NALC Public Relations Department Records

1985-1995

5 Linear Feet

Accession No. 1912

Records of the Department of Public Relations were deposited in the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs by the National Association of Letter Carriers (NALC) in 2001 and opened to researchers in December 2007.

The NALC Public Relations Department was established in 1988 to promote the activities and programs of the union. At that time, Mr. Drew Von Bergen joined NALC as director of public relations and assumed the duties and responsibilities of that position.

The director’s functions encompass a wide range of responsibilities. He issues press releases, answers media inquiries, and coordinates press conferences and interviews. Internally, he assists NALC branches and state associations as needed, provides information and seminars on public relations at conventions and conferences, and compiles news clippings for members of the Executive Council. The director also writes and edits the *NALC Bulletin*, and provides editorial assistance for NALC’s monthly *Postal Record* and the annual Health Benefit Plan “Open Season” drive.

A significant portion of the director’s work deals with the union’s extensive involvement in community services. Von Bergen coordinates NALC activities with the AFL-CIO Department of Community Services, and acts as liaison for NALC with Red Cross officials on disaster relief, blood drives, and assistance to military during conflicts. He is also a member of the National Labor Advisory Committee of United Way of America. Von Bergen assisted in developing the NALC food drive, coordinating the ten-city pilot program and subsequent national drives, and is the NALC representative on the Executive Committee of the Postal Employees’ Relief Fund.

At this time (2007), Von Bergen continues to serve as the director of the NALC Public Relations Department. He is a native of Scranton, PA and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Scranton. From 1963 to 1985, Von Bergen was editor of Washington news as well as a congressional, labor and political reporter for United Press International. He was UPI reporter for the Gary Hart and Walter Mondale campaigns during the 1984 presidential primaries and at the Democratic National Convention, and served as “night editor” for Washington in late 1984 and early 1985. From 1985 to 1986 Von Bergen served as press secretary for Senator Howard M. Metzenbaum (D-OH) and, from 1986 to 1987, he was vice president and director of media relations for The Kambler Group, a Washington-based public relations firm specializing in union and political clients.
Materials in this record group reflect the functions of the Public Relations Department and document the activities of the department director. Records consist of correspondence, reports, press releases, media contact lists, advertising, news clippings, transcripts, minutes, testimony, and other materials created while promoting the activities and programs of the union.

**Important correspondents in this collection:**

Chavez, Cesar  
Frank, Anthony M.  
Hightower, Jim  
Inslee, Jay  
Keane, Bil

**Important Subjects in this collection:**

Combined Federal Campaign  
Contract negotiations  
Disaster Relief  
Food Banks  
Floods Middle West (U.S.)  
Floods United States  
Hurricane Andrew, 1991  
Hurricane Hugo, 1989  
Hurricanes  
Letter Carriers  
Natural Disasters  
Storms  
Tornadoes  
United States Postal Service  
United Way
Series I, Chronological Files, 1989-1995, Boxes 1-2:

Subseries A, General Files, 1990-1995, Box 1:
The bulk of material in this subseries consists of correspondence to and from the public relations director. Also included are reports, memoranda and other miscellaneous items relating to the many functions of the Department of Public Relations. Material is arranged in chronological order.

Subseries B, Electronic Transmissions, 1990-1994, Box 1:
This subseries consists of print copies of facsimile (fax) communications, commonly referred to as *drufaxes* within the Public Relations Department. These electronically transmitted messages reflect the common method of communication between the director and members of the media, and were frequently used to distribute press releases and other pieces of information. Material is arranged in chronological order.

Subseries C, President’s Files, 1990-1994, Box 2:
Files in this subseries contain correspondence to and from NALC president, Vincent R. Sombrotto. Many of these communications were either copied to or forwarded on to the public relations director. Other communications were prepared by the director at the president’s request. Materials also include a number of editorial responses and several keynote addresses delivered by the president. These papers are arranged in chronological order.

Series II, Director’s Reports, 1989-1994, Box 2:
The reports contained in this series were prepared by the public relations director as supplemental material for the 1992 President’s Report and as annual departmental reports for the Executive Council. Each provides a detailed description of the yearly activities of the department.

Series III, Advertising and Media, 1989-1994, Box 2:
This series relates to promotional activities and interaction with media. Material consists of advertisements and ad copy for placement in various publications, correspondence, memoranda, news clippings, media contact lists, press releases, communications with newswire services, and transcript of a Sombrotto interview with radio commentator Jim Hightower. Of interest if a 1990 press release which includes Sombrotto’s reaction to the Hatch Act Reform vote and subsequent veto by then president George H. W. Bush. Folders are arranged first alphabetically, then in chronological order.
Series IV, Subject Files, 1985-1995, Box 2-3:
Subject files are self-explanatory and reflect the range of responsibilities and activities of the Public Relations Department and its director. It should be noted that a significant number of files relate to community service programs. Files for the United Way of America relate to Von Bergen’s position on the National Labor Advisory Committee of that organization. Of special interest in this series is material generated during the 1990 contract negotiations and arbitration case which includes transcripts of the NALC president’s “hotline” messages to members, USPS telephone information messages, and President Sombrotto’s statement on the arbitrator’s award.

