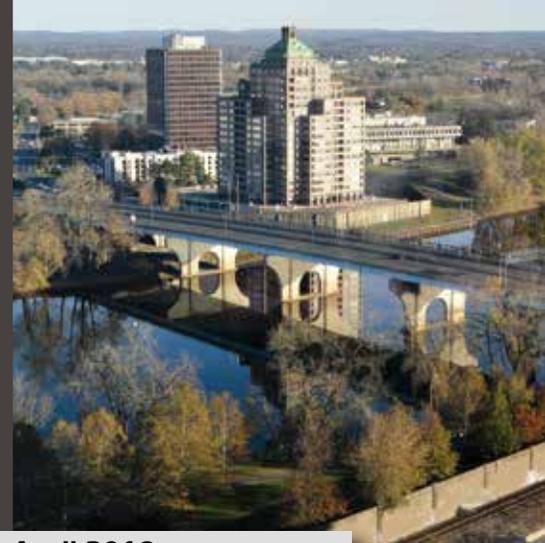


THE DAS TIMES



April 2019

DAS “TOWN HALL”

By Jeff Beckham

On February 1, newly sworn in Commissioner Josh Geballe introduced himself to DAS employees in a “town hall” meeting in the plaza-level atrium at 450 Columbus Boulevard.

He first paid tribute to out-going Commissioner Melody Currey and thanked her for her many years of service to the State and presented her with a glass trophy commemorating her service.

Commissioner Geballe comes to state service after 18 years in the corporate sector. After grad school he went to work for IBM, where he spent 11 years before leaving for a small start-up company that provided IT services and applications for science data and research. The work supported the deployment of health care therapies to the marketplace. The company was sold to a larger scientific instrument and supply firm.

Since leaving that last firm, Josh spent some time consulting and teaching before

being tapped by Governor Lamont for DAS.

Josh is a native of Branford, Connecticut but now makes his home in Guilford with his wife, Allison, a psychology professor at the University of New Haven, and their two children and two dogs.

In his remarks to the assembled staff, Commissioner Geballe said that he had been favorably impressed with the leadership team whom he had met so far and was aware of the efforts made recently to cope with diminishing resources.

Josh laid out three themes or goals that he will pursue during his tenure.



Newly sworn DAS Commissioner Josh Geballe gathers his DAS team in the Plaza of 450 Columbus Boulevard for a Meet and Greet presentation.



First is the role the agency needs to play in supporting Connecticut's growth and driving development in the state. This will be demonstrated in the services we provide to individuals and businesses and the impression that we leave with the public. By providing new and improved assistance and customer service, reducing costs and focusing on our people and their talent, we will help create conditions for economic success in our state.

Second is continuous innovation and improvement in the services DAS provides. He wants us to rethink all our processes and systems and see how we can do things better, looking at other states and the private sector for best practices and emerging strategies and tactics. He wants the agency to take some risks and "lean in" a little more. He said he will take the blame for any failures and will share the credit for any successes. But he wants us to be courageous and bold.

The last goal was assuring that the State provides a rewarding career experience for all of its workforce. The new Commissioner wants to attract and retain the highest quality talent and provide support for them as they deliver the highest quality services.

Taking questions from the audience, Geballe touched on the need for improved IT architecture and resources to bring that online. He is preparing to bring a focused effort and relentless drive to obtain those resources and deploy those improvements during his tenure.

A question came regarding the leadership associate program and mentoring programs. The Commissioner indicated his enthusiasm for doing more in that area. As a teacher he is aware of a desire among young people to bring their passion and talent into public service and he is very interested in exploring ways to do more to facilitate that.

To a question about procurement, Josh emphasized the Governor's commitment to doing more to maximize the market power of the State and its municipalities to drive down costs in the procurement of goods and services by government, thereby freeing up more resources to be available for programming.

