

**Biennial Report
2022-2024**

GROW. RISE. TOGETHER.



**President
Brian L. Renfroe**

This report is hereby submitted to the officers and delegates to the 73rd Biennial Convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers, AFL-CIO, Boston, MA, Aug. 5-9, 2024, pursuant to Article 9, Section 1(k) of the *Constitution of the National Association of Letter Carriers*.

Detailed information pertaining to many of the National Association of Letter Carriers' most important activities can be found in the following pages and in the reports of my fellow officers. I am grateful for their efforts in fulfilling their responsibilities with diligence and competence. My role has been to coordinate and supervise their activities, set an overall direction for this great union and, in a number of key areas, provide direct, active and assertive leadership in the best interests of the members of the NALC and, where appropriate, the U.S. Postal Service as well.

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

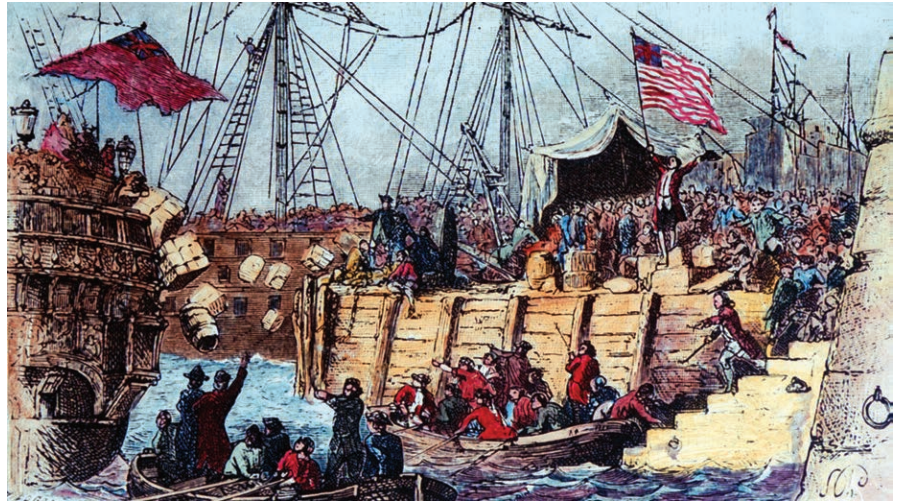
Executive summary

Welcome to the 73rd convention of the National Association of Letter Carriers. We have the privilege of meeting in cities with incredible labor history all over the country each convention, but Boston is the site of three important firsts in our history: the location of the first post office in what would eventually become the United States; the city of origin of our beloved national publication, *The Postal Record*; and the location of the first NALC convention after our founding in 1889. A lot has changed in the years since, but, at its core, the city represents our country's legacy of Americans joining together to fight for a better life.

Boston is, of course, known as the birthplace of the American Revolution. We all know the story of the Boston Tea Party, where American colonists protested British taxation by dumping more than 300 chests of tea into Boston Harbor, and the legend of Paul Revere's famous midnight ride to alert Minutemen in surrounding towns that the British Army was approaching, leading to the battles of Lexington and Concord.

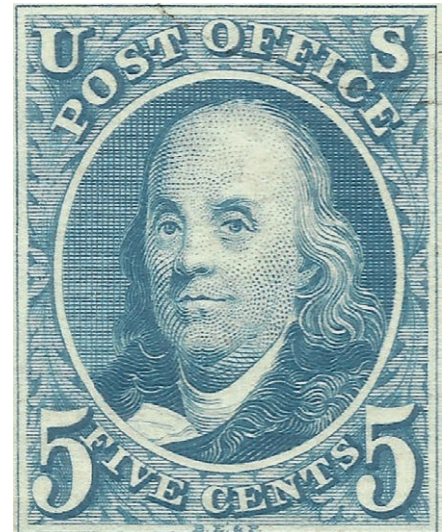
But, more than a century before the start of the American Revolution, a Boston tavern owned by Richard Fairbanks was designated the British colonies' first post office. On Nov. 6, 1639, the Massachusetts General Court named Fairbanks's tavern as a post office for letters coming into or going out of the colony to overseas posts. The tavern no longer exists (it was located at the current site of the *Boston Globe* building), but nearly four centuries later, our country's postal system is still a vibrant and important part of daily life. In fact, next year we will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the official creation of the Post Office of the United States at the Second Continental Congress.

Boston is also the birthplace of *The Postal Record* and the site of the very first NALC convention, held



in 1890. A year before, a group of 60 letter carriers from across the country had come together in Milwaukee to discuss what they could accomplish by banding together, and unanimously passed a resolution to establish the NALC. Around the same time, the New York Letter Carriers Association had also formed, but the two groups found they did not share the same philosophies. A primary issue both associations organized around was the eight-hour workday, which was also an intense nationwide movement that involved an enormous number of workers in addition to letter carriers. One month before the first planned NALC convention, the two groups resolved to put aside their differences and merged their organizations into one, declaring, "We should be co-laborers in a common cause." It was with this spirit that 68 letter carriers attended the first NALC convention in August 1890.

Boston carriers had already proven their dedication to the common cause, as a letter carrier by the name of Alvin G. Brown had begun a publication called *The Postal Record* in 1887, which recounted the concerns of letter carriers, but also carried material of interest to all postal workers. The journal was later purchased by an NALC national officer, who built up its subscribership while he held



Top: The Boston Tea Party
Above: Benjamin Franklin



office. By the first NALC convention, the union encompassed 52 branches and represented 4,600 carriers. Each subsequent issue of *The Postal Record* documented steady growth in the number of branches, as the NALC reached into every region and every state—anywhere letter carriers were delivering mail.

That Boston seemed an appropriate setting for this first meeting is not a surprise, given the region’s legacy of resistance. In the 1830s, half a century before the better-known mass movements for workers’ rights in the United States, mill workers in Lowell, MA, organized, went on strike and mobilized in politics when women couldn’t even vote—and created the first union of working women in American history. Also in the 1830s, Boston became the center of the abolitionist movement with the founding of *The Liberator* newsletter, which advocated for the “immediate and complete emancipation of all slaves.”

That legacy has continued in the years since that first NALC convention. In 1919, 20,000 textile workers in Lawrence, MA, struck against a cut in pay, stopping nearly all production in the city. The strike depended on the solidarity of diverse workers, as it united people of more than 51 nationalities. Remembered as the Bread and Roses Strike, workers sought both fair wages and dignified working conditions. This strike has become a source of inspiration for the labor movement, as labor activists today still quote a poem written about the strike, reciting, “Hearts starve as well as bodies; give us bread, but give us roses!”

It is with this same goal—for both wages and dignity, bread and roses—that NALC delegates have continued to convene in Boston over

the years. In 1968, delegates met for the last time without the right to full collective bargaining. The wildcat postal strike in 1970 would mean that by the time the delegates next met, NALC had won the right to bargain over wages for the first time under the Postal Reorganization Act.

In 2008, delegates grappled with the grim realities of the early stages of the Great Recession. The country had just experienced the biggest jump in unemployment in more than 20 years and millions of Americans, including some NALC members, were losing their homes in the wake of a historic collapse of the mortgage market. Mail volume had begun its secular decline a few years before, but we had yet to understand the deep and lasting impact the recession would have on the Postal Service—or the negative impact of the pre-funding mandate in the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act, which had just become law in 2006. But there was hope. The delegates voted to endorse Barack Obama for president and, as we now know, he helped the country navigate financial recovery.

This year marks the fourth time we have met in Boston for an NALC convention. We gather here to carry on the work of the Lowell mill girls, the Lawrence textile workers, and NALC’s original organizers to advance the cause of worker rights and solidarity. We will meet the challenges ahead, just as our predecessors did. Welcome to Boston, siblings. Bread and roses!

Time since Chicago

Our time in Chicago was one of celebration and pride. We had a lot to celebrate: We were finally gathering together after four years, with the COVID-19 pandemic requiring us to cancel our 2020 convention, and exercising an abundance of caution in 2022 in Chicago as vaccines and masks were ushering us out of the pandemic.



The Bread and Roses Strike

Despite the challenges of Covid, we have a lot to be proud of: Essential workers had carried our country through some of its most vulnerable moments. As essential workers, letter carriers played a hugely important role during that time, delivering vital goods to a country in lockdown, and delivering ballots and democracy during one of the most consequential elections of our lifetimes. And, following years of letter carriers educating Capitol Hill, NALC succeeded in passing the Postal Service Reform Act, which eliminated the unfair burden of pre-funding retiree health care costs, integrated Medicare for future annuitants, and codified six-day delivery into law.

Still, we knew there would be more work ahead. Main subjects of focus at the Chicago convention were concerns about the Postal Service's implementation of its new 10-year plan, preparations for our upcoming round of collective bargaining, the need to address understaffing and high turnover nationwide, and the crisis of democracy our country was facing.

We have made progress in each of these areas, and other long-term NALC goals, in the last two years.

- The Postal Service's 10-year strategic plan, the Delivering for America plan, is more than three years into implementation. NALC has worked to ensure city carriers' interests are protected throughout this process. We were heavily involved in the design of the new Next Generation Delivery Vehicles (NGDVs), we have addressed issues with the opening of every sorting and delivery center (S&DC), and we continue to improve the new employee training program adopted by USPS.
- We opened bargaining with the Postal Service in February 2023. Despite a robust national economy and tight labor market, USPS's long-term financial losses created challenges in the

Volume 136/Number 3 March 2023

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

In this issue

President's Message 1

National Officers 28

Branch Election Notices 53

Branch Items 54

OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS







NALC, USPS formally begin bargaining talks

— PAGE 4

process. But we looked at this as an opportunity; through a fair contract, the Postal Service could strengthen the letter carrier workforce, and in turn, bolster the Postal Service's ability to achieve the goals in its 10-year plan. As we have in recent rounds of collective bargaining, we agreed to remain at the table with postal management as long as the prospects remained for reaching a tentative agreement that met our goals. Through it all, we fought for a contract worthy of our craft's contribution to this great public service.

- We sought to resolve staffing shortages caused by long-standing managerial shortcomings and a labor market transformed by the COVID-19 crisis. We negotiated multiple memorandums of agreement with the Postal Service to implement an all-career model in hundreds of installations around the country, and we

argued at the bargaining table for higher starting wages and modifications to our workforce.

- We helped to uphold American democracy in the 2022 mid-term election, working to ensure that American voters could safely and confidently cast their ballots at home during a time of intense polarization and heightened congressional scrutiny. During the pandemic and its aftermath, voting by mail skyrocketed, and letter carriers and NALC were proud to play a crucial role in getting tens of millions of ballots delivered securely and on time.
- We continued to develop the new Technology Integrated Alternate Route Evaluation and Adjustment Process (TIAREAP), a joint route adjustment process administered by both NALC and USPS.
- We set a goal to grow the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) by increasing the number of letter carriers who give. Currently, only 12 percent of members give, but in a union of 94 percent voluntary membership, we know we can do better. A stronger LCPF will be better able to protect and advance the interests of letter carriers by supporting federal candidates who stand up for those interests, regardless of their political party.
- We monitored implementation of the Postal Service Health Benefits program within the Federal Employees Health Benefits program along with Medicare integration, as called for by the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022. NALC worked closely with USPS, the Office of Personnel Management and the NALC Health Benefit Plan to ensure all members, both active and retired, understand the changes and get the coverage they need.
- And, we remained engaged on Capitol Hill to gain support for

our priorities. We have focused on policy that would protect letter carriers on the job, guarantee our retirement security, stabilize the Postal Service's finances, and support the agency's universal network.

This week, we intend to look back on this hard work. But even more importantly, we will consider the future of our great union. Over the next two years, we must ensure that letter carriers are protected on the job, both from violent attacks and excessive heat, remain involved in the implementation of the DFA plan, amplify our voice on Capitol Hill through growing LCPF and staying focused on our legislative priorities, and defend democracy by steadfastly delivering ballots and committing ourselves to vote this fall.

Collective bargaining

In February 2023, NALC kicked off contract talks with the Postal Service. For the 16th time since 1970, we sat across the table from a postmaster general and a USPS bargaining team to hash out the terms of a new national agreement governing our wages, benefits and working conditions.

We faced a tough environment when entering into collective bargaining in 2023, and certainly a very different environment than we faced during the last round in 2019 and 2020. Despite a robust economy, Postal Service finances lagged. Still, we felt confident in the case we could make to earn letter carriers a contract worthy of the dedication and hard work of our active membership.

As the 2019 contract expired, letter carriers had just made it through the pandemic, putting their lives on the line while seamlessly keeping the economy and our communities running by delivering essential goods and medications, school supplies, stimulus checks and at-home COVID-19 tests. We had also

helped to uphold American democracy in two national elections by delivering at-home ballots. This was not easy.

We also faced the increasingly difficult challenge of attracting sufficient applicants for letter carrier jobs at the starting wage at that time. This significantly affected our ability to properly staff post offices and ultimately deliver the nation's mail. The staffing shortages, coupled with the influx of parcel volumes, changing technology and heightened customer expectations, had made our jobs more challenging and demanding. Letter carriers were working harder and longer hours than at any other point in our history.

Additionally, crime against letter carriers was on the rise. The repeated attacks against our members were horrific and unacceptable—and unfortunately meant that crime had become a deterrent in an already difficult environment to attract letter carriers to join the Postal Service.

Economic conditions made it even harder for USPS to hire. As bargaining opened in the spring of 2023, unemployment rates were at a 50-year low and the number of available job openings in the American economy had hit historic levels, giving job seekers plenty of options. As a result, private-sector wages had soared.

This economy had been good for organized labor in the private sector. In 2022, unions secured the highest pay raises in more than 30 years—when most unions have not enjoyed the consistent wage increases that have been reflected in NALC's collective bargaining agreements over this period. In 2023, newspaper headlines were full of news of major union victories. Unions won historic gains for all kinds of workers, including teachers, airline pilots, amusement park workers, screenwriters, movie and film actors, and medical center employees. The United Auto Workers' (UAW) wins against the "Big Three"



The opening of negotiations

automakers and the Teamsters' (IBT) win against USPS competitor UPS were particularly exciting for NALC. UAW had won historic raises and the elimination of a lower-tier position created after the 2008-2010 auto industry crisis. And IBT had similarly won sizable raises.

However, despite the booming economy and clear arguments for the increases in pay letter carriers deserved, the Postal Service itself was in a very different position. Despite record-breaking increases in parcel revenue during the pandemic and the repeal of the pre-funding mandate in 2021, higher-than-expected costs due to high levels of inflation, significant investment in new infrastructure related to the DFA plan, and the costs associated with high levels of employee turnover all contributed to the Postal Service reporting a loss of \$6.5 billion in fiscal year 2023.

But we looked at this as an opportunity: Through a fair contract, the Postal Service could strengthen the letter carrier workforce, and in turn, bolster the Postal Service's ability to achieve the goals in its 10-year

plan. We knew the DFA plan could not be successful without our craft and its buy-in. Key portions of the plan, like the implementation of sorting and delivery centers, could only be successful if we used these negotiations to build a stronger city letter carrier craft.

As I stated during my speech at the opening of negotiations, I believe both parties had a unique opportunity to build something transformative for the nation's letter carrier workforce and the entire Postal Service. By increasing wages, appropriately staffing our craft, addressing safety concerns and enforcing managerial contract compliance, letter carriers, in turn, will ensure that the Postal Service remains strong and competitive.

In the winter of 2022 as we began preparations for negotiating the new national agreement, we formed subcommittees to develop the formal proposals we would present to the Postal Service. The subcommittees—comprised of NALC Executive Council members and Headquarters letter carrier staff—focused on several important subjects, from workplace issues, city delivery matters and safety and health, to route structure, uniforms and strategies to fix turnover and understaffing. The subcommittees worked for months, going over convention resolutions and discussing practical ways to solve problems facing letter carriers. Using their own experiences as well as ideas and concerns heard from the NALC membership, the subcommittees worked vigorously to craft bargaining proposals designed to improve working conditions. Once these initial proposals were crafted, many were officially submitted to USPS for consideration at the bargaining table.

Many of our goals are common to every round of collective bargaining—pay increases to reward letter carriers for our contributions to the Postal Service and to recognize the increasing difficulty of our work,

the preservation of cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs), and the maintenance of protections against subcontracting and layoffs. But others are unique to this round of talks or had been generated by our subcommittees.

Throughout the process, we have remained committed to achieving a negotiated agreement. But we have repeatedly communicated to USPS that we would not hesitate to present our demands in interest arbitration if necessary to gain a contract that properly rewards city letter carriers for what they do day in and day out in service of America's public.

On May 21, 2023, when the 2019 National Agreement formally expired, NALC and the Postal Service agreed to continue negotiations and that the expired agreement would remain in full force until a new negotiated or arbitrated agreement was reached. The formal expiration triggered a statutorily required 60-day mediation period. NALC continued to work productively toward reaching a negotiated agreement with the Postal Service during this period, reaching tentative agreement on several key issues.

While discussions on pay, benefits and working conditions continued to be constructive, we had yet to reach tentative agreement with the Postal Service when the mediation period expired on July 19, 2023. As we have in recent rounds of collective bargaining, we agreed to remain at the table with postal management as long as the prospects remained for reaching a tentative agreement that meets our goals. Because talks continued to be productive, and because of the economic issues outlined above, we concluded this to be the best and least risky way to achieve a contract that meets our goals.

At the NALC rap session in New Orleans in November, I shared that while we had made progress, even reaching tentative agreement on several key issues related to work

rules, a gap remained between what the Postal Service was willing to pay and what we believe would constitute a fair agreement that rewards NALC members for their value and contributions to the Postal Service's success.

As talks continued into the new year, we were working on dual tracks, finalizing preparations for interest arbitration even as we continued to engage at the table with the Postal Service for a negotiated agreement. In early March 2024, NALC and the Postal Service selected Arbitrator Dennis R. Nolan to serve as the neutral chair of a three-person interest arbitration panel that would set the terms of a new national agreement. Arbitrator Nolan served as the parties' neutral arbitrator in the interest arbitration proceedings for the 2019 National Agreement, which were near conclusion when the parties reached a negotiated settlement late in 2020.

Under the law, the interest arbitration process is triggered by the parties declaring an impasse in negotiations. While the parties had yet to declare an impasse in March, naming a neutral chair was a way to create some deadline pressure to get a negotiated settlement. Additionally, Arbitrator Nolan would not be available to us until later in the year. NALC and the Postal Service continued to negotiate in an attempt to reach a tentative agreement while final preparations for interest arbitration were made.

As stated above, while reaching a voluntary settlement that properly rewards city letter carriers for the work they do delivering America's mail remains NALC's goal, NALC officers, staff and attorneys are busy preparing for binding interest arbitration hearings. The meticulous work of marshaling evidence and recruiting expert witnesses to make our case in interest arbitration proceedings began well before bargaining opened and continues in earnest throughout negotiations.

Volume 136/Number 12 December 2023

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

In this issue

President's Message	1
National Officers	35
Branch Election Notices	55
Branch Items	58

At NALC rap session, President Renfroe updates state and branch leaders on:

- **Contract negotiations**
- **Crimes against carriers**
- **Heat safety**
- **Improving representation**
- **Legislation and politics**
- **New initiatives**

—PAGES 4-7

Postal Service in transition

Delivering for America 10-Year Plan

The world has been changing around the Postal Service for nearly two decades. In the early 2000s, the rise of the internet and digital communications, along with the impacts of the Great Recession, permanently reduced letter mail. Since then, e-commerce has slowly gained momentum, expanding incredibly in 2020 and 2021 during the pandemic, creating a huge new source of revenue for the Postal Service. In 2019, parcel revenue surpassed First-Class Mail revenue for the first time. Longtime carriers have experienced these changes firsthand, as letter volumes have decreased, and parcel volumes have increased on our routes.

Until recently, it has often felt



like the Postal Service has been a step behind. Our delivery vehicles, many of which are nearly four decades old, weren't designed for this many parcels. Facilities haven't had the capacity or equipment to handle this change in the mail mix. Extraordinary levels of turnover and significant difficulty in hiring in parts of the country have had compounding effects, lowering morale on the workroom floor and causing delivery issues for customers. And, despite its new reliance on parcel revenues, the Postal Service seems to be losing ground to competitors, which have reported record profits in recent years while USPS has lost money. Amazon, for one, grew its immense network and became a significant player in the parcel market in only 10 years—taking advantage of the Postal Service's universal network to create and expand its own delivery business.

In March of 2021, the Postal Service announced a long-term strategic plan to address these issues and stabilize the agency. This plan, the Delivering for America (DFA) plan, is guiding the transformation of the Postal Service from an organization in financial and operational crisis to one that is self-sustaining and high performing. It involves the reorganization of the Postal Service's processing, transportation and delivery networks. Under the plan, USPS intends to reverse an estimated \$160 billion loss by 2031. To realize these cost savings, the plan identified five objectives: modernize the Postal Service and make it capable of providing world-class service at affordable prices; maintain universal six-day mail delivery and expand seven-day package delivery; stabilize the workforce and invest in strategies to empower employees and put them in a position to succeed; grow revenue through innovation and meet the changing needs of the marketplace; and become financially stable so that the universal service mandate is met.

This plan is a massive undertaking with many implications for the work of city carriers. We spoke in-depth about the coming changes this plan would bring when we gathered in Chicago in 2022. We held back judgment, wary of how many of these objectives might be implemented, but encouraged by a plan finally focused on growing USPS business rather than the incessant proposals to slash service with no plan to grow our business that were put forth by previous leadership at USPS since the recession of the late 2000s. Top of mind for many was the need to address staffing issues, the newly announced Next Generation Delivery Vehicle, and the creation of large delivery units called sorting and delivery centers across the country. Much was still unknown at the time. Two years later, progress has been made, but we remain in transition. Each of these elements has been a major topic of negotiation

Letter carriers' involvement with USPS's 10-year plan



—PAGES 12-16

with the Postal Service, both in bargaining over the contract, and in the daily work of addressing city delivery issues.

The regulator has also turned its attention to the Postal Service's DFA plan. In April of this year, the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) issued an order directing the Postal Service to justify the major reforms the agency is implementing as part of its 10-year plan, suggesting that the reforms are having a larger negative impact than predicted.

This order represented a reversal for the PRC. In October of 2021, 20 states and commonwealths had filed a complaint with the PRC alleging that the Postal Service should have been required to submit its 10-year plan to the PRC for an advisory opinion. Law requires that before making a change in the nature of postal services that will generally affect service on a nationwide or substantially nationwide basis, the Postal Service must seek an advisory opinion from the PRC within a reasonable time before the proposed change becomes effective. The states argued that the Postal Service should have sought an advisory opinion before adopting the DFA plan because its changes would have a nationwide effect. The Postal Service disagreed with this argument, and the PRC sided with the agency.

However, three years further into the implementation of the plan, the Postal Service is facing pushback from lawmakers, customers and mailers over service declines related to the redesign of its network. The PRC ordered USPS to request an advisory opinion from the regulator or explain why such a review is unnecessary. NALC will monitor this docket and submit comments if deemed necessary.

Sorting and delivery centers

With 68 S&DCs now in operation around the country, we have a good understanding of how this transition will affect city carriers.



