

Resolve to be more active in your branch



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Every January, nearly everyone we know makes New Year's resolutions. We resolve to eat better, exercise more, get organized, spend less money and so on. Unfortunately, we often abandon our resolutions. I find that, in general, we lose our motivation both to get started and to see the resolutions through all the way. Adjusting and adapting to accommodate our new additional goals is vital. Including our families can help us stay motivated to accomplish our short- and long-term goals.

For those of you who are not deeply immersed in union functions, I want you to consider getting more involved this year. Consider attending all branch meetings and bringing someone along with you. Let that be one of your New Year's resolutions. We all have very valid reasons as to why our participation and involvement in union functions may not be as much as we desire. Often there are competing interests, such as our family priorities, long hours at work, exhaustion, etc. However, the world still spins, and the business of the union still must be conducted.

The business of the NALC is accomplished only by the involvement and participation of its members. You, the members, are the union! There has been a decline in branch meeting attendance for years now. Unfortunately, COVID-19 caused an even further decline, and we've yet to fully rebound. It is important to encourage one another to be resolute and steadfast in our activism.

When you're trying to change your behavior, one helpful tool is to set small targets that help you monitor your progress. Instead of approaching this year with "I will make every branch meeting and function," have a made-up mind to attend every general membership meeting and function in support by the union for that month. Then restart each month's goal over with the next month, and before you know it, you're quite active in the union. Looking back at what you've done reaffirms your commitment. If you're already committed, you'll want to make more progress when you look ahead.

I've found that the ideal scenario for getting involved is to have someone alongside you who wants to see you succeed in meeting your goals. I entered into the USPS di-

rectly out of active-duty military service for the Marine Corps where there wasn't a union. Therefore, when I became a letter carrier, I wasn't sufficiently aware of the importance of unions and the necessity of active involvement. As such, I wasn't inspired to attend branch meetings, become a shop steward or participate in branch functions, because I hadn't seen unions on television and had no common knowledge of them. So, when I was asked by my then-shop steward "Andy" Andranegian to accompany him to a union meeting, I was moved in a way I wouldn't have been otherwise. The

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comradery and sense of purpose and belonging manifested itself in a profound way. Ultimately, I not only made it a New Year's resolution, but a career resolution, to be an active member of the NALC. Now, I've even made it a life resolution.

Most, if not all of us, want to know what our union is doing for its members. How is it working to our advantage? What is the latest in contract negotiations? When will the Next Generation Delivery Vehicles arrive? And many other questions abound. A means to find the answers is to commit to participating in union functions and regularly attending branch meetings to be further informed. Information is the resolution to uncertainty!

*Happy
New Year*

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