

## Special Guest Commissioner's Corner



**Michael Deloach**  
Deputy Commissioner  
Public Affairs & Communications

I had the distinct pleasure last Thursday of hosting the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest at the Queens Theatre in Flushing. More than 1,300 students (grades 2–12) from 75 schools in New York City, Watershed communities and homeschools were honored for creating more than 1,200 original pieces of artwork and poetry that reflect an appreciation for New York's water resources, the drinking water supply, harbor water, wastewater treatment, and the importance of water conservation. Student

entries also raised awareness about the importance of maintaining New York City's critical water supply and wastewater infrastructure.

At the event, students were honored for their outstanding work and received certificates recognizing their contribution. Additionally, a group of judges selected more than 60 entries as this year's Water Champions.

The 2018 contest focused on five central themes that incorporate STEM education and the humanities:

- **Water, A Precious Resource:** To recognize the importance of a clean and plentiful supply of water.

## Spotlight on Safety

### World Environmental Day

June 5<sup>th</sup> is World Environmental Day, the United Nation's (UN) most important day for encouraging worldwide awareness and action for the protection of our environment. The observance began in 1974 and is celebrated in over 100 countries. This year's theme is "Beat Plastic Pollution," and encourages everyone to consider how they can help reduce the burden of plastic pollution in our environment.

World Environmental Day encourages everyone to do something to take care of the Earth, no matter how large or small. Reducing plastic waste is something we can do every day. Some ways to reduce plastic waste include:

- using reusable coffee mugs and water bottles—1 million plastic

drinking bottles are purchased every minute worldwide

- using reusable tote bags when you shop—5 trillion disposable plastic bags are used worldwide every year
- talking to businesses you frequent about the possibility of them reducing their plastic waste
- if you do use plastic, recycle it, do not throw it in the trash!

DEP provides NYC with the best tasting water in the country, so instead of purchasing bottled water, fill up your own! DEP also has a [Recycling and Pollution Prevention Policy](#). Next week remember to do your part to [#BeatPlasticPollution!](#) For more information visit [World Environmental Day](#).

At DEP, everyone is responsible for safety. If you or anyone on your team is concerned about your working conditions, it's okay to ask your supervisor or your bureau's EHS liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline. It's DEP's responsibility to acknowledge and fix unsafe situations, procedures, and practices. With your help, we'll not only get the job done, we'll make it safer for ourselves, our coworkers, our families, and our city. CALL (800) 897-9677 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH [PIPELINE](#). HELP IS ON THE WAY.



- **New York City Water Supply System:** To explore the history of the New York City Water Supply System and its present-day source, operation, delivery, protection, maintenance, and stewardship.
- **New York City Wastewater Treatment System:** To examine the purpose of, and process for, cleaning used water in New York City and in the East and West of Hudson Watersheds.
- **Harbor Water Quality & Healthy Marine Ecosystems:** To discover the richness of our marine life and opportunities for recreation and commerce on local waterbodies; and to understand the work that is being done to monitor and ensure healthy water quality.
- **Water Stewardship and Climate Change: What Can We Do To Help?** To consider our influence on the environment and how we can address and help to resolve

environmental issues that impact our neighborhoods, our city, and beyond.

For more than three decades, DEP's annual Art and Poetry contest has given young New Yorkers a wonderful opportunity to use their artistic abilities to learn about and express the importance of protecting our environment and water resources. Nearly half the State of New York relies on the City's water supply system so this is a terrific way for students in both New York City and beyond to celebrate our shared natural resources.

My sincerest thanks to everyone in the Bureau of Public Affairs and Communications that helped put on this wonderful event. I would also like to recognize **Kim Estes-Fradis** and the Education team for the countless hours they devoted to organizing this contest and delivering an entertaining program for the students and their families.





## Reducing Nitrogen in Jamaica Bay



Work began this month on a \$23 million upgrade to the Rockaway Wastewater Treatment Plant that will reduce the amount of nitrogen released into Jamaica Bay and help to improve the overall ecology of the waterway. The Rockaway Wastewater Treatment Plant currently removes approximately 45 percent of the nitrogen present in the treated water. The introduction of new, enhanced nitrogen removal technology, which converts the organic nitrogen present in wastewater into inert nitrogen gas that is released harmlessly into the atmosphere, requires significant upgrades to much of the plants' supporting infrastructure. Work at the Rockaway plant will include the installation of baffles and hyperbolic mixers, new process air distribution piping and local isolation valves, new foam spray pumps and strainers, a new polymer feed system and storage, the repair of existing concrete and tank joints, and replacement of tank ground water pressure relief valves as well as the electrical support system. The project is anticipated to be completed in 2020. This project complements the \$460 million in upgrades that have already been completed to reduce nitrogen discharges from the Jamaica and 26<sup>th</sup> Ward Wastewater Treatment Plants, which similarly drain to Jamaica Bay.

## Welcome Aboard!



Today, 18 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Deputy Commissioner for Human Resources and Administration **Zoe Ann Campbell**, HR Specialist **Grace Franco**, Recruitment Coordinator **Briana Lomax-Day** and HR Generalist **Conor Bulger**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

**Christopher J. Larson** with BEDC; **Blair M. Goodridge**, **Brian A. Grocholl**, **Eric W. Malone** and **Chioma Onyekwere** with BWS; **John J. Brady**, **Kevin A. Callwood**, **Eric T. Febres**, **Igor Gorokhovskiy**, **Kevin L. Guthrie**, **Shane G. Peters**, **Nicholas J. Maxwell** and **Raafat Samwiel** with BWSO; **John G. Kilroe**, **Daniel P. McSherry** and **Liz A. Ramos** with BWT; **Shiv K. Bakshi** and **Samantha M. Ruggirello** with CFO/OIT.

## Innovative Green Park Receives Award



The Sponge Park™ was recently honored by the [Municipal Art Society of New York \(MAS\)](#) with the MASTerworks Award for Best Urban Landscape. Selected each year by an esteemed jury, the MASTerworks Awards pay tribute to projects that make a significant contribution to New York City's built environment. [The Sponge Park™](#) is located at the foot of 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Brooklyn where it dead ends on the west side of the Gowanus Canal. The 1,800 square foot park cost roughly \$1.5 million and was designed to capture and clean nearly 1 million gallons of stormwater annually. The park was developed through the grassroots efforts of DLANDSTUDIO and the Gowanus Canal Conservancy, with funding from DEP and the City Council.

## Register to Vote



June 1 is the last day to [register to vote](#) in the upcoming federal primary election, which will be held June 26. You can register at Lefrak on Wednesday, May 30, from 11am–1pm in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor lobby of the low-rise. Voter registration forms in multiple languages will be available on May 29, 30 and 31 at the following locations:

- 1<sup>st</sup> floor, low-rise
- 8<sup>th</sup> floor, high-rise
- 9<sup>th</sup> floor, high-rise
- 13<sup>th</sup> floor, high-rise

For more information, contact **Eva Lynch** at ext. 3487 or **Jaunita James** at ext. 3508.

**We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: [newsletter@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:newsletter@dep.nyc.gov).**