As some carriers have already experienced, the establishment of an S&DC involves moving city letter carriers and their assignments from their current work locations to larger facilities, many of them located in former processing plants or other large postal facilities. Initially, the Postal Service is selecting markets where it expects potential growth in package delivery.

The Postal Service says that S&DCs will aid the plan by allowing the agency to implement three strategies related to the parcel market: expand local access for same-day and next-day delivery, improve ground delivery in one- and two-day package delivery, and move First-Class package delivery to an expanded ground network to help reduce the reliance on air transportation. By reducing the number of steps between collection and delivery from the current number of 11 down to five, the Postal Services hopes this network will help grow parcel volume.

When NALC is notified that an S&DC is going to be established, representatives from NALC Headquarters and the region's national business agent's office meet with the local branch to discuss the process. Each S&DC is also visited to evaluate the ongoing renova-

tions being completed in the facility. Every two weeks, NALC meets with USPS to discuss the ongoing implementation of S&DCs and to discuss any issues affecting the movement of city letter carriers. Any issues or concerns regarding the S&DCs, whether due to a visit by NALC representatives or raised from the local branches, are discussed during these biweekly meetings. As USPS continues to open S&DCs, NALC will remain involved and in discussion with the Postal Service on the status of S&DC implementation, the impact on the city carrier craft, and to resolve any issues that can be anticipated or arise

Next Generation Delivery Vehicles

To meet the needs of a changing mail mix and improve the safety and working conditions for letter carriers, one of the DFA plan's elements is the replacement of the Postal Service's aging delivery fleet.

Since the beginning of this process over a decade ago, NALC has played an integral role in the design of the NGDV. During regular meetings with USPS representatives from engineering, safety, delivery operations and labor relations, as well as with employees of Oshkosh Defense, NALC has raised the concerns voiced by letter carriers across the country about the current fleet and what is needed in a new vehicle.

In December 2022, USPS announced plans to acquire 106,000 vehicles through 2028. This acquisition would include at least 45,000 battery electric-powered NGDVs, and 21,000 additional electric-powered commercial off-the-shelf vehicles. All NGDVs deployed from 2026 onward and all commercial-off-the-shelf vehicles added between 2026 and 2028 are expected to be 100 percent electric. In February 2023, USPS awarded contracts for more than 14,000 charging stations to create the infrastructure necessary to support this fleet

transition. These charging stations, made by one of three manufacturers, are being installed in delivery units throughout the Postal Service for use on the NGDV and the Ford e-Transit, a left-hand drive electric van. All new vehicles, regardless of electrification, will include air conditioning and advanced safety technology.

On May 31, 2024, the first four NGDVs were deployed to the Athens, GA, S&DC. These vehicles, which are all gas-powered, will be integrated into the delivery fleet once the city letter carriers have received the proper familiarization and training. As production of the NGDV proceeds through the end of the year, more vehicles will be deployed to delivery units across the country. In August of 2024, the first battery electric vehicles will be produced and integrated into the delivery fleet to replace the aging Long Life Vehicles (LLVs) and Flex-Fuel Vehicles (FFVs).

Our goal has always been to ensure that the Postal Service acquires a delivery vehicle that provides a safe and improved ergonomic working environment for letter carriers while providing sufficient space to accommodate the current volume of parcels and mail.

The DFA plan also includes other goals, some that do not relate to the city carrier craft, and some that have not yet begun. These include the simplification of shipping products, transformation of the processing network through the creation of regional processing and distribution centers (RPDCs) and local processing centers (LPCs), and seeking changes to how USPS retirement funds are invested to increase earnings.

As you can see, the plan is ambitious. Central to its success is investment in the network and the people of the Postal Service. Such large-scale investment is taking place while USPS finances remain in the red. While the pre-funding mandate was repealed and parcels infused a new source of revenue

at a crucial time in the agency's history, the Postal Service still reported a loss of \$6.5 billion last year, due in large part to the effects of inflation and investments in its network. Despite these large investments, USPS has reduced projected losses for the decade by more than half, from \$160 billion to \$70 billion.

However, the plan has gained criticism from lawmakers, customers, mailers and other stakeholders in 2024, as certain parts of the country experience significant mail delays.

As part of the DFA plan, USPS will consolidate mail sorting away from individual post offices and move processing operations away from hundreds of cities and towns in favor of 60 of these mega-center RPDCs throughout the country. NALC remains alert to assessing the effectiveness of the plan and its impact on service, mail volumes and the jobs of our fellow crafts.

Concern has mounted to the point that both the postal regulator and Congress have taken action. The PRC opened a docket in April, asking the Postal Service to justify its plans. In Congress, Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) introduced the Protecting Access to Rural Carriers for Every Location (PARCEL) Act in May to restrict USPS network reforms. The act would prohibit the consolidation of mail-processing operations in rural areas unless the Postal Service meets certain conditions, including completing a geographical review to ensure local mail delivery is not harmed and receiving public input on consolidations.

The Postal Service and Postmaster General DeJoy have steadfastly defended the plan and remain committed to the pace of implementation. With another 40 or 50 S&DCs planned for this year, DeJoy recently said, "We cannot take our foot off the pedal," arguing that these changes are coming years too late. The DFA plan is intended to reverse

years of underinvestment and every initiative is meant to win new customers and bring volume into the network.

NALC remains hopeful that this ambitious investment will result in a network that is better able to serve the expectations of today's customers, compete and regain market share in the parcel industry, and improve the working environments for city carriers. As the plan progresses, NALC will continue to meet with the Postal Service on a regular basis to help navigate this transition, enforce compliance with the National Agreement, and represent the interests of our members.

Staffing

Staffing issues have been debilitating our craft and negatively affecting our ability to serve our customers in some locations. While fixing this issue is one of the Postal Service's top goals in the DFA plan, the issue remains. The Postal Service has struggled to attract applicants in some isolated areas.

USPS Governor Daniel Tangherlini and I at the December announcement by USPS to purchase 66,000 electric vehicles by 2028.



We have worked with the Postal Service to develop and implement new employee and mentoring pilot programs to improve onboarding and retention. Similarly, to address both the difficulty in hiring and the high levels of turnover in our craft, in the last two years we negotiated more than 10 MOUs with the Postal Service to eliminate the CCA position and hire directly at the career level in hundreds of installations around the country. The success of these two initiatives, combined with our efforts at the bargaining table to increase starting pay, give us a clear path to improvement. We will continue working with USPS leadership to address the widespread staffing issues that continue to negatively affect letter carriers and our ability to serve our customers.

Heat safety

Working outside in all parts of the country, letter carriers are consistently exposed to the dangers of extreme weather. Climate change continues to intensify extreme weather, and every year we see temperatures and heat indexes climb to record highs, putting letter carriers at greater risk to the dangers of extreme heat.

Unmitigated excessive heat can cause heat stress, often resulting in serious illness or death. Since the last convention, we have lost one brother to excessive heat. In June of 2023, Branch 132 member Eugene Gates Jr. collapsed and died in a customer's yard in Dallas, TX. We mourn Brother Gates and our other brothers and sisters who we have lost to heat illness.

NALC has engaged USPS and the Department of Labor for over a decade with one goal—to better protect our members from the hazards of excessive heat. Some progress has been made over the years, but there are still steps needed to implement all the measures universally recognized by experts as necessary to provide sufficient protection from heat illness. We continue to

put pressure on the government and postal management to provide letter carriers with a heat-illness prevention program that includes all these elements.

A major part of the issue is that the United States does not yet have a heat safety standard for workers. NALC has continually pushed for a work rule standard, and finally we are seeing progress.

In July, the Department of Labor released a proposed heat standard work rule. While it is still in the early stage and must move through the official rule-making process, this comprehensive rule is the ultimate solution to prevent heat-related injury and illness on the job. NALC fully supports implementation of this proposed rule and will continue pushing for its approval and use every possible avenue to protect letter carriers from excessive heat.

Government affairs

Building on passage of the Postal Service Reform Act of 2022, we have continued to focus on some long-standing—and some new—legislative priorities. While we continue navigating the difficult and ever-evolving political landscape in Washington, DC, we have continued to work across the aisle to gain support for our priorities and their advancement.

Stabilizing the Postal Service's finances

The long-term financial viability of our employer remains a top priority. A sustainable USPS is key to our long-term job security and the service we provide.

Postal reform was a major step toward making the USPS financially solvent long-term. However, we knew this was only one piece of a larger solution. Two crucial potential policy changes remain.

First, NALC is advocating for the Postal Service to be allowed to reinvest its retirement funds.

The Postal Service has three retire-

ment funds: The Civil Service Retirement System, the Federal Employees Retirement System, and the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund. Currently, these funds are invested solely in low-yield Treasury bonds, causing the agency to miss out on millions of dollars of potential annual returns.

We are proposing that the Postal Service be allowed to adopt private-sector best practices by diversifying its investment portfolios with stocks and bonds through Thrift Savings Plan-style index funds. This sensible and fiscally responsible change would yield greater returns and ultimately reduce the cost of pensions and retiree health benefits shouldered by the agency, its employees, and even mailers in the form of rate increases.

We have had productive conversations with Capitol Hill leaders, and we are hopeful about the prospect of a legislative solution that would allow the Postal Service to reinvest.

Similarly, for more than 50 years, the Postal Service has faced a glaring misallocation of retirement fund obligations, resulting in more than \$90 billion in unjust expenses. NALC has continually engaged the current and previous presidential administrations on this issue. We are evaluating all our options to finally get a fair pension reallocation for the Postal Service.

Priority legislation

Since our last convention in Chicago, a wave of violent crime and assaults against our members has continued to heighten. Since 2020, more than 2,000 crimes have been committed against letter carriers nationwide. In 2023, 650 letter carriers were victims of crimes, a 30 percent increase from the year prior.

As NALC began investigating these crimes, we were alarmed to find that very few of these cases were prosecuted at the federal level. This inaction sparked something in our members, and in the last year more than 15 branches and regions nationwide



have rallied to declare “Enough is Enough!” I have traveled coast to coast to join our members at rallies to raise awareness about this growing problem. The solidarity at these events has been unmatched, and we have spread the message across the country that any assault on a letter carrier is unacceptable.

In addition to public awareness, federal legislation is the next step to deter these crimes from happening. Earlier this year, Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH), and Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO) introduced the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 7629/S. 4356). This bill would deter these crimes from happening by replacing and securing postal infrastructure, ensuring every crime against a letter carrier is prosecuted, and strengthening sentencing guidelines for those who are found guilty of these crimes.

In this issue
 President's Message 1
 National Officers 24
 Branch Election Notices 50
 Branch Items 52



Volume 137/Number 4 April 2024

The Postal Record

The monthly journal of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS

In this issue	
President's Message	1
National Officers	34
Branch Election Notices	49
Branch Items	54

NALC calls on Congress to pass H.R. 7629

—PAGES 4-7

Arbitrator selected to hear case for new national agreement

—PAGE 8

oversight over the Postal Service. It has five commissioners, who are appointed by the president for six-year terms. Currently, Michael Kubayanda serves as chairman and Thomas Day serves as vice chairman. The three other commissioners are Ann Fisher, Ashley Poling and Robert Taub.

Recently, the PRC has intervened on Market Dominant price increases and the Postal Service's 10-year plan in the last two years.

As discussed in the 2022 Chicago convention report, the PRC finalized a new ratemaking system in December 2020. This new system modified the price cap for Market Dominant products to allow for additional pricing authority beyond the consumer price index. The new system implemented two mechanisms designed to permit the Postal Service to generate additional revenue to cover costs outside of its control related to mail density declines and retirement obligations.

Since the rate system change, USPS has raised Market Dominant rates six times, most recently bringing the price of a First-Class stamp up to 73 cents in July 2024. The PRC has adjudicated these increases, allowing the Postal Service to use banked pricing authority as outlined in the system. However, the frequency and magnitude of these increases has caused alarm for mailers, with some suggesting that the pricing increases have been accelerating the decline in mail volume.

The PRC's 2020 ruling included a five-year review period to assess the effects of the ratemaking system change, though the PRC also retained the flexibility to conduct the review sooner than five years if necessary. As a result of commenters raising a substantial number of concerns related to the effects of the new system, in April 2024 the PRC initiated a new proceeding to conduct this review earlier than planned. NALC will monitor this regulatory case and

While combating the horrific increase of crime against our members has become a top legislative priority for our union, we have remained focused on policies that will protect our retirement security and benefits.

For more information about our ongoing legislative priorities, please refer to the Legislative and Political report on page 25.

Postal Regulatory Commission and the USPS Board of Governors

The Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) is an independent agency that has exercised regulatory

submit comments if deemed necessary.

The USPS Board of Governors (BOG) is another oversight body that is responsible for overseeing the executive management of USPS. It consists of nine members who are appointed by the president. No more than five members can be affiliated with the president's political party.

There have been two vacancies on the BOG since December 2023, when Captain Lee Moak and William Zollars's terms expired. Both Postmaster General DeJoy and Deputy Postmaster General Doug Tulino serve on the BOG. In addition, Roman Martinez is the chairman and Amber McReynolds is the vice chairwoman. Robert Duncan, Anton Hajjar, Derek Kan, Ronald Stroman and Daniel Tangherlini serve in the remaining seats.

In March, President Biden announced his intent to nominate former Department of Labor Secretary Marty Walsh to the vacant Democratic seat on the BOG. Typically, an administration sends a Republican and a Democratic nominee to the Senate at the same time for consideration. President Biden has yet to announce his intent someone for the vacant Republican seat.

NALC will continue to remain engaged with both the PRC and the BOG to ensure that letter carriers' perspectives are considered as they make decisions that could affect our work or the Postal Service.

Political update

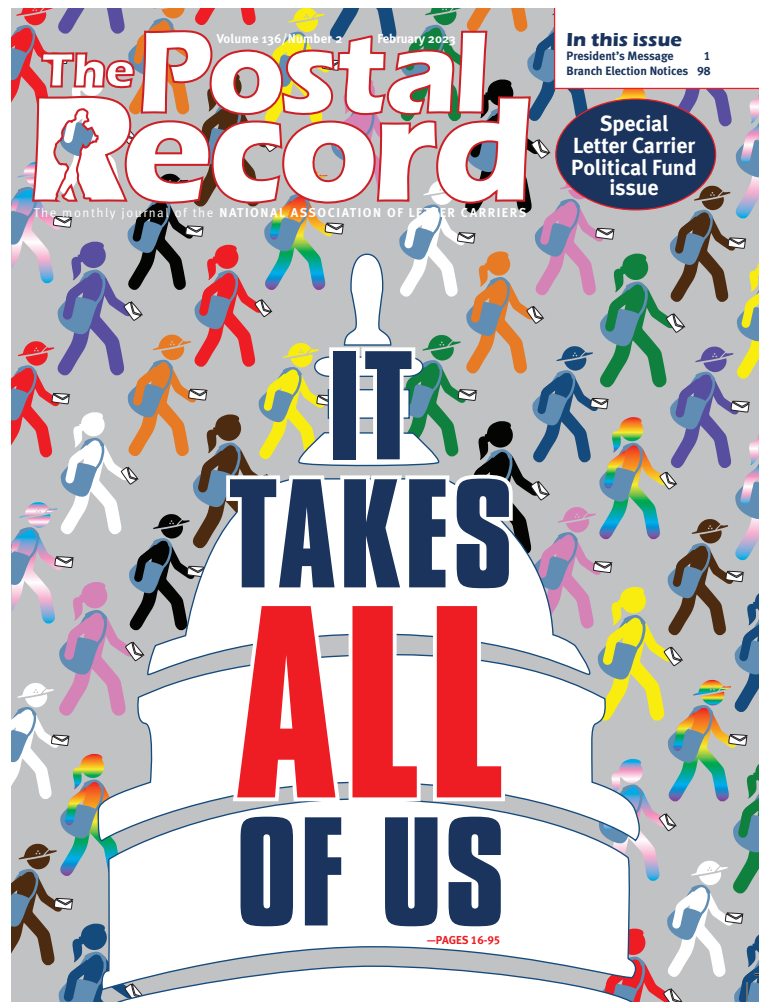
Growing the Letter Carrier Political Fund

Our legislative successes have always hinged on our ability to work with legislators in both parties and a broad coalition of allies to take advantage of the public's overwhelming support for the Postal Service. This ability will be central to our success in the future. One way to increase our ability to do so is to grow our political action

committee, the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF).

The money we raise to support letter carrier candidates in both parties—and to finance extensive get-out-the-vote efforts with our allies in the AFL-CIO—is essential to making our voices heard in Washington.

In the years ahead, we aim to build on the recent success of the LCPF. We



Note: By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor.

Vol. 31, No. 1 Winter 2024
Neal, Editor, President

NALC Activist

A NEWSLETTER FOR BRANCH LEADERS OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LETTER CARRIERS



Getting ready for local negotiations

Whether a negotiated national agreement between NALC and USPS is reached or is avoided by an arbitration, LMUO negotiations will likely occur approximately once to three months after the date of ratification or award. Negotiations of which way a new national agreement is reached, there are things that can be done in the next few weeks to enable branches to be better prepared when the time for LMUO bargaining arrives.

Select LMUO committees

Now is a good time to begin setting up branch LMUO committees. Give many committees you will need deposits

The steward's right to information

The National Agreement gives shop stewards the right, in the course of grievance investigation and processing, to both review and obtain copies of relevant information held by the Postal Service. The right to information is found primarily in Article 22, paragraph 1. In addition, the union has a legal right to employee information under the National Labor Relations Act. So, the right to information may be exercised both within the grievance procedure

Message about the Activist from President Brian L. Renfroe



The Activist will be published quarterly and will provide you with the tools and knowledge you need to build stronger, more effective branches. We will cover workplace issues, contract questions and the latest information for local leaders.

The new and improved Activist complements the plethora of resources already available for our members, including various materials on rule, org, The Postal Record, the NALC Bulletin, NALC's podcast "The Ave the Current Resident," NALC's social media accounts and NALC's mobile apps. I encourage you to utilize all these resources as you work to educate our members.

This publication is created to help you. If you have feedback or suggestions for future Activist content, please contact us at activist@nalc.org.

Thank you for all you do for the members of NALC.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- USPS by the Numbers 3
- Ballot boards 7
- The foundation of OMCPC related grievances 9
- Managing the stress of leadership... so what? 11
- Does your branch have an HRB and HRBT? 13
- MDA fundraising and strategic planning 15
- What does the successful steward do besides file grievances? 19

Continued on page 2

Continued on page 2

Continued on page 2

The NALC Activist

will aggressively work to educate all NALC members on the importance of contributing to the PAC. I know our members always do the right thing, and I'm convinced that we have an opportunity to rapidly grow the LCPF through education.

This will allow us to amplify and expand our influence on debates that affect the wages, benefits and working conditions of letter carriers, as well as the health of the Postal Service. It will also allow us to fight for other important legislation, including the Protecting the Right to Organize Act and other labor law reforms, as well as expand vote-by-mail and strengthen American democracy. These efforts are essential to improve the ability of unions to grow and to raise living standards for all workers across America. They are also essential for the pursuit of economic and racial justice.

Our legislative and political organizers (LPOs) have been focused on growing our power through LCPF. Currently, 88 percent of NALC members do not give to LCPF. Imagine our influence if even a quarter of those members chose to give.

Our LPOs have been and will be traveling to our branches nationwide to execute their main goal—signing members up for LCPF. We are stronger together, and we must unite to increase LCPF participation so we can deliver results for letter carriers.

Defending democracy

At our last convention, we spoke extensively about the crisis of democracy we were facing. Voting rights were under attack, and it felt like even the most factual piece of information could be politicized to an extreme. And the country had just witnessed one of the most divisive elections of our lifetimes, and its aftermath at the Capitol.

As letter carriers, we not only witnessed the election, we played a vital important role in making sure every voter had access to a ballot and that those ballots were received to

be counted. We steadfastly did this again in 2022. These were two of the three highest turnout elections in decades, along with the 2018 midterm elections. They were also two of the elections where the most people had access to mailed ballots.

In 2020, shortly after Postmaster General Louis DeJoy took over, we asked him to establish a joint task force with us to prepare for election mail. This task force was created in 2020 and was re-established prior to the 2022 elections. The group has addressed issues, established extraordinary measures necessary to handle election mail, and played a big role in the Postal Service's success in each of the last two elections. The task force has been meeting to discuss the 2024 election to take steps to ensure that success is duplicated in 2024.

A major theme that came up throughout the 2022 convention was that we cannot rebuild the labor movement without rebuilding our democracy, and vice versa. Expanding and protecting voting rights ensures that every worker has a chance to let their voice be heard, both at the ballot box and on the workroom floor. Voting pro-letter carrier and pro-worker politicians into office makes reforms like the PSRA and PRO Act possible.

As we look ahead a few months and prepare for an election that in many ways seems like a repeat of 2020, we will again help to defend democracy, delivering ballots to ensure every vote gets counted. But we must also commit to vote ourselves. No matter whom we vote for or why, it is essential that we recommit ourselves to democracy by participating in it. Registering to vote, educating ourselves on the issues and casting our ballots are essential to this commitment. Please urge your families, friends and neighbors to vote as well. The process is just as important as the results. What is voting if not an embodiment of empowered solidarity?

NALC initiatives

New beginnings also bring new opportunities for our union internally. I am proud and excited about new initiatives that staff at Headquarters have been working hard to create and launch to serve our members in new ways.

First is a series of member-education initiatives. Primary among these is the development of a new eLearning training platform, a new type of virtual training for our activists. We are developing a platform that will offer a series of comprehensive training courses in a virtual format. This program will not replace in-person training but expand opportunities for those who want to get involved and might be unable to make it to training in person. It will also provide activists with the opportunity to learn and further develop their skills on their own time. This will be an excellent resource allowing more members to get trained, ultimately continuing to improve representation for our members.

Additionally, we have dedicated resources to improving and standardizing much of the education we provide in a more traditional, classroom setting. The first piece was the development of shop steward training in a modular format. This format allows topics to be taught in succession or in isolation. It is designed so it could be taught in its entirety over several days, or in segments as short as 15 to 20 minutes by topic. This flexibility will allow for its use in a variety of training opportunities such as seminars, branch steward meetings, etc. The curriculum was recently delivered by headquarters staff to a group in early July as a test. We anticipate modifying the curriculum based on feedback from this test class and making it available across the country soon.

We also revived the *NALC Activist* newsletter in January 2024. The *NALC Activist* is a newsletter intended for shop stewards, branch officers and all local NALC leaders. The publica-

tion has been around since 1986—with a couple of pauses along the way—and we were excited to bring it back to continue providing additional resources to assist in educating and informing local NALC representatives. The quarterly publication addresses issues and problems that arise in our everyday work lives and gives practical advice and skills on topics like effectively running a branch meeting, conducting a training, or creating a branch publication.

Similarly, in an effort to make information more accessible, get information out to members as fast as possible, and reach members in new ways, we have used the NALC podcast, “You Are the Current Resident.” Through the podcast, we have been able to take on topics, issues and concerns that are on the minds of letter carriers in an informal, conversational way. Episodes have discussed contract negotiations, crime against letter carriers, heat illness prevention training, Medicare integration, USPS sorting and delivery centers, the morning routine of dealing with management, and the route adjustment process. This is a way for rank-and-file members to hear directly from various officers and staff of the union and learn about their areas of expertise.






