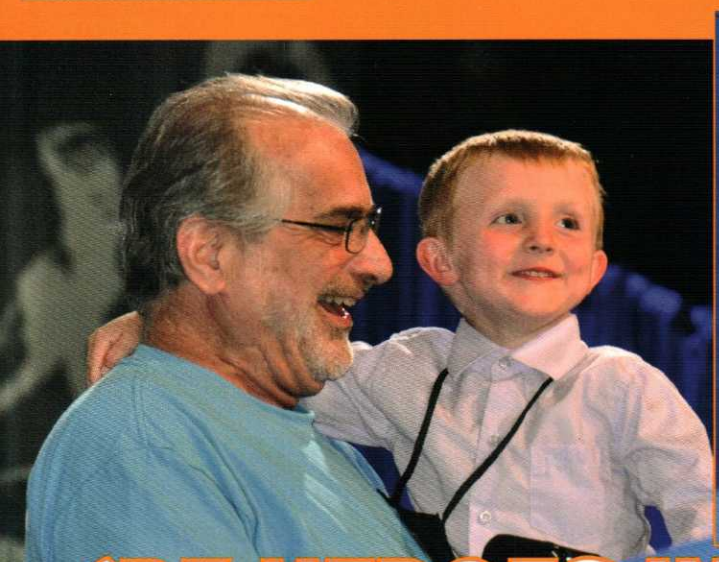
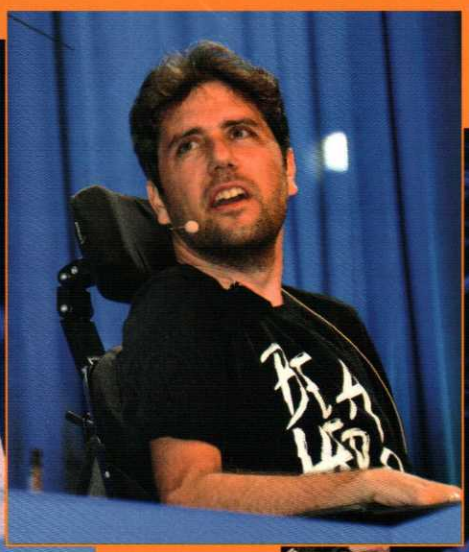
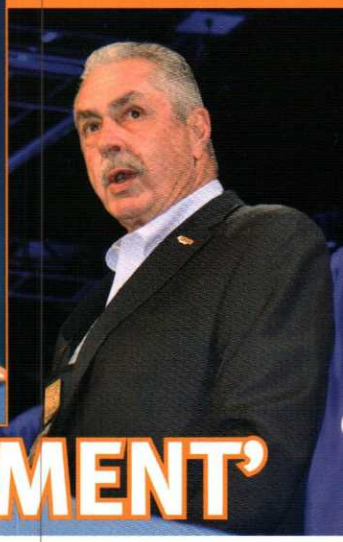
NALC 71ST BIENNIAL CONVENTION
JULY 16-20, 2018 • DETROIT, MI

NALC CONVENTION
CHRONICLE

Covering the **fourth session**: Thursday, July 19, 2018







From l: NALC President Fredric Rolando with Jaxson Hunt, Ady Barkan and Mark Perrone

'BE HEROES IN THIS MOMENT'

On the fourth day of the 71st biennial convention, delegates embraced their power to effect positive change beyond the workplace. Whether bringing their message to voters and to Congress, feeding hungry families through the Letter Carrier Food Drive or working for social and economic justice, letter carriers meeting in Detroit renewed their commitment to creating a better world.

Speakers urged delegates on Thursday to remember that in their unity lies the power to embrace their values by helping the hungry, giving hope to the sick, defending the powerless and resisting those who discriminate or seek to divide.

The delegates responded, donating money on the floor and in raffles for those in need and wearing blue T-shirts displaying their support for the union's political fund, which helps broadcast our message. They strengthened their resolve to stand up for working men and women everywhere and build stronger communities—to "be heroes in this moment."

BACK TO WORK

The day began at 10 a.m. as NALC President Fredric Rolando called the delegates to order and invited to the stage Los Angeles Branch 24's Juanetta McKissick to perform "The Star-Spangled Banner." Detroit Branch 1 Treasurer Michael Slavin led the Pledge of Allegiance, and Pastor Ian Reed Twiss of Trinity Episcopal Church in Belleville, MI, delivered the invocation.

Before moving to the day's business, Rolando took a few comments and questions from the microphones.

