

The first of the first responders



Assistant to the President for Community Services
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Well, it's that time of year again—time to celebrate those who have been chosen as Heroes of the Year for 2019. This year, the annual ceremony will once again be held at the Hyatt Regency in Washington, DC. It will recognize men and women who not only deliver the mail to 150 million households and businesses six days a week, but often assist in situations involving accidents, fires, crimes or health crises.

A panel of judges gathered at NALC Headquarters one day this summer and went through 200-plus stories about members who performed deeds of goodwill. They then selected a Hero of the Year and several other heroes. The heroes represent thousands of letter carriers who more than deliver the mail. This year's categories are: National Hero of the Year, Eastern Region Hero, Central Region Hero, Western Region Hero, Carrier Alert and National Humanitarian of the Year.

Letter carriers often are the first to arrive at the scene of a crisis—an accident, a disaster, a crime—and the first to offer assistance. Or, perhaps because of their daily vigilance, a community problem—a child without shoes, increasing substance abuse among neighborhood youth, families without food or fuel, a lonely senior citizen who needs cheering—is recognized and action is taken to provide solutions.

To recognize these carriers, NALC established the Heroes of the Year Awards in 1974 to pay public tribute to outstanding letter carriers who, ignoring dangers to themselves, perform selfless and heroic acts to rescue those at risk of losing their lives. In 1978, a second category—Humanitarian of the Year—was initiated to honor letter carriers for significant, sustained personal contributions to a worthy cause. The program was further expanded in 1986 to include a Branch Service Award recognizing an NALC branch involved in ongoing community service.

Once again, in 2002, a fourth category—Special Carrier Alert—was created to honor letter carriers who may not risk their own lives, but who, due to their alert observations of conditions and people on their routes, save customers' lives.

Every day, our members are on the streets of every neighborhood in every community of every city in every state. Members are in constant contact with the public. Brothers and sisters, you are the last public servants to make regular rounds and come into daily contact with customers. As many

state, brothers and sisters, you are the eyes and ears of the community. Being a hero is second nature for a letter carrier.

All of these selfless, civic-spirited letter carriers, who perform way beyond the call of duty every day, truly deserve our honor and respect. Along with countless other NALC heroes, both recognized and unrecognized over the years, they represent a continuum of the extraordinary commitment city delivery carriers feel to serve their communities. These good men and women believe that serving America means more than delivering the mail. For them, a vital part of “universal service” is a sense of universal caring.

With that said, I want to remind branch presidents and other members that the hero's nomination form (shown below) is online. If you think that one of your members has done an heroic deed and should be recognized, you can go to nalc.org/community-service/carrier-heroes/nominate-a-hero to print the form out, complete it and mail it in.

Letter Carrier Heroes

Official NALC Hero Nomination Form

Hero nominee's information:
 First name: _____ Last name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____
 Branch #: _____ City: _____ Region #: _____

Nominator's information:
 First name: _____ Last name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____
 Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____
 Branch #: _____ City: _____ Region #: _____

Location of heroic or humanitarian act: _____ **Date:** _____

Explanation of heroic or humanitarian act: (include attachment or expanded explanation)

Did the story appear in media? (TV, radio, newspaper) Link/copy attached?

Mail this form to:
 Letter Carrier Heroes, NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144