

Special
COLCPE
issue

Get in the Game

Letter carriers' contributions give NALC opportunities for legislative success

You can sit in the stands and let someone else decide your future—or you can *get in the game*. That's the theme of this month's special COLCPE issue, which honors the letter carriers, active and retired, who refused to just sit and watch as others made decisions that affect their jobs, their pay and benefits and their futures like spectators in the stands at a basketball game. Instead, these letter carriers stood up and joined the team.

By supporting the Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education (COLCPE), this group of NALC members assures that the voice of letter carriers continues to be heard in Washington. COLCPE helped a large circle of candidates for the Senate and House of Representatives get their message out to the voters during the 2012 campaign season—helping most of them take office last month as the 113th Congress convened. The name of every donor is printed in this special issue.

NALC uses the donations to give direct financial support to candidates, from both political parties, who have demonstrated a commitment to standing up for letter carriers. These candidates used those resources to reach voters and get out the vote. Support from COLCPE helps candidates win elections so they will have the power to protect the interests of letter carriers.

“We pick candidates based on how they stand on issues vital to letter carriers—our jobs, our pay and benefits, our collective-bargaining rights,” NALC President Fredric Rolando said. “Black or white, male or female, Democrat or Republican, it doesn’t matter—if they support us, we help them get their message out to the voters.”

NALC also uses COLCPE funds to provide funding to “release” letter carriers to work full-time on AFL-CIO campaigns. Candidates appreciate help from letter carriers because of our work ethic, organizing skills and knowledge of the neighborhoods as we walk from union house to union house to talk to voters or hand out campaign literature. (Many letter carriers also volunteered to help campaigns through the Carrier Corps program, as detailed in the January issue of *The Postal Record*.)

Congress makes laws that affect everyone, and that’s why so many Americans participate in the democratic process. But the stakes are particularly high for letter carriers because the federal government is our employer. We depend on the government for our jobs and benefits, and it could wipe those out with the stroke of a pen.

Of course, given today’s political environment, sometimes the best we can hope for is to keep bad ideas from becoming public policy, noted President Rolando. “We’ve seen more than our share of misguided and harmful proposals for dealing with the Postal Service coming from Washington lately,” he said. “And

compromise is harder than ever in this politically polarized environment. Despite the encouraging election results, we may have to settle for keeping the worst ideas from seeing the light.”

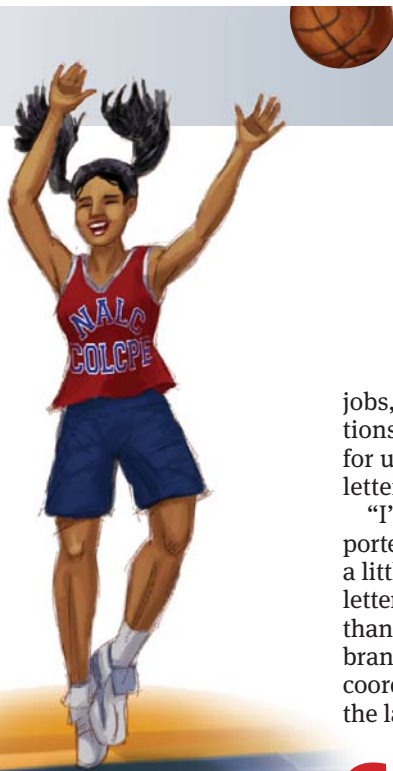
That hard political reality was on display in the presidential election. President Obama’s mixed record on letter carrier issues is well known. But Obama supports basic union rights and is willing to listen to letter carriers’ concerns. Republican challenger Mitt Romney supported a national right-to-work law, major cuts in federal pay and benefits, and likely would have pushed for privatizing the Postal Service.

“Sometimes the best you can get in Washington is to keep bad things from happening,” Rolando said. “With all these terrible proposals for changing the Postal Service circulating, our first task is to minimize the damage as we continue to educate lawmakers and the public about what’s really needed. In sports terms, that means we play defense first. And you have to ‘get in the game’ to play defense.”

Letter carriers, both active and retired, and their families support COLCPE in several ways. The bedrock donations come from letter carriers who simply authorize automatic deductions from their paychecks, such as the participants in the “Gimme 5” program who give \$5 per pay period. Some COLCPE donors mail in a donation, donate at a COLCPE fundraising event, or authorize automatic deductions from an annuity or bank account.

These generous donors are the people who stopped sitting on the sidelines and chose to “get in the game.” With their help, NALC is protecting the interest of letter carriers in Washington, and working to assure that the things that letter carrier activists in the past worked so hard for—our





jobs, pay, benefits, working conditions and retirement—are preserved for us and for the next generation of letter carriers.

