

Biennial Report

2018-2022

A UNION of ESSENTIAL WORKERS



**President
Fredric V. Rolando**

This report is hereby submitted to the officers and delegates to the 72nd Biennial Convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO, Chicago, IL, Aug. 8-12, 2022, pursuant to Article 9, Section 1(k) of the *Constitution of the National Association of Letter Carriers*.

Detailed information pertaining to many of the National Association of Letter Carriers' most important activities can be found in the following pages and in the reports of my fellow officers. I am grateful for their efforts in fulfilling their responsibilities with diligence and competence. My role has been to coordinate and supervise their activities, set an overall direction for this great union and, in a number of key areas, provide direct, active and assertive leadership in the best interests of the members of the NALC and, where appropriate, the U.S. Postal Service as well.

Executive Summary

Welcome to the 2022 national convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers. All NALC conventions are, by definition, special occasions. There is pure magic in the idea that men and women of all ages, races, religions, ethnicities and family backgrounds can come together from every corner of a gigantic country for a common cause and to renew bonds of affection and solidarity that have been built over 13 decades by hundreds of thousands of their predecessors. That we get to have this wonderful experience in the great city of Chicago after one of the most challenging periods in our country's history, given the pandemic, makes it even more special.

At the time the NALC was formed in 1889, less than 100 miles from here, this city was the epicenter of a great national awakening among American workers struggling for decent wages and conditions in a harsh and unregulated industrial economy that created unprecedented wealth on the backs of the working class. The few unions that existed were small guilds for highly skilled tradesmen. As the economy industrialized, the number of manufacturing jobs exploded. It was the era of sweatshops, child labor, and in some instances, chronic indebtedness to the company store. Workers had virtually no rights—no overtime, no sick leave and no workplace representation.

In response, workers and their nascent labor unions started organizing and calling strikes to limit their working hours, improve their working conditions, and win recognition of their unions. In the spring of 1886, unions in this city (and across the country) launched strikes in support of these demands. One of those strikes involved the business of the family for whom this building is named—the McCormick Harvesting Machine Company—which later came to own the staunchly anti-union *Chicago Tribune*.

On May 1, 1886, an astounding crowd of 80,000 workers marched down Chicago's Michigan Avenue in support of workers' rights. Some of the protesters in the days that followed gathered to support the striking McCormick workers and to condemn the scabs who were brought in to replace them. Police suppressed the protesters with force and killed one

protester. On May 4, a rally to protest police brutality ended with the infamous Haymarket Massacre—when an anarchist threw a bomb, and police opened fire on the gathered workers. More than a hundred local trade unionists were arrested on trumped-up charges of inciting a riot, and four were later hanged. Their deaths fueled the development of the labor movement in the United States. To this day, May Day (May 1) is celebrated around the world as International Labor Day with union marches and demonstrations in support of workers' rights.

It took decades of further trade union struggle to finally win—at the bargaining table and in legislation. I am proud to say that our union played a small, but important, role in that epic struggle. Although Congress had mandated the eight-hour day for “mechanics and laborers” employed by the federal government as far back as 1869 and then passed a law to specially apply it to postal workers in 1888, the Post Office Department balked. It chose to interpret the law as permitting longer days so long as total hours did not exceed 56 hours per week. Carriers were illegally forced to work 10 to 12 hours a day with no overtime. It took a successful lawsuit filed by the NALC in 1893, which was eventually decided in the U.S. Supreme Court, to secure application of the law to America's postal workers. The Post Office was ordered to issue back pay for improperly denied overtime—totaling more than \$100 million in today's dollars. Sounds familiar, doesn't it?

This year marks the third time that we have convened in Chicago for a NALC convention. In 1978, we met here in the early days of the Postal Service to debate the merits of a just-negotiated but-unratified third collective-bargaining agreement. We faced economic circumstances remarkably similar to what we face today—there was strong economic growth (5.5 percent) but very high inflation (7.6 percent). Ultimately, following the lead of Vincent R. Sombrotto of New York Branch 36, this body adopted a resolution of disapproval regarding that tentative agreement because it put a cap on cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) over the course of the contract—setting up a negative ratification vote by the national membership several months later.

In 2000, we came back to Chicago in the middle of a highly competitive presidential campaign that nearly turned into a constitutional crisis. In the end, Vice President Al Gore, who spoke to our delegates in 2000, rose to the occasion and facilitated a peaceful transfer of power after the Supreme Court decided the election in favor of Texas Gov. George W. Bush after a month of high-stakes litigation over a recount of the votes in Florida. Sadly, the same cannot be said of the loser of our most recent presidential election, in 2020. Former President Donald Trump seriously damaged our democracy by his claims that the election was rigged, and some of his followers pose an ongoing threat to our republic—to which, as citizens and trade unionists, we must respond.

We gather here in McCormick Place to carry on the work of the Haymarket martyrs and our founders in Milwaukee to advance the cause of worker rights and solidarity—and to once again grapple with many of the same issues that faced delegates of the 1978 and 2000 biennial conventions. I have no doubt that delegates in 2022 will meet these challenges, just as our predecessors did. Welcome to Chicago, brothers and sisters.

Road from Detroit and the 'lost convention'

Technically speaking, this biennial report is really a quadrennial report. It covers the four-year period from our 2018 convention in Detroit to the summer of 2022. None of us who gathered in Michigan in July 2018 could have foreseen that the 2020 Honolulu convention would need to be canceled in the face of a global epidemic that would eventually take the lives of more than a million Americans. The COVID-19 crisis would end up becoming a primary focus of our union in the years since the 71st biennial convention, and therefore a major topic in this report.

But before proceeding, I'd like to pay tribute to the leaders and members of Honolulu Branch 860 for all their efforts to prepare for the 2020 convention. President Howard Komine, who helped organize a great convention in Honolulu in 2004, deserves special praise for mobi-



lizing his branch to, once again, play the role of host branch. Brother Komine put in months of hard work to get ready for our visit, only to suffer the disappointment of the cancellation due to the pandemic. We all owe Howard and Branch 860 our gratitude for that hard work. This week, as we thank members of Branch 11 for taking on the heavy duties of a host branch, let's remember to thank the delegates from Honolulu as well.

Another casualty of our “lost convention” was our plan for a very special celebration in 2020 of the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970. We had been preparing a new documentary on the strike for the Honolulu convention to complement the video we made on the strike’s 40th anniversary (“The Strike at 40”)—this time focusing on strikers all over the country in addition to those in the New York metropolitan area. The video also tells the story of how the national union in Washington used the strike to win collective-bargaining rights for America’s postal workers. In addition, we had planned a dinner to celebrate the strikers in New York in March 2020. The pandemic thwarted those plans as well. But the good news is that we’re going to celebrate the strike this week in Chicago—both with the newly completed film, “The Revolt of the Good Guys,” and a special exhibit called “The Week the Mail Stopped.” I look forward to celebrating the 52nd anniversary of the strike this week with all of you in Chicago.

Four years of turmoil and triumph

Two main subjects of focus at the Detroit convention were the upcoming 2019 round of collective bargaining, and our political strategy to overcome both the gridlock in Washington and the opposition of the Trump administration that was blocking our legislative agenda. Securing a new contract would be delayed and complicated by the arrival of the pandemic in early 2020, while breaking the gridlock and defeating a hostile administration would take two election cycles (in 2018 and 2020).

I will remember these years for the turmoil we faced as a country, which includes everything from the promising yet incom-

plete racial reckoning prompted by the murder of George Floyd in 2019, to the arrival of the pandemic in March 2020, and the chaos and division caused by the violent attempt to disrupt the peaceful transfer of power at the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. Through it all, the NALC has risen to the occasion to serve our members and to preserve our unity. Indeed, despite the dire challenges facing America, we can look back on these years as ones with major victories for NALC:

- Despite the unavoidable delays caused by the COVID-19 crisis and the need to initiate an interest arbitration after an eventual impasse, we negotiated a 44-month labor contract with the Postal Service that achieved many of our key objectives—a National Agreement that was overwhelmingly approved by active letter carriers who voted in an early 2021 ratification vote.
- We successfully resisted efforts by the Trump administration to promote privatizing the Postal Service, dismantling it and gutting our collective-bargaining rights—as proposed by the 2018 White House Task Force on the U.S. Postal System.
- In concert with our allies in the AFL-CIO, we used our Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) to help elect a pro-letter carrier and pro-Postal Service majority in Washington—first in the House of Representatives in 2018, and then with the Senate and the White House in 2020. Those successes paid off in concrete terms for letter carriers, with both significant relief for the Postal Service during the COVID-19 crisis and enactment of long-fought-for postal reform legislation to repeal the retiree health



pre-funding mandate and to secure permanent protection for six-day delivery in the United States.

- In the summer and fall of 2020, as the Postal Service began to struggle with staffing shortages caused by both the pandemic and the long-evident failures by postal management to improve the management of its workforce complements, the NALC and the other postal unions worked to calm growing public fear that the Postal Service might not be able to process and deliver election mail in a timely manner—including the tens of millions of mail ballots that voters were expected to cast as election boards shifted to vote-at-home options in response to the pandemic. We secured a seat at the table of the Postal Service’s National Election Task Force and worked tirelessly to make sure that every mail ballot was delivered on time to be counted. Our efforts were spectacularly successful, as 98 percent of ballots were delivered on time and the percentage of ballots cast by mail rose from 21 percent in 2016 to 46 percent in 2020.

- At the same time, along with the other three postal unions, we worked around the clock in 2020 and 2021 to protect the health and safety of letter carriers and other postal employees from the dangers of the COVID-19 virus—we fought to secure supplies of personal protective equipment (PPE), develop new safe-work protocols, restructure workplaces and work schedules to promote social distancing, and put in place a variety of COVID-19 policies. We mourn the 109 active and retired letter carriers who died from COVID-19, and yet we know that our actions prevented an untold number of additional deaths.

- We successfully argued to the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) that the price-setting system for market dominant classes of mail (most letter and flat mail) established by the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act was failing to secure the financial stability of the Postal Service. In December 2020, following a four-year delay, the PRC issued its final ruling on the rate-setting system. It adopted a more favorable price cap (allowing increases greater than the increases in the Consumer Price Index) that should improve the Postal Service's financial condition in the years to come.

All these victories were made possible by the incredible solidarity and unity of the NALC membership—and by the work of thousands of activists at all levels of our union. I am also very proud of the work of our national officers and of the amazing staff employed by NALC at the regional and national levels. In the face of the COVID-19 crisis and the near-national shutdown, we scrambled to reinvent and restructure the operations of the NALC Headquarters office, the Mutual Benefit Association and the NALC Health Benefit Plan. In so doing, we managed to find new, innovative ways to serve the members and to keep our union strong.

This week, we intend to celebrate our recent victories. But even more importantly, we will cast our thoughts to the future of our great union. Over the next two years, we must overcome the lingering effects of a pandemic that is not yet behind us. Among these after-effects are the staffing shortages caused by long-

standing postal managerial shortcomings and a labor market transformed by the COVID-19 crisis. The “Great Resignation” and a noticeable rise in union organizing efforts have reshuffled our economy. Another lingering impact is high inflation caused by COVID-19-related disruptions to global supply chains—now made worse by Russia's immoral and unprovoked attack on Ukraine, which has caused both energy and food prices to soar even higher. These factors will certainly have an impact on the upcoming midterm elections, when we must work to sustain a bipartisan majority for the Postal Service and its workers.

If the past four years have taught us anything, it is that the future is unpredictable. But they also have taught us that when we stay united and strong, NALC can achieve its goals no matter how difficult the circumstances.

A union of essential workers looks to the future

Of course, the real heroes of the NALC during these tumultuous times have been the rank-and-file members of our union who serve every day on the front lines of the still-lingering pandemic. As NALC has striven to serve and protect its members, our members have continued to serve and protect the American people in a time of crisis:

We helped tens of millions of Americans work from home, shelter in place, and stay safe by delivering billions of essential packages.

We distributed relief checks from the Treasury and health bulletins from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

As mentioned above, we made it possible for nearly half the country's 160 million voters to safely vote by mail in 2020 in the highest-turnout election in our lifetimes.

And we have delivered—and continue to deliver each day—do-it-yourself COVID-19 test kits that have helped tens of millions of Americans monitor their health status and thereby limit the further spread of the virus.

Letter carriers have always known how **essential** we are to the political, social

and economic well-being of our country—long before COVID-19 struck. But now the rest of the country has taken notice, too—so much so that the Postal Service landed the very top slot (No. 1) of the Harris Poll's list of the “most essential enterprises” in May 2020. Around the same time, the Pew Research Center released a public opinion poll on the attitudes of Americans toward various agencies of the federal government. As has been true for decades, the Postal Service had the highest approval rating and an astounding 91 percent of those surveyed reported having a favorable view of our agency. Inspired by this overwhelming public support and in celebration of our contributions to American life during the once-in-a-century pandemic, we chose the theme of the 72nd biennial convention—**NALC: A Union of Essential Workers**.

That theme feels right to me not only because NALC represents essential workers, but also because the work of delegates to this convention is *essential* to the success of our union. But so is the work you do week in and week out between conventions. You are the shop stewards who enforce our contract, the branch officers who give life and energy to our branches, the health benefit and MBA representatives who make those services real for our members, the food drive and MDA coordinators who power our community service activities, the political and legislative activists who drive our legislative agenda, the Letter Carrier Political Fund contributors who amplify our advocacy, and the retired members whose experience, knowledge and commitment animate NALC's essential spirit of solidarity. *Together, we make up a union of essential workers.*

I look forward to a great convention and can't wait to get to work on the next great challenges facing NALC.

The main body of this report will provide information about the activities of all of the major departments of our national headquarters since the Detroit convention, starting with my office, and will include reports from each of the NALC's resident officers and national business agents (NBAs) as well as from the Board of Trustees.



Report of the Office of the President

The past four years have been among the most challenging in the history of the NALC. Having first taken this office amid the Great Recession of 2009-2010, I did not think anything would ever be more difficult to overcome. I was wrong. In 2020, we faced an even greater economic crisis brought on by the worst global public health crisis in our lifetimes, the COVID-19 pandemic.

We were all shocked by how fast the Covid virus spread across the United States—infesting and sickening millions and hospitalizing hundreds of thousands. Across the country, state and local governments began to issue “shelter in place” orders to slow the spread of the virus. The economic impact was felt immediately. In the space of a few short weeks in the spring of 2020, 14 million Americans lost their jobs and the unemployment rate spiked from 3.8 percent to 14.4 percent—far surpassing the rate reached in 2009. Letter mail volume plunged faster than during the Great Depression of the 1930s—First-Class Mail declined by 25 percent and marketing mail dropped off by 50 percent. In the initial uncertain weeks of the crisis, when more than 100 million Americans (whose jobs allowed it) were compelled to work from home, the Board of Governors of the Postal Service informed Congress that USPS could exhaust its operating funds within months—a prediction that happily did not come true. The feeling of crisis was palpable.

In the face of this existential crisis for the Postal Service and the danger posed by the COVID-19 virus to our members, the NALC—at the national, regional and local levels—was forced to use creative changes and social distancing to keep our officers, employees and staff safe. Like other U.S. employers, we reconfigured our phone systems and adopted new technology to allow us to continue our work on behalf of the union’s membership. The officers and staff of the NALC responded to the crisis magnificently. Although none of us needed the strength and courage shown by active letter carriers who went to work every day despite the dangers of exposure to COVID-19, I have never been prouder of the men and women who work for the NALC. They stepped up for letter carriers just as letter carriers stepped up for the

country we serve. On behalf of the entire membership, I wish to express my appreciation to the NALC’s staff and officers for all their hard work during this most trying at times—most especially to those at the local level.

In the pages that follow, I want to first review the incredible contributions of letter carriers and the Postal Service during the pandemic and comment on what we’ve learned from this crisis. Then I will report on my activities since the Detroit convention, starting with a section on collective bargaining and then moving on to legislative and regulatory affairs, and our union’s political activities. I will conclude my office’s report with a brief discussion of the challenges facing the NALC in the future.

USPS and the COVID-19 pandemic

Little else in recent memory has changed the lives of letter carriers as dramatically as the COVID-19 pandemic. As you’ll see, nearly every aspect of my report refers in some way to the effects of the pandemic.

Most of us were born after the second World War, which is probably the event most similar to what we faced in the early days of the pandemic—a truly global catastrophe that transformed American life at warp speed. Within several weeks of the World Health Organization declaring the novel coronavirus outbreak a global pandemic on March 11, 2020, nearly the entire country was placed under a “stay at home” order. The U.S. economy was purposely shut down to slow the spread of the virus. In the early months of the pandemic, millions of workers were filing for unemployment insurance *per week*. In comparison, at the height of the 2008-2009 recession, about 800,000 Americans per month lost their jobs. The level of uncertainty that marked the first months of the pandemic is something I expect few of us will ever forget.

While lifesaving vaccines have allowed for the return of some certainty and a semblance of normalcy, the pandemic continues, particularly as new variants arise. More than 1 million Americans have died from COVID-19 and at least 88 million have tested positive for the virus—though by nearly all accounts, that number is a drastic undercount. We must continue to

care for our brothers and sisters who are still at great risk, whether they are immunocompromised or experiencing the devastating effects of “long COVID-19.”

Though always critical to the functioning of the country’s social and economic life, the Postal Service became a lifeline overnight. The Postal Service became so important that a June 2021 Harris poll ranking 100 major U.S. companies rated it the nation’s “most essential” company—above companies like Amazon, CVS and Purell. Early on, as people sheltered at home, the Postal Service ensured that the nation still received prescription drugs, CDC public health information, and goods ordered online to prevent the spread of the virus. Later, as Congress passed coronavirus stimulus packages, USPS delivered relief checks to households in great need. The U.S. Census Bureau conducted the 10-year census, which included mail to and from millions of households. In the 2020 primary and general elections, the Postal Service was integral to the smooth delivery of millions of mailed ballots as dozens of states adopted emergency measures to make voting by mail more accessible, partly to prevent long lines at the polls that posed a dangerous public health risk. And most recently, the Biden administration partnered with USPS to mail free, at-home rapid COVID-19 tests to make testing more accessible.

For letter carriers, the crisis was particularly challenging. As front-line “essential” workers who had to remain on the job to deliver vital mail and packages to keep our country going, we were asked to risk our health and even our lives—and the health and lives of our loved ones—to do this essential work, all while we struggled with the same inconveniences and anxieties that everyone else was facing. We had to navigate ever-changing public health guidelines, mask mandates and social distancing. Staffing shortages due to the absence of colleagues who had contracted the virus or needed to stay home to care for children whose schools and childcare had closed exacerbated this stress. At the peak of the pandemic in January 2022, thousands of letter carriers had contracted COVID-19 and thousands more were forced to quarantine.

Letter carriers have a long history of serving the United States in times of crisis.

Our service in difficult times transcends the delivery of mail. By delivering our routes, we bring a sense of normalcy and stability to anxious customers. And by showing up to do our jobs in the face of uncertainty and danger, our members were truly heroic, overcoming fear to serve our country. I have never been prouder to represent letter carriers.

But of course, like with many aspects of the pandemic, this pride also comes with deep sorrow and grief. NALC mourns the loss of 109 of our brothers and sisters from COVID-19, as I write this. We thank these members for their service to their communities and nation, and send our deepest condolences to their families, friends and colleagues. To honor these lives, we set up a memorial wall online.

At the beginning of the pandemic, there was a tremendous amount of uncertainty about how the future would unfold for us, our families, the Postal Service and our country. But for NALC, there were two overriding and immediate goals: First, we were dedicated to protecting the health and safety of letter carriers—and therefore the health and safety of our families and patrons. Second, we fought to ensure that the Postal Service had the resources to continue operations.

On the first goal, the national officers, staff and other NALC representatives throughout the country worked truly around the clock to engage postal management to secure needed PPE and cleaning supplies, while also negotiating safety-enhancing work rules, policies and protocols to mitigate the risks of infection among our members. A detailed discussion of these efforts is provided below in the collective-bargaining section. In pursuit of this same objective, the NALC Executive Council made the unprecedented decision to cancel the union's 2020 national convention in Honolulu, not being able to guarantee that travel and gathering in person would be safe.

Regarding our second goal, ensuring that the Postal Service maintained the revenues necessary to continue operations through this crisis, we faced a daunting task. The impact of the pandemic on Postal Service revenues and of the pandemic-related shutdown of the U.S. and global economies was devastating and immediate. Although package volumes were

up as we delivered goods for families forced to shelter at home, letter volume plummeted in those early months. To make matters worse, the Postal Service became entwined in a political battle as President Trump strongly opposed giving USPS financial relief in the COVID-19 legislation. As detailed in the legislative section of my report below, we were able to secure \$10 billion in financial assistance from the last COVID-19 relief bill enacted in December 2020.

Fortunately, the Postal Service enjoyed extraordinary levels of public support during this crisis. As a union, we worked to harness that public support to preserve and protect the Postal Service and fight for federal pandemic assistance similar to that received by other sectors. Ultimately, the early volume losses were not permanent, and the nation's reliance on e-commerce during the pandemic significantly increased the Postal Service's operating revenue, even above 2019 levels.

As we reach a new stage of the pandemic in a state of relative stability, we can look back on lessons learned. Congress's robust economic response to the pandemic was incredibly positive. Relief packages achieved historic gains against poverty and bolstered the economy. Thanks to economic impact payments and the prepayment of the child tax credit, the number of people with annual income below the poverty line fell in 2020 by the largest amount on record: 8 million. Direct government assistance worked—and the deep recession caused by the pandemic lasted only months instead of the years required after to overcome the global financial crisis of 2008-2009. But the government's public health response was less successful,

obstructed by politicization of the pandemic and a rise in misinformation, which promoted a lack of trust in the institutions working to protect the nation. Communication and strategic messaging are crucial to re-building this trust.

As we look to the future keeping these lessons in mind, we see ways the Postal Service can be a tool to do better in the next public health crisis. Thanks to the Postal Service's vast reach, it could capably take on an expanded public health role. Letter carriers could be used as contact tracers, the government could partner with the agency to distribute masks or other necessary supplies early in a crisis, and we could revive and expand the Cities Readiness Initiative, which had been developed to respond to potential bio-chemical attacks in the early 2000s, for new uses. The Postal Service exists to serve the public, and letter carriers are committed to this mission. We can be a part of preventing the next public health crisis from reaching the scope of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Collective bargaining

In late June 2019, NALC kicked off contract talks with the Postal Service. For the

Volume 133/Number 6 June 2020

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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HEROES DELIVERING

A day in the life as told by letter carriers

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15th time since 1970, we sat across the table from a postmaster general and a team of labor relations managers to hash out the terms of a new National Agreement governing our wages, benefits and working conditions. None of us could have imagined what an unusual round of bargaining it would turn out to be—one that would include a deadly pandemic that both complicated talks and delayed them, a mid-round rap session, two postmasters general, a modified period of mediation, and a partial interest arbitration remotely conducted on Zoom. The most important thing, however, was its conclusion—a voluntary settlement that could be—and was—sent to the members for ratification. However, before reporting on the 17-month road to a new National Agreement, I want to address perhaps the most consequential collective-bargaining activity since the Detroit convention—our efforts to protect the health and safety of letter carriers in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Combating COVID-19 in the workplace

In the academic literature on labor unions, labor economists note that unions give workers an alternative to “exiting” (quitting) when their employers treat them poorly by giving them a “voice” on the job, giving them the ability to make things better. This function, they say, is one of the reasons union workers suffer fewer injuries and are much more productive than non-union workers.

Never has the “voice” function of the NALC been more important than when the pandemic hit in March 2020. At the time, we were preparing to go to interest arbitration to settle the terms of a new National Agreement. In the face of an unprecedented public health crisis that had already tragically killed 13 active city letter carriers by the end of April, all of our attention necessarily shifted to responding to the health and safety threat to the men and women we represent. Over the next several months, I spoke with and met (through videoconferencing) with Postmaster General Megan Brennan and the Postal Service’s top executives dozens of times to minimize the threat of infection among active letter carriers. We worked to set up a system to acquire and distribute

PPE to every postal employee—including masks, gloves, sanitizing wipes and hand sanitizer—sharing daily information on workplaces facing shortages and identifying COVID-19 hot spots. We worked on getting information from the CDC to postal workers, whose essential duties were vital to the functioning of our society.

Over several weeks, we negotiated a number of new MOUs and protocols aimed at: promoting safe working practices by requiring face masks; initiating programs to test and quarantine those exposed to the virus; providing sick leave for city carrier assistant (CCAs) with COVID-19-related issues; implementing new liberal leave and leave without pay (LWOP) policies to allow letter carriers to handle gaps in child care coverage caused by school closings and other COVID-19-related family issues; staggering work starting times of letter carriers; reconfiguring carrier workplaces (where possible) to maximize social distancing; and ensuring the delivery of mandatory stand-up talks on COVID-19 policies.

NALC and the other postal unions also negotiated with postal management to help deal with operational bottlenecks and service failures resulting from staff shortages caused by COVID-19. For example, we created a mechanism for sharing workers between facilities and the means to hire temporary carrier assistants to replace carriers who tested positive for COVID-19 or who were being quarantined for safety reasons. All through the summer of 2020, we worked with our NBAs and branch leaders to identify service problems caused by the growing staff shortage due to the pandemic as well as to pre-existing managerial failures that also contributed to improper staffing.

This work continued when a new postmaster general, Louis DeJoy, took office in June 2020. His appointment caused a media and political firestorm. Although he had built a successful trucking and logistics company with 10,000 workers in North Carolina, his political ties to President Trump were controversial—and he was a major fundraiser for the Republican Party. Over the prior two years, Trump had relentlessly attacked the Postal Service with a steady stream of false claims about the Postal Service’s Negotiated Service Agreement with Amazon, whose owner, Jeff Bezos, also owns the *Washington*

Post—which was highly critical of the president. And in the months immediately preceding DeJoy’s selection, Trump intensified his attacks on the Postal Service with an all-out disinformation campaign about vote-by-mail, as states across the country turned to postal ballots as a much safer way to conduct both primaries and a general election during a pandemic. Trump falsely claimed that mail ballots would cause massive voter fraud that would cost him reelection—and DeJoy’s hiring led to fears that Trump was trying to sabotage the Postal Service before the election. It did not help that USPS immediately misapplied transportation policies that added to the Postal Service’s pandemic-related service problems.

But rather than adding to the hysteria, we focused on working with the new PMG to solve the service problems while protecting the health and safety of our members. We negotiated a halt to three misguided delivery programs unilaterally introduced by management that were impairing the quality of service—the Consolidated Casing program, the Expedited to Street/Afternoon Sortation (ESAS) program and the Sortation Equipment Rationalization (SEP) initiative. And we worked with DeJoy to renew and improve our COVID-19-related memorandums of understanding (MOUs).

Looking back on this period, we can take legitimate pride in how we used our collective-bargaining role to keep letter carriers as safe as possible during perhaps the scariest and most dangerous period in the history of the Postal Service. I have no doubt that our efforts saved lives. But we also can take pride in how we helped the Postal Service survive the pandemic—both by fighting to preserve the quality of service, especially as it related to the 2020 elections (see page 30), and by campaigning for pandemic relief from Congress. I will further address these topics elsewhere in my office report.

Negotiating the 2019-2023 National Agreement

As we began the process of negotiating a new National Agreement in the summer of 2019, we formed subcommittees to develop the formal proposals we would present to the Postal Service. The subcommittees—composed of NALC Executive Council members and union staffers—



focused on several important subjects, from workplace issues, city delivery matters and safety and health, to route structure, uniforms and innovation strategy. The subcommittees worked for months, going over convention resolutions and discussing practical ways to solve problems facing letter carriers.

Many of our goals were common to every round of collective bargaining—pay increases to reward letter carriers for our contributions to the Postal Service and to recognize the increasing difficulty of our work, the preservation of COLAs, the maintenance of protections against subcontracting and layoffs. But others were unique to this round of talks or had been generated by our subcommittees—such as advancing a plan for automatic career conversions and the eventual phase-out of non-career employment in our craft. Similarly, we aimed to press management to create truly national and jointly managed programs on safety and health, route adjustments and other matters that are too important to be left solely to management.

We had other important priorities as well. Notably, the need to address the toxic workplace culture that exists in too many post offices across the country. We believed then, and still believe now, that a dysfunctional work environment in many delivery stations has contributed to the chronic turnover and instability in the Postal Service's workforce. We sought to arrest and hopefully reverse that trend by addressing workplace culture issues and making changes that will facilitate a transition to an all-career workforce.

Although the talks we held with the Postal Service were constructive and professional, they were complicated by the fact that Postmaster General Brennan had announced her intention to retire at the end of 2019. That may have reduced the willingness of the Postal Service's leadership (the Board of Governors and/or its lead negotiators) to reach a deal before a new PMG could be named.

NALC and the Postal Service remained far apart on many issues being discussed when we paused talks to brief the leadership of our branches and state associations at the Denver rap session in August 2019. I emphasized then that we would work in good faith to reach a fair contract, but that preparations for interest arbitration were well underway. And I advised our leadership that we were not inclined to extend bargaining beyond Sept. 20, 2019—the expiration date of the 2016-2019 National Agreement. And, indeed, when the deadline arrived without an agreement, the parties proceeded to use the collective-bargaining impasse procedures outlined in the Postal Reorganization Act.

The first step was a mandatory 60-day mediation period required by the statute. During that period, we continued to try to fashion a settlement, but ended up focusing on selecting a neutral arbitrator to serve as chairperson of an interest arbitration panel, which by law is a three-member board consisting of the selected neutral chairperson, a union arbitrator and a management arbitrator. We eventually agreed to hire Dennis Nolan, a well-known and well-respected arbitrator, to serve as chairman of the interest arbitration board. Based on his availability, we planned to conduct the arbitration on selected dates in May, June and July. Our teams of lawyers, officers and staff, which had been working for months on preparing evidence and testimony for the hearings, got to work finalizing their papers, exhibits and presentations.

Then the pandemic hit and scrambled all our plans. In addition to the need to focus much of our energies on responding to the crisis (see above), it was clear in the summer of 2020—before the availability of COVID-19 vaccines and good therapeutic treatments—that holding a safe in-person interest arbitration would be impossible. The parties were forced to make complicated arrangements to hold the interest

arbitration remotely, which led us to postpone the May, June and July hearing dates until the fall of 2020.

We began the interest arbitration in September 2020. The NALC's longtime legal counsel, Keith Secular, served as the union's arbitrator. Since we had used this impasse-resolution process six times in our prior 14 rounds of collective bargaining, the process was not new to us and we were fully prepared. What was new and strange was how we did it. The pandemic forced us to be creative and innovative to pull off the interest arbitration safely. Instead of meeting in person in Washington, we conducted the hearings virtually for the first time, using video technology. All the arbitrators, attorneys and witnesses were working from various locales around the country and meeting via Zoom calls. But the process was basically the same one we have used in the past: The two sides alternated providing expert testimony, data and arguments in support of their contract proposals. Witnesses testified about formal exhibits and were cross-examined, and hearing transcripts were produced by a court reporter—working remotely, of course.

