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APRIL 2018



# Commissioner Currey Speaks at the Women Who Build Summit

by Nina Ritson



On Thursday, February 22, the Construction Institute of the University of Hartford held the 3rd Annual Women Who Build Summit at Goodwin College in East Hartford. This year saw robust attendance and the summit offered many panels throughout the day with several women speakers from top construction companies in the Northeast. In addition to great motivational speakers, there were strong networking exercises for participants to share their knowledge and learn from top notch professionals in the industry. The keynote speaker was our Commissioner, Melody Currey. Since the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) is the design and construction agency for most of state government her remarks were especially appreciated.

The employees at DAS have had the honor of working for Commissioner Currey for a few years now, but many have not had the opportunity to get to really know who Melody Currey is or know her journey to the 15th floor at 450 Columbus Boulevard. Her story, as told by the Commissioner herself to the many women in construction, in her own words:

“First of all I really do not like talking about myself so bear with me! My mother, Janet Hartman, was very active in politics but she also owned a few businesses. To give you some perspective, she was divorced from her first husband in 1948 – which was pioneering in itself for the day, then she married my father and I was born in the Catskills of New York. My mother

*Continued to next page*

always took me with her on her adventures – which I enjoyed - and she held many important positions during this time. She was the Democratic vice-chair of county government and later took a job in the Senate in Albany and held the distinction of being the first woman officer in the New York state senate. So I was already primed for adventure when I met and married my husband Don in 1969, a U.S. Air Force pilot, and we were transferred to Alaska. Living in Alaska, I learned very quickly how to be self-sufficient! It was very expensive to live there and we were just starting out so I learned how to grow my own vegetables and my husband and I hunted and fished. We really did live off the land! In Alaska you actually do experience 24 hours of darkness in winter. My daughter was born there and I swear she has the ability to work any shift and sleep at any time of the day because of this!

We returned to Albany but then my husband was quickly transferred to Hartford. We landed in East Hartford where we bought a home. Our two sons came along shortly and I became a stay-at-home mom – Girl Scouts, Little League, CCD, you name it....this was my life.

At some point I decided to take a job at JCPenney, answering phones working nights. My husband and I always believed one of us should be with the kids at home so I thought working nights would be best. I was exposed to my first computer at this job and decided I had to have one at home – it was a Commodore 64! Customer service can be a tough job, but I enjoyed being on the phones and it was there that I really learned a lot about people. Speaking to people on the phone is a lot different than speaking to them face to face. I loved to engage in conversation with all kinds of people and I guess JCPenney thought that was a great idea too, because I could usually make a good sales pitch following these conversations, and it showed in my sales!

During this time, I also became a district chair for the East Hartford Democratic Committee - tasked with making politicians. My life picked up pace when a friend asked me to come to the State Capitol in 1992 as a legislative aide for four representatives. This was the year the income tax had passed. Three of the reps I worked for were for the income tax and one was opposed. Answering the phones was interesting,

depending on who I was answering for I had to assume that representative's position on the tax!

As soon as the income tax became law my representative wanted out. The resistance to this had taken a toll on many in the legislature including personal threats to representatives. I was now tasked with finding someone to run for that rep's seat. The Democratic community looked around and we thought we had found someone, but when that person declined – I asked who can we put forward who will win? The committee said "You!" They wanted me to run and I thought I would not win, but come election night I remember standing outside the polls in the pouring rain when a person walked up



to me to have their picture taken with me. I thought wow does that mean I really am winning? I beat my opponent with 56% of the vote and I was off to the General Assembly!

I enjoyed making policy – for 13 years I was in the House and served as Deputy Majority Leader and Deputy Speaker. I loved those years – I learned to deal with all sorts of issues as you really must be a jack of all trades in that position, but I did have a lot more input. Goodwin College came to me when I was in the legislature and talked about a possible campus on the riverfront here. We worked hard to make this happen and look where we are today. Through all this, I needed to be absolutely sure of two things; where I stood on the death penalty and abortion rights. I also learned to never let anyone know what

is important to me in the General Assembly – they will use it!

These experiences helped me to be who I am. After 13 years, I had opposed the Speaker and at that same time the mayor of East Hartford was running for a senate seat. Friends rallied me once again to please think about running for mayor of East Hartford. I did think about it and realized I would no longer be making policy but now administering it. So, I ran for mayor.