Series V, Postal Employees’ Relief Fund, 1990-1994, Box 3:
Subseries A, Fund Administration, 1990-1994:
Records in this subseries relate to the establishment and early years of the Postal Employees’ Relief Fund (PERF). Included is the Declaration of Trust Agreement, signed by the U.S. Postmaster General and postal union presidents as Grantors, creating a permanent relief fund for postal employees in need of assistance following specific natural disasters. Files also contain correspondence, reports, financial statements, criteria lists to determine eligibility for assistance, and materials generated by the Grantors Committee and Executive Committee, including agendas and minutes, which provide details of the administration of the fund. Public relations director Drew Von Bergen sits on the Executive Committee of PERF as the representative for NALC.

Subseries B, Fund Disbursements, 1990-1993:
Records in this subseries relate to the distribution of funds to victims of specific natural disasters. Included are communications with both contributors and recipients of funds, as well as a sampling of applications for relief. These are the first groups to receive financial assistance from the Relief Fund.

Series VI, NALC National Food Drives, 1990-1994, Box 3:
Material contained in this series consists of information relating to the NALC food drive program. Background information describes the branch food drive conducted in Phoenix which became the model for the national program, along with suggestions from Phoenix for a successful drive. Also included are records documenting the planning and coordination of the 1991 ten-city pilot program, as well as the 1993 and 1994 national drives. Files contain planning materials, reports, coordinator lists, memos, branch correspondence, congressional correspondence, press releases, newsletters, public service announcements, brochures, video production materials, and collection tallies.
Series I
Chronological Files, 1989-1995
Boxes 1-2

Subseries A, General Files, 1990-1995, Box 1:

Box 1

1. General, Apr-Dec 1990
2. General, Jan-Nov 1991
3. General, Jan-Mar 1992
4. General, Apr-Jun 1992
5. General, Jul-Sep 1992
7. General, Jan-Mar 1993
8. General, Apr-Jun 1993
9. General, Jul-Sep 1993
10. General, Oct-Dec 1993
11. General, Jan-Mar 1994
12. General, Apr-Jun 1994
13. General, Jul-Sep 1994
15. General, Jan 1995

Subseries B, Electronic Transmissions, 1990-1994, Box 1:

Box 1

16. Fax Transmissions, Sep-Dec 1990
17. Fax Transmissions, Jul-Oct 1992
18. Fax Transmissions, Jan-Feb 1993
19. Fax Transmissions, Mar-Apr 1993
20-21. Fax Transmissions, May 1993
22. Fax Transmissions, Jun-Jul 1993
23. Fax Transmissions, Aug-Sep 1993
24. Fax Transmissions, Oct 1993
25. Fax Transmissions, Nov-Dec 1993
26. Fax Transmissions, Jan-Feb 1994
27. Fax Transmissions, Mar 1994
28. Fax Transmissions, Apr 1994
29. Fax Transmissions, May 1994
30. Fax Transmissions, Jun-Jul 1994
31. Fax Transmissions, Aug-Sep 1994
32. Fax Transmissions, Oct 1994
33. Fax Transmissions, Nov-Dec 1994
Subseries C, President’s Files, 1990-1994, Box 2:

Box 2

Series II
Director’s Reports, 1989-1994
Box 2

6. PR Director’s Report; Supplement to President’s Report, 1992
7. PR Director’s Reports; Executive Council Meetings, 1989-1991
8. PR Director’s Reports; Executive Council Meetings, 1992-1994
Series III
Advertising and Media, 1989-1994
Box 2

Box 2

15. Media Contact Lists, n.d.
17. Press Releases, 1990
19. Press Releases, 1992
20. Press Releases, 1993
22. PR Newswire, 1990-1993
24. Video Needs; Memos, 1993
Box 2