Training members of the Emergency Response Team

Second is the Emergency Response Team (ERT), an emergency response support program to assist members who have been affected by a traumatic incident on or off the job. The ERT offers peer-to-peer support with critical events, such as deaths and life-altering injuries.

We are all aware that far too many letter carriers have been victims of crime, assault and other traumatic incidents while at work. Additionally, some of our members have been victims of or witnessed mass

shootings, natural disasters and other life-altering events outside of work. When I first introduced this program at the rap session in November 2023, I referenced the then-recent mass shooting in Lewiston, ME, where NALC member Brother Stephen Vozzella was killed. My hope is that the ERT will be a resource of information and alleviate members' suffering in heartbreaking situations like this.

In March 2024, we held our first ERT training for 29 members from around the country who were selected for this program. This training taught the new ERT members how to best support their brothers and sisters who have suffered from a traumatic event. The first three days featured in-depth training by Dr. Jeffrey M. Lating of the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation (ICISF), a leader in providing training on comprehensive crisis intervention and disaster behavioral health services to emergency responders and other professions. The team members were given tools, often described as "emotional first aid," to assist people experiencing trauma-related mental health effects. They learned the core elements of a comprehensive, systematic and multicomponent crisis intervention curriculum both for individuals and

groups. Upon completion of the three-day training, the attendees were certified by the ICISF.

In addition, the team members learned about the postal-specific resources for responding to members in crisis. They left with the knowledge, tools and techniques necessary to provide crisis support to groups and to recommend follow-up services. An additional session is scheduled this fall to provide more in-depth training on suicide awareness and prevention for the members of our ERT.

The goal of the program is not to replace medical or professional help, but to serve as a peer-to-peer support program that can help someone get the help they may need. We are excited to expand the ERT's assistance in the future to situations involving suicide awareness, suicide prevention, mental health issues or substance abuse.

I am always in awe that our members are so often willing to stand up to help each other. The future is not certain and none of us know when we might find ourselves in crisis. But I do know this for sure—when given the knowledge and opportunity to help their brothers and sisters, they always step up to do so.

Third is a women's mentoring program to identify, support and develop our current and future female leaders. It is undeniable that women who take on or wish to take on a new responsibility or leadership role face different challenges than men. As a union, we should be doing everything possible to make it easy and accessible for women who want to step up in their branches. This program will have experienced mentors who can help other women navigate their roles as NALC leaders. With the support of other women, we hope it will result in more women serving in leadership roles at the branch level and beyond.

Finally, we also are forming a group of NALC members to look at issues related to diversity and inclusion. One of our union's greatest strengths is our diversity. This com-

mittee will help us maximize the impact of that strength by embracing and celebrating the diversity of our membership. The main goal of this committee is to improve access and make it as easy as possible for anyone, regardless of their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation or anything else, to get involved and fulfill the mission of our union—to fight for city letter carriers.

Solidarity and organizing

NALC is the best organized open shop union in the country—94 percent of letter carriers choose to be a part of NALC. We do not take these rights or successes for granted. We celebrate our wins by standing in solidarity with our siblings across the labor movement who are fighting for their right to organize and collectively bargain.

In April, our siblings at the United Auto Workers celebrated a major victory with an overwhelming vote to organize a Volkswagen plant in Chattanooga, TN. Similarly, in May, 1,700 Disneyland Resort cast members voted to join the Actors' Equity Association (AEA). Organizing victories, and hard-fought battles, are taking place every single day across every sector.

One of the biggest fights ahead of NALC, and the entire labor movement, is to organize Amazon's workforce.

Amazon has been a topic of conversation at our last few conventions, and rightly so. With its aggressive growth strategy, cutthroat approach toward competitors and its hostility to the rights of its workers, the company is increasingly seen as a threat to the U.S. labor market and economy.

This is especially true for the Postal Service and letter carriers. Amazon used the universal service that we provide to build a massive customer base, and then attempted to model its own delivery network on our own. In 2023, for the first time ever, Amazon delivered more packages than UPS. It had already surpassed FedEx's annual volume in 2020.

If Amazon becomes the dominant player in the parcel delivery industry, it will affect both letter carriers and customers. Its brutal labor practices and deceptive employee misclassification of its delivery workers will set the labor market standards for our industry. And its ability to cherry-pick the most profitable delivery points, leaving USPS with the least, and even unprofitable ones, will hurt USPS finances and result in service declines. We cannot let the company continue to compete with a non-union workforce and without a check in its power.

In the coming years, we must become involved in legislative and regulatory strategies, along with providing support to organizing campaigns, to counter Amazon's anti-labor and anti-competitive practices. This will include lobbying our representatives about the importance of passing the PRO Act, engaging with antitrust efforts about Amazon's place in the delivery market, and other ideas we have not explored yet.

This is one area where the empowered solidarity of letter carriers alone is not enough. Amazon is a global company, and it will require the collaborative efforts of the entire global labor movement to ensure workers are protected from its power.

Looking forward

As referenced above, the world, the Postal Service and our union have been in a period of transition. Transitions can be full of unknowns, and it can be easy to resign ourselves to an expected outcome. But, I do believe that while change is inevitable, its outcome is not. When we come together, use our collective strengths and dedicate our time and energy to one another, we can build a better future.

I have seen how potent this empowered solidarity is, time and again, in my union work. In fact, I have just outlined the numerous ways NALC harnessed this power, made progress and worked to build



better jobs and lives for letter carriers over the last two years of transition. As we look ahead, elements of transition remain. I am confident NALC will harness this power again and again.

We are in Boston this week to chart our course for the next two years. We know there is still work to do to safeguard letter carriers' interests in collective bargaining, the implementation of the DFA plan, and stop crime against letter carriers and protect ourselves from violent attacks. Empowered solidarity is how we move forward and achieve results.

Celebrating 250 years

There are many challenges ahead, and our work in the labor movement is never done. But I want to end this report with a reminder that we have much to look forward to as well. Next year, we will mark the 250th anniversary of the U.S. Post Office. Despite our frustrations with management and never-ending efforts to improve wages and working conditions, working for the Post Office is something to be proud of.

Created during the Second Continental Congress in 1775, before the Declaration of Independence was even signed, the Post Office of the United States was created as the first function of the fledgling democracy. The new government relied on the postal system to inform the electorate. High-priced postage for letters, then sent mostly by businessmen and lawyers, subsidized delivery of cheap, uncensored newspapers. Letter carriers have been delivering democracy since the beginning.

Since then, the Post Office has grown and changed with America.

- In 1788, the Post Office delivered the Federalist Papers that helped create the U.S. Constitution.
- In the 1860s, the post office created city delivery and helped reelect Abraham Lincoln with an innovation called absentee vot-

ing—one that allowed hundreds of thousands of union soldiers to vote from the battlefields of the Civil War.

- In 1891, the invention of Rural Free Delivery meant more equal access to service across the country.
- In the 1910s, Parcel Post, mail order catalogs and a new service called Airmail helped create a continental market economy.
- In 1971, the United States Postal Service we know today was created following years of underinvestment and a wildcat strike led by NALC Branch 36 in New York.
- And in the 2020s, the Postal Service helped the United States survive the COVID-19 pandemic by delivering essential goods to every American household and facilitating the highest-turnout election since 1900, thanks to vote-by-mail.

Reviewing this history reminds me that the Post Office is always in transition, always responding to the evolving needs of the American people. But it also reminds me that we have the power to shape the transition. The wildcat strike, started by a few carriers in New York City, led to the creation of the USPS. It also gave then-NALC President Rademacher the leverage to negotiate for full collective-bargaining rights for letter carriers, giving us the chance to continue to improve our lives each time we sit down at the bargaining table. Our ability to respond to transitions and work together to build a better future is what our union work is all about. We grow. We rise. And we do it together.

That concludes the report of my office. What follows is a comprehensive report of the activities of your union's Headquarters departments and of the NALC's national and regional officers. Once again, brothers and sisters, welcome to the 73rd Biennial Convention. Grow. Rise. Together. Let's get to work.

Executive Council

The Executive Council is the governing body of the NALC between national conventions and is responsible for determining the direction of the union. In accordance with Article 9, Section 11 of the *NALC Constitution*, the council consists of the president, executive vice president, vice president, secretary-treasurer, assistant secretary-treasurer, director of city delivery, director of safety and health, director of life insurance, director of the health benefit plan, director of retired members, the board of trustees and the national business agents.

As of May 30, 2024, the Council had convened twenty-one (21) times since the 2022 national convention, with additional meetings scheduled prior to the 73rd Biennial Convention in Boston.

Meetings of the council are an important opportunity for national officers and key staff to focus on the important issues facing letter carriers. NALC leaders learn about the latest developments from the field and tackle significant issues of national importance. Often, staff members in attendance will report on departmental activities. By meeting as a group, Executive Council members gain the perspective needed to make important decisions on behalf of the membership.

Here is a summary of the council meetings that took place during the past two years:

May 24-27, 2022 (Washington, DC): The council discussed in detail the provisions of the Postal Reform Act of 2022, which was signed into law on April 6 by President Biden, and other legislative priorities. The council received information regarding the USPS's intention to rescind the face covering policy and has declined to renew the COVID-19 related MOUs. COVID-19 protocols at the upcoming national convention including other convention items were discussed. The council adopted several amendments to be presented at the 2022 national convention and discussed and made recommendations of approval or disapproval on resolutions and amend-

ments to the *NALC Constitution* for submission to the convention. The council was notified of a newly created position providing for letter carriers to replace field secretaries in the regional offices. The council also elected the Nalcrest officers,

June 22, 2022 (video conference): The council discussed and made recommendations of approval or disapproval on all resolutions and amendments to the *NALC Constitution* for submission to the 2022 national convention.

Aug. 3-5 and 8-12, 2022 (Chicago, IL): President Fredric V. Rolando announced the appointment of Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr. to the Federal Advisory Committee – Occupational Safety and Health. The council discussed the additional resolutions received since the last meeting for recommendations of approval or disapproval. The council was advised that NALC is working on data in preparation for discussions with the USPS about how the Sorting and Delivery Centers will be structured. The council was provided with a legislative and political update. The council authorized the purchase of property for the purpose of housing the Region 11 national business agent's office.

Nov. 29, 2022 (video conference): The council passed a resolution concerning the rates for the NALC Health Benefit Plan for employees and staff, based on the staff plan actuary's analysis.

Dec. 13-14, 2022 (Washington, DC): The council was informed of the expiration of the term for Board of Governor Lee Moak and efforts to have him reappointed. President Fredric V. Rolando discussed with the council the Segal Report and the financial impact the recalculation of the CSRS retirement liability would have on the Postal Service. The council also received a political and legislative report, an update on the status of the Step AA pay dispute and had discussions on the commitment from the USPS to create a task force to address crimes against postal employees.

Jan 24-26, 2023 (Marietta, GA): The council was provided an update on the Vote At Home initiative as well as a political and legislative update. Negotiating priorities were discussed with the council. The council was also provided with diversity training.

Feb. 22-23, 2023 (Washington, DC): The council was assigned bargaining subcommittees and the topics they would be discussing in preparation for negotiations with the USPS for the collective bargaining agreement. An update was provided to the council concerning the activities of the Disaster Relief Foundation. A litigation report was provided by legal counsel as well as a legislative and political update. President Brian L. Renfroe discussed with the council initiatives to increase contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund.

April 18, 2023 (video conference): Executive Vice President Paul Barner provided the council with an update on the status of contract negotiations. The council was also given an update on the potential purchase of property in California to house the Region 1 national business agent's office.

May 12, 2023 (video conference): Executive Vice President Paul Barner informed the council that a team headed up by Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr. was tasked to study safety and health concerns related to the implementation of the Sorting and Delivery Centers. The council was also provided with an update on collective bargaining efforts.

May 20, 2023 (video conference): Executive Vice President Paul Barner provided the council with an update on collective bargaining and the status of the potential purchase of property in California to house the Region 1 national business agent's office.

June 29, 2023 (Washington, DC): The council discussed the 2024 presidential election and the endorsement of the Biden-Harris ticket by the AFL-CIO. The council was provided with a legal report and a

legislative and political update. The council also discussed heat safety and past litigation involving the U.S. Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Agency.

July 24, 2023 (video conference): President Brian L. Renfroe provided an updated to the council on collective bargaining efforts. The council also discussed the HIPP training issues, crimes against postal employees and the likelihood of a labor strike by the Teamsters against UPS.

Aug. 29, 2023 (Washington, DC): An update was provided to the council on the potential purchase of property in California to house the Region 1 national business agent's office as well as the potential purchase of property in Texas to house the Region 10 national business agent's office. An update on contract negotiations was provided by President Brian L. Renfroe.

Sept. 19, 2023 (video conference): President Brian L. Renfroe provided an update on collective bargaining efforts. The council discussed the vacancy status on the Board of Governors as Governor Lee Moak would not be renominated. The council was notified of potential legislation addressing crimes against postal employees likely to be introduced in the House of Representatives. The council was provided with an agenda for the national rap session. The council discussed efforts to create a new steward training platform in an "e-learning" type format and emergency response training designed to educate teams on how to respond to

emergencies that affect members.

Oct. 18, 2023 (video conference): The council elected the officers of Nalcrest and considered reports from the Convention Site Committee concerning selection of the sites for the 2028 and 2030 national conventions. The council voted to have the 2028 national convention in Minneapolis and the 2030 national convention in Honolulu.

Oct. 27, 2023 (video conference): President Brian L. Renfroe provided the council with an update on collective bargaining efforts, legislation to address crimes against postal employees and rallies for letter carrier safety.

Nov. 16-17, 2023 (New Orleans, LA): The council reviewed the agenda for the national rap session and the topics for the workshops. The council was provided with an update on the states of the "e-learning" steward training and emergency response training. President Brian L. Renfroe introduced the women's mentoring and diversity inclusion committee concepts. The council discussed efforts to address Step B and arbitration backlogs. The council was also provided legislative and political, Board of Governors and collective bargaining updates as well as the status of the possible purchase or property in Texas to house the Region 10 national business agent's office.

Dec. 18, 2023 (video conference): The council passed a resolution concerning the rates for the NALC Health Benefit Plan for employees and staff, based on the staff plan

actuary's analysis.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1, 2024 (Nalcrest, FL): The council acknowledged the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Nalcrest and reviewed the associated activities. Brian L. Renfroe provided an update on collective bargaining and discussed the interest arbitration process. The council was provided with an overview of national arbitration hearing involving the PostalEase hack issue. The council was provided with an update on the emergency response training, the status of the Segal Report, the Board of Governors and Postal Regulatory Commission as well as the crime legislation. The council was also updated on the women's mentoring and the diversity and inclusion committees and was provided with a legal report from legal counsel.

April 26, 2024 (Washington, DC): An overview of the IT infrastructure was provided to the council by the director of network operations with discussion regarding system upgrades.

May 29-30, 2024 (Washington, DC): The council was provided an update on the Emergency Response Team training and the activities of the ERT since. The council was provided with a legal report from legal counsel. The council discussed and made recommendations of approval or disapproval on amendments to the *NALC Constitution* for submission to the 2024 national convention. The council also discussed the Dispute Resolution Process and improvements that resulted from joint meetings with the USPS.

The president of the NALC Auxiliary

Hello convention delegates!

I am so excited to be here in Boston again. I am Cynthia Martinez, president of our NALC Auxiliary. The Auxiliary has been my passion for a number of years. I joined 35 years ago. Our mission is to fight for letter carriers. This includes their well-being, their working conditions, their right to

representation, and a fair contract. I myself was a letter carrier for five-plus years and know the demands of the job. I appreciate their dedication and hard work.

The Auxiliary members attend workshops at their state capitols, along with other public meetings. We have the opportunity to hear lectures from our elected officials.

Our Auxiliary members also attend rallies in support of letter carriers.

At this convention, we hope to continue to find ways to better the lives of letter carriers and their families. Again, welcome to Boston. Have a wonderful time.

In solidarity,
Cynthia Martinez

Legislative and Political Affairs

Since our last convention report, Washington's legislative and political landscape has significantly shifted. The 2022 midterm elections saw Republicans reclaim a narrow majority in the House, while Democrats managed to hold onto their slim majority in the Senate. Tight majorities and a divided Congress have set the stage for a challenging legislative environment in the 118th Congress.

Last fall, the House faced a significant three-week disruption when members of his own party triggered a vote to remove Speaker Kevin McCarthy (R-CA). After several unsuccessful attempts by other members to secure the speakership, Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA) was finally elected speaker at the end of October.

Speaker Johnson has faced numerous obstacles, including a motion to vacate the speakership filed by members of his own party just seven months into his tenure. Speaker Johnson met a different fate than McCarthy when Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) and fellow Democrats voted to table the motion and keep the House running.

Nevertheless, with a 220-213 majority (and two vacancies), Republicans can only afford to lose three votes on any legislation considered on the House floor, meaning it is almost impossible to pass bills without some bipartisan support. The majority has experienced significant difficulty within in its own caucuses resulting in very little making it to the House floor outside of non-controversial matters.

On the Senate side, margins are just as tight with a nearly evenly divided body (48 Democrats, 49 Republicans, and three Independents who caucus with the Democrats). Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) have kept their leadership roles. In both chambers, the legislative agenda has been scaled back significantly in the 118th and looking at the remainder of the second session, not much is expected.

We are convening in Boston just three months before the 2024 elec-

tion, in which the presidency and control of both chambers of Congress are up for grabs.

The last few election cycles have taught us that despite polls and predictions, anything can happen. Uncertainty in the presidential election is making it increasingly difficult to project the outcome of that race as well as future control of both chambers of Congress.

The race for control of the House in the 119th Congress is sure to be tight. 45 members of Congress have announced their retirement, with more expected. According to The Cook Political Report, there are 22 extremely competitive elections, half currently held by Democrats and half held by Republicans, that could go either way. These races will likely decide which party reaches the 218-seat threshold to control the chamber.

In the Senate, one-third of seats are up for reelection this year. Eight senators have announced their retirement and Democrats are at a significant disadvantage in defending the majority. Seven seats currently held by Democrats will largely determine the majority. Sens. Jon Tester (MT), Jacky Rosen (NV), Sherrod Brown (OH), Bob Casey (PA), and Tammy Baldwin (WI) are the most vulnerable. With the retirements of Sens. Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), the Senate races in Arizona and Michigan are also expected to be competitive and go towards either party. If Democrats lose two or more of these, or any, Senate races, Republicans will gain control of the chamber. Republican senators that are up for reelection hail from largely safe Republican seats. Sens. Rick Scott (R-FL) and Ted Cruz (R-TX) are considered the party's most vulnerable, however their states are Republican strongholds that Donald Trump won in 2020.

Now more than ever, it's important for letter carriers to familiarize themselves with the candidates, know NALC's priority issues, and most importantly, have a plan to vote in November.

As always, NALC will educate members and support candidates who will support letter carrier-friendly policies that promote a healthy network and good jobs. To that end, we will continue to work alongside our sister unions to elect pro-letter carrier candidates across the federal government.

Post-election, Congress will convene for a lame duck session. The House, Senate, and presidential election results will shape what opportunities might arise during this eight-week period. A changing 2025 landscape could incentivize party leaders to hotline some of their priorities through Congress. NALC will stay closely engaged during this time and will act on any opportunities that could propel our priorities forward.

Legislative priorities

Stabilizing the Postal Service's finances

The long-term financial viability of our employer remains a top priority. A sustainable USPS is key to our long-term job security and the service we provide.

The Postal Service Reform Act was a major step toward making the USPS financially solvent. However, we knew this was only one piece of a larger solution. Two significant policy matters must be addressed in order to achieve financial stability.

First, NALC is advocating for the Postal Service to be allowed to invest its retirement funds.

The Postal Service has three retirement funds, CSRS, FERS, and the Postal Service Retiree Health Benefits Fund (PSRHBF). Currently, these funds are invested solely in low-yield Treasury bonds, causing the agency to miss out on millions of dollars of potential annual returns. To that end, NALC has been working with key legislators to carefully craft legislation to allow for investment of future funds that follows private-

Legislative and Political Affairs

sector best practices by diversifying its investment portfolios with stocks and bonds through Thrift Savings Plan (TSP)-style index funds. This sensible and fiscally responsible change would yield greater returns and ultimately reduce the cost of pensions and retiree health benefits shouldered by the agency, its employees, and even mailers in the form of rate increases.

NALC has had productive conversations with Capitol Hill leaders, and we are hopeful about the prospect of a legislative solution that would allow the Postal Service to reinvest.

Similarly, for more than 50 years, the Postal Service has faced a glaring misallocation of retirement fund obligations, which has unfairly saddled the agency with costs that should be the obligation of the federal government. To that end, if our pensions were calculated in accordance with 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA), the Postal Service would see over a \$90 billion surplus in pension liabilities. Legally, any surplus in our pension accounts would be directed to the retiree health benefits fund. NALC has continued to engage the current and previous presidential administrations on this issue and will continue to evaluate all of our options to finally get a fair pension reallocation for the Postal Service.

Protect Our Letter Carriers Act

Since 2020, there have been more than 2,000 violent assaults and crimes committed against letter carriers on the job. In the last year, NALC Headquarters, regions and branches have organized more than 15 rallies nationwide to bring public awareness to this growing problem.

Letter carriers from coast to coast have made their voices heard, and the next step to deter these crimes from happening is federal law. In March, Reps. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA) and Greg Landsman (D-OH),

introduced the Protect Our Letter Carriers Act (H.R. 7629/S.4356). In May, Sens. Josh Hawley (R-MO) and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) introduced a companion bill in the Senate. Since its introduction, the bill has continued to gain bipartisan support, and as this report was going to print had 91 cosponsors in the House.

This bill includes three important provisions to deter these crimes from happening.

It provides \$7 billion over five years (\$1.4 billion annually) in funding for the Postal Service to secure its infrastructure, including installing high-security collection boxes and replacing items carried by letter carriers with more secure electronic versions.

It would ensure that every crime committed against a letter carrier is prosecuted by requiring the Attorney General to appoint an assistant U.S. attorney in each judicial district to prioritize any case that involves an assault or crime against a letter carrier.

It would strengthen and standardize sentencing guidelines for these crimes by ensuring they are treated in the same manner as assaults on federal law enforcement officers.

The health and safety of letter carriers always come first, and this bill is NALC's top legislative priority. It is imperative that America's mail is protected and, most importantly, that the letter carriers who deliver it are, too. NALC is committed to using all our power and resources to move this bill through Congress.

Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset repeal

NALC has remained focused on gaining support and pushing for the passage of the Social Security Fairness Act (H.R. 82/S. 597). This bill, led by Reps. Garret Graves (R-LA) and Abigail Spanberger (D-VA) in the House and Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Susan Collins (R-ME) in

the Senate, would repeal the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and the Government Pension Offset (GPO).

The WEP and GPO are parts of Social Security law that unfairly reduce—or sometimes eliminate—the Social Security benefits of public employees, including letter carriers, who have earned pension benefits from public employee pension plans such as the CSRS.

Once again, this bill has overwhelming bipartisan support in the House with 322 cosponsors at the time of this writing. There have been two hearings on WEP and GPO repeal held by the House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Social Security this Congress. In November, the subcommittee held a field hearing in Louisiana where victims, including a police officer, firefighter, teacher, and retired state employee, testified on how the WEP and GPO have affected them. In April, the subcommittee held a hearing in Washington, DC, that featured economists, researchers, and Social Security experts.

