

Some training opportunities in 2020



**Lew
Drass**

Many of you will assume new roles in your branch after the Installation of Officers ceremony takes place. As a result, some of you will take on a more active role in processing grievances, and you, as well as many others who already do this work, may be interested in an opportunity to sharpen your skills. Here is an opportunity to do just that.

Advanced Formal A and Beyond training program

We held two classes in 2019, and we have now held 10 classes since we started this program in 2016. According to the 781 participants that have attended, this training is a really good product. Every single participant that attended thus far said he or she would recommend it to others.

At present, we plan to offer two classes this year. We are asking that you discuss this issue within your branch now and submit your applications by the end of March. We will send every branch in the country a letter and some applications, which will arrive in time to give you the opportunity to discuss this issue at your January or February meeting.

The dates for the two scheduled Advanced Formal A and Beyond training sessions are Sept. 13 to 18 and Nov. 15 to 20. These two training opportunities will be held at the Maritime Institute in Linthicum Heights, MD, five minutes away from Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) airport.

The total cost of food and lodging per room to attend an NALC Advanced Formal A and Beyond training session in 2020 will be \$1,219.15 (single occupancy) or, \$1,816.80 (double occupancy). This is for five nights at \$243.83 (single occupancy) or \$363.36 (double occupancy) per day. This rate includes your room and tax for five nights, as well as all meals and refreshments during breaks each day. We will supply all the materials you will need.

Over the years, we have made adjustments to this training program based on suggestions from participants and from our own observations. One such suggestion we implemented was to offer an optional additional day of hands-on computer training for those who need/want to take advantage of it. This option has drawn high praise from those participants who attended the extra day of training over the last few years. We will offer the extra day of hands-on computer training again this year as an available option.

The extra day of computer training will take place on Saturday afternoon/evening and Sunday morning on the front end of each session. This is a good opportunity for those of you who want to learn more than you know now about using a computer. While it does incur the cost of an additional night's stay (\$243.83 for single occupancy or \$363.36 for double occupancy) for your branch as referenced above, past participants report that it is well worth the additional cost.

Each Advanced Formal A and Beyond training session class has 80 participants, so we have a total of 160 spots open at present. Participants are selected from the applications we receive on a first-come, first-served basis. We already have received some applications, but there are plenty of spots open in each class if you are interested in attending. However, if you have an interest in attending, I would advise you to submit your application as soon as possible.

Applications will be sent out with the letter to your branch. They are also available on the NALC website. Simply go to nalc.org and click the tab labeled "Workplace Issues"; from there, a drop-down menu will allow you to select "Contract Administration Unit," and you then can click the tab labeled "Advanced Formal A and Beyond training program." On that page, you will be directed to information about the training, including two links to the application that provide the qualifications needed to attend. One is a fillable version and the other can be printed out and filled out by hand. Either way, please complete the application and mail it to me at: Lew Drass, C/O NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

This training program is intense, rewarding and a great investment for your branch's current and future efforts to provide the best possible representation for its letter carriers. If you are going to attend this class, you should plan to work hard all week, but you will get a lot out of it, too. I will be looking forward to seeing many of you in one of our Advanced Formal A and Beyond training sessions.

Arbitration advocate training program

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We also will be offering two arbitration advocate training classes this year. The first class will be held from Jan. 12 to 18. The participants for that class have already been selected. However, we plan to offer a second class in the fall. I will report further on this when we have firm dates.

One of the requirements you will need in order to be selected for this training opportunity is to have some experience serving as a technical assistant (TA) in at least a few arbitration hearings. If you are interested in becoming an arbitration advocate, you should apply through your national business agent's office. Once again, recommendations for participants will be submitted by the NBAs.

In closing, I want to wish all of you and your families a happy new year!