The subject of LEAN came up and the Commissioner expressed interest in learning more about that system for eliminating waste in business processes. He indicated an awareness of hits and misses in that specific type of internal review but was interested in learning about anything that would find efficiencies and facilitate better and faster business processes.

Finally, a question about his availability to talk more to individual employees resulted in a general offer to meet with anyone anytime, although he encouraged everyone to work with their own management in conjunction with any contact directed at him.



Newly sworn DAS Commissioner Josh Geballe presents Commissioner Melody Currey a glass plaque thanking her for her years of service to DAS, DMV, the Legislature and as Mayor of East Hartford.



DAS WELCOMES NOEL PETRA AS DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

By Jeff Beckham

Deputy Commissioner Noel Petra brings 23 years of experience in private sector real estate and construction. As a senior leader at a large construction company and an executive at two real estate development firms he has been directly involved in the acquisition, development, construction, and management of over a million square feet of multifamily, mixed-use, institutional, healthcare, and hospitality projects.

Noel holds a Bachelor of Science from the University of Connecticut and is a former Board Member of Emerge Connecticut and artSpace, both located in New Haven. He has been a member of the Associated General Contractors of America, the Urban Land Institute, and an associate member of the American Institute of Architects.

Noel's direct reports include:

- State Chief Architect
- State Building Inspector, Director of Facilities Design, Construction and Building Services
- Office of School Construction Grants and Review
- Construction Services Legal Team
- Leasing and Property Transfer
- Several Assistant Directors of Project Management Teams
- State Fleet Operations
- Properties and Facilities Management

Please join us in welcoming Noel to the team!



The Real Estate and Construction Services group will bring together several DAS teams responsible for our tangible assets, providing more opportunities to collaborate and innovate across the numerous related services we provide to state government, local school boards, private industry and the general public.

On Tuesday evening, March 12, DAS participated in the Joint Dinner of the Design and Construction Industry hosted by AIAConnecticut held at the Aqua Turf. Deputy Commissioner Noel Petra (far right) addressed the group of 184 professionals representing over 30 construction-related associations. Also attending from DAS were (from left to right) Nick Ross, Joe Cassidy, David Barkin, and Sherry Petruccione.

Hosted by AIA Connecticut and presented by Robinson and Cole, this was an evening of collegiality and relationship building. The annual event is an opportunity for members of the participating professional associations to network. Each year they enlist a keynote speaker to discuss what is happening in our state and the effect on the design and construction industry.



WILLARD-DILORETO COMPLEX AT CENTRAL CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY (CCSU) RIBBON CUTTING

By John McKay

Visitors to the CCSU campus can wave goodbye to the flurry of construction work that has been underway at Willard and DiLoreto halls. DAS, along with CCSU administration hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony in February announcing the building is open and ready for business.

The \$63.6 million project to gut and renovate the two 50-year-old adjacent buildings was completed on time and on budget.

DAS' State Architect David Barkin spoke at the ribbon cutting highlighting the achievements of the work done as well as listing out the amount of materials used to construct the beautiful new building.

Barkin said, "The project's scope included a 30,000-foot addition, technology upgrades, HVAC improvements, and a new ADA-accessible elevator. The addition provides space for approximately 20 classrooms and several offices. It will also physically connect the two buildings on all four floors with common-area atriums."

"Along with several new high-tech classrooms, there will be wonderful new spaces for students to gather, work on group projects, or just socialize. The Dean's Office for the Ammon College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences also will be housed there, along with some of its academic departments, including English, World Languages, Journalism, and Philosophy," said CCSU President Zulma R. Toro.

The building also will serve as a "one-stop shop" for student services, including registration, financial aid, the bursar's office, Student Wellness Services, and The Learning Center.

The project is part of the CSUS 2020 long-term capital improvement initiative.