This was also the time that I found out I had cancer which was a pivotal point in my life. In politics, most of this is really not important compared to life. Family is important, who you are is important. I knew I had quite



a battle ahead to survive this but at the same time my husband was asking if we could prepare the letters to everyone in the event of my win on election night. I asked him to hold off until we were sure everything worked out. After the surgery, I came to in the recovery room and the first thing my husband said was, 'We're mailing the letters!' I knew then I was going to be OK!

Being the mayor of East Hartford was a demanding job, I will not lie. I never left the house without a pad and pencil. East Hartford is fortunate to have a strong form of government which prepared me wonderfully for my next career step. In 2010, I was attending a fundraiser for Governor Dannel Malloy when he said to me, 'I will be giving you a call next week.' He followed up with that call and asked me to be the Commissioner of the Department of Motor Vehicles. I thought to

myself, 'well...I have a motor vehicle license?!' I loved that job – I loved the people at DMV. Believe me, no one has a tougher job than the employees in those customer service windows at DMV. At DMV we made 1,500 changes and we began the computerized system overhaul.

In late 2014, Commissioner DeFronzo announced he was retiring and the Governor came to me again. He asked me to take the helm of the Department of Administrative Services. I told him if I go there I want to see changes, and he said to me, 'Don't be afraid to make changes!' He had two priorities: straighten out Human Resources and School Construction. It has been three years since I came to DAS and in that time we have really overhauled School Construction. We have avoided a cost of over \$1 billion and reduced the staff of that team from 13 employees to 8. We developed standards in guidelines and now communities can work out their solutions online.

This past fall we launched JobAPs, the new approach to hiring. What used to take up to six months and a mountain of paper to hire one employee is now accomplished in 30-45 days. Plus, applicants are now able to simply go online to email their application and upload supporting documentation. The state workforce is aging – at DAS 65% of the employees are over 50, 5% are over 70. We need

to entice young people to come to work for the state. Because of these changes we are coming in 17% under budget and we have been able to accomplish more with 15% less staff.

In closing, I have just two thoughts for the women who build in this audience. 1) Hire for attitude – you can always teach someone to do a job, but you cannot fix attitude. 2) Fire for just cause. Do not hesitate-others will take notice and pay attention to your policies."

Commissioner Currey then closed her talk by saying to this all-woman audience, "You know, DAS is a predominantly female agency, although we do have a few good men!"

# New Online Bidding Process for State Construction Projects

From a DAS press release February 2, 2018

## NEW PAPERLESS PROCESS BEGINS IN FEBRUARY

The Department of Administrative Services is excited to announce a new online bidding process for its Design-Bid-Build Construction Projects. These types of projects are the traditional delivery methods for state construction projects and involve a design phase with an architect consultant, followed by a construction phase with a construction contractor. This new process will be for bids in the construction phase.

This new process began February 1, 2018. Solicitation responses, or “bids”, will be submitted electronically via the state’s BizNet IT network. Applicants will need to have a BizNet Account to participate and is free to users.

Currently the bid process is a paper-driven process which can be inefficient or burdensome for both the contractors and the State.

Commencing February 1, bidders will log into BizNet, download, complete, upload and submit the bid documents electronically. Bids will no longer be submitted or accepted in hard copy paper format. Detailed instructions on the process and how to submit bids are available on the Adobe PDF File DAS website. Solicitation responses can be updated until the day and time of the solicitation closing. Submitted bids cannot be viewed by any other bidder until after the bid opening. The bid opening will also occur electronically and, once opened, all bids will then be available for viewing.

As the system comes online, DAS recommends that bidders prepare and submit their bids with ample time before the bid due date and time.

“This online bidding process is a modern, cost effective and paperless process,” said DAS Commissioner Melody Currey. “DAS continues to modernize its systems to meet the demands of our customers by using technology to help them manage their business needs more efficiently.”

## American Cancer Society Daffodil Days by John McKay



The DAS Daffodil Days fundraiser for the American Cancer Society was another success this year. Organized by DAS Procurement’s **Linda LoSchiavo**, the event raised **\$1,136**.

Thanks so much to all those that purchased daffodils, donated daffodils to cancer patients in local hospitals or made donations to the American Cancer Society. Also, thanks to Cheryl Baruffi for helping with donations at BEST, 55 Farmington Avenue.

