

Leadership Academy graduates urged to help carriers and spread unionism



Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr.

NALC Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr. presided over the graduation ceremony of the 29 members of NALC Leadership Academy Class 28. The ceremony was held on May 3 at the Maritime Conference Center in Linthicum Heights, MD, just south of Baltimore.

Peralta told the graduates that one of their roles going forward is to not just mentor letter carriers, but to help educate the next generations of trade unionists. He shared how when he was a boy and his family moved to Anaheim, CA, in 1964, one of his neighbors was a Teamster. “Papa Jim took all the kids in the neighborhood under his wing to teach them about the importance of unions in society. Well, that’s how I started as a unionist at the age of 8, being preached [to] by Papa Jim,” Peralta said.

“Your role, for the rest of your life, is to make positive the idea of unionism, to improve it with everybody, to understand the importance of it,” he told the graduates.

Peralta encouraged them to look at challenges they may face as opportuni-

ties to use their new skills to improve the lives of letter carriers.

“Use open arms and open ears,” he said. “Listen to what’s going on and apply what you’ve learned as best you can. Reach out to your mentors and your teachers, and spend the rest of your life improving this union.”

He also called on the graduates to pay forward the investment made in them by their mentors and teachers to the next generation of union activists. “It makes me ask you, ‘Who inspired you and who are you going to inspire?’ Guide them. Teach them. Help them be successful. Do everything you possibly can to make this union successful,” he told them.

The commencement event capped several months of intensive training on the skills necessary for union members to become effective leaders. Under the tutelage of their mentors—established NALC leaders such as branch presidents—the students combined three separate weeks of classroom learning at the Maritime Conference Center with take-home assignments and special projects.

The 29 participants (listed on the next page) now add their names to

Former National Business Agent Troy Clark (r) acted as the master of ceremonies.





an ever-lengthening list of graduates of the Academy. During their classes, students took part in often lively discussions on such subjects as the National Agreement and the union's legislative agenda. They also learned more about the Dispute Resolution Process, strategic planning, branch financial responsibilities, safety and health, retirement issues, route protection, workers' compensation, effective negotiation techniques, and the use of social media for branch communications.

NALC national officers, Headquarters staff members and President Brian L. Renfroe are tapped to teach classes on a wide variety of topics. The attendees

also were guided by daily class instructors: former National Business Agents (NBAs) Troy Clark and Chris Wittenburg; Region 1 NBA Keisha Lewis; Region 5 Regional Administrative Assistant Larrissa Parde; and Assistant to the President Ed Morgan.

Each week of the Academy also includes an emphasis on acquiring effective written and oral communication skills. Back in their branches, graduates will make use of those skills in such forums as membership meetings, awards ceremonies and dinners.

After the commencement, the graduates were assigned to work at their respective NBA offices for a week to learn in a different environment. **PR**

Leadership Academy Class 28



Shanaya Benson receives her certificate from Peralta and Clark.

NALC Leadership Academy Class 28 graduates

Desiray Anderson
Douthern Delaware Br. 906

Joseph Baker
Columbia, SC Br. 233

Shanaya Benson
Chicago, IL Br. 11

Kenneth Best
Kansas City, MO Br. 30

Scott Bultena
Minneapolis, MN Br. 9

Cory Champagne
Houma-Thibodaux-Lockport,
LA Br. 2464

Andrew Chapa
Norman, OK Br. 1491

Jordan Costa
Morrisville, PA Br. 2572

Dustin DeCastro
Akron, OH Br. 148

DeMarcus Dial
Tyler, TX Br. 493

Laura Fahey
Boston, MA Br. 34

Andrew Grant
Anchorage, AK Br. 4319

Denna Hoskins
Hazelwood, MO Br. 5847

Anne Ibison
Centennial, CO Br. 5996

Molly Jackson
Madison, WI Br. 507

Sanjera Johnson
Texarkana, TX Br. 569

Dee Ann Johnstone
Snohomish Co., WA Br. 791

Patrick Kelly
Levittown, PA Br. 4973

Justin Landrum
Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100

Oswald Lecky Jr.
South Jersey, NJ Br. 908

Rob Lloyd
Charleston, WV Br. 531

Renee Maxey
Vicksburg, MS Br. 94

Jacqueline McGregory
Western Wayne Co., MI
Br. 2184

Rowan Riehm
Reno, NV Br. 709

Roberto Santini-Sierra
Ponce, PR Br. 826

Ryan Slusser
Cleveland, OH Br. 40

Lawrence Steward
Rockford, IL Br. 245

Michael Vazquez
Deland, FL Br. 2591

Zed Waltz
Lexington, KY Br. 361