



# EEO VIEWS

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## October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month!

Visit:  
[www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence](http://www.nyc.gov/domesticviolence)  
for events going on in the New York City.

NYC Domestic Violence Hotline:  
(800) 621-4673 or TDD (866) 604-5350

## EEO Computer Based Training

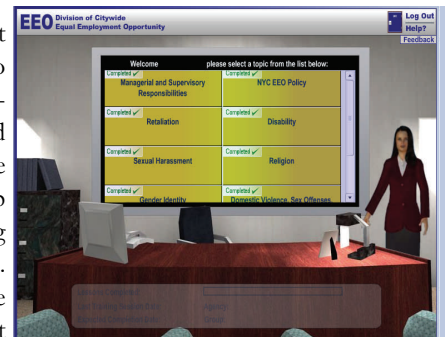
By: Cavita Lewis

The Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) developed an EEO Computer Based Training (CBT) program to be implemented in all City agencies. The new program, which is described as “user friendly”, has enabled the EEO Office to address a larger audience than possible in the traditional classroom presentation, and as such has improved the EEO Office’s mandates to meet its training goals. The CBT will be used for refresher training sessions and employees will be scheduled to participate approximately every two years.

The CBT consists of a sequence of slides with audio and graphics that contain current

EEO information that is particularly relevant to managers and supervisors. Case studies and review sections at the end of each topic help to ensure understanding of the material covered. Unlike traditional live training, you need not leave your office in order to take the CBT. You can log on from your office computer.

The DEP launched the EEO CBT for DEP managers on May 11, 2009 and concluded on May 22, 2009 and with only a few minor glitches it went off with great success. Our target goal was 386 managers and we far exceeded our expectation by reaching 418 managers. A



great deal of this success was accomplished with the assistance of the Office of Information Technology (OIT) and Human Resources. Positive feedback was received from employees that participated in the CBT.

Starting fiscal year 2010, EEO CBT will be offered to DEP supervisors and we’re expecting the same success.

## Domestic Violence and How it Affects the Workplace

By: Denise Dyce

Through an initiative sponsored by DEP’s Quality of Worklife (QWL) and in conjunction with the EEO Office, a Domestic Violence Seminar was held at DEP in March 2009.

The presentation was given by K.C. Wagner, Director of Workplace Issues—Cornell

University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Ms. Wagner has specialized in the prevention of sexual harassment, gender bias, and promoting inclusiveness in the workplace for over 28 years. Ms. Wagner has provided training to corporations, unions, non-profit and government organizations.

Domestic violence is a serious issue that affects a significant segment of the American population and has the potential to affect individuals both at work and at home. Statistics indicate that one in five employed adults in the U.S are victims of domestic violence, which very often affects productivity in the workplace.

## Diversity Awareness

### DEP's Diversity Committee

By: Herb Roth

The DEP began venturing on a new initiative to highlight cultural diversity in the workplace.

In September 2008, we implemented a workplace diversity initiative. The objective of this initiative is to communicate, educate and share the rich and diverse heritages in our Agency. We have used literature, videos, live performances, cultural events, biographies, posters, recipes and puzzles to get our message out. This past June, during Caribbean Heritage Month, we had a steel pan recital as well as an Indian

dance performance which were well received and enjoyed by all in attendance.

On this note, all employees are encouraged to become involved and participate in this exciting initiative. Your talents and ideas are most welcomed! All of the Diversity Committee members are available for you to discuss your ideas and suggestions.

The Diversity Committee members are: Herb Roth, Martha Osenni, Grace Pigott, Adrienne Blanford, Doreen Johann,

Abigaile Taylor, Tanika Thomas, Farrah Ahmad, Cavita Lewis, Constance McLeod, Madelene Ramos and Shivon Tyrell.

During the year, we celebrate the following heritages: African American Heritage in February, Greek/Irish Heritage in March, Asian/Pacific Islander Heritage in May, Caribbean Heritage in June, Hispanic Heritage in September, Polish/Italian/German Heritage in October, and Native American Indian & Alaskan Heritage in November.