However, it was no ordinary interest arbitration. By this time, PMG DeJoy was on the scene. We immediately established a working relationship. In addition to ongoing discussions on COVID-19 issues, we collaborated on legislative relief efforts, postal reform issues, CCA attrition, workplace culture issues, contract compliance, safety matters and a number of misguided operational initiatives. We agreed to pursue a very unusual two-track approach during the impasse process—we would continue to discuss a contract settlement even as we conducted the interest arbitration. Like virtually everything else about this pandemic, that was a first.

That approach worked out well. After both parties presented their cases for their major proposals in September and October of 2020, settlement talks inten-

sified in November. On Nov. 25, 2020, we announced a tentative national agreement. As I said at the time, I was proud of the case and the evidence we amassed in support of our proposals during the interest arbitration proceeding. But it is always better to reach a negotiated deal, because that way active letter carriers get to decide whether or not to accept the agreement in a ratification vote, as provided by the *NALC Constitution*.

Contract terms, a virtual rap session and ratification

The provisions of the tentative agreement met or made progress toward many of our major goals:

- It rewarded all letter carriers for their contributions to the Postal Service's success serving the American people with four general wage increases of 1.1 percent, 1.1 percent, 1.3 percent and 1.3 percent over the 44-month contract;
- It preserved our COLA clause and provided for seven cost-of-living adjustments over the term of the contract;
- It narrowed the compensation gap between CCAs and career letter carriers and provided an automatic conversion of CCAs to career status after no more than 24 months;
- Effective in November 2022, it will create a new Step P in the career pay charts that is \$444 greater annually than top Step O;
- It preserved the core achievements of our bargaining history, including protections against outsourcing and layoffs, as well as other contractual elements that define our standard of living;
- And it established a variety of labor-management task forces and working groups to, among other things, improve the route adjustment process, promote product innovation, and find ways to improve the Postal Service's long-troubled workplace culture.

A six-page detailed summary of the proposed contract was published in the December 2020 *Postal Record* in preparation for a first-ever virtual rap session, which I called under Article 3, Section 4 (b) of the *NALC Constitution*. That rap session, which reviewed the new agreement

article by article and MOU by MOU, was held on Dec. 20, 2020. Along with other national officers, I sought to address as many questions as possible and laid out the ratification process. Copies of the proposed National Agreement were mailed to all members eligible to vote along with ratification ballots during the week of Jan. 11. In view of logistical hurdles caused by the pandemic, we extended the deadline for returning ballots to March 1, 2021. On March 8, our 15-member Ballot Committee announced the results: The contract was approved by a vote of 60,111 to 3,341—meaning that almost 95 percent of those voting chose to accept the agreement.

Thanks to the hard work of NALC's officers and staff over 17 long months—and to the unity and solidarity of our entire membership—the 2019 round of collective bargaining was a success. Every day since its ratification, the same folks who helped craft the agreement (with the help of thousands of local activists) have been hard at work to implement its terms and to hold management accountable for any failures to follow those terms. Please refer to the reports of the other national officers to learn more about these post-ratification efforts.

I have one final observation about the 2019 round of collective bargaining. Since the contract went into effect, we have learned once again how important it is to defend the gains we've achieved over the past 50 years in negotiations. Most notably, we should pause and consider the value of our contract's COLA clause in the career pay schedule. The huge surge in inflation over the past two years caused by the difficult recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrates this once again. In December 2020, inflation was very low and was expected to stay that way—using government projections of future inflation,

we estimated that the first six COLAs would generate total pay hikes of about 1.6 percent for career letter carriers (based on pay rates at the beginning of the contract). We could not have predicted that inflation would spike in late 2021 and rise to more than 8.5 percent on an annual basis in 2022 due to supply chains disruptions caused by the pandemic. We certainly could not have imagined that a war in Ukraine would cause energy and food prices to soar even higher. But thanks to our contract's COLA clause, those first six inflation adjustments will generate pay increases of at least 9.0 percent. Of course, our COLA clause has not provided total protection against inflation, but it has made a huge difference by preventing a huge loss of purchasing power for letter carriers. We can all be thankful that we are not still engaged in "collective begging" with Congress, as we were before 1971.

Our recent experience—both with responding to COVID-19 and securing a decent contract in difficult circumstanc-

National Association of Letter Carriers (AFL-CIO)



2019-2023

NATIONAL AGREEMENT



United States Postal Service

es—shows the power of collective bargaining. That's why we owe a debt of gratitude to all the carriers who came before us—the brothers and sisters who won the right to negotiate directly with the Postal Service over our compensation. Because of this, perhaps it is most appropriate to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970 in 2022 rather than 2020. That is precisely what we are going to do this week.

Looking to the future—the next round of bargaining

We are not just celebrating the anniversary of the strike this week. We are also celebrating a half century of collective bargaining and a half century of the Postal Service since reorganization in 1970. Looking back, it's amazing to see how far we have come. In the 1970s and 1980s, our interaction with USPS was fairly limited. Every three years we sat down to negotiate, but in between rounds of contract talks we mostly operated separately—tangling in the occasional national-level grievance. Today, we engage with the Postal Service daily on a wide range of issues. Collective bargaining never stops. Whether it is dealing with the COVID-19 crisis, or collaborating on the handling of election mail, or engaging on route inspection procedures, or staffing, or discussing ways to improve the experience of new employees, or exploring opportunities to better serve our customers, collective bargaining is going on constantly.

Looking ahead, we are already preparing for the next round of bargaining. Our contract expires in May 2023. At the end of February, we will officially open negotiations with the Postal Service to renew our National Agreement once again. Our officers and staff are ready. Thanks to our being the best organized open shop union in the United States, we have the resources and the personnel to do the job.

This week, all of you will have your chance to contribute to our efforts in contract talks next year. We will debate contract resolutions and decide our priorities, together. Together we will fight for America's letter carriers. And together we advance the hopes and dreams of our members. Serving as a delegate here in

Chicago is a big responsibility, but I have no doubt that each of you will take your job seriously. Knowing this, I have nothing but optimism about the future of our great union.

Legislative and regulatory affairs

In 2018, in the immediate aftermath of the Detroit convention, two of NALC's biggest concerns were how to contend with the Trump administration's open hostility to the Postal Service and its workers, and the one-party (GOP) control of government that blocked bipartisan postal reform legislation. At the same time, a major regulatory battle was heading into its third year—the PRC's so-called "Ten-Year Review" of the Postal Service's rate-setting system for letter mail and other "market-dominant" products. Those were the legislative and regulatory battles that we knew about in the summer of 2018. Of course, with the pandemic right around the corner, there was a whole other set of Washington battles on the horizon. In this section of my office report, I will discuss how NALC engaged in all these battles to defend the interests of our members.

The Trump White House targets the Postal Service

Over the past 40 years, we have had to contend with our share of unfriendly administrations in Washington. The Reagan administration favored privatization of the Postal Service, though it never actually tried to achieve it. The George W. Bush administration advocated giving the PRC the authority to approve or disapprove our collective-bargaining agreements—but made no effort to implement the change. And, of course, several Republican and Democratic administrations have proposed benefit cuts and the elimination of six-day delivery in their budgets, most recently under Barack Obama. But no administration has ever been more consistently hostile to the Postal Service than the administration of Donald Trump—both in words and in actions.

Evidence of this hostility showed up in the administration's proposed federal budget in 2019 that targeted our pensions and health benefits for cuts—it called for raising federal employee payroll contribu-

tions for Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) benefits by 1 percent per year for *six years*, a 6 percent pay cut for the vast majority of federal and postal workers. Such proposed cuts were not new for Republican presidents. What made Trump unusual was his repeated comments, tweets and press releases attacking the Postal Service.

In June 2018, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), a powerful force within the structure of the White House, had called for USPS's privatization in a master plan to restructure the entire federal government. This was alarming, since President Trump had signed an executive order a few months earlier creating the White House Task Force on the U.S. Postal System, arguing that the agency was "unsustainable" and needed to be restructured—partly in pursuit of his vendetta against Jeff Bezos, the founder of Amazon and owner of the *Washington Post* (as mentioned above on page 20). NALC took the lead in drafting a white paper on postal policy on behalf of the four postal unions and met with the White House Task Force just before the Detroit Convention. We urged the task force to tread carefully, maintain the existing "business model," and to focus on the real cause of the Postal Service's financial woes—the retiree health pre-funding burden.

In December 2018, the White House Task Force released its report, "United States Postal Service: A Sustainable Path Forward." The report fundamentally misdiagnosed the operational and financial condition of the Postal Service and, as a result, offered recommendations that would have effectively destroyed the agency. The principal recommendations called for dramatically raising mailing costs for "commercial mailers" and shippers (targeting Amazon), slashing the frequency and quality of delivery, and gutting the standard of living of postal employees by outsourcing our jobs, stripping us of collective-bargaining rights, and reducing our retirement and workers' compensation benefits. These recommendations would weaken, not strengthen the Postal Service—and threaten the most efficient and affordable universal postal system in the developed world.

NALC fought back and issued a new white paper debunking the task force's



final report—which was riddled with glaring errors, faulty data and poorly supported conclusions. The union paper, “Misdiagnosis: A Review of the Report of the White House Task Force on the Postal Service,” was shared widely on Capitol Hill and with the media. Although the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee held a hearing on the Trump task force report, there was virtually no support in Congress for its recommendations. Thankfully, the results of the November 2018 election had shifted control of the House of Representatives (see below)—and a vast bipartisan majority of the House opposed the Trump postal proposals.

The administration’s efforts to damage the Postal Service did not stop with legislative proposals. Starting in September 2018, the Treasury Department’s Federal Finance Bank began restricting Postal Service access to its statutory borrowing authority (line of credit), demanding ideological and operational changes supported by USPS’s private competitors. For the first time in its history, the Treasury was refusing to sign a long-term extension of this line of credit, which is vital for essential capital investments in the agency’s networks. Providing more evidence that the administration was politically targeting Amazon, Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin used the credit line as leverage, trying to force massive price increases on competitive products (which would be especially damaging to small businesses and Americans in rural areas) and to interfere with postal collective-bargaining matters. To its credit, the USPS Board of Governors rejected these unacceptable pressure tactics—thanks to the leadership of board member Ron Bloom.

The battle for COVID-19 relief legislation

The Trump administration’s hostility did not stop when the COVID-19 crisis hit. Although the administration did not object to the emergency sick leave and additional Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave provided for COVID-19-related reasons to most American workers in the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) in early 2020 (which applied to federal workers), it strongly opposed any direct relief to the Postal Service.

Just two weeks after passing the FFCRA, Congress already was working on an even larger relief bill—the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). Once again, the Trump administration worked to exclude the USPS from relief legislation, which was signed into law on March 27, 2020 (P.L. 116-137). The version of the bill debated in the Democrat-controlled House of Representatives called for providing \$25 billion in aid to the Postal Service, while the Republican-controlled Senate was willing to provide \$13 billion in assistance. But the White House, guided by the Treasury Department, refused to support such relief in any amount.

The bill that passed did not offer the same kind of support for the Postal Service that it did for airlines (\$61 billion), private cargo shippers (\$17 billion) and other corporations (\$425 billion). Instead, as Mnuchin insisted, it provided just \$10 billion in new borrowing authority, subject to control by the Treasury Department’s Federal Finance Bank (FFB). This left the Postal Service open to the kind of political interference that the Postal Reorganization Act was designed to eliminate and made the crisis worse—saddling the Postal Service with more debt was not a solution to the crisis caused by the pandemic.

This was a pattern that would repeat itself—the House would repeatedly take action to bolster the Postal Service and help it weather the negative economic impact of the pandemic, but the Trump administration and the GOP leadership in the Senate would block it. For example, in May 2020, the House passed the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act, a \$3 trillion COVID-19 relief package. It proposed \$25 billion in direct appropriations to help USPS overcome the financial crisis brought on by the pandemic and called for the removal of restrictions placed in the CARES Act on the \$10 billion in added USPS borrowing authority from the U.S. Treasury. Also included in the package was a proposed “Heroes Fund,” which would provide hazard pay of \$13 per hour premium pay on top of regular wages up to \$10,000 for essential front-line workers, including letter carriers and other postal employees.

However, the Senate refused to even debate the HEROES bill.

Nevertheless, NALC pulled out all the stops to push for passage of the HEROES Act. We commissioned a bipartisan public opinion poll by Hart Research and North Star Opinion Research that showed that 92 percent of the public supported pandemic relief for the Postal Service. We also created a website (heroesdelivering.com) and ran targeted ads on television and social media to promote the postal provisions of the HEROES Act. Despite these efforts, the bill would never become law in the face of opposition from the Trump administration and Senate leadership. Bizarrely, according to media reports, part of President Trump’s opposition to the legislation was its postal provisions, which was apparently related to his false claims that a surge in voting by mail would cause massive voter fraud and cost him reelection. Meanwhile, the chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, Ron Johnson (R-WI), reversed his earlier support for USPS assistance in any further emergency relief legislation.

Two other bills that passed the House in 2020, a major transportation infrastructure bill and a standalone postal relief bill (The Delivering for America Act), also attempted to provide relief funding for USPS—but met the same fate in the Senate. In the latter case, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi brought House members back to Congress during the August recess on a Saturday to pass it. It was only at the end of December 2020, just before the two Georgia Senate runoff elections that decided control of the Senate in the 117th Congress, that the logjam was broken—and even then, the postal relief was minimal. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 provided no new relief to USPS, but it did convert the \$10 billion CARES Act line of credit into a grant that did not have to be repaid if it were used for COVID-19-related expenses.

Though unsuccessful, our drive to provide greater relief to USPS did raise the profile of the Postal Service in the national conversation—as did President Trump’s repeated attacks on the agency and the media storm over the appointment of Louis DeJoy as postmaster general. That higher profile helped us build on the existing bipartisan support for the Postal Service. That support, combined

with the results of the November elections that changed control of the Senate and the White House, would lay the groundwork for major progress in months ahead.

In fact, an otherwise dreadful 2020 ended on a high note with those election results and a final ruling from the PRC's 10-year review of the postage rate-setting system. These political and policy developments would help finally propel us to victory in our multi-year battle for postal reform. I will turn to these topics next.

The Biden transition and new board members

Given the hostility and abysmal track record of President Trump and his administration on letter carrier issues and, by contrast, the decades of friendly support on those issues demonstrated by former Senator/Vice President Joe Biden, it came as no shock that our membership that our Executive Council endorsed the Biden-Harris ticket in the 2020 general election (see the "Political" section below). Biden's appointment of my chief of staff, Jim Sauber, to serve on his presidential transition team revealed the wisdom of that choice. It was both a tribute to the NALC and an opportunity for our union to help shape the incoming administration's views on postal policy. And that is precisely what we set out to do.

We provided extensive briefing documents to the Biden Transition's Agency Review Team for the Postal Service. We outlined our views on the whole range of postal policy issues, identified both legislative and administrative actions needed to strengthen the Postal Service, and made recommendations for appointments to the Postal Service Board of Governors and the PRC. In the early days of the administration, we successfully lobbied to include a provision in the American Rescue Plan Act to ensure that the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) presumptively approved the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) benefit claims of those infected by the COVID-19 virus—if they had worked within 21 days of their infection diagnosis. And we met with a whole range of new White House staffers from the OMB and the Domestic Policy Council to the White House Office of Public Engagement. We stayed in regular contact as the postal reform legislation advanced

through Congress, and I had multiple calls with President Biden's top aides.

Among our highest priorities was to educate the new administration on the need to implement, through executive action, the recommendations of the 2010 PRC report on the proper allocation of pension costs between the postal and federal accounts of the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS). That report, authorized by the PAEA and conducted by the Segal Company for the PRC in 2010, called on the OMB to correct the misallocation of those costs. The PRC/Segal report found that the Postal Service had been overcharged by \$50 billion to \$55 billion between 1970 and 2010. That overcharge had grown to \$92 billion by 2021—correcting it would strengthen the Postal Service's balance sheet and reduce its expenses by between \$1.8 and \$2.0 billion annually. (For more information, see the USPS OIG report "Update on the Postal Service's Share of CSRS Pension Responsibility," Report No. RARC-WP-18-009, May 7, 2018.)

We had some success with respect to presidential appointments. We were pleased that President Biden followed our recommendation to elevate PRC Commissioner Michael Kubayanda to serve as chairman of the PRC in January 2021 and to nominate Amber McReynolds of the National Vote at Home Institute and former American Postal Workers Union (APWU) lawyer Anton Hajjar to serve on the USPS Board of Governors. He also nominated former Deputy Postmaster General Ron Stroman to serve on the board. We have worked with all of them, and each of them brings valuable experience to these positions. The only disappointment was the administration's decision not to re-nominate then-Chairman Ron Bloom as a Democratic member of the Board of Governors. As a sitting member, Bloom had played an important role in shaping the board's new mission statement in 2020, which embraced the public service role of the Postal Service as well as universal six-day delivery. Unfortunately, his re-nomination faced largely unfair opposition from Democratic members of Congress who opposed the Republican-controlled board's appointment of Louis DeJoy as PMG in May 2020.

The American Rescue Plan and Emergency Federal Employee Leave

The impact of the change in administration was evident less than two months into the new president's term. On March 11, 2021, Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). In the face of the surging Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus (which was twice as transmissible and more likely to lead to hospitalizations than the original virus), the new administration defeated the entrenched opposition and enacted a major new relief package (similar to the 2020 CARES Act) in record time. ARPA provided new economic impact relief checks and appropriated funds for schools, hospitals and state governments to deal with the impact of the ongoing pandemic. Included in that legislation were Emergency Federal Employee Leave (EFEL) provisions, which effectively restored leave policies for federal employees that were enacted in the CARES Act, but which had expired in December 2020.

NALC went to work to ensure that the provisions—for Emergency Sick Leave and Emergency Family and Medical Leave—would apply to postal employees (Title 39 in the U.S. Code), and not just to non-postal federal employees (Title 5 U.S.C.). Working with staff members of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, as well as the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, we resolved some key legislative language problems in order to benefit our members. We reviewed several drafts, offered suggested changes and pushed Congress to include these leave policies in the American Rescue Plan. The bill, H.R. 1319, was introduced on Feb. 24, 2021, passed in the Senate and House on March 6 and March 10, and sent to the president for his signature.

New rate-setting rules from the Postal Regulatory Commission

Over most of the Post Office's near-250-year history, Congress set postage rates in this country. Over time, that political system of rate setting undermined the quality of service and the health of our postal infrastructure, for obvious reasons. Politicians do not like to take controversial votes—and raising postage rates, like rais-



ing taxes, was unpopular with the folks back home. That changed in 1970 with the Postal Reorganization Act, which depoliticized the process by turning it over to technocrats in what was then called the Postal Rate Commission. The new system worked well for a long time, but dissatisfaction grew as the process devolved into extended, expensive and litigious fights over arcane cost accounting issues and regulatory economics.

In 2006, Congress streamlined the process in the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA), renaming the PRC the Postal *Regulatory* Commission and implementing a simpler system that would index postage rate increases to inflation, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). But there were major disagreements about the details of the new system, which would apply to letter mail and other so-called market dominant products (as distinct from competitive services like package delivery). So, in the PAEA, Congress gave the PRC a mandate to review the rate-setting system after 10 years and to propose new rules if the CPI price cap system failed to meet any key objectives of the 2006 law.

When the PRC initiated the review in December 2016, NALC intervened in the case and provided extensive evidence in support of major changes—along with the Postal Service and the other postal unions. We argued that the rate-setting system was failing because the CPI (a measure of average inflation for all products and services purchased by average U.S. households) was not the appropriate index. It did not reflect the cost factors most important to providing national delivery services—i.e., labor, transportation and energy costs—and did not consider the huge costs imposed on the Postal Service that were causing major financial losses, most notably the PAEA mandate to pre-fund future retiree health benefits at a cost of \$5 billion a year. As you might expect, most of the mailing industry preferred the status quo of minimal rate increases in a period of very low inflation.

In my report to the 2018 Detroit convention, I reported that the PRC had concluded that the unions and USPS were largely right. In February 2017, its initial 10-year review ruling concluded that, “with respect to finances, the Commission finds that the

system has not maintained the financial health of the Postal Service as intended by the PAEA.” In the same ruling, it issued a proposed rule for a new CPI+2 price cap—meaning that USPS could raise postage rates by up to 2 percentage points above the rate of inflation each year. It then asked for further public comment.

After the PRC issued its proposed CPI+2 proposal, we offered detailed alternatives on the new rate-setting system in our formal comments, including a one-time “true-up” increase of at least 10 percent, the adoption of a more suitable price index (e.g., the CPI for delivery services), a more flexible definition of exigent increases to deal with emergencies, and a provision to allow the PRC to build the cost of any future congressional mandates into market dominant postage rates. A final ruling was expected by the end of 2018. Much to our dismay, the PRC failed to issue a final rule for more than two years. Then in December 2019, it issued a “revised notice of proposed rulemaking” and started a whole new public comment period.

In the revised rule, the Commission proposed to modify the price cap to permit additional pricing authority (above the CPI) based on changes in per-unit costs caused by reductions in volume per delivery, which are largely outside the Postal Service’s direct control. This changed the additional pricing authority from a static 2 percent per year to a more dynamic mechanism. The PRC also provided additional rate authority to fund a portion of USPS’s retirement obligations. This revised rule was finalized in December 2020.

Although the new system is not as favorable as we had hoped, it was and is a significant step in the right direction. Of course, with the high inflation we have witnessed over the past 15 months, we must be concerned about the possible damage such inflation may cause to the customers of the Postal Service—especially the business mailers who generate more than 90 percent of all mail. Those mailers have alternative technologies/delivery options, and rising postage rates driven by high inflation could drive them out of the system. For that reason, it is in our interest that the uneven recovery from the pandemic be improved and accelerated, and that the Federal Reserve bring price inflation down as soon as possible.

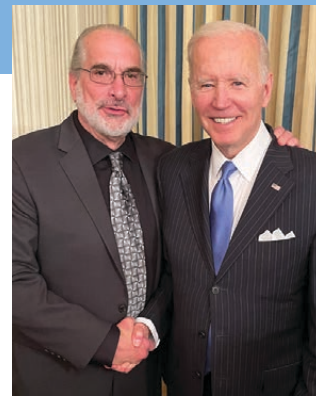
The long road to winning postal reform

By the time I finished my first term as president in 2010, it was already apparent that the burden imposed on the Postal Service by the PAEA to pre-fund future retiree health benefits (decades in advance) at a cost of at least \$5.5 billion annually was not sustainable. That was true not just because we were mired in the Great Recession, which made the payments unaffordable. It also was true because the Postal Service had decided not to build the cost of the pre-funding mandate into its baseline rates, which the PAEA permitted within one year of enactment—before the CPI-based price cap took effect. And it also was unsustainable because it was clear that, in the face of stiff GOP opposition, the Obama administration would not implement the recommendations of the PRC/Segal Report (discussed above on page 25). Implementation would have effectively eliminated the pre-funding burden in 2015 because it would have produced a surplus in USPS’s CSRS account—and the PAEA includes a provision that any postal surplus in the CSRS gets automatically transferred into the Postal Retiree Health Benefits Fund at specified intervals.

My report to the Detroit convention covered our decade-long attempts to find other solutions. There is no need to repeat that history here. Over the past four years, I am pleased to report, we never gave up on the goal of postal reform that would address the artificial financial crisis caused by the pre-funding mandate. I am even more pleased to report that our long fight to achieve postal reform ended in victory when President Joe Biden signed into law the Postal Reform Act of 2021 (P.L. 117-108) on April 6, 2022. How long a fight, you ask? How about *seven Congresses, four postmasters general and three U.S. presidents* long.

In the April 2022 issue of *The Postal Record*, we published a comprehensive history of our campaign for reform over a dozen-plus years, which I will not repeat here. But several factors made this victory possible:

- We stressed bipartisanship from the beginning and focused on building Republican support for the Postal Service in Congress despite frequent oppo-



maintaining their existing prescription drug benefits for their retirees. That will translate into lower premiums, all other things equal, for active and retired

sition from GOP presidents. My governmental affairs director, Kori Blalock Keller, worked tirelessly to make this happen.

- We engaged in an extensive communications effort to increase public, political and press understanding of postal finances, with letter carriers at all levels working in conjunction with the Department of Communications and Media Relations in an array of media interactions, including thousands of letters to the editor and op-eds.
- We used House and Senate resolutions on specific policies—for six-day delivery and preserving door delivery, and against privatization—to find allies in unlikely places. Under the leadership of Executive Vice President Brian Renfro, our team of regional legislative and political organizers (LPOs) did a fantastic job of slowly and steadily building bipartisan support for all our issues, including postal reform.
- The introduction of the USPS Fairness Act at the end of 2018, a simple repeal of the pre-funding mandate, helped Congress focus on the real cause of the Postal Service's financial distress. We hammered home our key message: The mandate was the key problem, accounting for 84 percent of the Postal Service's losses since 2007. By early 2020, that bill was passed by a huge bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives—even while President Trump was in office.
- The election of Joe Biden, a pro-Postal Service and pro-letter carrier president, and the change in leadership in the Senate, removed huge political roadblocks to reform.
- In the 117th Congress (2021-2022), working with the bipartisan leadership of our oversight committees in the House and Senate, we shifted our focus from comprehensive postal reform with lots of moving parts to a much narrower

bill with the USPS Fairness Act at its center.

- The role of Postmaster General DeJoy was also extremely important—he embraced a partnership with NALC on postal reform and backed reform ideas that we had advocated for more than a decade, unlike his predecessors and other top postal managers in years past. We spoke regularly to share information as the legislative process wound to a successful conclusion.
- Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we won this victory because of the dedicated activism of tens of thousands of members and the inspired work of our talented staff over many, many years.

Remarkably, the new law not only repealed the pre-funding mandate (saving the USPS at least \$5 billion annually), but also made six-day mail and package delivery a statutory requirement for the first time. We will no longer have to fight to save six-day delivery every year—as we have since 1983—in the annual appropriations process. Both of these provisions took effect on April 6, 2022.

The last major element of postal reform are the reforms to the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program (FEHBP) included in the law. Starting in 2025, FEHBP plans will be priced separately for postal and federal participants (actives and retirees). This will allow postal participants to realize savings on their premiums resulting from the legislation's Medicare integration provisions. Those provisions will require active employees under the age of 64 as of Jan. 1, 2025, to enroll in Medicare Parts A and B when they retire and are eligible—as the vast majority of new retirees have always done. This will put downward pressure on FEHBP rates for all postal employees and retirees because Medicare is the first payer for senior health care costs, and because the new law will provide FEHBP plans federal subsidies under the Medicare Modernization Act—just for

postal employees alike—as well as for the Postal Service.

There will be exceptions to the rule that active employees under the age of 64 (as of Jan. 1, 2025) must enroll in Medicare to retain their FEHBP coverage. They will not have to enroll in Medicare if they would not or could not benefit from Medicare participation due to VA or other alternative medical coverage, or if they reside where Medicare providers do not exist.

No retired postal employee or active employee age 64 or older (as of Jan. 1, 2025) will be required to enroll in Medicare when the FEHBP reforms take effect—it will remain entirely voluntary.

However, existing Medicare-eligible retirees who have not enrolled in Medicare Part B will get a one-time chance (in 2024) to do so with no late-enrollment penalty—a potentially huge savings for older seniors. That's because, under current law, the penalty can make Part B premiums unaffordable—ordinarily rates are increased by 10 percent for each year a participant delays enrollment past the age of 65.

All in all, the Postal Reform Act is a triumph for the NALC, our allies in the other unions and in the mailing industry. One that we can rightly celebrate this week in Chicago.

Unfinished business

Looking back over the past four years, we have made real progress on the legislative and regulatory front. But there is plenty of unfinished business. Most distressing to me are the legislative barriers blocking repeal of the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO) of the Social Security Act. These provisions have unfairly reduced (or eliminated) Social Security benefits for many CSRS retirees for decades. Although H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act of 2021, has broad bipartisan support in the House of Representatives (with a healthy majority of 282 co-sponsors), GOP opposition in the Senate (and the chamber's fili-



buster rule requiring a supermajority of 60) continues to stymie our efforts to win justice for CSRS retirees. A vote in the House is expected before the end of 2022. NALC is continuing to explore litigation options, though such options have proved elusive.

Another bill that we are still working to advance is the Federal Employees Fairness Act (H.R. 4268), which would allow federal and postal employees to “buy back” retirement credit for non-career employment. This would allow former CCAs and TES to improve their retirement benefits. We are making progress in the House, as 69 members from both parties have signed on as co-sponsors. We aim to grow that number and seek a companion bill in the Senate—but then again, the price tag and filibuster rule will be major hurdles.

This rule has also blocked a wide range of other bills important to the labor movement and the American people. Included among the bills being blocked in the 117th Congress:

- The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, a major overhaul of U.S. labor laws that would make it easier for unions to organize workers, passed the House of Representatives in March 2021.
- The Raise the Wage Act to increase the federal minimum wage to \$15 per hour by 2025 was passed by the House in the 116th Congress but is being blocked now by 50 Senate Republicans and two Senate Democrats (Joe Manchin and Kyrsten Sinema).
- The same group of GOP senators blocked passage of the Freedom to Vote/John Lewis Act, a bill that would, among other things, guarantee the right to vote by mail, require a minimum number of days of early voting in federal elections, allow automatic and same-day registration and restore the powers of the Justice Department to enforce the Voting Rights Act.
- President Biden’s Build Back Better infrastructure bill that would have spent \$1.75 billion over 10 years to upgrade our infrastructure to battle climate change—a bill that included \$6 billion to purchase electric vehicles for the Postal Service.

Many of us feel a great deal of frustration over the dysfunction of the Senate and the

abuse of filibuster rules to block change and to thwart democracy. Indeed, earlier in 2022, the AFL-CIO Executive Council took the unusual step of calling for an end of the filibuster in the Senate. In August 2021, I argued for reforms to the rule in my President’s Message. It is difficult to envision our country being able to achieve justice for workers and to address our most pressing problems without a better functioning and more democratic Senate. In practical terms, however, there do not appear to be the votes to alter Senate rules any time soon. That means we must do the hard work of building bipartisan consensus around our legislative agenda the way we did with the Postal Reform Act of 2021, which passed the House by a vote of 342-92 and the Senate by a vote of 79-19. NALC has proven over the past four years that bipartisan progress is possible. We will remain committed to that approach in the years ahead.

Political action

As with nearly every other aspect of union business, COVID-19 has had a dramatic effect on how we engage politically. However, the pandemic did not lessen the importance of this engagement—if anything, the devastating effects of the pandemic have demonstrated how critical it is that letter carriers take action to elect candidates who look out for the interests of working people.