### Totals:

40 bunches of daffodils  
19 Potted Mini-Daffodils  
\$26 in additional donations

# *The American Institute of Architects elevates (DAS') Kermit Thompson to the College of Fellows Construction Projects*

*From a DAS press release February 2, 2018*

The 2018 Jury of Fellows from the American Institute of Architects (AIA) elevated 152 member-architects to its prestigious College of Fellows, an honor awarded to members who have made significant contributions to the architecture profession.

This year, DAS' Kermit Thompson of the Office of School Construction Grants and Review is included in this prestigious college.

"We are extremely proud and impressed with Kermit's appointment to the College of Fellows," said DAS Commissioner Melody Currey. "His dedication, skill and commitment to his profession have led to this appointment and I congratulate him on this notable achievement."

The Office of School Construction Grants and Review is responsible for the grant administration of all Connecticut public school construction projects seeking authorization for a State grant commitment. The Office of School Construction Grants and Review actively serves the 169 Connecticut municipalities, 17 Regional School Districts and 6 Regional Educational Service Centers in the project application process.

Office of School Construction Grants and Review Director Kostas Diamantis said, "Kermit brings his successful and lengthy experience as an architect to our schools for the benefit of children. His leadership in his field has elevated school construction to an art form."

The fellowship program was developed to elevate those architects who have achieved a standard of excellence in the profession and made a significant contribution to architecture and society on a national level. Prospective candidates have demonstrated influence in at least one of the following categories:

- Promoted the aesthetic, scientific, and practical efficiency of the profession;
- Advanced the science and art of planning and building by advancing the standards of architectural education, training or practice;
- Coordinated the building industry and the profession of architecture through leadership in the AIA or other related professional organizations; or
- Advanced the living standards of people through an improved environment.

The stringent requirements result in only three percent of the AIA's more than 91,000 members being recognized as fellows. Currently, there are 3,425 living fellows globally.

The fellows will be honored at a ceremony on June 22 at the AIA Conference on Architecture 2018 in New York City.

# Commissioner Currey Receives a Special Honor



On Wednesday, March 28, the East Hartford Rotary Foundation held their annual Paul Harris Dinner for members and guests to honor three outstanding citizens of East Hartford.

Paul Harris Committee Chairman Jim Watts introduced this year's three Paul Harris recipients, George Agnelli, Mary Martin and Melody Currey who was named a Paul Harris Fellow in appreciation of tangible and significant assistance given for the furtherance of better understanding and friendly relations among peoples of the world.

Each of the honorees gave a short speech thanking the Rotary for the honor and introducing their table of guests.

Congratulations, Commissioner!

# DAS is Looking Lean!



Dan Dion, Joe Giliberto, and Melissa Marzano (*shown left*) attended the Lean Showcase event at the State Capitol on Wednesday, March 14 to represent the Lean process that the Procurement Division conducted in July 2017. During that process DAS Procurement identified opportunities to streamline state contracting.

“The Lean event was very well-organized with a steady flow of visitors throughout the duration.” said Dan. “It was refreshing to have the chance to speak to those interested in the Lean process and to describe what DAS is doing to better assist our customers. Most questions received were regarding a new e-sourcing solution that will replace or enhance our current system. Stay tuned as the request for proposal has been issued and is under evaluation!”

The Procurement team felt it was great to have the opportunity to represent the department and have the chance to see what other state agencies are doing to be more efficient while showing off their own.



Sharing a booth was the Statewide Human Resources team of Mike Cosgrove, Kathy DeBoer, Heather Tweeddale, Margaret Hackett, and Director Nick Hermes (*shown left*). Heather reported, “We don’t have an exact number but there was a fairly constant flow of visitors. We spoke to both state employees as well as members of the public.”

Their busy booth saw many visitors come through interested in learning more about the new JobAps, the Executive Branch’s Online Employment Center website, and asked several questions about the display. They were able to use a laptop to show individuals the new state hiring application and how to use it. Most people thought it was really simple to navigate and happy to see the process modernized.

When asked if they were receiving feedback Heather responded, “The feedback was very positive. We were surprised how many individuals have actually already used the system and how familiar they were with our Online Employment Center. A few director level state employees had great things to say about the referral question feature which helped them to whittle down large recruitments, but also have some questions answered prior to the interview.”

As with any new system implementation, there were questions from applicants learning the new process. Kathy DeBoer was on deck to troubleshoot those questions.

They noted that some people weren’t aware of the new JobAps and were very happy to see a demo!

