

# Some training opportunities in 2019



**Lew  
Drass**

**M**any of you will assume new roles in your branch after the installation of officers ceremony takes place. As a result, some of you will take on a more active role in processing grievances. You, as well as many others who already do this work, may be interested in an opportunity to sharpen your skills. Here is an opportunity to do just that.

## Advanced Formal A and Beyond

**We held two classes in 2018. We** have now held eight classes since we started the program in 2016. According to the 622 participants who have attended, this training is a really good product. Every single participant who attended thus far has said he or she would recommend it to others.

At present, we plan to offer two classes this year. We are asking that you discuss this issue within your branch now and submit your applications by the end of March. We will send a letter and some applications to every branch in the country to arrive in time to give you the opportunity to discuss this issue at your January or February meeting.

The dates for the two scheduled Advanced Formal A and Beyond training sessions are Sept. 29-Oct. 4 and Nov. 3-8. These two training opportunities will be held at the Maritime Institute in Linthicum Heights, MD, which is five minutes from Thurgood Marshall Baltimore-Washington International (BWI) airport.

The total cost of food and lodging to attend an Advanced Formal A and Beyond training session in 2019 will be \$1,202.20 (single occupancy) and \$1,799.85 (double occupancy). This is for five nights at \$240.44 (single occupancy) or \$359.97 (double occupancy) per day. This rate includes your room and tax, all meals and refreshments during breaks each day for five days. We will supply all the materials you will need.

We have made adjustments to this training program based on suggestions from participants and our own observations. One such suggestion we implemented was to offer an optional additional day of hands-on computer training for those who need/want to take advantage of it. This option drew high praise from more than 75 participants who attended the extra day of training last year. We will offer the extra day of hands-on computer training again this year as an available option.

The extra day of computer training will take place on Saturday afternoon/evening and Sunday morning on the front

end of each session. This is a good opportunity for those of you who want/need to learn more about using a computer. While it does incur the cost of an additional night's stay (\$240.44 single occupancy or \$359.97 double occupancy) for your branch as mentioned above, past participants report that it is well worth the additional cost.

Each Advanced Formal A and Beyond training session class has 80 participants, so we have a total of 160 spots open for 2019 at present. Participants are selected from the applications we receive on a first-come, first-served basis. We have already received some applications, but there are plenty of spots open in each. However, if you have an interest in attending, I would advise you to get your application in as soon as possible.

Applications will be sent with the letter to your branch. They also are available on the NALC website. Go to [nalc.org/AdvancedFormalA](http://nalc.org/AdvancedFormalA). You will be directed to information about the training; and there are two links to the application that include the qualifications needed to attend. One is a fillable version and the other can be printed and filled out by hand. Either way, please complete the application and mail it back to me at: Lew Drass, c/o NALC, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144

This program is intense, rewarding and a great investment in your branch's current and future efforts to provide the best possible representation for its letter carriers. If you are going to attend, you should plan to work hard all week, but you will get a lot out of it. I am looking forward to seeing many of you in our sessions.

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## Arbitration Advocate training program

**We also will be offering two arbitration advocate training** classes this year. The first class will be from Feb. 24 to March 2. The participants for that class already have been selected. However, we are offering a second class Nov. 17-23. One of the requirements to be selected for this training opportunity is to have some experience serving as a witness and/or a technical assistant (TA) in at least a few arbitration hearings. If you are interested in becoming an arbitration advocate, apply through your national business agent's office. Once again, recommendations for participants will be submitted by the NBAs.

**In closing, I wish all of you and your families a happy New Year!**