

City carrier assistants called on as NALC leaders

Todd Bussan is a Navy veteran, a union worker throughout his career and president of Freeport, IL Branch 223. He's also a city carrier assistant (CCA).

Before he became a CCA, Bussan began his postal career as a transitional employee (TE) in 2009. His branch first elected him as president when he was a TE, in 2011.

"I have to admit, I was nervous and had concerns at first," Bussan recalled of his first days as branch president. "I sometimes wondered if I had bitten off more

than I could chew. I mean, I was a TE with little more than two years as a carrier and limited knowledge of the contract."

But he learned the job fast, and his branch re-elected him last year. Bussan's experience demonstrates that CCAs are an integral part of the NALC, and some bring the skills and dedication to step up as leaders of their union just like career employees.

After four years in the Navy, Bussan worked for Chrysler Corp. and became an active member of the United Auto Workers. When he joined the Postal Service and NALC, Bussan began speaking up at branch meetings about his concerns that branch members weren't sticking together and supporting their union's efforts as well as they could.

"As I started to express my concerns at meetings and gave my opinion on union

issues, I was asked if I'd be interested in running for office—more specifically, president," he said, since the previous president was retiring. "They felt they needed young blood to become more active in the union." After the branch checked to assure that a TE could hold the office, the members elected Bussan. He has learned on the job under the tutelage of more experienced carriers, such as 16-year steward **Dan Pattat**.

"He has taken me under his wing and guided, coached, counseled and advised me every step of the way," Bussan said of Pattat. "Not only is he knowledgeable, he treats everyone fairly, from the lowest CCA to the most senior carrier."

"It's nice to see someone who has passion," Pattat said. Bussan "has brought some fresh fire. He's a really good advocate for getting people involved."

"Every emerging leader can use a mentor," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "I encourage branches to look to CCAs to serve as not only future, but current leaders at every level—branch officer, steward, volunteer or otherwise. And I encourage CCAs not to be shy about taking leadership roles. It's your union, and no one has a bigger stake in our future than you."

Olin Moore of Minneapolis Branch 9 didn't wait to become a career employee to volunteer for his union. Before joining the Postal Service, Moore worked for 12 years as a district staff member for Rep. Martin Sabo (D-MN), a U.S. House member from the Minneapolis area. Hired as a TE in 2007, Moore put his skills to use as a congressional district liaison for NALC.

Moore said he "jumped at it" when his branch approached him with the

Kevin Card appointed special assistant to the president



Kevin Card is a member of Portland, OR Branch 82. He has been a letter carrier for 28 years. Before NALC President Fredric Rolando appointed him as assistant to the president for workers' compensation in November 2013, Card served as a shop steward and as secretary-

treasurer of Branch 82, and he also edited the branch's newsletter. Active in statewide service, Card was elected in 2011 as president of the Oregon State Association. He has also worked as an NALC liaison for Oregon's third congressional district, as the state's coordinator for the Letter Carrier Food Drive, and he has served on the executive board for the Oregon chapter of the AFL-CIO.

Card is married with three children and two grandchildren. He will split his time between NALC Headquarters in Washington and the Region 2 office in Vancouver, WA. *PR*

idea. “It was something I could do for the union.”

Moore keeps in touch with Sabo’s successor, Democrat Keith Ellison, and makes sure that Ellison and his staff know what letter carriers think about postal legislation. He became a CCA last February and was recently converted to a full-time career carrier position.

Though he worked on many issues as a staff member for Rep. Sabo, Moore likes focusing on supporting the Postal Service. “It’s an important cause, not only to our union members and their families, but also to our economy,” he said.

Though his congressional experience made him a natural for the CDL position, Moore said, he credits his branch leaders for asking him to take a leadership role even though he was not a regular carrier.

“None of this would have happened if union leaders hadn’t reached out and said, ‘Would you be willing to do this?’ ”

Moore likes the challenge of communicating complex postal issues to Ellison and his staff, knowing that they have many issues to track. So far, his efforts seem to be working: Ellison “has been super-supportive of postal issues,” he said.

For CCA **Carl Pope** of Atlanta Branch 73, military experience—he served in the Army for 22 years—quickly came in handy as a union leader. Soon after he took a job as a TE six years ago, Pope approached his branch president with some concerns about his assignment, and the president gave him a field promotion.

“He stopped the conversation and appointed me on the spot as the shop steward,” Pope said. He didn’t expect



the appointment, but Pope took on the job and didn’t look back. “It has turned out excellent,” he said.

Others have noticed Pope’s leadership potential. He also was named the branch’s equal employment opportunity representative (he held a similar position in the military), and his branch recently elected him as an assistant vice president. Pope believes he is being groomed to take on more leadership roles.

These aren’t the only CCAs, or career carriers who started as CCAs, who have taken leadership roles in their union. Whether as elected officers or stewards, in appointed positions, as volunteers or just by actively participating, many CCAs are pitching in to move their union forward and serve their fellow carriers.

Bussan encourages his fellow CCAs to follow this example. He may be among the first CCAs to serve his union as an officer, but “I hope I’m not the last,” he said. “CCAs should embrace the union for all it has done to promote a career path when one didn’t exist just a year ago. Being active in our union ensures that our voice is heard, that our concerns are considered and that our needs are met. Just because we are CCAs should be more reason to be active in our union.” **PR**

While at the Illinois state convention in June, NALC President Fredric Rolando (r) congratulated Todd Bussan for his re-election as president of Freeport, IL Branch 223.