

VALUE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Special Guest *Commissioner's Corner*



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Assistant Commissioner
EEO & Diversity

"When we listen and celebrate what is both common and different, we become a wiser, more inclusive, and better organization."

— Pat Wadors, Head of HR, LinkedIn

Diversity is essential to organizational excellence. DEP's ability to fulfill its mission of enriching the environment and protecting the health of all New Yorkers depends on our success in recruiting, developing, and retaining diverse

talent and in fully engaging this talent. Promoting diversity, and leveraging its inherent benefits, is a shared responsibility. Every DEP employee has a role to play in creating and sustaining a work environment of which we can all be proud. As your Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) & Diversity, I am honored at this opportunity to spotlight diversity and inclusion at DEP.

DEP remains committed to building a workforce that reflects the composition of the communities we serve, while promoting a work environment in which every em-

ployee is valued and positioned to succeed. This is no small task. Our commitment requires courage to consistently and honestly assess our workplace and practices to identify areas for improvement, as well as tenacity and resilience to engage creative solutions for change. We must be intentional and strategic.

The Office of EEO & Diversity is responsible for promoting and helping to manage DEP's diversity and inclusion initiatives. Last year, DEP participated in or hosted an array of longstanding events that celebrated our cultural diversity. We also coordinated and introduced enhanced or new initiatives including monthly awareness emails with timely diversity and inclusion information, quarterly newsletters, access to a broadened curriculum of EEO and inclusion training, and a climate survey to assess employees' awareness of their EEO rights and responsibilities. These initiatives also served as a platform to raise awareness for topics such as suicide prevention, mental health, and domestic violence prevention and resources.

We also continued to strive for increased diversity and inclusion

by administering various programs including:

- the 55-a Program, through which qualified persons with disabilities can be appointed to civil service jobs without their taking a civil service examination;
- the Reasonable Accommodation Program, through which accommodations may be provided for qualified bases; and
- the Lactation Program, through which nursing mothers may have a private space to express breast milk during the work day.

Moving forward, we continue to partner directly with dedicated DEP personnel from different bureaus, titles, and disciplines to identify and deliver more diverse and inclusive programs. You can learn more about these and other programs offered by the Office of EEO and Diversity by contacting us at EEOffice@dep.nyc.gov or (718) 595-3400, visiting our website at <http://depresources/eeo/default.aspx>, or contacting your bureau EEO Liaison.

It is up to each of us to champion diversity and inclusion. Let's all roll up our sleeves and pitch in to build a more diverse and more inclusive DEP!

Spotlight on Safety

Staying Healthy in the New Year

According to the [NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene](#), more than half of adult New Yorkers are overweight (34%) or obese (22%). People who are overweight are at increased risk for diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, arthritis, and cancer. The start of the New Year is a good time to remind ourselves to take steps to improve our overall health. Many employees spend significant time doing tasks that are sedentary in nature, such as prolonged sitting at desks. Research indicates that people who spend more than four hours per day sitting may be at greater risk for chronic health conditions. It is important to fit in at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day.

Here are some steps to take while on the job:

- Plan for alternative work activities during the course of the workday to avoid prolonged sitting time.

- Walk down the hall to speak with a colleague about work, instead of calling or e-mailing them.
- Stand or stretch at your desk when you are doing a task, such as talking on the phone.
- Take advantage of DEP sponsored health and wellness programs or start a lunch time walk when the weather gets warmer.

The City has many programs to help New Yorkers maintain their physical and mental health. The New York City Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides free counseling services to employees. To learn more about the EAP and many other programs designed to help keep you healthy, visit the [WorkWell NYC website](#). Also, for more information on physical activity options and guidelines, visit the NYC Parks Department [BeFitNYC website](#) and the [Center for Disease Control's website](#).

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.



This month, DEP is celebrating our value of diversity. If you know someone who embodies this value, please send an email by January 22 to values@dep.nyc.gov, and include the name of who you are nominating, their bureau, and a brief description of how they embody this value.

Progress on the Rail Trail



Work continues on Ulster County's Ashokan Rail Trail, an 11.5-mile trail that runs along an easement owned by the County on the north side of Ashokan Reservoir in the towns of Hurley and Olive. The trail is consistent with DEP's goals of protecting water quality, enhancing outdoor recreation in the Catskills, and expanding free-of-charge access to public lands that surround New York City's water supply. The trail will be 10 to 12 feet wide, with a compacted crushed stone surface that is accessible for persons with disabilities and limited mobility. Once completed, the trail will be open from dawn-to-dusk, year-round for non-motorized uses, including hiking, bicycling, running, nature observation, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. More information about the Ashokan Rail Trail can be found on Ulster County's website by visiting ulstercountyny.gov/planning/ashokan-rail-trail. We anticipate the trail opening to the public later this year.



DEP Donates to Coat Drive



DEP employees once again showed compassion for their fellow New Yorkers this past holiday season donating 228 gently-used, freshly laundered coats for men, women, and children to the 30th Annual New York Cares Coat Drive. The donated jackets will keep our most vulnerable residents warm and outfit families who would have otherwise faced a long, cold winter without a coat. Thanks to all who donated for your support.

2018 Record Runoff Fills Reservoirs

Watershed Runoff								
Reservoir	Dec Runoff	Normal Dec Runoff	Rank out of 90 yrs of Record					
	(BG)	(BG)	Dec	Nov	Oct	Sep	Aug	Jul
Cannonsville	29.5	17.9	74	85	83	83	90	78
Pepacton	25.7	16.6	72	85	81	83	90	80
Neversink	11.0	5.4	83	89	80	88	89	81
Rondout	9.0	4.6	82	89	84	85	86	66
Ashokan	27.5	12.6	80	87	69	86	89	83
Schoharie	21.5	12.6	77	85	67	81	89	84

The second half of 2018 set records for runoff in nearly all parts of the watershed as persistent rainfall and an early snowstorm and its melt caused streams to swell and reservoirs to stay full or nearly full for months. Cannonsville and Pepacton reservoirs set a record for the most runoff in August across 90 years of historic record. Our other four reservoirs in the Catskills saw the second-most runoff in history—either in August or November. The story for precipitation is similar. Through the first seven months of the water year (June-December) the watershed has seen 41.61 inches on average, just shy of a full year's precipitation. Water quality has remained excellent throughout this wet period. Runoff came from a series of moderate storms that were spread apart by days, therefore none was large enough to generate worrisome spikes in turbidity. Because the reservoirs stayed full all summer and fall, there are a lot of options for drawing the best quality water without needing to worry about reservoir storage in any part of the system.

Tour Traces Reservoir History



Samar Qandil, DEP Director of Records and Archive Management, recently led a walking tour for educators, in partnership with DEP's Education Office, on the history of the Central Park Reservoir. Participants explored the New York City water supply system while tracing the history and evolution of the Croton water supply system. The tour started with the events that led to the system's creation between 1837–1842 and covered the rapid expansion of the system during the rest of the 19th century. The group also examined geologic and manmade artifacts from the original reservoir. The tour concluded with a discussion on the inauguration of the Catskill Aqueduct in 1917.

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov.