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REVE NEWS

FINANCE'S MONTHLY NEWSLETTER • APRIL 2007 • VOLUME 4, NUMBER 4

Divisional Corner

Robert Y. Lee, Deputy Commissioner, Treasury Division



My education and career have always been about quantitative facts, like dollars-and-cents, so I believe that it was fated that I work for an organization like Finance. I received a Bachelor of Science degree in Economics and Finance from SUNY Plattsburgh in 1971 and an MBA in accounting from CUNY Baruch in 1977. I also received my Charter as a Chartered Financial Analyst from the American Institute of Management and Research in 1995.

As a manager, I see myself as a global thinker and a local worker. I keep my eye on the City's financial goals and Finance's objectives, and, at the same time, I am accessible to my staff and involved in

the day-to-day operations of the Treasury Division. I came to Finance and to Treasury in the fall of 1995 after seven years as the Controller/Treasurer at the New York City Economic Development Corporation. My first assignment here was to work with City Hall and the City Council to pass a bill authorizing City agencies to accept payments for certain fees and fines via three widely recognized credit cards. We were successful, and, fast forward to FY06, Finance collected \$165 million in parking fines and \$28 million in property tax all through credit card payments. In addition, there are currently 17 other City agencies that accept credit cards.

When Martha E. Stark became Commissioner of Finance in 2003, Treasury, the City Comptroller's Office, the New York State Banking Department, and the State Comptroller's Office began working together to implement the Banking Development District program. This program is designed to bring much needed banking services and financial literacy to under-banked neighborhoods. As the City's central banker, Treasury provides the bulk of the funding for the 20 bank branches in the five boroughs now participating in the program.

EVERY UNIT IN TREASURY IS WORKING SMART

The Treasury Division has long incorporated the principles of fairness, transparency, and data-driven results in accomplishing its contribution to Finance's mission. For example, the Cash Management Unit is both data-driven and transparent as it oversees the flow of monies into the City's General Fund and other accounts. Cash Management ensures that the City Comptroller invests cash not immediately needed for the City's day-to-day operation and other purposes. Knowing exactly where the money is and what it is being used for is extremely important in this unit.

The Banking Relations/Contracts Unit maintains the transparency and fairness of the Request for Proposal process for City Mayoral agencies seeking banking services. "Efficiency" is Banking Relations' middle name. We make sure that redundant or unnecessary City bank accounts are not opened. Those accounts that are deemed no longer efficient are promptly closed to prevent the City from wasting its money on fees.

The Client Services Division works SMART for the 45,000 vendors conducting business with the City. No money is paid to a vendor who owes money to the City. Liens must be resolved first. When we pay City vendors, we pay the right amount at the right time.

One of Client Services' best initiatives has been the promotion and expansion of the Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) Unit, a process that allows vendors who do business with the City to be paid by EFT, more commonly known as "direct deposit." In fiscal year 2006, the City paid out more than 600,000 vendor-payment checks. In 1996, at EFT's inception, there were only 3,000 vendors enrolled. Today, resulting from a joint effort to enroll vendors in EFT by

Finance, FISA, the City Comptroller, and the Mayor's Office of Contracts, there are over 8,600 vendors enrolled. We were particularly anxious to get the City's largest vendors onto EFT; some of these vendors receive hundreds of checks each month. It is much easier for Finance and for the vendor to have those "checks" direct-deposited. Commissioner Stark has been active in getting the Common Sense Local Law passed by the City Council. In essence, this law will require vendors doing frequent business with the City to sign up for EFT. This will encompass 75-85% of the vendors currently doing business with the City, drastically eliminating the number of paper checks issued.

I'm guessing that many **ReveNEWS** readers don't know that the Department of Finance deposits, tracks and disburses bail money collected by the City's correctional facilities and court system. It can take years before a case is resolved and the person who paid the bail gets his or her bail refund. In that time, people move and forget to tell us, and they lose their bail receipts. As part of Client Services, our Bail Unit has also made strides to improve customer satisfaction. For example, we have eliminated long lines and processing delays for the refund of bail. We know our customers are satisfied because our customer survey cards are being returned with favorable responses.

I am very proud of the excellent work being done in the Treasury Division and the way that our employees are making improvements in the services we provide through the SMART program. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the managers, supervisors, and employees in Treasury for all their hard work and for their many contributions to Finance and to the City.



Front row from left to right: Deputy Commissioner Robert Y. Lee, Nancy Leonard, Linda Gerwin, Ricky Kwong. Second row from left to right: Jacqui Cheeseborough, Peggy Codrington, Miryam Perez, Nancy Sultan, Darryl Lykins, Rita Ramirez, Kelly Ko. Third Row left to right: Kessey Ankomah-Kwaku, Allen Lee, Nicholas Falcone, Rocco Fusco.

SMART CORNER

SMART Jam Update

You have probably heard the words "SMART Jam" so many times this past month. We hope you did, because many of your colleagues have been working very hard since the beginning of March to deliver these enjoyable, educational events to you so that you can learn more about the SMART transformation and how it is related to your everyday work. Almost all the divisions have held a Jam session by the time this went to press, and many Finance employees have either learned more about SMART or learned about it for the first time as a result. Your divisional Jam Coordinators and creative planners brought SMART Jeopardy, the Wheel of SMART, SMART Word Scrambles, a SMART Scavenger Hunt and even a lovely SMART "original soundtrack" (Kudos to Legal Affairs for tapping into Andy Eisner's song writing

talents for this unique contribution!). Apart from educating frontline employees about SMART, these events also created a sense of community, teamwork, and bonding among colleagues.

As part of the SMART education campaign, Finance provided each employee with an orange folder that contains a booklet of the most important information you need to know about SMART and a copy of your division's SMART card. If you missed your division's event or somehow have not received your SMART materials, please inquire with your division's Jam Coordinator or your supervisor.

SMART Point Person

So you were on vacation and you missed the Jam, or you learned about SMART last month, but this week (*Continued at top of page 2*)

(Continued from page 1)

you have a question about SMART and the co-worker sitting next to you does not know the answer. Now what? Well, the Communications Division anticipated this scenario and has come up with a solution: Go to your SMART Point Person. The Point Person program is another part of the SMART education campaign aimed at addressing employees' needs for enhanced communication around SMART. As this goes to press, the selection process is underway. The program's goal is to create a network of volunteers who will be selected by colleagues in their division and will serve in the role for one year at a time. This person will be a Finance employee who has received training on and who is knowledgeable about SMART and, most importantly, is someone who is a good

UPDATE ON SMART FILM SERIES



The SMART Film Series, which launched at the end of February, continues this month with the opening of *The Attitude Virus*. The films are short comedies that

provide Finance employees with an opportunity to learn about and discuss key SMART concepts related to their everyday work. The 10-30 minute films are open to all employees at various work locations. Free refreshments are served, and one employee will win a raffle prize at each show. For more information, please go to <http://financenet/>, click on the FinanceNet icon on your desktop, or contact the SMART Film Series Coordinator in your borough.

communicator. Through the Point Person, you will be able to learn more about SMART, find out how it's related to you, and provide feedback to both the Communications Division and Executive Office to help us improve. Communications plans to announce each division's Point Person on FinanceNet later this month.

2007 Operational Reviews

Mark your calendars for the agency-wide Operational Review Weeks to review performance results:

Monday, April 23 through Friday, April 27th

Monday, July 23 through Friday, July 27th

Monday, October 22nd through Friday, October 26th

HEALTH BENEFITS UNIT NOW CENTRALIZED IN DCAS

Effective March 19th, the Office of Labor Relations and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) centralized the Health Benefits Enrollment process to a division of DCAS called NYCAPS Central. Finance employees should now contact this new unit to handle changes in enrollment in City health benefit programs, to update their

enrollment information (for instance, add a new spouse or child to your coverage), to update general information (such as mailing address etc.), or ask about their health benefits status and eligibility.

You can contact NYCAPS Central by phone, fax, and email:

Phone: 212-487-0500

Fax: 212-313-3411

Online: EmployeeSupport@dcas.nyc.gov

When you contact NYCAPS Central, please include your 7-digit Employee ID Number available, which is located on your pay stub.

FINANCE OUT AND ABOUT

Shirley Chisholm Leadership Award - 3/22/07

ReveNEWS readers will be proud to hear that the winner of this year's Shirley Chisholm Leadership Award was our own Commissioner Martha E. Stark. Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz presented this award on March 22nd.

Named for the first African-American woman elected to the House of Representatives in 1968, Shirley Chisholm was known for her independence and her willingness to fight for what she believed in. This award, then, seems entirely appropriate, since Commissioner Stark is also well known for these qualities. In addition, Shirley Chisholm was and Commissioner Stark is a proud daughter of Brooklyn, two local "girls" who made good.



National Women's History Month - 3/22/07

The Commissioner was also busy during March making presentations in commemoration of National Women's History Month. On March 22nd, she spoke at the NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA) about the continuing importance of celebrations of diversity, such as Women's History Month in March and Black History Month in February, even though women, African Americans, and other minorities have made significant advances, especially in government. She mentioned some of the women in government who are her heroes and who opened doors that the next generation of women could walk through, women like NYS Congresswoman Bella Abzug, Texas Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, and, of course, Shirley Chisholm. She also credited the two other women who have served as Finance commissioners - Hilda Schwartz and Carol O'Cleireacain - with paving the way.

MARCH OF DIMES WALKAMERICA 2007 "THE WALK TO SAVE BABIES"

The Department of Finance kicked off its March of Dimes WalkAmerica 2007 effort on Friday, February 16, 2007. Approximately eighty employees attended the Kickoff, held at 345 Adams Street in the 7th Floor Training Facility. Commissioner Martha E. Stark, who is the Government Industry Chairperson, hosted the event with the Finance March of Dimes WalkAmerica Volunteer Committee.

The Kickoff included recognition of the efforts of individual walkers and divisions in WalkAmerica 2006. Each award recipient received a plaque commemorating the amount of money raised.

- The City Register Division took home the WalkAmerica Cup for raising \$6,334 - the most money of any division in Finance, and the City Register also took the Healthy Babies Cup for having the highest per capita amount of money - \$44.92 per employee - raised in 2006.
- Mary Scheman (City Register) took the Department's Top Walker Award. Ms. Scheman raised \$3,240.
- Sheila Williams (Employee Services) was honored as a **Platinum Walker**. She raised \$2,135.
- **Gold Walkers** (who raised \$1000 - \$1999) were Sharon Ward (Executive), Vanessa Shamsid-Deen (Audit), Colette McCain (City

Register), Hyacinth Nelson (Audit), Answorth Robinson (Employee Services), Susie Yuen (FIT), Cleo Taitt (Audit), and Zena Spence (City Register).

- **Silver Walkers** (who raised \$750 - \$999) were Vivian Lock (Sheriff) and Howard Walvick (Communications).
- **Bronze Walkers** (who raised \$500 - \$749) were Daisy Alverio (Legal), Eva Gambino (Payment Operations), Sharon Kelly (City Register), Robert Lee (Treasury), Portia Perkins (FIT), Sheryl Williams (Payment Operations), Della Stilley (Legal), Sharon Chew (Enforcement), Anita Mullin (Property), Jacqueline Morrell (Executive), Pat Roman (Enforcement), and George Mark (FIT).

WalkAmerica 2007 takes place on Sunday, April 29, 2007, rain or shine. To sign up, go to WalkAmerica.org or call 1-800-525-WALK. The Department's official team name is **NYC DEPT OF FINANCE**.

For additional information, please contact Answorth Robinson or a Team Captain listed below:

- Adjudications:** Princetta Johnson.
- Audit:** Vanessa Shamsid-Deen, Pat Roman, Rebecca Sass, Hyacinth Nelson, & Cleo Taitt.
- Communications & Customer Service:** Howard Walvick.
- City Register:** Colette McCain, Sharon Kelly, Mary Scheman, and Zena Spence.
- Collections:** Gloria Anderson and Doreen Fulton.
- Employee Services:** Reasa Semper and Sheila Dallas Williams.
- Enforcement:** Sharon Chew.
- Executive:** Jacqueline Morrell.
- FIT:** Daphne Harris, Susie Yuen, and Portia Perkins, Diana Saunders.
- Legal Affairs:** Della Stilley.
- Payment Operations:** Eva Gambino and Sheryl Williams.
- Property:** Anita Mullin & Danielle Woodson.
- Sheriff:** Vivian Lock.
- Tax Policy:** Kathy Nixon.
- Treasury:** Susan Cheung.