'YOU CAN BE AN AMERICAN HERO'

Rolando next invited to the stage Ady Barkan of the Center for Popular Democracy.

Barkan, who has ALS and needs Medicaid to help pay for his care, has been an advocate on Capitol Hill for progressive change.

"I'm losing my ability to speak, so I'm asking people to be my voice," he said in a moving introductory video shown to the delegates. "I'm losing my ability to walk, so I'm asking people to march for me—to vote to replace these Republicans in Congress with people who listen to families like ours."

Barkan began his speech by saying that the country's values of justice and equity are under attack from a president who cares only about profits, not people.

"And I know that you, as the women and men who are our neighbors, block by block, door by door, you know better than anyone what this government is doing to our families and friends and neighbors," he said.

He continued by saying that, because we have the power of solidarity and the power of the American people, it is our duty to use that power against hatred, greed and xenophobia. Barkan urged delegates in the hall to turn out in force for the midterm elections in November, and to become community organizers as proud, brave Americans committed to a different vision.

"Think about how close we are to building a

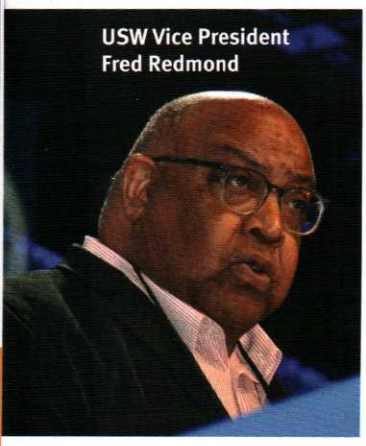
Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Judy Willoughby

dramatically different world," he said. "We need each and every one of you to be heroes in this moment."

Delegates gave Barkan an enthusiastic letter carrier cheer and later passed a motion to make him an honorary member of NALC.

COMMITTEES

Rolando continued the day's events by announcing the members of the National Election Committee: Barbara Stickler, Garden Grove, CA Branch 1100; Mike O'Neill, New Jersey Merged Branch 38; Rod Holub, Manhattan, KS Branch 1018; Delano Wilson, Silver Spring, MD Branch 2611; Antonia Shields, Birmingham, AL Branch 530; Paul Roznowski, Royal Oak, MI Branch 3126; Ethel Ford, Houston, TX Branch 283; Tom Dlugolenski, Syracuse, NY Branch 134; Market Parker, Aurora, IL Branch 219; and Brian Wiggins, Seattle, WA Branch 79.



USW Vice President Fred Redmond

The president then called Special Assistant to the President Paul Barner to the podium. Barner introduced the members of the Public Relations Committee: Dan Garhofer, St. Paul, MN Branch 28 (chairman); Larissa Parde, Lincoln, NE Branch 8; and Paul Glavin, Nashville, TN Branch 4. Garhofer delivered the committee's report, updating delegates on the progress of many of the union's efforts to make the world a better place, including the annual Stamp Out Hunger food drive, the NALC Heroes program, and Carrier Alert.

The Mileage and Per Diem Committee returned to the stage. Chairman Antonia Shields gave the committee's final report. Board of Trustees Chairman Lawrence D. Brown told the delegates that the trustees had accepted the report. The delegates then approved the report by voice vote.

The delegates viewed a video trailer for a documentary titled "Detroit 43202" that explores the ongoing crisis in Detroit resulting from decades of racial injustice and deindustrialization—but that also reveals the hopeful efforts of determined citizens to stay and fight for a better future via the lens of a letter carrier's longtime mail route.

After viewing the trailer, Rolando introduced filmmaker Pam Sporn and retired Detroit 1 letter carrier Wendell Watkins, the subject of the film. "I learned so much and I was really deeply inspired by the stories of Wendell and these great, resilient Detroiters," Sporn told the audience.

A SEA OF BLUE

President Rolando returned to the stage. "Boy, do we have a sea of blue out there," he commented, seeing the myriad of contributors in the crowd clad in their stylish light blue Letter Carrier Political Fund (LCPF) T-shirts.

"Currently, over 24,000 members contribute to the Letter Carrier Political Fund. That's impressive—but it's only 9 percent of our membership," Rolando said. "One thing I know for sure is we are more than a 9 percent union, and we've made good progress educating our members and growing the PAC since we last met in Los Angeles."