# The Red Cross Needs Your Help

On Wednesday, March 14 Jeff Beckham of the Office of the Commissioner received an email congratulating him on an important milestone:



“It is our honor to congratulate you on reaching your 10 gallon milestone. Your 80 lifetime donations have helped make a difference in the lives of many who you may never know.

We are happy to present this digital milestone badge to you as a symbol of your dedication to helping save lives. Share it with pride. Show everyone you're a #DonorForLife. You've earned it.

*from: The American Red Cross”*

This achievement did not happen overnight. Jeff had a few thoughts about his 10-gallon milestone:

**When did you begin to donate blood – at what age?** In December 1990, at the age of 27, I began work at the General Assembly as a legislative attorney. Someone was recruiting staff to donate during an upcoming blood drive and they told me it was a policy to encourage employees to donate as a public service and that I could donate during work hours. So in the spirit of public service and because it was an hour break out of my work day, I did it. Would I have done it if they told me I had to take personal time? In all candor, probably not. How many years? My 80th donation was at the drive here at 450 Columbus a couple of weeks ago. I am now 54, so a little over 27 years.

**Did something personal drive you to be so diligent about giving blood?** I was able to do it, I got time off from work to

do it and I did not mind the donation process, although I don't look as the needle goes in - I don't love that part. Over the years, as the number of gallons increased, it did give me a sense of doing my part to help out. I believe that we all need to contribute to society in some way. This is one small way for me to do that.

**I am assuming you have given every time you are eligible since you have worked for the state....** You can give every 56 days, I think, but no, I have not given at the maximum rate. Probably two or three times a year on average. Some years I have been busier than others, sometimes I have had to miss appointments and reschedule for the next drive.

**Any words of wisdom to people who do not donate but qualify to donate?** It's not for everyone, for medical or other reasons, but if you're able, it's a relatively painless and easy way to make a difference. The need is always there and you or someone you care about may need blood someday. The Red Cross folks are good at their job and they take good care of you. And, oh yeah, there's free snacks.

The next blood drive will be held May 30 and May 31 at 450 Columbus Boulevard. An email will be sent out before this date for donors to set up appointments.

To find out if you are eligible and learn more about the donation process or if you are already considering becoming a donor and would like to complete your pre-reading and health history questions online using any computer, tablet or smartphone go to <http://www.redcross.org>.

Congratulations, Jeff!

# School Construction Bonding Hearing

by Kosta Diamantis and Nina Ritson

On Wednesday, March 14 Commissioner Currey and Director of Office of School Construction Grants & Review (OSCGR) Kosta Diamantis were questioned at the recent School Construction Bonding meeting along with Commissioner Dr. Dianna Wentzell of the State Department of Education (SDE). Legislators joined the panel to ask questions and discuss funding and the process for school construction projects.



From left to right Commissioner Dianna Wentzell, Commissioner Currey, and Kosta Diamantis

Commissioner Currey opened the discussion: "We have made many improvements in the last three years and have avoided over \$1 billion in excessive building costs through these changes. The School Building Advisory Council (SBPAC), created by Governor Malloy and chaired by Commissioner Currey, effectively created standards and guidelines to be used by consultants and districts when building or renovating our schools. The Office of School Construction Grants and Review has streamlined the process although having a greater hands-on approach with a reduced staff from 13 to eight. The office is also modernizing and enhancing its computer system allowing for greater efficiency and proceeding paperless."

Kosta Diamantis added, "Our office, along with the SDE and DESPP, ensures that limited resources in school security are

not overlapping. The School Safety Infrastructure Council (SSIC) meets to review applications seeking school security funding. Furthermore, OSCGR in partnership with DESPP require school districts to seek a review of security needs from DESPP and require those recommendations to be included in the scope of the project before us as a project. We do all we can to provide the security measures necessary and requested. The dilemma is not the original cost but rather the school district's difficulty in maintaining the system. Often a district must decide between books or a security camera."

The discussion spanned into questions about the magnet, charter schools and tech schools in which Commissioner Wentzell clarified that any work done to these schools must be approved through the State Department of Education first as it relates to their operation plan. All other approvals are from DAS/OSCGR.

Kosta emphasized how a new process has been implemented to review major projects seeking priority status. All applications and documentation are required to be submitted prior to placement on the priority list. All projects are reviewed by the team for compliance, and costing in relation to the district's needs. When all aspects of the project are found to be satisfactory, the project is placed on the priority list. This process greatly enhances the quality and reduces the cost of the project. It further reduces the amounts necessary for funding. Construction must begin within two years from commitment.

