



Thanks and Praise to All of Our Veterans

As Ethan E. Zweizig, Valedictorian of Class 1 of the 2017 Probationary Firefighters, gave his commencement speech, I could not help but feel a strong sense of pride because he accepted his accomplishments—not merely on his own behalf but on behalf of his entire class. Firefighter Zweizig, a U.S. Marine Veteran, said, “We all come from different backgrounds, but we are here to help each other; I am here because you helped me.” That’s what diversity and inclusion is all about: bringing a strong sense of self, commitment, determination, and drive with the realization that we are part of an incredible team that works together, valuing the unique contributions of everyone.

November 11, Veterans Day, is one day that we take to honor those who have served in the United States military, but we are always proud to uplift our Veterans’ service, as well as the



Firefighter/Former Marine Antoinette Proctor with her daughter Sanyah.

skills they bring to this Department, which we benefit from daily.

Former Firefighter William C. Hayes, who leads the S/Sgt. Christian Engeldrum FDNY VFW Post 12033, an FDNY affiliated organization, served in the

military for 32 years, in the Navy, Navy Reserves and in the New York Air National Guard, and retired in 2011 from Ladder 45. Hayes recalls the mentoring and support of one Veteran in particular: “Thomas P. McGuire of Ladder 16, a gentle giant,” who had served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War and received the Navy Cross. Hayes hopes he was able to pass on what he learned from Veterans like McGuire to the firefighters who came after them.

Firefighter Antoinette Proctor served with the U.S. Marine Corps for 16 years and as a firefighter for four years. The most important thing that she learned from the Marines is resilience: the

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Inclusive Leadership: All About Being Fair

First Deputy Commissioner Robert Turner and Commissioner Douglas White are role models for inclusive leadership. When asked what colleagues say is his best quality, Commissioner Turner says, “I get along with people. I highlight the positives rather than accentuate the negatives.”



Growing up in Hollis, Queens, Turner was a boy scout, developed an interest in martial arts, and enjoyed swimming and other sports. When the firefighter exam came up in 1978, his father, who was an FDNY Captain, said, “Why don’t you become a firefighter?” Commissioner Turner says he never really gave it any thought, but he trained very hard for the exam and ended up at the top of the list.

Although he quickly moved up in the ranks at the Department, Turner was encouraged by his family members to go to college, and he ultimately received a degree in Public Administration. In order to succeed in your career, Turner says you need competence,

interpersonal skills, mental toughness, and resilience. “As a leader, I try to pay attention to individuals, be supportive and encourage positive behavior, and set an example. I try to be inclusive and encourage others to accept that not everyone is the same or has the same ability.”

Turner plans to retire soon but says he’s appreciative of how much support—friends, family, and co-workers—surrounding him will make the transition easier. He is looking forward to traveling overseas and spending more time with his wife and family.

Deputy Commissioner Douglas White and Commissioner Turner share a common leadership style: being both appreciative and inclusive.

When Commissioner White, who also plans to retire soon, joined FDNY in 2002, it was a traumatic time. Inclusive leadership was imperative. He let people do their jobs without micro-manag-

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Vision, Mission and Goals for Diversity and Inclusion

Vision

The excellence of the New York City Fire Department is enhanced by the ability to recruit, hire, retain, and promote highly skilled, talented and motivated members from diverse backgrounds. FDNY prides itself in attracting candidates of diverse gender, age, culture, race, religious preference, economic, sexual orientation, as the expression of unique ideas provide for better productivity, efficiency and service to a diverse and multi-faceted community.

Mission

FDNY’s mission is to maintain its high standard of excellence by accomplishing our recruitment, retention and inclusion goals.

Goals

FDNY’s goals are to uphold all federal, state and local laws, and the FDNY rules and regulations regarding employment; to attract and retain qualified individuals from diverse backgrounds who are committed to the continued excellence of FDNY; to achieve and accept a diverse work force in terms of age, culture, ethnicity, gender, race, religious preference, sexual orientation, and the expression of unique philosophies and ideas; to provide all employees the opportunity for development and growth at every rank in FDNY; and to expect that all employees will treat each other with dignity and respect regardless of perceived differences.