Top from left: Mary Scheman's mom, Sharon Kelly (Queens, CR), Darlene Tye (N.Y.C., CR), Mary Scheman, Deputy (Bronx, CR), Annette M. Hill (City Register), Collette McCain, Deputy (Queens, CR), Zena Spence, Asst Deputy (N.Y.C., CR), Marie Prasad (N.Y.C., CR), Mariya Yevseykina (N.Y.C., CR), Commissioner, Martha E. Stark. Bottom from left: Victoria Ricks (NYC, CR), Iri Martinez (N.Y.C., CR), Caressa Ogletree (N.Y.C., CR), Renee Fryar (N.Y.C., CR), Jenifer Steer (N.Y.C., CR), Thea Williams (N.Y.C., CR) Middle bottom Floor: Latonya Rasdell (N.Y.C., CR), Lai Ping "Virginia" Fong (N.Y.C., CR)

APRIL 15-21 IS NATIONAL VOLUNTEERISM WEEK

Finance Employees Donate Time and Effort to a Variety of Worthy Causes

Many **ReveNEWS** readers already do some volunteer work, but how many of us have thought about volunteering but put it off because you're too busy, too tired, etc.? It is hard for those who work full-time to find the time to do anything more than care for their families, but there are many advantages to volunteering:

Feel Appreciated and Valuable: The main purpose of volunteering may be to help others, but the fact is, it also feels good. Seeing the face of a child who finally "gets" what you're teaching or the smile of a senior who might not have any visitors other than you – these are amazing feelings. Many volunteers say that they get more than they give, and feeling appreciated and useful is what they mean.

Meet New People Who Share Your Interests: When you volunteer, you meet people who share your interests and values. It is also a great way to meet people when you are new, for example, at church or in your neighborhood.

Enhance Your Skills and Your Resume: Depending on what you choose, you may find a volunteer job that helps you improve in skills that you can use at Finance and that you can possibly add to your resume.

Let's take a look at the volunteer work being done by some Finance employees:

Heidi Chain

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." (Margaret Mead)

Heidi Chain is an attorney and the Director of the Collections Unit (Legal Affairs). Outside of her Finance responsibilities, Heidi and her husband are exceptionally busy volunteers in their community. Heidi's husband is the volunteer president of the Queens Symphony Orchestra, and Heidi is the President of the 112th Precinct Community Council, the founder of the Forest Hills-Rego Park Community Emergency Response Team, a member of Community Board 6, an instructor at the Citizens' Police Academy, and a board member of the Forest Hills Community and Civic Association. Heidi also speaks at senior citizen homes and trains new NYPD captains in police-community relations.

All these activities share a common theme – public and community safety. Heidi started volunteering at the 112th Precinct Community Council in her own neighborhood. All precincts have Community Councils that work with the precinct to help the community by sponsoring courses and events related to public safety and accident prevention. Heidi eventually became president of her Community Council, and she created the Forest Hills-Rego Park Community

Emergency Response Team (FHRPCERT), a group of volunteers, trained by the Mayor's Office of Emergency Management, to help police and firefighters in case of emergency and speak to other organizations about emergency preparedness.

Heidi also attends monthly meetings at 1 Police Plaza as an alumnus (and four-time past president) of the Citizen's Police Academy, a Citywide, 14-week training program to teach the public ways to contribute to their communities and improve communications between the police and the communities that they serve. Heidi also takes one day of annual leave every year to help the CPAAA with their Holiday Party for 5,000 children with disabilities, a joint effort of the NYPD, NYFD, the FBI, the Sanitation Department, and the Mayor's Office.

If you are interested in the kind of volunteer work Heidi does, call your local police precinct about their Community Council or look online at [www.neighborhoodlink.com/\[your borough\]/\[your precinct\]cc/](http://www.neighborhoodlink.com/[your borough]/[your precinct]cc/) (fill in the name of your borough and your local precinct in the bracketed spaces, e.g. www.neighborhoodlink.com/queens/112precinctcc/).