After a long range of questions from Senator Fonfara about a specific school in his district that was closing due to low enrollment, it was clarified that school closings and academic programming happen at the local government level, not the state level. Commissioner Currey and Kosta responded, "School districts are required to review their entire district for consolidation where possible. We simply must right-size schools and districts."

Commissioner Wentzell also added, " We have come a long way from where we were four to five years ago. We look to the city's plan when approving magnet schools and we realize we have a lot further to go."

# 2018 Black History Celebration

by Nina Ritson



*Top: Deputy Commissioner  
Toni Fatone  
Middle: Deputy  
Commissioner  
Bud Salemi  
Below: Mary Taylor  
sings the Negro  
National Anthem*



On February 16, Jason Bowsza of the Department of Agriculture, Master of Ceremonies, opened the 17th Annual Black Heritage Celebration honoring the life of entertainer Lena Horne who appeared on this year's United States Post Office commemorative Black Heritage stamp. He thanked the committee and commended their hard work, especially Mary Taylor of DAS Leasing and Property Transfer, for organizing this event. And Mary, once again, kicked off the event by singing the Negro National Anthem.

Kevin Sullivan, Commissioner of Revenue Services (DRS) offered a moment of silence to recognize the events in Parkland, Florida which occurred the day before. "It is hard to be silent after yesterday's events in Florida and perhaps we should stand for a moment of protest instead. I think Lena would approve."

With that, the attending Commissioners each spoke briefly about this year's recipient, Lena Horne. Michael Lambert spoke for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), because Commissioner Klee was not available. "We honor the legacy of Lena's family. Lena refused roles that were disrespectful and for DEEP, like Horne, we should leave the world a better place than we found it."

Kevin Sullivan followed by adding, "Her beauty, style and voice were matched by her resolute voice for justice. She was a four-time Grammy winner and amongst her numerous other awards she had the distinction of being blacklisted during the McCarthy period."

Steven K. Reviczky, Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture shared the words of Governor Dannel Malloy in his opening remarks last week, "We need to protect survivors of domestic violence. These are tumultuous times and we need everyone to speak up."

DAS Deputy Commissioner Fatone filled in for Commissioner Currey who was at a meeting. She praised Lena Horne but also shared names of other African-Americans who should also be remembered for breaking down barriers. "I am so pleased to have all employees here at 450 Columbus connect with the United States Post Office to honor Lena Horne who is a role model for so many," she said. "Today is a day to reflect on the past and the present. We have celebrated so many who overcame discrimination,



the list of names we easily remember, Martin Luther King, Shirley Chisholm. But there are many lesser-known people who we celebrate, too. Every day, I drive by the large billboard on Homestead Avenue celebrating Dr. Mae Jemison, a doctor who become the first African-American astronaut and first black woman in space. And Benjamin Oliver Davis who became the first African-American general in the United States Air Force or Daniel Hale Williams, who was the second surgeon to successfully perform open heart surgery and who also founded a hospital with interracial staff.”

Commissioner Wentzell spoke to the audience, not as a commissioner, but as a “proud Connecticut teacher who stands by her belief of how important it is for all children to learn the history of our country – especially of the struggles for African-Americans and their achievements. Lena Horne’s experience was in the arts – all children should connect with the arts in their school and every child should have access to a top quality education.”

Deputy Commissioner Karen Perham-Lippman of the Department of Consumer Protection then officially dedicated this year’s stamp on the big TV screens.

She said, “Lena Horne was a pioneer who risked everything to speak out against injustice. She united forces with Eleanor Roosevelt at the end of World War II to end discrimination against Japanese-Americans and she used her star power to shine the spotlight on ignored injustices. Consumer Protection in no way compares to Lena Horne, but our compassionate employees fight for the same principles – working for a fair environment. We should all ponder what we can do to make this world a better place.”

The program then moved to a feature presentation by the cast members of Mary Taylor’s own production, *From the Boat to Obama and Beyond*.