DAS CONDUCTS EMPLOYMENT OUTREACH

By Alicia Nuñez

The University of New Haven's Career Development Center hosted the Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) Career Fair on Thursday, February 21, 2019. The STEM Career Fair is designed for all University of New Haven students majoring in science, technology, engineering and math fields. However, any student interested in working in any of these fields were also invited to attend, regardless of major. A variety of employers were in attendance to meet, network with, and potentially hire talented students and job seekers for their internships, co-ops, and full-time positions.

Students were encouraged to attend the STEM Career Fair to identify employment opportunities, expand their network, polish their interview skills, learn industry information, and gather information about employers.

The job fair was free. Participating agencies and employers included the Department of Administrative Services, the CT National Guard and the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI). In total 68 employers had booths at the event with over 475 diverse students and jobseekers in attendance.

Gary Chirgwin, Talent Acquisition Trainee, and Alicia Nuñez, Equal Employment Opportunity Director, were on hand to assist job seekers with information about obtaining a job with the State of Connecticut, completing a Master Application via JobAps, signing up for interest cards and navigating our new online employment center. The DAS representatives also informed attendees of the various social media sites that we use to advertise our job opportunities, Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.



March 20, 2019



.@conndas commissioner [@JoshGeballe]
meeting with #business, #smallbiz leaders during
#CTbizday at state Capitol this morning.





THE 2019
BLACK HERITAGE
CELEBRATION
BLACK MIGRATION:

Honoring African
Americans in Motion

February 21, 2019
By Nina Ritson





On Thursday, February 21, the Plaza level at 450 Columbus Boulevard was alive with the sounds of drums and the vibrations of dancers for the 2019 Black Heritage Celebration. Launching the event was Garfield Pillinar, moderator, who is currently the assistant principal at Wilbur Cross High School and was the 2013-2014 New Haven Teacher of the Year.

A Moment of Silence was offered by Colonel Alberto M. Higuera, who serves as a Revenue Services Agent. Commissioner Scott D. Jackson of the Department of Revenue Services then welcomed attendees and all sang the Negro National Anthem.

The program then kicked off with Sistah Auyango Yaa Asantewaa and the energetic drumming and dance of FriendZWorld Music.

Commissioner Jackson stated, "My father was born in Mechanicsville, SC and joined the navy on his mother's signature at the age of 17. At the time he thought the fight in Korea was better than the fight in the south Bronx which is where his family had just moved. He served 25 years and right before he passed away he said to me 'this is your world, you can do anything you want.' That hasn't always been true - there are dreams in this world and then the realities of this world."

Former State Senator and newly appointed Early Childhood Commissioner Beth Bye spoke of her memories of her grandfather in Virginia who she described as a racist. And to his surprise his daughter (Commissioner Bye's mother) welcomed her first grandchild - who was African-American!

Commissioner of the State Department of Education Diana Wentzell spoke of the value of good education for everyone then noted, "I am happy to have a Connecticut Educator emcee this event!"

continued





Newly appointed DAS Commissioner Josh Geballe said, “ I have only been here a short time, but I know now the wide range of tasks at DAS. No matter what the task is - it is our mission to help support opportunity and growth in jobs to our state. We want to establish the State of Connecticut as a fantastic place to work. Events like this are not only cool, but very important to recognize our heritage and what each person brings to the workplace.”

Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities (CHRO) Director Tanya Hughes said, “We are the oldest state civil rights entity in the nation! No one should come to work and feel as though they are not welcome. Get to know each other - that is how the walls come down - when we realize we are a lot like each other.”

The theme of the program was African Americans in Motion and this program kicked off in full motion with a LIVE Libation by Sistah Auyango Yaa Asantewaa and African drumming and dancing by FriendZWorld music leading to the United States Postal Service

stamp unveiling by Heather Marquis and Barbara Owens. This year’s commemorative stamp portrays the late entertainer Marvin Gaye.

Attendees were invited to stay for a panel discussion, poetry slam, more dance and circle of healing followed by a complimentary soul food lunch provided by Black-eyed Sally’s.

