

Leadership Academy graduates urged to strengthen letter carriers' cause

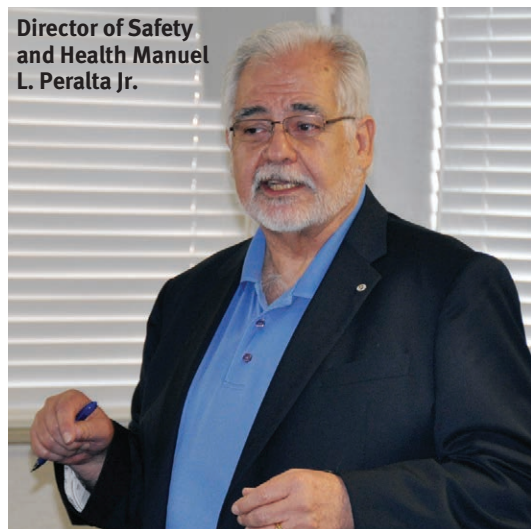
NALC Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr. presided over the graduation ceremony of the 31 members of NALC Leadership Academy Class 27. The ceremony was held on Dec. 8 at the Maritime Center in Linthicum Heights, MD, just south of Baltimore.

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 and a fair playing field by the power that collective workers can use. Well, that’s how I started as a unionist at the age of 8, being preached by Papa Jim,” Peralta said.

“Our job is to teach people the importance of the NALC and unionism in America,” he said, “because it can’t be just [letter carriers] that we’re protecting. We have to protect unionism as a whole.”

He continued: “We have to preach about the NALC contract and how we serve that membership in every

Director of Safety and Health Manuel L. Peralta Jr.



opportunity you have. You have to ask yourself, ‘Am I helping my branch? Not my ego. Am I helping my branch to be stronger, and to influence others to develop the army that we need to protect each other in the future?’ ”

He pushed them to thank the people who inspired them to become unionists, and urged them to find people whom they can inspire on that same path.

“Make your union stronger forever. Continue to learn. Don’t give up. Don’t walk away,” he said.

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 Center with take-home assignments and special projects.

The 31 participants (listed below) now add their names to an ever-lengthening list of graduates of the Academy. During their classes,

The graduation luncheon was held on Dec. 8 at the Maritime Center in Linthicum Heights, MD.





Class 27

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 NBAs' offices for a week to learn in a different environment. **PR**



Melissa Limage receives her certificate from Peralta.

NALC Leadership Academy Class 27 graduates

Adam Albrecht
Denver, CO Br. 47

Eric Beu
Oklahoma City, OK Br. 458

Lakeyshyan Bryant
Greenwood, MS Br. 1080

Katherine Buettner
Ballwin, MO Br. 5050

Cory Carter
Fargo-West Fargo, ND Br. 205

Valerie Castillo
Salem, OR Br. 347

Sherie Davis
San Jose, CA Br. 193

Joseph Desrosiers
Southeast MA Mgd. Br. 18

Krishonna Edwards
South FL Br. 1071

Andrea Frias
Central CA Br. 231

Jesse Golumbeski
Wilkes-Barre, PA Br. 115

Daniel Gordon
Warwick, RI Br. 3166

Yvette Kinard
New York, NY Br. 36

Ramon Lawson
Columbus, OH Br. 3166

Melissa Limage
Rockville, MD Br. 3825

Debra Lundergan
Garden Grove, CA Br. 1100

Caitlin Magruder
Joliet, IL Br. 305

Latasha Mccaleb
Minneapolis, MN Br. 9

Matthew Parkin
Pocatello, ID Br. 927

Richard Ray
Staten Island, NY Br. 99

Adriana Rivera
Santa Fe, NM Br. 989

Blake Rockers
Lawrence, KS Br. 104

Jose Romero
Albuquerque, NM Br. 504

Ronnie Salvador
Silver Spring, MD Br. 2611

Jarett Sims
Louisville, KY Br. 14

Brian Stahlheber
Belleville, IL Br. 155

Benjamin Vess
Asheville, NC Br. 248

Edward Walsh
Northeastern NY Br. 358

Chris Williams
Northern KY Br. 374

Dennis Young
Hammond, LA Br. 2223

James Zerbe
Harrisburg, PA Br. 500