He then announced the awards for participation in LCPF by branch size through June 15. The first place winners were:

PARTICIPATION RATE

2,000-plus members—Chicago Branch 11, 14.58 percent

1000-1,999 members—Austin, TX Branch 181, 35 percent

500-999 members—Birmingham, AL Branch 530, 30.85 percent

300-499 members—Reading, PA Branch 258, 46.5 percent

Under 299 members—Newport, RI Branch 57, 83.8 percent

State Association—Rhode Island, 33.94 percent

Region—Region 8 (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee), 15.32 percent

PER CAPITA DONATIONS

2,000-plus members—Chicago Branch 11, $25.02

1,000-1,999 members—Austin, TX Branch 181, $63.55

500-999 members—Honolulu, HI Branch 860, $80.48

300-499 members—Central California Coast Branch 52, $68.79

50-299 members—Newport, RI Branch 57, $151.26

LARGEST INCREASE

2,000-plus members—New Jersey Merged Branch 38, 4.89 percent

1,000-1,999 members—Austin, TX Branch 181, 5.29 percent

500-999 members—Birmingham, AL Branch 530, 12.92 percent

300-499 members—Reading, PA Branch 258, 21.64 percent

50-299 members—Linden, NJ Branch 2876, 39.19 percent

State Association—Rhode Island, 7.82 percent

Region—Region 3 (Illinois), 4.06 percent

President Rolando then introduced NALC Assistant Secretary-Treasurer Judy Willoughby, who read three legislative resolutions pertaining to how to use NALC fact sheets, as well as the union's stances on social and ecological issues. All three were approved after recommended changes.

'TOUGH IS WHAT WE DO'

After a video of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivering his "I Have a Dream" speech in Detroit, Rolando said racism is still a challenge for America before introducing Fred Redmond, international vice president of the United Steelworkers Union of America.

Redmond reminded the delegates of the labor movement's central role, from its earliest years to today, in promoting social and economic justice and opposing racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. Our united action in service of our values, he said, prepares us for the struggles that face us today.

"These are tough times," Redmond said. "But in the labor movement, tough is what we do. We fight every day for working families, because in this labor movement, we pride ourselves on the morality of our core values and our mission of being a collective voice for the voiceless."

Redmond harshly criticized the Trump administration's disrespect for human rights and dignity, shown, for example, by its treatment of undocumented immigrant families.

"I think we are all astonished and saddened that our country has stooped to separating children at the border from their parents," he said. "Brothers and sisters, that's not the America that we know. That's not the America that some of you in this room served to defend by your military service."

He urged letter carriers to rise to the many challenges as one. "If we stand by the principles of the labor movement, if we work with our community partners and allies, then one day, one day soon, we will be able to stand up and look our children square in the eye and tell them, because of what we have done in this movement, the best days of America are not behind us," he said.

The delegates showed their appreciation with a letter carrier cheer.

The delegates then viewed a video in the "We Carry On" series about how their brothers and sisters in Puerto Rico, St. Thomas and St. Croix dealt with the devastating impact of Hurricanes Irma and Maria last September.

STAMP OUT HUNGER

President Rolando invited to the stage Marc Perrone, president of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) International Union, a national sponsor of the Letter Carriers' Food Drive.

"Bag by bag and door by door, millions of pounds of food have been donated by our union and your union," Perrone said. "We have changed the lives of countless families all across this country, and I want to thank you for the work that you've done."

Perrone praised letter carriers for their role in uniting the American people. "You help remind people that, every day, we are a nation—a single nation. You treat everybody equally," he said. "You reflect our values: equality, unity, community, respect and dignity, decency and selflessness."

He reminded the delegates that their hard work, and unions' struggle overall to win a fair share for their labor, is what makes America run. "No organization, no company, no government has ever succeeded in spite of its workers," he said. "We succeed because of our workers.

"When those with wealth and power and political agendas come after us," he added, "it isn't because we've done something wrong—no, it's because we've done something right."

Perrone urged the delegates to transform their values into action. "Let me call on all of you to embrace the power that you all have, that we all have, to be able to shape the kind of America that we believe in."

In a memorable moment following his speech, Perrone announced that UFCW will double its contribution to the Letter Carriers' Food Drive next year.

The delegates rewarded Perrone with a letter carrier cheer.

President Rolando invited Gerry Brisson, president and CEO of Gleaners Community Food Bank in Detroit, to the podium. "We are inspired and deeply grateful to you," Brisson said.

Tellers then moved through the convention hall to collect donations for letter carriers suffering personal setbacks, to raise money to help fund a Fisher House for injured veterans' families in Ann Arbor, MI, and for the children of Flint, MI. The effort raised $15,369, which the NALC trustees will decide how to distribute on Friday. Additionally, donations of bottled water for Flint will be collected on the floor Friday.