FDNY High School Graduates: Paying it Forward

Leading by example and mentoring others can have a profound impact on helping others fulfill their professional development goals. This particularly rang true for three graduates from Captain Vernon A. Richard High School for Fire and Life Safety: Tristen Echols, Chelsea Berry, and Anthony Gaddison.

Firefighter Tristen Echols (Class of 2008) developed leadership skills at various stages throughout his experience with the FDNY. He started off as an Explorer in his freshman year of high school, engaging in community service projects. Then, he served as an EMT for four years, where he made decisions regarding patient care and hospital transportation. Now, as a firefighter, Echols sharpened his decision-making skills and is able to make decisions even quicker. Chief Michael Buckheit helped him face obstacles during his first run-through. When Echols was going through challenges, he says, "Sal Scarfuri, the most senior firefighter, never berated me. He kept telling me that we will get there; to keep my head up. He also helped me with home issues. I consider all the firefighters at Engine 231, where I work, my mentors."

EMT Chelsea Berry (Class of 2010) now works at EMS Station 58. However, it was not an easy journey for her.



Commissioner Michelle Maglione addressing FDNY High School graduates.

She was in foster care throughout her high school years and luckily had aspiring mentors to guide her through the process. She credits Assistant Commissioner of Recruitment and Retention Nafeesah Noonan and Assistant Commissioner of Youth Workforce Development Michelle Maglione as pivotal in helping her stay mindful and grounded during troubling times.

Freda Scott, her Exploring Post Advisor, was Chelsea's role model. Chelsea

says, "Freda was an EMT and that is what I wanted to be." During the program, Chelsea was able to develop her networking skills, empathize with others, and work as part of a team. Chelsea is the first in her family to work for the FDNY, and she hopes to become a firefighter.

EMT Anthony Gaddison (Class of 2012) decided that he wanted to be an EMT when his family members experienced health problems. Gaddison reached out to Director of Youth Workforce Development Brandon Mahon for help with his challenges. Director Mahon helped him study and improve his fitness. "If he sees you struggling, he helps. He goes above and beyond. He told me, 'You got this.' I can talk to him anytime and he always gives me advice. I consider him a father figure to me."

Commissioner Maglione also inspired Gaddison. Now, Gaddison pays it forward through his mentorship with students at the Summer Leadership Academy. "I've learned to be a leader, even though I never knew how to be one. I would compare myself to Mahon to strengthen my weaknesses." Gaddison is now at EMS Kings County Station 38.

Echols, Berry and Gaddison all have inspiring stories that teach us to recognize mentors and leaders who have helped us throughout our lives, and to be that person for others.

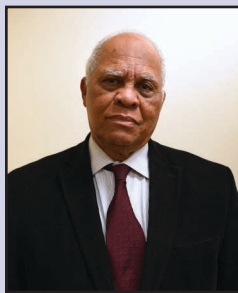
Inclusive Leadership

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ing. White says, "People are more industrious about their work if they have a certain amount of discretion—it's very important in terms of self-respect. I also tend not to be unduly harsh when people make mistakes."

Former NYC Human Rights Commissioner for the State of NY under Mario Cuomo and City Personnel Director under David Dinkins, White's professional career is marked by a strong commitment to civil rights. Growing up in North Carolina for him meant growing up under segregation. One of his first memories was getting on the bus with his mother and having to sit in the back of the bus. "I asked my mother why we had to sit there. She 'shushed' me."

In college, Commissioner White was active in the civil rights movement. He then went on to Yale Law School,



where he was classmates with Hillary and Bill Clinton.

Following Yale Law School, he commenced a successful career heading several city and state agencies for many years, before

landing a job at the FDNY. "Part of being successful means treating people fairly. It means having a certain integrity about the decision-making process, and being sensitive to people." To Commissioner White, being a leader also means being receptive to new ideas. "If you come into a job and don't change it to make a better institution, then what are you doing?"

Both Commissioners Turner and White will be missed, but hopefully because of their example, the Department will be better.

Lt. William Patsakos, Firefighter, Diversity and Inclusion Trainer and Army Veteran, Reports From Puerto Rico



Lieutenant William Patsakos with physicians and in Puerto Rico.

