



## DEP Employees of the Month for September 2014

**T**he Employee of the Month program recognizes DEP staff members that have exhibited outstanding personal effort, and have gone above and beyond the call of duty to serve the people of New York City.

DEP is a great agency that delivers services that millions of New Yorkers depend on daily. Making good on that promise requires the dedication and hard work of the nearly 6,000 employees at DEP. To nominate someone who has demonstrated uncommon dedication and excellence, fill out the nomination form with some basic information, such as the nominee's responsibilities, examples of extraordinary performance, and ways candidates set an example for others. The form is available on The Source, and you'll need to submit it by the tenth day of each month. For more information, email Herb Roth at [hroth@dep.nyc.gov](mailto:hroth@dep.nyc.gov).

The Employees of the Month for September, featured in this Weekly Pipeline Extra edition, were honored at a breakfast on October 29 with First Deputy Commissioner Steve Lawitts, during which they received a certificate, and had their names added to the Employee of the Month Board on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> floors at Lefrak and at the Kingston Office. These men and women set a standard for all of us to emulate and appreciate.



### Water & Sewer Operations - Bluebelt Field Team

**Joseph Scarlotta, Philip Arale, Anthony Lerman, and Vincent Cittadino**

Recently, the bureau received inquiries from concerned residents and elected officials on Staten Island about the condition of Jack's Pond and the surrounding DEP-owned property. Joe Scarlotta and his staff quickly responded and spent several days improving conditions at the site. Under DEP supervision Greenside Contracting trimmed and cut more than 19,910 square feet of grass, brush and other vegetation. The Robotics Team from the nearby St. Clare's school pitched in by participating in the major clean-up of the pond and perimeter area.

In addition, the Bluebelt field staff used rowboats to remove floatables and other trash from the pond, and cut and trim excess vegetation around the pond. Combined, DEP Bluebelt staff and Greenside Contracting removed a total of 156 cubic yards of vines, invasive plant species, dead tree limbs and branches, and other mixed debris from Jack's Pond and adjacent areas. Bluebelt staff also repaired damaged chain link fencing along Clovis Road.

During the clean-up, Scarlotta also discovered two critical fire hydrants near the pond that were not functioning and reported them to the Staten Island Repair yard, which quickly made the necessary repairs. The tremendous dedication and swift responsiveness from the Bluebelt team not only dramatically improved Jack's pond but also helped to ensure public safety by having the hydrants repaired.



## Environmental Planning and Analysis - Qi Long Chen

Qi Long 'Jackie' Chen began his career with DEP in April 2012 and is a valuable member of the bureau's Office of Ecological Services. One of his primary responsibilities is to oversee the ecological integrity of restored habitats in the NYC area. An example of these habitats is the Pennsylvania and Fountain Avenue Landfills situated along the northern shores of Jamaica Bay. These once severely degraded lands have been converted into New York City's largest environmental restoration project.

The Pennsylvania and Fountain Landfills were completed in 2008, but urban ecological pressures have permitted highly invasive species to colonize portions of both sites. Jackie oversees the contract that directs targeted remedial actions to bring these destructive invasive plants under control without impacting the native species that utilize the former landfill sites. The contract is set to be completed on budget by the end of 2014, and the Pennsylvania and Fountain Avenue restoration sites are on track to regain their original reestablished grassland habitat.

Jackie also manages the Gowanus and Flushing Watershed Initiative, which is a grant program aimed at managing urban stormwater runoff by funding environmental benefit projects. Jackie works with local nonprofits or public universities to supervise the design, construction and monitoring of various green infrastructure installations to determine the amount of sewer overflow reduction and pollutant capture that occurs.

Past projects include three green roofs on top of The New York Hospital-Queens, 11 bioswales along the 6<sup>th</sup> Street Green Corridor in the Gowanus neighborhood of Brooklyn, and two planted modular green infrastructure installations to capture runoff diverted from the Van Wyck Expressway. Ongoing Initiatives include a green corridor within the Bronx River watershed, and a retention wetland along Meadow Lake in Flushing Meadows Park to capture runoff from an adjacent parking lot.

In addition to managing the restoration of New York's ecosystems and supervising grant programs, Jackie also oversees the administration of NYC's Boat Pump-out Program. The program works with various marinas and environmental groups throughout the city to install pumpout facilities that are free for the public to use to remove recreational boater sewage. In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, all the pumpout facilities were knocked out of service and Jackie coordinated the purchase and upgrade of pump-outs in four different boroughs in time for the start of the next boating season.



## Water Supply - Spiny Waterflea Team

**Meredith Taylor, George Haug, Donna Reynolds, Karen Collins, Paul Brown, Christopher Morgans, Kim Nezelek, Emily Kinne, Lori Froehlich, Joseph Miller, Michael Spada, Paul Perri, Thomas Mills, Dean Giuliano, Stephanie Sorbellini and Allison Bennett**

The spiny waterflea is an aquatic crustacean that can choke and kill young fish that try to eat them. By killing and reducing the populations of young fish that feed on phytoplankton, the presence of spiny waterfleas can eventually impact the taste and smell of water.

Meredith Taylor is the Invasive Species Biologist for the both the East and West-of-Hudson watersheds and she has developed early detection programs for many invasive species. When the spiny waterflea was identified recently in Lake George, she knew it was important to have an even more rigorous program in place.

