

Delivering more than the mail to our communities



Brian L. Renfroe

NALC is always fighting for our members. Whether it's the continued fight for the fair contract we deserve, or fighting to preserve our retirement benefits, or keeping our members safe on the job, or for maintaining an independent Postal Service that secures our jobs and retirements, we have a long list of battles. While we're focused on delivering results in all these arenas, our members are actively fighting for their communities by giving back.

I'd like to focus this month's article on that inspiring fight, which was on full display last month as letter carriers

stepped up and went the extra mile for their communities during the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. While the final totals are still being calculated, it's clear that this year's food drive was another massive success. More than 1,000 branches, with members from every state, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, participated in this year's efforts to restock America's food banks on the second Saturday in May.

The food drive shows the strength of our union in countless ways. When our members are given the opportunity to lend a hand, they always do. That's what we see year after year. Letter carriers, who already carry heavy loads, take on even more that day, all for the greater good.

The food drive is also a reminder of the power of our unmatched universal network. Its impact is so widespread because of our members, who go door to door at every home and business in the country every day. No other organization could do this, because there's no other network like this.

But the food drive's primary success comes from the people. From the letter carriers who collect donations, to the NALC food drive coordinators who help get the word out, to the community volunteers who help sort food, to the customers who leave donations, it takes everyone working together to make the food drive successful year after year.

We're fortunate to have a long list of partner organizations that support our efforts, and in the last several years, we've focused on making the food drive a labor-led

event. I am proud to say that the food drive now has more support from our fellow unions than ever before—and it's more than monetary support. Seeing photos come in of our union brothers and sisters across crafts and trades helping sort food is the true example of what our union, and the entire labor movement, is all about.

Many letter carriers will remember that, for health and safety reasons during the pandemic in 2020 and 2021, we were forced to cancel the in-person food drive. Since then, I've been extremely impressed with our food drive coordinators' determination to come back stronger than ever. Along with the traditional food drive postcards, our members continue using creative ways to get the word out to their communities. From posters at local businesses to media outreach and social media posts, it's clear that our members are as committed as ever to the food drive's continued success.

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Last month's in-person food drive was just the latest in our union's fight to end hunger in America. Last fall, during the longest government shutdown in history, NALC launched a Shut Down Hunger initiative to raise monetary donations for food banks across the country. In just a few months, NALC branches and state associations raised more than \$263,000. With NALC Headquarters' match, more than \$526,000 was donated to food banks across the country. That comes out to more than 5 million meals for those in need.

Our work as letter carriers provides immeasurable contributions to our country. On an average day, we deliver lifesaving medication, sensitive documents, ballots, heartfelt cards, essential packages, and so much more. But our contributions outside our daily work are just as impactful. Whether it's the annual food drive, our members stepping in to save someone in distress while on their routes, or fundraisers for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, the ways our members show up for each other and their communities are what make me proud to be a letter carrier and a member of our great union. As we continue to work every day to improve the working lives and retirements of letter carriers, I hope you feel that sense of pride in being an NALC member.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian L. Renfroe'.