Letter carriers have a lot at stake when it comes to national politics. Unlike many other workers, the day-to-day work lives of letter carriers are greatly affected by the decisions Congress makes. Members of Congress control our employer and its operations, establish our rights at work, and set the terms of our pensions, health insurance and workers’ compensation coverage. What rights and benefits we enjoy are granted by legislation—and can be taken away by legislation.

Similarly, the president influences our work lives, too. The president nominates members of the Board of Governors and the Postal Regulatory Commission, has power over executive branch departments, including the Department of Labor, that can affect our working conditions, and sets legislative agendas that can affect our pensions and health benefits.

That means that every national election is important to letter carriers. Helping to

elect pro-letter carrier, pro-Postal Service and pro-union candidates to federal office is essential for our well-being. And we have the ability to do so, thanks to the size and diversity of our membership. A component of that diversity is a diversity of political views, yet we stay united by focusing on the issues that affect letter carriers at work. We inform our members about the policies and positions of candidates from both parties, and we use the resources voluntarily donated by our members to LCPF to elect candidates, regardless of party, who support letter carriers and a strong Postal Service.

Our ability to stay united and take a bipartisan approach is our strength—particularly when the Postal Service is nearly universally liked on both sides of the aisle. Indeed, bipartisan outreach and support was key to our victory in the passage of the Postal Service Reform Act.

Letter Carrier Political Fund: Campaign releases and contributions

NALC engages in political action in two ways, both of which are intended to influence decision-makers to adopt legislation that strengthens the Postal Service and promotes the workplace interests of active and retired letter carriers. First, we mobilize our members to help elect pro-letter carrier candidates at the federal level—from House members and senators to the president of the United States. Second, we use the LCPF to support candidates who support us and the Postal Service. Let’s review each way in turn.

As in previous elections, NALC deployed its political network in both 2018 and 2020 by contacting members of our union and other unions on behalf of pro-labor candidates. These efforts are led by NALC state associations and NALC’s network of legislative and political organizers (LPOs). LPOs support state associations by developing and implementing plans specifically designed for the challenges within each state to build their capacity to participate in campaigns. LPOs also train other letter carriers, officers and rank-and-file activists to help carry out the plans and recruit new activists.

In 2018, NALC’s political engagement continued much as it always has, with letter carrier activists released to join AFL-

CIO and NALC outreach efforts. Released carriers worked with dozens of AFL-CIO campaigns, often by knocking on members' doors and dropping campaign literature, or directly speaking to members in person. However, in-person outreach was not possible in 2020 due to the state of the pandemic at that time. So, campaigns switched tactics, turning to virtual phone banks, digital methods, and peer-to-peer texting instead. Political messaging remained the same. Released carriers shared information about pro-union candidates and asked their brothers and sisters to be sure to vote.

Turning now to LCPF, it takes significant amounts of money for members of Congress to communicate with their constituents and for candidates to run viable campaigns for office. This is where political action committees (PACs) such as LCPF can play a critical role. Our political fund allows us to support pro-letter carrier and pro-USPS candidates in both parties—and to gain an audience with members of Congress on our issues. We may not like it, but politicians pay more attention to the folks who help fund their campaigns. And many of our political adversaries (UPS, FedEx, the Koch brothers) have PACs of their own against which we must compete.

By law and by union practice, we cannot and do not use NALC dues money to make campaign contributions, but we can pool together voluntary contributions to LCPF to support candidates of our choosing. LCPF levels the playing field for workers like us who would not be able to afford large political contributions on our own, by allowing us to combine our resources to support men and women who support us legislatively. Though there are many ways for NALC members to help us achieve our political and legislative goals, giving to LCPF is an excellent way to do so.

NALC's political engagement was critical to the success of both the 2018 and 2020 elections in terms of electing pro-letter carrier candidates. Letter carriers celebrated a huge victory in the 2018 midterm elections in the House of Representatives, shifting control of the body and its committees to pro-letter carrier and pro-Postal Service representatives. In all, 219 of the 229 candidates we supported with LCPF contributions won. These pro-letter carrier

candidates, regardless of political affiliation, earned our support by backing our interests on legislative and regulatory matters—and we showed our appreciation by working to get them elected. That is just how democracy is supposed to work.

2020 elections and NALC's presidential endorsement

In September 2020, I announced that the NALC Executive Council had unanimously voted to endorse Joe Biden and Kamala Harris for president and vice president, respectively. The former vice president and the former senator from California have been staunch supporters of letter carriers and the Postal Service, and their records—along with the results of in-depth polling of the NALC membership—made clear that the Biden-Harris ticket was the clear choice for letter carriers and their families.

Our endorsements, for president and other federal offices, are based on issues affecting our jobs and work life, not on social or cultural issues which, while important, can be divisive to many of our members. Letter carriers perfectly reflect the political diversity of the United States. I see the diversity of opinion within our membership as one of our strengths. But the union's endorsement—and how we use our LCPF funds—is always dictated by what's best for the jobs, pay and benefits of letter carriers. That is how we preserve our unity, build our strength and make progress.

The endorsement process is guided by a variety of factors. These factors include the results of a *Postal Record* reader poll,

the results of a Hart Research poll of NALC members nationwide, and the candidates' responses to our presidential questionnaire. Additionally, NALC's president and Executive Council consider experience, electability and each candidate's relationship with the union.

In the 2020 election, our endorsement reflected the demonstrated preference of NALC's membership. In *The Postal Record* reader poll, members preferred Biden over Trump by greater than a 2-to-1 ratio. The results from Hart Research's scientific poll had similar results.

Biden has spent his career fighting for working people. His vocal support for unions and his backing for the USPS have been loud and clear. He not only responded positively to our candidate questionnaire, but also made sure that the platform of the Democratic Party included a commitment to strengthen the Postal Service. Similarly, Harris was a close ally of letter carriers in her time in the Senate. As a member of the Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee, she took a

Volume 133/Number 10 October 2020

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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What's at stake for letter carriers in the 2020 elections

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proactive stance and worked closely with NALC on postal issues.

In contrast, Trump refused to fill out our candidate survey and throughout his presidency demonstrated unrelenting hostility to the Postal Service and its workers. He attacked the agency as a “joke,” called for privatization and deregulation, and blocked aid for USPS in COVID-19 relief legislation (as discussed above). His administration also advocated for the elimination of our collective-bargaining rights, while also proposing budgets that would slash our pensions and benefits. Additionally, the Republican Party decided to run on the same platform it had adopted in 2016, which ignored the Postal Service altogether and called for cuts to federal employee pay and benefits. Perhaps most glaringly, the decision to recycle an outdated platform ignored the crises our country faced in 2020: a pandemic, an economic meltdown and a racial justice crisis.

We are therefore pleased and relieved that NALC-endorsed candidates Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were elected. Just as important, we helped just enough senators to shift control of that body and its committees (including our oversight committee, the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, or HSGAC) to pro-letter carrier leaders. With an ally, Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY), setting the Senate’s agenda instead of the anti-worker Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-KY), and with Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI) leading the HSGAC instead of the hostile Sen. Ron Johnson (R-WI), all the stars aligned to make progress on our legislative agenda (as described above). Most notably, Congress passed, and President Biden signed into law, the Postal Reform Act of 2022.

All this political progress was thanks in part to the hard work of NALC’s LCPF-funded get-out-the-vote efforts, and our members’ role in getting vote-by-mail ballots delivered safely and on time in an unprecedented election. NALC also played a role at the national level to ensure that most Americans have the option to vote by mail.

VBM and NVAHI

The pandemic dramatically affected how the nation ran its elections in 2020. State election officials and local election boards across the country were frantically

trying to figure out how to safely conduct primary elections in the middle of a pandemic. In an effort to protect both voters and poll workers throughout the country, dozens of states expanded their vote-by-mail programs. In fact, at least 83 percent of all U.S. voters had the option to vote by mail in 2020 and some 51 million voters automatically received their ballots in the mail.

A large number of voters embraced the vote-by-mail option. The National Vote at Home Institute (NVAHI) found that half of all primary voters in dozens of states—more than 29 million people—voted by mail. After the general election, the Postal Service announced that it had delivered a total of 135 million ballots, counting both blank ballots mailed to voters and completed ones mailed back to election officials.

However, the shift to vote-by-mail was not without controversy. The rapid change came with accusations and court battles that began months before Election Day on Nov. 3 and persisted even afterwards. Soon after states began expanding access to vote-by-mail, President Trump began attacking the system, claiming without evidence that it would be subject to fraud. Later, DeJoy’s changes to postal operations shortly after being named postmaster general sparked allegations—and lawsuits—charging that he was trying to disrupt the vote-by-mail process in Trump’s favor. And campaigns battled in court over when ballots had to be received to be counted.

NALC played an important role in ensuring a smooth election. Even prior to the pandemic, we had helped found the National Vote at Home Institute (NVAHI), which became an essential resource of expertise on vote-by-mail elections for states as they had to expand their vote-by-mail programs quickly and with little preparation. Amber McReynolds, who now serves on the USPS Board of Governors, was the NVAHI’s first executive director—and NALC Executive Vice President Brian Renfroe served as chairman of the Institute’s board. NALC representatives joined McReynolds on weekly press briefings to battle misinformation and distribute accurate information about the steps the Postal Service was taking to make sure every ballot would be counted. We also consulted dozens of state attorneys general

and progressive voting rights groups as they sought service guarantees through litigation.

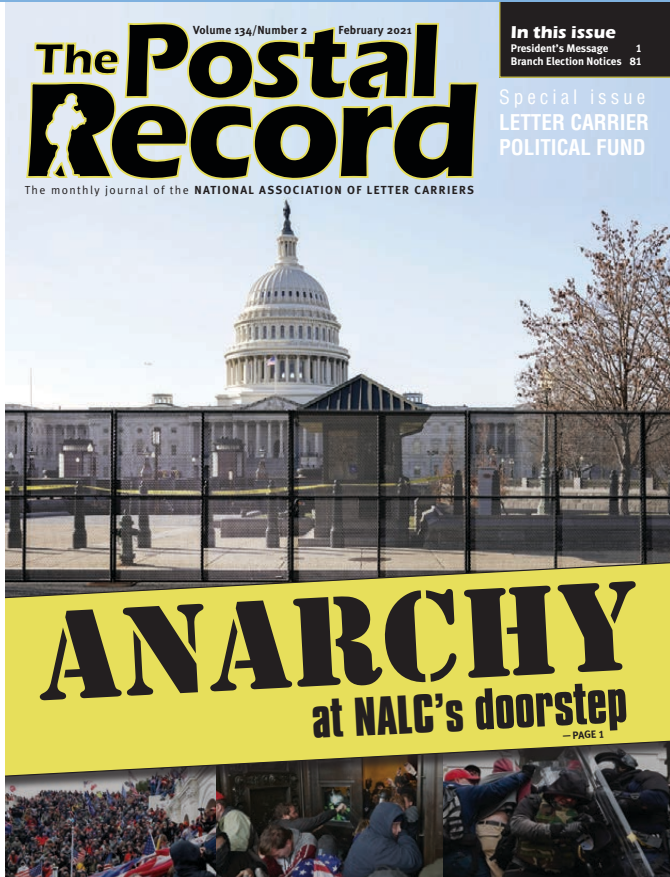
NALC also worked with the other postal unions to reassure the public and voters that they could count on the Postal Service. We engaged with Postmaster General DeJoy, convincing him to shut down new transportation and delivery pilot programs that were making pandemic-related delays worse. I proposed a joint labor-management task force to ensure a smooth election, which led to the four postal unions and the Postal Service’s management associations joining a USPS National Election Task Force. The task force met weekly to coordinate public messaging, training and operational planning for the surge in mail ballots. We set up similar labor-management working groups at all levels of the agency, creating an army of workplace monitors to ensure high performance—an army that itself performed magnificently.

This collective election effort was a great success. It took an average of 2.1 days to deliver ballots from election officials to voters and an average of 1.6 days to deliver marked ballots from voters to election officials. And nearly 98 percent of ballots were delivered to election officials in three days.

In a year of extraordinary circumstances, letter carriers did an extraordinary job. Called upon to safeguard elections and keep Americans safe while looking out for our own health during a pandemic, we delivered tens of millions of ballots to voters and completed ballots from voters to election officials.

A day of infamy: Jan. 6, 2021

As many of you know, the union’s headquarters building sits very close to the Capitol building. On Jan. 6, 2021, I watched in disgust and horror from my eighth-floor office, as I’m sure many of you did through the internet and your TVs at home, as a violent mob attacked the U.S. Capitol, interrupting the certification of the election of Joe Biden and Kamala Harris by the Electoral College. Over my years sitting in this office, I have seen countless protests, demonstrations and rallies on the grounds of the Capitol—and NALC has participated in our fair share of them. Such exercises of our First Amendment rights are fundamental to our system of government. But



NALC will have to be nimble enough to adapt and act accordingly. And I am confident that we will. But we do know for sure that there are a few things that we will have to grapple with before we next meet in Boston in 2024. I want to finish my portion of this report by addressing some of those things.

The Postal Service's 'Delivering for America' plan

A major topic NALC will have to contend with is the Postal Service's "transformation

plan," as the postmaster general likes to refer to the 10-year strategic plan he unveiled in the spring of 2021—the Delivering for America (DFA) plan. Indeed, DeJoy told the National Postal Forum in May, "I was not hired and I did not come here to manage the Postal Service. I was hired to transform it."

If nothing else, the DFA plan is bold. It combines a massive reorganization of the managerial structure of the Postal Service (now largely complete) with proposed legislative and administrative actions (partially achieved) and a strategy to restructure the operations of the Postal Service. It features ambitious goals to both invest in the Postal Service's networks and to dramatically increase the agency's revenues by growing its competitive product revenues. It also includes all the usual rhetoric about becoming a great place to work (more on that below). As I said when the plan was unveiled, there was much to like in it. Unlike every other PMG since 1943, DeJoy has embraced six-day delivery as an organizational imperative. Instead of "shrinking to survive," as his immediate predecessors supported and tried, he has an actual growth strategy with the USPS Connect shipping initiatives. This means adding

capacity instead of focusing exclusively on downsizing. Former BOG member Ron Bloom clearly influenced the plan; many of its elements bear a strong resemblance to what Bloom proposed when he worked as an advisor to the NALC 10 years ago.

But there also are things that don't make sense. The service standard changes—purposely slowing the delivery of regional and cross-country mail—are not worth the paltry savings they generate—a fact that we focused on in our comments to the PRC when it conducted its review of the changes. The changes are especially dubious when implementing them while raising rates by the maximum amount possible—in business lingo, "slower mail at higher prices" is not a good "value proposition."

One year into this plan, it is far too early to pass judgment, though there is some evidence that the quality of service has been improved somewhat after two years of turmoil caused by the pandemic—and a year or so of managerial reshuffling. But the plan's potential impact on letter carriers is only now coming into view. Here, it is worth reading what DeJoy had to say at the National Postal Forum about the planned changes in the Postal Service's delivery operations:

Let's speak about our delivery network.

With almost 19,000 locations around the country, we can have as many as 40 locations within a ten-mile radius. This requires significant sorting of product at our plants, numerous underutilized truckloads, and diminishes the magnificence of our biggest competitive advantage—our mail carrier route structure.

These delivery units are in disrepair. They have poor employee amenities, have not accommodated our package growth, and operate to a dated and costly strategy.

Dramatic change is needed, and dramatic change is what we are pursuing.

We will be aggregating much of our carrier base into Sort and Delivery Centers. with adequate space, docks, conveyors, mail, and material handling equipment to operate more efficiently and provide greater reach.

We will place large carrier operations inside our mail processing

what happened on Jan. 6 was not a peaceful protest or a principled example of civil disobedience. The attack was a disgraceful betrayal of our democracy. We cannot let it happen again or let it define our future, a subject to which we now turn.

Looking to the future

There is a well-loved and wryly funny proverb that has been attributed to everybody from Yogi Berra to Mark Twain, but which is really a centuries-old saying from Denmark that was made famous by a Danish physicist named Neils Bohr. It goes: "Making predictions is hazardous, especially about the future." Based on our experience over the past four years, that seems right to me. None of us saw what was coming four years ago—a pandemic, a deep recession, an election in which the Postal Service and mail ballots took center stage, a booming economy scarred by inflation, etc. But just like all politics must be about the future, so must all union conventions.

We are here this week to chart our course for the next two years, even though we can't possibly predict what will happen next month, much less next year. Whatever the world throws at us, the



plants, dramatically reducing transportation, reducing mail handlings, increasing reliability, and decreasing time to delivery

We are analyzing our vast collection of closed plants around the nation and plan to modernize them to accommodate this strategy. Implementing this strategy will make us the preferred delivery provider in the nation. We will have the greatest reach and be the most reliable and affordable.

We will also be the most environmentally friendly solution for shipping needs as we are going to every home anyway!

These changes to both our national network and our local operations will take years to accomplish, but each plant or delivery unit tackled will provide immediate systemwide benefits. We simply just cannot do this fast enough.

This will transform the Postal Service—and I wish I could say it is ingenious! It is not—it is obvious. If you were building a Postal Service from scratch today this is what you would do. The genius is unwinding what we are doing today to prepare for the future.

Again, it's a bold vision. In response, my message to the PMG has been very clear and very simple: None of this will work unless the NALC has a seat at the table *before* and *during* this transformation. The Postal Service needs the interests of letter carriers to be a principal concern in the design of any new Sort and Delivery Centers. That means our union must be involved up front as partners in this transformation—not merely consulted, not informed, not tolerated. We will need to have a partnership of equals, as we did in the campaign for postal reform. Otherwise, it will not work.

As for the success of the overall DFA plan—as it pertains to transportation, processing, retail services and delivery—I've delivered another simple message: The Postal Service cannot succeed unless it solves its chronic staffing problems first. These problems were clearly made worse by the pandemic and the labor market

conditions resulting from the so-called Great Resignation, but they pre-dated the pandemic. The negative effects of staffing shortages, beyond the outrageous fact that routes consistently go undelivered in some locations, have been enormous. In thousands of delivery units, the Postal Service is routinely violating work-hour limits in our contract, for overtime-desired list (ODL) and non-ODL carriers alike, and for CCAs and part-time flexibles as well. As a result, CCA retention rates continue to decline, and the chronic staffing shortages we now face have even begun to adversely affect the Postal Service's ability to retain career city carriers. Here's the bottom line: Unless management solves these problems, the DFA plan will fail.

Fortunately, collective bargaining provides a means to fix the staffing problems. Today, even as we file grievances to compensate letter carriers for forced overtime and work-hour limits in violation of the National Agreement, we also are engaging management at the headquarters level to address staffing issues with additional career conversions, and where and when necessary, with direct hiring of career employees. Our early experience with the MOU on City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force, which expanded a pre-existing task force on city delivery to seek methods to improve the cultural and operational environment in city delivery offices, also shows promise. We've rolled out pilot programs to improve the New Employee Experience that aims to treat CCAs more humanely and to provide mentors. This appears to be improving retention rates. Here's a bold idea for the DFA plan: Let's work to spread those more humane practices to all employees, not just CCAs.

That will be on the table for the next round of contract talks, along with the only time-tested solution to the Postal Service's chronic staffing woes: moving to an all-career workforce with competitive starting wages.

Broader challenges

Finally, there are two sets of problems that the NALC will have to confront over the next two years (and beyond), for which there are no obvious collecting-bargaining solutions. One set relates to long-standing technological, social and marketplace

changes that are transforming the way businesses and households use the Postal Service. The other set involves a growing crisis within the institutions of American democracy that threaten our rights as workers and citizens.

The changing mail mix and the rise of Amazon

Over the course of my presidency, the mix of products delivered by the Postal Service has dramatically changed due to technological and social changes brought about by the internet and information technology. On the one hand, electronic substitution has reduced the volume of letter mail dramatically. On the other hand, the internet has fueled an e-commerce boom. In 2006, the Postal Service delivered 200 billion pieces of letter mail, which accounted for 94 percent of USPS volume and 82 percent of USPS revenue. That number fell in 2021 to 107 billion pieces, still accounting for 82 percent of volume, but just 49 percent of revenues. First-Class Mail revenue declined from \$37 billion to \$23 billion and its share of total revenues fell from 54 percent to just 30 percent. Over that same period, the Postal Service has been transformed into a major package delivery company—shipping revenue quadrupled from \$8.2 billion to \$32 billion, and the share of total revenues derived from packages rose from 12 percent to 42 percent. The single largest source of revenue for the Postal Service is now shipping services, far surpassing the revenue derived from First-Class letters.

So, what does all that mean for us—other than providing useful context for the Postal Service's DFA plan? It means that the Postal Service is now much more susceptible to market forces than it was even 13 years ago, when its core revenues were from letter mail. Nothing symbolizes this change more than the rise of Amazon, which long ago supplanted the Postal Service and Walmart as the nation's largest employer.

The Postal Service's relationship with Amazon is complicated. Amazon is both one of USPS's biggest customers and one of its biggest competitors. Over the past five years, Amazon has built out an extensive logistics and delivery network to bring in-house the delivery of products sold

on its marketplace platform. In the past, USPS delivered more than half of Amazon's parcels. Today, we deliver only about a quarter. Amazon is projected to ship more packages than both UPS and FedEx by the end of this year. While the volume of parcels that USPS receives from Amazon has remained relatively consistent over this period, Amazon's sales have grown spectacularly—particularly during the pandemic—meaning that Amazon increasingly keeps a larger proportion of its delivery business in-house. As Amazon's delivery network grows, it seems likely that USPS will be left with only the most expensive delivery points, while Amazon retains the most lucrative for itself. This underlines our need to diversify our customer base—and makes it imperative for the Postal Service to make its USPS Connect initiative a success.

Amazon also is a threat to good jobs—and therefore relevant to our collective-bargaining interests. Stories about the terrible working conditions at Amazon facilities have permeated the news in recent years. Amazon demands an extreme pace of work and gives little time for breaks to its workers. Heartbreaking stories of heart attacks, miscarriages and even deaths in Amazon warehouses are not uncommon. The company tries to combat these stories by offering splashy benefits and higher pay than other employers in a given area, but turnover is extremely high—indicating that working conditions do not make the pay worth it.

NALC therefore strongly supports the unionization of Amazon workers—both to help these suffering workers and to curb Amazon's market power. Several high-profile organizing campaigns have recently caught the media's and public's attention. In Alabama, the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) ran a valiant effort to organize an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer. After losing its first election in April 2021, RWDSU appealed and was granted a re-run by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) due to Amazon's extreme anti-union tactics. At the RWDSU's request, the labor movement rallied to help, sending organizers and funds to fuel the campaign. NALC released four local letter carriers to work on the campaign for several months. Region 3 NBA Michael Caref joined for several weeks

as well. These carriers visited the homes of Amazon workers to talk to them about their jobs and why a union would improve their working conditions. Unfortunately, Amazon continued its scare tactics, and the RWDSU lost its re-run election in March 2022, but by less than 120 votes—significantly fewer than the first election.

On the other hand, in New York (Staten Island), the independent Amazon Labor Union (ALU) caught the country by surprise and won an NLRB election in an Amazon warehouse in April 2022. The ALU now must bargain with Amazon, and the labor movement is eagerly lending its support.

Compared to warehouse workers, organizing Amazon's delivery drivers is much more complicated. Rather than employing delivery drivers directly, Amazon contracts with a number of small delivery companies at each Amazon delivery facility. These small companies, known as Delivery Service Providers (DSPs), then hire drivers themselves. While this is different than FedEx's independent contractor model that precludes unionization, it still makes organizing these drivers very difficult, because a union would need to organize anywhere between five and 15 companies at each facility—while also successfully hiding these efforts from Amazon, which can and will cancel contracts with DSPs with little warning and no explanation. Still, the labor movement is strategizing about ways to organize this group of workers. NALC is particularly interested in this line of organizing because these are the jobs that compare most directly to ours. Improving pay and working conditions for Amazon delivery drivers will raise wages across the sector. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), which represents UPS drivers, also is active in this area, and NALC staff members have engaged with their IBT counterparts about opportunities to collaborate. The election of a new IBT president and subsequent staffing changes at IBT have paused these efforts, hopefully temporarily.

NALC also is also engaging in other efforts to organize Amazon and curb its market power via our national and international federations. We joined UNI Global Union's Amazon Alliance in the fall of 2019. The Alliance brings together unions from around the world with a stake in Amazon to share information, research and

successful strategies for engaging with the company. NALC also is participating in the AFL-CIO's Amazon working group, which has assembled unions from both inside and outside the federation to strategize about how best to tackle Amazon in America. Debate and discussions about the size and scope of such a federation-wide campaign are ongoing. We will continue to seek ways to engage in productive action.

America's besieged democracy

The monumental task of organizing Amazon—and of rebuilding a labor movement that has been shrinking for decades—is fundamentally a democracy project. Giving Americans a “voice” on the job by securing their right to organize unions is not much different than the task of giving citizens a “voice” in their governments by securing their civil rights, including the right to vote. These rights cannot be separated in a free society—labor rights and voting rights go hand in hand.

Unfortunately, since at least the passage of the 1947 Taft-Hartley Act (which created the so-called “right to work” movement) the labor movement has been under assault by right-wing politicians and their corporate backers. Starting in the 1970s, those same corporations have funded right-wing think tanks and organizations dedicated to putting pro-business federal judges on the bench, who have gradually weakened our right to organize and effectively eliminated our right to strike. As I mentioned earlier, that is why we need the PRO Act.

For more than 50 years, our efforts to achieve labor law reform have been blocked by the Senate filibuster—despite majority support for such bills as the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) and the PRO Act. In a legislative body that already gives states with small populations disproportionate power, the filibuster has effectively institutionalized minority rule. Meanwhile, anti-democratic trends have flourished across the country with the proliferation of various forms of voter suppression, the widespread use of gerrymandering, and an explosion of campaign spending by “dark money” billionaires and millionaires. As I also mentioned earlier, that's why we need the Freedom to Vote/John Lewis Voting Rights Act.



Volume 134/Number 8 August 2021

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

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A pivotal time for the U.S.

LABOR MOVEMENT

Do you approve or disapprove of labor unions?

Year	% Approve	% Disapprove
1940	60	30
1945	64	25
1950	75	14
1955	75	14
1960	71	19
1965	60	27
1970	60	27
1975	55	30
1980	55	30
1985	60	27
1990	60	27
1995	65	26
2000	58	33
2005	49	45
2010	53	38
2015	81	18
2020	81	18

GALLUP

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outgoing president of the United States, who falsely claimed that the presidential election had been marred by fraud and irregularities, makes it even more appalling. Letter carriers, like our fellow American citizens, are diverse, opinionated, and passionate about their values and politics, which NALC appreciates and celebrates. But a line has been crossed that can never be excused, accepted, or repeated.”

Unfortunately, the danger has not passed. More than 4 in 10 Americans still believe the Big Lie that the 2020 presidential

election was stolen. It is fueling yet another wave of voter-suppression initiatives at the state level and animating the campaigns of hundreds of office seekers.

What has become abundantly clear to the U.S. labor movement is that we cannot rebuild a labor movement without also rebuilding our democracy. That was a major theme at the AFL-CIO convention in Philadelphia, and it is one that drives the NALC’s support for the National Vote at Home Coalition. The coalition’s non-profit

organizations give us a way to fight for a healthier democracy by expanding vote-by-mail options to all Americans. The 2020 election demonstrated the democratic power of mail ballots as states—Republican and Democratic alike—resorted to vote by mail to help citizens vote safely during the pandemic. As a result, voter turnout soared to the highest level (67 percent) in more than a hundred years—as the percentage of votes cast on mail ballots soared from 21 percent in 2016 to 46 percent in 2020.

The legacy of the 2020 elections should be the remarkable everyday heroism of postal workers and the Postal Service in preserving our democracy with this surge in mail ballots. We cannot let the attack on the Capitol on Jan. 6 be that legacy. Clearly our society, our economy and our democracy have deep-seated problems that require fundamental reforms. We must work in good faith with each other to solve them while recommitting ourselves to democratic values. That is what we do in the NALC and in the labor movement. And that is what we need to do in the country as a whole. In other words, *democracy is on the ballot in 2022*, and it is crucial that letter carriers vote in primaries, in November, and every other Election Day going forward. We should not take democracy for granted. It’s messy and frustrating but losing it would be tragic—and catastrophic for our society and the world.

That concludes the report of my office. What follows is a comprehensive report of the activities of your union’s headquarters departments and of the NALC’s national and regional officers. Once again, brothers and sisters, welcome to the 72nd biennial convention. Let’s get to work.

Executive Council

The Executive Council is the governing body of the NALC between national conventions and is responsible for determining the direction of the union. In accordance with Article 9, Section 11 of the *NALC Constitution*, the council consists of the president, executive vice president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, director of city delivery, director of safety and health, director of life insurance, director of the health benefit plan, director of retired members, the Board of Trustees and the national business agents.

As of May 15, 2022, the council had convened 14 times since the last update through May 19, 2020, which would have been the cutoff date for the Hawaii convention report.

Meetings of the council are an important opportunity for national officers and key staff to focus on the important issues facing letter carriers. NALC leaders learn about the latest developments from the field and tackle significant issues of national importance. Often, staff members in attendance will report on departmental activities. By meeting as a group, Executive Council members gain the perspective needed to make important decisions on behalf of the membership.

Here is a summary of the council meetings that took place as of May 15, 2022, since the cutoff date for the Hawaii convention report:

June 1, 2020 (video conference): President Fredric V. Rolando acknowledged the recent acts of racism and resulting civil unrest, reminding the national business agents (NBAs) to make letter carrier safety on the street a daily topic of discussion with the USPS area counterparts. The council discussed the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and measures to ensure the safety of letter carriers. The council received updates on the new postmaster general and the scheduling of Senate confirmation hearings for recent Board of Governors nominees. The council approved a financial contribution to Unite Here, which represents the workers in the hotel, gaming and food service industry as well as others, as these industries were disproportionality hit hard by the

COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in layoffs of approximately 95 percent of the workers. Other topics discussed included the request by national Arbitrator Das for an extension of the deadline to render a decision on the consolidated casing initiative interpretive dispute and COVID-19 testing protocols.

June 4, 2020 (video conference): President Fredric V. Rolando notified the council of a settlement in the consolidated casing national-level dispute and provided details of the settlement. In addition, the council approved funding to purchase a new human resources/payroll system. The council was informed of the approval of the USLC-MBA disability policy submission by the California Insurance Commission for members in that state.

July 9, 2020 (video conference): President Fredric V. Rolando provided updates related to the COVID-19 pandemic, including precautions, related memorandums of understanding (MOUs), payroll tax credit, the stimulus package, infection statistics, and supplies pertaining to personal protective equipment. In addition, the council received information on meetings with the USPS over implementation of the consolidated casing initiative settlement. Other items discussed included the Stamp Out Hunger donor drive and the cancellation of Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA) events.

Aug. 13, 2020 (video conference): President Fredric V. Rolando notified the council about discussions with the USPS over the recent restructuring and related concerns. In addition, the council was briefed on the service issues plaguing the USPS and the attention they are garnering from members of Congress. The council discussed strategies for addressing the issue in the context of an upcoming national election involving expanded voting by mail. The council approved to endorse former Vice President Joe Biden and running mate Sen. Kamala Harris for president and vice president in the 2020 presidential election.