This important work included having Allison Bennett, the Field Director in the Catskill District, and Paul Brown, the Field Director for the Delaware District, as well as their staff, trained on the proper method for sample collection. George Haug, the Section Supervisor of Microbiology at the Kingston Laboratory, and Donna Reynolds and Karen Collins, both Microbiologists, received training on how to analyze the samples. All staff also learned the protocol if the spiny waterflea was found in a sample.

To date, the spiny waterflea has not been found in the watershed and the monitoring will continue next year when the reservoir temperature exceeds 53 degrees Fahrenheit.





## Wastewater Treatment - Willowbrook Discharge Trackdown Team

**Mayank Shukla, Ru Zhao, Mitul Patel, Fedake Woldegiorgis, Romil Shah, Shashank Shukla, Keith McDonald, Tsun Kuen Chan, Dennis Thomas and Jishu Samuel**

On Monday, September 15, a Parks Department worker fell ill while working near a creek in Willowbrook Park on Staten Island and had to be hospitalized. Hazmat teams from the NYPD, FDNY, DEP DERTA and the City's Office of Emergency Management immediately closed off the area and investigated. FDNY and DERTA took samples and found no potential life-safety issues.

In the days that followed there was a continuing foul smell in the park and DOHMH and DEP's Bureau of Wastewater Treatment (BWT) were brought in to investigate. Working 12-hour shifts, staff from BWT's Compliance Monitoring Section cleared a path within the heavily forested trail and, after taking samples, identified the unknown substance as raw sewage. Trekking more than a mile each way while carrying necessary equipment, the Track Down Team dye-tested multiple manholes and traced the source of the raw sewage to a blockage in one of the private sanitary sewer lines connected to the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. The blockage caused the raw sewage to overflow from the NYS sanitary pipes into a storm sewer, and ultimately into the creek.

The BWT team explained the situation to the plant superintendent for the New York State facility, who, without delay, initiated repairs. Because the case involved a direct discharge, it was transferred to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for enforcement and follow-up. Due to the tenacity and dedication of the Track Down Team, Willowbrook Park was able to be fully and safely reopened three days after their investigation began.



## United Nations General Assembly Service Awards

**BCS: Karen Douglas, Marilyn Rodriguez; BEC: Oscar Gonzalez; BEDC: Dennis Stanford, Walid Harrouch, Douglas Jones; BPA: Joseph Sokolowski, Frank Fontana, Jessica Keating, Eva Lynch, April Kelly; Executive: Timothy O'Grady**

During the week of September 22 through the 27, these twelve DEP volunteers assisted the Mayor's Office of International Affairs at the 69<sup>th</sup> United Nations (UN) General Assembly. They staffed checkpoints surrounding the UN from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm where they assisted local residents, helped to manage pedestrian traffic flows, and provided directions and instructions to visitors. They also interacted with NYPD and federal law enforcement, and became the "eyes and ears" on the street for the Mayor's Office. Thank you to all of the volunteers for your important efforts to make this event run smoothly.



## Customer Services - Steven Barry

Steven is the Director of DEP's Customer Service Call Center and an excellent manager of staff and resources. He dedicates himself to solving customers' problems and goes the extra mile to coordinate with the appropriate parties so that all outstanding complaints are resolved. He also coordinates with 311 and facilitates initiatives within the bureau. He leads by example, has a keen sense of judgment and is a terrific role model for the employees that he supervises. Steven goes above and beyond his professional obligations to ensure that all DEP customers are receiving high quality customer service.

## Commissioner's Award:



### Employee Resource Development & Implementation Team

**Michael Bartlett**

**Quanetra Caple**

**James Cuggy**

**Nicole DeVito**

**Shinique Edwards**

**Lauren Gallo**

**Elestene Houston**

**Alexander Koren**

**Sannie Lubin-Holder**

**Sue Mallon**

**Bernadette McCallion**

**Robert McHale**

**Edna Pennie**

**Grace Pigott**

**Emil Pulicicchio**

**Antoinette Quinones**

**Velicia Robinson**

**Lorraine Robinson**

**Herb Roth**

**Arlene Siegel-Fishman**

**Christopher Smith**

**Joseph Sokolowski**

The on-line Employee Resource Center, also known as ERC, was created in order to provide a single location for important information needed to support the DEP employee experience. Bob McHale took the lead with Herb Roth by his side and appointed Sannie Lubin-Holder as the project lead. Sannie reached out to Christopher Smith, OIT's SharePoint Services Director, in order to develop a way to make employee-related materials easily accessible, searchable, and well-organized.

The team wanted to ensure that employees have easy access to policies and Frequently Asked Questions, civil service and career counseling information, and that it was all well organized and easily searchable. Working together over the course of many months, both the HR team and OIT's SharePoint group developed a product that will provide sustainable value to our employees for years to come.

The Employee Resource Center was successfully launched on Monday, September 22. As of October 7, there were 4,882 recorded hits to the site and numerous suggestions have been received from all across DEP for additional resources to be added. Kudos to the entire team for successfully collaborating on this important resource that will benefit all DEP employees and that will continue to add value to the DEP employee experience for years to come.



### Employee Experience Site Tour Drawing

At today's ceremony, the following awardees and their nominators won passes to participate in one of the upcoming [DEP Employee Experience Site Tours](#).

EOM Awardees: **Kim Nezelek**, **Lori Froehlich** and **Michael Spada/Michelle Rissolo** - Nominator, **Ru Zhao**, **Tsun Kuen Chan** and **Keith McDonald/Jorge Villacis** - Nominator

Commissioner Awardees: **Robert McHale**, **Lauren Gallo**, **Shinique Edwards** and **Sannie Lubin-Holder**.