

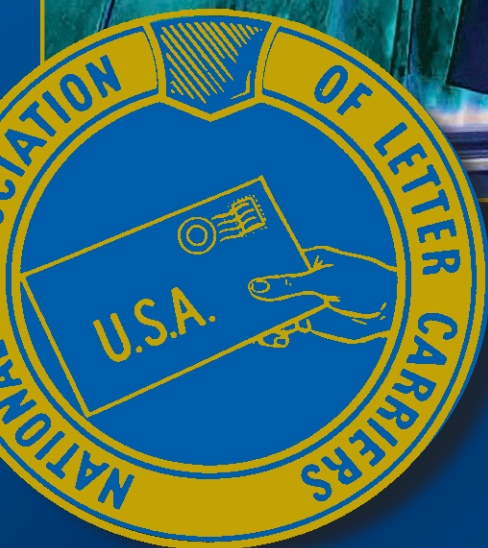


NALC President Brian L. Renfroe

sees challenges for new leadership team:

- crime
- staffing
- postal operations reorganization

Vows to work to protect letter carriers



After the Executive Council and AFL-CIO delegates were sworn in (opposite page), Brian L. Renfroe (above) delivered his first speech as NALC president.

On Saturday, Dec. 17, on an evening that served to close the book on one era and mark the beginning of another, Fredric Rolando performed his last act as president by leading new NALC President Brian L. Renfroe and the other 27 recently elected members of the union's Executive Council through the oath of office. Gathered in the ballroom of the Marriott Marquis Washington, DC in the nation's capital, the men and women chosen to direct NALC for the next four years recited the pledge as prescribed by the NALC Constitution:

"I do solemnly promise on my honor that I will faithfully execute the laws of the National Association of Letter Carriers. I will perform, to the best of my ability, the duties of the office to which I have been elected, guard all property placed in my charge and, at

the expiration of my term of office, turn the same over to my successor. I will do everything in my power to promote the welfare of the National Association of Letter Carriers and its members."

Secretary-Treasurer Nicole Rhine kicked off the evening event and served as the evening's master of ceremonies. She called on Lisa Hayden, administrator of the Mutual Benefit Association, to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" *a cappella*. Retired Vice President Lew Drass led the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by the Rev. Richard J. White, pastor of the St. Paul AUMP Church in Washington, DC, who led the invocation.

Representatives from dozens of NALC branches purchased tickets and attended the dinner ceremony. The crowd also contained friends, family and labor leaders who came out to support the union's Executive Council,



including Mark Dimondstein, president of the American Postal Workers Union, APWU Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell and AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, who offered her solidarity with Renfroe and the other members of the Executive Council.

“Tonight, we welcome the next generation of leaders who will carry on the incredible work of this union. I want to congratulate the NALC’s new president, Brian Renfroe,” she said. “I think Brian’s election says so much about where the labor movement is,” she said, pointing to his relative youth and to his being from Mississippi. “When I look at where so much of the energy and opportunity are for the labor movement right now, it is with young people and it is in the South. So, what a dynamic combination.”

After a pause in the ceremony to eat dinner, Secretary-Treasurer Rhine called Rolando to the podium. Before leading the Executive Council in the administration of the oath, Rolando

took a moment to say goodbye before performing his last duty as NALC president.

“Tonight is certainly not about me,” he noted. “One of the most important duties of someone in a leadership role is to do what? It’s to find and develop those who will replace you.

“I’ve had the privilege and opportunity to select, mentor and/or work with the women and men who I’m going to be installing tonight. On top of that, we have such a deep bench of letter carrier staff at Headquarters and at the regional offices behind them. And that’s what allows leaders to move on while maintaining the confidence that the union will remain strong and continue to grow.”

He then expressed his confidence in the Renfroe-Barner Team. Both President Renfroe and Executive Vice President Paul Barner spent time as President Rolando’s special executive assistants.

“Brian spent a couple of years as director of city delivery,” he said. “And

for the past six years, he’s been an amazing executive vice president. Brian is ready to lead, and this 28-member Executive Council is ready to face and conquer the challenges we face ahead. I’m so looking forward to watching them navigate, execute and succeed.”

“My sisters and brothers,” he concluded. “It’s been fun. It’s been an honor. Stay together and stay strong. I love you.”

Rolando then called forward the 10 resident national officers, three national trustee and 15 national business agents who make up the 28-member Executive Council. NALC’s seven elected AFL-CIO delegates were invited to the stage as well; only AFL-CIO delegate Lloyd Doucet was unable to attend.

After administering the oath of office, Rolando excused the other officers and called Renfroe to the podium to perform his first act as NALC president. Below is his speech in its entirety.

Thank you.

Thank you, brothers and sisters.
Thanks, Fred.

Good evening, brothers and sisters.

Tonight, I have a lot of people to congratulate and to thank—after which, I want to outline some of the serious challenges facing our union and its new Executive Council. As a native of Mississippi, I feel a little like a Southern minister about to give a sermon to a congregation that’s already thinking about the Sunday potluck to follow—so it’s probably best not to go on too long.

Adding strength to this wisdom are a few complicating factors: this “congregation” has already eaten; it’s

Saturday night, not Sunday morning; we’re in Washington, not Hattiesburg; and ... you’re all thinking about a party with music and alcohol, not a church potluck.

So I promise to do my best to keep this speech relatively short so that we can all head over to the holiday party and celebrate together.

I’ll start by offering my congratulations to all my sisters and brothers who just took the oath of office. It is a tremendous honor to be installed with each of you and to be part of the new Executive Council of our great union, the National Association of Letter Carriers.

We are a team, first and foremost. The members of the NALC have entrusted

us with the leadership of something very precious, their union. I know that every one of you share my commitment to work together every day for the best interests of America’s 290,000 city letter carriers, active and retired alike.

I also want to congratulate and thank the families and friends of our national officers. Union activism at any level is impossible without their love and support. The long hours, the travel, the phone calls from members at all hours of the day place a special burden on union representatives—but also on their families. We appreciate all of you for that.

I want to welcome our special guests—especially APWU President



Mark Dimondstein and Secretary-Treasurer Liz Powell. It means a great deal to us that you took the time to attend our installation. Our unions have a long and proud history of cooperation and solidarity—a history that has made each of our unions stronger. We all look forward to continue our work together.

I would also like to thank AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler for being here as well. I am excited to continue strengthening our bonds of union solidarity in the years to come.

I also want to offer a special welcome to my family members that are here with me tonight—my sister, Elizabeth Bracey, and her husband, Josh, from Hattiesburg, MS. They are here representing my mom and dad, who could not be here tonight in per-

son—though they are certainly here in spirit.

It's not just that my parents brought me into this world together—for which I am naturally grateful—but also because I probably would not have become a letter carrier if not for my father, Ken Renfroe. He started as a letter carrier three years before I was born and is a proud retired member of my branch—NALC Branch 938 in Hattiesburg, MS. (I've never asked him—but I hope my dad didn't get in trouble for giving me a ride in his Jeep when I was 2 years old!)

I grew up immersed in the issues facing letter carriers—because they affected my father and my family. I saw how hard my dad worked and how important the union was to all of us. I developed a deep appreciation of the value—and the values—of the NALC from a very early age.

When I became a letter carrier in 2004, I had the pleasure of occasionally working alongside my dad in the same station for a couple of years before he retired. I got involved in the union because I wanted to help the people I worked with every day. I'm thankful I was given the opportunity to serve as a shop steward and I'm thankful for every opportunity I've been given to serve our members since then. So on this wonderful evening, I wish to express the overwhelming sense of gratitude I feel toward my Branch, Region 8 and, most importantly, my dad and our family. Liz and Josh—thank you for being here with me tonight. Your presence makes this very special. I love you both.