Despite the support and momentum around the issue, the bill has yet to receive a committee markup or floor vote. Given the bill's high price tag, it is unlikely that we will see it considered this Congress. However, the lame duck session, end-of-year funding packages, and more might present new opportunities, and NALC is committed to any means necessary to finally get this bill passed.

Federal Retirement Fairness Act

The Federal Retirement Fairness Act (H.R. 5995) is another ongoing legislative priority for NALC. This bill would allow certain federal employees to make catch-up retirement contributions for time spent as non-career employees after Dec. 31, 1988, making it creditable service under the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS).

The legislation would cover letter carriers who were employed as casuals, transitional employees, or city carrier assistants. About 70 percent of active NALC members would have some sort of credible time under this bill.

Reps. Derek Kilmer (D-WA), David Valadao (R-CA), Don Bacon (R-NE), and Gerry Connolly (D-VA) introduced the legislation, which has 113 co-sponsors at the time of this writing.

Much of our work related to this bill has been focused on educating members of Congress on this issue. Many are unfamiliar with this widespread injustice across the Postal Service and the entire federal government.

Like WEP and GPO repeal, this bill, which covers the entire federal government, has a hefty price tag that this Congress is almost certain to shy away from.

While likely we will not see action on this bill this Congress, NALC is committed to continuing to educate members and candidates on this issue that affects so many of our members.

Our power through the Letter Carrier Political Fund

NALC has a robust legislative agenda and while the landscape of this Congress is not ideal for advancing much of anything, NALC remains actively engaged in Washington and in every Congressional district due to the hard work of our letter carrier congressional liaisons and every engaged member in local districts. Our reputation and commitment to supporting those who support us is backed by one of our greatest weapons, the Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF), which allows

continued political engagement on the federal level to keep our priorities at the forefront.

We know that Congress has enormous power over the Postal Service, our health care, our pensions, and our collective bargaining rights. There's a saying that if you are not at the table, you are on the menu. LCPF keeps us at the table – ready to take advantage of any opportunity to advance our goals. In addition, our proactive defense enables us to stop bad policies before it sees the menu.

Despite the inevitable power shifts in the House, Senate and White House, LCPF allows us to continue to invest in candidates who support us and stay at the forefront no matter the landscape. Enactment of the Postal Service Reform Act proved that if we continue to engage in a bipartisan manner, we can achieve success.

LCPF is one of our greatest weapons. Right now, only 12 percent of our members support our political action committee (PAC). At that level, LCPF generates nearly \$7 million in a two-year cycle, a respectable number. For context, the top labor PAC brought in nearly \$70 million. Our union has 94 percent voluntary membership so we know that if we were to increase participation in the PAC from 12 percent to 50 percent, LCPF's influence would skyrocket.

Over the past year, our Legislative and Political Organizers (LPOs) have asked branches to organize Hatch Act compliant events focused on signing members up for LCPF. Additionally, LPOs have worked with state associations and branches to educate LCPF coordinators with talking points and instructions to maximize local contributors.

LCPF events are only successful when branch leaders “make the ask” of their members. As you are coordinating events or trainings, please reach out to your LPO for any assistance. They are a great resource and are available to help grow LCPF in your branch and state.

This year's convention theme and the February 2024 LCPF-focused issue of *The Postal Record* are the same: Grow. Rise. Together. This embodies the spirit of becoming stronger together, and we must come together to increase LCPF participation.

Everyone has a role in our legislative efforts, whether it is offense, defense, letter writing, or town halls, but the most efficient and effective way to make a difference is by contributing to LCPF. Its strength and growth are critical to our legislative success.

We will continue using our LCPF resources on educating, electing, and re-electing lawmakers who stand with us on our issues. We do not engage in wedge, partisan issues that seek to divide us, rather we support candidates who support a strong and vibrant Postal Service, protecting our benefits and retirements, and expanding collective bargaining rights for all workers. Regardless of party, we make decisions based on candidates' records and stances on our priorities. This is how we ensure the right candidates who will fight for us are in Washington.

On page 222, please find the Letter Carrier Political Fund Committee and Distribution report, which includes all disbursements made to members of Congress from Jan. 1, 2023 through July 15, 2024.

Note: By making a contribution to the Letter Carrier Political Fund, you are doing so voluntarily with the understanding that your contribution is not a condition of membership in the National Association of Letter Carriers or of employment by the Postal Service, nor is it part of union dues. You have a right to refuse to contribute without any reprisal. The Letter Carrier Political Fund will use the money it receives to contribute to candidates for federal office and undertake other political spending as permitted by law. Your selection shall remain in full force and effect until canceled. Contributions to the Letter Carrier Political Fund are not deductible for federal income tax purposes. Federal law prohibits the Letter Carrier Political Fund from soliciting contributions from individuals who are not NALC members, executive and administrative staff or their families. Any contribution received from such an individual will be refunded to that contributor.

Information Center

The NALC Information Center (IC) has several purposes: to obtain, organize, protect and provide access to the information resources needed by the union’s officers, staff and membership. In order to meet these needs, the IC works in several areas to enhance access to materials with better organization, thorough indexing and metadata, and follow-through of retention schedules and destruction of unnecessary materials, all while following the regulations and legalities as required.

Archives

NALC’s official archives have been stored at Walter Reuther Library at Wayne State University since 2001, where a professional staff of archivists and technicians safeguard the materials. NALC maintains a relationship with Reuther’s staff to evaluate records for future transfers and make current holdings more accessible to officers, staff and members, as well as the labor community. By doing so, NALC’s history will be preserved and made available to a wide audience. Anyone interested in NALC, the Postal Service and its workers, or American labor in general can access this plethora of historical material.

Reuther is continuing to process NALC records. Professional archival processing is a painstaking activity and takes time but increases access to the materials by producing finding aids, which help researchers locate specific items of interest. The union’s collection at Reuther includes paper records, memorabilia, photographic images, videos, posters, badges and uniforms. If you go to the Reuther website (reuther.wayne.edu), you’ll see the finding aids to the NALC collection and a photo gallery of historic images. These will provide you with some idea of the extent of NALC’s collection.

While the union’s official archives are in Detroit, many historical items and files remain in Washington. Some archival materials remain on site for the use of staff and officers as reference materials, while other archival

materials remain on site in consideration of other projects. The collection of historical artifacts started in earnest with the celebration of the union’s centenary in 1989 and has continued since. We have, among other things: historical organization records, uniform items from USPS, the Post Office Department and foreign postal services; an almost complete collection of convention badges, dating back to the organizing convention in 1889; pins; buttons; and scrapbooks.

Records management

As branches should be aware, the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) imposes strict retention requirements on unions on both the local and national level. However, records management is about more than legalities; records management is a necessary component for a functioning union. The purpose of the records management program at NALC Headquarters is to organize and preserve the enormous amount of material generated by the union while disposing of that which is no longer needed.

Although increasing amounts of NALC’s work is done solely in digital format, paper is still a part of the records management process and must be considered properly. Requirements for records retention—whether practical or legal—and space limitations often clash. NALC continues to reinforce its physical record management standards and ensure timely destruction of material that is no longer needed or legally required. This allows the valuable records storage spaces in the Headquarters building to be used to store only those items that officers and staff may need more convenient and frequent access to and prevents backlogs that contradict proper records management practices. Care is always taken to safeguard personal and financial data and other sensitive information when disposing of records.

NALC has also strengthened its electronic records retention policy to ensure efficient and ideal usage of

space, optimize retrieval capabilities, eliminate redundancy, and support effective management. This effort includes restructuring and organizing digital files, removal of duplicate and outdated items, and scanning projects to reduce physical space use and enhance successful retrieval. In addition, NALC has acquired a digital asset management system to ensure that items requiring permanent retention are stored in a secure space that also allows for elevated searching, extensive metadata, and fast retrieval, while at the same time providing the ability to remove those materials from NALC’s other storage options.

As mentioned above, branch recordkeeping is also subject to the LMRDA, and must follow the same general principles that govern records management at the Headquarters level, if on a smaller scale. Branch Officers’ Training, offered by the secretary-treasurer, provides classes on records management, with the aim to help branches comply with LMRDA requirements.

Information Center

The NALC Information Center holds a large collection of NALC and postal materials, and a smaller amount of general interest and reference sources. The IC maintains copies of all NALC publications, including all convention materials back to the early 1960s. In preparation for the national convention, this proves useful, as many need to reference past proceedings, officers’ reports and resolutions. In combination with the convention materials, the past *Postal Records* can trace what happened in every convention of the union’s history, back to the very beginning. The resources available in the IC are also used when the union is engaged in bargaining or preparing for arbitration. Among other items, the IC has the transcripts and exhibits from all NALC interest arbitrations, and those from many of our sister postal unions.

One of the most significant parts of the IC collection is postal-related

material. The IC can supply, when asked, the changing language of a section of the *Employee and Labor Relations Manual (ELM), Handbook M-41*, or other postal document going back to its origin. Branches needing support for arbitration, as well as Headquarters officers and staff, have access to this information through the IC. In addition to official USPS documents, the IC has

an extensive collection of postal-related books and government documents, ranging from past President Doherty’s *Mailman USA* to a complete set of Government Accountability Office studies on postal issues to recently published studies of the Postal Service.

Increasingly, digital access is part of the IC, as digital subscriptions to larger online archives of materi-

als replace physical subscriptions. Digital access is also a goal for scanning projects happening with IC materials to allow officers and staff to use the IC materials wherever and whenever they may need to for research and to assist members.

The IC staff is always happy to answer reference questions, or do research projects, by drawing on the unique materials it has available.

Disaster Relief Foundation

At the 2018 national convention in Detroit, the creation of the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation (DRF) was announced to the delegates in attendance. The mission of the foundation is to respond to the far-too-often occurrences of devastating natural disasters by providing relief to alleviate the suffering of affected NALC members.

NALC branches and members remain determined to provide aid to members who are affected by these disasters.

When a disaster strikes, DRF officers and directors quickly identify carriers who are affected and give them aid as soon as possible. The aid might include supplies such as water, food, clothing and postal uniform items. Working closely with local branch leaders, the DRF helps members whose homes are uninhabitable find temporary housing and transportation, as well as apply for DRF grants.

The DRF is structured so that when a natural disaster occurs, an assessment can be made quickly and then followed up with much-needed relief for our affected members. Since being established, hundreds of individual donors, branches and state associations have pitched in to help the foundation build its capacity to assist regular NALC members in need.

Through the NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, NALC is answering the call from branches and individual members who wanted a mechanism

to send donations, supplies, uniforms and other assistance to their brothers and sisters affected by natural disasters. “The foundation is ready to provide rapid help for our affected brothers and sisters,” Renfroe said. “But it can’t do its job without our support.”

Donations should be sent to NALC Disaster Relief Foundation, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144. The foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, and your contribution may be tax deductible. It is recommended that you seek further advice from your tax advisor. All donations from letter carriers, branches and state associations go directly to NALC members who need assistance—no administrative costs are deducted. Any NALC member who has faced hardship as a result of a natural disaster or wildfire can apply for assistance by completing the Application for Relief Grant available on the Foundation’s web page at nalc.org/disaster.

“If you have not donated yet, please help your fellow letter carriers affected by a natural disaster,” Renfroe said. “Let’s all donate to the Disaster Relief Foundation now so that it can be ready when disaster strikes.”

The DRF received more than \$881,950.16 worth of donations, from June 1, 2022, through May 31, 2024.

- Headquarters: \$525,100.00
- Members: \$105,428.31
- Branches: \$173,334.00

2022
Hurricane—FL
Flooding—MO
2023
Flooding—IL, WV, MI, NJ
Wildfires—HI, WA
Hurricanes—FL, CA, PR
Windstorms—TN, MI
Tornado—GA
2024
Tornadoes—NY, OK, KY
Wildfires—NM

- State: \$25,958.58
- Region: \$8,723.50
- Others: \$43,405.77

The DRF also provided more than \$643,900 worth of grants and other assistance for the storms shown above.

The eligibility requirements are outlined in the application. The foundation’s board of directors will consider the applications and issue grants on an objective basis to eligible individuals as funds are available. Members do not have to wait for emergency relief or insurance claims to be settled to apply for aid. Applications must be received no later than 120 days after the date when the natural disaster occurred, unless the applicant can provide sufficient reasons for the delay.

Communications Department

The NALC Department of Communications and Media Relations is the hub for the union's official communications efforts both to NALC members and to outside audiences. The department strives to provide a consistent and effective message. The department has a challenging mission, one that is central to the future of NALC, of the letter carrier craft and of the U.S. Postal Service—informing active and retired NALC members alike while also helping to develop and get the union's message out to the public and to the public's political representatives. Increasing the understanding of postal issues in the public and political arenas is key to NALC's ability to succeed in everything else it does.

In delivering our message, we have two spheres of activity—internal communication (to NALC members) and external communication (largely through the news media), with a good deal of interaction between the two.

For members, our aims are to inform them about the postal situation, tell them what's at stake for them and inspire them to take action when appropriate, whether through political activity or by spreading the message.

The chief forms of communication with members are *The Postal Record*, NALC's monthly magazine and official publication, which is mailed to our 292,000 members and some others, including lawmakers, and posted on NALC's website, nalc.org. Also central to our efforts are the *NALC Bulletin* (a periodic publication that is posted in branch halls and post offices), the NALC Member App for smartphones and our outreach through various social media channels.

We seek to influence the public by getting our message out through the news media—on the national, regional and local levels. That involves responding to reporters' requests for comments on postal issues, and granting interviews with national officers, re-

gional or state leaders, branch officers or local letter carriers, to news outlets. It also includes getting our message across directly in the media in our own voices—by writing commentary pieces (also known as op-eds) and letters to the editor.

Also critical in the process, given the amount of misleading conventional wisdom that exists, is the department's effort to inform journalists about letter carrier issues and other postal matters so that their reporting or analysis will be more accurate. Similarly, we seek to dissuade media outlets from delving into topics that are not relevant or that would be injurious to letter carriers. Such conversations take place on a daily basis and typically are off the record so we can speak as frankly as necessary to make the case and achieve our aims.

The quality of the department's work has been recognized by our peers in the labor communications community. Since the last convention, news articles in print and online have won 18 awards from the International Labor Communications Association's (ILCA) Labor Media Awards, the largest competition in the United States recognizing excellence in labor journalism.

Internal communications

The Postal Record is, as mentioned, NALC's chief communications vehicle with the membership. It is a unique resource, without peer in the U.S. labor movement in focus and quality. The official journal of NALC, *The Postal Record* is two years older than the union itself, having been founded in 1887. Its pages address the concerns of letter carriers in the workplace, legislative and political spheres; when relevant, it places topics in the context of the broader labor movement. The magazine's emphasis is on straightforward information so members can make their own informed decisions. *The Postal*

Record also explains how members can help make NALC stronger. It provides thorough and up-to-date reports on the letter carrier craft, the Postal Service, public policy issues and the many notable efforts of NALC members to improve the communities in which they work; for example, through the annual food drive or the Muscular Dystrophy Association. The staff also writes feature stories relevant to letter carriers.

In planning magazine articles, the staff works directly with resident national officers and coordinates with other NALC Headquarters departments. Most of the articles are written by Communications Department staffers, but staff members from other departments provide essential material for many items or even write stories themselves.

The Postal Record has featured a wide range of articles recently, such as ones reporting on the efforts by members to raise public awareness about crimes against letter carriers, encouraging members to get involved in the legislative process, informing new and veteran members of their rights, and preparing for the biennial convention in Boston.

Meanwhile, because it is not on a set publication schedule, the *NALC Bulletin* provides a timely way to address issues such as legislation, contract negotiations and various union campaigns, as events warrant. Further, the *Bulletin* is available to all postal employees across crafts, because it's posted on union bulletin boards in the work areas of post offices as well as in branch halls. Nearly 10,000 copies of the *Bulletin* are mailed to branch officials and shop stewards.

Along with these publications, the department maintains the NALC website, which aims to be attractive, content-rich, focused and current. While the website's primary goal is to provide information to members, it also serves as a public relations tool by communicating to

a wider audience the value of the universal postal network and the important contributions made by letter carriers to their communities every day. The level of interest is reflected in the tens of thousands of visits a month to NALC's website. Contract-related documents account for the majority of downloads from the website. Its seven main sections—About NALC, News & Research, Government Affairs, Workplace Issues, Union Administration, Community Service and Member Benefits—contain subsections with hundreds of pages of information and thousands of supporting documents.

The Communications and Media Relations staffers also work closely with other NALC Headquarters departments to post important information to the website in timely fashion.

The department delivers vital information to members quickly through the NALC Member App for iPhone and Android smartphones, a tool that uses today's technology to get the most up-to-date information and resources into the hands of our stewards and members. The app was developed at NALC Headquarters with the needs of all members in mind. It contains links to workplace resources, including the National Agreement, the *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)*, the Materials Reference System (MRS), city carrier assistant (CCA) resources and more. It also includes legislative tools, as well as one of the most useful features for all letter carriers—an interactive non-scheduled days calendar. Members can sign up for notifications based on their interests and where they live. The app is available in the App Store or on Google Play.

The Communications and Media Relations Department provides frequent updates on web-based social media sites, including Facebook (facebook.com/nalc.national); X, formerly Twitter (@NALC_National); and Instagram (@LetterCarriers).

The staff employs vehicles such as these to spread NALC's message and to generate enthusiasm among the rank and file for the union's agenda and activities. We also use YouTube (youtube.com/ThePostalRecord) to post NALC-made videos.

Additionally, the department provides creative, editorial and publishing support for other departments, and prepares materials for national conventions and rap sessions. The expertise and experience that is gathered in the department gives other NALC Headquarters operations the ability to create a variety of professional-quality publications in-house at a substantial savings over contracting with outside vendors, ranging from greeting cards and invitations to major works such as *Carriers in a Common Cause* and the *Joint Contract Administration Manual (JCAM)*.

For national conventions, the department produces the *Officers' Reports* book, the *Financial Reports* book and the *Pocket Guide*. It also works with video vendors during the convention to quickly isolate key events for posting to NALC's website as well as to its YouTube account.

When the convention is in session, the department writes and produces a daily summary, the *Convention Chronicle*, with department staffers covering the events—monitoring the proceedings, taking notes, writing articles, taking photographs, editing, doing layout and proofreading from morning well into the evening. The *Chronicle* is produced completely on-site and printed overnight at a union printer for distribution of about 8,000 copies the next morning to delegates.

Following the convention, the department produces a special convention edition of *The Postal Record* to share convention business with the full membership. Later, the staff assembles the *Convention Proceedings*, a verbatim account

mailed to every NALC branch represented at the event.

Department members also participate in training and developing the union's future leaders at the Leadership Academy by explaining how to create effective branch publications and websites, and leading workshops on developing and communicating a message.

External communications

The department's communications efforts focus on getting information out through the news media in ways that will constructively influence the public and political conversations about postal matters. That requires educating journalists by debunking the large amount of misleading conventional wisdom and explaining the value of the Postal Service and letter carriers to the nation and each community. Along with the myths are the dual problems of political or ideological narratives as well as the large gaps of information on postal issues that exist in most newsrooms. That is the case because few media organizations have reporters who regularly cover USPS, letter carriers or postal topics in general—meaning that journalists often tackle an assigned postal story armed with little knowledge or context.

That trio of problems—the persistent myths; the presence of political agendas, sometimes stemming from the efforts by vested or ideological interests to influence public opinion; and the lack of in-depth knowledge about postal matters, resulting in part from the economically driven trend in journalism away from specialized beat-reporters toward general assignment reporters—pose challenges for NALC's efforts to press for accurate journalism.

Those very factors, however, also provide NALC with an opportunity because many reporters appreciate guidance as they navigate complex topics with which

Communications Department

they are not familiar, often unsure of where to turn to get the unvarnished truth. And that is where the widespread contributions of letter carriers around the country have proven invaluable. The Communications and Media Relations Department can inform journalists of the facts and help them avoid the pitfalls. But when thousands of letter carriers at all levels—from national officers to regional officials, and branch leaders to rank-and-file carriers in every part of this vast nation—make their voices heard through letters to the editor or op-eds, through interviews with newspaper reporters or comments on radio or television, it alters the way the public, the politicians and the press understand all things postal. All the more when letter carriers communicate their message in a clear, factual and non-partisan manner, as they have consistently done for the past decade and more.

It is that dynamic that was vital in achieving legislative goals such as the landmark postal reform legislation in 2022, because it not only provided legislators with a fuller grasp of the facts and the need for changes, it also made clear the public support for such reform. When media outlets produce accurate reports, it informs the public while influencing the political discussion in two ways—lawmakers directly consume media reports, while also hearing from their constituents about how much they value the Postal Service.

That dynamic also has manifested itself in the 15 or so “Enough is enough” rallies letter carriers have organized around the country over the past year to draw attention to the skyrocketing number of assaults and robberies targeting letter carriers, the impact, and the need to combat the trend, with the Communications and Media Relations Department closely involved in aspects ranging from working with local and regional media outlets on coverage to helping branch

officers plan the rallies, formulate their messages and deal with reporters who attend and often seek one-on-one interviews. Media coverage has been intense, with local TV affiliates of NBC, Fox, ABC and CBS often present, along with local and regional newspapers, radio stations and online news outlets.

The department also helps to publicize and generate news coverage for the many important things that letter carriers do beyond their jobs to serve their customers, their communities and the country as a whole, such as the food drive and heroic actions on the route.

Our overall goal: to inform the press, public and policymakers in ways that will lead to policies ensuring a stable and prosperous future for the Postal Service and for letter carriers—one that will allow us to continue to offer residential and business customers the industrial world’s most-affordable delivery service.

To get there, members of the Communications and Media Relations Department interact daily with news reporters, editors and producers in all parts of the country. We provide information for journalists working on stories, so NALC’s voice—and the facts—will be part of the public discussion. We often do this before an event or before news breaks, both to achieve more accurate reporting and to make it more likely that NALC’s perspectives and comments will be included. That has led to much-improved reporting by key media organizations such as the Associated Press, whose stories are carried by thousands of news outlets nationwide. We also facilitate interviews when advisable with NALC officers and members for prominent print, television and radio outlets on a national level, as well as for small local news organizations—with the latter being a key part of our efforts because they often are the most-trusted source of news for residents. Indeed, while many unions and other institu-

tions focus on high-profile and prestigious national outlets, NALC understands the importance of local news outlets that are closer to where people live and work. Emphasizing regional and community media requires extra work because of their smaller circulation, yet another factor that makes the participation of individual letter carriers in the department’s communications efforts so important. The omnipresence over the past decade of our letters to the editor and our op-ed/commentary pieces, from major newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post* and *Los Angeles Times* to regional newspapers in North Carolina or small-town weeklies in Wisconsin and in every other part of the country, is unparalleled in the union movement—as is the increasing volume of interviews our leaders and members do with print or broadcast outlets on letter carrier safety issues. Our internal communications efforts help inform letter carriers so they can carry out this mission out—and they deliver the message with considerable success.

