
Marietta, GA Br. 1119