Aug. 18-20, 2020 (video conference): In addition to receiving a legislative update that focused primarily on Con-

gress's attempts to provide COVID-19 relief, the council was given updates on the political landscape in terms of the upcoming election cycle. The council was briefed on the COVID-19 infection rates and related letter carrier deaths, as well as protection protocols currently in place and those being discussed with USPS. The council was given an update on the schedule for the NALC-USPS interest arbitration hearings. Other subjects discussed included USPS operations, status of e-commerce—particularly Amazon, 2020 biennial convention issues and postal reform. The council elected the directors of the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, as is required every two years.

Oct. 30, 2020 (video conference): The council was informed of the passing of Region 12 secretary Fran Hojlo and the retirement of Region 12 NBA David Napadano. The council was briefed on the status of the NALC-USPS interest arbitration as both parties had completed the presentation of their case in chief on the economic portion, although the parties continue to attempt to negotiate a settlement. In addition to receiving a 2020 election update, the council discussed ways to instill confidence in vote-by-mail for the upcoming election cycle.

Nov. 17, 2020 (video conference): The council was informed that Brian Thompson was appointed as NBA for Region 12 to fill the vacancy left by the retirement of David Napadano. The council received an update on the NALC-USPS interest arbitration and the terms of a possible tentative agreement under consideration by the parties.

Dec. 17, 2020 (video conference): President Fredric V. Rolando reminded the council of the composition of the Ballot Committee, as addressed in Article 16 of the *NALC Constitution* and identified the members appointed to the committee. The council was briefed on the most current COVID-19 exposure and infection rates among USPS employees. The council was informed of proposed USPS proof-of-concept studies involving temperature-taking of employees and COVID-19 testing. The council received an update to organiz-



ing efforts of Amazon workers. The council was advised of meetings with the postmaster general (PMG) to discuss legislative and operational strategies. The council approved the recommendations of the Board of Trustees to adopt the 2021 premium rates for the NALC Health Benefit Plan for Employees and Staff and Nongroup Benefits. The Executive Council elected the seven trustees of the Nalcrest Foundation, Inc., four of whom must be members of the council, and the officers of Nalcrest. Other topics discussed included the exclusion of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act provisions in the current stimulus proposal, the NALC rap session—tentative agreement, current data on letter carrier deaths from COVID-19, and CCA discipline issues.

Feb. 19, 2021 (video conference): The council received updates on the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and was advised that there hasn't been any allotment of vaccines dedicated to USPS employees to date. Further, the council was notified that some of the 64 jurisdictions comprising the jurisdictional breakdown created across the country have not prioritized USPS employees in Phase 1B. The council discussed the commitments from USPS involving safety protocols for post offices related to face coverings, social distancing, facility cleaning and contact tracing. The council received a stimulus update, as well as a postal reform update. Other topics discussed included legislation, an update to the Board of Governors and Postal Regulatory Commission, recurring violation of workhour limitations, COVID-19-related dispensation to branches and state associations, and the status of the ratification of the NALC-USPS tentative agreement. The council officially approved the cancellation of the 2020 biennial convention after being previously postponed.

April 15, 2021 (video conference): The council discussed the convention reports normally made available to delegates and published in *The Postal Record* and determined that a letter to branches would be drafted explaining how the reports, as well as awards, would be communicated and distributed. The council discussed the viability

of convening a rap session in 2021, deciding to continue to monitor the situation to determine if it would be safe to do so. The council was informed that the NALC health benefit representative seminar will likely be postponed until 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The council discussed the terms of the ratified NALC-USPS National Agreement and the resulting local memorandum of understanding training and subsequent negotiations. The council received an update on the organizing campaign of Amazon warehouse workers by the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union in Bessemer, AL. The council was briefed on the work being done by the City Delivery and Workplace Improvement Task Force. Other topics discussed included a stimulus update, the USPS business plan, postal reform, recent nominations to the Board of Governors, legislation, the NALC Stamp Out Hunger donor drive, a COVID-19 update and USPS e-commerce.

June 30, 2021 (video conference): The council received information regarding USPS's intentions to modify the face coverings policy. The council was informed that the convention reports from the canceled 2020 national convention will be posted on the Members Only section of the NALC website for the delegates and members to view by the end of July. The council was notified that the rap session is canceled this year due to the continued impact of COVID-19. The council was apprised of discussion with the USPS over staffing issues within the USPS involving considerations for increasing interest of potential employment candidates. The council was informed that the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is seeking to work directly with NALC on a joint outreach program to encourage letter carriers who contracted COVID-19 to file a claim with OWCP.

Oct. 13, 2021 (video conference): President Fredric V. Rolando notified the council of a shooting incident that occurred the previous day at the East Lamar Carrier Annex in Memphis, TN. The council was provided a status update on the COVID-19 vaccine directive issued by the Biden administration and the possible impact on USPS employees. The

council received an update on the current USPS face covering policy, and that USPS COVID-19 exposure and infection rates are trending in a positive direction. The council discussed contractual issues resulting from the settlement of the NALC-USPS National Agreement, including, but not limited to, letter carriers receiving back pay and the status of a new *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)*. The council was notified of the retirement of Mike Gill from the Board Of Trustees. The council received updates on the expansion of Amazon, legislation and the political climate. The council was informed that a letter, previously mailed to all branches, would be included in the convention call advising of possible attendance restrictions related to COVID-19.

Dec. 6-8, 2021 (video conference): President Fredric V. Rolando advised the council that Region 5 NBA Mike Birkett and Region 6 NBA Troy Clark announced that they would be retiring in December 2021. The council was provided an update on postal reform and advised of support from all three branches of the government. The council was informed of a meeting President Rolando had with U.S. Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Richard Neal to discuss moving the postal reform bill out of the House Ways and Means Committee and onto the House floor for a vote. The council was provided an update on the status of the Next Generation Delivery Vehicles. The council discussed the COVID-19 vaccine directives from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the expected extension that USPS will seek for implementing the protocols. Along with receiving a legislative update, the council was given an update on the status of confirmations of Board of Governors nominees Dan Tangerlini (R) and Derek Kan (D). The council discussed the letter carrier compensation provisions of the newly ratified National Agreement. The council was advised of discussions with USPS regarding the application of the Juneteenth holiday. Additional topics discussed included contractual issues, organizing and the

Dispute Resolution Process. The council was advised of meetings with the PMG to discuss legislative and operational strategies. The council approved the recommendations of the Board of Trustees to adopt the 2021 premium rates for the NALC Health Benefit Plan for Employees and Staff and Nongroup Benefits. The Executive Council elected the seven trustees of the Nalcrest Foundation, Inc., four of whom must be members of the council, and the officers of Nalcrest.

Feb. 23 and 25, 2022 (video conference): The council received NALC COVID-19 travel policies and internal protocols. The council was informed of intentions to resume the Stamp Out Hunger food drive in May. The council discussed the scheduling for April 21 of the national interpretive issue involving the PTF Step AA rate dispute before Arbitrator Nolan. The council received an update on the fifth contractual cost-of-living adjustment that stood at \$1,331 at the time of the meeting. The council was given an

update on the status of American Postal Workers Union-USPS collective-bargaining session. The council discussed the progress of the subcommittees under the City Delivery Task Force and resulting pilot programs. The council discussed the renewal of plans to have a celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Great Postal Strike of 1970 as COVID-19 permits. Along with discussions about the NALC 72nd biennial convention, the council received updates about organizing, Amazon and staffing issues.

Combined Federal Campaign (CFC)

NALC has long been an enthusiastic supporter of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), which is designed to allow postal and federal government employees to make charitable donations through payroll deduction.

Each year, NALC has issued an endorsement of the annual CFC campaign and suggested that NALC members use the opportunity to make regular donations to the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the Postal Employees' Relief Fund, the United Way, or any charity of their choice.

In 2018, charities covered by CFC raised a total of \$7,792,391 from 26,256 postal employees, including 4,524 hours of time spent by employees volunteering for the campaign. These donations were an increase of \$1.6 million over the amount

raised in 2017.

In 2019, the CFC campaign raised a total of \$6,762,366 from postal employees, including volunteer hours, which is equal to \$23,769 in cash donations.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) authorized a special solicitation period, which was open from April 22 through June 30 of 2020. During this period, an additional \$45,274 was donated, including time spent by employees volunteering worth \$6,227. This increased the total amount raised, in both monetary donations and volunteer hours, to \$6,955,320 for charitable organizations supported in part by the CFC.

In 2020, at the height of the pandemic, postal employees donated \$4,590,776 in

pledges. In addition to the money pledged during the campaign, a total of 5,345 in volunteer hours, worth \$110,529, donated. Both totals include a special solicitation period authorized by OPM during the spring of 2021 in reaction to severe winter storms across the country.

During the 2021 campaign, postal employees pledged \$4,016,257 in monetary donations and 6,651 hours of volunteer time, which equated to \$128,178. These totals do not include any donations received during the special solicitation period authorized by OPM to help with the humanitarian crisis caused by the war in Ukraine. This special period ran from April 18 through June 30, 2022, and OPM was still finalizing the contributions when my report went to print.

National Auxiliary President

My union brothers and sisters! As the saying goes, all good things must come to an end. Yes, this is my last term as president of the National Association of Letter Carriers Auxiliary. It has been an honor and my pleasure to serve as your president for the last eight years. During this journey, I have met a diverse group of people. Some have become friends and some have not, but we all worked together as one in this fight to protect this great union called the National Association of Letter Carriers.

A special thanks goes to my awesome board members and their spouses: Cyn-

thia and Steven Martinez, Crystal and Christopher Bragg, Linda and T.J. Davis, and Pamela and Steve Fore. Thanks for all of your hard work for this union and for the love and support that you have given to Vincent and myself. Love you all!

The theme for the convention is: "Where do we go from here?"

I hope that all will enjoy the 72nd NALC convention and the NALCA's 56th convention in Chicago, and that the union and the Auxiliary will be around for many more years to come.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve!
Sincerely,
Cythensis Lang

Equal opportunity employer

NALC continues to honor and subscribe to its affirmative action program, which provides for a continuing analysis of the association's human resources and personnel policies and practices and formalizes our commitment to recruit, hire, train and promote all persons without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, marital status, age, handicap, veteran status or national origin. This program has the strong support of this administration.



Information Center

The NALC Information Center (IC) has changed but its purpose remains the same: to obtain, organize and protect the information resources needed by the union's officers, staff and membership. One change since the last convention is the retirement of Nancy Dysart, the former Information Center director. NALC evaluated its needs following her retirement, and decided to hire an archivist to meet the evolving requirements of the archival and historical collections, the records management program, and the Information Center materials.

Archives

Walter Reuther Library at Wayne State University houses NALC's official archives. NALC continues to maintain a relationship with Reuther's staff, and works with them to evaluate records for future transfers and make current holdings more accessible to officers, staff and members, as well as the labor community as a whole. Reuther's professional staff of archivists and technicians safeguard the documents physically, while organizing their content to ease access for research. Documents are stored in acid-free containers in climate-controlled settings. Finding aids produced by the Reuther staff help researchers locate specific items of interest.

The archives have been located at Reuther Library since 2001, when President Emeritus Vincent Sombrotto spearheaded its establishment at one of the pre-eminent centers for research on U.S. labor. By so doing, NALC's history will be preserved and made available to a wide audience. Anyone interested in NALC, the Postal Service and its workers, or American labor in general, can access this treasure trove of historical material.

Reuther is continuing to process NALC records. Professional archival processing is a painstaking activity and takes time. The use of the terms "records" or "archives" may conjure up images of papers, folders and storage boxes, but the union's history also can be traced through many other types of sources. NALC's collection at Reuther includes memorabilia, photographic images, videos, posters, badges and uniforms. If you go to the Reuther website (reuther.wayne.edu), you'll see the finding aids to the NALC collection alluded to above, and a photo gallery of historic images. These will provide you with some idea of the extent of NALC's collection.

While the union's official archives are in Detroit, many historical items and files remain in Washington. The collection of historical artifacts started in earnest with the celebration of the union's centenary in 1989, and has continued since. The Information Center is fortunate to receive numerous donations each year. The center has, among other things: uniform items from USPS, the Post Office Department and foreign postal services; an almost complete collection of convention badges dating back to the organizing convention in 1889; pins; buttons; and scrapbooks. The collection should continue to grow.

Records management

As branches should be aware, the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) imposes strict retention requirements on unions on both the local and national level. But records management is about more than legalities. The purpose of the records management program at NALC Headquarters is to organize and preserve the enormous amount of material generated by the union while disposing of that which is no longer needed.

Although increasing amounts of NALC's work is done solely in digital format, paper is still around and must be dealt with. Requirements for records retention—whether practical or legal—and space limitations often collide. NALC is currently reinforcing its physical record management standards and ensuring timely destruction of material that is no longer needed or legally required. This will allow the valuable records storage spaces in the headquarters building to be used to store only those items that officers and staff may need more convenient and frequent access to. Care is always taken to safeguard personal and financial data and other sensitive information when disposing of records.

NALC has also strengthened its electronic records retention policy in order to ensure efficient and ideal usage of space (both physical and electronic), optimize retrieval capabilities, eliminate redundancy, and support effective management. This effort includes restructuring and organizing digital files, removal of duplicate and outdated items, and scanning projects to reduce physical space use and enhance successful retrieval.

As mentioned above, branch record-keeping is also subject to the LMRDA, and must follow the same general principles as govern records management at the headquarters level, if on a smaller scale. Branch officers' training, offered by the secretary-treasurer, provides classes on records management. The aim is to discuss useful approaches to a common problem, while helping branches comply with LMRDA requirements.

Information Center

The NALC Information Center holds a large collection of NALC and postal materials, and a smaller amount of general interest and reference sources.

One of the most significant parts of the IC collection is, not surprisingly, postal-related material. This part of the IC's collection has always been one of its strengths. Most are in the IC itself, but the oldest are in records storage. The IC can supply, when asked, the changing language of a section of the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)* or *Handbook M-41* or other postal document going back to its origin. Branches needing support for arbitration, as well as Washington, DC, officers and staff, have access to this information through the IC. In addition to official USPS documents, the IC has an extensive collection of postal-related books and government documents, ranging from former President Doherty's *Mailman USA* to a complete set of *Government Accountability Office* studies on postal issues to recently published studies of the postal service.

The IC also maintains copies of NALC publications or CD/DVDs. This fact proves especially useful every two years when NALC prepares for the national convention and people develop a sudden interest in past proceedings, officers' reports and resolutions. The IC has a collection of convention documents going back to the early 1960s. Combining those with all of the past *Postal Records*, people can trace what happened in every convention of the union's history, back to the very beginning.

The resources available in the IC are also used when the union is engaged in bargaining or preparing for arbitration. Among other items, the IC has the transcripts and exhibits from all NALC interest arbitrations, and those from many of NALC's sister postal unions.

The move to digital format continues. With publications choosing to produce digital versions, and increasingly offering access to online archives of materials, NALC is no longer keeping news clips in a

physical format since they are easily accessible and searchable online. This frees up time and resources for other projects and materials.

The IC staff is always happy to answer

reference questions, or do research projects, by drawing on the unique materials it has available, and its ability to borrow material from other libraries through the interlibrary loan system.

Research

The NALC Research Department provides research and analysis for the NALC's Office of the President, the Executive Council and staff of the union's major departments. Jim Holland has been NALC's research director since 2013. Sean Crosbie joined the department in 2017 as a staff assistant for economic analysis.

Examples of Research Department work include: analysis of quarterly and annual USPS financial reports; analysis of postal regulatory developments and filings; research on U.S. postal and parcel industry trends; evaluation of regulations and developments among international postal operators; representation of NALC on postal industry panels and at postal conferences; demographics and workforce analysis; and support for collective bargaining.

Since the 2018 biennial NALC convention, the Research Department has worked on a number of issues on behalf of NALC members.

USPS financial analysis

The department monitors USPS financial results and compiles information about the results for the Office of the President. This includes the analysis of monthly, quarterly and annual financial data. Examples of items the department analyzes include: USPS product revenue and volume, workers' compensation accounting, retiree health benefits pre-funding, and the USPS balance sheet. The department works to provide useful information about the financial health of USPS at specific points in time, and over the year. The department also monitors postal products and services usage, and summarizes USPS reports about usage, such as the USPS Household Diary Study. In addition, the department reviews what others write about the USPS financial results, including reports published by the Postal Regulatory Commission, the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General and industry groups.

Pay tables, COLA tracking, annuity tables

When USPS makes changes to the letter carrier pay tables, the Research Department independently verifies the changes to make sure that they are correct. The department provides pay tables to the Communications Department for publication in *The Postal Record* and posting on NALC's website.

The Research Department also tracks the monthly changes in the consumer price index (CPI) and summarizes where the contract, retiree and Federal Employees' Compensation Act cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) stand each month.

To provide letter carriers a visual representation of the progress toward a COLA, each month the department updates a CPI graph on NALC's website. The line graph shows the CPI index readings since the start of the contract, the most recently published CPI, and the CPI number that would generate a future COLA.

When actual contract COLA amounts are calculated by USPS, based on the January and July CPI releases, the Research Department independently reviews the amounts to ensure that they are correct.

Research also maintains and updates the Civil Service Retirement System and the Federal Employees Retirement System annuity projection tables that are included in *The Postal Record* and on the NALC website. Past pay tables, COLA memos and annuity projections can be found on the NALC website.

2019 PRC 10-year price cap review

In December 2017, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) issued a rulemaking in connection with its 10-year review of the market dominant consumer

price index-based price cap. NALC submitted comments during this review. In those comments, NALC evaluated the outcomes of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act price cap system and determined that it had not provided USPS with the pricing flexibility it needed to cover the cost of delivering mail. The research department provided analytical support for the NALC's filing.

In December 2019, the PRC decided to issue a revised notice of proposed rulemaking, taking into consideration comments that were received after the first rulemaking and further consideration by the PRC. Another comment period was opened and the NALC submitted additional comments. The union's comments noted that the PRC had made some improvements on the first rulemaking by adding a new "density-based" rate authority (authority to account for less mail spread across a growing number of addresses) and rate authority to cover some of the USPS retirement expenses. However, the union argued that this added rate authority was still not enough, because it did not account for past network density loss and would not cover all of the USPS retirement expenses. The Research Department again provided research and analysis support for this filing.

In November 2020, the PRC approved the addition of new density-based and retirement expense-based rate authorities for USPS market-dominant price changes, mostly in line with what the agency proposed in its 2019 revised notice of proposed rulemaking. These new pricing authorities were added to the existing consumer price index (CPI) authority. The PRC also approved a further percent of price cap authority for products that do not cover their attributable costs, such as Periodicals and Package Services.

The USPS has made two price adjustment so far under the new PRC system. The new system has allowed the USPS more than double the price authority that they would have had under the old system.



In 2021, the USPS filed its first market-dominant price increase under the new system, with a price cap set at 6.8 percent. This compares to what would have been a 1.24 percent price cap under the old CPI price cap system. The new price cap included an additional 4.5 percent of authority to account for density loss, driven by the declines in mail volume experienced during the pandemic, and an additional 1.1 percent to pay for some retirement expenses, in addition to the 1.24 percent CPI-based increase.

In April 2022, USPS filed its second market-dominant price increase under the new system, with a price cap set at 6.5 percent. This was comprised of the CPI increase of 5.135 percent, 0.583 percent of authority to account for density loss, and 0.785 percent to pay for some retirement expenses. The retirement expenses authority was reduced due to the elimination of retiree health benefits amortization expense, a part of the 2022 Postal Service Reform Act.

Going forward, the PRC will continue to monitor the new system and the PRC has the option of modifying it if it decides it is not working.

2020 interest arbitration work

The Research Department assisted NALC's chief of staff with preparation for 2020 NALC-USPS interest arbitration and participated in weekly conference calls to prepare for it. Research work included updates of previous NALC presentation exhibits and data, and development of new exhibits, to support the NALC's case. The department developed a computer program simulator to create exhibits that showed why USPS proposals for reduced compensation were unnecessary. The department also worked closely with an outside expert on parcel logistics. The department provided background information about the USPS parcel business, answered questions, and assisted the expert in identifying and locating publicly available USPS and parcel market data. This helped the expert quickly develop effective testimony to support NALC in the arbitration. During the arbitration, the department continued to work under the direction of NALC's chief of staff on

presentations and exhibits to respond to USPS arguments made during the hearings.

2021 PRC cases on service standards

In 2021, the department monitored two significant proposed USPS changes to service standards. During 2021, the USPS requested two Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) advisory opinions for proposed changes to service standards. The USPS is required to file requests for PRC advisory opinions if it wants to make major "nature of service" changes. After hearing the case, the PRC provides the USPS with a non-binding advisory opinion. The first advisory opinion request was for First-Class Mail and Periodicals, both market-dominant products. The second advisory opinion request was for First-Class Package Service (or FCPS), a competitive product. The PRC provided two advisory opinions to the USPS during 2021. The USPS implemented the First-Class Mail and Periodicals service standard changes in October 2021 and implemented the FCPS service standard changes in May 2022. During 2021, the research department monitored the filings for each case and summarized the information for NALC leadership. Since then, the research department has continued to monitor USPS news related to service standards.

Representing NALC at postal conferences and on panels

The Research Department represents NALC at various postal conferences and on panels throughout the year, and provides input to reports produced on the USPS.

In 2019, the department attended the Rutgers University Center for Research in Regulated Industries (CRRI) 27th Conference on Postal and Delivery Economics, held in Dublin, Ireland. In 2020, the department attended the CRRI 28th Conference on Postal and Delivery Economics, held virtually via Zoom. CRRI conference attendees regularly include USPS, other postal operators from different countries, postal regulators, logistics industry representatives, academics and other unions. In 2019, the department also attended a UNI Global Union

Post and Logistics conference in Brussels, Belgium.

The department has previously represented NALC as a program speaker at the CRRI Advanced Workshop on Regulation and Competition in Network Industries, and as a panelist in USPS OIG-organized forums.

Attendance at external conferences helps NALC to monitor developments the postal and logistics industries.

Analysis of PRC, USPS OIG and industry reports

The department works to analyze and interpret reports and studies from the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General (USPS OIG) and reports produced by other independent bodies.

The research staff reviews and summarizes annual reports and supporting material filed at the PRC. These reports include: the PRC's financial analysis of United States Postal Service Financial Results and 10-K Statement; the PRC's Annual Compliance Determination report; and the PRC's Analysis of the Postal Service's Annual Performance Report and Performance Plan. The department also monitors other filings with the PRC to determine if they may be of interest to NALC.

An example of the USPS OIG report analysis is the summary the department produced of an OIG report on staffing turnover. In 2016, the OIG produced its first report about the non-career employee retention problems at USPS. A February 2020 report titled "Effectiveness of the Postal Service's Efforts to Reduce Non-Career Employee Turnover" provided updated data on turnover, examples of what USPS has done to try to reduce turnover, and some of the possible causes of high turnover. The department summarized the 2020 report, and compared it to the 2016 report to see what had changed since the last OIG report on the subject.

Other OIG report titles analyzed by the department include: "Same-Day Delivery: Implications for the U.S. Postal Service"; "Reevaluating the Universal Service Obligation"; "Customer's Perceptions of the U.S. Postal Service during the COVID-19 Pandemic"; "A Closer Look at Postal Labor Costs"; and "Electric Delivery Vehicles and the Postal Service".

Labor and the economy

The Research Department also analyzes and produces reports on broader economic indicators and evaluates how these indicators may affect letter carriers and the labor movement. The department seeks to understand economic developments by analyzing a wide range of economic data.

The department explores the forces that affect working people, such as the declining real value of the minimum wage; income and wealth inequality; the gap between

productivity and wages; employee compensation trends; and the latest trends in the labor market. They also analyze data related to union membership so that NALC may gain a better understanding of the state of unionized America and how NALC membership compares to that of the overall workforce.

The department also tracks the state of the economy as a whole, looking at various economic data, including the core consumer price index (CPI), CPI for delivery services and postage, gross domestic product, delivery worker employment data,

e-commerce sales, labor costs and compensation, union membership data, and any other data involving the general labor market and the market for those employed in delivery capacities. This data is released on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis and provides NALC with snapshots of how these indicators are performing at a given moment and over the year. While these indicators are often incomplete ways to gauge the health of the economy for letter carriers, they provide NALC with a sense of how the economy might affect letter carriers and USPS.

Workers' Compensation

NALC's Workers' Compensation Department, headed by Assistant to the President for Workers' Compensation Kevin Card, provides information and advice to the membership on the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) and its administration by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP).

Nine full-time regional workers' compensation assistants (RWCAs) assist national business agents (NBAs) and branch officers with OWCP claims and other FECA-related matters. RWCAs provide training at state and regional trainings. NALC encourages all letter carriers (career and non-career alike) seeking help for their FECA claims to contact their NBA's office for assistance. NBAs and RWCAs are instrumental in ensuring NALC members receive the representation and compensation they are entitled to.

The NALC's goal is to provide OWCP representation to NALC members at every level of the organization. The department has worked closely with OWCP and the USPS to assist injured letter carriers in transitioning towards electronic claim filing via OWCP's ECOMP web portal.

The department also provides direct representation for members who file appeals with the Labor Department's Employees' Compensation Appeals Board (ECAB). NALC members who are contemplating an ECAB appeal should contact the compensation office at NALC Headquarters for assistance.

The Workers' Compensation Department provides information and advice to the membership through *The Postal Record*, *The NALC Activist*, the "Injured on the Job" section of the NALC website and national convention workshops. The department provides OWCP training

to NALC Leadership Academy students focusing on the history of the FECA and its underlying social compact, the FECA's structure and regulatory underpinnings and how the FECA intersects with the National Agreement.

The Workers' Compensation Department works closely with the Contract Administration Unit (CAU) on grievances that deal with OWCP issues. Close monitoring of management's obligations under FECA and the contract help every injured worker by enforcing strict compliance. The Workers' Compensation Department also assists the CAU with USPS handbook and manual changes and postal programs to ensure that they are in compliance with the FECA.

Under President Rolando's guidance, NALC provides the most comprehensive OWCP representation of any federal-sector union.

Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF)

The Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF), created by postal unions, management associations and the U.S. Postal Service in 1990, continues to serve the needs of active and retired postal employees who suffer substantial damage to their homes caused by major natural disasters and fires.

Over the 32 years that the PERF has existed, it has provided grants to 4,838 postal employees and retirees, providing \$21,550,200 to individuals—including hundreds of letter carriers—who have

requested assistance related to losses from earthquakes, hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, wildfires, home fires and other natural disasters.

The fund receives most of its money from payroll check-off donations through the annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), although some individual and organizational donations are also received. As of June 15, 2022, the fund has a remaining balance of \$2,045,156.

The PERF grant structure was modified after Hurricane Sandy, effective Oct. 29,

2012, to maintain a stable and sufficient fund balance that is able to help all postal employees well into the future.

Generous contributions from postal employees and others through the CFC have allowed the fund to maintain a stable base of resources. An inspired effort for CFC donations is needed this fall to continue PERF's work. Donations can be made through CFC #10268. Checks can be mailed to: Postal Employees' Relief Fund, P.O. Box 41220, Fredericksburg, VA 22404-1220. For more information, call 202-408-1869.



Legislative and Political Affairs

At this time four years ago, NALC was anxiously awaiting President Trump's "Report from the Task Force on the United States Postal System," on the heels of a report from his Office of Management and Budget called "Delivering Government Solutions in the 21st Century: Reform Plan and Reorganization Recommendations," which called for the privatization of the United States Postal Service. The task force report was issued in late 2018 and was worse than expected: It called for excessively raising competitive product prices to support the interests of private competitors, reducing delivery frequency to five days or less, and repealing our collective-bargaining rights regarding pay, benefits and working conditions.

NALC and its members successfully fought off these treacherous ideas, thanks in part to the success in electing allies in both parties over the past four years. Since the Detroit convention we have continued to fight for letter carriers. In so doing, we have had to overcome many challenges, including three years of a pandemic, a politically contentious postmaster general who prompted anger in Congress and with the public, and the sharp political divisions resulting from the 2020 presidential election. Despite these challenges, we achieved the most challenging goal on the NALC's legislative agenda—postal reform legislation. That achievement, the cultivation of a broad bipartisan majority of pro-letter carrier legislators in Congress, and the election of a staunch ally to the White House are among the highlights of the past four years.

Overview

The role of the Department of Legislative and Political Affairs is to advocate for the interests of letter carriers with members of Congress, the White House and other federal officials who make decisions affecting NALC members. In so doing, we seek to educate and engage legislators and executive branch officials about the issues most important to letter carriers and to the U.S. Postal Service, and to build the union's capacity to positively influence such decision makers. That capacity requires a large group of educated and motivated activists who can mobilize our members to make their voices heard, and

the financial resources to support pro-letter carrier candidates for federal office.

The department's main activities include:

- advocating for letter carriers in the halls of Congress by working publicly and behind the scenes with lawmakers on policies affecting our issues;
- monitoring federal and state legislation on bills affecting our members and their issues;
- collaborating with a broad range of stakeholders—including postal unions, postal management, and a cross-section of the mailing industry—to help pass legislation that advances the interests of letter carriers and strengthens our employer;
- soliciting voluntary contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund to help elect and reelect lawmakers from both parties to Congress who will defend the Postal Service and letter carriers;
- mobilizing letter carriers and allies in local communities to advocate for a strong Postal Service; and
- preparing for the midterm elections around the country. To do these things effectively, our department has been very active on a number of fronts.

Executive Vice President Brian Renfro oversees the department, which is managed by Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Legislative and Political Affairs Kori Blalock Keller under the direction of NALC President Fredric Rolando. The team includes Madeline Alvis, a communications and social media specialist, and Eddie Davidson, executive assistant to the president responsible for political and legislative organizing, as well as a team of five regional legislative and political organizers (LPOs) who work directly with our state associations and branch leaders on the union's legislative and political agendas. We also engage outside lobbyists or consultants to help us with specific projects.

Despite the disruptions of the pandemic, which dramatically altered the manner of our legislative and political engagement by shifting much of our work to online and remote activities, there was no loss of intensity and commitment to our department's work.

What follows is a summary of the department's principal activities since NALC's 2018 convention in Detroit related to legislation and politics.

Legislative Activities

As it has been for more than a decade, a top legislative priority since the last convention was enacting vital postal reform legislation to stabilize the U.S. Postal Service, which has been in financial crisis since passage of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) of 2006. But we also worked on a variety of other bills affecting the Postal Service and/or letter carriers as well as those affecting all U.S. workers and their unions. A review of key legislation follows.

Postal Reform Act of 2022 (H.R. 3076/S. 1720)

NALC President Fredric Rolando often has reminded letter carriers that "no reform is better than bad reform." That required us to be both patient and persistent over a long period of time. That makes our success in 2022 especially rewarding. It would not have been possible without our grassroots capabilities and our ability to build relationships with key legislators on both sides of the partisan aisle.