Jayne Lindberg

Tuesday and Thursday evenings find *Jayne Lindberg* (Communications & Customer Service) at LaGuardia Community College

students how to write essays that will pass the GED. Jayne told us that she walked into LaGuardia and volunteered her services because she missed teaching and hoped to be able to be of service to students who are trying to better themselves and their lives. She says she gets enormous satisfaction when her students seek her help, and she celebrates every time a student passes the GED.

LaGuardia also needs Math tutors for this program on Monday nights. If you remember fractions, decimals, square roots, and basic algebra and geometry and want to help, call 718-482-5933.

Patricia Yarber

Feeding the Homeless

Patricia Yarber is a PAA in the Queens City Register's Office. She spends her days helping the public, including issuing tow releases for customers whose vehicles have been impounded, processing agreements for customers with delinquent real estate taxes, issuing parking violations payment plans, preparing registration clearances and satisfactions of judgment, and lots more.

But on Wednesday nights, from January to April, Patricia volunteers at the First Church of Jamaica, South-East Queens Cluster Homeless Program, work she has been doing for over ten years. Each year, this program provides shelter and meals for the homeless during the coldest months. Patricia is in charge of providing meals on Wednesdays and enlisting the help of various churches to meet this obligation.

As a result of Ms. Yarber's dedication, for the past five years, her fellow co-workers at the Queens Payment Center have joined in her efforts. Some employees' cook, some contribute money and clothing, and others give their time by helping in the distribution of food to the homeless and offering words of encouragement.

Zulma "Toni" Bodon

The Dog Rescuer

Zulma "Toni" Bodon is Senior Tax Counsel in Finance's Tax Advocacy & Resolution Unit in Legal Affairs. She is also a longtime animal advocate and rescuer who, weekends, evenings, and vacation days, spends all her time rescuing and caring for the City's abandoned dogs. About 80% of the dogs have been found, abandoned, in the NYC-Metro area, but dogs also come from as far away as Ecuador and Puerto Rico, where *Stray from the Heart* – the name of Toni's group – has relationships with dog rescue groups. You can see photos and read about all the available dogs online at <http://www.strayfromtheheart.org/> and volunteer to help by clicking on *How You Can Help* at the top of the home page.

If you are a volunteer and would like to submit information about the work you do please let us know. Email sarricat@finance.nyc.gov.



in Long Island City, helping students prepare to take the GED exam and receive their high school equivalency diplomas.

The Adult Education Department sponsors these free GED preparatory classes in Math and English. Students range in age from late teens to their 50's, many went to school in other countries before immigrating to the US, and virtually all attend the GED Prep Classes in the evening after a long day at work. (There is also a daytime GED Prep program.)

Jayne works one-on-one with students who voluntarily seek her help with their writing assignments. She reviews the rules of grammar and punctuation, helps them organize their thoughts, and shows the

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATED

To celebrate National Women's History Month, the Department of Finance held its annual event on Friday, March 30, 2007, Brooklyn Borough Hall Community Room, 209 Joralemon Street. This year's Women's History Month theme was "Women's Health and Wellness," and it included presentations and materials on how to live well, eat well, and feel well.

Commissioner Martha E. Stark and First

Deputy Commissioner Rochelle Patricof opened the event, and Galia Galansky, newly appointed Assistant Commissioner of Employee Services Division, made a Health and Wellness presentation. **See Women's Health and Wellness presentation on FinanceNet.**

Thanks to the Women's History Month Committee for their work in putting together a great event:

L.E. Tina Barnes (Employee Services); Heidi Chain (Legal Affairs); Peggy Codrington (Treasury); Daphne Harris (Information System Services); J. Delise Hood (Collections); Catherine Jones (Collections); Joyce Lippman (Legal Affairs); Stephanie Mitchell-Cloud (Employee Services); Mary Rose O'Connell (Legal Affairs); Miryam Perez (Treasury); Reasa Sempier (Employee Services); Sheryl Williams (Payment Operations); Susie Yuen (Information System Services).