With pianist John Colby hammering the ivory, narrator Beverly Rohlehr shared



*Top: Attendees join Mary Taylor singing the Negro National Anthem*

*Middle: Nia-Amora Morgan*

*Below: Narrator Beverly Rohlehr*





a percussive keyboard journey of the evolution of music from the early 1920's classical to funky to the Jelly Roll Morton considered the Father of Jazz, then blues and ragtime ending in boogie-woogie which is regarded as the beginning of rock and roll. John Colby played tunes beginning with Scot Joplin, whose music began at a time when it was common for the household to own a piano because there were no records, electronic devices or radio stations to enjoy music. Music was played live! Nia-Amora Morgan, the youngest member of the acting couple brought two powerful presentations..... *Imagine Me* and *Just Like You!*



*Top: Commissioner Currey is presented an award*

*Middle: Kemet Maroon*

*Below: Commissioner Sullivan is presented an award*

The program closed with the blessing of the food by "Father" Bud Salemi, Deputy Commissioner of DAS, who shared that although he is not an ordained minister his mother always wished he would become a priest one day. He said, "We are given gifts - share these gifts and make peace. May joy and peace come to us all."



## People are talking..... by Cindy Rusczyk

Chief State's Attorney Kevin T. Kane expressed his "sincere gratitude and appreciation to BEST for their invaluable assistance provided to the Division of Criminal Justice in the preparation and public release of the Report of the State's Attorney for the Judicial District of Waterbury Concerning the Death of Jayson Negron in the City of Bridgeport on May 9, 2017. In particular, the Division of Criminal Justice wishes to acknowledge **Angela Taetz** and **Christopher Sheehan** for going above and beyond the call of duty in assisting us with addressing technical issues and ensuring that the report and its critical audio, video and photographic exhibits were readily accessible to the public via the internet. As a result of their efforts, the Division was able to provide transparency to the public with regard to the State's Attorney's investigation and findings regarding this sensitive matter. Our sincere gratitude and appreciation to all at BEST who contributed to this endeavor."

Department of Transportation (DOT) Chief of Staff Cheryl Malerba sent the following message of praise to BEST employees **Paul Nicholas** and **Denis Richard**: "Denis and Paul, on behalf of myself, Deputy Commissioner Barry and Commissioner Redeker, we would like to thank you for successfully completing the recent telecommunications cabling upgrade at the DOT Headquarters Building. We truly appreciate your efforts to coordinate and work collaboratively with one another on the oversight of what was clearly a long, challenging and potentially disruptive project. In the end, there were very few people at Headquarters that were even aware that such an important upgrade was occurring. Our sincere thanks to you both for a job well done."

Leonard Welch received this message of praise from Dawn Barrett-Walsh from the Department of Agriculture regarding service from **Jose Baez**; "I just wanted to write you a quick note about Jose! He is one extremely helpful, smart, kind and very patient man! I truly appreciate all of his help but especially yesterday and today when we received a new copier/printer from A & A Office. Jose has fixed the issues we experienced. We were very 'frazzled' and Jose took care of us – BEFORE 9AM!!!! We are very lucky to have him around; along with **Anna Tara** and **Brian Halloran** also. I don't want to leave them out but Jose

*Each issue we publish letters of praise that we have received about DAS employees going above and beyond. If you have received great service or would like to write about a DAS employee going the extra mile, email [Cindy.Rusczyk@ct.gov](mailto:Cindy.Rusczyk@ct.gov) Don't be shy - good work deserves a good word- DAS employees are the best!*

was the one to rescue us when we panicked so he is standing out in front today!"

Angie Fitzpatrick from the Department of Economic and Community Development "wanted to pass on some good words about **Angie Fuggetta**" to manager Nina Ritson. "She is always so professional, flexible and helpful. It is a pleasure to deal with her."

Department of Transportation (DOT) Chief of Staff Cheryl Malerba wrote a letter of praise to Commissioner Currey regarding **Robin Dawkins-Khan**, Reimbursement Analyst from Collection Services. "When I contacted Ms. Dawkins-Khan I found her to be warm, thoughtful and considerate. She

was also well informed and communicated her role and what steps needed to occur to get through the required process involving her office. Having never been in this role before, I must tell you how much I appreciated her demeanor and her treatment of me. While still grieving it is difficult to process a will through probate, settle affairs, sell property, etc. All I have wanted is guidance to help me through this and Ms. Dawkins-Khan is a fabulous example of compassion and education combined. I wanted to share with you my experience with her. It is something to be very proud of and represents your agency in the best possible light under very stressful and trying circumstances. It is also a tribute to the standards maintained by you and your management team. My sincere appreciation and thanks."