Congratulations to the Black Heritage Celebration team for putting together another very fine event!

March 5, 2019



ETHICS TRAINING

Regular training in state ethics laws is an important feature of our public employment environment. The Office of State Ethics visited DAS’ offices at 450 Columbus on March 5 for annual training on “Why Ethics Matter – Knowing the Limits”.

STEVE MCGIRR OFFERS AUTOMOBILE OWNERSHIP ADVICE

On Wednesday, January 23, Fleet Director Steve McGirr presented an informative class to UCONN Health Center students on how to maintain their vehicles to help prevent being taken by a repair shop. "This idea was sent to me in an email months ago from Christopher Bandish, Financial Aid Counselor at Student Services Center at UCONN Health in Farmington, when I was still located at Wethersfield as an assistant supervisor. I said yes, and on Wednesday, approximately 20 medical students learned a little more about cars. It wasn't just a presentation on how to repair your vehicle, but more on how to make sure the proper maintenance items are taken care of as well as how we actually drive our vehicles to avoid costly repairs. Two thirds of the battle is proper maintenance and good driving habits like paying attention to the road conditions."

"Lots of questions followed - I actually took maybe 30-40 questions," said McGirr, "good questions which led me to think about how important a class like this is for students. The class was in the large Massey Auditorium which had a drop down screen. I had prepared a PowerPoint presentation with about 25 slides for the evening which was quite helpful."

Steve received positive feedback from Student Services about the class and added, "I am very involved with Toastmasters – public speaking, and this was just the opportunity I had been looking for. The presentation was well-received and very helpful for those who attended, so I may just do this again in six months or so."



Fleet Director Steve McGirr addresses students at UCONN Health Center in Farmington.

March 12, 2019



AT THE CAPITOL

DAS Office of School Construction Grants & Review has saved CT a billion dollars in construction costs over the last few years with new procedures and guidance to local school districts renovating and constructing school facilities. <http://ct-n.com/ctnplayer>.

THE SILVER TSUNAMI: COPING WITH THE COMING PUBLIC SECTOR RETIREMENT BOOM

By Nina Ritson



DAS Commissioner Josh Geballe joins a panel of speakers including (from right to left) Nick Hermes, Statewide HR Director, John Russotto and Matthew Hart to speak about the Silver Tsunami at UConn's Hartford Campus.

On March 7, Commissioner Josh Geballe joined DAS Statewide Human Resources Director, Nick Hermes, to speak on a panel at the newly opened UConn campus. The subject? The impending Silver Tsunami: Coping with the Coming Public Sector Retirement Boom. Contrary to the opinion that state government is bloated, the reality is the size of government declined 16% by 2008 and an additional 11% during Governor Malloy's term. Today there are approximately 1,500 separations in state service per year. There are approximately 30,000 employees in the executive branch which does not include the Judicial branch, Legislative branch and Higher Education. By July 1, nearly 25% of the current workforce will be eligible for retirement and 29% will be over the age of 55. In addition, the SEBAC agreement negotiated in 2017 changed the COLA formula for retirees after July 1, 2022 so much so that it is anticipated that possibly 10,000 employees will leave state service in advance of that change – yes a silver tsunami! With their departure will go decades of institutional knowledge. We need to hire the right people with the right skills when this happens.

Commissioner Geballe noted, "There has been a lot of progress thanks to Nick Hermes' leadership." Nick went on to say, "we did not have an applicant tracking system until 2017, and we have heavily LEANed our processes to be like most other employers with the use of social media and the internet. Before, applying for a position with the traditional exam used to take 6-9 months – now the time it takes between applying for a job and starting work is about 6 – 8 weeks. We have focused the DAS website on attracting skilled and good employees and branding state employment as a desirable thing! We are getting tons of feedback and the tide is turning. Good skilled talent is beginning to look at us as an employer of choice. We offer diverse occupations, tons of mobility and we are a huge employer. We are doing more outreach with video to entice the hard to fill positions.