At the end of 2018, comprehensive reform seemed out of reach. Therefore, NALC called on Congress to consider more targeted reform legislation, focusing on the most important way to strengthen the Postal Service—repealing the PAEA's mandate to pre-fund retiree health care while working toward consensus on a much narrower set of other reforms. That insistence and persistence paid off when, one month before the COVID-19 pandemic took hold of our country in February 2020, the House of Representatives passed the United States Postal Service Fairness Act (H.R. 2382) by a vote of 309-106. That pre-funding repeal bill was originally sponsored by Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and pushed in the Senate by Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT). This narrowed the focus and trajectory of the postal reform debate for lawmakers, which paved the way for enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022 (Public Law 117-108) two years later.

Our victory was made possible thanks to a bipartisan approach to reform first

begun in the 114th Congress (2015-16) by the late Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD), who died in 2019, and former Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT)—the leaders of the Postal Service’s House oversight committee. Our strategy and that approach, over four different Congresses, led four key legislators in 2021 to set aside the most contentious issues and embrace provisions advocated by NALC for years. These leaders were:

- **Rep. Carolyn Maloney** (D-NY), chairwoman of the House Committee on Oversight (COR), has served in the House for 29 years. Following the death of Cummings, Maloney became the chairwoman of COR in 2019. A fierce defender of working families and the Postal Service, Maloney was the principal drafter of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022.
- **Rep. James Comer** (R-KY), who has represented Kentucky’s 1st District since 2016 and served as ranking member on COR since 2020, was committed to legislation that would bring financial solvency to the Postal Service. He worked with Maloney to fine-tune the legislation and helped build broad support for the bill among House Republicans.
- **Sen. Gary Peters** (D-MI), served as ranking member for the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee (HSGAC) for three years before he became committee chairman in 2021. Chairman Peters was the Senate’s most influential player in enacting postal reform. He personally rounded up support in the Senate and never wavered in ensuring that letter carriers and the Postal Service network were protected.
- **Sen. Rob Portman** (R-OH), ranking member on HSGAC, was Sen. Peters’s unlikely but instrumental ally given his relationship with the private shippers, who pressured lawmakers to oppose postal reform. Ultimately, Portman’s “stay the course and build consensus” leadership was instrumental to the bipartisan Senate passage of postal reform.

This “gang of four” committed to working together to move identical legislation through both houses of Congress in 2021-22 that not only repealed the

pre-funding mandate, but also embraced another of NALC’s top policy goals—a statutory requirement that the Postal Service deliver mail and packages at least six days a week. They also worked with us to protect the interests of active and retired letter carriers alike in the money-saving health insurance and Medicare reforms included in the bill. (See President Rolando’s discussion of the legislation on pages 14-34.)

While their work and ultimate support were critical, success would have been impossible without thousands of NALC members, who are the backbone of this union and this department. Every letter carrier and letter carrier congressional liaison who picked up the phone, wrote a letter, distributed a fact sheet, attended an event, or built a bridge with an unlikely political ally to educate Republicans and Democrats alike deserves a share of the credit for our postal reform victory. And every member who contributed to the Letter Carrier Political Fund can take a bow as well.

The effectiveness of our grassroots lobbying power was amplified by our network of legislative and political activists, led by LPOs who navigated the politics of a wide range of congressional districts, COVID-19, and so many other challenges to hone our messaging and advance our agenda. Also important was the broad coalition of postal stakeholders (including other postal unions, mailers, etc.) favoring the bill, a coalition we helped lead.

Another key to successful reform was the change in the Postal Service’s approach. Long before she retired, Postmaster General Megan Brennan abandoned many reform ideas that NALC and/or other postal stakeholders could not support. Most notable was the Postal Service’s decades-long quest to move to five-day delivery. Brennan abandoned that quest in the context of postal reform (though she flirted with it again after the pandemic hit) while her successor, Louis DeJoy, fully embraced six-day delivery in his strategic plan and in the agency’s lobbying efforts. Although his background as a GOP fundraiser made DeJoy extremely controversial among congressional Democrats, the support and effort he provided to help advance the bill contributed significantly to the strong bipartisan votes we won in favor of the

legislation.

The final element to our success on postal reform was the election of President Joe Biden, a staunch ally of the Postal Service, its employees and their unions – in stark contrast with his predecessor. He signed the legislation into law on April 6, 2022.

Passing postal reform, which was 12 years in the making, was a tremendous victory for our union. However, it is not and has not been our only priority in Congress. Since 2018, NALC has continued to fight for a number of priorities that have so far failed to advance in Congress.

Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82/S. 1302)

H.R. 82/S. 1302, introduced by Reps. Rodney Davis (R-IL) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) in the House and by Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME) in the Senate, would repeal the Government Pension Offset (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) titles of the Social Security Act for the months payable after December 2021. The inclusion of the WEP and the GPO in Social Security law has resulted in benefits formulas that significantly disadvantage federal employees who have a Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) pension, resulting in decreased or eliminated Social Security benefits. (The provisions do not affect those with Federal Employees Retirement System pensions, since FERS employees pay Social Security taxes for their federal service.)

These two provisions were adopted by Congress in the late 1970s and early 1980s, respectively, to address the false perception that federal retirees were somehow “double dipping.” In fact, these provisions are grossly unfair because retired CSRS letter carriers who worked both for the Postal Service and for private-sector employers over their working years paid into both CSRS and Social Security. Although retired CSRS letter carriers naturally do not expect to receive Social Security benefits for their service for the Postal Service when they did not pay into the Social Security system as government employees, most are shocked to find out that their Social Security benefits for their private-sector work—or for the private-sector work of their spouses—are usually reduced or eliminated by the WEP and



GPO provisions in Social Security law. (See the fact sheet on these provisions in the legislative action center of the Government Affairs section of the NALC website for more details.)

H.R. 82/S. 1302 would prospectively eliminate both WEP and GPO from the Social Security Act, something NALC has been working for decades to accomplish. The legislation has broad bipartisan support, with 196 Democratic co-sponsors and 72 Republican co-sponsors in the House, as well as 33 Democratic co-sponsors, two independent co-sponsors and four Republican co-sponsors in the Senate. Despite consistent bipartisan support for this legislation, efforts to pass it into law have been unsuccessful due to the high price tag it would raise the Social Security benefits of millions of retired public employees. Nonetheless, NALC will continue to fight for this important legislation in the House and Senate.

Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 4268)

Many federal employees, including Postal Service employees, begin their federal/postal employment in non-career positions before transitioning to career status. These employees, including letter carriers who were employed as casuals, transitional employees (TEs) or city carrier assistants (CCAs), do not receive retirement credit for their time spent in these positions.

The Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 4268), sponsored by Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA) and Tom Cole (R-OK), would modify what is considered creditable federal civilian service under FERS. This bill would allow these employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, making such time creditable service under FERS, and for other purposes.

The bill, which has been introduced in the last two Congresses, has bipartisan support in the House, with 22 Democratic co-sponsors and 13 Republican co-sponsors. It remains a top legislative and bipartisan opportunity for NALC. The immediate goals are to build broader support in the House and identify champions for this legislation in the Senate—leading ultimately to a floor vote.

Paid leave (parental and FMLA)

Since our last convention, the issue of providing paid leave for federal employees has been a hot topic on Capitol Hill. When bills regarding leave for federal workers are introduced in Congress, NALC always lobbies for the inclusion of Postal Service employees. However, because the Postal Service is an independent agency not funded by taxpayers, Congress often excludes it from such bills.

On the issue of paid parental leave, in 2019 federal employees were extended paid parental leave through the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2020 (NDAA; P.L. 116-92). That authorization failed to include numerous classifications of federal employees, including postal employees. In 2021, Congress passed a technical fix to extend leave provisions for those omitted, but intentionally left out the postal workforce, despite our best efforts. NALC continues to remind Congress that we should be granted these same leave benefits, and we will continue to do so.

For years, legislation that expands paid medical and family leave for federal employees has been introduced in Congress and fizzled out due to an overwhelming price tag. Most recently, the Comprehensive Paid Leave for Federal Employees Act (H.R. 564/S. 1158), was introduced by Chairwoman Maloney in the House and Sen. Brian Schatz (D-HI) in the Senate. This bill would provide up to 12 weeks of paid family and medical leave for federal employees, including Postal Service employees. Federal employees are currently entitled to 12 weeks of leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), but are not guaranteed paid leave.

During the 116th Congress (2019-2020), a similar bill passed in the House; however, it did not include Postal Service employees. While no further action has been taken on the legislation in the 117th Congress, NALC lobbied successfully to cover postal employees in this bill. We will continue to advocate for letter carriers on this important issue.

Other COVID-19 relief issues: hazard pay and postal vehicles

President Rolando covered the issue of Covid relief legislation and the American

Rescue Plan earlier in this report. But those bills, both the ones that passed (e.g., the American Rescue Plan Act) and the ones that did not (e.g., the HEROES Act and the Build Back Better Act) also featured other issues we care about. Among these issues were:

- **Hazard pay.** In 2020, it became very clear to some in Congress that letter carriers and other essential workers were facing great and unknown health and safety risks as the pandemic began to spread across the country. As a result, Democrats in the House and Senate began shaping various bills to extend hazard pay to front-line workers. Throughout the pandemic, NALC has lobbied Congress to provide additional pay premiums to letter carriers and other essential workers.

We actively advocated for hazard pay for our members, most notably, a Senate Democratic proposal that would have provided an additional \$13/hour on top of workers' current salary or hourly rate—capped at \$25,000. Unfortunately, Republicans refused to negotiate over the issue.

- **Child tax credits.** The American Rescue Plan was signed into law in March 2021. The law provided tax credits of \$3,600 per year for every child under 6, and \$3,000 per year for every child aged 6 to 17—for families with a combined income of up to \$150,000, or a single parent income of up to \$112,500. This provided a major boost to letter carriers with young families. President Biden proposed to make the expanded credits permanent in his proposed Build Back Better plan, a version of which passed the House but stalled in the Senate.
- **Postal vehicle funding.** Legislation adopted in the House of Representatives in 2020 (the HEROES Act and a transportation infrastructure bill) provided billions of dollars to the Postal Service to cover the cost of replacing its fleet of delivery vehicles with Electric Vehicles as well as some or all the cost of the charging infrastructure that would be needed. NALC lobbied hard for these funds, which would provide needed vehicles and provide a financial boost to the Postal Service. This legislation, however, did not advance in the Senate.

(Note: Since we last met in Detroit, the Postal Service has selected a vendor and placed an initial order for 50,000 Next Generation Delivery Vehicles, the first of which are to be deployed in 2023.)

USPS Shipping Equity Act

NALC has been lobbying Congress for years about the potential advantages of shipping of beer, wine and alcohol. Under current law, the Postal Service is unfairly banned from shipping alcoholic goods, which makes private shippers such as FedEx and UPS the only option for wineries, breweries and other producers that wish to ship their products directly to customers. The Postal Service Shipping Equity Act (H.R. 3287/S.1663), introduced by Reps. Jackie Speier (D-CA) and Dan Newhouse (R-WA) in the House and Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR) in the Senate, would allow the Postal Service to deliver alcoholic beverages directly from licensed producers and retailers to legal customers, generating an estimated \$190 million annually in new revenue for the Postal Service. This bill would give USPS two years to develop regulations, ensuring that the Postal Service is prepared to safely deliver alcoholic beverages to adult consumers with appropriate identification checks.

This legislation has been introduced in every Congress since 2013 and every year since. NALC, along with beer, wine and alcohol distributing allies, have lobbied Congress to urge them to support and act on this legislation. Letter carriers may recall previous postal reform legislation including language allowing for shipping of beer and wine. Unfortunately, industry opponents raised enough misleading concerns to sideline this provision during consideration of postal reform. Now that postal reform is done, we will refocus our efforts on this stand-alone bill.

Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act

When we gathered in Detroit, the Trump administration had revealed itself to be one of the most anti-union administrations in recent memory. It had initiated several efforts to undermine or dismantle collective bargaining. It issued three executive orders aimed at limited organizing and union representation in the federal sector

(which were immediately rescinded by the Biden administration within days of taking office). In December 2018, the White House Task Force on the Postal Service called for stripping the right to collective bargaining from postal employees—rights that were won in the Great Postal Strike of 1970. Of course, the attacks on America's unions, legislative and judicial, have been going on for decades and have contributed to steadily declining union density—and a rising tide of economic inequality in the United States.

In response to the assault on labor, NALC has actively engaged in the AFL-CIO's fight to enhance workers' rights and protections. Most notably, significant time and resources have been dedicated to advancing the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act (H.R. 2474). This legislation would increase protections for workers' rights to organize and bargain for higher wages, better benefits and safer working conditions. It would also create a mediation and arbitration process to ensure that corporations and newly formed unions are able to reach a first contract; authorize unions and employers to negotiate deals to collect fair-share fees that cover the costs of representation; and protect the integrity of union elections against coercive "captive audience" meetings.

President Joe Biden was very clear when he took office that he would sign the PRO Act. Unfortunately, while the House has passed the PRO Act two Congresses in a row, the Senate has failed to advance the measure—once again, largely due to the upper body's filibuster rule.

Senate inaction has not stopped NALC's efforts in urging all senators to vote for the legislation. As this publication was going to print, Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer was planning to call the bill to the Senate floor this summer or early fall.

John Lewis Voting Rights Act

Lawmakers have tried but have continued to be unsuccessful at sending sweeping voter reform legislation to the president's desk. The Freedom to Vote Act (H.R. 4) and subsequent replacement bill dubbed the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021 (H.R. 5746) was introduced as the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2019 in the

116th Congress and was renamed in the 117th Congress to honor the late civil rights leader.

Both House bills would combat voter suppression and discrimination by restoring the protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which were cut back after a pair of recent Supreme Court decisions. The bill includes an updated formula for determining which states and localities are subject to federal oversight, based on any recent history of voter discrimination. It would restore the portion of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that requires specific states to pre-clear certain changes to their voting laws and redistricting criteria with the federal government. NALC also fought for inclusion of language to allow no-excuse vote by mail and early voting.

Both H.R. 4 and H.R. 5746 passed in the House but were blocked by Senate Republicans. Without the necessary 60 votes to break a filibuster, there is no clear path for the legislation to advance. That has not stopped NALC and others from imploring Congress to take action to solidify voter protections and access, which have been major targets of state legislatures following the 2020 election. In 2021 alone, more than 400 pieces of legislation were introduced in 49 states and 34 laws to restrict voting rights were passed in 19 states.

USPS Board of Governors

At the time of the Detroit Convention, the U.S. Postal Board of Governors, consisting of nine presidentially appointed members, had been vacant since December 2016. There is perhaps no better symbol of the political disfunction in Washington than a \$70 billion agency of the federal government being forced to operate for 18 months without legally mandated oversight due to Senate nomination politics. (Presidential nominees to the postal board must be confirmed by the Senate.)

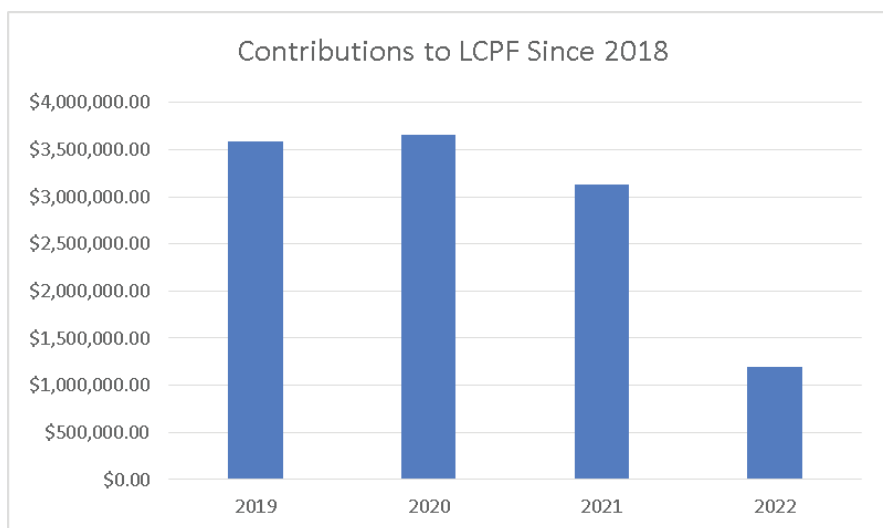
That situation would quickly change starting in August 2022. Over the next 20 months, President Trump nominated seven board members, four Republicans and three Democrats. Although NALC had no real influence on the Republican

nominees, we did advocate for each of the three Democrats: David Williams, the former inspector general of the Postal Service; Ron Bloom, a financial adviser who had worked for NALC in the past; and Lee Moak, the former leader of the Air Line Pilots Association. President Rolando knew each of the Democratic governors well and welcomed them to the board while pledging to seek a constructive relationship with the Republican governors.

The onset of the pandemic and the hiring of Louis DeJoy, a North Carolina businessman and GOP fundraiser, kicked up controversy on the Board. David Williams resigned after DeJoy's appointment, having objected to the Treasury Department's interference with the hiring process—at a time when President Trump was politicizing the Postal Service and making false accusations about the security of voting by mail in the upcoming election.

The resulting political firestorm, and service problems in DeJoy's first months on the job, led to calls for DeJoy's firing by many House and Senate Democrats. This controversy complicated the legislative department's efforts to advance postal reform. NALC sought to defuse the situation by securing the unions' direct involvement in USPS planning for the 2020 election. President Rolando quietly built a working relationship with the postmaster general, focusing on, among many other issues, the need for postal reform. At the same time, the department worked closely with the Postal Service's governmental affairs personnel to build consensus over reform.

Since President Biden took office, he filled the three vacancies on the board and replaced Governors Ron Bloom and John Barger with a fourth and fifth appointment. Although NALC was disappointed that Bloom was not renominated for misguided political reasons, most of the new governors are familiar faces for the NALC: former Deputy Postmaster General Ron Stroman; former National Vote at Home Institute CEO Amber McReynolds; former APWU lawyer Anton Hajjar; and Dan Tangherlini, former administrator of the General Services Administration, who worked on the Biden transition team. Also nominated was a former aide to Sen. Mitch McConnell, Derek Kan.



Political Activities

NALC strives to be a bipartisan force for the common good and the shared interests of its members. That means we focus on the issues that unite us—our shared interests as active and retired postal workers and as union members—and seek to support pro-letter carrier federal candidates who support those issues, regardless of party. That approach paid off handsomely this year with overwhelming bipartisan votes for postal reform in both houses of Congress.

The department's political goals are to mobilize members to support pro-letter carrier candidates for federal office by registering to vote, voting, and encouraging others to do the same.

As President Rolando explained earlier in this report, we endorse candidates only on the basis of workplace issues. Our members hold the whole range of political views of our country, but we stay strong by remaining united around our shared interests.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the department has continued to survey, interview and evaluate candidates for federal office.

Dues money is never used for partisan political campaign contributions—for that we use our political action committee (PAC), the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF). Contributions to our PAC allow us to amplify our messaging on Capitol Hill, finance get-out-the-vote efforts in support of our endorsed candidates, and make financial contributions to their campaigns.

A brief update on our PAC fundraising and spending follows.

Letter Carrier Political Fund

More than 25,000 NALC members made contributions to the Letter Carriers Political Fund (LCPF) in 2021, raising some \$3.1 million for our political activities. That is modestly down from the funds contributed in 2019, the most recent non-election year. But given the impact of the pandemic on our ability to meet in person, that is an extraordinary level of ongoing support for our collective political activities. We have only partial results for 2022, but we hope to bounce back to pre-COVID-19 levels of fundraising soon.

With control of the House and Senate on the line in the 2022 midterm elections, LCPF is just as important as ever. We thank all the members who have contributed to our PAC and remind all NALC members that giving to LCPF is just one way to do your part for the legislative interests of letter carriers. Making your voice heard with your representatives in Washington in support of our legislative priorities, volunteering on campaigns of pro-letter carrier candidates, and educating your fellow carriers, families and friends on our issues are also great ways to support our agenda.

The contributions made to federal candidates and incumbents from Jan. 1, 2021, through June 30, 2022, are in the *Officers' Reports* book distributed at the convention in Chicago.

Communications and Media Relations

The NALC Department of Communications and Media Relations is the hub for the union’s official communications efforts, striving to provide a consistent and effective message that resonates with audiences both internal and external. The department has a challenging mission, one that is central to the future of NALC, of the letter carrier craft and of the U.S. Postal Service—informing active and retired NALC members alike while also helping to develop and get the union’s message out to the public and to the public’s political representatives. Increasing the understanding of postal issues in the public and political arenas is key to NALC’s ability to succeed in everything else it does.

In delivering its message, the department has two spheres of activity—internal communication (to NALC members) and external communication (largely through the news media), with a good deal of interaction between the two.

For members, the department’s aims are to inform them about the postal situation, tell them what’s at stake for them and inspire them to take action when appropriate, whether through political activity or by spreading the message.

The chief forms of communication with members are *The Postal Record*, NALC’s monthly magazine that is sent to our 292,000 members, and NALC’s website, nalc.org. Also central to the department’s efforts are the *NALC Bulletin* (a periodic publication that is posted in branch halls and post offices), the NALC Member App for smartphones and its outreach through various social media channels.

The department seeks to influence the public by getting NALC’s message out through the news media—on the national, regional and local levels. That involves responding to requests for comments by reporters seeking information on postal issues, providing comments from NALC on postal issues, and granting interviews with national officers or local letter carriers to news outlets. It also includes getting NALC’s message across directly in the media in members’ own voices—by writing commentary pieces (also known as op-eds) and letters to the editor.

Also critical in the process, given the amount of misleading conventional wisdom that exists, is the department’s effort

to inform journalists about USPS finances and other postal matters so that their reporting or analysis will be more accurate

Internal communications

The Postal Record is, as mentioned, NALC’s chief communications vehicle with the membership. It is a unique resource, without peer in the U.S. labor movement in focus and quality. The official journal of NALC, *The Postal Record* is two years older than the union itself, having been founded in 1887. Its pages address the concerns of letter carriers in the workplace, legislative and political spheres; when relevant, it places topics in the context of the broader labor movement. The magazine’s emphasis is on straightforward information so members can make their own informed decisions. *The Postal Record* also explains how members can help make NALC stronger. It provides thorough and up-to-date reports on the letter carrier craft, the Postal Service, public policy issues and the many notable efforts of its members to improve the communities in which they work; for example, through the annual food drive or the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The magazine also includes feature stories relevant to letter carriers. Since rejoining the International Labor Communications Association (ILCA) three years ago, NALC’s magazine has won 15 national awards, including nine in the 2021 contest alone. ILCA’s annual contest is the largest competition in the United States recognizing excellence in labor journalism.

In planning magazine articles, the staff works directly with resident national officers and coordinates with other NALC Headquarters departments. Most of the articles are written by Communications Department staffers, but staff members from other departments provide essential material for many items.

The Postal Record has featured a wide range of articles recently, such as ones encouraging members to get involved in

the legislative process to pass the Postal Service Reform Act, informing new and veteran members of their rights, and preparing for the biennial convention in Chicago.

Meanwhile, because it is not on a set publication schedule, the *NALC Bulletin* provides a timely way to address issues such as legislation, contract negotiations and various union campaigns, as events warrant. Further, the *Bulletin* is available to all postal employees across crafts, because it’s posted on union bulletin boards in the work areas of post offices as well as in branch halls. Nearly 10,000 copies of the *Bulletin* are mailed to branch officials and shop stewards.

Along with these publications, the department maintains the NALC website, which aims to be attractive, content-rich, focused and current. While the website’s primary goal is to provide information to members, it also serves as a public relations tool by communicating to a wider audience the value of the universal net-

COST OF THE POSTAL RECORD		
	4/18 to 3/20	4/20 to 3/22
Printing	\$2,339,633	\$2,441,356
Postage	\$1,834,601	\$1,914,366
Total	\$4,174,234	\$4,355,722
Number of issues	23	24

COST OF NALC BULLETIN		
	4/18 to 3/20	4/20 to 3/22
Printing	\$145,456	\$103,031
Postage	\$316,516*	\$224,200*
Total	\$461,974	\$327,231
Number of issues	24	17

*The *NALC Bulletin* and the *NALC Activist* share a USPS postage account, so the postage cost here is estimated.

work and the important contributions letter carriers make to their communities every day. The level of interest is reflected in the tens of thousands of visits a month to NALC’s website. Contract-related PDFs account for the majority of downloads from the website. Its seven main sections—About NALC, News & Research, Government Affairs, Workplace Issues, Union Administration, Community Service and Member Benefits—contain subsections with hundreds of pages of information and thousands of supporting documents, with much of the material available as PDFs.

The Communications and Media Relations staffers also work closely with other



NALC Headquarters departments to post important information to the website in timely fashion.

The department delivers vital information to members quickly through the NALC Member App for iPhone and Android smartphones, a tool that uses today's technology to get the most up-to-date information and resources into the hands of NALC's stewards and members. The app was developed at NALC Headquarters with the needs of all members in mind. It contains links to workplace resources, including the National Agreement, the *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)*, the Materials Reference System (MRS), city carrier assistant (CCA) resources and more. It also includes legislative tools such as a bill tracker, an individualized list of your congressional representatives and information on the Letter Carrier Political Fund; as well as one of the most useful features for all letter carriers—an interactive non-scheduled days calendar. Members can sign up for notifications based on their interests and where they live. The app is available in the App Store or on Google Play.

The Communications and Media Relations Department provides frequent updates on web-based social media sites, including Facebook (facebook.com/nalc.national), Twitter (@NALC_National) and Instagram (@LetterCarriers). The staff employs vehicles such as these to spread NALC's message and to generate enthusiasm among the rank and file for the union's agenda and activities. We also use YouTube (youtube.com/ThePostalRecord) to post NALC-made videos.

Additionally, the department provides creative, editorial and publishing support for other departments, and prepares materials for national conventions and rap sessions. The expertise and experience that is gathered in the department gives other NALC Headquarters operations the ability to create a variety of professional-quality publications in-house at a substantial savings over contracting with outside vendors, ranging from greeting cards and invitations to major works such as *Carriers in a Common Cause* and the *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)*.

For national conventions, the department produces the *Officers' Reports* book, the *Financial Reports* book and the Pocket Guide. It also works with video vendors during the convention to quickly isolate

key events for posting to NALC's website as well as to its YouTube account.

When the convention is in session, the department writes and produces a daily summary, the *Convention Chronicle*, with department staffers covering the events—monitoring the proceedings, taking notes, writing articles, taking photographs, editing, doing layout and proofreading from morning well into the evening. The *Chronicle* is produced completely on-site and printed overnight at a union printer for distribution of about 8,000 copies the next morning to delegates.

Following the convention, the department produces a special convention edition of *The Postal Record* to share convention business with the full membership. Later, the staff helps assemble the *Convention Proceedings*, a verbatim account mailed to every NALC branch represented at the event.

Department members also participate in training and developing the union's future leaders at the Leadership Academy: explaining how to create effective branch publications and websites, and leading workshops on developing and communicating a message.

External communications

The department's communications efforts focus on getting information out through the news media in ways that will constructively influence the public and political conversations about postal matters. That requires educating journalists by debunking the large amount of misleading conventional wisdom and explaining the actual financial situation at USPS as well as the value of the Postal Service and letter carriers. Much progress has been made in these areas over the past several years, with reporters now routinely including—for example—the pre-funding mandate in their news stories and often mentioning the operating profits being realized by USPS. Along with the problem of false narratives is the problem of the large gaps of information on postal issues that exist in most newsrooms. That is the case because few media organizations have reporters who regularly cover USPS, letter carriers or postal topics in general—meaning that journalists often tackle an assigned postal story armed with little knowledge or context.

These twin problems—the presence of false narratives, sometimes stemming from the efforts by vested or ideological interests to influence public opinion; and the lack of in-depth knowledge about postal matters, stemming in part from the economically driven trend in journalism away from specialized beat-reporters and toward general assignment reporters—poses challenges for NALC's efforts to press for accurate journalism.

Those very factors, however, also provide NALC with an opportunity because many reporters appreciate guidance as they navigate complex topics with which they are not familiar, often unsure of where to turn to get the unvarnished truth. And that is where the widespread contributions of letter carriers around the country have proven invaluable. The Communications and Media Relations Department can inform journalists of the facts and help them avoid the pitfalls. But when thousands of letter carriers at all levels—from national officers to regional officials, and branch leaders to rank-and-file carriers in every part of this vast nation—make their voices heard through letters to the editor or op-eds, through interviews with newspaper reporters or comments on radio or television, it alters the way the public, the politicians and the press understand all things postal. All the more when letter carriers communicate their message in a clear, factual and non-partisan manner, as they have done.

It is that dynamic that was vital in achieving postal reform, because it not only provided legislators with a fuller grasp of the facts about pre-funding and the need for changes, it also made clear the public support for such reform.

When media outlets produce accurate reports, it informs the public while influencing the political discussion in two ways—lawmakers directly consume media reports, while also hearing from their constituents about how much they value the Postal Service.

The department also helps to publicize and generate news coverage for the many important things that letter carriers do beyond their jobs to serve their customers, their communities and the country as a whole, such as the food drive and heroic actions on the route.

The overall goal: to inform the press, public and policymakers in ways that will lead to policies ensuring a stable and

prosperous future for the Postal Service and for letter carriers—one that will allow them to continue to offer residential and business customers the industrial world's most-affordable delivery service.

To get there, members of the Communications and Media Relations Department interact daily with news reporters, editors and producers all over the country. The NALC provides information for journalists working on stories, so NALC's voice—and the facts—will be part of the public discussion. They often do this before an event or before news breaks, such as providing extensive background information to key reporters and outlets prior to the release of the quarterly USPS financial reports to help them frame the way they then cover the news and to make it more likely that they will include NALC's perspectives and comments. That has led to much-improved reporting by key media organizations such as the Associated Press, whose stories are carried by thousands of news outlets nationwide. The department also facilitates interviews when advisable with NALC officers and members for prominent print, television and radio outlets on a national level, as well as for small local news organizations—with the latter being a key part of its efforts because they often are the most-trusted source of news for residents. Indeed, while many unions and other institutions focus on high-profile and prestigious national news organizations, NALC understands the equal importance of local news outlets that are closer to where people live and work. Emphasizing regional and community media requires extra work because of their smaller circulation, yet another factor that makes the participation of individual letter carriers in the department's communications efforts so important.

The omnipresence of NALC's letters to the editor and its op-ed/commentary pieces, from major newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times* to regional newspapers in Utah or small-town weeklies in Wisconsin and in every other section of the country, is unparalleled in the union movement. The department's internal communications efforts help inform letter carriers so they can carry out this mission out—and they deliver the message with unparalleled success.