Tom Kazmierczak, IT Manager from the Department of Correction sent the following message to **Gerard Johnson** and **Bob Cosgrove** regarding the Router replacement and Groton DR site: "I want to THANK YOU and your team" **Michael Armentano, Jacques Casella, Lauren Clarke, Boris Gorfinkel, Bruce Heal, Mark Jacques, Caleb MacDonald, Tony Matthews, George Mederios, Phillip Nassetta, James O'Neill, Ray Picard, Timothy Searles** and **Randy Woodfield** "for assisting DOC with the router replacement on all our sites, getting DOC onto B-Top network and all the work done for the DR site in Groton. It was a large undertaking and I truly appreciate your teams substantial time commitment to get these tasks accomplished. It puts us in a good spot to host the new in-house applications, EHR and

OMIS, and our users DO appreciate the new network speeds. Thanks again and have a great weekend.”

Nina Ritson wrote to Carol Wilson “to share how thankful I am for **Janet DelGreco** who really came to bat for us last week at the Print/Mail shop on two separate issues. The first was with the folks from Neopost! We were having difficulty with the completed installation of recently rented equipment and it seemed that Neopost was taking longer time than was acceptable – as we were losing money awaiting completion. Janet helped me call a meeting of not just the sales rep but the vice president and general manager and district sales manager and she reminded them that this issue was now a NASPO issue as they had not delivered what they quoted on which was now a problem. She was on her game, knew the contract inside and out and called out their shortcomings swiftly. By the end of the meeting we now had a solid schedule of deliverables and Neopost has since been very responsive toward remedying this issue. She held them accountable!!! In another matter, I came to Janet shortly after our **Fiery** front engine to the Konica production color copier had been identified by BEST as having that WannaCry virus. Jose Baez shut the machine down to separate it from the network. Through his investigation he identified that the equipment had been not been properly installed from the very beginning, dating back to 2015. Since installation, the device had not received a single update, patch or download and it turns out 149 had been issued to prevent attacks through the network. The vendor claimed this was our responsibility to repair and was insisting on charging DAS because they do not handle network issues. With Jose’s documentation of the improper original install, Janet was prepared to defend our position with the vendor and pursue the repair at their expense, not DAS. We are now repaired and updated and running. She did not back down - she is awesome! Thank you!”

Carol Wilson thanked Nina Ritson “for taking the time to share your positive experience with **Janet DelGreco**. She is a gem and represents the accountability, professionalism, integrity and teamwork that we expect of all of our staff. Thank you Janet for your diligent customer service, thorough knowledge of the contracts and ability to effectively influence our supplier base during difficult times. Nice work!”

Nina Ritson wrote to Leonard Welch of BEST “to say how thankful I am for **Jose Baez**, who is the *McGyver* of Tech Support – he is just incredibly good at his job and very willing to resolve problems! We had an issue that began on Friday, February 23 when our front engine to the Konica production color copier had been identified by BEST as having the *WannaCry* virus. Jose came in over the weekend and shut the machine down to immediately sever it from the network. He

then went to work at what he does so beautifully – sleuthing to discover exactly what happened and why. Through his investigation he identified that this equipment had not been properly installed by the vendor dating back to 2015. Since installation, the device had never once received an update, patch or download and, as it turns out, 149 updates had been issued to prevent attacks through the network. The vendor insisted on charging DAS for this repair because they said network issues are not part of the contract. With Jose’s documentation of the improper original install, DAS was able to defend its position that this incident occurred because of their failure to meet the contractual obligation to properly install. Konica then agreed to absorb the cost to repair and proceeded to install a patch ....that did not work. Again, Jose came to the rescue by diving in and to discover what the problem was and he then installed the patch properly. He also now had to allow the 149 backed up updates (dating back three years) to finally come through. This took a couple days, but he was in good spirits about it. During this time he diligently kept checking this device and monitoring. Once this process completed thanks to Jose, we were up and running again – virus free. Jose Baez is the most valuable employee in this building! Please take good care of him!”

