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GUIDANCE

Meet DEP's 55-a Program Coordinator and Career Counselor
As a DEP employee you can benefit from some of the services offered. Learn more on page 3.

October Awareness

Diversity Corner

National Domestic Violence

- Wear purple on October 21st!
- "Light the Night" Walk: October 21, 2016 at 7:00PM in Staten Island
- For more information visit: <http://www.nrcdv.org/dvam/node/403>

National Breast Cancer Awareness

- All Making Strides against Breast Cancer Walks in the five boroughs occurred on Sunday, October, 16, 2016.
- For more information: <http://tinyurl.com/jonlavr>

National Disability Employment Awareness

- Promote National Disability Employment awareness throughout DEP with hashtag #InclusionWorks
- <https://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/ndeam/>

For Your Information

"For all of those DEP employees who share in the excitement of the NYC Marathon on November 6, 2016, I want to wish all our runners good luck! See you at the finish line!"

-Martha Osenni, EEO Director

 **Daylight savings ends on Sunday, November 6, 2016!**
set your clocks back an hour

To discuss EEO related concerns or learn about resources available through this office contact the EEO Office at (718) 595-3400 or EEOffice@dep.nyc.gov



4th Annual Diversity Celebration

2016 Gallery Exhibit

"CHRONICLES OF CHANGE: DIVERSITY AT DEP"

Celebrating our workforce's diversity through a historical perspective.



The EEO Office would like to thank our special guest speakers Acting Commissioner Vincent Sapienza and BEDC Acting Deputy Commissioner James Mueller and all DEP employees for their participation at our 4th Annual Diversity Celebration Gallery Exhibit opening ceremony at Lefrak on October 18, 2016. Join us on November 2nd, 9th, and 15th to continue celebrating our workforce's diversity at our future gallery exhibit displays.



To receive special announcements about future events held by the Diversity Committee please email them at DEPDiversityCommittee@dep.nyc.gov. If you would like to volunteer, become a member of the committee, or be involved in any of our events, please contact Gloria Rodriguez, Diversity Liaison, at (718) 595-3400 or by email at EEOffice@dep.nyc.gov.

Happy Diwali DEP

Deepawali or Diwali, the festival of lights, in India is one of the biggest and brightest of all Hindu festivals. This year Diwali begins its four-day celebration on October 30, 2016. In each of the four days rituals, traditions, and legends portray the significant theme from darkness unto light. Essentially, Deepawali is the celebration of life, its enjoyment and goodness. The illuminations of homes is an act of homage to the heavens for the attainment of wealth, knowledge, health, peace, and prosperity during the year. The light empowers and encourages to commit good deeds in order to be closer to enlightenment. May the year ahead be lit with happiness and success for you and your families. The Asian Indian American Association of NYCDEP invites you to this year's Diwali celebration. It will be held on October 21, 2016 at noon. For more information view the attached flyer: <http://tinyurl.com/zf6cffa>



PAM ELARDO

BEING HERSELF IN A PREDOMINANTLY MALE WORK ENVIRONMENT



Given the anniversary of the 19th Amendment in August, which granted women the right to vote 96 years ago, we are highlighting the women in our workplace and the ongoing journey for females in DEP. Who better to gain insight on this journey than Pam Elardo, our new Deputy Commissioner for the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT).

Pam Elardo is BWT's first female Deputy Commissioner. Pam comes to DEP from Seattle, where she has had 30 years of experiences in wastewater treatment and environmental management. As a professional engineer and a certified Wastewater Treatment Operator, Pam served as the Director of Wastewater Treatment Division at the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks. Prior to that, she worked for 15 years at the Washington State Department of Ecology.

We are fortunate to have Pam with us sharing how she became so successful in a traditionally male workforce. Gloria Rodriguez, Diversity Liaison, and I interviewed Pam and she welcomed us enthusiastically. When we inquired what the transition from Seattle to New York was like, she said it was "very exciting and a lot of work." She still has boxes left to unpack, yet seemed ready to get to work. "At DEP, people are very welcoming." When we questioned what surprised her about working with DEP, she said "it's amazing how much the breadth of my previous experience is directly relevant to my current job in this new setting." She was also awed over the level of diversity, here in New York, compared to other places she has worked.

What Pam wants other people to know about DEP is the "importance of our work. If you flush a toilet, you should understand what happens to your waste and the effort and cost that goes into keeping our rivers clean. If you turn on a tap, you should understand what it takes to make it drinkable." Her goal is to get people to understand the value of the infrastructure in our wastewater and water systems.

Moving onto our theme of female leadership, we sought her insight on what she believed is the most significant barrier to female leadership. She noted that, "Up until recently, there were not many female role models. My industry as a whole has been very male dominated. It has been hard to find women in leadership roles."