I also have two huge mentors and friends I want to recognize tonight. First, of course, is Lew Drass—who led us in the Pledge of Allegiance earlier

this evening. I literally cannot thank Lew enough for the many opportunities he gave me to serve NALC over the years. He recognized my potential before I did—and then helped me (over and over) to develop as an advocate, a trainer, and as a union leader. As national business agent, Lew was an endless source of creativity and innovation in his approach to representation, organizing, fundraising for our political action fund, training and advocacy—and he mentored me all along the way. As a 20-something-year-old branch president, long late-night conversations with my national business agent about our union and my future motivated me to do all I could do to help our members—and it still does to this day.

Lew's effectiveness and success led him to Washington, where he rose to the vice presidency of the NALC—and became a beloved national leader. That love was evident every time he took the stage at a rap session, a convention ... or indeed, as we saw earlier tonight, at an installation ceremony—proven by a chorus of “Lewwws” each time. Thank you, Lew, for all you've done for NALC and for all you've done for me. I could never repay you for everything you've taught me, but I will repay it to those you always cared about and worked so hard for—our members.

Second, I want to express my love and appreciation for the 18th president of the NALC, Fred Rolando. We've had some great presidents over the history of this union, such as Bill Dougherty and NALC's greatest president, Vince Sombrotto. Fred Rolando belongs among these greats. Over the past 14 years, Fred has led us through recessions, three rounds of bargaining



AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler expressed her excitement to work with President Renfroe and all of the newly sworn-in NALC leaders.



Former Vice President Lew Drass

and a pandemic with steadiness, intelligence and sound judgment. All at a time when the Postal Service has been forced to transform itself in the face of dramatic technological change and repeated political attacks targeting the postal monopoly, six-day delivery and affordable universal service.

Through it all, he mobilized all our union's resources to make the best possible case for letter carriers in bargaining and in interest arbitration, while leading a broad coalition of political and legislative allies to fight back and to win. He leaves office with our union stronger than ever—financially, politically and organizationally.

For me personally, Fred has been an excellent mentor. In 2013, when I worked for Fred as an executive assistant to the president, he told me, *"You are going to have to do this job one day."* In the nearly 10 years since that time, he's prepared me for my new responsibilities by giving me the opportunity to serve as chief spokesperson in two rounds of bargaining, work with our management counterparts at USPS Headquarters on a daily basis to help our members and oversee our

organizing and political and legislative affairs activities. He has been diligent about teaching me all that he has learned over the years.

His work ethic and integrity are an inspiration to me and all the incoming members of the Executive Council. He has led by his good example and always with good humor.

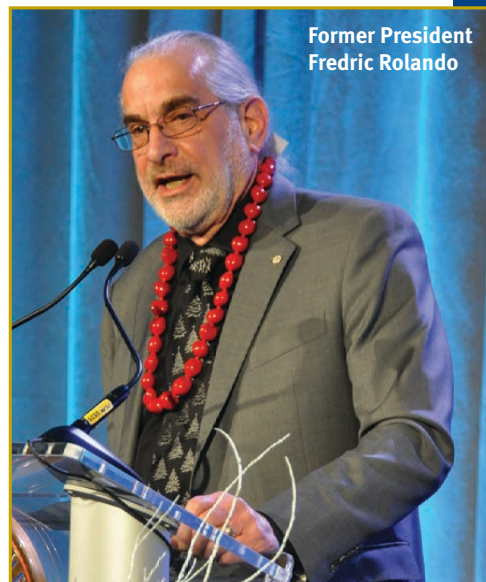
In fact, his sense of humor is his secret weapon—he knows that union work is serious business, but it can also be a lot of fun. From dressing up as Rocky to our Blues Brothers act a few months back in Chicago, our members have seen Fred's humorous side. In that spirit of fun, I do have one last bone to pick with Fred. On occasion, I have heard Fred referred to as the first NALC president from the South, which seems right at first. Not one of our predecessors were from the South—most came from all great labor towns of America—New York, Detroit, Boston and Philly, as you might expect. And Fred's home branch is in Sarasota, FL. So the claim seems to be true. But Fred is not really our first president from the South. He's a Yankee, through and through—and by that, I mean, a New York Yankee. Despite being born in Queens, his adult life in Florida might have qualified him as the NALC's first Southern president. But his refusal to shed his love for the hated New York Yankees makes that claim dubious at best. So, brothers and sisters, I humbly present myself as the real first NALC president from the South—born in Mississippi, and a diehard fan of America's team, the Atlanta Braves.

[Audience boos] That did not quite

work out like I planned!

In any case, brothers and sisters, Fred really did make it fun for NALC officers and staff to come to work. We will all miss him very much.

Thank you, Fred, my brother and my dear friend. I know you will always be here for us, and I am sure I will be able to rely on you for wisdom and advice as I take on my new responsibilities. And let me be the first to call you president emeritus of the NALC—I am



Former President Fredric Rolando

certain that the first general resolution to be adopted by the delegates to the 2024 Boston Convention will be one to give you that well-earned title.

Challenges

Let's turn to major challenges facing our union in the months and years to



come. We can begin by acknowledging that, despite our best efforts, the working conditions for letter carriers—in what we hope is post-pandemic America—are as difficult as we've seen since the creation of the Postal Service in 1970.

Over the past two rounds of collective bargaining, we've grappled with a staffing crisis that has progressively gotten worse. Massive turnover and staffing shortages, which are drivers of managerial abuse, excessive overtime, and unsafe working conditions—were huge problems even before the pandemic. COVID-19 made these problems even worse.

We've responded in two rounds of bargaining—by significantly raising CCA pay, accelerating the transition to career status, and establishing a variety of initiatives designed to improve CCA conditions and to reduce turnover. This approach has been met with limited success.

In the last several months, we've reached agreement with the Postal Service to move hundreds of installations around the country to an all-career model. This has resulted in some improved staffing in these locations. But it is not enough. We must phase out non-career employment in the city carrier craft and significantly raise starting pay to solve the staffing crisis. This is the goal we will take up in February, when our next round of bargaining begins.

But there are solutions we need even before contract talks begin. That's because a wave of crime against letter carriers has taken hold across the

country. Increasingly, our members are working in fear because so many of our brothers and sisters are being attacked on American streets by violent criminals. Just a week ago Friday, we lost a member named Aundre Cross in Milwaukee, WI. Aundre was shot and killed in a robbery while delivering mail after dark. He was just 41 years old and had 18 years on the job. He is survived by his wife and four children. It's heartbreaking and appalling.

Sadly, such robberies have become commonplace around the country. At our convention in Chicago, this was a huge subject of conversation. This violence against our members is UNACCEPTABLE. IT. MUST. BE. STOPPED.

[Moment of silence for Aundre]

Let us together make a commitment as a union to do all we can to make it stop.

Why is this violence happening? There was a time not too long ago that nobody would attack a letter carrier, an employee of the federal government and a greatly admired member of every community, even those ridden with crime. That has changed. We know that crime in general rose in America during the pandemic, and that carriers have been targeted by thieves who attempt to steal our keys with the hope of stealing mail. Protecting our members is and must be our No. 1 PRIORITY.

In fact, in recent weeks we have been working with postal management, the Postal Inspection Service and the Office of Inspector General to find ways to deter crime and violence against letter carriers. We have made it

crystal clear to all that are charged with protecting postal employees: *We need measures to protect our members now.*

Of course, as I mentioned earlier, we will seek lasting solutions to the staffing crisis when we begin work on a new National Agreement in 2023. Let me repeat what I said earlier: That means moving toward an all-career workforce and significantly raising starting pay. We will also fight to protect and improve all our members' standard of living. To achieve this goal, we will seek general wage increases and fight to preserve our cost-of-living adjustments, which has provided significant, though partial, protection against the surge in inflation we've suffered over the past two years. Another major topic in negotiations will be the Postal Service's plans to restructure its delivery operations. We recognize that the USPS is attempting to reorganize its delivery operations in response to a massive shift in the mix of mail over the past two decades—letter volume is down 50 percent and package volumes are up 300 percent over this period. And we know that our network of delivery facilities has been starved of investment. We welcome new investments, but the overall restructuring plan will only work if the NALC is part of the planning and execution of the effort. In this round of bargaining, we will demand to continue to have a seat at the table and increase our involvement to make sure we protect the interests and rights of the men and women we represent.