In the criminal justice fields, 54% of the workforce will retire by 2027. They are changing how they do business so that they can face this head-on and continue business. In particular, technology is changing how they do that business. Prosecutors are beginning to become experts in digital technology. Clerical support staff are no longer the traditional clerk – they need IT skill sets to do that job. Work can no longer be done the old fashioned way.”

Matthew Hart of the town of West Hartford spoke about the challenges he faces replacing:

- Police and fire dispatch personnel
- IT personnel
- Skilled trades (students are pushed to go to college after high school)
- Public safety and managers.

The discussion was followed by an in-depth Question and Answer session discussing what is next. Many great ideas were discussed, notably:

- Create pathway programs for young graduates bringing them directly into the workforce. Currently employers look for experience and bypass the fresh minds coming out of college.
- Non-traditional employment considers the other end of that spectrum-hiring retirees who most likely will not need benefits but certainly bring vast knowledge to the table.
- The employees entering the workforce, coined the ‘millennials’ are eager to fit suitable employment but they are also willing to compromise earnings to be able to work on something they are passionate about - working for a cause or a mission.

Commissioner Geballe said,“The media has bashed state employees for so long that it is difficult to get past the words bloated and privileged. We need to retrain the media and let them know we have a strong workforce and a great story to tell.”

March 11, 2019



Keeping you safe. DAS OEDM Fire Investigator training March 11 in Newington. Walk-through fire scenes to reinforce class lessons on consent and warrants, scene safety, fire pattern analysis, documenting the scene and interviewing.

March 12, 2019



AT THE CAPITOL

@ConnDAS @JoshGeballe speaks about HB 7385 streamlining state contract requirements and consolidating 7 affidavits. #businessfriendly #efficiency

113,033 LBS RECYCLED SINCE SEPTEMBER 2018

By John McKay

In today's world, recycling is taking a prominent role in office buildings like 450 Columbus Boulevard (450 CB).

Upon moving into 450 CB 2.5 years ago, a plan was devised to recycle as much material as possible and keep items from entering our local landfills.

From the beginning, Konover Commercial Corporation has worked with DAS Facilities to make 450 CB an example of how state offices can successfully recycle materials.

Konover continues to recycle, on average, approximately 62% of all material that leaves the facility. In discussing recycling with our contractor, some States are pursuing aggressive goals of up to 75% recycling compliance by the end of 2020. We are already ahead of the curve on this!



Trash / recycling ratios by weight for the months of September 2018 through February 2019 are as follows:

- **September 2018 – Trash – 7.02 tons, Recycling – 5.19 tons (57%/43%)**
- **October 2018 – Trash – 6.79 tons, Recycling – 4.33 tons (61%/39%)**
- **November 2018 – Trash – 6.74 tons, Recycling – 4.7 tons (59%/41%)**
- **December 2018 – Trash – 4.88 tons, Recycling – 3.26 tons (60%/40%)**
- **January 2019 – Trash – 7.75 tons, Recycling – 6.54 tons (54%/46%)**
- **February 2019 – Trash – 4.87 tons, Recycling – 1.92 tons (71%/29%)**

Adding in confidential recycling during the last 6-months, 450 Columbus Boulevard's recycling program has prevented a total of 56.52 tons (113,033 lbs.) of material from entering landfills.

ASPIRING LEADERS MARKS 11 YEARS OF TRAINING STATE MANAGERS

By John McKay



Aspiring Leaders, the State Executive Development Program, has hit the 11 year mark for improved training for state managers.

Sponsored by DAS and the Connecticut Training and Development Network (CTDN) the program gives managers the knowledge and confidence to manage their people and units with improved skills and abilities.