When we asked who inspired her, a smile grew on her face when she stated, "I have one person with an incredible inspirational story. Her name is Pwint Htun. She was 15 years old when I met her. Her mother was a doctor who I worked alongside in a Cambodian refugee camp in 1990-91. Pwint and her family were blacklisted in their native country of Myanmar (Burma) because they were politically active. Pwint at 15 years old didn't have the chance to attend high school. I tutored her in physics and math at the kitchen table. A couple of years later, I decided to sponsor her as a student in the United States. Within 2 weeks of arrival, Pwint had a job, a Social Security card, was enrolled in a community college, later completed her electrical engineering degree, rose through the ranks at T-Mobile, and ultimately quit her job to follow her dream of building telecommunications in Burma." Pam picked up her iPad, standing it on the conference table and holding the cover as if it were a door. "All I did was crack open a door, and she literally became a world leader in the field. Now that is inspiring!"

She also mentioned her previous boss, who was quite instrumental in her success. When there was a new problem or challenge her boss would often say "Let's get Pam to do it!" She kept meeting these challenges, which eventually removed any doubt in herself and brought confidence to get just about anything done. Pam tries to implement what she learned from Pwint and her previous boss by providing new challenges for people and helping remove obstacles as best as she can so her team can be successful in their duties.

Looking at her past, we wondered if she imagined she would be where she is today. She began telling us, "how many kids in the third grade know exactly what they want to do with their lives? And of the few who do, how many actually get to do it? Not many, most likely, but that's exactly how Pam Elardo's career is working out." She mentioned her student teacher in the third grade, who taught her about environmental science. Clearly, she was always determined and focused saying, "At age 8 or 9, I decided I wanted to work on protecting the environment."

We asked how it felt being the first female Deputy Commissioner for BWT, and she said, "For the record, I didn't really know I was the first. Nonetheless, I feel like I've been accepted and fit right in. It's great! I'm still

pinching myself at how lucky I am to be working here." Looking onto the generation of women following Pam's footsteps, we asked what she believes the biggest challenge will be. She began by telling us her perspective on barriers and opportunity, "In 1972, Title IX was passed, which granted women equal access to educational programs. I was 11 years old when it passed, and my life changed overnight. On Friday, my school had no basketball team. On Monday we had gym time, uniforms and a schedule of games. Everything changed overnight." She mused, "I call myself a 'Title IX baby'. I have come to realize that women older than I am had limited access to a lot that I can take for granted, and women that are younger than I face fewer barriers. And the results show...I mean, look at our Olympic athletes! Still, it is important to recognize that there are persistent real barriers that prevent people from reaching their full potential and there are still stereotypes."



In response to challenges, she advised, "Rise above the pressure and the boxes people are trying to put you in. Don't let anything hold you back. When I was in high school, I enjoyed science and math, but I was told by my high school adviser not to pursue engineering because it was a 'man's job'. The thing that really bothers me is that many girls might conclude, 'I can't be an engineer,' and derailed or ended their ambitions." She continued, "find what interests you and go for it. I have two principles for my career: First, my work has to have meaning. Second, I have to be effective in it. At DEP the first one is

covered—our work is very meaningful—and I plan to do my best to meet the second." Some advice she has for budding females in any field is to be courageous, and confidence will come. "Often people advise that you need to be confident. Take this from me, as a person who did not initially have a lot of confidence in her abilities, but still managed to be successful: Be courageous. Throw yourself into challenges before you have the confidence that you can do it. Just do it, and at some point you will look back and say 'I did that?!' and like a wave—confidence will catch up to you."

Delving into the topic of breaking barriers, we asked what others she has broken down. She said, "I started a non-profit organization called the Living Earth Institute in 1999 to bring water and sanitation to communities in developing countries." According to their mission statement, they aim to empower communities to protect their health and environment through the sustainable use of water resources.¹ She said, "people disbelieved I could do that along with all else I have had going on." Despite what other people thought, this non-profit organization has provided sanitation and clean water, income generation training, micro-leading programs, and literacy classes for people in Nepal (where Pam was a Peace Corps volunteer 1983-1985) and other places.

She has overcome much in her engineering education, early career, and her humanitarian efforts, Pam has risen above challenges in her work. Additionally, she is thankful in that progressive causes continue to eliminate barriers. Like Title IX did for Pam and women in the 1970's, marriage equality has been another big change. "Up until even 5 or so years ago, I never dreamed I would be able to get married. The passage of marriage equality changed that. Now that I am married, I finally understand what a big deal it is. It is like being a full citizen. It's huge!"

To conclude, she noted that her short tenure of working for DEP has been great, but admits she still has a lot to learn. Not only does this show her eagerness to dig into her work here at DEP, but it shows her humble nature and determination that has lead her to great success not only in Seattle and New York, but in developing countries as well.

We invite you to meet Pam at our 4th Annual Diversity Celebration Gallery Exhibit on November 2, 2016 at the Newtown Creek Support Building from 7:00am to 9:00am.

We would like to thank Pam Elardo for meeting with us, and are grateful for her enlightening advice on how to succeed. We look forward to working with someone who shares our mission to promote diversity and inclusion, who has worked extensively to create a better life for those in developing countries as well as in her hometown, and has offered great advice to the generation of working women behind her.