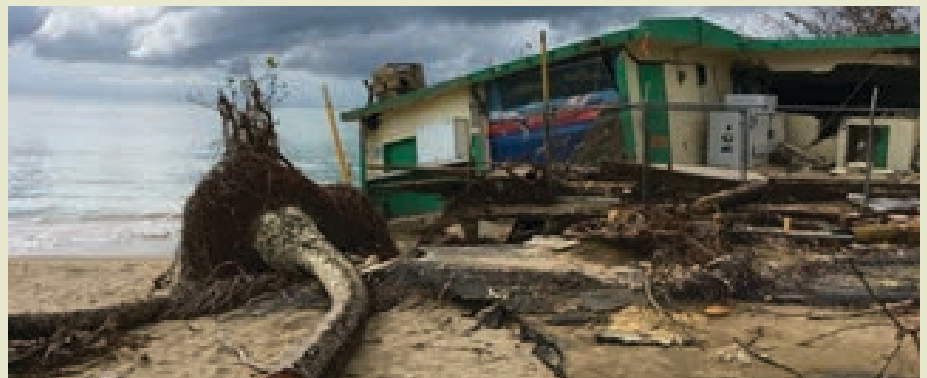
On Wednesday, September 20, 2017, Hurricane Maria—a powerful Category 4 hurricane with +150 mph winds—made direct landfall on Puerto Rico, devastating the island with a power outage, complete loss of communications and no running water. With the support of the Fire Department and CVS Health Specialty, a subsidiary of CVS that provides medicine and medical support for very expensive chronic medical conditions, Lt. William Patsakos traveled to Puerto Rico from October 10-18 to help with the relief effort. Lt. Patsakos also works on the FDNY In-

cident Management Team (“IMT”) as a Medical Unit Leader, and so he was able to liaison between federal agencies (FEMA) and local agencies on the ground.

The effort’s focus was initially to restore power and communication capabilities to critical facilities, firehouses, police stations, and hospitals. Lt. Patsakos, a pharmacist, coordinated medical shipments to four strategic pods located around the island and linked up with medical volunteers to triage and deliver care to rural areas that are heavily affected. He and others visited patients that doctors were concerned about and delivered medications.

Patsakos and others assisted major distributors and pharmacies in gaining assistance from FEMA for fuel and delivery logistics. In addition, they communicated needs to volunteer organizations in obtaining tarps for temporary roofing, and in some cases placed some on residents’ roofs.

“Hurricane Maria left no part of the island untouched. The people of Puerto Rico are Americans forced to live in third-world conditions. To date, 40,000 people have moved off the island since Maria has struck,” says Patsakos. “I’m grateful to contribute because a great deal needs to be done to restore Puerto Rico’s infrastructure, economy and jobs.”



Damaged house in Puerto Rico formerly belonged to severely ill patient.

Patience is the Key Component to Success and Mentoring

Dr. Viola Ortiz, Deputy Chief Medical Officer in the Bureau of Health Services, has played the role of mentee, mentor and trainer. With 30 years of experience at the FDNY, Dr. Ortiz has a pleasant demeanor that is brimming with a quiet confidence. At first glance, you would not assume that Dr. Ortiz is a skilled “Big Game Hunter.” Hunting with her dad since she was three, Dr. Ortiz states that much like hunting, you can miss opportunities in your career if you lack confidence and patience.

Dr. Ortiz recalled a time when she was laying silently on the ground for five hours to take down a large game. While waiting, she was able to savor the great expanse of the cloudless sky and green foliage. She embodies this consciousness of being fully present



in her practice and mentoring style.

Patience applies to both the mentor and mentee. Dr. Ortiz emphasizes that “Nobody starts at the top; it takes time.” Patience gives you clarity and

efficiency at decision-making and problem solving. In 1988, Dr. Kerry Kelly—who currently serves as the FDNY’s Chief Medical Officer—encouraged Dr. Ortiz to apply for a position at the FDNY. That phone call started a mentoring relationship that would span 30 years.

Dr. Ortiz instructs employees to not to be afraid to express your ideas. You may hear a “no” to your idea, but that’s life. The next time you may hear “yes.” With an inspirational demeanor of confidence and strength, there is no question as to why she was awarded the Fire Commissioner’s Award for Meritorious Service and the Leon Lowenstein Award in 2015. Dr. Ortiz has been a valuable member of the FDNY; we thank her for her service.

