

COLCPE

Opening doors for carriers' friends and issues

The Committee on Letter Carrier Political Education (COLCPE) is the National Association of Letter Carriers' political action committee. Through voluntary donations from letter carriers, COLCPE allows hundreds of thousands of letter carriers to express a unified voice in the political process. COLCPE does not use union dues—it depends entirely on donors. This issue of *The Postal Record* honors those carriers who gave a little extra to help assure that our voices are heard in Washington, DC.

Every two years, all seats in the House of Representatives and one third of the Senate are up for election. The democratic election of representatives is a fundamental vehicle in our democracy that spurs debate, shapes national agendas and priorities, and provides all Americans direct representation in the federal government. COLCPE is the means by which the NALC expresses the unified voice of letter carriers in American politics.

As concerned and engaged citizens, letter carriers are responsible for expressing the importance of electing politicians and enacting legislation that supports working families, creates job growth, expands the middle class and strengthens the U.S. Postal Service.

COLCPE supports both Democrats and Republicans, NALC President Fredric Rolando noted. "We don't

base the decision on political party affiliation or on other issues," he said. "Our only concern is whether a candidate will stand up for letter carriers in Congress by supporting workers' rights and common-sense reforms to strengthen the Postal Service. Even if a candidate doesn't share all of our views, above all we support people who will listen to us and seriously consider what we have to say."

Assuring that letter carriers are heard on Capitol Hill is more important than ever. Anyone who has read the news lately knows that Congress is sharply divided on critical issues of governance. A small but aggressive group of activists and their allies are pushing an agenda that is hostile to both labor rights and government employees.

From assaults on collective-bargaining rights to cuts in pay and pensions to cutting Saturday service or privatizing the Postal Service, there is no shortage of efforts to harm and discredit the job letter carriers do and the service letter carriers provide to American businesses and the American people.

The next election is just months away, and this November we must work together to educate and increase the group of legislators offering solutions that do not blame the



employees of the Postal Service for its financial situation. Let's work together to elect men and women who value what letter carriers do on the streets of every community in the United States, six days a week.

COLCPE supports such candidates in two ways.

With direct support, COLCPE helps candidates fund their campaigns, helping them pay for costs of staff, advertisements, phone banks, literature and mailings. Printing and postage to reach voters costs money, but getting the word out to voters is even more expensive in the age of television and Internet advertising.

The average House district has more than 650,000 constituents. A Senate candidate in a large state may have tens of millions of voters to reach. No candidate can talk to all of the voters in person. To compete, candidates must spend money on mailings, phone banks and advertising to get their message to the voters.

The second way COLCPE helps is by releasing letter carriers to work for AFL-CIO efforts to get out the vote for pro-labor candidates.

Released carriers primarily do direct voter outreach—contacting targeted voters by making phone calls and knocking on doors—to talk about what is at stake in an upcoming election.

“Letter carriers are natural campaigners,” Rolando said. “We know better than anyone how to go door-to-door, we're not shy about talking to people and we have a lot of respect in the community. Voters listen.”

You don't have to be released to help a campaign, Rolando added. “Contributing to COLCPE is the easiest and most important way to support the candidates who will stand up for

us. I encourage carriers to go out and volunteer for their local AFL-CIO election campaigns before this November's elections,” he said. “Joining the Carrier Corps, our union's grassroots volunteer network, is a great way to start. You'll make new contacts and learn how campaigns work.” Carrier Corps members are also empowered with the tools to sign up new donors for COLCPE and other legislative and political activities to support their fellow carriers. (Go to nalc.org/carriercorps for more information.)

In this annual COLCPE issue of *The Postal Record*, we recognize the generosity of letter carriers who give a little extra to protect the jobs and way of life of all carriers.

These supporters, both active and retired, donate to COLCPE in three ways.

Most choose the easiest way to provide steady support by signing up for a small deduction from their postal paycheck each pay period, such as \$5

deductions from a bank account, and retired members can contribute directly from their OPM annuities.

Carriers who made donations through automatic deductions in 2013 are recognized beginning on page 14 of this issue.

Some carriers choose to send one-time donations, or make donations in addition to their automatic deductions, by simply writing a check. Donors who made one-time donations in 2013 are recognized beginning on page 73. (Those who also gave through automatic deduction are shown only in the first list, with their totals reflecting both kinds of donations.)

Letter carriers also give to COLCPE through group donations by participating in fundraising events held by branches, auxiliaries and state associations. Group donations in 2013 are shown on page 79.

“Thanks to these generous supporters, COLCPE continues to stand up

“Contributing to COLCPE is the easiest and most important way to support the candidates who will stand up for us.”

under the “Gimme 5” program. For less than the cost of a cup of coffee, a letter carrier can help ensure that COLCPE has a reliable source of funds to help guard his or her pay, benefits, collective-bargaining rights and job. These regular donors provide the bedrock financial support for COLCPE by ensuring a steady source of funds it can count on.

In addition to automatic payroll deduction, active or retired letter carriers can easily arrange for automatic

for letter carriers in Washington, DC,” Rolando said. “Look at all the names, and you'll see another example of the strength of a union—when we unite and each give a little, we can do great things. Imagine how much we could do if every letter carrier gave even a small donation to COLCPE.”

For information on how to support COLCPE, call the NALC Legislative and Political Affairs Department at 202-393-4695, extension 22, or go to nalc.org/colcpe. **PR**