As in the past, preparations are well underway for bargaining. As part of



that process, we are also preparing for the possibility of binding interest arbitration, should we fail to reach a negotiated settlement. In the last contract, we ended up reaching a voluntary agreement after we started an interest arbitration. No matter which way the contract talks go, I can assure you that the NALC will be ready to deploy all of its resources to achieve a fair contract for our members.

As we bargain for better wages, we will continue to focus our legislative and political agendas in support of active and retired letter carriers. The 117th Congress was a huge success for the NALC and our allies. After more than a dozen years of sustained effort, we finally got Congress to enact postal reform legislation that both repealed the crushing mandate to pre-fund retiree health benefits and made six-day delivery the permanent law of the land.

We also made significant progress on building support on other key legislation—most notably, the Social Security Fairness Act to repeal the WEP and GPO provisions that discriminate against our CSRS retirees. That bill, which will be reintroduced in the next Congress, gained the support of a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives. The task now is to replicate that success in the U.S. Senate, a challenge we will seek to meet in the 118th Congress. At the same time, we will fight to improve future pensions by passing the Federal Retirement Fairness Act, which would allow former TEs and CCAs to buy pension credit for their non-career service.

We will also pursue new ways to strengthen the Postal Service on both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. In Congress, we will work on new ways to financially strengthen the Postal

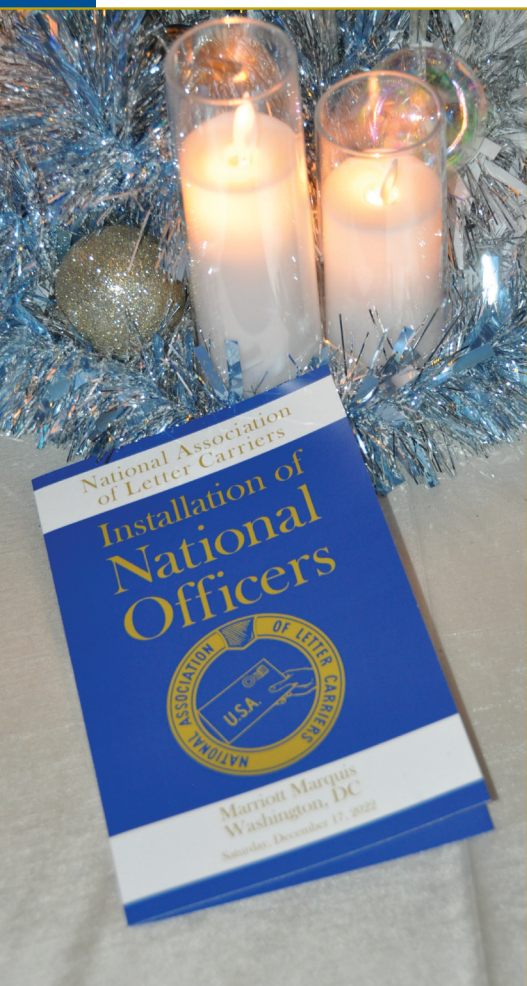
Service, such as permitting the Postal Service to better invest its hundreds of billions of dollars in CSRS and FERS pension assets. Under current law, we are forced to invest those funds in low-interest government bonds. Allowing a more-sensible-but-safe investment policy to invest in private securities would generate billions in savings for the Postal Service. That would reduce the cost of these pensions for both us and the agency. It is not a new idea, but it is one that needs to be executed with bipartisanship and precision to provide the greatest impact. At the same time, we will continue to press the Biden administration to take executive action to implement the recommendations of the Segal report, a 2012 Postal Regulatory Commission report that called on the Office of Personnel Management to accurately—and fairly—value the Postal Service’s pension assets and liabilities. This would save the Postal Service billions annually. And we will urge the White House to explore initiatives by federal agencies to better use the Postal Service to achieve their missions—providing jobs and revenues to postal workers, while improving government services to America’s households and businesses.

Our recent success on the legislative front has hinged on our ability to work with legislators in both parties and a broad coalition of allies to take advantage of the public’s overwhelming support for the Postal Service. This ability will be central to our success in the future. The just-concluded midterm election did narrowly shift control of the House of Representatives to the Republican Party, but the outlook for bipartisan support for the Postal Service remains positive. However, as

we’ve seen in the past, a divided Congress often leads to budget fights that threaten the health benefits and pensions of federal workers. We must—and we will—fight any misguided efforts to target federal and postal employees and retirees for unfair cuts. An-



other source of our success has been the strength of our political organizing and fundraising for the Letter Carrier Political Fund. The money we raise to support pro-letter carrier candidates in both parties—and to finance extensive get-out-the-vote efforts with our allies in the AFL-CIO—is essential to making our voices heard in Washington. In the recently concluded midterm election, we supported hundreds of candidates from both parties who showed support for our issues. Amazingly, 95 percent of the candidates we supported won their races—including 84 percent of the challengers.



In the years ahead, we aim to build on the recent success of LCPF. We will aggressively work to educate all NALC members on the importance of contributing to the PAC. I know our members always do the right thing, and I'm convinced that we have an opportunity to rapidly grow LCPF through education. This will allow us to amplify and expand our influence on debates that affect the wages, benefits and working conditions of letter carriers, as well as the health of the Postal Service.

It will also allow us to fight for other important legislation, including the PRO Act and other labor law reforms, as well as the John Lewis Voting Rights Act to expand vote-by-mail and strengthen American democracy. Both these bills are essential to improve the ability of unions to grow and to raise living standards for all workers across

America. They are also essential for the pursuit of economic and racial justice.

We will complement our pro-labor efforts in Congress with continued engagement, cooperation and solidarity actions with the broader labor movement. Of course, this starts with the other U.S. postal unions but also involves working with our allies in both our domestic and international federations—the AFL-CIO and UNI Post & Logistics. These bodies provide platforms to improve labor conditions universally. For example, NALC works with both federations to help workers employed by Amazon to organize, both nationally and internationally. We cannot, and must not, let Amazon's delivery operations set the labor market standards for our industry. Its non-union—and therefore powerless and low-paid—delivery workforce is a threat to every NALC member.

Another priority I want to highlight for the coming years is to build on the progress we have made in expanding the networks of NALC representation available to city letter carriers. These networks—which include regional workers' compensation assistants, regional grievance assistants, legislative and political organizers and, most recently, full-time advocates—are among President Rolando's greatest achievements. My administration will grow and strengthen these networks. We will embrace new technology to give our representatives the tools they need to better serve our members—and to educate our members about all the ways that NALC can help improve their working lives. We will also use technology to develop online learning and training programs to supplement our extensive in-person training capacity. Robust training is the key to

arming all NALC representatives with the knowledge and skills needed to best represent our members. We are committed to using all available tools to provide that education to those that have stepped up to represent letter carriers.

Expanding and improving the representation we give is the best way to maintain—and perhaps even improve on—our organizing success. Ninety-three percent of all active city letters are members of the NALC—and we intend to remain the best organized open-shop union in America!

A final priority I want to mention for the years to come is our continued commitment to defend the Postal Service itself—as a public service with affordable service for Americans, no matter where they live and how much money they have. We've always embraced a dual mandate—to fight for our members and for the public interest in a public post office. NALC and the other postal unions have been battling for decades against privatization and deregulation with great success. We will continue to do that in the future. In a few short years, we'll mark the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Post Office. We will celebrate:

- Ben Franklin's Post Office that delivered the Federalist Papers that helped create the U.S. Constitution;
- Montgomery Blair's Post Office that created city delivery in 1863 and helped reelect Abraham Lincoln in 1864 with an innovation called absentee voting—one that allowed hundreds of thousands of union soldiers to vote from the battlefields of the Civil War;



- John Wanamaker's Post Office that helped create a continental market economy with the invention of Parcel Post and mail-order catalogs;
- Louis DeJoy's Postal Service that helped America survive the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 by delivering essential goods to every American household and facilitating the highest-turnout election since 1900, thanks to vote-by-mail.