“I’m very proud of COLCPE supporters for their willingness to give a little extra to support their fellow letter carriers,” Rolando said. “Special thanks go to those who organized their branch’s COLCPE efforts as COLCPE coordinators and worked, as part of the last COLCPE contest, to urge their

fellow letter carriers to pitch in. Also, thanks to letter carriers and Auxiliary members who organized fundraising events. You all deserve extra praise for getting in the game.”

If your name isn’t on this list, getting in the game by donating to COLCPE couldn’t be easier. The simplest way is to sign up for payroll deduction, such as \$5 a pay period. It’s an easy and smart way to invest in your future by supporting NALC’s

COLCPE contest results

The 2012 COLCPE competition again encouraged letter carriers to boost their branch’s number of “Gimme 5” contributors.

Branches with 25 or more members were divided by branch size into eight categories. The branches in these eight different categories with either the highest total percentage of automatic Gimme 5 contributors or the largest percentage increase in Gimme 5 participation were to receive a number of \$100 American Express gift cards to use as raffle prizes. To qualify for a prize in either category, each winning branch was required to increase its total number of Gimme 5 contributors by at least 1 percent of the total branch membership.

As a further incentive to become a contributor to the letter carriers’ political action fund, all donors at the Gimme 5 level were entered into a general raffle for 10 \$100 gift cards.

The results are in. Some competition highlights:

- Phenix City, AL Branch 3122 increased from 0 percent to 26.92 percent this year.
- Parsons, KS Branch 477 moved into third place in the country with 69.23 percent.
- Linden, NJ Branch 2876 increased by 19.7 percentage points, from 1.4 percent to 21.1 percent.
- Last year’s second-place overall finisher, Branch 55 of Pawtucket, RI, surged into first place by increasing by 10 percentage points this year, with

more than 73 percent of members now participating.

- Long Island City, NY Branch 357 increased by almost 6 percentage points this year.
- Eugene, OR Branch 916 continued its steady increase over the past several years by growing by 9 percentage points this year, bringing its total to 44.82 percent.
- Austin, TX Branch 181 increased by nearly 3 percentage points to bring its total contribution percentage to 31.87 percent.
- Leading the way among the large branches, Oak Brook, IL Branch 825 increased by more than 2 percentage points this year.

The winning branches, by category of number of member, were:

Category 1: 2,000-plus members

Highest percentage and largest increase

1st place: Branch 825, Oak Brook, IL—6.08 percent and 2.13 percent increase

Category 2: 1,000-1,999 members

Highest percentage

1st place: Branch 100, Toledo, OH—12.67 percent

2nd place: Branch 2194, Western Wayne County, MI—11.44 percent

3rd place: Branch 182, Dayton, OH—5.41 percent

4th place: Branch 193, San Jose, CA—5.23 percent

Largest increase

1st place: Branch 2194, Western Wayne County, MI—2.1 percent

2nd place: Branch 100, Toledo, OH—2 percent

3rd place: Branch 193, San Jose, CA—1.36 percent

4th place: Branch 182, Dayton, OH—1 percent

Category 3: 500-999 members

Highest percentage

1st place: Branch 181, Austin, TX—31.87 percent

2nd place: Branch 124, New Orleans, LA—10.89 percent

3rd place: Branch 20, Connecticut Merged—10.87 percent

4th place: Branch 5, Omaha, NE—8.01 percent

5th place: Branch 908, South Jersey—5.81 percent

Largest increase

1st place: Branch 20, Connecticut Merged—3.03 percent

2nd place: Branch 181, Austin, TX—2.86 percent

3rd place: Branch 5, Omaha, NE—2.33 percent

4th place: Branch 908, South Jersey, NJ—1.98 percent

5th place: Branch 124, New Orleans, LA—1.15 percent

Category 4: 350-499 members

Highest percentage

1st place: Branch 916, Eugene, OR—44.82 percent

2nd place: Branch 258, Reading, PA—21.88 percent

3rd place: Branch 245, Rockford, IL—14.16 percent

4th place: Branch 791, Everett, WA—11.32 percent

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legislative program—after all, a pay cut or job loss will cost much more than \$5. You also can set up automatic deductions from a bank account or send a check directly to COLCPE. Retired members can contribute directly from their OPM annuities. Instructions can be found on NALC's website at nalc.org/depart/legpol/#COLCPE, or by calling the Department of Legislative and Political Action at 202-662-2833. **PR**

COLCPE started the 2011-12 election cycle with \$3,203,126 in the bank. As of Nov. 23, 2012, COLCPE had raised \$6,038,182. COLCPE disbursed \$7,370,467 for the last election cycle, and had \$1,870,841 in cash on hand at the end of November.