*Diversity may be the hardest thing for a society to live with, and perhaps the most dangerous thing for a society to be without.*

**William Sloane Coffin, Jr.**

### Bureau of Wastewater Treatment—Summer Program 2009

By: Abigaile Taylor

This summer marked the Bureau of Wastewater Treatment's third year of involvement with the Environmental Benefit Program. With this program, the Bureau hired 25 summer employees to work on cleaning the shorelines inside New York City limits. The logistics of the clean-up and the BWT summer Intern Program was headed by the Facilities Operations Support Section, who work under Mr. John Petito, PE, Director of Facilities Operations, and Mr. Arthur Spangel, PE, Director of Collection Facilities and Residuals Management.

This year, the students visited 9 locations throughout the City: Kaiser Park, Sheepshead Bay, Plum Beach, Canarsie Pier,

Floyd Bennett Field, Cryders Point, Cross Bay Bridge, Dubos Point, and Castle Hill.

The interns also participated in the Greenmarket Project, which was facilitated by Office of Correspondence and Intergovernmental Affairs. The interns communicated the message to the public: "Clean Streets = Clean Beaches" and that water conservation helps to protect the City's water quality. This significance was taken well by most New Yorkers.

In summary, the Summer Program was rewarding for all of the interns of BWT. They presented a PowerPoint presentation to managers, supervisors and their peers displaying

what they learned. This program is rewarding for DEP and the Summer Interns because it displayed their diversity, how well they worked as a team and also provided them with experiences that they will foster and spread as they move forward throughout their lives.

This program enhanced their knowledge of the importance of cleanliness, and how waste affects our environment.

The interns communicated the message to the public for "clean streets = clean beaches".



*"If you set goals and go after them with all your determination, your gifts will take you places that will amaze you."*



## Ms. Abosede Sosanya—BWT's 2nd Female SEE

By: Michael Walczyszyn



On October 1, 2009 Abosede Sosanya, a Sr. Sewage Treatment Worker assigned to the Tallman Island WPCP, was appointed Stationary Engineer Electric – only the second woman in the history of DEP to attain this position.

Ms. Sosanya arrived in the United States in 1980 from her native Nigeria, to pursue her education. While working toward her Baccalaureate degree at City College, former classmates who had begun working at the DEP told Ms. Sosanya about the Agency and how this was a good Agency to work for because of the many

opportunities for advancement. Following her graduation with a Bachelor of Science degree in Electro-Mechanical Technology, Ms. Sosanya joined the DEP as an Instrumentation Specialist in 1989.

While employed as an Instrumentation Specialist, Ms. Sosanya took the exam for Sewage Treatment Worker and was appointed to this title in 1992. Ms. Sosanya explained the rationale behind this change in titles stating that her experience as an Instrumentation Specialist placed her in a plant setting often working alongside STWs. However, as the career path of an STW seemed to have more rapid opportunities for advancement, she decided to change her title and pursue a different career path in the Agency. Ms. Sosanya worked as an STW at the Newtown Creek plant for 11 years until her promotion to

Sr. STW in 2003 when she transferred to Tallman Island.

Ms. Sosanya, a mother of three girls who are currently all studying in college, enjoys cooking – especially Italian food – in her spare time. When asked who or what her inspiration was for continuing on this career path, Ms. Sosanya acknowledged James Pynn, Plant Chief for the Newtown Creek WWTP, as someone whom she has always admired as he is very fair. She explained that as a woman coming into a traditionally male profession, Mr. Pynn made it easy for her to assimilate into this environment noting "I aspire to be him". When asked for words of encouragement to other women in similar situations, Ms. Sosanya stated simply, "If you're beat down, get up and try again".

## Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009

On January 29, 2009, President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 ("Act"), which supersedes the Supreme Court's decision in *Ledbetter v. Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., Inc.*, 550 U.S. 618 (2007). *Ledbetter* had required a compensation discrimination charge to be filed within 180 days of a discriminatory pay-setting decision (or 300 days in jurisdictions that have a local or state law prohibiting the same form of compensation discrimination).

