

Branch COLCPE coordinators nationwide are buckling down to increase branch-level, automatic Gimme 5 contributions to NALC's political action committee—the focus of this year's COLCPE contest that will end with seven individual \$1,000 winners.

Top prizes will go to lucky members who make regular contributions to the bi-partisan Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education. To qualify for the prize drawings, branches must lead their size category in the percentage of members regularly contributing at the Gimme 5 level or higher as of December 31.

The five categories are 50 to 99 members, 100 to 499 members, 500 to 999 members, 1,000 to 1,999 members, and 2,000 members or more. The campaign seeks contributions of \$5 per pay period or more from active carriers via regular payroll deduction or electronic funds transfer. Retirees qualify by donating \$5 or more per annuity payment or by EFT.

At year's end, the top branches in each category will qualify to hold a raffle for a \$1,000 American Express gift card for one of the branch's donors. A sixth raffle will be held to select one winner from all donors in branches with 49 or fewer members. A seventh gift card will go to a contributor from the branch recording the greatest percentage increase in Gimme 5 donors.

Time to 'get a ladder'

Each branch with 50 or more members should have a designated COLCPE coordinator, a position created when President Bill Young launched the Gimme 5 campaign three years ago, and many smaller branches should also have coordinators. Over the next few months, *The Postal Record* will pass along ideas from some successful coordinators.

Jason F. Freehauf, coordinator for 160-member Fargo-West Fargo, North Dakota Branch 205, said 50 percent of his branch already is signed up as automatic contributors—an astonishing record, and one that makes increasing the number of contributors difficult.

"We've picked the low-hanging fruit and now we need a ladder for the other half. I pick a couple of names each month and work on those," he said.

Freehauf cites two tactics as keys to success. First, "we try to sign new hires immediately, not only as NALC members but as COLCPE contributors, too. We let them know that this is what our members do in Branch 205."

He also makes the fund-raising campaign "a team effort."

"Sure, you're the coordinator, but it's a tough job and you can't do it on your own," Freehauf said. "You need all the help you can get. Consider it 'COLCPE by Committee!'"

In Austin, Texas, COLCPE Coordinator Les Doss relies on persistence—he never passes up a chance to promote the PAC at functions of his 1,000-plus member Branch 181.

"At every branch meeting, every retirees' meeting and any other occasion I get a chance, I talk about COLCPE," said Doss, who is retired. "The message is simple. The reason that every member should contribute is the power it gives to our legislative personnel in Washington to protect their jobs and their retirement benefits."

"Some carriers apparently believe that they will always have a job with the USPS and actually feel immune to any downsizing," Doss said. "They're wrong, but I don't give up on them. We need every carrier on board to make COLCPE work."

Rounding up new donors is time-consuming, so Doss—much like Branch 205's Freehauf—picked three other members to serve as a COLCPE Committee. "That reduced the load and got more people directly involved," he said.

In addition to the individual winners, there are other prizes, including laptop computers for the top five branches and \$200 gift cards for the COLCPE coordinators in each winning branch.

Full contest details are in the March *Postal Record*, available at nalc.org under "News." Also, visit the website to check on how your branch is doing. Winners will be highlighted in the February 2010 COLCPE issue. ✉

Note: Contributions to COLCPE are 100 percent voluntary and are not tax-deductible. Absolutely no NALC dues money is used to support political candidates.

COLCPE coordinators concentrate on contest



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