

Thank you for everything, Jim



Chief of Staff
Kori Blalock Keller

It is impossible to put into words the impact that our beloved chief of staff, Jim Sauber, has had on our postal universe and the labor community over his 37-year career at the NALC. He has been a force, fixture and muse in fighting for workers and a strong Postal Service. His exceptional knowledge and background as an economist and researcher while raising three amazing daughters into women during his NALC tenure has made him the voice

of reason, compassion and respect in every room.

As I step into my version of Jim's role, I am profoundly affected by Jim's grace and humility. I've always compared him to a postal and labor history encyclopedia, something I am not and will never be. Reflecting on the last nine years that I've attempted to absorb his wisdom by osmosis, there have been laughs and lessons that I will cherish. Jim and I have always approached action with opposing views and approaches—Jim with soft diplomacy and me with a sledgehammer—always meeting somewhere in the middle. I am one of many who have been affected by Jim's intellect and commitment to his work.

His dedication to the men and women of NALC is best told through the voices who have the utmost respect and appreciation for all that our favorite Michigander has done over the years:

"It has been a privilege to work with Jim for more than 10 years. He is a respected leader in the postal community, and the NALC and our members have benefited tremendously from his passion, dedication and expansive knowledge on postal and labor issues. I am grateful for all that Jim has given to the NALC and even more grateful to call him a friend. We'll miss you, Jim."

—Brian Renfroe, NALC president

"On behalf of APWU's members, retirees and officers, we thank you for nearly four decades of dedication to the labor movement. Your contributions have helped improve the lives of letter carriers and all postal workers and helped to secure the quality public Postal Service millions of people rely upon every single day. Your contributions to the landmark postal reform bill, the Postal Regulatory Commission, UNI Global Union, Employee Thrift Advisory Committee, and your work with the Vote at Home Institute will have a lasting impact on all postal workers and the working class both here and abroad. We wish you and your wife, Heidi, a long and healthy retirement."

—Mark Dimondstein, president
American Postal Workers Union



"Jim has been a tremendous resource to not just the Letter Carriers, but to all the postal unions. The NPMHU appreciates his decades of work to improve the United States Postal Service and his dedication to all postal employees. I wish him the best of luck in his retirement."

—Paul Hogrogian, president
National Postal Mail Handlers Union

"During his long and illustrious career at NALC, Jim has served as an economist, research director and a veritable jack of all trades in his exemplary service to the union. I have always enjoyed working alongside Jim on our mutual legislative priorities and goals over the years. While I know Jim is not completely walking away, I wish him nothing but the best as he embarks on the next stage of his life."

—Ronnie Stutts, president
National Rural Letter Carriers' Association

"I hit the career jackpot when I began working at the NALC; while there are many reasons for this, working with Jim was at the top of the list. One could only wish to be as lucky as I was, and still am, to call him my friend and my mentor. To say I learned from him would be an understatement. Everything that I have applied to my work, whether it was during my 10 years with the NALC or in the many years since, can be attributed in one way or another to Jim. I wish him nothing but the best as he turns the corner to the next part of his life. I know he will take it on, as he always has, without guile and changing lives along the way."

—Jennifer Warburton,
former NALC staff member and current government
affairs director, Postal Regulatory Commission

"The gifts Jim Sauber has given to all those who have worked around him cannot be captured in one *Postal Record* article. We not only benefited from being exposed to one of the most brilliant minds in the labor movement, but he also brought us into his love of Springsteen, labor history, obscure economists, and unfortunately his dedication to University of Michigan sports. It was truly amazing to see how his mind works and how he used that intellect to help NALC members and all workers. I can sincerely say that my time working with him made



me a smarter, nicer and all-around better person (despite all the Michigan nonsense).”

—Tucker McDonald, former NALC field director

“Jim Sauber is a statesman. From the industry point of view, after decades of sharply divergent views and disagreements between the postal unions and the mailing community, he engineered an approach that enabled labor and customers to work together to pass the critical Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act. That cooperation and collaboration continued through the enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act. Intellectually, he was a driving force on key issues that were resolved in both pieces of legislation. We respect his leadership, acumen and persistence within his own community and in the larger postal context. He ‘delivered’ for all of us. And all the while he was doing that, he was a nice guy and a good friend! He will certainly be missed.”

—Art Sackler, manager
Coalition for a 21st Century Postal Service

“It has been a wonderful honor to know and work with Jim for a number of years. I met him early in my time working on postal issues in the Senate and I always appreciated his tremendous experience in the industry, his insightful approach, and his kind demeanor. I always walked away from every meeting feeling like I had learned another unique and memorable piece of postal history. I am glad to call him a friend and I know he will continue to make a valuable impact on the postal world wherever his journey takes him next.”

—Ashley Polling, commissioner
Postal Regulatory Commission

“Jim Sauber has been an incredible partner in the pursuit of postal reform. His vision and technical expertise in identifying and developing opportunities to improve USPS finances, forge partnerships with USPS management and the mailing industry and find the common ground needed to move legislation forward has been invaluable. We are grateful for his leadership, open-heartedness, and willingness to work with us to find opportunities that recognized the special connection between and advanced the mutual interests of the mail and mail carriers.”

—Rafe Morrissey, vice president of public affairs
Greeting Card Association

“Jim is truly Mr. Postal. It’s been a privilege working with him for the past 28 years on the many issues confronting our nation’s Postal Service. He was always unwavering in his commitment to the Service’s dedicated employees and the success of the organization.”

—Robert Taub, commissioner
Postal Regulatory Commission

“Jim was a consummate professional and brought

grace and outstanding policy acumen to the postal community (if you overlook his alma mater).”

—Michael Kubyanda, chairman
Postal Regulatory Commission

“Jim, it’s no exaggeration to say your work has improved the lives of millions. Generations of letter carriers and other postal workers, both here and abroad, and the public they all proudly serve, have benefited from your creativity and dedication to our movement and public postal services. Perhaps less importantly, but no less profoundly, you’ve also touched those of us who’ve had the privilege to work alongside you. Your guidance, generosity of time, and confidence in us have formed and inspired us all to be better trade unionists. You’ve been a brother and a friend. A working-class hero. That’s something to be.”

—Stephen DeMatteo,
former NALC research director and current executive assistant to the president, American Postal Workers Union

“I’ve had the honor of working with Jim, both as executive assistant to the UFCW international president and the AFL-CIO chief of staff. Jim is quite literally the best. His intellect, calm, understanding of the labor movement and passion for letter carriers is the gold standard. Whether it’s the complexities of navigating the federal government as an employer or the intricacies of bargaining for members or the role of letter carriers in defending our democracy, he is the expert. He is also a wonderful peer, thoughtful and supportive of those who, like himself, are dedicated to the strength and integrity of labor organizations in service to working families.”

—Christyne Neff, chief of staff, AFL-CIO

“Jim has been a pillar of UNI Global Union for so many years. ... An expert on postal policy, U.S. politics, planning a convention, good music and so much more. ... A real gem in our labor movement, who always puts the collective interests first, he is widely respected across the world for his insight, integrity and leadership. We will miss you, Jim—let’s hope that you have some time in your retirement for UNI!”

—Christy Hoffman, general secretary
UNI Global Union

All the heartfelt words above showcase how much Jim has affected the NALC, the postal community and his colleagues in the labor movement. His progressive, trade unionist heart will be missed, but thankfully he will be around to help guide NALC into a new era.

One last thing I’ll mention that Jim is right about—there is no such thing as “South Detroit.”

Thank you for everything, Jim. We wish you all the best.