No matter who leads the Postal Service, no matter how visionary or how misguided they may be, NALC will be there to defend this great American institution. We will do that not only because it's in our members' best interests, but also because it supports the common good for all Americans.

Closing

I started my speech with a note of gratitude. Let me finish on a similar note by thanking the most important people in our union—the members we represent. They have been the key to our success for 133 years. There is no more powerful force in America than empowered solidarity. We have the force of empowered solidarity in the NALC, thanks to the unity and commitment of our 290,000 members. For that I am eternally grateful.

I am also tremendously thankful for the NALC—our union. In many ways, it has given my life meaning and purpose—as I am sure it has done for all of you.

Every day, NALC makes it possible to go to work and fight for the dignity

and rights of our members who deliver the mail—and for the dignity and security of the hard-earned benefits of our retired members who served this country so well, even as they built and improved a powerful union.

Every day, NALC gives us a platform to fight for racial and economic justice in the workplace, not just for letter carriers, but for all postal workers and all other workers here and abroad.

Every day, NALC gives us the capacity to join forces to protect one of America's greatest institutions—the United States Postal Service—a part of the social fabric in every American community and an indispensable

element of our economy and our democracy.

And every day, NALC makes it possible for men and women of every race and ethnicity from every corner of a gigantic country to embrace the power of solidarity and to fight for each other and for the common good.

For all these reasons, and many, many more, I am extremely proud and honored to be the 19th president of the National Association of Letter Carriers! Thank you very much!

Short biographies of each member of the Executive Council are on the pages that follow.



President

Brian L. Renfroe



Brian L. Renfroe was elected president by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022.

Renfroe, a second-generation letter carrier, began his career in 2004 in Hattiesburg, MS,

where he joined NALC as a member of Hattiesburg Branch 938. Just two years later, Renfroe was elected vice president of Branch 938. He also served as shop steward until 2008, the year his branch elected him president.

“As the son of a letter carrier, I grew up learning about the issues letter carriers have faced over the years,” he said. “At a young age, I had a deep appreciation for the hard work and sacrifice of the men and women of our union and its positive impact on my father’s job and my family. I quickly got involved in my branch because I felt a responsibility to do all that I could to keep moving forward and improving the jobs and lives of letter carriers. I still feel that responsibility.”

In addition, Renfroe served as a local business agent and arbitration advocate for NALC’s Region 8, which covers Mississippi, Alabama, Louisiana and Tennessee. Renfroe worked extensively on route adjustments in his home state and focused much of his time on training members at the branch, state and regional levels.

In 2011, the Mississippi State Association elected Renfroe its president. A few months later, NALC President Fredric Rolando appointed Renfroe to work at NALC Headquarters in the Contract Administration Unit, where he focused on city delivery issues. In 2013, Rolando appointed Renfroe as a special assistant to the president.

Renfroe was elected NALC director of city delivery in 2014 by acclamation during the union’s 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia. President Rolando had

appointed Renfroe to that position earlier in the year to fill a vacancy. In 2016, Rolando appointed Renfroe as executive vice president to fill a vacancy. He was elected to the position via mail balloting of NALC members in 2018.

Renfroe is a graduate of the NALC Leadership Academy, having attended Class 6 in 2008.

Executive Vice President

Paul Barner



Paul Barner was elected executive vice president in 2022 by mail balloting of NALC members.

A member of Roswell, GA Branch 4862, Barner began his

postal career in 1987. His service to the branch started in 1996 upon his election as a steward.

“The military taught me the importance of camaraderie and the strength that comes from solidarity,” Barner, an Army veteran, said. “After witnessing how many carriers were being mistreated, I felt a strong sense of duty to do what I could to support my fellow brothers and sisters.”

Barner served in multiple other roles in his branch, including on-the-job instructor, trustee, and safety and health committee recording secretary. His branch elected him treasurer in 2006. He also served in several roles for the Georgia State Association, including on the executive board.

Barner served as a local business agent, as a primary member of the dispute resolution team for Region 9 (Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina) and as an arbitration advocate. In 2012, he was appointed as regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 9.

In 2015, he was named to the position of special executive assistant

to the president working at NALC Headquarters, a position he held until his election as assistant secretary-treasurer. He was elected to the position in 2018 by mail balloting of NALC members.

Barner earned a bachelor’s degree in business administration from Georgia State University.

He graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2007.

“We as letter carriers must not settle for anything less than to be acknowledged, respected and valued by management for the service we provide to the public day in and day out,” Barner said. “The strength in our unity as NALC members provides the vehicle to achieve this end.”

Vice President

James D. Henry



James D. Henry of Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 was elected to the office of vice president by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

A Los Angeles native, Henry began his postal career as a letter carrier in Pomona, CA, in 1988. His path to becoming an NALC activist began that year, when he was unjustly disciplined and his branch came to his aid, resolving the case in his favor.

“Thereafter, I knew I couldn’t stand by and see letter carriers treated unfairly,” Henry said. “I became a shop steward, and my calling of representing letter carriers began.” His appointment as a steward came only six months after he joined the Postal Service.

In 1991, he was appointed as an area steward, and after completing advocate training in 1995, he became an arbitration advocate for Region 1 (California, Hawaii, Nevada and the territory of Guam). In 1998, Henry was appointed

to serve as one of NALC's first Step B representatives for the Step B pilot program, and again when the program was made permanent. He was elected vice president of Branch 1100 in 1999 and senior vice president in 2008.

Henry was appointed as a regional administrative assistant (RAA) for Region 1 in 2011. As an RAA, he oversaw six dispute resolution teams, conducted dozens of interventions, represented carriers during multiple unemployment hearings, negotiated thousands of pre-arbitration settlements, and presented more than 150 cases in arbitration. He also negotiated hundreds of local contracts. In 2015, he was selected as a facilitator/instructor for the Advanced Formal A and Beyond and arbitration advocate trainings.

Henry is a 22-year veteran of the Marine Corps. He and his wife, Janice, have three children.

"My guiding philosophy is 'the best ability is dependability,'" Henry said. "Sometimes we must have the courage to do the right thing, even if it is unpopular or difficult. I strive to live up to that in my work for letter carriers."

Secretary-Treasurer

Nicole R. Rhine



Nicole R. Rhine was reelected secretary-treasurer by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022.

Rhine, a member of Lincoln, NE Branch 8, became a member of NALC as soon

as she joined the letter carrier craft in 1992, regularly attending branch meetings and state conventions.

"I couldn't wait to become a member of the union," she said. "I learned at an early age what unions stood for and could accomplish because my mother worked at a packing plant and belonged to one."

At the branch level, Rhine served stints as assistant steward and stew-

ard. She was elected branch secretary in 1998, a role she held until her election as branch president in 2004. For three years starting in 1998, Rhine also was the Nebraska State Association of Letter Carriers' legislative representative, until her election as state association president in 2001.

Rhine was an arbitration advocate for Region 5 (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas) from 1999 to 2006. In 2006, she was appointed as a regional administrative assistant to fill a vacancy. Then, in 2009, she was appointed as national assistant secretary-treasurer to fill a vacancy and was elected assistant secretary-treasurer the next year at the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim. Rhine was elected secretary-treasurer by acclamation in 2014 at the union's 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia and was reelected by mail balloting of NALC members in 2018.

"It was my desire to educate letter carriers of their rights, and to defend them when those rights were violated, that inspired me to assume my other union roles over the years," she said.

Rhine holds a journalism degree from the University of Kansas.

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer

Mack I. Julion



Mack I. Julion was elected assistant secretary-treasurer by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Julion began his career as a letter carrier in

Chicago, IL, in 1997 and joined Branch 11. He served his branch as steward, sergeant-at-arms and branch auditor. In 2008, he was appointed to the post of regional administrative assistant for Region 3 (Illinois). The next year, Branch 11 elected Julion as branch president. He was reelected branch

president by the members in 2012, 2015 and by acclamation in 2018. Julion also is an arbitration advocate and intervention specialist.