The Act restores the pre-*Ledbetter* position of the EEOC that each paycheck that delivers discriminatory compensation is a wrong actionable under the federal EEO statutes, regardless of when the discrimination began. As noted in the Act, it recognizes the "reality

of wage discrimination" and restores "bedrock principles of American law."

Under the Act, an individual subjected to compensation discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 may file a charge within 180 (or 300) days of any of the following:

- when a discriminatory compensation decision or other discriminatory practice affecting compensation is adopted;
- when the individual becomes subject to a discriminatory compensation decision or other discriminatory practice

affecting compensation; or

- when the individual's compensation is affected by the application of a discriminatory compensation decision or other discriminatory practice, including each time the individual receives compensation that is based in whole or part on such compensation decision or other practice.

The Act has a retroactive effective date of May 28, 2007, and applies to all claims of discriminatory compensation pending on or after that date.

Source: [www.eeoc.gov/epa/ledbetter.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/epa/ledbetter.html)

## October is National Disability Awareness Month

### DIRECT THREAT AND PANDEMIC INFLUENZA



**Direct threat** is an important ADA concept during an influenza pandemic.

Whether pandemic influenza rises to the level of a direct threat depends on the severity of the illness. If the CDC or state or local public health authorities determine that the illness is like seasonal influenza or the 2009 spring/summer H1N1 influenza, it would not pose a direct threat or justify disability-related inquiries and medical examinations. By contrast, if the CDC or state or local health authorities determine that pandemic influenza is significantly more severe, it could pose a direct threat. The assessment by the CDC or public health authorities would provide the objective evidence needed for a disability-related inquiry or medical examination.

During a pandemic, employers should rely on the latest CDC and state or local public health assessments. While the EEOC recognizes that public health recommendations may change during a crisis and differ between states, employers are expected to make their best efforts to obtain public health advice that is contemporaneous and appropriate for their location, and to make reasonable assessments of conditions in their workplace based on this information.

Source: [www.eeoc.gov/facts/pandemicflu.html](http://www.eeoc.gov/facts/pandemicflu.html)



## NYC DEP- EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

**Martha Osenni**  
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**(718)595-3400**

### **IDEAS? ARTICLES?**

*Tell us what you think or what you would like to see in the next issue.*

*Send submissions to:*

*NYC Department of Environmental Protection  
Equal Employment Opportunity  
59-17 Junction Blvd., 20th Floor  
Flushing, NY 11373*

## *Did You Know?*



- Some offensive acts or remarks may violate the City's EEO policy, even if they are not so severe that they violate federal, state or local discrimination laws.
- A violation of the City's EEO Policy may occur not only in the City's workplaces, but also at any extension of the workplace, such as field locations, off-site business-related social functions, or City vehicles.
- Sexual harassment (conduct or language of a sexual nature) and harassment based on gender hostility or any other protected categories (such as race, religion, national origin, disability or sexual orientation) are prohibited by the City's EEO Policy.
- Harassment and/or retaliation against a person who opposes or complains about prohibited conduct or participates in any way in the complaint, investigation or reasonable accommodation processes are prohibited.

*Source: About EEO: What You May Not Know*



Herb Roth, Deputy Director of HRM and Tanika Thomas, EEO Investigator at a recent Structured Interview training presented by DCAS—

### *Other Important Numbers:*

**New York City Commission on Human Rights**  
(212) 306-7500

**New York State Division of Human Rights**  
(718) 722-2856

**U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission—New York District Office**  
(212) 336-2620

**Federal Monitor**  
(888) 875-4800

**Employee Concerns Hotline**  
(800) 897-9677

**Employee Assistance Program**  
(212) 306-7660



## *EEO Bureau Liaisons*

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Gloria Williams	Customer Services	(718) 595-7830
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Gayna Samuel	Environmental Planning & Assessment	(718) 595-3198
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Laddie VanderMass	Fleet Administration	(718) 610-0707
Jason Low	WaterBoard	(718) 595-3114