The department regularly converses with journalists—in Washington, DC, around the country, and occasionally around the globe—to help them better understand postal issues, to explain where the common narratives about USPS fall short, and to show them why postal issues matter to readers, viewers or listeners—and thus are worth reporting or commenting on.

There remains much to do, but these efforts—helped tremendously by the support and participation of President Renfro and Executive Vice President Paul Barner; the members of our Executive Council, including the national business agents; our state association presidents; our branch officers and our rank-and-file letter carriers—are clearly influencing the national debate, as seen by the passage of the Postal Reform Act.

Journalists who were simply reciting the conventional wisdom about the Postal Service often now display the knowledge—and willingness—to delve beyond press releases, preconceived notions and special-interest advocacy statements and get at the actual situation, while frequently including NALC’s perspective and comments.

Along with constant contact with news organizations and interaction with members around the country as they deal with the media, the Communications and Media Relations Department also helps write speeches for national officers. We provide advice for our political and legislative efforts in terms of effective communications strategies and practices. We work on NALC advertising campaigns that spread our message in print or in broadcast media. And we work with our allies, whether individuals or groups, to help them get the message out.

Meet the department

The Communications and Media Relations Department staff currently consists of six individuals:

- Philip Dine, the department’s director and the union’s media liaison.
- Mike Shea, *The Postal Record* managing editor.
- Rick Hodges, a writer and editor.
- Jenessa Kildall Wagner, a writer and editor.
- Sarah Eccleston, the editorial assistant.
- Sarah Thomas, the digital communications specialist.

These six staff members provide most of the story-idea generation, research, interviewing, writing, editing, copy editing, photography, design, layout and production for department projects.

As director since 2010, Dine’s work encompasses a broad spectrum. He edits *The Postal Record*

and discusses communications and media issues in his Letter from the Editor in the magazine. Dine also helps formulate and carry out the union’s communications strategy, while interacting daily (and often nightly) with the news media on issues of importance to letter carriers, the Postal Service and the labor movement. He works with national officers on their media appearances and speeches, while also helping letter carriers around the country write letters or commentary pieces or prepare for interviews.

Shea, who has been with NALC since 2002, has duties that include coordinating with other Headquarters departments and national officers to produce print materials, most notably *The Postal Record*. Along with assigning story ideas and writing articles for the magazine, he handles its design, layout and production schedule. Shea also serves as the union’s chief photographer at most major events.

Writer/Editor Hodges was hired in 2010. An experienced scribe, he has produced a multitude of well-received news and feature stories for *The Postal Record*, including several about the contributions of letter carriers at the community and national levels. He also is involved in the editing and layout of *The Postal Record’s* large Branch Items section.

Wagner joined the staff in 2007 as editorial assistant, becoming a writer/editor in 2018. She relies on her substantial knowledge of NALC and her editing skills to perform her current job as a writer of a variety of news and feature stories for *The Postal Record* and other

COST OF THE POSTAL RECORD		
	4/20 to 3/22	4/22 to 3/24
Printing	\$2,441,356	\$3,238,293
Postage	\$1,914,366	\$2,595,178
Total	\$4,355,722	\$5,833,472
Number of issues	24	23

COST OF NALC ACTIVIST		
		4/22 to 3/24
Printing		\$7,521
Postage*		--
Number of issues		2

COST OF NALC BULLETIN		
	4/20 to 3/22	4/22 to 3/24
Printing	\$103,031	\$135,297
Postage	\$224,200*	\$396,590
Total	\$327,231	\$531,887
Number of issues	17	26

*The NALC Bulletin and the NALC Activist share a USPS postage account, so the postage cost here is estimated.

publications. Wagner produces the popular series of features on letter carriers’ interesting hobbies. She also handles the State Summaries and Retiree Reports sections of the magazine, as well as other editing and layout duties.

Eccleston became the editorial assistant for *The Postal Record* in December 2023. For each month’s *Postal Record* she writes, researches and conducts interviews for human interest stories, the Proud to Serve section and the internet news section. She is also involved in laying out the magazine and various other communications-related tasks.

Thomas began working at NALC in 2023. As a digital communications specialist, she helps manage NALC’s social media accounts by creating original content, spotlighting NALC members, bringing attention to issues relevant to letter carriers, managing the calendar, and reporting on metrics. Her role also includes working with other Headquarters departments to update the NALC’s website with new web content. Additionally, she helps photograph NALC events and produces various audio and visual projects.

Research Department

The NALC Research Department provides research and analysis to NALC’s Office of the President, Executive Council and staff of the union’s major departments. Holly Feldman-Wiencek joined the department in 2016 as a research assistant and has been NALC’s research director since January 2023. Sean Crosbie joined the department in 2017 as a staff assistant for economic analysis.

Examples of Research Department work include analysis of quarterly and annual USPS financial reports; analysis of postal regulatory developments and filings; monitoring of USPS volumes by class of mail; support for collective bargaining; coordination of NALC’s interest arbitration case and hired expert witnesses; analysis of city carrier craft demographics and workforce data; research on U.S. postal and parcel industry trends; evaluation of regulations and developments among international postal operators; and representation of NALC on postal industry panels and at postal conferences.

Since the 2022 biennial convention, the Research Department has worked on a number of issues on behalf of NALC members.

Analysis of USPS reports

The department monitors USPS financial results, volumes, service performance and workforce data and provides analysis and context to the Office of the President. Examples of items the department analyzes include USPS product revenue and volume, workers’ compensation accounting, the USPS balance sheet, and monthly reports on employment and workhours. The department also monitors postal products and services usage, and summarizes USPS reports about usage, such as the USPS Household Diary Study.

In addition, the department reviews what others write about the USPS financial results, including re-

ports published by the Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC), the U.S. Postal Service Office of the Inspector General (USPS OIG) and industry groups.

Despite the repeal of the pre-funding mandate in 2022 and cost reductions due to the early implementation of the Postal Service’s strategic plan, the agency faces a difficult financial outlook. USPS reported a loss of \$6.5 billion in fiscal year 2023. As of the end of the second quarter of the 2024 fiscal year, the Postal Service had not significantly improved its net loss over the same period the previous year. These results were favorably affected by increased revenue due to increased parcel volumes and lower transportation costs, but partially offset by the continued effect of inflation on operating expenses.

Collective bargaining and interest arbitration

The Research Department’s preparations for a new round of collective bargaining begin far in advance of a contract’s expiration. The department began this work for the current round in the fall of 2022, ahead of the May 2023 expiration. The department engages with collective bargaining in two ways: Before bargaining opens, we provide initial research and insight into USPS finances and the labor market to give NALC leadership a detailed understanding of the broader context in which they will bargain, and, during negotiations, we work in collaboration with NALC’s attorneys to craft the case that the union will make in interest arbitration. While we never know before negotiations open if we will reach an impasse and go to interest arbitration, the department works these dual tracks to ensure that we will be ready for arbitration if necessary.

Before contract negotiations begin, the department conducts preliminary research into the overall health of the economy, labor mar-

ket trends, wages in the parcel and delivery market, and trends in USPS workforce data. We share this information with the Office of the President and other NALC officers who will be at the bargaining table. During negotiations, the department is on call to provide any research or analysis as issues arise.

The department’s main focus during bargaining is preparing the case for interest arbitration. This work is comprehensive and meticulous, and includes updating previous NALC presentation exhibits and data, developing new exhibits and identifying expert witnesses to support NALC’s case. In this round of preparations, the department created new exhibits on general economic conditions, injury and illness rates among letter carriers, recent labor settlements around the country, comparison of wages across the delivery industry and the trend toward remote work in the labor market. The department also worked closely with outside experts on wage comparability, heat safety, economics, the parcel market, delivery industry employment trends and workforce structure. The department provided these experts with background information, answered questions, and assisted in identifying publicly available data to help them develop effective witness testimony to support NALC’s case in arbitration.

Pay tables, COLA tracking, annuity tables

When USPS makes changes to the letter carrier pay tables, the Research Department independently verifies the changes to make sure that they are correct. The department provides pay tables to the Communications Department for publication in *The Postal Record* and posting on NALC’s website.

The Research Department also tracks the monthly changes in the consumer price index (CPI) and summarizes where the contract, re-

tiree and Federal Employees' Compensation Act cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) stand each month.

To provide letter carriers with a visual representation of the progress toward a COLA, the department updates a CPI graph on NALC's website. The line graph shows the CPI index readings since the start of the contract, the most recently published CPI, and the CPI number that would generate a future COLA.

When actual contract COLA amounts are calculated by USPS, based on the January and July CPI releases, the department independently reviews the amounts to ensure that they are correct.

The department also maintains and updates the Civil Service Retirement System and the Federal Employees Retirement System annuity projection tables that are included in *The Postal Record* and on the NALC website. Past pay tables, COLA memos and annuity projections can be found on the NALC website.

Analysis of PRC and USPS OIG reports

The department works to analyze and interpret reports and studies from the PRC, the USPS OIG and other independent bodies.

The research staff reviews and summarizes annual reports and supporting materials filed at the PRC. These reports include the PRC's financial analysis of USPS financial results and 10-K Statement, the PRC's Annual Compliance Determination, and the PRC's Analysis of the Postal Service's Annual Performance Report and Performance Plan. The department also monitors other parties' filings with the PRC to determine if they may be of interest to NALC.

NALC is closely monitoring two dockets and may file comments. The first is a review of the PRC's ratemaking system for Market Dominant products. This follows a change in the system after the PRC

adopted a new price cap formula in 2021, which allowed the Postal Service additional authority to increase Market Dominant prices beyond the CPI. Since 2021, USPS has used this authority and raised Market Dominant prices five times. However, Market Dominant volumes have declined year over year. These declines, along with stakeholder concerns, prompted the PRC to initiate another review of the ratemaking system in April 2024. NALC participated in the initial review, and will likely do so again in the current review.

The second is a docket examining the implementation of the Postal Service's 10-year plan, the Delivering for America plan, published in 2021. Three years into the implementation of the plan, the Postal Service is busy redesigning significant parts of its network. However, USPS is facing pushback from lawmakers, customers and mailers over service declines related to the redesign. Notably, customers experienced significant mail delays in the rollout of one of the first regional processing and delivery centers in Richmond, Atlanta and Houston. The PRC has opened a docket in April 2024 to examine these service issues. The PRC ordered USPS to request an advisory opinion from the regulator to ensure that the network changes will not substantially affect service quality nationwide, or explain why such a review is unnecessary. NALC is monitoring this docket and will submit comments if deemed necessary.

The research staff also monitors research published by the USPS OIG and provides summaries and insights on reports relevant to NALC issues. Some reports of note in the last two years were: "Election Mail Readiness for the 2022 Mid-Term Elections"; "Changes in Mail Mix: Implications for Carriers' Physical Health"; "Safety and Health Program Training"; "Postal Service Non-Career Turnover Follow-up"; "Historical Analysis of USPS Retirement Fund Returns"; "U.S. Postal

Service's Response to Mail Theft"; and "Postal Service Hiring Practices." The information gathered from these reports helps to inform union decisions and can provide useful evidence for our case in collective bargaining and interest arbitration.

NALC also provides input on reports produced about the USPS. In the past two years, the USPS OIG has reached out to NALC officers and staff seeking input on reports about heat safety, turnover, the design of sorting and delivery centers, how changes in mail mix have affected carriers' jobs, and the OT Admin tool.

Industry trends

The Research Department also monitors major developments in the delivery industry and looks for trends that might affect the work of city carriers in the future.

First, the department is always tracking the development of Amazon's in-house delivery network and its impact on the parcel market and delivery jobs. In the last two years, Amazon has had to reduce its operating expenses by shrinking its distribution network after over-investing in new facilities during the pandemic. Amazon closed, canceled or delayed more than 160 buildings in 2022 and 2023. Despite this reduction in the size of its network, Amazon continued to increase its share of the parcel market. Amazon's parcel delivery volume increased 15.7 percent between 2022 and 2023. In 2023, for the first time ever, Amazon delivered more packages than UPS. It had already surpassed FedEx's annual volume in 2020. However, Amazon's 2023 volume of 5.9 billion parcels is still shy of the Postal Service's 6.6 billion parcels, though the distance is closing. It is important that the Postal Service maintain its market share to protect letter carrier jobs.

In terms of the delivery labor market, over the last five years, Amazon has hired almost 300,000 delivery workers, making its in-house delivery workforce nearly the size of the

Research Department

city and rural carrier crafts at the Postal Service combined. In many areas, Amazon carefully sets wages to ensure that they are competitive to attract workers, sometimes paying above \$25 per hour, though the jobs do not include the benefits found at the Postal Service. Despite the competitive pay, the jobs are incredibly dangerous and demanding, and turnover is extremely high. The company also uses an employment model that makes it very difficult for workers to organize. Without the ability to organize, Amazon drivers have little power, and the company has an outsized impact on the quality of delivery jobs across the market.

Second, research staff follows the negotiations of unions at other major companies to look for trends and gather ideas for our negotiations. We follow the Teamsters' relationship with UPS most closely, as UPS is a direct competitor of the Postal Service. In July 2023, after months of preparation and establishing a credible strike threat, the Teamsters and UPS reached an agreement on a historic contract. The agreement included sizeable wage increases and, particularly interesting for NALC, the elimination of a lower-tier job classification similar to the city carrier assistant position. Another labor gain of interest was the UAW's win against the Big Three automakers in November 2023. Like the Teamsters-UPS contract, the UAW contracts included sizable wage increases and the elimination of lower-wage tiers, along with the restoration of COLAs. These were both helpful in the development of our case for potential interest arbitration.

Finally, the department monitors the sentiment of the broader industry about USPS, as their satisfaction with the agency has a direct impact on mail volume and revenue. As mentioned above, mailers have voiced significant concern about the frequency and magnitude of Market Dominant price increases in the last two years. One coalition

commissioned a paper to look at the impacts of price increases on mail volume, warning that USPS is underestimating how much these increases are driving away some of its biggest customers. As also noted above, the PRC has opened a docket to investigate these concerns, and the Research Department will work with NALC leadership to decide if engaging in this docket would have a positive impact on city carriers.

Labor and the economy

The Research Department also analyzes broader economic indicators, evaluates how these indicators may affect letter carriers and the labor movement, and alerts union leadership about these findings.

The department explores the forces that affect working people, such as the declining real value of the minimum wage; income and wealth inequality; the gap between productivity and wages; employee compensation trends; and the latest trends in the labor market. We also analyze data related to union membership so that NALC may gain a better understanding of the state of unionized America and how NALC membership compares to that of the overall workforce.

The department also tracks the state of the economy as a whole, looking at various economic data, including the core CPI, CPI for delivery services and postage, gross domestic product, delivery worker employment data, e-commerce sales, labor costs and compensation, and any other data involving the general labor market and the market for those employed in delivery capacities. This data is released on a monthly, quarterly or annual basis and provides NALC with snapshots of how these indicators are performing at a given moment and over the year. While these indicators are often incomplete ways to gauge the health of the economy for letter carriers, they provide NALC with a sense of how the economy might affect letter carriers and USPS.

The unionized labor force saw incredible gains in 2022 and 2023. 2023 was a historically tumultuous year for labor unrest. The number of union elections climbed to their highest in nearly two decades, with 1,572 elections in 2022 and 1,666 in 2023. Unions won more than three quarters of these elections. More strikes were called in 2023 than in any single year since 2002, covering more than half a million workers—more than in the previous three years combined. And, union contracts negotiated in 2023 gave workers an average first-year wage increase of 6.6 percent, the highest average pay raise for any year since 1988. In 2022, that number was 5.7 percent.

Representing NALC at conferences and panels

The Research Department represents NALC at various conferences, postal industry meetings, and on panels throughout the year. In addition, the department represents NALC on several AFL-CIO staff committees, including the Affiliates Table on Digital Technology & Artificial Intelligence, the Affiliates Table on Clean Energy Jobs, and the Contract Campaign & Strike Hub.

In March 2023, the department attended the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA) annual meetings in Detroit, MI. LERA brings together the views of representatives of labor, management, government, academics, advocates and neutrals to share research about labor relations. NALC has attended other LERA events in the past, but this is the first time we attended this conference. It proved to be an informative program, especially one session about employment in the delivery industry. NALC eventually hired a researcher from that panel to act as an expert witness for potential interest arbitration proceedings.

Later that year, NALC research staff participated in several international solidarity and information-

sharing events held by UNI Global Union, the global federation of unions to which NALC is affiliated. NALC belongs to UNI's Post & Logistics sector, along with many other unions that represent workers from national postal systems in their home countries, as well as some unions that represent workers for private delivery companies like UPS, DHL and Amazon.

In August, NALC hosted two UNI Global Union Post & Logistics committee meetings at our Headquarters. On the first day, the World Post & Logistics Committee met. One of the most interesting sessions was about efforts to organize last-mile drivers at private companies like Amazon. National postal systems around the world are all seeing increased competition from new delivery companies. On the second day, the Americas Post & Logistics Committee met and discussed issues concerning postal unions in North and South America. Topics included postal worker health and safety, the increase in gig work in the sector, and the challenge of automation.

Following the Post & Logistics meetings, several NALC officers and staff attended the UNI World Wom-

en's Congress and the UNI World Congress in Philadelphia, PA. These global meetings are held every four years and, much like the NALC convention, function to set the agenda for the federation for the next several years through the passage of resolutions and strategic work plans. Union representatives from 400-plus unions in 109 countries joined together to pass resolutions asserting workers' rights to collective bargaining, healthy and safe workplaces, decent work in a global economy that is rapidly changing due to technology, and work that is not managed by algorithm or another digital interface. Delegates also affirmed the labor movement's commitment to gender equality, building a sustainable future, fighting racism and other forms of discrimination, and holding corporations accountable for their actions.

In October 2023, NALC research staff joined union representatives, Amazon workers, activists and advocacy groups at The Summit to Make Amazon Pay in Manchester, England, to strategize how to tame Amazon's power and make the company pay its fair share—to its workers and to governments. NALC joined the meetings as part of UNI

Global Union's Amazon Alliance, which is a group of unions from around the world that have an interest in how Amazon is shaping and affecting their industries.

The summit featured panels of experts discussing the ways Amazon uses its size and power to influence markets and governments to increase its profits, as well as ways to limit this influence. The summit also prioritized time to discuss lessons learned from actual organizing efforts.

Unlike the first Amazon Alliance meeting that NALC Research Department staff attended in 2019, where little progress had been made in addressing Amazon's immense power, this meeting showed how much work has been done in the few years since. In addition to some small, yet still significant, organizing wins, the public narrative around the company has shifted. Media coverage and the public now understand the exploitative and predatory aspects of the company. This is thanks in large part to the many unions, community groups and advocacy organizations that have come together to shed light on Amazon's poor labor and business practices.

Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF)

The Postal Employees' Relief Fund (PERF) was created in 1990 to help carriers, clerks, and other active and retired postal employees rebuild after a major natural disaster.

PERF continues to serve the needs of active and retired postal employees, whose home, as a result of a major natural disaster, suffered substantial damage.

Over the 34 years that the PERF has existed, it has provided grants to 4,650 postal employees and retirees, providing \$22,833,200 to individuals—including hundreds of letter carriers—who have requested assistance related to losses from earthquakes, hurricanes, torna-

does, flooding, wildfires, home fires and other natural disasters.

PERF receives the majority of its contributions through payroll deductions authorized by postal employees and other federal employees during the annual Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), although some individual and organizational donations are also received. As of June 13, 2024, the fund has a remaining balance of \$1,956,392.67.

The PERF grant structure was modified after Hurricane Sandy, effective Oct. 29, 2012, to maintain a stable and sufficient fund balance that is able to help all postal employees well into the future.

Generous contributions from postal employees and other donors through the CFC have allowed the fund to maintain a stable base of resources. An inspired effort for CFC donations is needed this fall to continue PERF's work.

Donations can be made via check made payable to "PERF" and sent to: Postal Employees' Relief Fund, P.O. Box 41220, Fredericksburg, VA 22404-1220. Donations can also be made through the CFC; the CFC number for PERF is 10268. For more information, call 202-408-1869, visit the PERF website at postalrelief.com, or send an email to perf10268@aol.com.



Leadership Academy

Founded in 2005 by President Emeritus Bill Young and then-Executive Vice President Jim Williams, the NALC Leadership Academy continues to reflect the national leadership's belief in the importance of developing and preparing current and future NALC leaders for the challenges of today and those that are surely ahead. Since the Chicago convention in 2022, the Academy has graduated Classes 26, 27 and 28. There are more than 830 graduates since its inception. Class 29 will begin on Aug. 25 and graduate in December. Applications will be accepted for Classes 30 and 31 starting on Aug. 5 and will close on Sept. 27.

Interest in the Academy has remained high. Each year, hundreds of NALC activists apply for one of the 30 slots available in each class. Most encouraging to me is how closely the demographics of the applicants reflect those of NALC as a whole. As of our last application period, 35 percent of the applicants were female and 45 percent came into the Service as city carrier assistants, the applicants came from branches of fewer than 20 members to those with more than 7,000, and from members with barely a year in the Postal Service to

those with more than 33. More than 45 percent were applying for the first time, while dozens were seeking admission for the sixth, seventh or eighth time. This is promising on many levels. It shows that there's a high interest among newer members in becoming of greater service to the union. It also shows that in spite of not being selected in previous attempts, many continue to reapply each year, showing that they are determined and not easily discouraged, both characteristics of a good leader.

Admission to the Academy begins with the completion of a written application form available on the NALC website during the application acceptance period, which, as previously stated, begins this year on Aug. 5 and runs through Sept. 27. Applicants must be endorsed by a union leader who commits to being their mentor throughout the Leadership Academy experience and provides them with additional learning opportunities. It's an extremely difficult job to select only 30 students for each class from among the many qualified applicants.

The rivers of NALC talent and dedication continue to run deep, as evidenced by the high quality of each

new Leadership Academy class. At last count, 28 state presidents, 28 regional administrative assistants, 11 Headquarters staff members, all three of our full-time advocates, eight regional workers' compensation assistants, six regional office assistants, 11 regional grievance assistants, five legislative and political organizers, 12 national business agents and five resident national officers are graduates of the Academy. Additionally, Academy graduates have been elected to leadership positions in their local branches, small and large, with many becoming full-time union officers. Just as important: Hundreds of graduates have gone on to serve NALC in various other capacities. These include as arbitration advocates, Dispute Resolution Team members, Office of Workers' Compensation Programs representatives, shop stewards, route adjustment team members, and Carrier Academy instructors, as well as food drive, MDA and community service coordinators.

The commitment to working hard and helping others seen in each successive leadership class is always encouraging. If this is any indication of the future of NALC, the union has a bright future ahead of us.

Honoring longtime members

The NALC honors its retirees in a unique way. Our retirees are an integral part of our organization and, as such, retain both their membership and union rights. But more than that, when they have belonged to the NALC for 50 years or more, we honor them with either a gold membership card, a lapel pin or a plaque.

The gold cards are presented to our 50-year members (since 1939); the lapel pins are given to our 60-year members (since 1954) and 65-year and 55-year members (since 2012); and the plaques are awarded on the members' 70th and 75th anniversaries (since 1974). A number of 80-year plaques have also been

awarded (since 2014).

Most of our branches make quite an occasion of the actual presentations, and NALC sends a letter to the retiree expressing gratitude for his or her continuing support of the NALC over the years.