The department regularly converses with journalists—in Washington, DC, around

the country, and occasionally around the globe—to help them better understand postal issues, to explain where the common narratives about USPS fall short, and to show them why postal issues matter to readers, viewers or listeners—and thus are worth reporting or commenting on. A key element here is to explain that while the internet has led many people to communicate or pay bills online, it also has sparked a jump in package deliveries as a result of e-commerce. That means that red ink is not the result of technological progress but rather of public policy (including the pre-funding mandate)—policy that readers, listeners and viewers can weigh in on with their political representatives. Again, the resonance of this message—facilitated by having the facts on their side and reinforced by the willingness of thousands of dedicated letter carriers across the country to help get the message out—has been vital in achieving postal reform.

There remains much to do, but these efforts—helped tremendously by the support and participation of President Rolando and Executive Vice President Brian Renfro; the members of the Executive Council, including the national business agents; its state association presidents; its branch officers and its rank-and-file letter carriers—are clearly influencing the national debate, as seen by the passage of the Postal Reform Act. The highly misleading—and damaging—narrative of a Postal Service

losing billions of dollars a year because everyone is on the internet, putting taxpayers on the hook and thus requiring sharp cuts in postal services, is in retreat as more and more news reports provide a more accurate account and fuller context.

Journalists who were simply reciting the conventional wisdom about the Postal Service often now display the knowledge—and willingness—to delve beyond press releases, pre-conceived notions and special-interest advocacy statements and get at the actual financial situation, while frequently including NALC's perspective and comments.

Along with constant contact with news organizations and interaction with members around the country as they deal with the media, the Communications and Media Relations Department also helps write speeches for national officers. The department provides advice for the political and legislative efforts in terms of effective communications strategies and practices. They work on NALC advertising campaigns that spread its message in print or in broadcast media. And they work with NALC's allies, whether individuals or groups, to help them get the message out.

Meet the department

The Communications and Media Relations Department staff currently consists of five individuals, but is in the process of hiring additional personnel. The five staffers:

39 million pounds of food collected for first food drive in two years

Convention housing deadline is July 10

Veterans Group

Convention baseball night tickets available for branch orders

MDA

Registration Form:

Reserve your ticket, priced at \$40 each (includes entrance) \$ _____

Branch # _____

Branch contact person _____

Branch city _____

Name, phone number & email address of person responsible for electronic updates _____

Name _____ Cell phone _____

Branch address _____

Return the form by July 22, with a check or money order with full payment, to: NALC Baseball Night, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144



- Philip Dine, the department's director and the union's media liaison.
- Mike Shea, NALC's graphic designer and web editor.
- Rick Hodges, a writer and editor.
- Jenessa Kildall Wagner, a writer and editor.
- Madeline Alvis, a digital communications specialist.

These five staff members provide most of the story-idea generation, research, interviewing, writing, editing, copy editing, photography, design, layout and production for department projects.

As director since 2010, Dine's work encompasses a broad spectrum. He edits *The Postal Record* and discusses communications and media issues in his Letter from the Editor in the magazine. Dine also helps formulate and carry out the union's communications strategy, while interacting daily (and often nightly) with the news media on issues of importance to letter carriers, the Postal Service and the labor movement. He works with national officers on their media appearances and

speeches, while also helping letter carriers around the country write letters or commentary pieces or prepare for interviews.

Shea's duties include coordinating with other Headquarters departments and national officers to produce print materials, most notably *The Postal Record*. Along with assigning story ideas and writing articles for the magazine, he handles its design, layout and production schedule. Additionally, he led the effort to upgrade the union's website. More recently, he has led an effort to work with an outside vendor to produce the NALC Member App for smartphones. Shea, who has been with NALC since 2002, serves as the union's chief photographer at most major events.

Writer/Editor Hodges was hired in 2010. An experienced scribe, he has produced a multitude of well-received news and feature stories for *The Postal Record*, including several about the contributions of letter carriers at the community and national levels. He also is involved in the editing and layout of *The Postal Record's* large Branch Items section.

Wagner joined the staff in 2007 as editorial assistant, becoming a writer/editor in 2018. She relies on her substantial knowledge of NALC and her editing skills to perform her current job as a writer of a variety of news and feature stories for *The Postal Record* and other publications. Wagner produces the popular series of features on letter carriers' interesting hobbies. She also handles the State Summaries and Retiree Reports sections of the magazine, as well as other editing and layout duties.

Alvis joined the staff as a digital communications specialist in 2020. She manages NALC's social media accounts, which includes creating content, managing the calendar, and reporting on metrics. Alvis posts new web content and works with other Headquarters departments to update NALC's website. She also organizes push notifications sent from NALC's member apps, supplies information for some *Postal Record* articles, and compiles the monthly audiobook for the magazine.

Education

The NALC Education Department continues to provide educational opportunities and training materials for NALC officers, stewards, activists and rank-and-file members.

NALC Leadership Academy

Founded in 2005 by President Emeritus Bill Young and then-Executive Vice President Jim Williams, the NALC Leadership Academy continues to reflect the national leadership's belief in the importance of developing and preparing current and future NALC leaders for the challenges of today and those that are lie ahead. Since the Detroit convention in 2018, the Academy has graduated Class 23, Class 24, and Class 25, bringing the total number of graduates to just under 750. Class 25, which began in January of 2020, was interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic and, following a two-year hiatus, graduated in June of 2022. Applications for future Academy classes will be available once the 2023 dates are established.

Interest in the Academy has remained

high. Each year, hundreds of NALC activists apply for one of the 30 slots available in each class. Most encouraging is how closely the demographics of the applicants reflect those of NALC as a whole. As of our last application period (2019), 35 percent of the applicants were female and 45 percent came into the Service as CCAs. The applicants were from branches ranging from less than 20 members to those with more than 7,000 members, and from those with barely a year in the Postal Service to those with more than 33 years of service. More than 45 percent were applying for the first time while dozens were seeking admission for the sixth, seventh or eighth time. This is promising on many levels. It shows that there's a high interest among newer members in serving our union. It also shows that in spite of not being selected in previous attempts, many continue to reapply each year, indicating that they are determined and not easily discouraged, both characteristics of a good leader.

Admission to the Academy begins with the completion of a written applica-

tion form available on the NALC website during the application acceptance period, which is announced on the website and in the *NALC Bulletin* and *The Postal Record*. Applicants must be endorsed by a union leader who commits to being their mentor throughout the Leadership Academy experience and provides them with additional learning opportunities. It's an extremely difficult job to select only 30 students for each class from among the many qualified applicants.

The rivers of NALC talent and dedication continue to run deep, as evidenced by the high quality of each new Leadership Academy class. At last count, 19 state presidents, 25 regional administrative assistants, 10 headquarters staff members, eight regional workers' compensation assistants, four regional grievance assistants, four legislative and political organizers, 10 national business agents, one national trustee and four resident national officers are graduates of the Academy. Additionally, Academy graduates have been elected to leadership positions in their local branches, small and large, with many becoming full-time union

officers. Just as important: Hundreds of graduates have gone on to serve NALC in various other capacities. These include as arbitration advocates, dispute resolution team (DRT) members, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs representatives, shop stewards, route adjustment team members, and Carrier Academy instructors, as well as food drive, MDA and community service coordinators.

NALC is always encouraged by the commitment to work hard and helping others seen in each successive leadership class. If this is any indication of the future of NALC, the union has a bright future ahead of us.

Branch Officer Training

Due to the pandemic, Branch Officer Training has not been held in person since January 2020; however, dozens of virtual workshops were offered dur-

ing that time. Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine and Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Paul Barner led sessions covering a variety of topics related to the administrative and fiduciary duties and responsibilities of state and branch officers and trustees. We are looking forward to getting back to holding in-person sessions in the field in the near future.

Step B training

NALC continues to work with USPS Headquarters to prepare and conduct joint training for Step B candidates as part of the Dispute Resolution Process. There are currently 58 teams actively employed to cover the USPS districts around the country. This means that providing DRT replacement and backup training is an ongoing process.

Step B candidates receive training on various sections of the contract, the *Joint*

Contract Administration Manual and postal manuals, as well as in contract application, computer research and decision writing. To become certified to serve on a Step B team, candidates must satisfactorily complete all work assignments, demonstrate accuracy and proficiency in decision-making and writing, and pass a comprehensive written examination on the contract. NALC continues to work with Postal Service staff to improve and update this training.

Due to travel restrictions in place since April 2020, the DRT training has been held virtually five times (June and October in 2021, and January, April and June in 2022) and will resume in-person training in the fall of 2022. Retired former Director of Education Jamie Lumm, along with NALC facilitators Karrie Blough, Jim Ruetze and Michelle McQuality, have been essential components of the training.

NALC Disaster Relief Foundation

At the 2018 National Convention in Detroit, the creation of the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation was announced to the delegates in attendance. The mission of the Foundation is to respond to the far-too-often occurrences of devastating natural disasters by providing relief to alleviate the suffering of affected NALC members.

NALC branches and members remain determined to provide aid to members who are affected by these disasters. Through the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, NALC is answering the call from branches and individual members who wanted a mechanism to send cash donations, supplies, uniforms and other assistance to their brothers and sisters affected by natural disasters. The Foundation is structured so that when a natural disaster occurs, an assessment can be made quickly and then followed up with much-needed relief for our affected members. Since being established, hundreds of individual donors, branches and state associations have pitched in to help the Foundation build its capacity to assist regular NALC members in need.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation was not able to go out into the field to assist members that were affected,

as was done in response to previous natural disasters. Once it is safe, the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation will once again return to the field to assist any NALC members affected by natural disasters.

Donations should be sent to NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, and your contribution may be tax deductible. It is recommended that you seek further advice from your tax advisor. All donations from letter carriers, branches and state associations go directly to NALC members who need assistance—no administrative costs are deducted. Any NALC member who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster or wildfire can apply for assistance by completing the Application for Relief Grant available on the Foundation's web page at nalc.org/disaster.

The eligibility requirements are outlined in the application. The Foundation's board of directors will consider the applications and will issue grants on an objective basis to eligible individuals as funds are available. Members do not have to wait for emergency relief or insurance claims to be settled to apply for aid. Applications must be received no later than 120 days

after the date when the natural disaster occurred, unless the applicant can provide sufficient reasons for the delay.

The DRF received more than \$1,205,944.82 worth of donations, from May 20, 2020, through April 30, 2022.

Headquarters: \$1,005,281.24

Members: \$72,258.48

Branches: \$110,067.20

State: \$9,188.82

Region: \$1,901.00

Others: \$7,248.08

The DRF also provided more than \$1,100,666.00 worth of grants and other assistance for the following storms.

5/20/2020

Derecho – IA

Hurricanes – LA, TX, FL, AL

Flooding – MI

Tornadoes – IA, AL, AR, TX, MS

Wildfires – CO, CA

2021

Arctic Storm – TX

Hurricanes – LA, TX, NJ, NY, AL, FL

Lighting Fires – OH, MN

Tornadoes – AL

2022

Tornadoes – LA, KS

Windstorms – CO



Veterans Group

Veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces comprise almost a quarter of the membership of the National Association of Letter Carriers—active NALC members as well as retired members.

These veterans traded their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms, and they continue to serve their communities and this great nation.

Oftentimes, gratitude is expressed in words such as “thank you,” but it’s rarely followed up with any tangible expressions. The creation of the NALC Veterans Group is intended to be something tangible and useful.

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members who are military veterans access to the information and tools specific to veterans’ rights and benefits within the U.S. Postal Service. It seeks to provide all NALC members who are also military veterans—active full-time and part-time letter carriers, as well as retired letter carriers—resources, rights information and a sense of camaraderie.

We have more than 18,100 veterans in our Veterans Group. The Veterans Group has done two projects since 2018, one in Detroit and one in Hawaii that was not able to be attended due to the COVID pandemic.

On Nov. 12, 2021, the Hawaii Department of Defense, along with the Hawaii Office of Veterans’ Services, held a rededication ceremony at the World War II Memorial Plaque in Honolulu. The original memorial was dedicated in 1944 to commemorate the service of the Hawaiians who died during World War II. The memorial is decorated on four sides with an American eagle, the olive branch of peace, the shield of the

United States and the Hawaiian coat of arms, and 880 names are carved into the sides of the monument. It is prominently located on King Street at Punchbowl Street, near the statue of King Kamehameha and across the street from Iolani Palace.

After a visit to Hawaii and many phone calls and several emails with the director of the State Office of Veterans’ Services, Col. Ronald Han, the vision of this memorial came to life. Assistant to the President for Community Services Christina Vela-Davidson was heartbroken that she was not able to be there for the dedication due to surgery; however, having Air Force veteran Howard Komine, president of Honolulu, HI Branch 860, standing in her place was reassuring and amazing.

Col. Han opened the ceremony with a welcoming message, which was followed by a prayer led by American Legion Chaplain Michele Hauser. The three keynote speakers were Major General Kenneth S. Hara, Chief Master Sgt. Bridget Komine and her husband, NALC’s own Howard Komine.

“It’s been 80 years since the bombing of Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7,” Howard Komine said. “To have the World War II memorial laid out and fixed up—it’s beautiful.”

The renovation of the memorial plaque would not have been possible without the contribution of NALC members, a fact that was recognized at the ceremony. All three keynote speakers mentioned the benevolence of the NALC by name.

“On behalf of our State Office of Veterans Services, thank you so very much for making this special ceremony happen,” Han said. “We cannot sing enough praises on you and the NALC.”

In his speech, Komine recognized the absence of what would have been a large group of attendees at the rededication had the ceremony taken place as planned during the 2020 NALC convention. “But for the COVID-19 pandemic,” he said, “there would have been hundreds of veteran letter carriers here today to honor all Americans of Hawaii who paid the ultimate sacrifice to preserve our freedom.”

Some other notable highlights of the day included the presence of a family member of a deceased Hawaiian who was present on Dec. 7, 1944, for the original dedication of the WWII memorial, as well as three WWII veterans who are recipients of the Congressional Gold Medal. The veterans were accompanied by their family members and helped represent all WWII veterans.

During the program, Howard Komine was given the Governor’s Commendation Certificate as a mark of the gratitude of the Hawaiian government for the generosity of the NALC. “I was just so proud that the NALC supported [the rededication],” he said. “I took it as an honor to represent the NALC.”

The Veterans Group will provide the ability to connect with fellow NALC veterans and stay informed on issues of importance to letter carrier veterans. Members receive a pin as a symbol of gratitude of their military service and membership in the NALC.

If you are interested in joining the group, please go to <https://www.nalc.org/member-benefits/join-the-nalc-veterans-group>. Alternatively, you may complete the sign-up card included in each issue of *The Postal Record* and return it to: NALC Veterans Group, National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washing-

Food Drive

Our efforts for the national NALC Food Drive began humbly, as letter carriers saw a need in the neighborhoods in which they carried their routes and did what they always do: They began the work of helping.

Following a successful pilot food drive held in 10 cities in October of 1991, the NALC began working with the U.S. Postal Service to roll out an even bigger effort that spanned the country. As they say, the rest is history—a wonderful history that now spans 20-plus years, with more than a bil-

lion pounds of food collected by letter carriers and our partners, all in an effort to stock local food shelves, pantries and food banks.

The second Saturday in May each year sees the largest one-day food drive in America. Building a campaign for hunger awareness is an important component in our food drive efforts. Knowledgeable of the devastating and all-too-common issue of hunger in this nation, letter carriers and our allies are ready to work together to ask for donations of non-perishable food and, on the day of the drive, to collect those donations as we

conduct our daily delivery rounds.

The NALC has a great team of partners for our Letter Carriers’ “Stamp Out Hunger®” Food Drive. In 2022, the U.S. Postal Service, by order of the postmaster general, once again granted permission for us to use the G10 permit to mail both reminder postcards and paper and plastic bags.

The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW) donated \$1 million, which paid for 115 million post cards and approximated a million paper bags that were distributed around the country. Valpak

also mailed more than 40 million envelopes promoting the drive, envelopes that contained inserts that further supported the effort. Other partners in 2019 were the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, United Way Worldwide, AFL-CIO, Kellogg Co., CVS Health and Valassis.

These partners assisted us with driving public and media awareness, volunteer recruitment, logistical support, food donation and planning expertise. Many local businesses, United Way organizations and food agencies supported the food drive by sponsoring paper and/or plastic bags to be delivered to mailboxes as an additional reminder.

2021 INFO

The second Saturday in May each year sees the largest one-day food drive in America. Building a campaign for hunger awareness is an important component in our food drive efforts. Knowledgeable of the devastating and all-too-common issue of hunger in this nation, letter carriers and our allies are ready to work together to ask for donations of non-perishable food and, on the day of the drive, to collect those donations as we conduct our daily delivery rounds. However, again in 2021 the food drive was canceled by the COVID-19 pandemic, so we continued the donor drive to help our communities due to the need being so great.

To deal with this urgent situation, we developed a new plan to address the problem of hunger that affects 1 in 8 Americans, including millions of children, elderly and military veterans.

Americans in big cities and suburbs, in small towns and rural areas, were able to go to a website set up just for this, select a food bank close to them, and donate funds to help the pantry purchase food. This has been set up in a manner that allows every dollar raised to go directly to purchasing food for the hungry. To find a local food bank all you had to do is go to nalc.org/food to donate. The following number show what was approximately donated to the food banks through the donor drive, branch donations, headquarters matching and CVS donation.

Total food banks/pantries	\$149,476.66
Total branches	\$465,683.00
Total HQ match	\$465,683.00
Total CVS	\$15,000.00
Grand total	\$1,095,842.66
Total food collected	13,150,112

As always, the food procured will stay in the community to help residents in need. And again, our wonderful national partners—the U.S. Postal Service, United Way Worldwide, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), Kellogg Co., the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, CVS Health, Valpak, AFL-CIO and Valassis—were vital to its success.

The NALC continued to build on the foundational blocks in the electronic arena as far as the food drive is concerned. Informational materials, cartoons and logo artwork, public service announcements, and order forms provided by union-made food drive merchandise vendors were all made available online. An online Food Drive Tool Kit page on nalc.org provides a one-stop location for NALC coordinators, food agency partners, media members and journalists—as well as members of the general public—who are interested in knowing and doing more to help us feed our hungry customers.

The total effect of this electronic effort has been an enormous awareness of our food drive campaign, and with the pandemic, we have stepped up our efforts. This diverse and multi-pronged approach, using physical assets and resources as well as digital ads and social media posts, come together to help spur one of the greatest days of giving in the United States—the Letter Carriers' Food Drive. On that day and all year long, we have a special common purpose: helping those in our communities in need of food.

2022 INFO

In 2022, the NALC held the 30th annual "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive. The food drive returned to normal, somewhat. Despite so many obstacles, we were able to get back out and collect food for our neighbors and communities. We had the steadfast partnership nationally of the United States Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association, United

Way Worldwide, AFL-CIO, Valpak, Kellogg Co., CVS Health and Valassis. To support this effort, local NALC branches helped by collecting monetary contributions from local business and agencies. These extra efforts were rewarded: approximately 36 million pounds of food were collected to help needy families across America.

The year 2022 has brought the 30-year cumulative total—through 2022—to approximately 1.9 billion pounds of food collected.

The top food-collecting branch for 2022 was San Juan, PR (2,964,000 pounds). The top branches for 2022, in 10 membership categories, were announced that summer's July *Postal Record*, and the top branches in each category received a plaque from NALC and a letter of congratulations from President Rolando.

Category	Branch	Branch Name	Region	State	Lbs Collected
1	1100	GARDEN GROVE, CALIFORNIA	1	CA	1,000,571
2	79	SEATTLE, WASHINGTON	2	WA	455,617
3	1477	WEST COAST FLORIDA	9	FL	650,332
4	869	SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO	15	PR	2,964,000
5	361	CENTRAL KENTUCKY	6	KY	199,830
6	246	KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN	6	MI	221,912
7	763	COLUMBIA, MISSOURI	5	MO	431,401
8	450	NORTH SOUND, WASHINGTON	2	WA	748,948
9	4682	AIEA-PEARL CITY	1	HI	259,428
10	220	HELENA, MONTANA	2	MT	560,364

The NALC continues to build on foundational blocks in the electronic arena as far as the food drive is concerned. Informational materials, cartoons and logo artwork, public service announcements, and order forms provided by union-made food drive merchandise vendors were all made available online. An online Food Drive Tool Kit page on nalc.org provides a one-stop location for NALC coordinators, food agency partners, media members and journalists—as well as members of the general public—who are interested in knowing and doing more to help us feed our hungry customers.

The total effect of this electronic effort has been an enormous awareness of our food drive campaign. This diverse and multi-pronged approach, using physical assets and resources as well as digital ads and social media posts, come together to help spur one of the greatest days of giving in the United States—the Letter Carriers' Food Drive. On that day, we have a special common purpose: helping those in our communities in need of food.

Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)

Although MDA has changed its brand, NALC did not change its commitment to help “Deliver the Cure” for muscular dystrophy. We have been there since 1952 and will be there until the need has disappeared.

NALC wants to thank all the branches that put forth an effort to raise funds and awareness. Although 11 branches are recognized each year, there are several NALC locals that make our national effort a success. NALC is a Diamond Partner, raising more than \$1 million annually for MDA research and services.

Letter carriers from almost every state have held or participated in activities such as bowl-a-thons, “muscle walks,” satchel drives, trivia contests and letter-writing campaigns. These and other events make a critical difference. NALC’s message to you is to get involved or increase your current efforts. Appoint an MDA coordinator if your branch does not have one. Don’t be afraid your effort is too small; just get started.

Thanks to you, families served by MDA have a future with hope. Let’s keep up the great work and strive to Deliver the Cure. In 2021, NALC branches, state associations, auxiliaries, headquarters and the Health Benefit Plan raised \$743,747.99, which is up \$200,000 from the previous year. Our members have also logged several volunteer hours to benefit MDA through camp programs, fundraisers and more.

to generate creative ideas to raise money for the union’s only official charity. The efforts allowed NALC to continue the union’s commitment to supporting MDA’s medical research and support programs for people living with neuromuscular diseases and for their families—a commitment that began with MDA’s founding in 1950.

The pandemic is still affecting fundraising; however, fundraising has increased. Letter carriers also volunteer at MDA Summer Camps, where thousands of children with neuromuscular diseases make friends, grow more confident, and get the chance to enjoy life like other kids each summer. As MDA volunteers, we get to see firsthand the people we serve and the results of our efforts and help MDA fulfill its mission.

Sadly, the pandemic forced MDA to cancel its in-person summer camps for 2020 and 2021, replacing them with online activities. MDA shifted its summer activities to virtual camps to keep children connected and engaged. With the help of adult volunteers who facilitated the conversations, participants met online to have fun doing activities such as arts and crafts projects, cooking activities, music-making events, scavenger hunts and a virtual escape room. (MDA recently announced that it will hold some in-person and some online events this summer.)

If you need help getting started, contact NALC at mda@nalc.org or at 312-392-

improved network of communication with the branches and a system to update records, especially when branches contact NALC at mda@nalc.org. Additionally, we are using the NALC app to promote all MDA-related issues as we become aware. Don’t hesitate to let us know about what your branch is doing so we can share with anyone who elects to receive MDA notifications.

Every year the MDA Honor Roll is published in *The Postal Record*. For the past several years, it has been in the April issue along with a feature article relating to MDA. With our continued efforts, letter carriers and NALC hope to fulfill our commitment and one day truly “Deliver the Cure” for those with MD.

“While NALC raised less in 2020 than the \$1.3 million we raised for MDA the previous year, half a million dollars in an historic pandemic and economic crisis is an extraordinary number,” Rolando said. “It shows that letter carriers never give up on their support for our official charity.”

Their efforts are greatly appreciated by MDA, whose resources are down over the past year because the pandemic forced the cancellation of in-person fundraising events. Meanwhile, the organization has faced rising expenses with the need to increase advocacy efforts on state and federal levels to secure priority access to vaccines, the need to pivot to a telehealth model instead of in-person care for MDA patients, and other pandemic-related factors. Meanwhile, COVID-19 also has affected clinical trials and research, which have been changed to virtual models, something that also wasn’t funded prior to the pandemic. Not only has NALC’s work helped MDA with needed resources in a tough period; it has provided an important intangible.

Asking your help for the 2022 NALC/MDA Virtual Campaigns:

Branch online virtual fundraising registration: <https://mda.donordrive.com/event/nalc2022>

Tough Mudder 5K – Oct. 15: <https://mda.donordrive.com/participant/ToughMudder>

NALC/MDA Gift Bags (\$100 each—LIMITED NUMBER LEFT):

<https://mda.donordrive.com/participant/nalcmdagiftbags>

A Hawaiian Night to Remember—Aug. 8, 2022 (at national convention): <https://mda.donordrive.com/participant/convention>

Category	Branch	Description	State	Collected Amt
1	Br. 38	NEW JERSEY MERGED	NJ	\$ 49,465.50
2	Br. 82	PORTLAND, OREGON	OR	\$ 15,999.00
3	Br. 599	TAMPA, FLORIDA	FL	\$ 13,471.87
4	Br. 358	NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK	NY	\$ 31,713.74
5	Br. 204	COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO	CO	\$ 12,985.50
6	Br. 387	PARSONS-GEHBARDT YONKERS, NEW YORK	NY	\$ 15,535.11
7	Br. 828	SOUTH CENTRAL INDIANA	IN	\$ 15,714.88
8	Br. 2262	BURLINGTON, NORTH CAROLINA	NC	\$ 7,746.00
9	Br. 1441	GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA	GA	\$ 4,000.00
10	Br. 5229	NEW CITY, NEW YORK	NY	\$ 3,551.36

MDA activities build camaraderie among members, which in turn builds a stronger union. Let’s do what we can to promote strength, independence and life to MDA while showing the best of what we union members are: trusted and respected public servants.

With traditional events such as bow-lathons, poker tournaments and golf tournaments coming back slowly because of safety concerns related to COVID-19, branches had

1100. Please be sure you use an allocation form and mail any offline gifts to: Muscular Dystrophy Association Inc., Attn: NALC, P.O. Box 7410354, Chicago, IL 60674-0354

NALC continues to post to the “Deliver the Cure” Facebook page and to highlight MDA fundraising efforts, family stories, progress toward a cure and new research and services available through MDA. NALC has an email address exclusive to MDA-related email communication and NALC Headquarters has an

National Heroes of the Year

On a daily basis, letter carriers assist people who need help, and each year NALC highlights the special acts of courage and compassion performed by letter carriers who improve—or save—lives along their routes by choosing some of them as NALC's Heroes of the Year.

2020 Heroes of the Year

The 2020 Heroes of the Year honorees were selected from more than 100 nominees, whose stories of heroism and community service were published over the course of a year in this magazine, as has been done since 1974.

A panel of independent judges reviewed the stories about heroic and humanitarian acts published in *The Postal Record* between June 2019 and June 2020 and gathered in a virtual meeting to determine the winners. The judges were Christopher Godfrey, chairman and chief judge of the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board at the U.S. Department of Labor; Christine Miller, director of labor engagement at United Way Worldwide; and Kim Dine, retired chief of police of the United States Capitol Police.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the traditional in-person fall event could not be held to recognize the 2020 Heroes of the Year. NALC plans to put on a virtual event in the near future to honor the recipients.

"We are immensely proud of what the eight Heroes being recognized did," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "They represent our country's best in public service. They truly are our heroes."

The following are the 2020 Heroes' stories.

National Hero of the Year: Pedro Mendoza of Grand Junction, CO Branch 913

The scene of a man yelling at a woman caught the attention of Grand Junction, CO Branch 913 member Pedro Mendoza while he was on his route on Jan. 13. "I thought it was a domestic disturbance at first," he said, and moved quickly to intervene. As he got closer, however, he heard the woman screaming at the man to get away from her and her baby. "I heard him telling her, 'I'll kill you,' and I thought, 'Oh no, you're not. Not on my watch,'" the 20-year carrier said.

As Mendoza moved forward, another man also stepped in from across the street. The

neighbor, Carlos Garcia, yelled at the suspect to get away from the woman, and "[the man] turned around to go for him," Mendoza recalled. To keep the man from attacking Garcia, Mendoza asked him what his problem was, and the man turned around to face the carrier. At that point Garcia's two daughters walked up the street, and Mendoza told Garcia to go protect them: "I said, 'I can handle this.'"

This comment appeared to infuriate the man further; as he approached the carrier, screaming vicious insults, the man pulled out a knife. "He came toward me, swinging the knife," the carrier said. "I took off my postal coat and wrapped it around my right arm. Then I waited for the right moment to punch him or take him down."

Finally, Mendoza saw his chance. "He swung the knife a few times, and then he stumbled," the carrier said. "And the second the knife was [pointing] down, I rushed him." He tackled the man to the ground and placed him in a chokehold. "I slammed him to the ground until I heard the knife drop," he added.

Garcia then came over and grabbed the knife, and they waited for the police to arrive. The man struggled to free himself, but Mendoza kept him pinned, telling him, "I'm not going to let you hurt any of my customers."

When police arrived, the suspect attempted to escape, but Mendoza helped officers recapture and handcuff him. "Then I picked up my scanner and went to deliver the mail," the carrier said.

Humanitarian of the Year: Jerry Giesting of Cincinnati, OH Branch 43

Jerry Giesting did more than mourn after his son, Brad Giesting, died in 2016 after a long struggle with liposarcoma, a rare form of brain cancer. Giesting, an Army veteran like his son and a member of Cincinnati, OH Branch 43, founded a charity group, Brad's Blessings, to give back to the community.

"We didn't want his memory to die," Giesting said.

Brad served in Iraq as part of the 101st Airborne from 2005 to 2006. While in Iraq, he was exposed to burn pits, used for garbage disposal, in which hazardous waste often was burned. Some veterans and health professionals suspect that the exposure to burn pits has led to health problems, including the type of cancer that took Brad's life.

After returning from Iraq in 2006, Brad

married his high school sweetheart and had two daughters. He was diagnosed with cancer in May of 2013, and despite 70 rounds of chemotherapy, 30 radiation treatments, six surgeries and a last-hope clinical trial, Brad succumbed to the cancer on Oct. 22, 2016.

Despite his enormous health problems, Brad managed to maintain a positive outlook. "He kept the family laughing throughout his ordeal," Giesting said. "He had a huge sense of humor and tried to keep people on a high note, even when he was struggling."

To honor Brad's memory, his family promotes a "Random Acts of Kindness Day" each year on Oct. 22, the anniversary of his death, to urge people to spread love. On that day, Brad's Blessings distributes care packages for people facing health challenges who are nominated by friends or family. This year, the group received about 75 requests for "sunshine boxes" to spread cheer to ailing people of all ages.

Brad's Blessings' activities include scholarships and gifts of supplies for students at both grade school and high school levels. Meanwhile, the Bradley M. Giesting Kindness Scholarship is awarded to a student from a veteran's household with financial need. The first scholarship helped a student pay tuition to attend Archbishop McNicholas High School in Cincinnati, which Brad attended. Also, three graduates of McNicholas who are headed for military careers after graduation received gifts to help them as they moved to a new chapter in life. The foundation awards one high school and one grade school student a scholarship each year.