Antoinette Alphonse from Statewide Workers’ Compensation “would like to express” her “appreciation for the great service that was provided and further reinforce our strong belief that DAS has some awesome employees! Special thanks to the **DAS Print Shop Team** for printing and folding our brochures for the Workers’ Compensation Symposium held on March 9th. With very little advance notice, we reached out for assistance and everyone came through making our event a great success. Fantastic job!! Just when we were putting the finishing touches on our Program, our copier/printer broke creating a mad dash to put our packages for participants together. I would like to express my appreciation to **Cindy Rusczyk** for coming to our aide when our copier/printer broke the day before our Symposium. You were gracious to make copies of our power point presentation and it is most appreciated. Thanks for all you do!”

Sandy Martin of SNET wrote to Joe Cassidy and **Nancy Dimitruck**, “Thank you! Nancy you have the best service of any government agency I have ever dealt with. The Governor should give you an award. Thanks so much for your help!”

# Retirements: It's Been Fun, But Places to Go, People to See and Things to Do!



Joining the Commissioner to receive their Proclamations from the Governor, a plaque and letter from the Commissioner are:  
Clockwise from the top: Keith Anderson; Kurian Kurian; Mary Goodhouse; Leonard Williams; David Busanet



**Keith Anderson**



**Peter McCann**



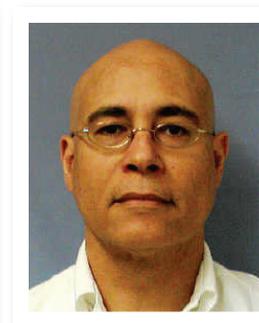
**Nancy Pierce**



**Shanta Kumar**



**Joseph Olender**



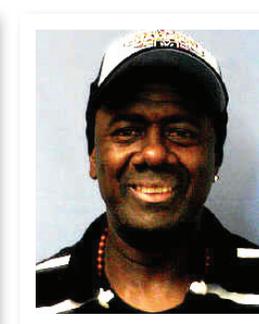
**David Busanet**



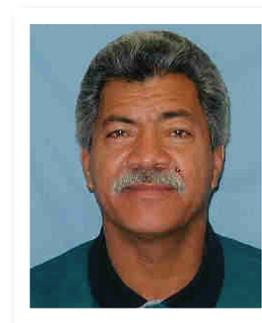
**Kurian Kurian**



**Mary Goodhouse**



**Leonard Williams**



**Virgilio Santos**



**James Grochowski**



**Brian Dillon**



**Jonathan Norton**

## COMINGS and GOINGS

### RETIREMENTS

**Keith Anderson** –

*Statewide Human Resources - February*

**Peter McCann** –

*Division of Construction Services – February*

**Nancy Pierce** – *BEST - April*

**Shanta Kumar** –

*Statewide Human Resources – March*

**Joseph Olender** – *SmART Unit – March*

**David Busanet** –

*Division of Construction Services – April*

**Kurian Kurian** – *Business Office – April*

**Mary Goodhouse** –

*State Properties Review Board – April*

**Leonard Williams** –

*Facilities Management – April*

**Virgilio Santos** – *Business Office – April*

**James Grochowski** – *BEST – April*

### TRANSFER

**Brian Dillon** – *State Properties Review Board*

### LEFT STATE SERVICE

**Jonathan Norton** – *Office of School Construction*

*Grants & Review*



**Shantelle Varrs**



**Elizabeth Stone**



**Jacqueline Medina**



**Michael Fuschi**



**Margaret Hackett**



**Roger Martin**



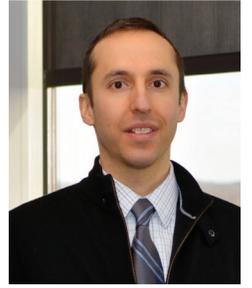
**Sarah Black**



**Diane Benedetto**



**Lisa Annis**



**Nicholas Ross**



**Juan Hernandez**



**Rachel Fein**



**Kevin McFarland**

**NEW EMPLOYEES**

**Shantelle Varrs** – *Business Office*

**Elizabeth Stone** – *Collection Services*

**Jacqueline Medina** – *Collection Services*

**Michael Fuschi** –

*Division of Construction Services*

**Margaret Hackett** - *Statewide Human Resources*

**Roger Martin** – *State Fire Marshal's Office*

**Sarah Black** – *Collection Services*

**Diane Benedetto** – *Statewide Human Resources*

**Lisa Annis** – *Statewide Human Resources*

**Nicholas Ross** – *Construction Services*

**Juan Hernandez** – *Print, Mail & Courier*

**Rachel Fein** – *Statewide Human Resources*

**Kevin McFarland** – *Properties & Facilities Mgmt*