The following presentations of life membership awards have been made since the Chicago convention:

50-year gold cards	3,637
55-year pins	7,476
60-year pins	1,278
65-year pins	808
70-year plaques	197
75-year plaques	122
80-year plaques	10

Equal opportunity employer

NALC continues to honor and subscribe to its affirmative action program, which provides for a continuing analysis of the association's human resources and personnel policies and formalizes our commitment to recruit, hire, train and promote all persons without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sex, marital status, age, handicap, veteran status or national origin. This program has the strong support of this administration.

Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)

Although MDA has changed its brand, NALC did not change its commitment to help “Deliver the Cure” for muscular dystrophy (MD). We have been there since 1952 and will be there until the need has disappeared. For more than 72 years, the NALC has supported the Muscular Dystrophy Association as our national charity. NALC is a Diamond Partner, raising more than \$1 million annually for MDA research and services.

I want to thank all the branches that put forth an effort to raise funds and awareness. Although 10 branches are recognized each year, I know there are several NALC locals that make our national effort a success. However, I want to give a shout-out to those branches who continue to be the top of their categories.

Letter carriers from almost every state have held or participated in activities such as bowlathons, “muscle walks,” satchel drives, trivia contests, and letter-writing campaigns. These and other events make a critical difference. My message to you is to get involved and start something new in your branch or find different ways to increase your current efforts. Either way, keep up the great work and remember that we are here until they “Deliver the Cure.”

Thanks to you, families served by MDA have a future with hope. Let’s keep up the great work and strive to Deliver the Cure. In 2022, NALC branches, state associations, auxiliaries and Headquarters raised \$875,665.56, which is more than \$200,000 from the previous year.

In 2023, NALC branches, state associations, auxiliaries, Headquarters and the Health Benefit Plan raised \$1,129,080, which is up \$200,000 from the previous year and the first time we hit above \$1 million since the COVID-19 pandemic. The efforts allowed NALC to continue the union’s commitment to supporting MDA’s medical research and support programs for people living with neuromuscular

2022					
Category	Branch	City, State or Name of Branch	Money raised	Pres First	Pres Last
1	38	NEW JERSEY MERGED	\$ 49,096.51	Michael	O’Neill
2	82	PORTLAND, OREGON	\$ 14,450.00	David	Norton
3	1902	ARIZONA MERGED	\$ 20,529.25	Nick	Smith
4	358	NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK	\$ 18,283.00	Bill	Cook
5	204	COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO	\$ 11,273.00	Jonathan	Meyer
6	442	SPOKANE, WASHINGTON	\$ 14,338.95	Sharee	Eschenbacher
7	828	SOUTH CENTRAL INDIANA	\$ 16,506.62	Joshua	Peterson
8	324	GREELEY, COLORADO	\$ 7,719.88	Richard	Byrne
9	490	MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN	\$ 12,015.00	Clifford	Konik
10	4456	THERMOPOLIS, WYOMING	\$ 1,300.00	Barbara	Munger

2023						
Category	Branch	Region	City, State or Name of Branch	Money raised	Pres First	Pres Last
1	38	15	NEW JERSEY MERGED	\$ 54,955.47	Michael	O’Neill
2	343	5	ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI	\$ 26,250.00	John	McLaughlin
3	1477	9	WEST COAST FLORIDA	\$ 16,000.00	Joe	Henschen
4	358	11	NORTHEASTERN NEW YORK	\$ 18,711.00	Bill	Cook
5	213	1	STOCKTON, CALIFORNIA	\$ 13,253.00	Gregory	Fuson
6	284	12	ERIE, PENNSYLVANIA	\$ 14,235.34	Mark	Murphy
7	828	5	SOUTH CENTRAL INDIANA	\$ 20,850.00	Joshua	Peterson
8	324	4	GREELEY, COLORADO	\$ 8,656.83	Richard	Byrne
9	490	7	MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN	\$ 12,130.00	Clifford	Konik
10	1006	4	SHERIDAN, WYOMING	\$ 2,599.00	Gerald	Curtis

diseases and for their families—a commitment that began with MDA’s founding in 1950.

Our members have also logged several volunteer hours to benefit MDA through camp programs, fundraisers and more. MDA activities build camaraderie among members, which in turn builds a stronger union. Let’s do what we can to promote strength, independence and life to MDA while showing the best of what we union members are: trusted and respected public servants.

If you need help getting started, contact NALC at nalc@mdausa.org or at 312-392-1100. Please be sure to use an allocation form and mail any offline gifts to: Muscular Dystrophy Association, Inc., Attn: NALC, P.O. Box 7410354, Chicago, IL 60674-0354.

NALC continues to post to the “Deliver the Cure” Facebook page and to highlight MDA fundraising efforts,

family stories, progress toward a cure, and new research and services available through MDA. NALC has an email address exclusive to MDA-related email communication, and Headquarters has an improved network of communication with the branches and a system to update records, especially when branches contact NALC at mda@nalc.org. Additionally, we are using the NALC app to promote all MDA-related issues as we become aware. Don’t hesitate to let us know about what your branch is doing so that we can share with anyone who elects to receive MDA notifications.

Every year, the MDA Honor Roll is published in *The Postal Record*. For the past several years, it has been in the April issue along with a feature article relating to MDA. With our continued efforts, letter carriers and NALC hope to fulfill our commitment and one day truly “Deliver the Cure” for those with MD.

Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive

Every year, letter carriers collect tens of millions of pounds of food during our annual Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger® Food Drive. The success of the food drive is due in large part to letter carriers, volunteers, and generous support from our partners including the U.S. Postal Service, the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, AFL-CIO, Valpak, United Way Worldwide, Kellanova, Vericast, CVS Health, and the National Rural Letter Carriers' Association. This remarkable feat proves what we can accomplish together with commitment, determination and hard work.

While the total pounds of food collected is hard to visualize, the faces of those we help are all too familiar—children, seniors, and working families struggling to make ends meet. They inspire us to keep the drive moving forward—one donation, one person, one family at a time.

Our commitment to community service exceeds our routes. Every year, letter carriers in every community work with family members, friends, other postal co-workers and allies on the second Saturday in May to give something back to the communities where they live and serve. The U.S. Postal Service's nationwide network, coupled with the trusted relationship letter carriers have with the American public, serves as a dynamic base for the food drive. We are

proud to be a part of such a powerful force connecting the community to food and hope.

For more than 15 consecutive years, with the help of volunteers and our partners, we collected more than 75 million pounds of food annually. Unfortunately, the pandemic forced the cancellation of the food drive in 2020 and 2021, but it did not slow letter carriers' commitment to supporting food banks. We replaced the food drive with an online donor drive, and NALC Headquarters matched the donations made from our branch treasuries. This yielded a little more than \$1 million each of those years for food banks.

The in-person food drive returned in 2022, and the nationwide total of collected food reported was approximately 39 million pounds. 2023's nationwide total of collected food stood around 39 million pounds with an additional 500,000 pounds of food donated by Kellogg Co. Nationwide, local food banks and pantries received \$212,808 in cash donations, raising the 2023 total to 42 million pounds. While this is still an outstanding feat, there is more work to do together to reach our pre-pandemic levels.

In 2024, we continued building on more than a quarter-century of delivering hope and help to those in need. Tampa, FL Branch 599 collected 1,955,085 pounds of food, resulting in the most food collected overall.



With 50 percent of NALC branches and rural offices reporting, the nationwide total of collected food was approximately 36 million pounds. Local pantries received \$392,738.20 in cash donations, raising the total to 40 million pounds.

In the quarter-century since it began, the Letter Carrier Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive has resulted in more than 1.9 billion pounds of food collected, replenishing food shelves in thousands of community food banks nationwide and helping countless Americans when they needed it most.

While times continue to challenge us on many fronts, our combined efforts and action continue to make a difference by improving lives and uplifting communities.

Category		Branch Name	Region	State	Lbs Collected
1	24	LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA	1	CA	1,865,600
2	421	SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS	10	TX	490,107
3	599	TAMPA, FLORIDA	9	FL	1,955,085
4	2008	CLEARWATER, FLORIDA	9	FL	1,518,458
5	826	PONCE, PUERTO RICO	15	PR	628,368
6	246	SOUTHWESTERN MICHIGAN	6	MI	230,584
7	763	COLUMBIA, MISSOURI	5	MO	866,085
8	4682	AIEA-PEARL CITY, HAWAII	1	HI	286,103
9	621	BUTTE, MONTANA	2	MT	99,000
10	513	STAUNTON, VIRGINIA	13	VA	39,160
11	1256	MORRISTOWN, TENNESSEE	8	TN	22,013

Veterans Group

Veterans of the U.S. armed forces comprise almost a quarter of the membership of the National Association of Letter Carriers—active NALC members as well as retired members.

These veterans traded their military uniforms for letter carrier uniforms, and they continue to serve their communities and this great nation.

Oftentimes, gratitude is expressed in words such as “thank you,” but it’s rarely followed up with any tangible expressions. The creation of the NALC Veterans Group is intended to be something tangible and useful.

The NALC Veterans Group is designed to provide NALC members who are military veterans access to the information and tools specific to veterans’ rights and benefits within the U.S. Postal Service. It seeks to provide all NALC members who are also military veterans—active full-time and part-time letter carriers, as well as retired letter carriers—resources, rights information and a

sense of camaraderie.

We have more than 19,850 veterans in our Veterans Group. The Veterans Group has done three projects since 2018: in Detroit, in Hawaii and in Chicago. The Veterans Group saluted all veterans at the 2022 NALC Biennial Convention in Chicago. Veterans Group members and family participated in the ruck march fundraising event on the shore of Lake Michigan. The event raised more than \$26,000 in donations to aid homeless veterans and to help empower other veterans to take control of their transitions to civilian living in the Chicago area.

This year, we will be raising money for the New England Center and Home for Veterans (NECHV). Its mission is to equip veterans who are facing or are at risk of homelessness with the tools for economic self-sufficiency and to provide them a path to achieve successful and dignified independent living. A service and care provider for former military service men and women, the NECHV offers



a broad array of programs and services that enable success, reintegration, meaningful employment, and independent living.

If you are interested in joining the group, please go to nalc.org/join-veterans. Alternatively, you may complete the sign-up card included in each issue of *The Postal Record* and return it to: NALC Veterans Group, National Association of Letter Carriers, 100 Indiana Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20001-2144.

Combined Federal Campaign

NALC has long been an enthusiastic supporter of the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), which is designed to allow postal and federal government employees the ability to make charitable donations through payroll deduction.

Pledges made by donors during the campaign season support eligible nonprofit organizations chosen by the donor. Postal and federal government employees can choose the charity or group of charities they want to support from a list of more than 2,000 eligible charities.

NALC is directly involved in two charities:

- **The Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA, CFC No. 10561)** is NALC’s only official charity. It is the world’s leading nonprofit health organization sponsoring research

into the causes of, and effective treatments for, neuromuscular diseases. MDA research grants support approximately 150 research projects worldwide, as well as camps and activities for children who have one of these diseases.

- **United Way Worldwide (CFC No. 11188)** is the leadership and support organization for the network of nearly 1,800 community-based United Ways in 40 countries and territories. The United Way’s focus is creating community-based and community-led solutions that strengthen the cornerstones for a good quality of life: education, financial stability, and health.

During the 2021 campaign, postal employees pledged \$4,016,257 in

monetary donations and 6,651 hours of volunteer time, which equated to \$128,178. These totals do not include any donations received during the special solicitation period authorized by the Office of Personnel Management to help with the humanitarian crisis caused by the war in Ukraine. This special period ran from April 18 to June 30, 2022.

In 2022, postal employees pledged a total of \$2,790,467 in monetary donations, including 2,649 volunteer hours, which equates to \$62,400 in cash donations.

In 2023, charities covered by CFC raised a total of \$2,803,536 from postal employees, including 2,134 hours of time spent by employees volunteering for the campaign, which equates to \$46,843 in cash donations. This brings the overall total donations to \$2,850,379.

Heroes of the Year

Every day, letter carriers are on the streets in every neighborhood of every city in every state. The very nature of their jobs puts them in constant contact with the public. They are, in fact, perhaps the last public servants to make regular rounds and come into daily contact with the customers on their routes.

As a result, there are many times when letter carriers are first to arrive at the scene of a crisis—an accident, a disaster, a crime—and the first to offer assistance. Or perhaps because of their daily vigilance, a community problem—a child without shoes, increasing substance abuse among neighborhood youth, families without food or fuel, a lonely senior citizen who needs cheering up—is recognized and action is taken to provide solutions.

To recognize these carriers, NALC established the Heroes of the Year Awards in 1974 to pay public tribute to outstanding letter carriers who, ignoring dangers to themselves, perform selfless and heroic acts to rescue those at risk of losing their lives.

In 1978, a second category—Humanitarian of the Year—was initiated to honor letter carriers for significant, sustained personal contributions to a worthy cause.

Independent judges—representing the labor community and community service organizations—review items published in *The Postal Record's* Proud to Serve section to determine the winners.

“We are immensely proud of what the heroes being recognized did,” NALC President Brian L. Renfro said at the Heroes of the Year luncheon in March 2024. “They represent our country’s best in public service. They truly are our heroes.”

On duty or off, letter carrier heroes generously deliver that “extra service” to the American public every day, and in doing so they proudly carry on a great tradition of delivering for America, six days a week.

National Hero of the Year

Philip Moon of Amarillo, TX Branch 1037

On his route in October, 37-year carrier Philip Moon was in his mail truck when he heard a commotion. The carrier saw a customer with her two small dogs under attack from a large dog. Moon, a member of Amarillo, TX Branch 1037, jumped out to help.

He managed to fight off the attacking dog and pull the woman and one of her dogs into his truck. The woman was bleeding badly from dog bites to her left leg. “The whole bottom of the floorboard was filling up with blood,” he said. Moon called 911 and then took off his shirt to use to compress her wounds, which helped stop the bleeding.

“Then the dog came back and bit down on her other leg,” he said. The dog forced its way into the partly closed door of the truck, forcing them both to fight off the dog as best they could. The woman’s husband had heard the struggle and came to help. “Then the dog went after me,” Moon said, biting his shoe and slightly injuring his ankle. “All this time, I’m talking to the 911 operator.”

First responders arrived and animal control officers caught the dog while EMTs tended to the victim. Moon drove back to the post office, and that night, he visited the woman in the hospital, where he was told she had passed out twice from loss of blood. “You saved her twice,” police responders told Moon—once from the dog and again from bleeding to death.

Moon doesn’t consider his actions particularly heroic. “I’ll be honest with you—I was scared to death,” he said. “I was just running on adrenaline.”

“Knowing the people I work with, anybody would have done what I did,” he added. “I don’t consider myself a hero.”

Eastern Region Hero

Timothy “Tim” Martin of Buffalo-Western New York

Delivering packages on New Year’s Eve, Buffalo-Western New York Branch 3 member Tim Martin turned a corner and saw a car on fire in front of a mobile home. Some neighbors were trying to put out the fire by throwing snow on it, but Martin noticed that the technique was not working. Other neighbors were filming the fire with their phones.

But then he realized that the fire was spreading to the mobile home.

Knowing that an elderly resident with breathing problems lived there, Martin asked the neighbors if she was home. They said yes—but kept filming.

The fire was blocking the front door, so Martin rushed to the back of the trailer. He pushed the back door open, but it was held shut with a bungee cord. “Luckily, I’m skinny enough to squeeze through,” he said. He found the home filling with smoke and the woman looking frantically for her shoes. “Let’s get you outside,” he told her as he helped her leave the house with her purse and dog.

First responders had arrived, and Martin helped the woman find an EMT who could give her oxygen. To avoid blocking the fire vehicles that were coming to the scene, he left in his mail truck, continuing his route. Martin returned a few days later and learned the woman was all right and had been able to move back into the home.

In recognition of his heroic actions, his supervisor coined a slogan for Martin: “I deliver bills and save lives,” and even made him a superhero cape. It was all in fun, but Martin said he doesn’t feel like a hero.

“I just think I’m just a regular guy,” he said. “I was just happy that I could help.”

Central Region Hero

Dominic Jack of Baton Rouge, LA Branch 129

On his route in White Castle, LA, earlier this year, Dominic Jack had just delivered to a house at the end of a loop and was circling back when he saw trouble. “I saw gray smoke coming from the back of the house,” he said. The two year carrier, a member of Baton Rouge Branch 129, knew there were children living in the house, so he rushed to help.

“I could hear somebody screaming,” he said.

He saw a small boy in the back yard, afraid to move. He coaxed the boy to come to him to reach safety. Jack then encountered a teenage girl at the front and convinced her not to go back inside to retrieve her phone. He went through the back door of the burning house to rescue the children’s grandmother, who he found near the door, and helped her to the street.

When he was sure all four children and the grandmother were safe, Jack went to the next-door neighbor’s home to warn them because he knew there were elderly people living there, and then alerted the neighbors on the other side. The house on fire was completely engulfed by the flames, but the others were not harmed—but more importantly, nobody was killed or injured.

“Due to the quick thinking of this carrier we, and several of our neighbors, were able to get out of our houses safely and before the firefighters had arrived on the scene,” one elderly neighbor wrote to the post office. “Carrier Dominic is definitely an asset to the Postal Service and the community!”

“It was just an instant reaction,” Jack said of his heroic efforts. “I just did what I would do any day.”

Western Region Hero

Randall “Randy” Fields of Boulder, CO Branch 642

Randy Fields was in the Valmont Post Office in Boulder, CO, on a July morning when disaster struck.

“I heard a big crash and saw glass exploding into the post office,” he said. A car had crashed into the building. He ran toward it and watched as the driver tried to back out, then move forward, then back out again. As other co-workers tried to stop the woman from moving the car, Fields heard someone moaning in pain.

“I turned the corner and saw a man on all fours,” the Boulder Branch 642 member said. “Blood was pulsating from a wound on his left arm.” The car had struck him and pinned him to a counter. The man, he later learned, was a postal customer named William Coffin.

Fields, who has carried the mail since 2005, took off his belt and used it as a tourniquet with the help of a postal customer. They managed to stop the bleeding, but Coffin had lost a large amount of blood already and was slipping in and out of consciousness, so they talked to him to try to keep him awake.

“I was scared he was going to die,” Fields said.

Coffin was seriously injured and when EMTs arrived, they took him to the hospital. Fields and his co-workers managed to go out on their routes that day. Police said charges are pending against the driver.

Coffin survived and eventually returned home from the hospital. “Mr. Coffin sustained a whole list of injuries,” Field added, including “a lacerated artery in his left arm, 16 broken ribs, fractured tibia separated from his knee, both ACLs and MCLs torn in both knees, a shattered pelvis, collapsed lung and dislocated shoulder.” Coffin will have to undergo more surgeries and rehabilitation before he is fully recovered.

To thank Fields for helping to save his life, Coffin had him over for dinner. “The emotions were incredible,” Fields said, “as we relived every moment for a solid two hours.”

As for being called heroic, Fields said, “It took me a long while to realize that I am a hero. I initially just thought it was something that everyone would do for another human being.”

Honorable Mention

Timmye Crowley of Billings, MT Branch 815

After 21 years on the job, Timmye Crowley knows her customers well. On her route on a cold, icy evening in Billings, MT, in November 2022, Crowley got out of her vehicle on her mounted route to bring an elderly customer’s mail to his door so he wouldn’t have to come to his box in the bad weather. When she reached the door, the Billings Branch 815 member heard the man’s smoke detector beeping. Looking in the window, Crowley spotted the man asleep in a chair despite the beeping and the smoke filling the room. She knew he was hard of hearing and the smoke alarm wasn’t waking him. “I started pounding on the door, kicking it and ringing the doorbell,” she said. The man finally woke up and came to the door, still unaware of the fire. “He had no idea what was going on.” Crowley called 911 and brought the man to safety. “I got him outside, away from the smoke,” she said. At the door, she noticed the fire was simply a plug-in cooking appliance with burning food inside, so she went inside and unplugged it. After the fire department arrived, Crowley returned to her route. U.S. Sen. Steve Daines of Montana later honored Crowley for her actions. “I didn’t feel like a hero,” Crowley said. “I feel like I was just doing my job.”

Heroes of the Year

Honorable Mention

Brittany Giles of West Palm Beach, FL Branch 1690

Brittany Giles was leaving work one day in December last year when she saw her manager doing something different. “My boss was making these super cute envelopes and stuffing them with a bunch of stuff,” the Port St. Lucie, FL, letter carrier said. They were responses from kids’ letters to Santa. “There were really cute letters she typed up, acknowledging that these kids wrote to Santa, and she put in colored pencils, crayons, coloring books, candy canes, whatever.”

Giles, a six-year letter carrier with West Palm Beach Branch 1690, immediately asked her manager if there were more. “I saw the bag and I started reading them, and a lot of them broke my heart. There were a lot of super-sad letters,” she said. But one stood out.

Camron King, then 10 years old, asked Santa for some toys and to have his family “come together and to have fun and to not get bullied.”

Giles knew she had to get involved.

“When I read that, you know, I’m a mom. I have two little kids. I’m super big on family. I have always taught my children to be as nice as possible to everyone, especially the struggling children at school that are being picked on. Those are the ones that you want to go make friends with, right?” she said. “This was almost a year ago now, and I can still tell you exactly what the letter said because it stuck with me so much, because his letter was about how he wanted his family. He didn’t want to be bullied. I mean, it broke my heart.”

Giles left her post office that evening and went to the return address on the Santa letter—the residence of Camron’s grandparents, who looked at this uniformed letter carrier like she was strange. After explaining that she had received Camron’s let-

ter and wanted to know what toys he would like (he hadn’t included anything specific on his letter), the grandfather began crying.

“You have no idea how much this means to me,” he told her. He also called Camron’s mother, Amy, who brought the boy to meet Giles.

“He normally goes to Grandma and Grandpa’s house after school, and then he had his cousin help him write the letter,” Amy King told WPTV, the West Palm Beach NBC affiliate. Camron was born without his left hand and has a muscle nerve disorder. “It’s called [Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease], so that affects his nerves and muscles in his legs and arms, so as he gets older it kind of deteriorates.

“They said he wouldn’t be able to walk, but he’s walking, running, playing soccer. I’m very proud of him. I always say, he’s my little miracle baby,” King added.

When Giles—a cancer survivor who was told (incorrectly) that she would never have children—met Camron, she told him, “I work for Santa and I read your letter, but you didn’t say what type of toys you want. So, he sent me down here to get a list and bring it back to him.”

The boy’s face lit up and he gave her a list of gifts for him and his family. Giles wrote down his ideas, but she left with a few more that hadn’t made it onto the list.

She reached out to St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office Deputies Ethan Kirk and Rebecca Ireland. They all pooled their own money to buy the gifts on the list. And Deputy Kirk told WPTV that he “asked [Camron] if there’s anything I can do for him, whether it’s go to his school, talk with his school resource deputy and just try to figure out a plan and try to get this stopped.” The police ultimately held an anti-bullying assembly at Camron’s school and spoke to every kid there.

After local news covered the story, it began to take on a life of its own. The national organization Bikers Against Bullying contacted Giles and wanted to do something.