True to its name, Brad's Blessings has allowed his family to turn a tragedy into service to others with similar challenges.

Unit Citation: Eric Beu & Mark Simone of Cleveland, OH Branch 40

After spending the day in Minneapolis, Eric Beu and Mark Simone, members of Oklahoma City, OK Branch 458, encountered a young blind man who got off the train at the same stop as the two carriers. After noticing that the man was about to step onto the open tracks, Beu asked if he needed help. The man, Abraham, told the carrier that he was looking for the Mega Bus stop. Beu googled the location and discovered that the man was at the opposite end of town.

Simone and Beu wanted to help Abraham, so they assisted him in making his way across town. On the way, the two carriers got



to know the man, who was in Minneapolis to check out a school for the blind. Abraham's friend had driven him from Chicago and, on the way to Minnesota, they had gotten into an argument; his friend then left him and drove back to Chicago.

"It was just a bad deal for him," Simone said.

Abraham asked if they could help him get back home to Chicago. Simone and Beu agreed that they couldn't leave him stranded in Minneapolis.

Beu bought the man a bus ticket back to Chicago. Because Abraham hadn't eaten since breakfast, and the bus wasn't scheduled to leave for about three hours, they found a restaurant that was still open. After Simone treated Abraham to dinner, the carriers walked him to the bus stop, put him on the correct bus, and made sure he had cab fare to get from the bus station to his home in Chicago.

Abraham called Beu the next morning to let them know that he had made it home and thanked them for the help.

Special Carrier Alert Hero: Matthew King of Champaign, IL Branch 671

"I was parked for my 10-minute break, and I looked to my left," Champaign, IL Branch 671 member Matthew King recalled. It was March 12, 2019, and King was on his route.

"I [originally] thought that someone was grilling," he said, "but then I knew that there was too much fire."

One of the houses in the neighborhood had caught fire—a stray cigarette butt had set the porch ablaze. "I ran over and banged on the door [to alert anyone inside]," the three-year carrier said. As it turned out, an entire family, including three children, was still inside the home, unaware that the house was in flames.

After helping everyone outside, King called 911 and went into the home to find buckets. He subsequently organized a chain of water buckets with help from neighbors, and then managed to keep the fire contained until firefighters arrived. Thanks to King's timely intervention and quick thinking, "we were able to save the house," he said, and nobody was injured.

Eastern Region Hero: Sydney Rodgers of Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3

As Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3

member Sydney Rodgers began to drive away from a house on her route that she had just delivered to on Feb. 12, a car pulled into the house's driveway.

As the carrier watched, a man got out of the car, dragged his female passenger out of the car, and engaged in an altercation with her, Rodgers said.

The carrier called the police, and then ran to the woman's aid. "I told the guy to get off of her, and then he started coming at me," Rodgers said.

The carrier's interference gave the woman time to flee inside, but it didn't stop the attacker for long. Once more, he began to move in intimidating fashion toward Rodgers.

"He was yelling at me and coming at me," she said. She went back to her truck, and once she called 911, the man fled the scene.

Buffalo police received the call from Rodgers at 11:30 a.m. and responded to the scene. The carrier provided police with the license plate number of his car. "We carry pens with us, so I was able to write it down as he was driving away," she said.

Central Region Hero: Gerald Soileau of Lafayette, LA Branch 1760

"I thought it was thunder, it was so loud," Gerald Soileau recalled about hearing what sounded like an explosion outside the post office on Saturday, Dec. 28, 2019. He and fellow Lafayette, LA Branch 1760 members were busy casing their routes that morning when the sound echoed through the post office.

He was one of the first carriers to exit the building to see what was going on—and when he opened the door, he saw a scene from a nightmare. "Everything was on fire," Soileau said. A mid-sized plane had crashed into their parking lot, hitting several vehicles and setting most of the area ablaze.

Soileau reacted quickly; realizing that the main gate was blocked by the fire, he rushed around to the other gate, which was padlocked shut due to construction. As Soileau described it: "God allowed me to hit the gate, and the chains fell off." The carrier then was able to sprint through to the parking lot. "The fuselage [of the plane] was scattered everywhere, and the whole area was covered in black smoke," he said. "I felt like I was running in slow motion."

After the plane crash-landed and broke into pieces, a large part of it had landed in

a field next to the post office. "It left a trail of smoke and fire," Soileau said. The carrier ran over to that part of the plane and helped rescue the only surviving passenger, who had severe burns all over his body. The other five passengers on the plane had been killed in the crash.

Once Soileau had pulled the injured man to safety, he ran over to another victim of the crash: a carrier's spouse, Danielle Britt, who had driven to the office to surprise the carriers with donuts. The plane had collided with her car, ejecting her from the vehicle.

Soileau and a holiday clerk carried Britt away from the area, which was still in flames. She was badly burned and had to undergo numerous surgeries after her hospitalization. Soileau also was taken to the hospital, where he was treated for smoke inhalation and stress.

Western Region Hero: Chyanne Fauntleroy of Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100

Chyanne Fauntleroy was on her route on April 19, 2019, when she saw police and volunteers passing out a bulletin for a 15-year-old girl named Abbey, who had been missing for 21 hours. Abbey has autism and functions at the level of a 12-year-old.

The Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 member asked for a flyer so that she could keep an eye out for Abbey while delivering mail. Fauntleroy then continued driving her route. While driving, she spotted "a girl matching the description with no shoes on" walking down the street, she said. It was about two blocks away from where the girl had last been seen.

The city carrier assistant immediately pulled over next to the girl and began talking to her to put her at ease. "I used to work with kids with disabilities," Fauntleroy said. "As she's talking to me, I'm calling police."

To build their connection, Fauntleroy told Abbey that she herself was missing and needed help. Abbey said she would help her and told her not to worry or cry.

The carrier kept police on the phone as she asked Abbey random questions to keep her talking. She said that police told her, "You're doing great; ask her these questions."

The carrier noticed that Abbey had a drawing in her hand and asked the girl to make a drawing for her, which she did, as Fauntleroy kept her talking and kept asking the questions police suggested, such as when she

had last eaten. When Fauntleroy thought she was losing the girl's attention, she threw in questions like, "What's your favorite color?"

"I just kept switching the story up," she said. Fauntleroy kept the girl distracted until undercover police arrived.

Medics determined that Abbey was dehydrated but otherwise was all right, and soon reunited her with her family. More than 80 volunteers with the sheriff's department had been out looking for the girl.

Then, a few weeks later, in early May, Fauntleroy was on her route when she came across a 3-year-old girl who was by herself.

"Where's Mama?" she asked the crying girl when she ran up to her. She appeared not to speak English, so the carrier called 911 and waited with her for about 10 minutes. Before police arrived, the child's mother came, and Fauntleroy was able to reunite them.

2021 Heroes of the Year

The 2021 Heroes of the Year honorees were selected from more than 100 nominees, whose stories of heroism and community service were published over the course of a year in this magazine, as has been done since 1974.

A panel of independent judges reviewed the stories about heroic and humanitarian acts published in *The Postal Record* between July 2020 and June 2021 and gathered in a virtual meeting to determine the winners. The judges were Christopher Godfrey, chairman and chief judge of the Employees' Compensation Appeals Board at the U.S. Department of Labor; Warren Livigen Broughton, Lieutenant/Assistant Fire Marshal and Prince William County Fire Marshal's Office; and Kim Dine, retired chief of police of the United States Capitol Police.

Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the traditional in-person fall event could not be held to recognize the 2020 and 2021 Heroes of the Year.

The following are the 2021 Heroes' stories.

National Hero of the Year: Ramique Hill of Rochester, NY Branch 210

Rochester, NY Branch 210 member Ramique Hill already had noticed the police officer's car parked across the street during one of his deliveries on Oct. 4, 2019, but "I didn't really think anything of it," he said. A few minutes later, however, his attention was caught by some unusual sounds coming

from the house.

"I heard a tussle, and it sounded like someone fell," the three-year carrier, who was a city carrier assistant at the time, recalled. Then, suddenly, "I heard a gunshot go off," Hill said.

The carrier quickly called 911 and reported what he had heard. At this point, a resident ran out of the house, shouting, "He's trying to kill the officer!" When Hill relayed this information to the emergency operator, the carrier was asked to check on the situation if he felt comfortable approaching the house.

Hill went up to the house; when he reached the porch, "I saw a lot of blood," he said. At that moment, another shot went off inside, and Hill entered the residence.

He was met by a frightening scene. The police officer, Denny Wright, was lying on top of the assailant, Keith Williams, who was scrabbling under the couch with his hands. Hill found out later that Williams had been trying to locate his knife. Hill also would learn that Wright had been doing a routine welfare check when Williams, who had not been taking his medication for a mental health issue, attacked him.

Wright was the source of the blood that now covered the entryway; he had been stabbed multiple times, including in the eye. "[He was] crying that he couldn't see," Hill recalled. The officer had fired the shots that had attracted Hill's attention, but he had not hit Williams. Now, he was using his waning strength to try to prevent Williams from reaching the knife.

Hill rushed over and dragged the assailant's arms away from the couch before helping Wright pin him to the floor. Another neighbor, who had followed Hill into the house, restrained Williams's legs.

However, Wright was too seriously injured to keep fighting with his assailant. He released his grip on Williams's midsection and collapsed. The other neighbor let go of the attacker's legs to help the officer, and Hill was the only one left to prevent Williams from going back on the attack.

Despite his precarious position, the carrier continued to shout encouragement to Wright. "I was telling him, 'I'm on the phone [with 911], backup's coming,'" Hill said. While the neighbor held Wright in his arms, Hill fought to keep Williams restrained.

After a couple of minutes, another police officer rushed into the house. Together, he and Hill worked to get Williams under control.

"I got [Williams's] arms out, and then the officer cuffed him," Hill said.

More officers arrived a short while later, and Williams was taken into custody. He has since been indicted on several charges of attempted murder.

Wright was transported to the hospital and eventually recovered, though he ended up losing his sight in both eyes.

Eastern Region Hero: Erin Pennington of Pittsburgh, PA Branch 84

Pittsburgh, PA Branch 84 member Erin Pennington was delivering packages in a neighborhood on her route on July 6, 2020, when she noticed an unusual odor in the air. "It smelled like wires burning," she recalled.

As Pennington went on with her deliveries, she turned down an alleyway that ran behind the houses. It was at that point that she saw the source of the smell. "It was the back corner of a vacant house—about three feet of [the house] was on fire," she said.

The carrier immediately leaped into action. She spotted a neighbor coming out of a nearby house, and Pennington asked him to call 911. Then, she raced up to the front to evacuate the other houses. "They're row houses, so there's only about a foot between the houses," Pennington explained. She was terrified that the whole neighborhood might go up in flames.

At the house next door to the fire, the carrier could hear dogs barking, but the homeowner was slow to respond. "She was asleep upstairs," Pennington said. "I was screaming, hitting the doorbell—I was getting ready to kick the door in and grab the dogs and see if anyone was inside."

Finally, the carrier heard a woman's voice through the door. "She asked who it was, and I told her it was the mail lady—that there was a fire, and she needed to evacuate.

"She grabbed her dogs and their leashes and ran out of the house," the carrier said. Once that resident was safe, Pennington rushed across the street and began knocking on their doors. "I evacuated four houses, and I got them to move their vehicles" away from the fire, she said.

The fire quickly spread through the houses, including into the bedroom of the woman who had evacuated just in time. "The flames were so hot [that they] were melting the siding on the houses across the street," Pennington recalled.

The fire department arrived within 10 min-



utes, but the damage already was severe—three houses were engulfed in flames. In total, seven houses were damaged; however, due in large part to Pennington’s warnings, nobody was injured.

Central Region Hero: Dixie Manns of Michigan City, IN Branch 455

On March 12, 2020, Michigan City, IN Branch 455 member Dixie Manns arrived at one of her regular delivery stops, a building that housed mostly elderly residents. When she walked in, “I heard the fire alarm going off,” the six-year carrier said.

Looking around, she saw an elderly man standing in his doorway. “I asked the guy if he had burned some popcorn, but he said, no, it was a paper towel,” Manns recalled. “I was going to put the fire out quickly, [but] when I walked into the apartment it was a grease fire on top of his stove—a fire too big for me to handle.”

Knowing how serious the situation was, especially given the limited mobility of the older residents, the carrier knew that they did not have time to waste. “I told him to go outside, [but] he didn’t walk too well, so I picked him up and put him by the door,” she said.

Once that man was out of immediate danger, Manns started thinking about evacuation plans for her other vulnerable customers. The carrier knew that the woman living across the hall was on oxygen, so she rushed over to warn her about the fire.

While dialing 911, she started banging on residents’ doors and telling everyone to leave the building. “By the time I got upstairs,” she said, “it was pitch black [from the smoke].” Still, she continued along the upper level, knocking on every door she passed.

After making her way back to the main floor, Manns noticed that the elderly man she had carried had not exited with the other residents. Worried that he would be trampled in the chaos, the carrier picked him up again and carried him outside.

Manns then went back into the building, determined to make sure that all those inside had evacuated.

Eventually, the smoke conditions made it too dangerous for her to continue. However, by the time police and firefighters arrived on the scene, she had managed to alert and evacuate the other two sections. All in all, Manns may have saved 40 people with her warnings.

Western Region Hero: Ray Hacker of North Bend, OR Branch 2342

Some letter carriers are heroes because they run into a burning building. Some are heroes because they pick up on the clues that tell them a patron is in trouble. Ray Hacker is a hero because he gave of himself.

In February 2020, the North Bend, OR Branch 2342 president and local shop steward found out that his former schoolmate Marci McIntyre needed a kidney. McIntyre was born with reflux nephritis, a condition in which kidneys are damaged by the backward flow of urine. She received a kidney transplant at 20 from her younger brother, but after 25 years—an exceptional track record for a donated kidney—it was starting to fail, and she needed a new one.

“She’s the nicest person in the world,” Hacker said of his high school acquaintance. “She’d do anything for anyone [and] deserved to have somebody step up.”

The Navy veteran was in good health and physically fit, and over his 27 years with the Postal Service—19 as a letter carrier—he had built up a collection of sick leave. Once he received the support of his wife, he volunteered to donate a kidney to McIntyre.

“I was the perfect candidate,” he said. And he wasn’t backing off. “The risk did not outweigh the reward for me.”

Hacker and McIntyre eventually got on the schedule for October. They both went in for the operation on the same day, which is common for live organ transplants. Hacker’s surgery began at 6:30 a.m. and lasted until noon.

After a couple of days of recovery in the hospital, Hacker was discharged. After five weeks, he returned to work and has been telling people about his experience ever since.

After a short stay in the hospital, McIntyre returned home to recover. She has had a lot of post-transplant testing, and took anti-rejection medications to help her transplant take hold. That imposed a financial burden. Hacker and other members of their high school class set up a GoFundMe page for McIntyre, which raised more than \$11,000, and then put together an online auction that raised nearly \$10,000 more. The money went to help pay McIntyre’s medical bills and medication not covered by insurance or Medicare. Hacker helped by asking local businesses for donated items. “We had a great class of ’89 in high school. We’re close and know everybody,” he said of the endeavor.

Carrier Alert Hero: Michelle DeCosta of New York Branch 36

On a summer day in the city, it’s not unusual to smell the smoke of a barbecue from somewhere nearby. But on one block on Aug. 21, in New York City, residents didn’t recognize the smell and alert authorities, at least not until Branch 36 letter carrier Michelle DeCosta came along on her route.

The six-year letter carrier saw white smoke hanging over the block and “thought some customers might be having a cookout,” she said. “It wasn’t until I got closer to the house, with my knowledge of fire from being in summer camp, when I saw the smoke go from white ‘happy smoke’ to gray, that I realized the house was on fire.”

Having been on the route for three years, she used her knowledge to quickly react. “[The residents] have two little girls,” she remembers thinking. DeCosta knew that the girls were being homeschooled during the COVID-19 pandemic and were usually home every day. She immediately rushed to the house and “started trying to break down the door,” she said. “I was choking on smoke and screaming [to alert people].”

As she was doing this, she was also on her cell phone with her friend and fellow Branch 36 carrier Janina Browne. Browne called 911 and alerted authorities to the fire while DeCosta banged on the door.

Unable to get through the door, DeCosta called 911 herself, afraid that the family might be unconscious from smoke inhalation. She also moved on to look after her other patrons who were in harm’s way. “The neighbors are elderly,” she explained, so she ran next door to warn them about the fire, as they might have needed more time to escape than some of the others.

Once the next-door neighbors were safely evacuated, DeCosta continued down the street, warning residents of the danger. “The houses are so close together,” she said. “If one catches, they all might go.”

Firefighters arrived and “started bashing down the door [of the burning house],” the carrier said. Once inside, firefighters found no one at home—the girls were visiting with a half-brother who was in town that day—but rescued several trapped dogs and cats. They put out the electrical fire, which had been slow burning for nearly two hours. Firefighters kept the house from burning down and the fire from spreading to the neighboring houses.

Once the firefighters arrived, DeCosta continued on her route. She returned later to check on her customers. The homeowners of the burning house told her that everyone on the block was saying, “It was the mail lady [who told us to evacuate]—if it wasn’t for her, it could have been really bad.”

Unit Citation: Kevin Bystrak & Jody Kotowski of Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3

On a hot summer day in 2020, Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 carrier Kevin Bystrak was on his route when he came upon an elderly man standing outside his home. “Something told me to stop” and speak to the man, he said. “He seemed in an ill state.”

The elderly man, whom Bystrak knew as Mr. Queeno, was wearing a Korean War veteran’s hat. He told the carrier that the heat wave gripping the area was getting to him. Queeno was out of breath and said he was feeling dizzy. Bystrak offered to give him some water, but then Queeno’s daughter, who has special needs, came outside and gave him a glass of ice water. Bystrak took his lunch break and ate as he sat with Queeno to keep an eye on him. When Bystrak asked the patron to go inside and stay in the air conditioning until he felt better, he learned that the home Queeno shared with his daughter had no air conditioning.

“I felt a deep concern for them,” Bystrak said. He also felt the urge to watch out for a fellow veteran—Bystrak served in the Navy Reserves and was deployed to Kuwait during the Iraq War.

“So, knowing how well carriers work together to help each other, I took to Facebook to ask for assistance for Queeno, looking for an air conditioner.” He posted the appeal to Branch 3’s Facebook page that day.

Seeing the post, fellow Branch 3 member Jody Kotowski came to the rescue with her husband, Frank, the next day. The couple, who also had a daughter with special needs, went to buy an air conditioning unit for Queeno. In the middle of the heat wave, however, every store they tried was sold out. That didn’t stop the Kotowskis, though—they had an extra window unit in their home, so they took that one and installed it at Queeno’s home.

“I knew we had a really good unit,” Jody Kotowski told *The Postal Record* last year, “and if he needed it, I knew I couldn’t see it sitting there.” They also learned that Queeno’s home had a bug infestation, so the Kotowskis contacted a local non-profit that serves veterans, which donated funds to clean his home and clear the infestation.

Humanitarian of the Year: Kyle West of Cincinnati, OH Branch 43

Letter carriers have always known that their jobs are essential, but the pandemic made them more important than ever. When the COVID-19 pandemic reached Colerain Township in suburban Cincinnati, OH, in the spring of 2020, three-year carrier Kyle West went above and beyond to serve his community.

West, a member of Cincinnati Branch 43, knew that many of his customers were elderly and sheltering at home, depending on carriers like him to bring them supplies. But when a customer asked for help finding toilet paper, which was in short supply at the time, he knew that others also must have been struggling.

“I take pride in giving my customers great service every day, and a big part is getting to know them,” West said. But the pandemic had affected his commu-

nication with them, as social distancing became the norm. “I went from talking to hundreds of people a day to not seeing more than five people a day,” West said.

Worried that his customers needed help but might not be able to seek assistance, West asked his mother to print letters to the postal patrons on his route who he suspected might need extra assistance with supplies. West then distributed the letter to about 400 customers. “If you are at risk and need help getting essential items, let me know,” the letter read. “I will do what I can to help.” He signed the letter with the name his customers know him by: “Mailman Kyle.”

West had more than supplies in mind. “I knew some people needed help,” he said, “but I also knew some people were lonely, so I wanted them to know I was still coming every day.”

About 30 customers responded with requests for help. What West didn’t expect was that other customers would respond by donating their own supplies for West to give to others. His customers left essentials like toilet paper, cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer at their doors for West. When local media outlets picked up his story, people in the community began bringing supplies and gift cards to his post office as well. West never had to buy any supplies—everything was donated.

West’s actions even earned him a trip to the White House in May of 2020. “Customers often tell us during difficult times that seeing us out every day gives them a sense of normalcy in their lives,” the letter carrier said at the White House event. “The gratitude we are receiving from our customers is greatly inspiring.”

Honoring longtime members

The NALC honors its retirees in a unique way. Our retirees are an integral part of our organization and, as such, retain both their membership and union rights. But more than that, when they have belonged to the NALC for 50 years or more, we honor them with either a gold membership card, a lapel pin or a plaque.

The gold cards are presented to our 50-year members (since 1939); the lapel pins are given to our 60-year members

(since 1954) and 65-year and 55-year members (since 2012); and the plaques are awarded on the members’ 70th and 75th anniversaries (since 1974). A number of 80-year plaques have also been awarded (since 2014).

Most of our branches make quite an occasion of the actual presentations, and NALC sends a letter to the retiree expressing gratitude for his or her continuing support of the NALC over the years.

The following presentations of life membership awards have been made since the Detroit convention:

80-year plaques	6
75-year plaques	68
70-year plaques	429
65-year pins	1,106
60-year pins	2,798
55-year pins	5,023
50-year gold cards	18,049



Litigation Report

[updated as of 6/21/22]

Court cases

Duty of fair representation cases

Chamberlain v. USPS, NALC—In August 2016, former letter carrier Cheryl Chamberlain filed this lawsuit in federal court in New Jersey against USPS, NALC, Branch 370 and a Branch 370 steward. She claimed that USPS violated the collective-bargaining agreement by terminating her and that the union defendants violated the duty of fair representation in connection with her termination. In March 2018, the court granted the union defendants' motion to dismiss Branch 370 and the steward, leaving NALC as the only union defendant. In January 2020, the court granted NALC's motion for summary judgment and dismissed the case. Chamberlain appealed, but her appeal was denied in August 2020.

Brooks v. USPS, NALC—Erica Brooks, a member of Branch 73, filed this lawsuit in Georgia state court in July 2017, against USPS, NALC and various other parties. Plaintiff's complaint referenced numerous causes of action, but contained no specific factual allegations or claims against NALC. The case was removed to federal court in Georgia in March 2018. In December 2018, the federal court granted NALC's motion to dismiss.

Jackson v. USPS, NALC—In September 2017, former letter carrier Delbert Jackson filed this lawsuit in state court in Missouri against USPS and NALC. The case was removed to federal court in Missouri. Plaintiff claimed that dues were unlawfully deducted from his paycheck from 2001 to 2017. Plaintiff withdrew the suit in April 2019.

Callender v. USPS, Branch 133—In January 2018, former letter carrier Cecil Callender filed this lawsuit in federal court in California against USPS and Branch 133. The complaint alleged that USPS unlawfully terminated plaintiff and that the branch breached the duty of fair representation in connection with the termination. In October 2018, the court granted NALC's motion to dismiss.

Morris v. NALC—In August 2018, former letter carrier Cherlene Chase Morris amended her complaint in a case already pending against USPS in federal court in New York, to add a claim against NALC. The amended complaint alleged that Branch 36 discriminated against her based on her age and sex and that a steward harassed

her. The case was settled and dismissed in February 2021.

Magyar v. NALC—In November 2018, former letter carrier Klay Magyar filed suit in federal court in Michigan against USPS, NALC, Branch 1 and representatives of USPS and Branch 1. She claimed that the union defendants conspired with USPS in discriminating against her. In May 2019, after NALC filed a motion to dismiss, the court dismissed the case.

Calderon v. NALC—Letter carrier Nicko Calderon filed this suit in federal court in New York in December 2018 against USPS and NALC. He claimed that USPS failed to comply with a Step B decision in his favor and that NALC failed to take steps to enforce the Step B decision. In April 2022, the court granted NALC's motion for summary judgment.

Hickey v. NALC—Former letter carrier Lynda Hickey filed this suit against NALC in Colorado state court in January 2019. She claimed that Branch 849 acted with negligence in advising her regarding the grievance procedure. NALC removed the case to federal court in Colorado. In May 2021, the federal court granted NALC's motion to dismiss. Hickey's appeal is pending.

Hurd v. NALC—Former letter carrier Susanne Hurd filed this lawsuit in state court in Nebraska in April 2019 against NALC, President Rolando and the president of Branch 324. The case was removed to federal court. The suit claimed that the defendants acted unlawfully by not grieving her removal. In March 2020, the court granted summary judgment to the defendants.

Watson v. Banner—Letter carrier Travis Watson filed this suit in state court in New York in April 2019 against two Branch 41 officers, claiming that USPS failed to comply with a grievance settlement and the union failed to take appropriate steps to enforce it. USPS removed the case to federal court. In July 2019, Banner agreed to a stipulation dismissing his suit.

Harter v. NALC—In May 2019, former letter carrier Ryan Harter filed this suit against USPS and NALC in federal court in Washington state. He claimed that USPS removed him without just cause and that NALC failed to represent him fairly in connection with his removal. The court granted NALC summary judgment in February 2021. In February 2022, the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit affirmed the lower court's ruling.

Coates v. NALC—In June 2019, former letter carrier David Coates filed this lawsuit in federal court in Pennsylvania against USPS and NALC, claiming that the union failed to file a timely grievance over his removal. In October 2020, the court granted NALC's motion to dismiss.

Rogers v. Hamilton—This suit was filed in South Carolina state court in August 2019 by letter carrier Latoya Rogers against USPS, NALC, the South Carolina Association of Letter Carriers and an officer of Branch 3092. She alleged a duty of fair representation claim against NALC and the state association and defamation and assault claims against the branch president. The case was removed to federal court in South Carolina. In June 2021, the federal dismissed the duty of fair representation claim against NALC and the state association and remanded the remaining claims to state court.

Merrell v. NALC—Letter carrier Albert Merrell filed this lawsuit in June 2020 in federal court in Missouri against USPS and NALC, claiming that USPS used the wrong seniority date in connection with his assignment bids and NALC prevented him from filing a grievance over the matter. In August 2020, after NALC filed a motion to dismiss, the court dismissed the case.

Becker v. Rolando—Former letter carrier Susanne Becker filed this suit in federal court in Nebraska in September 2020 against President Rolando and USPS, among other defendants. This suit, filed *pro se* (without counsel) alleges that NALC and others attempted to defraud her. In April 2021, the court granted defendants' motions to dismiss.

Andersen v. NALC, Branch 79 and USPS—Former letter carrier Shannon Andersen filed this suit in federal court in Washington state in November 2020 against NALC and Branch 79. She claimed that Branch 79 failed to file a timely appeal over the denial of her termination grievance. After the case was removed to federal court, Andersen in December 2021 stipulated to the dismissal of her claims against NALC and Branch 79.

Hale v. USPS, Branch 3126—Former letter carrier Venetta Hale filed this lawsuit *pro se* (without counsel) in February 2022 in federal court in Michigan. She claims that Branch 3126 failed to represent her properly in connection with her removal

and failed to enforce an arbitrator's back pay award in her favor. Branch 3126's motion to dismiss is pending.

Other NALC court litigation

Noble v. NALC—Retired letter carrier David Noble filed this action against NALC in the federal district court in Washington, DC, in June 2017, seeking an injunction against the membership ratification vote on the tentative new National Agreement. In July 2017, the court denied Noble's motion for a preliminary injunction. In January 2018, after the new National Agreement had been ratified, the court granted NALC's motion to dismiss as moot plaintiff's claims related to the ratification vote. In May 2018, Noble amended his complaint, asserting a claim that NALC unlawfully refused to allow him to send his campaign emails to those on NALC's member email list via an online email platform. In June 2018, Noble withdrew that claim.

USPS v. NALC—In December 2018, USPS filed this suit against NALC in federal court in Washington, DC, seeking to vacate a regional arbitration award. USPS filed a motion asking the court to vacate the award because the award contained a punitive remedy against USPS for failing to comply with grievance settlements and Step B decisions. In February 2019, NALC filed a motion to confirm the award. In July 2021, the court ruled in NALC's favor, enforcing the award.

Green v. Brown—Former USPS supervisor Bradley Green filed this lawsuit in federal court in New York in December 2017 against an officer of Branch 6000 and against several carriers, claiming defamation. Plaintiff voluntarily dismissed the case in May 2019.

Parker v. NALC—USPS Labor Relations Manager Stacy Parker filed this suit in federal court in Michigan in October 2019 against USPS, NALC and the former national business agent for NALC Region 6. She claimed, among other things, that the former NBA made derogatory and inappropriate comments about her. Parker voluntarily agreed to dismiss her claims against the former NBA. In June 2020, the court granted NALC's motion to dismiss.

Turner v. Branch 27—In January 2020, former letter carrier Gregory Turner filed this lawsuit in federal court in Tennessee against Branch 27. His complaint asserted

a claim under the Americans with Disabilities Act, alleging that the branch failed to challenge USPS's alleged refusal to find him work consistent with his medical restrictions. In March 2022, the court granted the branch summary judgment.

White v. NALC—In March 2021, retired member Albert White brought suit in California state court against NALC, Branch 24, and certain other defendants, alleging that the branch improperly suspended him from membership and that NALC improperly affirmed the suspension. In May 2021, White voluntarily dismissed the suit.

Noble v. NALC, Branch 9, Branch 421—In June 2022, retired letter carrier David Noble filed this action against NALC, Branch 9 and Branch 421 in the federal district court in Washington, DC. The suit seeks an injunction requiring the defendants to allow Noble to place paid campaign advertisements in their publications. The suit is pending.

National Labor Relations Board cases

Branch 455 (Schroeder)—In August 2012, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 455, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Irma Schroeder. The complaint alleges that the branch caused USPS to discharge her in retaliation for her alleged dissident union activity. The hearing on the case has not yet been scheduled.

NALC, Branch 11 (Williams)—In June 2017, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 11, based on an unfair labor practice charge filed by letter carrier Vanessa Williams. The complaint was later amended to add a claim against NALC. The amended complaint alleged that Branch 11 failed to pursue a grievance for Williams because she was not a union member and that NALC threatened not to represent her unless she joined the union. After holding a hearing, an NLRB administrative law judge dismissed the case in September 2018.

NALC (Marino)—In August 2017, the NLRB issued a complaint against NALC, based on an unfair labor practice charge filed by former letter carrier Jennifer Marino. The complaint alleged that NALC failed to properly handle the grievance over her removal. In May 2019, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 361 (Wells)—In November 2017, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 361, based on an unfair labor practice charge filed by former letter carrier Leslie Wells. The complaint alleged that Branch 361 breached its duty of fair representation by failing to file grievances on her behalf. After a hearing, an NLRB administrative law judge dismissed the case in May 2018.