He was appointed as a national trustee in May 2018 to fill a vacancy and was elected to the position by mail balloting of NALC members later that year. He held the position until his election as assistant secretary-treasurer.

Julion also is a member of the Chicago Federation of Labor's Executive Board and a delegate to the National Executive Board of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. In addition, Julion serves on the Chicago Amalgamated Bank Labor Council, University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) Labor Advisory Board and the Chicago local advisory board for United Way Emergency Food and Shelter Programs. He graduated from NALC Leadership Academy in 2006.

Julion cites the work and life of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as an inspiration to his own personal journey. "I believe we are all called to serve," he said. "My work in the labor movement is consistent with the core principles of my Christian faith and it is a continuation of Dr. King's fight for social justice."

Julion has an associate degree from Harold Washington College in Mental Health: Addiction Studies and has completed labor courses at UIC and the National Labor College. He is the father of six and resides in Westchester, IL, with his wife, Veronica, who also is a letter carrier.

As assistant secretary-treasurer, Julion said he is committed to working hard for NALC members. "I am excited about the opportunity to continue to serve our members and make the best possible decisions for the well-being and future of our great union," he said.

Director of City Delivery

Christopher Jackson

Christopher Jackson was reelected director of city delivery by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial



Convention in Chicago.

Jackson originally began his career with the U.S. Postal Service as a letter sorting machine operator clerk in 1981. He became a letter carrier in

1982 in Downey, CA, later transferring to Riverside, where he came under the guidance of Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100 officer Manuel L. Peralta Jr. His career defending letter carriers began when he became a shop steward in Riverside's Rubidoux Station.

"I would like to personally thank Manuel L. Peralta Jr. for the everlasting impression he left on me during the shop steward training class," Jackson said. "There, Manny said, 'Always remember we are here to represent letter carriers and to enforce the National Agreement, which our national officers have bargained for us.'"

Jackson served as an NALC Joint Route Inspection Team co-leader from 1993 through 2000 for San Diego District North, where he concurrently served on the Employee Involvement Local Joint Steering Committee and as NALC's delivery point sequence (DPS) coordinator. In 1999 he became an arbitration advocate. He also was an area steward through 2001. His other roles have included direct oversight of route inspection processes, serving as NALC team leader for Region 1.

In 2001, he became vice president of Branch 1100, serving until 2005 when he was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 1 (California, Hawaii, Nevada and the territory of Guam). He was elected national business agent for Region 1 by acclamation at the Biennial Convention in Anaheim in 2010. He was reelected to that post by acclamation in 2014 during the 69th Biennial NALC Convention in Philadelphia. Jackson was appointed director of city delivery in 2017 to fill a vacancy. He was elected to the position by mail balloting of NALC members in 2018.

"We, as leaders of NALC, must continue to bring in new talents to teach and educate them, to represent all letter carriers, to enforce the National Agreement and to be ready to step in as leaders of this great union," Jackson said.

Jackson is the proud father of two Cal State Fresno graduates—Krystina and Emmanuel.

Director of Safety and Health

Manuel L. Peralta Jr.



Manuel L. Peralta Jr. was reelected director of safety and health by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Peralta was hired as a letter carrier in 1979 at the Brookhurst Station in Anaheim, CA, and he quickly joined Garden Grove Branch 1100. In 1980, he was appointed as a shop steward, later also becoming a branch trustee. Until 1990, Peralta also served as an equal employment opportunity (EEO) representative, handling complaints through all steps, including formal hearings before the EEO Commission.

"I was inspired to become a union activist by a neighbor named Jim Linton, who was a truck driver and member of the Teamsters," Peralta said. "Jim had talked to me about unions and their value in our society since I was an 8-year-old. He helped me get my first union job before I came to the Postal Service, and it was because of his influence on me that I joined NALC the moment that I was able to do so."

In 1984, Region 1 National Business Agent (NBA) Brian Farris began assigning Peralta to present grievances before arbitrators. In 1985, Peralta became a Branch 1100 vice president; four years later, he became executive vice president. During this period, he also served as NALC co-chairman of

the Employee Involvement steering committee in Long Beach.

In 1990, Peralta was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 1, which covers California, Nevada, Hawaii and Guam. Peralta was elected Region 1 NBA by acclamation during the 2006 Biennial Convention in Las Vegas. He was elected director of safety and health by acclamation in 2010 during the 67th Biennial Convention in Anaheim. In 2014, Peralta was reelected by acclamation at the 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia. He was elected again by mail balloting of NALC members in 2018.

"From the beginning of my involvement with NALC," Peralta said, "I have worked to learn the contract, to learn what our members need, to learn how to put a good grievance file together, to learn how to present grievances through the steps of our procedures and then to learn how to best present our cases in front of arbitrators. My hope through the years has been—and continues to be—to teach these skills to others and to inspire others to get hooked on representing our members like I was inspired by all my union mentors."

Peralta attended California State University at Fullerton. He has been married to his wife, Gina, for more than 46 years. "I could not have dedicated myself to the demands of representing the membership without her total support," Peralta said. "She has raised my adult son Michael, my adult daughter Amy—and me."

Director of Retired Members

Dan Toth



The son of a letter carrier, Dan Toth was elected director of retired members by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022 and 2018. In 2005, he had

been named a regional administrative assistant for Region 11, which serves the letter carriers of Ohio and upstate New York. He was appointed in 2009 as the region's national business agent, then was elected to that position in a mail ballot in 2010 and reelected by acclamation in 2014 at the 69th Biennial Convention in Philadelphia.

Toth first became active in the defense of letter carriers when he took a shop steward position with Lorain, OH Branch 583 in 1984, and he has been working on behalf of his brother and sister letter carriers ever since.

"As a second-generation letter carrier, I remember how hard my father worked to make ends meet," Toth said. "During the late 1960s and into the 1970s, letter carriers like my father had to work numerous jobs to provide a solid middle-class quality of life. I decided from the onset of my career that I was going to make a difference in protecting and improving the wages and benefits that the NALC and its members fought to gain.

"From Day One, I was never intimidated by management," he said. "Routinely, I went toe-to-toe protecting the rights of letter carriers from overzealous managers."

Toth served Branch 583 as a local business agent and arbitration advocate, trustee and vice president, eventually rising to become branch president. He also served as director of education for the Ohio State Association of Letter Carriers.

"I was able to rise to the position of national business agent because the NALC dedicated resources to train me, along with mentors who took the time to provide support and knowledge to help me represent the members to the best of my ability," Toth said. "I recognize how important that was to me during my growth, and I want to pay that forward."

"Ultimately, I would like to see letter carriers continue to have a good wage-and-benefit package," Toth said, "a work environment free of bullying and harassment, and a fulfilling career that leads to the promised land—retirement!"

Toth studied industrial psychology at The Ohio State University. He and his wife, Nancy, have two adult sons: Russell and Matthew.

Director, Health Benefit Plan

Stephanie Stewart



Stephanie Stewart was elected director of health benefits by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022.

Stewart was hired as a letter carrier in 1995 for the Morgan Street

Station in Des Moines, IA, and quickly joined Central Iowa Merged Branch 352.

"I became involved as the shop steward because I couldn't sit by and watch management violate our contract and abuse letter carriers," she said. "I knew I had the ability to stand up and defend my co-workers, so I signed up and kept fighting anywhere I was needed."

She served Branch 352 as a shop steward, Formal A designee, safety captain, workers' compensation officer, trustee and vice president, and went on to become president in 2013. She also filled many roles at the request of the national business agent's office, including NALC co-leader for route inspections, District EAP committee member, District Safety Committee co-chairperson, Master Carrier Academy facilitator and arbitration advocate.

"The challenge of representing letter carriers through a variety of ways became my passion," Stewart said. "I was eager to learn and very fortunate to be surrounded by strong mentors who pushed me at every turn. I quickly realized we stay strong by leaning on each other and being proactive through ongoing education." Her desire to help letter carriers in new ways

led to her involvement as an officer with the Iowa State Association of Letter Carriers, where she served as vice president and director of education from 2011 to 2015.