DAS Commissioner Josh Geballe gave the opening remarks and said he had seen similar programs at IBM. "You're here because someone believes in you and sees potential in your ability to lead. The state will be going through a lot of changes over the next few years and we're going to need you to be effective leaders for the future. This is a great class to improve your skills and break down the silos of state government. A real resource to take away from this class is the network you'll establish by working together. And that network doesn't end when the class is over. You'll always have those connections to use as a future resource."

Each Aspiring Leader participant selects a project to apply the skills learned in the program, and makes a presentation of their capstone project proposal to fellow students, instructors and invited agency leadership. This year's cohort of 30 managers represents 17 agencies from the Executive Branch, Judicial Branch and Higher Education.

The class includes two DAS employees - Jennifer Taplin from EEO and Stephen McGirr who is the director of Fleet Operations. "I already have a good idea for Stephen's project," said Josh. "And I'm excited to work with him on it." No pressure Stephen!

The program includes 11 class days and runs from March to June, annually.

The Aspiring Leaders team consists of: Cheryl Cepelak from Department of Correction (DOC), Cheryl Malerba from Department of Transportation (DOT), Peggy Zabawar from Department of Developmental Services (DDS), Deana Giordano from Department of Labor (DOL) and Alan Hyla from the Judicial Branch /CSSD.



