

Meeting members where they are



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As I write this article, we are in a required 60-day mediation period in our contract negotiations with the Postal Service. Our current contract, which expired on May 22, remains in full force and effect until a new negotiated or arbitrated agreement takes effect. During this mediation period, negotiations continue, as they always do. Simultaneously, we are putting the final touches on our strong arbitration case, which has been in the works for months, in the event we decide to pursue interest arbitration.

Our round of negotiations for our last *National Agreement* made clear that our members wanted more insight and transparency into collective bargaining. The Executive Council and NALC Headquarters staff took this feedback seriously and have made it a priority to work together to meet our members' needs. During this round of collective bargaining, we made many enhancements to how we communicate about negotiations, including the creation of Rank-and-File Bargaining Committees, opening a collective-bargaining survey to all active members of the union, conducting membership polls, holding a day of action in conjunction with the opening of negotiations, publishing biweekly members-only updates during the bargaining period, hosting members-only video livestreams, and conducting a national collective-bargaining conference for branch and state leaders. The last two items on this list happened recently.

On May 22, I hosted a members-only livestream that focused on workroom rules that the Postal Service had proposed. Another members-only livestream followed on May 29, where I discussed the workroom rules proposed by NALC. The following week, 250 branch and state association presidents, or their designees, gathered in Washington, DC, for our first-ever NALC Collective-Bargaining Conference.

The conference was two full days of lengthy discussions about where we are in collective bargaining, economic and workroom rule updates, and our potential case in interest arbitration. The mics were open to all participants

during both full days, and we received thoughtful questions and ideas from branch and state representatives from across the country.

The way we are expanding our communications and member involvement in bargaining during this round of negotiations is just one of the numerous ways we continue working on reaching our members where they are.

While this magazine continues to thrive and win awards year after year, we know that we don't reach all our members through it. We've expanded our content on social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, X, BlueSky, Threads and YouTube to inform our members wherever they are. In recent years, we have produced more short-form videos than ever before, both to educate our members with contractual information as well as to explain our impact to the public.

Just like our jobs have changed in recent years, so have the ways we communicate. That's why we're working to constantly adapt and meet our members where they are in our evolving digital landscape.

An excellent example of this is the recent launch of NALC University, a new online learning system for training union representatives and members across the country. NALCU gives union representatives and members nationwide access to trainings on their own time and their own pace. Even better, these video courses are taught by real letter carriers who do this work every single day.

New modules will regularly be added to the platform, continuing to expand NALCU's training offerings. A well-informed union is a stronger union. I encourage all our members to take advantage of this resource and see what NALCU has to offer you. More information about NALCU is available on page 5.

Expanding our educational opportunities and communication methods never ends. As we gather next month in Los Angeles for our national convention, we will livestream the union's convention business for the first time ever. This will give our members real-time access into the business of the convention, which will chart the course of our union's efforts for the next two years. Leading up to the convention, check nalc.org for more information about the livestream.

Continuing to find new and unique ways to engage and educate our members remains a top priority as we work toward our collective goal of improving the working lives and retirements of every city letter carrier.