By Carolina Gazal, Summer Intern, and Gloria Rodriguez, Diversity Liaison

¹Retrieved from <http://www.living-earth.org/>

It's National Hispanic & Italian Heritage Month

The National Hispanic Heritage Month began in 1968 but it was formally known and celebrated as Hispanic Heritage Week. The celebration expanded in 1988 to span a month-long period beginning on September 15th and ending on October 15th of every year. The independence anniversaries of the countries Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, and Nicaragua all occur during this time period. This month was dedicated to celebrating the cultures, histories and accomplishments of Americans of Hispanic ancestry. It also honored their contributions and their presence in the United States. Many communities, businesses, and schools across the country take the time to recognize and honor Hispanic heritage.

This year also marks the 40th anniversary of Italian Heritage Month. In 1976, the celebration of Italian history and culture was originally known as Italian Culture Week. It occurred every May 17th-23rd, however, it was only until 1985 that Dr. Gimondo, who was then the President of the Italian Bilingual Educators Association and Superintendent of School District 30 in the Borough of Queens, first pioneered the month-long event. The purpose of this celebration is to inform the American public about the contributions made by Italians and Italian-Americans in the arts, humanities, and sciences. It is also an to honor the impact that the Italian culture and language has had on all of the inhabitants of the U.S in the last four decades.

For more information please visit:
www.pbs.org/specials/hispanic-heritage-month/
www.hispanicheritagemonth.org/
www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/hispanic_resources.html
<http://www.italianheritagemonth.com/>
<http://www.italyculturemonth.org/about.htm>

Trivia Questions

- How many Spanish speaking countries are there?
A. 10 B. 30 C. 22 D. 5
- Which document in 1494 established an imaginary line that divided the New World between Portugal and Spain?
A. Treaty of Tordesillas
B. Adams-Onis Treaty
C. Magna Carta
- Who is the current President of the Italian republic?
A. Giorgio Napolitano
B. Sergio Matterella
C. Matteo Renzi
- Which modern day city was the centre of the Roman Empire under Constantine?
A. Athens B. Cairo C. Rome D. Istanbul

"La vida no es la que uno vivió, sino la que uno recuerda y cómo la recuerda para contarla."
 -Gabriel Garcia Marquez

Translation: "What matters in life is not what happens to you but what you remember and how you remember it."

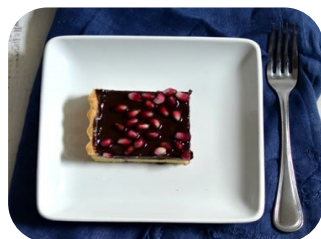
Trivia Question Answers:

- C.; <http://www.spanish411.net/Spanish-Speaking-Countries.asp>
- A.; <https://www.naqt.com/YouGottaKnow/treaties.html>
- B.; <http://tinyurl.com/zvdkgva>
- D.; <http://tinyurl.com/59e24l>

L'Shana Tova!

May the New Year bring you hope, peace and joy

CHOCOLATE POMEGRANITE TART



Crust:

- 1 cup margarine, melted
 - 6 tbsp. sugar
 - 2 tsp. vanilla
 - ½ tsp. kosher salt
 - 2½ cups flour
1. Use an 8"×11" tart pan with a removable bottom.

2. Preheat oven to 350°F.
3. Mix the melted margarine with the sugar. Add vanilla, salt and flour and mix until it reaches cookie dough consistency (mixture will be quite greasy).

Gently press the dough into the bottom and up the sides of the tart tin. Prick the dough with a fork and bake at 350 F for 30 minutes. Crust should be golden in color.

Click here for the full recipe: http://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/3059282/jewish/Chocolate-Pomegranate-Tart.htm

Meet DEP's 55-a Program Coordinator and Career Counselor



The City of New York encourages employment and promotional opportunities for persons with disabilities to be appointed to civil service positions within City government without taking a written or oral examination pursuant to Section 55-a of the New York State Civil Service Law. As of today, New Yorkers are working for the City in 55-a positions in workplace environments as clerical associates, caseworkers, auto mechanics, staff analysts, investigators, electricians, stock workers, plumbers, telecommunications managers and sanitation workers. Individuals who are eligible for this program

must be certified as having a mental or physical disability and be capable of performing the job with or without a reasonable accommodation.

It is important to note that appointment through the 55-a program is discretionary for each City agency. For more information, contact DEP's 55-a coordinator, Candice Clifford, at (718) 595-5853 or via email at CClifford@dep.nyc.gov.



DEP's Career Counseling Service is focused on preparing valued employees to meet future agency needs and to provide employees with career growth and development tools in a civil service environment. The Career Counselor provides clear direction on civil service career opportunities and paths, identifies advancement opportunities within the Agency and provides information on civil service titles, salaries, upcoming examinations, current vacancies, job specifications and requirements, and training.

We encourage employees to contact the Agency's Career Counselor, Herb Roth, Deputy Director of Human Resources at (718) 595-3377 or via email at herbr@dep.nyc.gov. Or visit <http://portal/sites/hr/SitePages/Career%20Counseling.aspx> and complete the career counseling intake form.

Remember to check the current and upcoming civil service exams at the beginning of every month at: http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcas/html/work/exam_monthly.shtml