Below is the current breakdown of COLCPE's disbursements for 2011-12 cycle:

- \$1,180,454 for costs associated with the AFL-CIO's Labor 2010 program.
- \$5,732,419 in contributions in support of federal candidates. These contributions were given either directly to the candidates' campaigns or they were made to national parties, state parties, leadership political action committees (PACs), super PACs or other political organizations in support of or in opposition to a federal candidate. (All contributions made by COLCPE can be found on the Federal Election Commission website, fec.gov.)
- \$342,371 on political communications, including mailings and telephone town hall meetings, to NALC members.
- \$41,705 for Letter Carriers for Obama T-shirts for NALC activists.
- \$73,518 on administrative fees.

5th place: Branch 116, Ft. Wayne, IN—10.93 percent

Largest increase

1st place: Branch 916, Eugene, OR—8.86 percent

2nd place: Branch 31, Peoria, IL—2.37 percent

3rd place: Branch 373, Cedar Rapids, IA—1.78 percent

4th place: Branch 258, Reading, PA—1.6 percent

5th place: Branch 116, Ft. Wayne, IN—1.43 percent

Category 5: 200-349 members

Highest percentage

1st place: Branch 499, Kansas City, KS—25.85 percent

2nd place: Branch 6119, Metairie, LA—22.44 percent

3rd place: Branch 357, Long Island City, NY—16.28 percent

4th place: Branch 456, Norfolk, VA—16.23 percent

5th place: Branch 542, Norristown, PA—13.43 percent

Largest increase

1st place: Branch 499, Kansas City, KS—6.26 percent

2nd place: Branch 357, Long Island City, NY—5.71 percent

3rd place: Branch 2810, Arlington Heights, IL—2.49 percent

4th place: Branch 263, Augusta, GA—2.11 percent

5th place: Branch 272, Morristown, NJ—1.99 percent

Category 6: 100-199 members

Highest percentage

1st place: Branch 55, Pawtucket, RI—73.16 percent

2nd place: Branch 489, Anderson, IN—20.14 percent

3rd place: Branch 533, Kokomo, IN—19.64 percent

4th place: Branch 317, Decatur, IL—19.17 percent

Largest increase

1st place: Branch 55, Pawtucket, RI—9.95 percent

2nd place: Branch 286, Pittsfield, MA—3.88 percent

3rd place: Branch 4286, Palatine, IL—3.44 percent

4th place: Branch 277, Chester, PA—3.21 percent

Category 7: 50-99 members

Highest percentage

1st place: Branch 4454, Kailua, HI—50 percent

2nd place: Branch 924, Freehold, NJ—31.71 percent

3rd place: Branch 595, Danville, VA—31.71 percent

4th place: Branch 54, Woonsocket, RI—29.87 percent

Largest increase

1st place: Branch 2876, Linden, NJ—19.76 percent

2nd place: Branch 54, Woonsocket, RI—6.79 percent

3rd place: Branch 4454, Kailua, HI—6.45 percent

4th place: Branch 1563, Ukiah, CA—6.43 percent

Category 8: 25-49 members

Highest percentage

1st place: Branch 477, Parsons, KS—69.23 percent

2nd place: Branch 1726, El Centro, CA—36.36 percent

3rd place: Branch 3677, Weirton, WV—30 percent

Largest increase

1st place: Branch 3122, Phenix City, AL—26.92 percent

2nd place: Branch 477, Parsons, KS—7.69 percent

3rd place: Branch 2291, Starkville, MS—6.45 percent

Despite not increasing by the minimum threshold to be awarded prizes for this year's competition, several branches should be recognized for their outstanding COLCPE participation. Those branches include:

- Branch 11, Chicago, IL 15.87 percent
- Branch 70, San Diego, CA 10.45 percent
- Branch 9, Minneapolis, MN 12.75 percent
- Branch 860, Honolulu, HI 34.84 percent
- Branch 52, Central California 31.68 percent
- Branch 219, Aurora, IL 44.13 percent
- Branch 57, Newport, RI 70.9 percent
- Branch 957, Bismarck, ND 51.72 percent
- Branch 94, Vicksburg, MS 41.67 percent

As part of this year's competition, NALC HQ also raffled off 10 \$100 American Express gift cards. Below are the 10 lucky Gimme 5 contributors:

- Van Foreman Jr., Northeast Florida Branch 53
- Thomas Falk, Duluth, MN Branch 114
- David Lloyd, Lansing, MI Branch 122
- Charles Rogers, Belleville, IL Branch 155
- Mary Gillespie, Fort Worth, TX Branch 226
- Scott Martin, Watertown, NY Branch 302
- Kimberlee Clark, Great Falls, MT Branch 650
- Kevin Allen, Yakima, WA Branch 852
- Timothy Gross, Burbank, CA Branch 2086
- Shirley Hise, Sun City, AZ Branch 6156