

# Delivering



Philip  
Dine

**T**he related but separate topics of letter carriers acting in heroic fashion and of letter carriers delivering our message have frequently been discussed in this space.

They are separate no longer.

With the U.S. Postal Service facing an existential threat that affects all those who work there, as well as millions of Americans who depend on USPS, you are rising to the occasion.

You are doing so by working your routes and helping customers along the way, as always—but also by delivering our message like never before, just when it is more important than ever. All this, even as you bravely accept the risks on your route so others can shelter at home and as you, off the clock, face the

same challenges as everyone else.

The threat USPS faces is a singular one—that the federal government will fail to help an institution held in high regard by an overwhelming majority of Americans of all political persuasions throughout the country.

Our goal is simple: We seek the same treatment as other sectors of the economy hit by the pandemic, assistance that will allow USPS to survive by returning it to its pre-coronavirus financial condition. This makes sense by any measure: logic, fairness, public well-being or U.S. economic interest.

Unfortunately, getting the government to do what it should is less simple. It requires, among other things, that we inform the public of what is at stake, inspire our allies to be even more assertive, and persuade those who are reluctant or even hostile to change their mind or, at the least, change their behavior.

**Watching all of you in action gives me confidence that we will accomplish this large communications challenge.**

That confidence starts with observing the actions of our top officers, as President Rolando engages with national news outlets to reach as many Americans—and politicians—as possible, making clear the sacrifices letter carriers are making for the greater good and the urgency of helping USPS get through this crisis intact. One small example: His live interview on Yahoo Finance reverberated widely; no surprise, given that it is the largest financial news platform, with 10 million views a day.

Equally involved every step of the way has been Executive Vice President Brian Renfro, whether he is making himself available to the media or helping devise plans to get multiple letter carrier voices out there.

Leaders at regional and branch levels have unfailingly as-

sisted in carrying out the communications efforts—for example, Dave Napadano and Larry Cirelli in Regions 12 and 15, respectively; Ted Lee in Pittsburgh and Paul Toms in Indianapolis—by identifying carriers to talk in first-person terms about their work and why it matters so much to those they serve.

**Those carriers, in turn, have been solid, impressive and humble,** as they tell the public what the challenges for letter carriers are, how they are meeting them, and why they are willing to accept them. And, what it would mean for the country if they were not there to do so.

And so, as representatives of what many of you are doing, we have Thomas Jackson of Pittsburgh, whose appearance on a new local media outlet called PublicSource captivated listeners from the get-go, as this soft-spoken Navy veteran explained that he has a duty on his route—serving the community and our country.

Or Tamara Twinn, a carrier until recently in New Mexico, now in Colorado, whose appearance on a Vice News television segment offered a compelling tale of an indispensable delivery network.

Robert McLennan, retired after 18 years as president of his Buffalo, NY, branch, warmed up with a letter in the *Buffalo News*, the state's fifth-largest newspaper, before being published in the country's largest paper, the *Wall Street Journal*.

Krysten Wilson of Canton, GA, graced the pages of *People*, one of the largest U.S. magazines with close to 4 million readers, which profiled her in a story on essential workers. A team of consultants could spend a week without devising a better quote than her last sentence: "The people that I work with, we would love to be home with our families, but we're out here to be there for everyone's families."

**Trust me, the names could fill the entire column. And trust me on this as well,** such a broad-based effort is not typical in the American labor movement. Some unions have skilled national leaders or dedicated regional or local officers; few combine that with an engaged and talented membership.

It is inspiring to watch you accept the challenge even as you face so many other challenges. We will see what the politicians do; we know what the letter carriers are doing.

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