The president then announced the

Danielle Harada raffled off her art as prizes to raise money for MDA.

Delegates from Hawaii marched to the stage to invite delegates to the 2020 convention in Honolulu.

top collections of food in last May's Letter Carriers' Food Drive:

1-25 members—Avon Park, FL Branch 4000, 63,992 pounds
26-49 members—Helena, MT Branch 220, 148,242 pounds
50-99 members—Butte, MT Branch 621, 166,500 pounds
100-199 members—Charlottesville, VA Branch 518, 349,164 pounds
200-349 members—Columbia, MO Branch 763, 1,095,148 pounds
350-499 members—Fort Meyers, FL Branch 2072, 292,095 pounds
500-699 members—North Oakland County, MI Branch 320, 537,683 pounds
700-999 members—Oklahoma City, OK Branch 458, 1,802,922 pounds
1,000-1,499 members—West Coast Florida Branch 1477, 1,312,092 pounds
1,500-2,499 members—Central Florida Branch 1091, 1,062,835 pounds
More than 2,500 members—Los Angeles, CA Branch 24, 2,017,939 pounds

Branch 24 also collected the most pounds of any branch, while Branch 458 collected the most money, $105,217, for the food drive.

DELIVERING THE CURE

The president invited Jacob Hunt and his family, including son Jaxson, to the stage. Hunt described his family's struggle to deal with Jaxson's diagnosis with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) and how the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA)—NALC's official charity—boosted his confidence in facing Jaxson's future.

"What do you have if you don't have hope?" asked Hunt. "We're here today because we have hope.

"Today, boys with DMD often become men," he said. "They live into their 20s and 30s, which was often not the case 15 or 20 years ago."

President Rolando announced the top MDA fundraising branches. The grand prize winner, with $60,221 raised last year, was Long Island Merged, NY Branch 6000. The other top branches were St. Louis, MO Branch 343; Portland, OR Branch 82; Arizona Merged Branch 1902; Northeastern New York Branch 358; Colorado Springs, CO Branch 204; Yonkers, NY Branch 387; Green Bay, WI Branch 619; Fargo-West Fargo, ND Branch 205, Manitowac, WI Branch 490; and Sheridan, WY Branch 1006. The Gold Prize winner for the most raised per capita ($111.36) was Branch 1006.

President Rolando introduced Danielle Harada, an artist and MDA ambassador who provided several works of art she raffled at the convention to raise money for MDA. Harada said NALC's support for MDA has helped develop a treatment for the type of muscular dystrophy she has. And she announced the winners of the raffle.

The president said that NALC's raffle and sales for MDA at the convention had raised about $63,000 so far.

The Convention Site Committee took the stage. Rhine introduced the members of the committee: Howard Komine, Honolulu, HI Branch 860 (chairman); Jim Korolowicz, South Macomb, MI Branch 4374; and Glenn Norton, Las Vegas, NV Branch 2502. Rhine delivered the committee's report and Komine explained the process of choosing a site for future conventions. As president of the host branch for the 72nd biennial convention in Honolulu in 2020, Komine led his branch in inviting delegates to his city in two years.

After some housekeeping items, the convention adjourned shortly after 3 p.m.

NALC AUXILIARY THURSDAY, JULY 19

President Cythensis Lang reconvened the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

All members recited the Pledge of Allegiance and the collect.

The thought of the day, about putting positive impulses into action, was given by Auxiliary Vice President Cynthia Martinez.

The minutes were approved as read. The Executive Board will approve the minutes for the last meeting.

All committees gave their final reports and were thanked for their service by President Lang.

The nominating committee reported the election results. The elected officers are as follows: president, Cythensis Lang; vice president, Cynthia Martinez; secretary, Crystal Bragg; assistant secretary, Linda Davis; and treasurer, Pamela Fore.

Past National Auxiliary President Linda Kirby swore in the newly elected officers.

After six years of service to our NALCA Board, George Anna Myers retired from the position of secretary. Myers has retired from the Auxiliary but will continue to work hard for NALC and NALCA.

Brooks Bennett of Washington thanked the Auxiliary for all our work in helping letter carriers. Luke Wigpen shared a touching video of his mother's last day on her route in Washington. It was beautifully done and illustrated the connection between letter carriers and their customers.

The NALCA Board was installed on Thursday.

Geneva Robinson of Aux. #4 in Missouri shared her thoughts about the benefits of an optimistic attitude.

The flags were retired and the meeting was closed until the 72nd NALC biennial convention in Honolulu.

—Submitted by George Anna Myers, NALCA Secretary