27. AFL-CIO; Demonstration/Rally – Solidarity Day, 1991
28. AFL-CIO; Demonstration/Rally – Desert Solidarity, 1992
29. AFL-CIO Community Services Department, 1992-1993
30. AFL-CIO Community Services Department; AmeriCorps, 1994
   AFL-CIO Community Services Department;
31. 28th National Conference on Community Services –
    (Includes Sombrotto keynote address), 1990
32. 29th National Conference on Community Services
    (Includes Sombrotto keynote address), 1991
33-34. 31st National Conference on Community Services
        (Includes Sombrotto keynote address), 1993
35. 32nd National Conference on Community Services
    (Includes Sombrotto keynote address), 1994
36. American Red Cross Blood Drive, 1989-1990
38. Carrier Alert Programs; State program lists, 1987, 1991
40. Combined Federal Campaign; Branch presidents’ letters to
    Office of Personnel Management, 1991
41. Court Cases (NALC Related); Opinions, 1991-1993
42. D.C. Friends of Ireland, 1990-1993
        See also Advertising
Emergency Relief Fund
    See Postal Employees’ Relief Fund (Series V)
43. Hyde, Judith (AIDS walk across America), 1992-1993
44. National Agreement, 1990-1994;
    Contract Negotiations, 1990
46. NALC Activist; Articles and drafts, n.d., 1988-1991
47. NALC Centennial, 1989
Box 3

2. NALC Staff Lists, n.d.
3. Nalcrest; Clippings, 1991
5. Olympics, 1991
6. Postal News
   - See United States Post Office; Press Releases
7. President’s Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities Conference; NALC/AFL-CIO Exhibit, 1991
9. Runyon, Marvin (Postmaster General), 1993
10. State Legislative Chairs Workshop, 1991
11. United Auto Workers (UAW); *Solidarity* Magazine Article and Responses, 1991
15. United Way; National Labor Advisory Committee (NLAC), 1991
16. United Way; NLAC, 1993
17-19. United Way; NLAC, 1994
   - See also Combined Federal Campaign, 1991
20. Worster, Romaine; Anti-union articles, correspondence, 1985-1994
Series V
Postal Employees’ Relief Fund, 1990-1994
Box 3

Subseries A, Fund Administration, 1990-1994:

Box 3

22. PERF, 1993
23. PERF, 1994
24. American Postal Workers Union; Expenditure authorizations, 1993

Subseries B, Fund Disbursements, 1990-1993:

Box 3

32. Hurricane Andrew, 1993
33. Hurricane Hugo/California Earthquakes, 1990
34. Midwest Floods, 1993
35-36. Midwest Floods; Contributions, 1993
37. Midwest Floods; Des Moines Branch Renovation, 1993
38. Tornado Disasters (IL/KS/OH) 1990-1992
Series VI
NALC National Food Drives, 1990-1994
Boxes 3-5

Box 3

42. Coordinator lists
43. Pilot City; San Jose, CA
44. Pilot City; Jacksonville, FL
45. Pilot City; Peoria, IL
46. Pilot City; Louisville, KY
47. Pilot City; Long Island, NY

Box 4

1991 Food Drive (Continued):
1. Pilot City; Columbus, OH
2. Pilot City; Portland, OR
3. Pilot City; Harrisburg, PA
4. Pilot City; Dallas, TX
5. Pilot City; San Antonio, TX
9-10. Branches (Interested)
11. Branches (Participating)
12. Coordinator lists
13. Media (PSAs/Press releases)
14. Video production

State Files, 1993;
15. Alabama
16. Alaska
17. Arizona
18. Arkansas
19. California
20. Colorado
21. Connecticut
22. Delaware
23. Florida
24. Georgia
25. Hawaii

Box 4

1993 Food Drive; State Files (Continued)

26. Idaho
27. Illinois
28. Indiana
29. Iowa
30. Kansas
31. Kentucky
32. Louisiana
33. Maine
34. Maryland
35. Massachusetts
36. Michigan
37. Minnesota
38. Mississippi
39. Missouri
40. Montana
41. Nebraska
42. New Hampshire
43. New Jersey
44. New Mexico
45. New York
46. Nevada
47. North Carolina
48. North Dakota
49. Ohio
50. Oklahoma
51. Oregon
52. Pennsylvania
53. Rhode Island
54. South Carolina
55. South Dakota
56. Tennessee
57. Texas
58. Utah
59. Vermont
60. Virginia
61. Washington
62. West Virginia
63. Wisconsin
64. Wyoming

68. Booklet/brochure
Box 5

1994 Food Drive (Continued);
1. Branches (Participating)
2. Coordinator’s manual
3. Flyer
4. Food bank newsletters
5. Letters to Congress
6-7. Media/Press releases
8. Monitoring reports (Video/TV/Radio)
10. Photographs (Photocopies)
11. Postal Record (Special reprint), Jul 1994
12. Press coverage; Clippings
13. Video/PSA; Production
14. Video/Recap; Production

State Files, 1994:
15. Alabama – New Jersey (Missing)
16. New Mexico
17. New York
18. North Carolina
19. North Dakota
20-21. Ohio
22. Oklahoma
23. Oregon
24-25. Pennsylvania
26. Rhode Island
27-28. South Carolina
29. South Dakota
30. Tennessee
31-32. Texas
33. Utah
34. Vermont
35-36. Virginia
37. Virgin Islands
40. West Virginia
41-42. Wisconsin
43. Wyoming