



SIX NALC MEMBERS TAPPED AS 2009 HEROES OF THE YEAR

Six letter carriers have been selected as particularly shining examples of the heroism and devotion demonstrated by NALC members all across the country, both on and off duty, and will be honored as 2009 Heroes of the Year.

NALC President Fredric V. Rolando announced the names of the winners, who were picked by a panel of independent judges, and invited them to a special luncheon and awards ceremony in Washington, DC, on September 24.

“Our members deliver America’s mail with their eyes open and their ears tuned to what’s going on in every community,” Rolando said. “On top of the Proud to Serve stories printed in *The Postal*

Record, I’m sure there are hundreds, probably thousands, more examples of bravery and kindness that never make it to the magazine, because, as so many letter carriers say, ‘It’s just part of the job.’”

Selected as the 2009 National Hero of the Year was Harrisburg, Pennsylvania Branch 500 letter carrier **Tim Foote**.

Foote had settled in for an evening of football on TV when his daughter began shouting that their neighbor’s house was on fire. A former fire company captain, Foote—shoeless and wearing only a hooded sweatshirt and a pair of gym shorts—dashed to the burning home, forced his way in through the garage and dropped low to get below the smoke. Crawling around inside, he spotted his unconscious 78-year-old neighbor on the living room floor and managed to drag the elderly man outside before the fire department arrived.

The judges chose Ghana native and New Jersey Merged Branch 38 member **Emmanuel Anim-Sackey** as the 2009 Humanitarian of the Year. When he’s not delivering the mail, Anim-Sackey likes to search thrift stores and yard sales for school supplies, clothes and toys to send to his poverty-stricken home village in central Africa. When Anim-Sackey’s West Orange patrons—including the mayor—caught wind his actions, they quickly got in on the act, helping him gather supplies to fill a 20-foot shipping container, as well as the funds to send both the cargo and letter carrier to Ghana to personally distribute the goods.

The judges (from l) are Jordan “Bud” Biscardo, Richard Bowers and Shelby Hallmark.



The three judges who selected this year's honorees after reviewing scores of Proud to Serve stories were Director Shelby Hallmark from the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs, Chief Richard Bowers from Montgomery County, Maryland's Department of Fire and Rescue Service, and Jordan "Bud" Biscardo, AFL-CIO Community Services liaison at the United Way of America.

They singled out four other NALC members for recognition:

Western Region Hero of the Year: While delivering her route, **Victoria Wells** spotted flames coming from under a house's roof—a home she knew served as a day care facility. The Seattle, Washington Branch 79 member called 911 to report the fire while she raced to the back door. Inside, she discovered 10 youngsters, all sound asleep for a mid-day nap. Wells woke the children and quickly herded them outside just as police and fire fighters arrived.

Central Region Hero of the Year: Having just witnessed a three-car pile-up, Rockford, Illinois Branch 245 letter carrier **Matthew Polnow** immediately began checking for injuries. The occupants in the first two vehicles were OK. The third was a handicapped-transport van, which was starting to burn as Polnow reached it. The van's driver, who had escaped the wreckage, told the letter carrier a wheelchair-bound person was still trapped inside. Polnow worked his way into the smoke-filled vehicle,

freed the wheelchair from its restrains, and pulled it and its terrified occupant to safety.

Eastern Region Hero of the Year: James Patrick was delivering mail when he saw smoke and fire coming from the top of a church and rectory on his route. The Johnstown, Pennsylvania Branch 451 member called out for someone to call 911 as he dashed inside the burning structure, where he found both the pastor and church secretary unaware of the danger above them. Patrick managed to help the pair escape the blaze before the fire department arrived.

Special Carrier Alert Rescue Award: Virginia Beach, Virginia Branch 2819 member **James Brown** found a group of elderly men and women milling around on Betty and Horace Hill's porch when he arrived to deliver the mail. Inside, Betty was calling for help, having fallen and injured herself. Her husband, a stroke victim, could offer no assistance and the door was locked. Brown climbed through a kitchen window, called 911 for medical aid and then notified the Hills' son.

In addition to the honorees and members of their families, NALC's national officers will attend the awards ceremony. Representatives from NALC's sister postal unions, organized labor, Congress and the Postal Service also have been invited. Coverage of that event will appear in a future issue of *The Postal Record*. ✉

HEROES OF THE YEAR 2009

Courageous and compassionate carriers