Branch 11 (Cannon-Stokes)—In March 2019, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 11, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Traci Cannon-Stokes. The complaint alleged that the branch retaliated against her for filing a prior unfair labor practice charge. In August 2019, the case was resolved by a settlement.

NALC (Lamley)—In June 2019, the NLRB issued a complaint against NALC, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Christopher Lamley. The complaint alleged that the branch failed to properly process a grievance for Lamley. In September 2019, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 124 (Winston)—In June 2019, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 124, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Nadia Winston. The complaint alleged that the branch failed to timely provide her with copies of grievance papers, failed to discuss the status of a grievance with her, and retaliated against her for filing a prior unfair labor practice charge. In September 2019, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 11 (Geans)—In July 2019, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 11, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Stephanie Geans. The complaint alleged that the branch retaliated against her for filing a prior unfair labor practice charge. In January 2020, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 6119 (Johnson)—In July 2019, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 6119, based on an unfair labor practice charge by former letter carrier Damell Johnson. The complaint alleged that the branch failed to notify him of a last chance agreement purportedly offered to settle the grievance over his removal. In October 2019, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 4319 (Javier, Lindly)—In October 2019, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 4319, based on unfair labor



practice charges by letter carriers Rachel Javier and Merlynn Lindly. The complaint contained multiple allegations, including the claim that the branch failed to file grievances for them. In September 2020, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 343 (Dunlap)—In November 2019, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 343, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Janayah Dunlap. The complaint alleged that the branch president and a steward told her they do not represent non-members. After a hearing, an NLRB administrative law judge dismissed the complaint in July 2020.

Branch 197 (Dright)—In January 2020, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 197, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Channing Dright. The complaint alleged that the branch president interrogated employees regarding pending unfair labor practice charges and implied that employees had to drop their charges in order to receive union representation. In September 2020, the NLRB dismissed the charge.

Branch 259 (Cozart)—In May 2020, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 529, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Jerry Cozart. The

complaint alleged that the branch failed to file grievances over his suspension and removal. In March 2021, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 2293 (Littleton)—In July 2020, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 2293, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Gaila Littleton. The complaint alleged that the branch threatened her with retaliation for filing prior unfair labor practice charges. In August 2020, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 576 (Ayala)—In July 2020, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 576, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Jose Ayala. The complaint alleged that the branch failed to file a grievance for him. In January 2021, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 2502 (Long)—In October 2020, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 2505, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Raymond Long. The complaint alleged that the branch failed to process a grievance for him. In March 2021, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 791 (Moore)—In December 2020, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 791, based on an unfair labor practice charge

by letter carrier Gabriela Moore. The complaint alleged that the branch harassed her and mishandled a grievance. In July 2021, the case was resolved by a settlement.

Branch 1069 (Armendariz)—In January 2021, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 1069, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Lorenzo Armendariz. The complaint alleged that the branch filed to provide him a copy of a grievance that he requested. In May 2021, Armendariz withdrew his charge and the NLRB dismissed the case.

Branch 3 (N-Logal, Caudill)—In September 2021, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 3, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carriers Penny N-Logal and Jack Caudill. The complaint alleged that a steward threatened an employee and took inappropriate action regarding a grievance. In November 2021, the case was resolved by settlement.

Branch 5730 (Marcum)—In April 2022, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 5730, based on an unfair labor practice charge by former letter carrier Kandi Marcum. The complaint alleges that the branch failed to file grievances for her and failed to provide her with copies of her grievances. A hearing is scheduled for June 22, 2022.

National-level arbitration decisions

1. Case Nos. Q15C-4Q-C 17697250 and 18033553 (Hatch Act changes to LWOP rules and regulations)—This interpretive case was initiated by the American Postal Workers Union (APWU) at the national level. NALC and the National Postal Mail Handlers Union (NPMHU) intervened in support of the APWU. The dispute concerned the Postal Service's unilateral implementation of changes to the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM)*, Subchapter 514 and the Form 3971. The changes would prohibit employees from taking union business leave without pay (LWOP) in order to participate in partisan political activity. According to the Postal Service, the changes were required to remedy a finding by the Office of Special Counsel that the postal managers had violated the Hatch Act by allowing letter carriers to take union business leave to engage in partisan political activity during the 2016 election. The unions argued that

management violated the National Agreement by making these changes without bargaining and by failing to comply with the procedures for changing handbooks and manuals provided by Article 19.

The case was heard by Arbitrator Stephen Goldberg on May 2, 2018. The parties submitted post-hearing briefs on July 2. On Aug. 6, Arbitrator Goldberg issued his award, sustaining the grievance. The arbitrator found that the Postal Service violated Articles 5, 10.2 and 19 by issuing the disputed regulations unilaterally, and ordered that the regulations be rescinded.

The Postal Service subsequently filed a lawsuit in the federal district court in Washington, DC, seeking to vacate the Goldberg Award. On May 2, 2019, NALC initiated a new national-level interpretive dispute, asserting that the Postal Service was not entitled to defer compliance with the Goldberg award until the lawsuit was resolved. On Feb. 19, 2020, NALC and USPS entered

into an interim settlement of this dispute recognizing that letter carriers who wish to take LWOP for the purpose of being released to work on a partisan political campaign may request LWOP in accordance with Section 514.4(a) of the *ELM* (see M-01908).

The Postal Service's lawsuit was subsequently withdrawn. The disputed revisions of the *ELM* were rescinded, effective July 29, 2021.

2. Case No. Q06N-4QC18427350 (Pay consolidation/excessing dispute)—This national-level interpretive dispute presented the question of whether employees from other crafts in pay grades equivalent to the former City Carrier Grade 1 (CC-1) could continue to be reassigned under Article 12 of the National Agreement to the letter carrier craft following the letter carrier pay consolidation negotiated in the 2016 round of collective bargaining.

Article 12 of the NALC-USPS National Agreement allows the Postal Service to

reassign employees from other crafts to vacant letter carrier positions in certain specified circumstances—but only to letter carrier positions in a pay level equivalent to or lower than the employee’s existing pay level. In the 2016 round of collective bargaining, NALC and the Postal Service agreed to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) providing that, effective Nov. 24, 2018, all city letter carrier positions would be consolidated into City Carrier Grade 2. NALC took the position that because the CC-1 grade no longer exists, employees from other crafts in pay grades equivalent to CC-1—i.e., Grade 6 in the Postal Service pay schedule (PS-6)—should no longer be reassigned into letter carrier positions under Article 12.

Hearings before National Arbitrator Shyam Das took place on Dec. 18, 2018, and May 20, 2019. The APWU and the Mailhandlers intervened in support of the Postal Service’s position. Arbitrator Das issued his award on Nov. 5, 2019. The arbitrator recognized that the memorandum “provided Carriers with the increased compensation they would have received if granted an upgrade.” Nonetheless, he rejected NALC’s position that this change meant that employees from other crafts in grade equivalent to the former City Carrier Grade 1 could no longer be excessed into the letter carrier craft under Article 12 of the National Agreement.

3. Case No. Q16N-4Q-C 19225372 (Consolidated Casing Initiative)—This national-level interpretive dispute, originating in the Annandale, VA Post Office, and ultimately affecting approximately 66 post offices, concerned USPS’s Consolidated Casing Initiative (CCI). The nationwide CCI test essentially split the city carrier craft into two jobs: “caser/carriers” who were responsible for casing mail on multiple routes, and “street carriers” who did no casing and virtually no office work.

NALC’s position was that the CCI was an obvious breach of the National Agreement. It fundamentally changed carrier working conditions in contravention of Article 5, and it entailed a wholesale adjustment of carrier routes without compliance with *Handbook M-39*. NALC also disputed the Postal Service’s argument that the CCI was authorized by Article 34 or Article 41.3.M.

Hearings before National Arbitrator Shyam Das took place on Nov. 22 and Dec. 18, 2019. The parties submitted post-hearing briefs on March 9, 2020. Prior to the issuance of the

arbitrator’s decision, the parties reached a comprehensive settlement that resolved the dispute. (See M-01923 and M-01936.)

4. Case No. Q19N-6X-C 22098723 (Calculation of pay for part-time flexible employees)—This national-level interpretive dispute involved the proper method of calculating overtime pay, Sunday premiums, cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), and general wage increases for part-time flexible (PTF) employees in Step AA.

In the 2019 round of collective bargaining, the parties agreed to modify the basic salary schedule provided in Table Two to include a new entry Step AA for the hourly basic rates of PTF employees. Article 9, Section 8 of the 2019 agreement expressly states that “[t]he Step AA Hourly Basic Rate will be equal to Step A of the Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees Hourly Basic Rate in Table Two.”

At the time the agreement went into effect, this hourly basic rate was \$19.88. Initially, the Postal Service correctly compensated PTFs in Step AA at this hourly rate for straight time.

However, the Postal Service used a lower hourly rate of \$19.12 to calculate overtime and Sunday premiums for these employees. The Postal Service’s method subsequently resulted in still more erroneous calculations following implementation of contractual wage increases and COLAs.

A hearing before National Arbitrator Dennis Nolan was scheduled for April 21, 2022. Prior to the hearing, the parties reached a settlement requiring the Postal Service to correct all improper payments to employees for time spent in Step AA.

Presidential rulings

Members can find the presidential rulings in the *Officers’ Reports* book distributed at the NALC convention in Chicago or on *The Postal Record* section of nalc.org.

NALC DIRECT ARBITRATION COSTS					
	Two-year period ended 3/31/20	Two-year period ended 3/31/22	Percentage Change		
Arbitrators’ fees	\$3,960,705	\$2,826,864	-28.63%		
Cancellation fees	683,680	479,879	-29.81%		
Transcripts	—	—	—		
Miscellaneous	—	—	—		
TOTAL	\$4,644,385	\$3,306,743	-28.8%		

NALC DISCIPLINE ARBITRATION					
	Sustained	Sustained in part	Denied	Total*	Percent denied
2012	127	96	192	415	46.3
2013	138	52	107	297	36.0
2014	61	39	108	208	51.9
2015	100	48	140	288	48.6
2016	92	49	149	290	51.4
2017	105	45	137	287	47.7
2018	75	81	121	282	43.6
2019	81	92	135	321	43.8
2020	72	76	127	279	46.1
2021	61	69	121	260	48.2
2022	26	19	51	96	53.1

NALC CONTRACT ARBITRATION					
	Sustained	Sustained in part	Denied	Total*	Percent denied
2012	194	55	131	380	34.5
2013	144	56	147	347	42.4
2014	105	36	62	203	30.5
2015	155	41	102	258	39.5
2016	115	45	86	246	35.0
2017	100	30	65	195	33.3
2018	278	142	163	629	27.9
2019	247	85	126	474	27.5
2020	144	56	84	304	29.5
2021	208	44	92	367	26.7
2022	119	39	53	216	24.5

*The total figure includes cases where no decision was issued by the arbitrator—for example, because the cases were settled during or after the hearing.



Cumulative pay (Table 2) since 2013

Year Step:	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O
2013	\$34,752	\$36,306	\$37,860	\$39,414	\$40,968	\$42,522	\$44,076	\$45,630	\$47,184	\$48,738	\$50,292	\$51,846	\$53,400	\$54,954	\$56,508
2014	\$35,190	\$36,763	\$38,337	\$39,910	\$41,484	\$43,057	\$44,631	\$46,204	\$47,778	\$49,351	\$50,925	\$52,498	\$54,072	\$55,646	\$57,219
2015	\$36,466	\$38,096	\$39,727	\$41,357	\$42,989	\$44,618	\$46,249	\$47,879	\$49,511	\$51,140	\$52,771	\$54,402	\$56,033	\$57,663	\$59,294
2016	\$36,814	\$38,459	\$40,106	\$41,751	\$43,399	\$45,043	\$46,690	\$48,335	\$49,983	\$51,627	\$53,274	\$54,920	\$56,567	\$58,213	\$59,859
2017	\$37,474	\$39,148	\$40,824	\$42,499	\$44,176	\$45,851	\$47,526	\$49,201	\$50,879	\$52,552	\$54,228	\$55,904	\$57,581	\$59,256	\$60,931
2018	\$38,439	\$40,155	\$41,874	\$43,593	\$45,313	\$47,031	\$48,750	\$50,467	\$52,188	\$53,905	\$55,624	\$57,343	\$59,062	\$60,782	\$62,499
2019	\$39,615	\$41,384	\$43,157	\$44,928	\$46,700	\$48,470	\$50,243	\$52,014	\$53,786	\$55,557	\$57,329	\$59,099	\$60,871	\$62,641	\$64,413
2020	\$40,541	\$42,352	\$44,165	\$45,978	\$47,791	\$49,603	\$51,417	\$53,230	\$55,043	\$56,855	\$58,669	\$60,480	\$62,294	\$64,105	\$65,918
2021	\$41,353	\$43,200	\$45,049	\$46,898	\$48,748	\$50,595	\$52,446	\$54,296	\$56,144	\$57,993	\$59,843	\$61,690	\$63,541	\$65,389	\$67,237
2022	\$43,881	\$45,841	\$47,803	\$49,765	\$51,728	\$53,688	\$55,652	\$57,616	\$59,576	\$61,538	\$63,501	\$65,461	\$67,426	\$69,386	\$71,347

Notes: All salaries are for July of each year and include cost-of-living adjustments not yet rolled into basic pay. Prior to 1971, it took 21 years for employees to reach top step; between 1971 and 1984 it took eight years; between 1984 and 1991 it took 10.7 years; it now takes 12.5 years. Under the 2011-2016 National Agreement, the January 2013 COLAs were calculated in 2013 but payment was deferred until 2014.

2006	\$37,205	\$40,655	\$41,992	\$44,554	\$44,908	\$45,262	\$45,610	\$45,963	\$46,317	\$46,665	\$47,019	\$47,370	\$47,724	\$48,078	\$48,428
2007	\$38,527	\$42,025	\$43,381	\$45,979	\$46,338	\$46,697	\$47,050	\$47,408	\$47,766	\$48,119	\$48,478	\$48,834	\$49,193	\$49,552	\$49,907
2008	\$39,669	\$43,229	\$44,609	\$47,253	\$47,619	\$47,984	\$48,343	\$48,708	\$49,072	\$49,431	\$49,797	\$50,159	\$50,524	\$50,890	\$51,251
2009	\$41,888	\$45,513	\$46,919	\$49,612	\$49,994	\$50,356	\$50,722	\$51,093	\$51,464	\$51,830	\$52,202	\$52,571	\$52,943	\$53,315	\$53,683
2010	\$42,610	\$46,300	\$47,732	\$50,474	\$50,852	\$51,231	\$51,604	\$51,981	\$52,359	\$52,732	\$53,110	\$53,486	\$53,865	\$54,243	\$54,618
2011	\$43,313	\$47,067	\$48,523	\$51,313	\$51,697	\$52,083	\$52,462	\$52,846	\$53,230	\$53,610	\$53,994	\$54,377	\$54,763	\$55,147	\$55,529
2012	\$44,292	\$48,046	\$49,502	\$52,292	\$52,676	\$53,062	\$53,441	\$53,825	\$54,210	\$54,589	\$54,973	\$55,356	\$55,742	\$56,128	\$56,508
2013	\$44,292	\$48,046	\$49,502	\$52,292	\$52,676	\$53,062	\$53,441	\$53,825	\$54,210	\$54,589	\$54,973	\$55,356	\$55,742	\$56,128	\$56,508
2014	\$44,881	\$48,672	\$50,143	\$52,961	\$53,349	\$53,739	\$54,121	\$54,509	\$54,898	\$55,281	\$55,669	\$56,056	\$56,445	\$56,835	\$57,219
2015	\$46,772	\$50,620	\$52,113	\$54,972	\$55,366	\$55,762	\$56,150	\$56,543	\$56,938	\$57,327	\$57,721	\$58,113	\$58,508	\$58,904	\$59,294
2016	\$47,215	\$51,100	\$52,608	\$55,495	\$55,893	\$56,293	\$56,684	\$57,081	\$57,480	\$57,873	\$58,271	\$58,667	\$59,065	\$59,465	\$59,859
2017	\$48,136	\$52,067	\$53,593	\$56,515	\$56,918	\$57,323	\$57,718	\$58,120	\$58,524	\$58,923	\$59,324	\$59,725	\$60,128	\$60,533	\$60,931
2018	\$49,540	\$53,521	\$55,067	\$58,026	\$58,435	\$58,845	\$59,245	\$59,652	\$60,061	\$60,463	\$60,872	\$61,278	\$61,686	\$62,096	\$62,499
2019	\$52,220	\$56,455	\$56,553	\$59,584	\$60,024	\$60,466	\$60,901	\$61,337	\$61,781	\$62,208	\$62,652	\$63,094	\$63,528	\$63,976	\$64,413
2020	\$53,591	\$57,873	\$57,972	\$61,036	\$61,481	\$61,928	\$62,368	\$62,809	\$63,257	\$63,699	\$64,138	\$64,585	\$65,024	\$65,477	\$65,918
2021	\$54,776	\$59,105	\$59,205	\$62,302	\$62,752	\$63,204	\$63,649	\$64,095	\$64,547	\$64,994	\$65,438	\$65,890	\$66,334	\$66,792	\$67,237
2022	\$58,728	\$63,112	\$63,213	\$66,350	\$66,805	\$67,263	\$67,714	\$68,165	\$68,623	\$69,066	\$69,526	\$69,983	\$70,433	\$70,897	\$71,347

Notes: All salaries are for July of each year and include cost-of-living adjustments not yet rolled into basic pay. Prior to 1971, it took 21 years for employees to reach top step; between 1971 and 1984 it took eight years; between 1984 and 1991 it took 10.7 years; it now takes 12.5 years. Under the 2011-2016 National Agreement, the January 2013 COLAs were calculated in 2013 but payment was deferred until 2014.

Cumulative pay (Table 1) since postal reorganization

Old step:	A	B	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Year New step:															
1970 (Last year of Post Office Department)				\$7,072	\$7,307	\$7,542	\$7,777	\$8,012	\$8,247	\$8,482	\$8,717	\$8,952	\$9,187	\$9,422	\$9,657
1971 (First MALC-USPS National Agreement)				\$7,322	\$7,557	\$7,792	\$8,027	\$8,262	\$8,497	\$8,732	\$8,967	\$9,202	\$9,437	\$9,672	\$9,907
1972	—	—	—	\$8,072	\$8,307	\$8,542	\$8,777	\$9,012	\$9,247	\$9,482	\$9,717	\$9,952	\$10,187	\$10,422	\$10,657
1973	—	—	—	\$9,188	\$9,423	\$9,658	\$9,893	\$10,128	\$10,363	\$10,598	\$10,833	\$11,068	\$11,303	\$11,538	\$11,773
1974	—	—	—	\$10,129	\$10,364	\$10,599	\$10,834	\$11,069	\$11,304	\$11,539	\$11,774	\$12,009	\$12,244	\$12,479	\$12,714
1975	—	—	—	\$11,298	\$11,533	\$11,768	\$12,003	\$12,238	\$12,473	\$12,708	\$12,943	\$13,178	\$13,413	\$13,648	\$13,883
1976	—	—	—	\$11,902	\$12,137	\$12,372	\$12,607	\$12,842	\$13,077	\$13,312	\$13,547	\$13,782	\$14,017	\$14,252	\$14,487
1977	—	—	—	\$13,313	\$13,548	\$13,783	\$14,018	\$14,253	\$14,488	\$14,723	\$14,958	\$15,193	\$15,428	\$15,663	\$15,898
1978	—	—	—	\$14,416	\$14,651	\$14,886	\$15,121	\$15,356	\$15,591	\$15,826	\$16,061	\$16,296	\$16,531	\$16,766	\$17,001
1979	—	—	—	\$15,577	\$15,819	\$16,061	\$16,303	\$16,545	\$16,787	\$17,029	\$17,271	\$17,513	\$17,755	\$17,997	\$18,239
1980	—	—	—	\$17,658	\$17,900	\$18,142	\$18,384	\$18,626	\$18,868	\$19,110	\$19,352	\$19,594	\$19,836	\$20,078	\$20,320
1981	—	—	—	\$19,268	\$19,510	\$19,752	\$19,994	\$20,236	\$20,478	\$20,720	\$20,962	\$21,204	\$21,446	\$21,688	\$21,930
1982	—	—	—	\$20,130	\$20,372	\$20,614	\$20,856	\$21,098	\$21,340	\$21,582	\$21,824	\$22,066	\$22,308	\$22,550	\$22,792
1983	—	—	—	\$20,991	\$21,233	\$21,475	\$21,717	\$21,959	\$22,201	\$22,443	\$22,685	\$22,927	\$23,169	\$23,411	\$23,653
1984	—	—	—	\$22,092	\$22,340	\$22,589	\$22,837	\$23,086	\$23,334	\$23,583	\$23,832	\$24,080	\$24,329	\$24,577	\$24,826
1985	—	—	—	\$23,068	\$23,322	\$23,578	\$23,832	\$24,088	\$24,342	\$24,598	\$24,854	\$25,108	\$25,364	\$25,618	\$25,874
1986	—	—	—	\$24,045	\$24,305	\$24,568	\$24,828	\$25,091	\$25,351	\$25,614	\$25,877	\$26,137	\$26,400	\$26,660	\$26,923
1987	—	—	—	\$25,013	\$25,279	\$25,547	\$25,812	\$26,080	\$26,346	\$26,614	\$26,882	\$27,147	\$27,416	\$27,681	\$27,949
1988	—	—	—	\$25,679	\$25,945	\$26,213	\$26,478	\$26,746	\$27,012	\$27,280	\$27,548	\$27,813	\$28,082	\$28,347	\$28,615
1989	—	—	—	\$27,102	\$27,368	\$27,636	\$27,901	\$28,169	\$28,435	\$28,703	\$28,971	\$29,236	\$29,505	\$29,770	\$30,038
1990	—	—	—	\$28,580	\$28,846	\$29,114	\$29,379	\$29,647	\$29,913	\$30,181	\$30,449	\$30,714	\$30,983	\$31,248	\$31,516
1991	\$22,420	\$24,927	\$27,088	\$29,176	\$29,445	\$29,716	\$29,985	\$30,256	\$30,525	\$30,796	\$31,067	\$31,336	\$31,608	\$31,876	\$32,147
1992	\$23,026	\$25,775	\$27,968	\$30,087	\$30,359	\$30,635	\$30,907	\$31,183	\$31,455	\$31,731	\$32,006	\$32,279	\$32,555	\$32,827	\$33,102
1993	\$24,028	\$26,809	\$29,036	\$31,184	\$31,461	\$31,740	\$32,017	\$32,296	\$32,573	\$32,852	\$33,131	\$33,408	\$33,688	\$33,964	\$34,243
1994	\$24,907	\$27,723	\$29,984	\$32,165	\$32,447	\$32,730	\$33,011	\$33,294	\$33,576	\$33,859	\$34,142	\$34,423	\$34,708	\$34,988	\$35,271
1995	\$25,240	\$28,056	\$30,317	\$32,498	\$32,780	\$33,063	\$33,344	\$33,627	\$33,909	\$34,192	\$34,475	\$34,756	\$35,041	\$35,321	\$35,604
1996	\$25,647	\$28,497	\$30,785	\$32,992	\$33,277	\$33,564	\$33,848	\$34,135	\$34,420	\$34,706	\$34,993	\$35,277	\$35,565	\$35,849	\$36,135
1997	\$26,375	\$29,225	\$31,513	\$33,720	\$34,005	\$34,292	\$34,576	\$34,863	\$35,148	\$35,434	\$35,721	\$36,005	\$36,293	\$36,577	\$36,863
1998	\$27,011	\$29,895	\$32,210	\$34,443	\$34,731	\$35,022	\$35,309	\$35,600	\$35,888	\$36,177	\$36,468	\$36,755	\$37,046	\$37,334	\$37,623
1999	\$27,219	\$30,103	\$32,418	\$34,651	\$34,939	\$35,230	\$35,517	\$35,808	\$36,096	\$36,385	\$36,676	\$36,963	\$37,254	\$37,542	\$37,831
2000	\$28,893	\$31,875	\$34,269	\$36,578	\$36,876	\$37,177	\$37,473	\$37,774	\$38,072	\$38,371	\$38,672	\$38,968	\$39,270	\$39,568	\$39,867
2001	\$31,844	\$35,064	\$36,314	\$38,707	\$39,036	\$39,367	\$39,692	\$40,022	\$40,351	\$40,676	\$41,007	\$41,335	\$41,664	\$41,995	\$42,323
2002	\$32,735	\$36,013	\$37,285	\$39,721	\$40,056	\$40,393	\$40,724	\$41,060	\$41,395	\$41,726	\$42,063	\$42,397	\$42,732	\$43,069	\$43,402
2003	\$33,446	\$36,773	\$38,063	\$40,535	\$40,875	\$41,217	\$41,553	\$41,894	\$42,234	\$42,570	\$42,912	\$43,251	\$43,591	\$43,933	\$44,271
2004	\$34,331	\$37,697	\$39,002	\$41,502	\$41,846	\$42,192	\$42,532	\$42,877	\$43,221	\$43,561	\$43,907	\$44,250	\$44,594	\$44,940	\$45,282
2005	\$35,602	\$39,010	\$40,331	\$42,862	\$43,211	\$43,561	\$43,905	\$44,254	\$44,603	\$44,947	\$45,297	\$45,644	\$45,993	\$46,343	\$46,689

Letter Carrier Pay Schedule

City Carrier Wage Schedule: Effective Feb. 26, 2022 (January 2022 COLA)

The following salary and rate schedule is for all NALC-represented employees.

Career city letter carrier increases

Effective Date	Type of Increase	Amount
Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	1.1%
Feb. 29, 2020	January COLA	\$166
Aug. 29, 2020	July COLA	\$188
Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	1.1%
Feb. 27, 2021	January COLA	\$416
Aug. 28, 2021*	July COLA	\$1,934
Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	1.3%
Feb. 26, 2022*	January COLA	\$1,331
TBA*	July COLA	TBD
Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	1.3%
TBA*	January COLA	TBD

City carrier assistant increases

Date	Type of Increase	Amount
Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	2.1%
Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	2.1%
Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	2.3%
Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	2.3%

NOTE: Upon conversion to Full-Time, Part-Time Flexible employees in Table Two will be slotted into the Full-Time Step commensurate with their number of weeks as a PTF, and retain their time credit toward the next step.

NOTE: Effective Nov. 19, 2022, Table One and Table Two will be modified to include an additional Step P that is \$444 more than Step O of the basic salary schedule in Tables One and Two.

NOTE: Carrier Technicians receive additional compensation equivalent to 2.1% of the employee's applicable hourly rate for all paid hours.

NOTE: The full COLAs will be added to the salaries of all steps in Table 1 and Step O of Table 2, with proportionate application of the COLA to Steps A-N of Table 2.

* NOTE: In accordance with Article 9.3.B, COLAs become effective the second full pay period after the release of the January and July Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers.

Table 1: City Carrier Schedule

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date prior to Jan. 12, 2013.

Basic Annual Salaries																RSC Q (NALC)	
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O		MOST PREV. STEP
City Carrier (Grade 2)	58,728	63,112	63,213	66,350	66,805	67,263	67,714	68,165	68,623	69,066	69,526	69,983	70,433	70,897	71,347		458
Carrier Technician**	59,961	64,437	64,540	67,743	68,208	68,676	69,136	69,596	70,064	70,516	70,986	71,453	71,912	72,386	72,845		468
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	29.48	31.68	31.73	33.31	33.54	33.77	33.99	34.22	34.45	34.67	34.90	35.13	35.36	35.59	35.82		
Carrier Technician**	30.10	32.35	32.40	34.01	34.24	34.48	34.71	34.94	35.17	35.40	35.64	35.87	36.10	36.34	36.57		
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	28.23	30.34	30.39	31.90	32.12	32.34	32.55	32.77	32.99	33.20	33.43	33.65	33.86	34.09	34.30		
Carrier Technician**	28.83	30.98	31.03	32.57	32.79	33.02	33.24	33.46	33.68	33.90	34.13	34.35	34.57	34.80	35.02		
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)																	
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O			YRS.
	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24			12.4

** Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1%

Table 2: City Carrier Schedule

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date on or after Jan. 12, 2013.

Basic Annual Salaries																RSC Q7 (NALC)	
	AA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	MOST PREV. STEP
City Carrier (Grade 2)	43,881	45,841	47,803	49,765	51,728	53,688	55,652	57,616	59,576	61,538	63,501	65,461	67,426	69,386	71,347		1,960
Carrier Technician**	44,803	46,804	48,807	50,810	52,814	54,815	56,821	58,826	60,827	62,830	64,835	66,836	68,842	70,843	72,845		2,001
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	21.19***	22.03	23.01	24.00	24.98	25.97	26.95	27.94	28.92	29.91	30.89	31.88	32.86	33.85	34.83	35.82	
Carrier Technician**	21.63***	22.49	23.50	24.50	25.51	26.51	27.52	28.52	29.53	30.54	31.54	32.55	33.55	34.56	35.56	36.57	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	21.10	22.04	22.98	23.93	24.87	25.81	26.76	27.70	28.64	29.59	30.53	31.47	32.42	33.36	34.30		
Carrier Technician**	21.54	22.50	23.46	24.43	25.39	26.35	27.32	28.28	29.24	30.21	31.17	32.13	33.10	34.06	35.02		
Percent Step O																	
	61.50%	64.25%	67.00%	69.75%	72.50%	75.25%	78.00%	80.75%	83.50%	86.25%	89.00%	91.75%	94.50%	97.25%	100.00%		
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)																	
Steps (From-To)	AA-A	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O		YRS.
	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46		12.4

** Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1%

***See "Interpretive dispute filed over PTF Step AA" on page 6 of the March 2022 issue of *The Postal Record*

Table 3: City Carrier Assistant Schedule

This schedule applies to CCA Hires with no previous TE service.

	BB	AA
City Carrier (Grade 2)	18.92	19.42
Carrier Technician (add 2.1%)	19.32	19.83
Steps (From BB to AA) in weeks	52	

Hourly Rates

This schedule applies to CCA Hires with previous TE service after Sept. 29, 2007, who were on the rolls as of Jan. 10, 2013.

	BB	AA
City Carrier (Grade 2)	20.44	20.94
Carrier Technician (add 2.1%)	20.87	21.38
Steps (From BB to AA) in weeks	52	

NOTE: Effective June 19, 2021, the Step CC pay rate in Table Three was eliminated. All CCAs at step CC as of that date were moved into step BB, receiving a 50 cent per hour raise. Step BB and its pay rate are the new entry step for new CCA hires. The new waiting period from Step BB to Step AA is 52 weeks. CCAs who were in step CC on June 19, 2021, will maintain their time-in-step credit toward step AA and will receive their next step increase to step AA after 52 weeks of service. CCAs that were in step BB as of June 19 will have 12 weeks added to their current time-in-step credit toward step AA. This will ensure all CCAs will reach step AA after 52 weeks of service.