In 2015, Stewart was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 5, serving Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas. She was appointed director of health benefits in 2018 to fill a vacancy, and she was elected to the post later that year by mail balloting of NALC members.

As director of health benefits, Stewart's goal is to educate members about our health benefit coverage and promote wellness and healthy living. "When our bodies are taxed by injury or illness, the physical and mental demands of being a letter carrier are even more challenging," she said. "If I can help lessen that burden, it must be a priority."

Director of Life Insurance

Jim Yates



Jim Yates was elected director of life insurance by mail balloting of NALC members in 2018 and again in 2022.

A Long Island, NY, native whose parents were postal employees

and union members, Yates began his letter carrier career in 1994 carrying mail as a part-time flexible in Glen Head, NY, and joined Long Island Merged Branch 6000.

"I grew up in a postal household where my father and sister were letter carriers and my mother a clerk. It was not only a postal household, but a union household—an NALC household," Yates said. "Because of this, I was drawn to become active in my branch as soon as I was hired as a letter carrier."

Yates began his union activism as

branch food drive coordinator and steward, then took on more than a dozen branch and regional roles, including trustee, arbitration advocate, health benefit representative and route adjustment team member. He was named a national field administrative assistant in 2013, a job that brought him to NALC Headquarters. Yates was appointed as assistant to the president for city delivery the next year.

In 2017, he was named assistant to the president for collective bargaining, communications and research, a job that included responsibilities such as support for negotiation of the 2016-2019 National Agreement between NALC and the Postal Service, which was ratified by the members in August 2017.

Yates graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2006. Before joining the Postal Service, he earned a degree in automotive engineering; in 2004, Yates graduated from the National Labor College with a B.A. in labor studies.

"Growing up, I heard about letter carrier and postal issues daily," Yates said. "I was ready to hit the ground running. All these years later, I am still focused on fighting for letter carriers."

Chairman, Board of Trustees

Larry Brown



Larry Brown was reelected trustee by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022, a position he had held for seven previous terms since 1994.

With nearly 30 years of experience as a national trustee to rely on, Brown continues his commitment "to serve the best interests of the letter carriers who have placed their confidence in me."

In 1998 he began serving as chairman of the three-member NALC Board of Trustees.

Brown has served as president of Los Angeles, CA Branch 24 since 1989. He began his union career as a shop steward at

Highland Park Station in 1973 and served in that capacity right up until his election as Branch 24 president. He also was the branch's Mutual Benefit Association representative from 1981 to 1989.

Brown credits his parents for his involvement in the labor movement. "Being raised by two parents involved in civic and church activities," he said, "the union was a natural extension of the leadership qualities and organizational techniques I learned at home."

A tireless community activist, Brown is vice president of the Los Angeles Federation of Labor and chairman of the Los Angeles Labor Community Services, AFL-CIO; and he sits on the advisory committee of the Los Angeles Trade Technical College.

Brown also plays a prominent leadership role in political affairs as NALC's congressional district liaison for California Rep. Maxine Waters (D-CA) and as an active member of the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee.

Along with safeguarding members' interests as a trustee, Brown says he also feels a duty to "always be working toward electing government representatives who best serve the needs of our membership."

Brown's wife, Carolyn, also is a letter carrier and a Branch 24 member. They have three daughters and a son.

Trustee

Sandy Laemmel



Detroit Branch 1 President Sandy Laemmel was elected trustee by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022.

Laemmel started as a letter carrier in 1976 and began her first

term as president of Branch 1 in 1997. Before her election as president, she served her branch as a steward and then was elected assistant secretary in 1986, secretary in 1988, and vice president in 1992. Laemmel also served as a local business agent and arbitration advocate.

Her activism with the Metropolitan Detroit AFL-CIO includes membership on its executive board. She was appointed as a trustee in 2021 to fill a vacancy.

Laemmel has served NALC in several other roles, including as a member of the national elections committee, a congressional district liaison, Scholarship Committee chairman, lead co-chairman of the Committee of Presidents and an NALC Disaster Relief Foundation board member.

Laemmel and her husband, John, have two children—John Jr. and Julie—and three grandchildren.

"As a letter carrier, I knew it was an honor to serve as Branch 1 president," Laemmel said. "Serving my peers brought an inner sense of fulfillment in my day's work. I know that serving the membership of this great union as a trustee will once again provide an opportunity to work for the members of this union and provide the seasoned leadership skills that I have learned along the way."

Trustee

Charlie Heege



New York, NY Branch 36 President Charlie Heege was elected trustee by mail balloting of NALC members in 2022.

Heege started as a letter carrier and member of

New York Branch 36 in 1979, working in the largest letter carrier station in the branch—FDR Station. There were close to 400 letter carriers working in this 24-hour station. Heege was not happy with the way management treated letter carriers, so he decided to run for shop steward and was elected in 1983. In 1987, Branch 36 President Arty Ullman appointed Heege as a hearing officer to handle the second step of the grievance procedure in several stations.

In 1992, Heege was elected Branch 36 executive vice president and served in this position for 15 years. In 2007, he

was elected Branch 36 president.

Heege was elected treasurer of the New York State Association of Letter Carriers in 2007. He also served as a delegate to the AFL-CIO from 1996 to 2022.

"I always look for ways to help letter carriers," Heege said, "and make their jobs safe and worthwhile."

Region 1

Keisha Lewis, National Business Agent



Keisha Lewis was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 1 (California, Hawaii, Nevada and the territory of Guam) by mail balloting of NALC members in the region in 2022.

Lewis began her career as a letter carrier in 1994, joining Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100. She became a shop steward in 2002 after seeing other carriers treated poorly. "I had a supervisor who picked on young female employees," she said. "This caused me to want to learn about my rights. I felt compelled to learn our contract to protect my co-workers, and I wanted to change the atmosphere on our workroom floor."

After serving her branch in several offices, including shop steward, area shop steward, executive council member, director of injury compensation and safety, third vice president, first senior vice president and executive vice president, Lewis became president of Branch 1100, the largest in the country, in 2020.

Lewis graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2011 and has been a co-instructor.

"The NALC has the ability to change how employees are treated on the workroom floor," Lewis said. "I will always be an advocate to better the conditions on the workroom floor and to enforce the contract. I look forward to working with the members of Region 1 and train and develop our future."

Region 2

Nick Vafiades, National Business Agent



Nick Vafiades was reelected national business agent (NBA) for Region 2 (Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Utah and Washington) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Conven-

tion in Chicago.

After serving in the Marine Corps for eight years, Vafiades joined the Postal Service as a letter carrier in 1996, delivering mail in Longview, WA, and soon joined Branch 2214.

With no union background, Vafiades learned the value of the union quickly.

"When I started my career, I was amazed at the way the carriers were treated—and coming fresh from the Marine Corps, that was saying something," he said. "I thought I could make a difference in the union. I had no idea what a shop steward's job entailed, but I ran anyway and was elected.

"I enjoyed carrying mail," he added, "but once I became active in the union, I found my passion."

Vafiades continued his union activism, serving as a local business agent, arbitration advocate and branch vice president before he was elected branch president. He graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2008. He was elected Washington State Association vice president in 2008 and state president in 2013, a position he held until his appointment as a regional administrative assistant for Region 2 in 2014. He was elected Region 2 NBA by mail balloting of NALC members in the region in 2018.

"My goal has always been to leave places better than you found them," he said. "For Region 2, that means using the talented, dedicated and motivated activists to the best of their ability and give everyone a chance to show their talents and what they can do. That will make the region better, but more importantly, the NALC stronger."

Vafiades has four children—Nicole, Jake, Jordan and Ivy.

Region 3

Michael Caref, National Business Agent



Michael Caref was reelected national business agent (NBA) for Region 3 (Illinois) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Caref grew up in a union household,

and he said that after he became a letter carrier in 1994, "it didn't take long to see why letter carriers have a need for a union."

He began his career as a union activist in 2000, serving for 10 years as a steward for Chicago's Ravenswood Station.