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strength to pull through challenges no matter what confronts you. Firefighter Proctor grew up in Brooklyn, close to Bedford-Stuyvesant, where she works today out of Engine 235. Proctor, the proud mother of 11-year-old Sanyah, says that joining the Marines was the "best thing" she ever did because it made her realize that she can accomplish anything she wants.

Similarly, Diversity and Inclusion Trainer Lawrence Felder, who served in the U.S. Air Force for six years and was deployed in Iraq, says Firefighter Gregory LaRoche in Queens was a powerful influence for him and the first African American firefighter he ever met. LaRoche taught Felder how to remain calm while working through the stress and challenge of being a first responder. "Show up early and go to everything" was a message that Felder received. But the most important guidance Felder obtained was given by retired Lieutenant Michael Dorkings, who always said, "Do the right thing, especially when no one is watching."

Former U.S. Marine and Firefighter Aleigha Powder, who is assigned to Ladder 155 and is also on active duty in the U.S. Army Reserve, attributes her success to the persistence of her mentor, Lieutenant Michael Kaiser, assigned to E55. Lt. Kaiser always told her no matter what, "Show up to what's expected," he said, and "be willing to learn."

Lt. Kaiser went far beyond the call of duty by studying with Powder, calling her and constantly checking in on her. Kaiser taught her to "give more than 100%; be willing to learn and give 110%." When she sees the community staring at her when she gets off the



Firefighter Kievon Harper with his mentor, Lieutenant Carlos Munroe.

fire truck and senses the pride of young girls, she experiences instant gratification, which makes the challenge of balancing military and service as a firefighter worthwhile. "I know," Powder says, "that I am making a difference."



Firefighter, U.S. Army Reserve Member and former Marine Aleigha Powder.

Dr. Tremaine Sayles, Director of FDNY's Counseling Services Unit, is a decorated US Army officer with over 25 years of service and a Veteran of the war on terrorism including the war in Afghanistan. Dr. Sayles, who has managed national behavioral health programs and provided consultation and guidance to individuals and their families throughout the United States, Southwest Asia and the South Pacific, is still a member of the Army Reserve. As a mentor, he focuses on communication, listening and empowering those mentored to make the most informed decisions for themselves.

Firefighter Kievon Harper, a member of the U.S. Coast Guard and firefighter at Rescue 5 in Staten Island, with the Department for 11 years, also exemplifies the power of mentoring. He says that the Coast Guard helped him make quick decisions and exercise skillful judgment while responding to heavy boat traffic and casualties in the water. Lieutenants Carlos Munroe and Aaron Gardner and Firefighter KC Clayton are his mentors, strong role models who helped him "stay focused" as a new firefighter. Harper is now a strong mentor himself, contributing to the FDNY Explorer's Program, as well as the FDNY High School Leadership Academy.

Adam Lessuck, who is the Military Outreach Coordinator for the Office of Community Affairs and served in the

U.S. Army and the U.S. National Guard, confirms that we are blessed with the participation of so many Veterans; we could write volumes and still not be done. The most important thing is to take note of the powerful role models that our Veterans serve, as well as their presence and dedication.

Cecilia B. Loving,
Deputy Commissioner
and Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer

VETERANS AFFILIATED ORG. INFORMATION:

- To join S/Sgt Chris Engeldrum FDNY VFW Post 12033, contact fdnyvfwcomms@gmail.com.
- The U.S. Marine Corps celebrates its 242 Birthday on November 10, which will be celebrated on November 8 at the Fort Hamilton Community Club in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; the ceremony starts at 1:30 p.m. Contact John Newman of the **FDNY Marine Corps Association** for more details at rocknew280@gmail.com.
- The **FDNY American Legion Post 930**, a fraternal organization of the U.S. Air Force Veterans, can be reached at info@fdnyalpost930.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **FDNY Chanukah Celebration:** December 19, 2017, 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. 9 MetroTech Center, Auditorium.
- **Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration:** January 16, 2017 (time TBD). 9 MetroTech Center, Auditorium.

In Remembrance



EMT Kevin Liang

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Submissions? Feedback? Email us at Diversity.Inclusion@fdny.nyc.gov