They rented out a Chuck E. Cheese restaurant and arcade and hosted a party for Camron and his family. Just as he had asked in his letter, he got to come together with his family and have some fun. “It was a great thing to see how many people truly cared and wanted to get involved and be a part of this,” Giles said.

She encourages everyone to help in their community. “I’m sure every community or city has a mayor, and if you don’t have anything that your office is a part of, you can always go through that way and try and get involved with your city. But, especially after COVID, things are rough for a lot of people right now,” she said.

As for Camron, the carrier still is a part of his life, seeing him and his family regularly. “This is my extended family at this point,” she said. “Community is everything. Family is everything. And it doesn’t have to be by blood.” “Camron is not going to live a long life,” Giles explained. “As he gets older, his body will start shutting down. He does not retain information. He does not remember a lot of things. But the fact that I could give that kid a merry Christmas, even if it only lasted in his mind for a few moments, it was worth it.”

Vigilant Award

Tommy Howe of Fall River, MA Branch 51

Out on his route in Taunton, MA, on a hot July day, Fall River Branch 51 member Tommy Howe thought the man sitting by the road with a push lawnmower resting on his legs was feeling the effects of the heat. It looked serious enough that Howe stopped to help the man. “I tried to sit him up,” Howe said, but the man lost consciousness and collapsed. “That’s when I knew it was serious,” he said. “I had to get help quickly.”

Howe, a carrier since 2007, spotted a pair of roofers working on a house nearby and yelled to them to

assist. He took the lead, calling 911 and telling one roofer to flag down the approaching ambulance and gave the other one his water jug to give water to the stricken man. “His lips were blue, so I know it was a matter of minutes” before he could die, Howe said. “We basically kept him alive until the ambulance got there.” EMTs arrived and managed to revive the man, who fully recovered. Though the man lost his memory of that day, he was apparently stung by insects and had an allergic reaction. The man was thankful when he talked to Howe later, and the city of Taunton gave him a certificate of appreciation, but Howe doesn’t think of himself as a hero. “I just happened to be at the right place at the right time,” Howe said. “I reacted.”

Vigilant Award

Kyle Mailman of Wichita, KS Branch 201

Two-year carrier Kyle Mailman is helping Wichita, KS, with a dangerous gopher problem. Recently, construction of a bridge spanning the Arkansas River was causing gophers to move into a residential area near the bridge. The gophers dug long tunnels underground, and when they encountered gas lines, they often chewed through them, causing dangerous leaks, Mailman said. Delivering the mail on a route in that area in April, the Wichita Branch 201 member approached a recessed door of a home to put the mail in a door slot. “I’d heard a report in the area of people having gas leaks,” he said. When he reached this door, the odor was unmistakable. “I about choked right then and there.” Mailman warned the woman who lived there. “I knocked on the door rather feverishly,” he said, and told her to call the authorities immediately. After experiencing the ill effects of breathing gas himself due to an unlit pilot light on a stove many years ago, Mailman could tell

that the woman showed the signs of gas poisoning. When the gas company came to fix the outdoor leak, it also found a leak in a faulty valve of an indoor gas fireplace as well. “To me, it’s not really a big deal,” Mailman said about his actions, which may have saved a life, “because I hope everyone would be out there helping each other.”

The Partnership Award

Earnest Twomley, David Correa, Heriberto Rodriguez and Daniel Weber of New York, NY Branch 36

New York, NY Branch 36 carrier Earnest Twomley’s chance encounter with a child on his route a decade ago led him to organize toy drives for needy children every Christmas.

Seeing a mother he knew from his route emerging from a taxi with her three children, he noticed that one of the children, a little girl, was in distress.

“She’s screaming in the middle of the street,” he recalled. “I went over there to see what the issue was because I have three kids myself.”

He offered to help by delivering the little girl to her home.

“I said, ‘Have you ever been delivered to your apartment by a mailman?’ And she just looked at me and started laughing. So, I picked her up, carried her up a couple of flights of stairs, put her on a couch, and that was it.”

But then a neighbor who saw what he did told him the significance of his kind act.

“One of the neighbors said, ‘That was a real nice thing you did.’ I said, ‘What? Stop a little girl from crying?’ ” The neighbor told Twomley that the little girl had a brain tumor and was returning from New York’s Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center after a round of treatment.

Wanting to do something more for the family, the next time he saw the mother while out on his route, he asked her for letters to Santa

Claus from the children. He then asked some fellow carriers to help fulfill the wish list, and everyone pitched in.

“So, picture a grown man going into the American Girl doll store and picking out the stuff that she wanted!” Twomley said.

Twomley and some other carriers invited the family to get the presents under the Christmas tree in the lobby of his station in Manhattan. Somehow a local TV news station heard about it, and when the story aired an idea was born.

“The newscaster called us ‘the Better Angels.’ ” That inspired Twomley and fellow Branch 36 members David Correa and Heriberto Rodriguez along with postal employee Don Daggett to form a nonprofit group called the Better Angels of Human Nature to bring the spirit of that first generous toy drive to many more children.

Postal employees at several stations in New York donate toys each year for the effort, each filling up a postal container with toys.

Of course, Christmas wouldn’t be Christmas without Santa Claus. A few years ago, after spotting fellow Branch 36 carrier Daniel Weber growing a beard, Twomley hatched a plan, asking Weber to let it grow out until Christmas. “So he’s our official Santa Claus” each year, Twomley said.

The group’s outreach has expanded far beyond that first family by serving children with disabilities in schools and needy children in women’s shelters. Last Christmas, the Better Angels provided gifts for 290 children at the New Hope Transitional Housing family shelter in the Bronx and for 153 kids at PS 186X Walter Damrosch School, a Bronx special education school.

This year they are busy collecting even more toys for PS 186X. “We have 800 kids with disabilities in the school where we’re going to fill the gymnasium up with toys and everything else for them,” he said. “What we usually do is get the toys and put them in a room. The kids

Heroes of the Year

come in, they pick whatever they want.”

Despite serving so many children, the Better Angels always seem to have extra gifts for others who reach out for help, because they lean on the community to donate along with postal employees.

“Right now, I have about 300 toys in my secret toy closet in the post office,” Twomley said. “The carriers ask some of these high-rise buildings—we’re in Midtown—to put out a toy box. The whole neighborhood knows us already. So we put the collection boxes in there.”

The Better Angels piggyback on the postal network to retrieve the toys. “We have relay drivers. They have to bring relays out there. So, every time they go to the building, they check the box to see if it’s full and they bring them back. That’s how simple it is.” Several other stations in the area now help to collect toys from donation boxes.

“And management is 100 percent behind me with this,” he added. “Even our area manager is getting involved with me as well because he has a friend in the New York Police Department—and we just made an announcement that we’re going to be joining forces with them as well.”

Like the system itself, Twomley’s slogan for the operation is simple: “Everyone gets a toy.”

Twomley said the satisfaction of seeing the joy his work brings children is its own reward. He still remembers a mother who called and pleaded with him to keep a toy giveaway at a shelter open late one day, because she was late bringing her daughter.

“She comes running in, and she’s out of breath,” he said. The woman was parked in the street because she couldn’t find parking, so someone went to watch her car and others brought her daughter, Mia, who used a wheelchair, inside.

“Her face lit up because we left all the toys that we were going to leave for them anyway in that room. And I said, ‘Mia, just pick anything that

you want. It’s yours,’” he said.

“Her mother started crying, and for everybody in that room, there was not a dry eye in the place. And she picked up her toys, and we made her day. And for that moment, that moment is exactly why we do that.”

Twomley and the other Better Angels want to grow the project even more by getting more stations in New York City involved in collecting toys.

After 37 years on the job, Twomley is thinking about retiring soon, but he doesn’t plan to stop delivering joy: “I actually ripped out my garage and put an office together, and it’s just about done. So, when I retire, that’s going to be our main headquarters, and then I’m going to concentrate every year going around to all the post offices.”

Humanitarian of the Year

Harry Bittner of Camden, NJ Merged Branch 540

Music has always been a part of Harry Bittner’s life. He grew up listening to Motown records around the house that his parents played, and then got exposed to rock ‘n’ roll music through neighborhood kids.

He picked up a bass guitar when he was 15 and has loved playing ever since. “I got started just because a friend of mine was kind of dabbling with the guitar,” he said. “His older brother was in a band, and we would sneak down and play their instruments when they weren’t around.”

Fast-forward to 2019, when the Camden, NJ Merged Branch 540 member joined a five-member cover band called uNGLuED. They practice once a week, usually perform two shows a month at bars or other events like festivals, and the bandmates work together to choose songs to cover.

“They jokingly call me ‘Heavy Metal Harry’ because my background before doing this cover

band was doing heavy metal stuff, so I like harder stuff,” Bittner said, and added that his biggest musical inspiration is Iron Maiden bass player Steve Harris. “But we tend to try and pick songs that we know will go over with the crowd,” he said. “We’re more inclined to do Michael Jackson and Prince. We don’t do Metallica and Megadeth, you know what I mean?”

The carrier was enjoying playing regular gigs with the band when uNGLuED’s singer, Wally, approached them in the fall of 2020 and told them about his longtime desire to do a traveling Christmas show by driving around a truck to a few locations, and the band would then play some Christmas carols on the back to spread some cheer. “I immediately said, ‘Yeah, I’m in,’” Bittner said.

However, that winter of 2020, COVID-19 was spreading, and events were shutting down. They began to fear that they’d get in trouble for gathering, so Bittner suggested that maybe they raise some money to help out people who need it while they play, in case they were questioned by police.

Then, fortuitously, an acquaintance of the carrier heard about their plans and asked if she could put them in touch with a friend of hers who is a retired prosecutor, who works with a charity and who could help the band find families who could be helped through the money collected.

“And boy, did she ever,” Bittner said. “I mean, you hear these nightmare, horrible stories about everything from people that had lost their jobs and just were hurting for money with little kids to a woman that was a victim of domestic violence and kind of out on her own.”

Plans soon came together, and the band began scouting locations and practicing songs. Wally spent a few weeks preparing the 20-foot utility trailer, and attaching the drum set to it so they can travel with it.

“We would tow this huge trailer decked out in lights and with a tree on it to a couple of different neighborhoods where we knew it wouldn’t be an issue,” Bittner said. “And then we went to a school that was closed at night [so] we’d have this big, giant open lot. We went to another community down the road where there was a VFW [Veterans of Foreign Wars].”

The first year they played four stops. Bittner’s friend, Joe Popow, whom he called “the most authentic Santa you’ve ever seen in your life” accompanied them. He also recruited his youngest of two daughters, Alyssa, who dressed as an elf and handed out candy canes to children and walked around with a bucket to collect money from concertgoers.

People in the local communities, including some of his co-workers, “bring their kids, kids go see Santa,” Bittner said. “They listen to us, give us a couple of bucks, and we would get it to the right people when all this was over.”

Within a week or so, the band and Santa visited the houses of the selected families and dispersed gift cards and presents.

“It kind of grew into this thing where we’d be able to get information on the families, like how many kids, what are their ages, what are their sizes,” he said, adding that the bandmates’ spouses shop for the kids’ clothes and toys, and then they’d all wrap the items. “It was a huge success,” Bittner said of the 2020 endeavor—so much so “that we had every intention of doing it every year.”

They had just set out preparing for the 2021 show that October when Bittner went in for routine blood work. “Next thing you know, I’m casing mail in the morning. I get a phone call from the nurse, and she says, ‘Your liver enzymes are through the roof, and we’ve got to figure out why,’” the 29-year letter carrier said. “And that just kind of set off this chain of events where I had to get all these different tests.

“It was an ultrasound and then an MRI, and I find out I have this tumor, and they thought I had bile duct cancer initially, and it’s like a death sentence,” he continued, adding that after undergoing a colonoscopy he was eventually correctly diagnosed with Stage IV colorectal cancer. “I’m reading, and I’m thinking, ‘Oh my God, how did I go from perfectly healthy a month ago to, man, I might have three or five years?’ You know, that starts all setting in.”

His eldest daughter, Haley, was getting married that December, and Bittner was convinced by a friend to get his minister’s license to officiate the ceremony, so he did. “She’ll always have this to remember—that her dad married her,” he said.

“Around the same time, we’re doing Year 2 of the Christmas gig. And it’s just under this shroud of uncertainty and fear and what’s going to happen next. I know that chemo is coming, and I just kept thinking, ‘Boy, I hope it doesn’t start until after the Christmas gig,’” he added. “I didn’t want to let my bandmates down. I didn’t want to let the people down that were going to be on the receiving end of these gifts.”

Fortunately, he was able to fully participate in the annual festivities. “It was even a bigger success than the first year. More people turned out, more money was raised, more families were helped,” Bittner said. They started to mix up the format, adding in some regular rock music, too.

They continued to collect cash, sometimes gift cards, and also PayPal donations at each stop. After receiving help from the retired prosecutor the first year with selecting families, the band was able to start finding them on their own. “People started hearing we were doing this, and we’d have people come to [us and] say, ‘Hey, man, I know this family, and they just had a house fire and lost everything. Can you help them out?’” he said.

“We’ll check into it and be, like, ‘OK, this is legit. Let’s help these people out.’”

One of his favorite memories from the endeavor was when he and the band was playing a gig in the fall, and he saw a man he recognized but couldn’t place. In between sets, the man approached the band and said they had helped him and his family out the first year when they were in a tough spot. He had then gotten a new job and was doing better, so he wanted to offer a donation for another family in need. “That was really cool, because that was like, we’ve made a difference in these people’s lives, and now they’re appreciative, and they’re here to support us as a band—but more importantly, they’re here to pay it forward and give it to somebody else who’s now down on their luck.”

Bittner began chemotherapy in January 2022 and tried working his postal job through his treatment to keep a sense of normalcy, but he ended up taking some time off here and there for treatments, which included eight chemo infusions, followed by five radiation treatments, and then a major surgery in which surgeons removed 60 percent of his liver and a section of his colon. In addition, “I had my gallbladder removed, hernia repaired, and I ended up with an ileostomy bag for nine weeks,” he said.

“They sent me [for] a scan in December of last year, and they found a tiny little piece of cancer in my common bile duct,” he continued. “And there again, the first thing I’m thinking is, ‘I don’t know when surgery is going to be, but I hope I can get this Christmas gig in,’ and I find out the surgery is going to be February. We did Christmas show No. 3 last December. And again—bigger, better, more money, more families.”

Being involved with music is both fun and rewarding, Bittner said. “Playing in the band has been so invaluable to me during my cancer journey, because every minute I spend learning a song, playing

a song, playing out, it's another minute that I'm not thinking about cancer," he said, adding, "And that was really crucial, I think, for me to maintain a good attitude [and] press forward."

As the December 2023 issue of *The Postal Record* was going to press, the carrier and his bandmates were winding down the last of their regular gigs for the year and gearing up for the fourth annual charity show on Dec. 9. "I'm sure it'll be bigger and better than it's been the last couple of years. It just keeps growing," he said. "I think as long as the five of us are together as a band, that we'll continue to do it."

Bittner said of their fundraising, "You just do it because it's the right thing to do. While it's been a rough two years for my family, there's people out there that have it worse." This year they planned

to help multiple people yet again, including a family they've met who lost everything in a house fire, even their dogs.

"When you're in a cover band, you're not looking to be famous or anything," he said. "At the end of the day, you're just doing it because it's fun, and it's a cool night out. You hope that people dig it, and in our case, with uNGLuED, you hope that you're building up this fan base that will also contribute to the Christmas thing at the end of the year, and they do. The reason why we've collected \$13,000 in three years is because we have people that come see us at those other shows."

As for himself, "things are looking up. There's no sign of cancer right now," Bittner said, and he added, "I'm one of the lucky ones. It's not lost on me that so many people don't come out the other

side from this. I feel very blessed." Haley, whose wedding Bittner presided over, is expecting a baby girl in January, and the carrier and his wife, Joan, are looking forward to being grandparents.

Indeed, he's thought of his legacy. "I want my kids, and my grandkids eventually, to have something to remember—that even when I was as low as low could be in the worst possible shape anybody could be in, I still was committed to getting out and doing this Christmas gig," he said.

"And I want people to go, 'Hey, you know what? This dude, he wasn't feeling great and he looked like hell, but he bundled up and put hand warmers in his pocket and jumped on a trailer to play Christmas carols to help out other people that weren't doing so good,'" he added. "That's what it's about for me. That's why I do it."

Workers' Compensation Department

NALC's Workers' Compensation Department—under the direction of Director of Retired Members Dan Toth, who is assisted by Assistant to the President for Workers' Compensation Coby Jones, who provides information and advice to the membership on the Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) and its administration by the Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP).

The department now meets quarterly with the director and staff of the Division of Federal Employees' Compensation, the federal division of OWCP, to both give input and resolve administrative issues. And the director of OWCP itself, Christopher Godfrey, will teach a workshop at the 2024 national convention to describe the many changes OWCP has made in the last two years to make the claims process more user-friendly.

The NALC's goal is to provide OWCP representation to NALC mem-

bers at every level of the organization. Ten full-time regional workers' compensation assistants (RWCA's) assist national business agents (NBAs) and branch officers with OWCP claims and other FECA-related matters. RWCA's provide training at the national, regional, state and local levels. Branch officers should contact their NBA office to request RWCA assistance.

The department will also represent members who file appeals with the Labor Department's Employees' Compensation Appeals Board (ECAB). NALC members who are contemplating an ECAB appeal should contact the compensation office at NALC Headquarters for assistance.

The Workers' Compensation Department provides information and advice to the membership through *The Postal Record*, the *NALC Activist*, the "Injured on the Job" section of the NALC website, and national convention workshops. The depart-

ment also furnishes OWCP training to NALC Leadership Academy students focusing on the history of the FECA and its underlying social compact, the FECA's structure and regulatory underpinnings, and how the FECA intersects with the National Agreement.

The Workers' Compensation Department works closely with the Contract Administration Unit (CAU) on grievances that deal with OWCP issues. Close monitoring of management's obligations under FECA and the contract help every injured worker by enforcing strict compliance. The Workers' Compensation Department also assists the CAU with the USPS handbook and manual changes and postal programs to ensure that they are in compliance with the FECA.

Under President Renfroe's guidance, NALC provides the most comprehensive OWCP representation of any federal-sector union.

Litigation report

Court cases

Duty of fair representation cases

Hickey v. NALC—Former letter carrier Lynda Hickey filed this suit against NALC in Colorado state court in January 2019. She claimed that Branch 849 acted with negligence in advising her regarding the grievance procedure. NALC removed the case to federal court in Colorado. In May 2021, the federal court granted NALC's motion to dismiss. In August 2022, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit affirmed the dismissal of the case.

Hale v. USPS, Branch 3126—Former letter carrier Venetta Hale filed this lawsuit in February 2022 in federal court in Michigan. She claims that Branch 3126 failed to represent her properly in connection with her removal and failed to enforce an arbitrator's back pay award in her favor. Branch 3126's summary judgment motion is pending.

King v. Hutson—Letter carrier Eboni King filed this lawsuit in state court in Illinois in April 2022 against Region 3 Regional Administrative Assistant Jerry Hutson, claiming that Hutson allegedly failed to represent her properly regarding back pay owed to her by USPS. After the case was removed to federal court, Hutson, in September 2022, moved to dismiss. The court dismissed the case in November 2022 based on King's failure to prosecute and failure to comply with court orders.

Poletto v. Battaglino, Branch 47—Former letter carrier Dominic Poletto filed this suit in federal district court in April 2022 against Branch 47 and Anthony Battaglino, a union-appointed dispute resolution team member, challenging, on fair representation grounds, a Step B decision sustaining his removal. In October 2022, defendants moved to dismiss the suit. The court granted the motion in August 2023. In April 2024, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit affirmed.

Ritchhart v. Puffer—Former letter carrier Deidra Ritchhart filed this employment discrimination suit in federal district court in Utah in January 2023. Her suit named as a defendant NALC President Brian Renfroe. The court dismissed Ritchhart's claim against President Renfroe and, in March 2024, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth Circuit affirmed the dismissal.

Sung v. Cancel—In March 2023, former letter carrier Mo Chiao Sun filed this employment discrimination suit in federal district court in Brooklyn, NY. The defendants he named in the suit included NALC President Brian Renfroe and the vice president of Branch 294. In December 2023, those two defendants filed a motion to dismiss, which remains pending.

Lopez v. Branch 421—In October 2023, former letter carrier Monica Ann Lopez filed a breach-of-contract suit in small claims court in Texas against Branch 421. In January 2024, the court granted Branch 421's motion to dismiss.

Other NALC court litigation

Noble v. NALC, Branch 9, Branch 421—In June 2022, retired letter carrier David Noble filed this action against NALC, Branch 9 and Branch 421, in the federal district court in Washington, DC. The suit seeks an injunction requiring the defendants to allow Noble to place paid campaign advertisements in their publications. In December 2022, the district court dismissed the lawsuit. In May 2024, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit reversed the dismissal and remanded to the district court for further proceedings.

USPS v. NALC (Memphis arbitration suit)—In May 2023, USPS filed this suit against NALC in federal court in Washington, DC, seeking to vacate a regional arbitration award. USPS claimed that the remedies ordered by the arbitrator, including the establishment of a new conflict resolution mechanism, exceeded

his authority. In February 2024, the parties resolved the suit by settlement agreement.

National Labor Relations Board cases

Branch 455 (Schroeder)—In August 2012, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 455, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Irma Schroeder. The complaint alleges that the branch caused USPS to discharge her in retaliation for her alleged dissident union activity. The hearing on the case has not yet been scheduled.

Branch 5730 (Marcum)—In April 2022, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 5730, based on an unfair labor practice charge by former letter carrier Kandi Marcum. The complaint alleged that the branch failed to file grievances for her and failed to provide her with copies of her grievances. After a hearing, an NLRB administrative law judge issued a decision in September 2022 dismissing the complaint.

Branch 642 (Daniels)—In April 2023, the NLRB issued a complaint against Branch 642, based on an unfair labor practice charge by letter carrier Terry Daniels. The complaint alleges that the branch failed properly to process various grievances for Daniels. The NLRB has not yet held a hearing on the complaint.

Presidential rulings

Members can find the presidential rulings in the *Officers' Reports* book distributed at the NALC convention in Boston or on *The Postal Record* section of nalc.org.



National-level arbitration decisions

1. Case No. 4B19N-4B-C 23120456 (Non-Payment of Wages)—NALC appealed this grievance to the interpretive step to resolve the parties' dispute as to whether the Postal Service was contractually obligated to compensate employees whose paychecks were stolen by cybercriminals. The grievant was enrolled in direct deposit via the USPS Human Resources website, LiteBlue.usps.gov. According to the Postal Service, criminals caused the direct deposits of certain employees, including the grievant, to be routed to bank

accounts controlled by the criminals. As a result, the grievant was not compensated for 80 hours worked during the 24th pay period of 2022.

NALC contended that the failure to pay an employee for hours worked is a clear violation of the federal Fair Labor Standards Act, as well as certain provisions of the Agreement, including Articles 5, 8, 9 and 34.

Hearings before National Arbitrator Dennis Nolan took place Jan. 23-24, 2024. Post-hearing briefing was completed by April 2024.