GOOD-BYE TO OLD FRIENDS



The following employees have recently retired after many years of City service. Some may enjoy

a life of leisure; others may work elsewhere. Whatever they choose, they will certainly be missed by Finance colleagues and friends. We wish them well in their retirements.

Name	Division	Yrs of Service
Emmanuel Awuku	Audit	29
Andrew French	Executive	6
John Hunt Jr.	ISS	18
William Layne	City Register	24
Gerry O'Connor	Comm. & Cust. Service	36
Annie Smalls-Bovelle	Collections	15
Esther Stuart	Audit	25
Vivian Suarez	Adjudication	36
John Torres	Sheriff	25
Jean Williams	Audit	24

APRIL TRIVIA

Did you know that April is Chocolate Eaters Month? Yummy! What a wonderful month! It is also National Smile Month, which won't be hard for most of us when we're "celebrating" Chocolate Eaters month.

April also commemorates a variety of activities and causes with special weeks, including these:

1st Week in April Straw Hat Week and National Reading a Road Map Week

2nd Week in April Be Kind to Animals Week, National Garden Week, and National Guitar Week

3rd Week in April National Bubblegum Week and National Coin Week (How, exactly, do you celebrate Coin Week?)

4th Week in April National Lingerie Week, National TV-Free Week, Professional Secretaries Week, Egg Salad Week, and (our favorite) Mattress Turnover Week

OUR APOLOGIES

The **ReveNEWS** staff regrets two errors made in recent issues of this newsletter: In the March issue, we gave the impression that the employees who supplied the food for Diversity Day's International Food Fair on January 26th also helped organize and coordinate the event. We should have given credit for organizing and coordinating the event to the QWL Career & Personal Development Committee. In February, we said that Black History Month events were sponsored by the Department of Finance. More accurately, Finance's African American Heritage & Culture Volunteer Committee sponsored these events.

ARE YOU OR SOMEONE IN YOUR FAMILY GRADUATING THIS YEAR?

Let **ReveNEWS** know about your own graduation or that of your child, your spouse, or your grandchild. Graduations include high school, college, post-graduate degrees, or specialty schools (e.g., cosmetology, auto tech, etc.). Your submissions will be included in a special June issue and are due by May 14th.



SEND AN E-MAIL to SarricaT@finance.nyc.gov. Include...

- Your name and relationship to the graduate,
- The name of the graduate,
- The name of the school, and
- The graduate's degree, if applicable.

If you have a photo of the graduate, we'd love that too, but it has to be sent to us as an e-mail attachment in a jpg format.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH CONTEST WINNERS

RevNews update- We're happy to announce the top two entrants to the National Women's History Month contest: *Howard Gross* (Treasury) and *Jackie Bartley* (Employee Services).

The correct answers were:

- 1) **Sandra Day O'Connor** – First female Supreme Court Justice from 1981-2006.
- 2) **Dianne Feinstein** – The senior U.S. Senator from California. First, and only, female mayor of San Francisco.
- 3) **Barbara Jordan** – In 1972, she was elected to the United States House of Representatives, becoming the first black woman from a Southern state to serve in the House.
- 4) **Geraldine Ferraro** – First, and only, woman to date to represent a major U.S. political party as a candidate for Vice President in the 1984 election.
- 5) **Frances Perkins** – First woman Cabinet member when appointed to be U.S. Secretary of Labor from 1933 to 1945. Made key contributions to the New Deal that resulted in the Social Security Act of 1935.
- 6) **Jeannette Rankin** – In 1916, she was the first woman elected to the U.S. House of Representatives.
- 7) **Janet Reno** – First female U.S. Attorney General (1993–2001), nominated by President Clinton.
- 8) **Shirley Chisholm** – First African American woman elected to Congress. First African American to make a bid to be U.S. Presidential race in 1972.
- 9) **Madeleine Albright** – In 1997, was sworn in as the first female Secretary of State, nominated by President Clinton and unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate 99-0.
- 10) **Dr. Jocelyn Elders** – Appointed by President Clinton as the U.S. Surgeon General, making her the first African American, and the second woman, to hold the position.

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TAKE OUR DAUGHTERS AND SONS TO WORK



Thursday, April 26, 2007
Visit FinanceNet for further Information

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