

Gratitude



**Brian
Renfroe**

For my last column as executive vice president, I feel it is important for me to share what I have witnessed from a unique perspective that I've been privileged to have. For the last 11 years, I've had the pleasure of working at NALC Headquarters—and I've had the pleasure of working with President Fred Rolando. This magazine includes an excellent retrospective on Fred's presidency that covers many of the accomplishments of our union under his leadership. Rather than repeat many of those accomplishments, I want focus on the characteristics and qualities I've seen from him.

“On behalf of all of NALC, I'll end with a simple message. Thanks, Fred.”

I worked as a letter carrier staff member at NALC Headquarters from 2011 to 2014. I served as director of city delivery from 2014 to 2016 and I've been executive vice president since 2016. During this entire time I have seen firsthand a remarkable level of consistent leadership from Fred. There are many words that I can use to describe him and his leadership—steady, intelligent, patient, calm, humorous, honest, compassionate and genuine are a few that come to mind. The one theme of every decision, directive and action from Fred is always doing what is best for the members of NALC.

Fred took office as president during one of the more difficult periods in our union's modern-day history. The way he navigated the effects of the 2009 recession and fought off numerous threats was emblematic of what I witnessed for the last 11 years—the ability to develop the right vision and patiently work to achieve the outcome that is best for the members of NALC. Fred has always remained calm and has methodically assessed each situation. Every single time.

Anyone who has spent even a few minutes around Fred knows that he likes humor. His jokes have always been pretty bad, but his humorous nature contributes

to a quality that I can speak to—people enjoy working with him. Officers, staff and members have always had a great experience working with Fred. I've been fortunate to work directly with him on countless issues over the years, and I have never had anything other than a positive experience.

Compassion is an important part of being a successful leader. Fred is one of the most compassionate people I've ever known. Many NALC members who have experienced tragedy can attest to this, as can many NALC officers and staff that have worked at Headquarters during his presidency.

Fred is as genuine as a person can be. That quality shines through in everything I've seen him do the last 11 years. It is uncommon for an individual to have the opportunity to affect thousands of lives in a positive way. Fred has taken full advantage of that opportunity he was given by being elected NALC president.

I could write a book about all the things I've learned from him the last 11 years. But in addition to what I've mentioned, the most important lesson I've learned is the importance of a strong work ethic. I've seen his work ethic permeate throughout NALC Headquarters and beyond.

I am extremely excited for Fred and his family to be able to enjoy a well-deserved retirement. I will forever be grateful for all he has done to strengthen our union. As we move into this transition, there is one thing I know for sure about Fred. Even in retirement, he will do what he has done for the last 44 years—anything he can to help the members of NALC.

I've had the privilege of writing dozens of *Postal Record* columns over the last eight years. I've never enjoyed writing one more than this one. On behalf of all of NALC, I'll end with a simple message.

Thanks, Fred.