"My early activism centered around fighting unjust discipline (mine or co-workers') and other contractual violations," Caref said. "But I've since learned there is much more to our union."

Caref also served as the Illinois State Association of Letter Carriers' Muscular Dystrophy Association coordinator from 2001 to 2009, and he was a delegate-at-large from 2011 to 2013.

In addition, he has been an Employee Involvement team member and a member of the Joint District Safety Team. He has participated in all of the various route adjustment processes over the years, and he is an arbitration advocate. Caref also is a 2008 graduate of the NALC Leadership Academy.

Caref served from 2010 to 2014 as vice president of Chicago Branch 11 before first being elected NBA in 2014 following balloting held among his region's active and retired members.

"I will work tirelessly with the officers and members in the region to make NALC stronger and to better serve the letter carriers who make up this great union," he said.

Caref is the father of eight—Anthony, Alanis, Solstice, twins Cassius and Clay, Mya, Zuri and Noah.

Region 4

Dan Versluis, National Business Agent



Dan Versluis was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 4 (Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Oklahoma and Wyoming) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd

Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Versluis served in the Marine Corps from 1982 to 1990. In 1993, he joined the Postal Service as a letter carrier in Tucson, AZ, and joined Tucson Branch 704.

“Within the first few days of arriving at my first station, I saw the absolute need for the NALC,” he said. “I had never seen abuse the way I saw letter carriers being singled out, belittled and bullied by management. I felt compelled to get involved to help my brothers, sisters and local branch to combat the harsh treatment by many in management.”

Versluis served his branch as a steward, trustee and vice president before serving as branch president from 2002 to 2010 and again from 2016 to 2018. He also served the Arizona State Association as director of education, vice president and as an arbitration advocate. Versluis graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2007.

In 2010, Versluis was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 4, a position he held until 2016. He was elected Region 4 NBA by mail balloting of NALC members in the region in 2018.

“NALC is the only defense to ensure our rights, benefits and way of life for our families and loved ones,” Versluis said. “I firmly believe that without our union, the Postal Service would no longer exist.”

Region 5

David Teegarden, National Business Agent

David Teegarden was elected national



business agent (NBA) for Region 5 (Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Teegarden began his postal

career in 1989 as a part-time flexible, joining Kansas City, MO Branch 30. He was elected branch treasurer in 1999, branch vice president in 2004, and branch president in 2008. He served as branch president until 2015, when he was appointed as a regional workers' compensation assistant to support carriers in Region 5. In 2018, he was named as an RAA for the region. He was appointed Region 5 NBA in 2021 to fill a vacancy.

Teegarden also served his branch as a steward, route adjustment co-leader and arbitration advocate. He graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2011.

Having grown up in a union family—his father was a Teamster—Teegarden's union activism began before he joined NALC. He worked for several unions, including the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the Service Employees International Union, and the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union before becoming a letter carrier.

Teegarden's wife, Kelly, also is a letter carrier. They have two adult children, Tiffany and Andrew.

“I believe that it takes all of us, working together, to make a positive change whether on the workroom floor, at the bargaining table or enforcing the contract,” Teegarden said. “I look forward to working with letter carriers across Region 5 to train and develop branch and state activists to make those positive changes now and in the future.”

Region 6

David Mudd, National Business Agent

David Mudd was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 6 (Kentucky, Indiana and Michigan) by



acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Following 12 years in the Army and three as a postal clerk, Mudd began carrying the mail in 2003 and joined Louis-

ville, KY Branch 14. He has served as a compensation officer, route adjustment district lead, arbitration advocate and dispute resolution team member. He was named steward of the year for Region 6 in 2008 and he graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2010.

Mudd was elected as Branch 14's vice president in 2010. He served as the branch's executive vice president from 2013 to 2015, when he was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 6. He then was appointed as NBA in 2021 to fill a vacancy.

Mudd's wife, Anna, also is a letter carrier and works for NALC as a regional grievance assistant. They have three children—Taylor, Dalton and Taryn.

“It is a great honor to serve as the NBA for the K-I-M region,” Mudd said, “and I look forward to helping and leading the members of this great region to the best of my ability.”

Region 7

Patrick Johnson, National Business Agent



Patrick Johnson was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 7 (Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Con-

vention in Chicago.

Following 11 years in the Army, Johnson joined the Postal Service in 2005 as a letter carrier in Milwaukee, WI, and joined Milwaukee Branch 2. He became

a shop steward in 2006 before serving as a full-time Formal Step A representative in 2011. In 2014, Johnson became the lead Carrier Academy instructor in the Milwaukee installation. Johnson was appointed as Branch 2 Mutual Benefit Association representative in 2015 and was elected Branch 2 vice president in 2016. Johnson also served as an arbitration advocate.

In 2019, he was appointed as regional administrative assistant for Region 7, a post he held until his election as NBA.

Johnson graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2014.

Johnson emphasized that his focus would be to continue to strengthen the region through training and communication. "It is the responsibility of the regional office to provide training and support to branch and state leaders as well as provide effective communication to the membership throughout the region," he said.

Johnson has an associate's degree in general studies from Georgia Military College. He has a wife, Evonne, and is the father of five adult children—Chiana, Jared, Sencere, Israel and Christian.

Region 8

Steve Lissan, National Business Agent



Steve Lissan was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 8 (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Conven-

tion in Chicago.

Lissan, a member of Nashville, TN Branch 4, joined the Postal Service as a city carrier in Nashville in 1985, and soon became a shop steward. He served as dispute resolution team representative for the Tennessee District and then as an arbitration advocate for Region 8.

As arbitration advocate, Lissan was instrumental in winning settlements resulting in awards of several million

dollars, including an award in 2005 that involved a \$1.2 million contribution to the Postal Employees' Relief Fund to help postal employees affected by Hurricane Katrina.

Branch 4 elected Lissan as branch secretary in 2004. That year, he was appointed as regional administrative assistant for Region 8. In 2018, he was appointed Region 8 NBA to fill a vacancy and was elected by acclamation at the 71st Biennial Convention in Detroit the same year.

Lissan learned the value of unions from his father, a steelworker. "I believe in solidarity—it is a daily indebtedness we must have with each other," Lissan said. "I will do my part to ensure dignity and respect for letter carriers is recognized."

Region 9

Eddie Davidson, National Business Agent



Eddie Davidson was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 9 (Florida, Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina) by mail balloting of NALC members in the region in 2022.

During and after serving in the Army, Davidson worked in the Postal Service as a letter carrier beginning in 1992 as a casual, then as a transitional employee in Chapel Hill, NC. In 1994, he started his career as a letter carrier in Durham, NC, and joined Durham Branch 382.

Davidson has a solid and clear view of the union, having worked for 24 years in various positions from his local branch to the national level. Davidson began as a steward for Branch 382 in 1996, became branch vice president in 1998, and then president in 2000, where he remained for 17 years.

In 2004, Davidson became president of the North Carolina State Association of Letter Carriers and a North Carolina AFL-CIO vice president. He served as the North Carolina State Association president for 11 years.

He also served as an NALC co-chairman on the Greensboro District Safety and Health Committee, as well as the Greensboro District Lead for route adjustment processes (IARAP, MIARAP, JARAP and CDRAAP) and in other roles the NBA or national president asked him to take on.

He also served as an arbitration advocate and graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2007.

Davidson was appointed as a legislative and political organizer in 2017 and then as executive assistant to the president in 2018, a job he held until his election as NBA.

"I believe leadership is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their growth and always being able to put your ego to the side and open your ears and mind, so not only can you grow but everyone around can too," Davidson said. "We must remember always what one of my favorite quotes states: 'True leaders don't create followers, they create more leaders.'"

Davidson is married to Christina Vela Davidson, assistant to the president for community services, and has three children, Montana Shae', Mia Sky and Tre'.

Region 10

Shawn Boyd, National Business Agent



Shawn Boyd was elected national business agent for Region 10 (New Mexico and Texas) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention.