NALC DIRECT ARBITRATION COSTS				
	Two-year period ended 3/31/22	Two-year period ended 3/31/24	Percentage Change	
Arbitrators' fees	\$2,826,864	\$2,911,225.72	2.98%	
Cancellation fees	479,879	551,053.71	14.8%	
Transcripts	—	—	—	
Miscellaneous	—	—	—	
TOTAL	\$3,306,743	\$3,462,279.43	4.7%	

NALC DISCIPLINE ARBITRATION					
	Sustained	Sustained in part	Denied	Total*	Percent denied
2014	61	39	108	208	51.9
2015	100	48	140	288	48.6
2016	92	49	149	290	51.4
2017	105	45	137	287	47.7
2018	75	81	121	282	43.6
2019	81	92	135	321	43.8
2020	72	76	127	279	46.1
2021	61	69	121	260	48.2
2022	50	38	95	183	51.9
2023	48	48	89	185	48.1
2024	21	11	39	71	54.9

NALC CONTRACT ARBITRATION					
	Sustained	Sustained in part	Denied	Total*	Percent denied
2014	105	36	62	203	30.5
2015	155	41	102	258	39.5
2016	115	45	86	246	35.0
2017	100	30	65	195	33.3
2018	278	142	163	629	27.9
2019	247	85	126	474	27.5
2020	144	56	84	304	29.5
2021	208	44	92	367	26.7
2022	205	65	85	355	23.9
2023	169	49	57	275	20.7
2024	57	25	26	108	24.0

*The total figure includes cases where no decision was issued by the arbitrator—for example, because the cases were settled during or after the hearing.

Cumulative pay (Table 2) since 2013

Year	Step: AA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
2013	—	\$34,752	\$36,306	\$37,860	\$39,414	\$40,968	\$42,522	\$44,076	\$45,630	\$47,184	\$48,738	\$50,292	\$51,846	\$53,400	\$54,954	\$56,508	—
2014	—	\$35,190	\$36,763	\$38,337	\$39,910	\$41,484	\$43,057	\$44,631	\$46,204	\$47,778	\$49,351	\$50,925	\$52,498	\$54,072	\$55,646	\$57,219	—
2015	—	\$36,466	\$38,066	\$39,727	\$41,357	\$42,989	\$44,618	\$46,249	\$47,879	\$49,511	\$51,140	\$52,771	\$54,402	\$56,033	\$57,663	\$59,294	—
2016	—	\$36,814	\$38,459	\$40,106	\$41,751	\$43,399	\$45,043	\$46,690	\$48,335	\$49,983	\$51,627	\$53,274	\$54,920	\$56,567	\$58,213	\$59,859	—
2017	—	\$37,474	\$39,148	\$40,824	\$42,499	\$44,176	\$45,851	\$47,526	\$49,201	\$50,879	\$52,552	\$54,228	\$55,904	\$57,581	\$59,256	\$60,931	—
2018	—	\$38,439	\$40,155	\$41,874	\$43,593	\$45,313	\$47,031	\$48,750	\$50,467	\$52,188	\$53,905	\$55,624	\$57,343	\$59,062	\$60,782	\$62,499	—
2019	—	\$39,615	\$41,384	\$43,157	\$44,928	\$46,700	\$48,470	\$50,243	\$52,014	\$53,786	\$55,557	\$57,329	\$59,099	\$60,871	\$62,641	\$64,413	—
2020	—	\$40,541	\$42,352	\$44,165	\$45,978	\$47,791	\$49,603	\$51,417	\$53,230	\$55,043	\$56,855	\$58,669	\$60,480	\$62,294	\$64,105	\$65,918	—
2021	20.71	\$41,353	\$43,200	\$45,049	\$46,898	\$48,748	\$50,595	\$52,446	\$54,296	\$56,144	\$57,993	\$59,843	\$61,690	\$63,541	\$65,389	\$67,237	—
2022	21.19	\$43,881	\$45,841	\$47,803	\$49,765	\$51,728	\$53,688	\$55,652	\$57,616	\$59,576	\$61,538	\$63,501	\$65,461	\$67,426	\$69,386	\$71,347	—
2023	22.13	\$46,038	\$48,094	\$50,153	\$52,211	\$54,271	\$56,327	\$58,387	\$60,448	\$62,505	\$64,562	\$66,622	\$68,679	\$70,740	\$72,796	\$74,855	—
																	\$75,299

Notes: All salaries are for July of each year and include cost-of-living adjustments not yet rolled into basic pay. Prior to 1971, it took 21 years for employees to reach top step; between 1971 and 1984, it took eight years; between 1984 and 1991, it took 10.7 years; it took 12.5 years under the 2011-2016 National Agreement; the January 2013 COLAs were calculated in 2013, but payment was deferred until 2014.

Cumulative pay (Table 1) since postal reorganization

Year	Old step: New step: (Last Year of Post Office Department) (First MAILC-USPS National Agreement)	A	B	C	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	P
1970	1971	---	---	---	\$7,072	\$7,307	\$7,542	\$7,777	\$8,012	\$8,247	\$8,482	\$8,717	\$8,952	\$9,187	\$9,422	\$9,657	---
1971	1972	---	---	---	\$7,322	\$7,557	\$7,792	\$8,027	\$8,262	\$8,497	\$8,732	\$8,967	\$9,202	\$9,437	\$9,672	\$9,907	---
1972	1973	---	---	---	\$8,072	\$8,307	\$8,542	\$8,777	\$9,012	\$9,247	\$9,482	\$9,717	\$9,952	\$10,187	\$10,422	\$10,657	---
1973	1974	---	---	---	\$9,188	\$9,423	\$9,658	\$9,893	\$10,128	\$10,363	\$10,598	\$10,833	\$11,068	\$11,303	\$11,538	\$11,773	---
1974	1975	---	---	---	\$10,129	\$10,364	\$10,599	\$10,834	\$11,069	\$11,304	\$11,539	\$11,774	\$12,009	\$12,244	\$12,479	\$12,714	---
1975	1976	---	---	---	\$11,298	\$11,533	\$11,768	\$12,003	\$12,238	\$12,473	\$12,708	\$12,943	\$13,178	\$13,413	\$13,648	\$13,883	---
1976	1977	---	---	---	\$11,902	\$12,137	\$12,372	\$12,607	\$12,842	\$13,077	\$13,312	\$13,547	\$13,782	\$14,017	\$14,252	\$14,487	---
1977	1978	---	---	---	\$13,313	\$13,548	\$13,783	\$14,018	\$14,253	\$14,488	\$14,723	\$14,958	\$15,193	\$15,428	\$15,663	\$15,898	---
1978	1979	---	---	---	\$14,416	\$14,651	\$14,886	\$15,121	\$15,356	\$15,591	\$15,826	\$16,061	\$16,296	\$16,531	\$16,766	\$17,001	---
1979	1980	---	---	---	\$15,577	\$15,812	\$16,047	\$16,282	\$16,517	\$16,752	\$16,987	\$17,222	\$17,457	\$17,692	\$17,927	\$18,162	---
1980	1981	---	---	---	\$17,658	\$17,900	\$18,142	\$18,384	\$18,626	\$18,868	\$19,110	\$19,352	\$19,594	\$19,836	\$20,078	\$20,320	---
1981	1982	---	---	---	\$19,268	\$19,510	\$19,752	\$19,994	\$20,236	\$20,478	\$20,720	\$20,962	\$21,204	\$21,446	\$21,688	\$21,930	---
1982	1983	---	---	---	\$20,130	\$20,372	\$20,614	\$20,856	\$21,098	\$21,340	\$21,582	\$21,824	\$22,066	\$22,308	\$22,550	\$22,792	---
1983	1984	---	---	---	\$22,092	\$22,340	\$22,589	\$22,837	\$23,086	\$23,334	\$23,583	\$23,832	\$24,080	\$24,329	\$24,577	\$24,826	---
1984	1985	---	---	---	\$18,552	\$18,800	\$19,048	\$19,296	\$19,544	\$19,792	\$20,040	\$20,288	\$20,536	\$20,784	\$21,032	\$21,280	---
1985	1986	---	---	---	\$19,032	\$19,280	\$19,528	\$19,776	\$20,024	\$20,272	\$20,520	\$20,768	\$21,016	\$21,264	\$21,512	\$21,760	---
1986	1987	---	---	---	\$19,927	\$20,175	\$20,423	\$20,671	\$20,919	\$21,167	\$21,415	\$21,663	\$21,911	\$22,159	\$22,407	\$22,655	---
1987	1988	---	---	---	\$21,814	\$22,062	\$22,310	\$22,558	\$22,806	\$23,054	\$23,302	\$23,550	\$23,798	\$24,046	\$24,294	\$24,542	---
1988	1989	---	---	---	\$21,480	\$21,728	\$21,976	\$22,224	\$22,472	\$22,720	\$22,968	\$23,216	\$23,464	\$23,712	\$23,960	\$24,208	---
1989	1990	---	---	---	\$25,039	\$25,287	\$25,535	\$25,783	\$26,031	\$26,279	\$26,527	\$26,775	\$27,023	\$27,271	\$27,519	\$27,767	---
1990	1991	---	---	---	\$24,381	\$24,629	\$24,877	\$25,125	\$25,373	\$25,621	\$25,869	\$26,117	\$26,365	\$26,613	\$26,861	\$27,109	---
1991	1992	---	---	---	\$24,927	\$25,175	\$25,423	\$25,671	\$25,919	\$26,167	\$26,415	\$26,663	\$26,911	\$27,159	\$27,407	\$27,655	---
1992	1993	---	---	---	\$23,026	\$23,274	\$23,522	\$23,770	\$24,018	\$24,266	\$24,514	\$24,762	\$25,010	\$25,258	\$25,506	\$25,754	---
1993	1994	---	---	---	\$24,028	\$24,276	\$24,524	\$24,772	\$25,020	\$25,268	\$25,516	\$25,764	\$26,012	\$26,260	\$26,508	\$26,756	---
1994	1995	---	---	---	\$24,907	\$25,155	\$25,403	\$25,651	\$25,899	\$26,147	\$26,395	\$26,643	\$26,891	\$27,139	\$27,387	\$27,635	---
1995	1996	---	---	---	\$25,240	\$25,488	\$25,736	\$25,984	\$26,232	\$26,480	\$26,728	\$26,976	\$27,224	\$27,472	\$27,720	\$27,968	---
1996	1997	---	---	---	\$25,647	\$25,895	\$26,143	\$26,391	\$26,639	\$26,887	\$27,135	\$27,383	\$27,631	\$27,879	\$28,127	\$28,375	---
1997	1998	---	---	---	\$26,375	\$26,623	\$26,871	\$27,119	\$27,367	\$27,615	\$27,863	\$28,111	\$28,359	\$28,607	\$28,855	\$29,103	---
1998	1999	---	---	---	\$29,825	\$30,073	\$30,321	\$30,569	\$30,817	\$31,065	\$31,313	\$31,561	\$31,809	\$32,057	\$32,305	\$32,553	---
1999	2000	---	---	---	\$27,219	\$27,467	\$27,715	\$27,963	\$28,211	\$28,459	\$28,707	\$28,955	\$29,203	\$29,451	\$29,699	\$29,947	---
2000	2001	---	---	---	\$28,893	\$29,141	\$29,389	\$29,637	\$29,885	\$30,133	\$30,381	\$30,629	\$30,877	\$31,125	\$31,373	\$31,621	---
2001	2002	---	---	---	\$31,844	\$32,092	\$32,340	\$32,588	\$32,836	\$33,084	\$33,332	\$33,580	\$33,828	\$34,076	\$34,324	\$34,572	---
2002	2003	---	---	---	\$32,735	\$32,983	\$33,231	\$33,479	\$33,727	\$33,975	\$34,223	\$34,471	\$34,719	\$34,967	\$35,215	\$35,463	---
2003	2004	---	---	---	\$33,446	\$33,694	\$33,942	\$34,190	\$34,438	\$34,686	\$34,934	\$35,182	\$35,430	\$35,678	\$35,926	\$36,174	---
2004	2005	---	---	---	\$34,331	\$34,579	\$34,827	\$35,075	\$35,323	\$35,571	\$35,819	\$36,067	\$36,315	\$36,563	\$36,811	\$37,059	---
2005	2006	---	---	---	\$35,602	\$35,850	\$36,098	\$36,346	\$36,594	\$36,842	\$37,090	\$37,338	\$37,586	\$37,834	\$38,082	\$38,330	---
2006	2007	---	---	---	\$37,205	\$37,453	\$37,701	\$37,949	\$38,197	\$38,445	\$38,693	\$38,941	\$39,189	\$39,437	\$39,685	\$39,933	---
2007	2008	---	---	---	\$38,527	\$38,775	\$39,023	\$39,271	\$39,519	\$39,767	\$40,015	\$40,263	\$40,511	\$40,759	\$41,007	\$41,255	---
2008	2009	---	---	---	\$42,025	\$42,273	\$42,521	\$42,769	\$43,017	\$43,265	\$43,513	\$43,761	\$44,009	\$44,257	\$44,505	\$44,753	---
2009	2010	---	---	---	\$43,229	\$43,477	\$43,725	\$43,973	\$44,221	\$44,469	\$44,717	\$44,965	\$45,213	\$45,461	\$45,709	\$45,957	---
2010	2011	---	---	---	\$41,888	\$42,136	\$42,384	\$42,632	\$42,880	\$43,128	\$43,376	\$43,624	\$43,872	\$44,120	\$44,368	\$44,616	---
2011	2012	---	---	---	\$42,610	\$42,858	\$43,106	\$43,354	\$43,602	\$43,850	\$44,098	\$44,346	\$44,594	\$44,842	\$45,090	\$45,338	---
2012	2013	---	---	---	\$43,313	\$43,561	\$43,809	\$44,057	\$44,305	\$44,553	\$44,801	\$45,049	\$45,297	\$45,545	\$45,793	\$46,041	---
2013	2014	---	---	---	\$44,292	\$44,540	\$44,788	\$45,036	\$45,284	\$45,532	\$45,780	\$46,028	\$46,276	\$46,524	\$46,772	\$47,020	---
2014	2015	---	---	---	\$44,881	\$45,129	\$45,377	\$45,625	\$45,873	\$46,121	\$46,369	\$46,617	\$46,865	\$47,113	\$47,361	\$47,609	---
2015	2016	---	---	---	\$46,772	\$47,020	\$47,268	\$47,516	\$47,764	\$48,012	\$48,260	\$48,508	\$48,756	\$49,004	\$49,252	\$49,500	---
2016	2017	---	---	---	\$47,215	\$47,463	\$47,711	\$47,959	\$48,207	\$48,455	\$48,703	\$48,951	\$49,199	\$49,447	\$49,695	\$49,943	---
2017	2018	---	---	---	\$48,136	\$48,384	\$48,632	\$48,880	\$49,128	\$49,376	\$49,624	\$49,872	\$50,120	\$50,368	\$50,616	\$50,864	---
2018	2019	---	---	---	\$49,540	\$49,788	\$50,036	\$50,284	\$50,532	\$50,780	\$51,028	\$51,276	\$51,524	\$51,772	\$52,020	\$52,268	---
2019	2020	---	---	---	\$49,540	\$49,788	\$50,036	\$50,284	\$50,532	\$50,780	\$51,028	\$51,276	\$51,524	\$51,772	\$52,020	\$52,268	---
2020	2021	---	---	---	\$53,521	\$53,769	\$54,017	\$54,265	\$54,513	\$54,761	\$55,009	\$55,257	\$55,505	\$55,753	\$56,001	\$56,249	---
2021	2022	---	---	---	\$53,521	\$53,769	\$54,017	\$54,265	\$54,513	\$54,761	\$55,009	\$55,257	\$55,505	\$55,753	\$56,001	\$56,249	---
2022	2023	---	---	---	\$54,776	\$55,024	\$55,272	\$55,520	\$55,768	\$56,016	\$56,264	\$56,512	\$56,760	\$57,008	\$57,256	\$57,504	---
2023		---	---	---	\$58,728	\$58,976	\$59,224	\$59,472	\$59,720	\$59,968	\$60,216	\$60,464	\$60,712	\$60,960	\$61,208	\$61,456	---
		---	---	---	\$62,078	\$62,326	\$62,574	\$62,822	\$63,070	\$63,318	\$63,566	\$63,814	\$64,062	\$64,310	\$64,558	\$64,806	---
		---	---	---	\$66,517	\$66,765	\$67,013	\$67,261	\$67,509	\$67,757	\$68,005	\$68,253	\$68,501	\$68,749	\$69,000	\$69,248	---
		---	---	---	\$66,619	\$66,867	\$67,115	\$67,363	\$67,611	\$67,859	\$68,107	\$68,355	\$68,603	\$68,851	\$69,099	\$69,347	---
		---	---	---	\$70,256	\$70,504	\$70,752	\$71,000	\$71,248	\$71,496	\$71,744	\$71,992	\$72,240	\$72,488	\$72,736	\$72,984	---
		---	---	---	\$71,777	\$72,025	\$72,273	\$72,521	\$72,769	\$73,017	\$73,265	\$73,513	\$73,761	\$74,009	\$74,257	\$74,505	---

Notes: All salaries are for July of each year and include cost-of-living adjustments not yet rolled into basic pay. Prior to 1971, it took 21 years for employees to reach top step; between 1971 and 1984, it took eight years; between 1984 and 1991, it took 10.7 years; it now takes 12.5 years. Under the 2011-2016 National Agreement, the January 2013 COLAs were calculated in 2013, but payment was deferred until 2014.

Letter Carrier Pay Schedule

City Carrier Wage Schedule: Effective March 11, 2023 (PTF Step AA rates corrected)

The following salary and rate schedule is for all NALC-represented employees.

Career city letter carrier increases

Effective Date	Type of Increase	Amount
Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	1.1%
Feb. 29, 2020	January COLA	\$166
Aug. 29, 2020	July COLA	\$188
Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	1.1%
Feb. 27, 2021	January COLA	\$416
Aug. 28, 2021*	July COLA	\$1,934
Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	1.3%
Feb. 26, 2022*	January COLA	\$1,331
Aug. 27, 2022*	July COLA	\$2,455
Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	1.3%
March 11, 2023*	January COLA	\$208

City carrier assistant increases

Date	Type of Increase	Amount
Nov. 23, 2019	General wage increase	2.1%
Nov. 21, 2020	General wage increase	2.1%
Nov. 20, 2021	General wage increase	2.3%
Nov. 19, 2022	General wage increase	2.3%

NOTE: Upon conversion to Full-Time, Part-Time Flexible employees in Table Two will be slotted into the Full-Time Step commensurate with their number of weeks as a PTF, and retain their time credit toward the next step.

NOTE: Effective Nov. 19, 2022, Table One and Table Two was modified to include an additional Step P that is \$444 more than Step O of the basic salary schedule in Tables One and Two.

NOTE: Carrier Technicians receive additional compensation equivalent to 2.1% of the employee's applicable hourly rate for all paid hours.

NOTE: The full COLAs will be added to the salaries of all steps in Table 1 and Step P of Table 2, with proportionate application of the COLA to Steps A-O of Table 2.

* NOTE: In accordance with Article 9.3.B, COLAs become effective the second full pay period after the release of the January and July Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers.

Table 1: City Carrier Schedule

RSC Q (NALC)

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date prior to Jan. 12, 2013.

	Basic Annual Salaries																Most Prev. Step
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	62,078	66,517	66,619	69,796	70,256	70,720	71,177	71,633	72,097	72,546	73,012	73,474	73,930	74,400	74,855	75,299	464
Carrier Technician**	63,382	67,914	68,018	71,262	71,731	72,205	72,672	73,137	73,611	74,069	74,545	75,017	75,483	75,962	76,427	76,880	474
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	31.16	33.39	33.44	35.04	35.27	35.50	35.73	35.96	36.19	36.42	36.65	36.88	37.11	37.35	37.58	37.80	
Carrier Technician**	31.82	34.09	34.15	35.77	36.01	36.25	36.48	36.72	36.95	37.18	37.42	37.66	37.89	38.13	38.37	38.59	
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	29.85	31.98	32.03	33.56	33.78	34.00	34.22	34.44	34.66	34.88	35.10	35.32	35.54	35.77	35.99	36.20	
Carrier Technician**	30.47	32.65	32.70	34.26	34.49	34.71	34.94	35.16	35.39	35.61	35.84	36.07	36.29	36.52	36.74	36.96	
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)																	
Steps (From-To)	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	O-P	YRS.	
	96	96	44	44	44	44	44	44	44	34	34	26	26	24	46	13.3	

** Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1%

Table 2: City Carrier Schedule

RSC Q7 (NALC)

This schedule applies to all carriers with a career appointment date on or after Jan. 12, 2013.

	Basic Annual Salaries																Most Prev. Step
	AA	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	46,038	48,094	50,153	52,211	54,271	56,327	58,387	60,448	62,505	64,562	66,622	68,679	70,740	72,796	74,854	75,299	2,060
Carrier Technician**	47,005	49,104	51,206	53,307	55,411	57,510	59,613	61,717	63,818	65,918	68,021	70,121	72,226	74,325	76,426	76,880	2,101
Part-Time Flexible Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	22.13***	23.11	24.14	25.18	26.21	27.24	28.28	29.31	30.35	31.38	32.41	33.44	34.48	35.51	36.54	37.58	37.80
Carrier Technician**	22.60***	23.60	24.65	25.71	26.76	27.82	28.87	29.93	30.98	32.04	33.09	34.15	35.20	36.26	37.31	38.37	38.59
Full-Time/Part-Time Regular Employees - Hourly Basic Rates																	
City Carrier (Grade 2)	22.13	23.12	24.11	25.10	26.09	27.08	28.07	29.06	30.05	31.04	32.03	33.02	34.01	35.00	35.99	36.20	
Carrier Technician**	22.60	23.61	24.62	25.63	26.64	27.65	28.66	29.67	30.68	31.69	32.70	33.71	34.72	35.73	36.74	36.96	
Percent Step O																	
	61.14%	63.87%	66.60%	69.34%	72.07%	74.80%	77.54%	80.28%	83.01%	85.74%	88.48%	91.21%	93.95%	96.68%	99.41%	100.00%	
Step Increase Waiting Periods (In Weeks)																	
Steps (From-To)	AA-A	A-B	B-C	C-D	D-E	E-F	F-G	G-H	H-I	I-J	J-K	K-L	L-M	M-N	N-O	O-P	YRS.
	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	46	13.3

** Carrier Technicians receive an additional 2.1%

***The PTF Step AA pay dispute was settled April 20, 2022 (M-01980). The correct rates were updated on April 8, 2023. Any back pay that may be due to letter carriers for hours in which they worked while in Step AA prior to that date will tentatively be paid on the paycheck that letter carriers will receive on July 21, 2023.

Table 3: City Carrier Assistant Schedule

Hourly Rates

RSC Q4 (NALC)

This schedule applies to CCA Hires with no previous TE service.

	BB	AA
City Carrier (Grade 2)	19.33	19.83
Carrier Technician (add 2.1%)	19.74	20.25
Steps (From BB to AA) in weeks	52	

This schedule applies to CCA Hires with previous TE service after Sept. 29, 2007, who were on the rolls as of Jan. 10, 2013.

	BB	AA
City Carrier (Grade 2)	20.88	21.38
Carrier Technician (add 2.1%)	21.32	21.83
Steps (From BB to AA) in weeks	52	