

Commissioner's Corner



I had the privilege last Tuesday of hosting the [31st Annual Water Resources Art and Poetry Contest](#) celebration event at the LaGuardia Performing Arts Center in Long Island City, Queens. More than 1,800 students (grades 2-12) from 100 schools in New York City, Watershed communities and homeschools were honored for creating more than 1,700

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 as DEP Water Ambassadors and received certificates recognizing their contribution. Additionally, from the more than 1,700 submissions, a group of judges selected 75 entries representing 137 student group projects as this year's Water Champions. The ceremony also included remarks from **Tiphany Yanique**, an award-winning poet and novelist.

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.

The 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.
- **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

For more than three decades, DEP's annual Art and Poetry contest has provided a venue for young New Yorkers to learn about the importance of protecting our environment while simultaneously developing their own means of artistic expression. Nearly half the State of New York relies on the City's water supply system, so this event serves as a terrific opportunity for students in both New York City and watershed school systems to celebrate our shared natural resources.

My warmest thanks to everyone in the Bureau of Public Affairs and Communications that was involved in putting on this wonderful event. I would also like to single out for special recognition **Kim Estes-Fradis** and the Education team for the countless hours of hard work they devoted to organizing this contest and delivering an entertaining program for the students and their families.

Spotlight on Safety

DEP's Office of Environmental Health and Safety has revised the Agency's [Contractor Selection and Management Policy](#). The policy has been distributed Agency-wide and goes into effect August 10, 2017.

The Contractor Selection and Management Policy is part of DEP's goal to run the safest operations and capital program in the country with the best environmental compliance record of any large water and wastewater utility. This policy addresses the review of EHS information prior to contractor selection, communication of DEP's EHS requirements and expectations, and evaluation of their EHS performance while they are

providing labor or services to DEP. Bureaus must train those employees who are directly affected by this policy.

Key changes to this policy from the previous revision include:

- revised responsibilities for Contract Supervisors
- revised procedures
- new sections on Quality Assurance, Auditing and Training

DEP strives to hire safe, environmentally compliant and cost-effective contractors and to systematically manage, monitor and evaluate contractors that are working on DEP projects.

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.



Great Water Cities Summit 2017



DEP proudly participated last Tuesday in the *Great Water Cities Summit 2017—Invest4Resilience*, held at the Marriot Marquis in Manhattan. Acting Commissioner **Vincent Sapienza** provided some opening remarks and then introduced Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater Treatment **Pam Elardo**, who served as emcee for the conference. **Anthony Maracic** Director, Asset Management and Capital Projects of BWT, participated in a panel on “Physical Resilience-Managing Risk,” while Deputy Commissioner of Organizational Development **Diana Jones Ritter** was a panelist on a discussion titled, “Workforce Resilience—Building the Team of the Future.” Also attending from DEP were **Lily Lee**, **Colin Johnson**, **Kathleen Esposito**, **Ellen Obenshain** and **Akosua Adomako-Bousu**. Additionally, **Daniel A. Zarrilli**, New York City’s Chief Resilience Officer, gave the lunchtime keynote address. Hosted by the Water Environment Federation and the New York Water Environment Association, the conference featured panelists and moderators from public utilities and financial institutions across the country discussing ways to overcome water infrastructure investment challenges.

Open Weekend at Jerome Park Reservoir



Jerome Park Reservoir served as host this past weekend to 120 people who came out to enjoy the limited access recreation event DEP held on the grounds of the Bronx facility. Families, joggers, community residents and local elected leaders, including Assembly Member **Jeffrey Dinowitz** and Council Member **Andrew Cohen**, took advantage of the opportunity to walk or jog around the 2-mile perimeter of the 93-acre Reservoir. The Reservoir, located in the north-west Bronx, can hold up to 773 million gallons of water and is fed by the City’s Croton Watershed, located in Westchester and Putnam Counties. Jerome Park Reservoir is the last stop for the water before it enters the Croton Water Filtration Plant and goes into the City’s distribution system.

Promotion Ceremony for K-9 Officers



Four veteran DEP Police officers with the K-9 unit were promoted last week to the rank of detective specialist during a ceremony at the Staff Sgt. Robert H. Dietz DEP Police Academy in Kingston, N.Y. The officers promoted are Det. **Kenneth J. Bauer**, Det. **Douglas DiSciullo**, Det. **Kelly L. Kilpatrick**, and Det. **Carlos J. Whearty**. The DEP Police Division was established more than 100 years ago. Its approximately 200 sworn members are charged with protecting the city’s water supply system, which includes more than 2,000 square miles of watershed land across nine counties, hundreds of miles of tunnels and aqueducts, 14 wastewater treatment plants, laboratories, and chlorination facilities. DEP police patrol the watershed by foot, bicycle, all-terrain vehicle, motorcycle, boat and helicopter. They also maintain specially trained units that include a detective bureau, emergency service unit, canine unit and aviation unit.

Welcome Aboard!



Yesterday, 30 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Deputy Commissioner for Organizational Development and Human Resources **Diana Jones Ritter**, Director of Planning and Recruitment **Grace Pigott** and HR Specialist **Grace Franco**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Kevin Hanley with BEDC; **Michael Vander Werff** with BWS; **Michael Cooper**, **Michael K. Davies**, **Terry Felder**, **Stephen Flemming**, **Anthony Gentilella**, **Roshane Gordon**, **Earl Johnson**, **Anthony Montalvo**, **Lorenzo Morrell**, **Shawn Napier**, **Andrew Sokolowski**, **Wayne Soldinger**, **Dave Thomas** and **Clarence Williams** with BWSO; **Cheryl A. Leith**, **Carlos M. Mata**, **Kenneth Morrow**, **Mercy Okundaye** and **Anne Marie Roitburd** with BWT; **Shalecia Branch**, **Kinta Dokubo**, **Joseph Fauci**, **Dalero James**, **Lydia Jones** and **Tyrone Zamminer** with CDBG; **Kaitlyn Richter** with Commissioner’s Office; **Jonathan Glotzer** and **David S. Mohanan** with OD&HR.

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