Boyd joined the Postal Service in 1997 as a letter carrier in Mesquite, TX, and joined Dallas Branch 132. In 1999, he transferred within the branch to his hometown of Sulphur Springs, TX, where he later became steward.

"When I transferred to Sulphur Springs, I worked with great letter carriers who were passionate about the NALC and unionism," he said. "A few years after arriving and getting

involved with my union brothers and sisters, I was targeted by an abusive supervisor. I was suspended without pay and the union successfully grieved the action. From that point forward I wanted to learn what I could do to help letter carriers. My local branch was critical in my growth, teaching me the basics of how to help others.”

Boyd served his branch as a steward, Formal Step A designee, trustee and editor. He also served the Texas State Association of Letter Carriers as a congressional district liaison, board member and treasurer. Boyd worked as a local business agent and NALC Headquarters advocate from 2008 to 2014. He has assisted the NALC vice president with arbitration advocate training since 2015.

In 2014, he was appointed as assistant to the president for contract administration, and in 2015 appointed as regional administrative assistant for Region 10. Boyd graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2007.

“The future of the NALC requires that we as members unite on issues that affect us more than ever,” Boyd said. “Preparing the next generation of new union activists across the country for the challenges ahead is essential for our continued success.”

He and his wife, Joyce, have two sons—Caleb, who works for the Department of Veterans Affairs, and Mason, who serves in the Army.

Region 11

Mark S. Camilli, National Business Agent



Mark S. Camilli was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 11 (upstate New York and Ohio) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

After serving in the Navy, including in Operation Desert Storm, Camilli began his career as a letter carrier in

Schenectady, NY, in 1997 and joined Northeastern New York Branch 358.

“Raised in a union household, I learned at an early age on how important the labor movement is for middle-class families,” he said. “When hired as a letter carrier in 1997, I immediately and proudly became a member of the NALC.”

As a union activist, Camilli’s many activities included serving as Formal A representative, local business agent and lead team member for route adjustments. Camilli also served as vice president of the Saratoga County Central Labor Council. He graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2007.

In 2009, he was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 11. He was elected NBA by acclamation at the 71st Biennial Convention in Detroit in 2018.

Camilli’s union experience taught him the value of political involvement for working men and women. “I then got hooked in political activism when I attended a local labor council event and listened to a local congressman thank the letter carriers for his successful election and his pledge to support us,” he said. “I quickly learned that educating elected officials combined with volunteering some time in get-out-the-vote efforts was a powerful tool.”

“By looking out for each other—by training and developing our current and next generation of activists—and only by working together,” he said, “we’ll keep the NALC the best union in the country.”

Camilli earned a degree in business management from Empire State College, State University of New York. He and his wife, Wendy, have three children—Mark Jr., Kyle and Rachel.

Region 12

Brian Thompson, National Business Agent

Brian Thompson was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 12 (Pennsylvania, South Jersey, and central New Jersey offices in Bordentown, Bricktown, Hopewell, Princeton,



Toms River and Trenton) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Thompson began his career as a carrier in 2004 after starting as a clerk in 1998. He

joined News Castle, PA, Branch 22 and served as secretary-treasurer and executive vice president before being elected president in 2010, a position he held until 2016. He also attended arbitration advocacy training in 2005 and has served as an arbitration advocate since that time. He was selected a NALC route adjustment team member district team lead for all the joint route adjustment processes from 2007 to 2016.

Thompson served on the Pennsylvania State Association executive board from 2012 to 2016. He participated in the NALC National Joint Task Force for Article 8, Route Adjustment, Workplace Environment and City Delivery in 2013.

He was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 12 in 2016, and then as NBA in 2020 to fill a vacancy.

Thompson grew up around the steel mill industries in Western Pennsylvania, where most of his family members worked as union steel workers in the steel mills. Before he became a career carrier, he started with the USPS in 1989 as a casual carrier and held transitional clerk and transitional city carrier positions. After seeing how the non-career workforce was treated, and experiencing it firsthand, he became involved in union representation as soon as he was hired as a part-time flexible clerk in 1998.

Thompson graduated from the NALC Leadership Academy in 2009.

Region 13

Vada Preston, National Business Agent

Vada Preston was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region



13 (Delaware, Washington, DC, Maryland, Virginia and West Virginia) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

Preston has been a letter carrier since 1986, having been hired following four years of active service in the Air Force and two years in the Air Force Reserves. He immediately joined Tidewater Virginia Branch 247 and became his branch's scribe; his duties included writing his branch's monthly Branch Items for *The Postal Record*.

In 1992, Preston became a shop steward, a role he served in for four years until his election as vice president of Branch 247. Following six years of service as vice president, he was elected branch president in 2002.

"Coming from a family history filled with union advocates," Preston said, "I became active in the union when it was obvious to me that carriers were not being treated fairly. I saw first-hand management's mistreatment and disrespect of letter carriers."

In addition to his branch office duties, Preston also has served as a backup dispute resolution team member. As a local business agent, he trained fellow members; as an arbitration advocate, he presented cases in arbitration.

"I thought I could make a difference by standing up for my fellow carriers and make a real contribution to improving the work environment," he said. "At that time, and to this day, I've focused on improving the workplace environment."

In 2005, he was appointed to be a regional administrative assistant for Region 13. In 2017, he was appointed as NBA to fill a vacancy, and he was elected NBA by acclamation at the national convention in Detroit the following year.

Preston has an associate's degree in business management and finance. He lives in Maryland. He is the father of two daughters and one son.

Region 14

Richard J. "Rick" DiCecca, National Business Agent



Richard J. "Rick" DiCecca was elected national business agent (NBA) for Region 14 (central and eastern Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire,

Rhode Island and Vermont) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

DiCecca began his letter carrier career at the Andover, MA, post office as a part-time flexible in 1984 and joined Massachusetts Northeast Merged Branch 25.

"I was raised in a union household," DiCecca said. "Whenever I started a job, the first thing my father told me to do was join the union. I took his words to heart."

DiCecca became a union activist immediately. "I met both the chief steward and alternate steward within five minutes. I had a contract in my hand within six, and a supervisor on my back within seven," he said.

It wasn't long before DiCecca became a steward. "It took a while for management to realize I was not going to bend the four corners of the contract for any reason. Once the members realized the strength we possessed as a group, things began to change," he added.

DiCecca held a number of positions in his branch, including director of education, before the branch elected him as vice president in 1989 and then executive vice president in 1994. In 1996, he was elected president of the Massachusetts State Association, serving until 1999, when he was appointed as a regional administrative assistant for Region 14. He was elected NBA by acclamation at the 2018 Biennial Convention in Detroit. DiCecca said his goals as NBA include boosting com-

munication, training, Letter Carrier Political Fund participation, organizing, "and most importantly, finding and mentoring the future leaders of Region 14."

DiCecca and his wife, Cathy, have three adult children—Caitlin, Shauna and Ricky.

Region 15

Bruce Didriksen, National Business Agent



Bruce Didriksen was elected national business agent for Region 15 (western Connecticut, northern New Jersey, New York, and the territories of Puerto Rico and the Virgin

Islands) by acclamation in 2022 at the 72nd Biennial Convention in Chicago.

After becoming a letter carrier, Didriksen joined NALC in November of 1971 and just three weeks later was elected president of his small branch, Park Ridge, NJ Branch 4282. He also served as an alternate steward. When his branch merged with Ridgewood, NJ Branch 991, he served as vice president until that branch merged with New Jersey Merged Branch 38, where he then served as first vice president until he was elected president of the branch in 1994.

In 2002, he was appointed a regional administrative assistant for Region 15.

Throughout his career, Didriksen served the union in other ways, including as branch newsletter editor, arbitration advocate and scholarship chairman. He graduated from the AFL-CIO Leadership Academy in 1977.

Didriksen has a son, Erik.

"The thing in my NALC career that I am actually proudest of is the role I played in Branch 991 prior to our merger with Branch 38," Didriksen said. "In a four-year period, we increased branch membership by about 1,500 through dozens of mergers."