ARRIVALS



Josh Gabelle



Noel Petra



Mae Lo



Richard Labutis



Aileen Alago



Anthony Floyd



Patrick Sullivan



Edward Guelfi



Nicole Dionne



Antoinette Hetherman



Linda DellaFera

New Employees

*Commissioner
Josh Gabelle*

*Noel Petra
Deputy Commissioner
DCS*

*Mae Lo
Procurement*

Richard Labutis BEST

*Aileen Alago
Collection Services*

*Anthony Floyd Collection
Services*

*Patrick Sullivan Collection
Services*

*Edward Guelfi
Fleet Operations*

*Nicole Dionne Collection
Services*

*Antoinette Hetherman
BEST*

*Linda DellaFera
Collection Services*

Retirements

*Laurie Melesko
Procurement -January*

*Daniel Melesko
Procurement -January*

*Doug Belli
BEST - February*

*Mark Carroza
Procurement -March*

*Thomas Surprenant
DCS – April*

*Rocella Mitchell
DCS – April*

*Blanche Kuwada
BEST – April*

*Elsie Stempinski
Business Office-March*

*Antoinette Alphonse
DAS Workers' Comp -April*

Transfer

*Jeff Beckham
Office of the
Commissioner - April*

.....**DEPARTURES**



Laurie Melesko



Daniel Melesko



Doug Belli



Mark Carroza



Thomas Surprenant



Rocella Mitchell



Blanche Kuwada



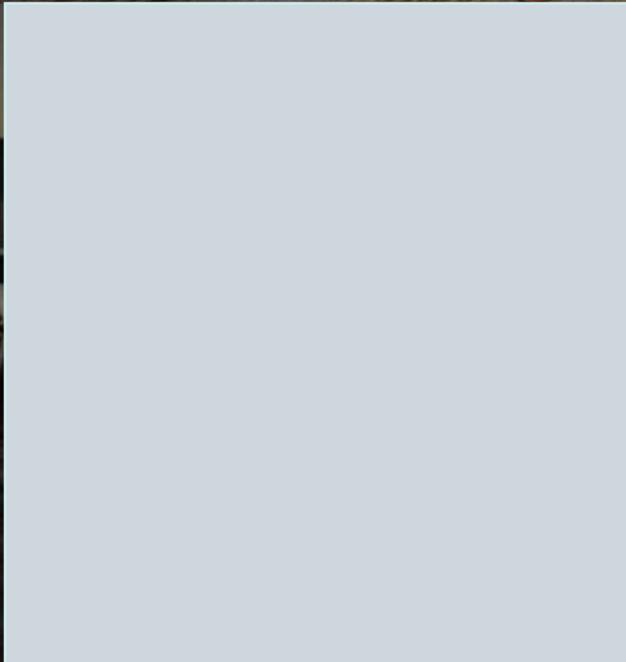
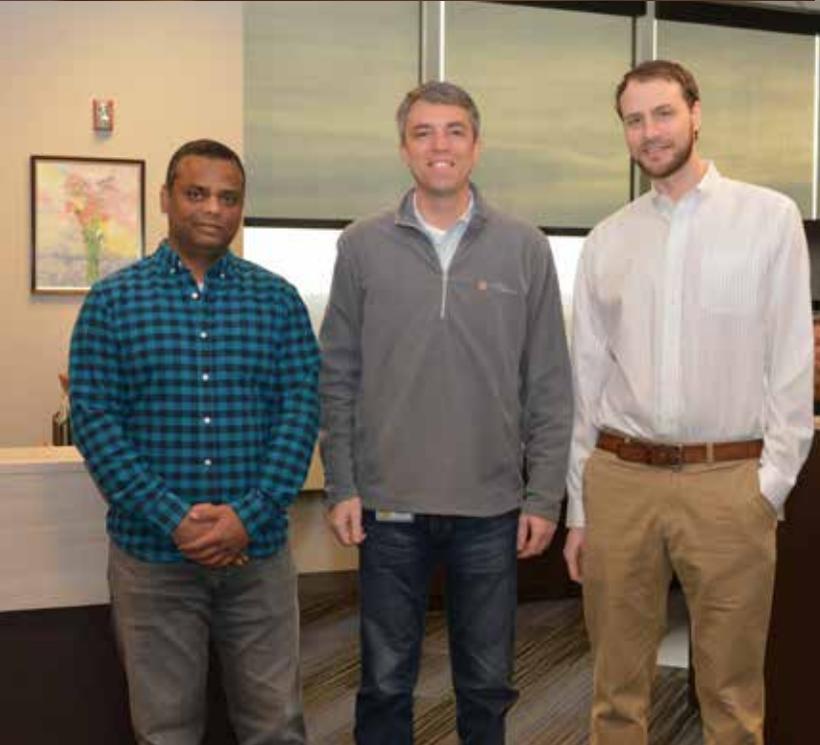
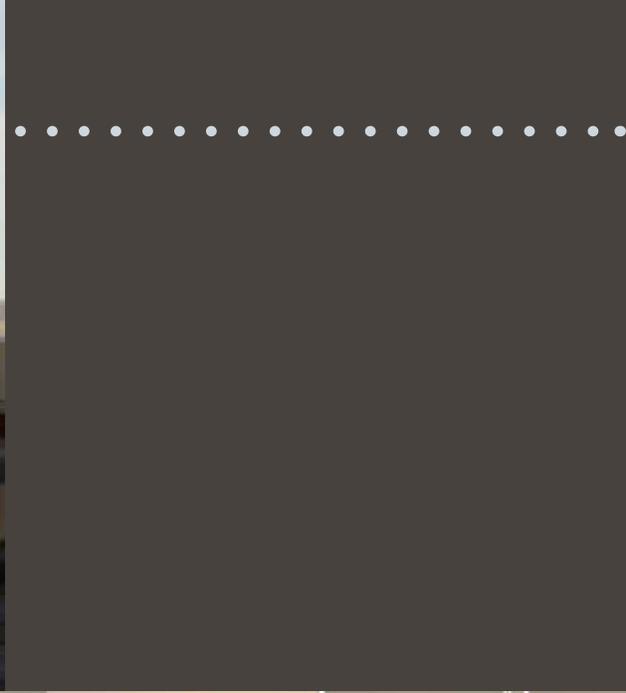
Elsie Stempinski



Antoinette Alphonse



Jeffrey Beckham





Superintendent of Schools Michael Graner Ph.D. sent the following message of gratitude and thanks to the Office of School Construction Grants and Review, specifically **Kosta Diamantis, Michelle Dixon** and **Robert Celmer**:

“Dear Kosta, Michelle and Bob, I was thrilled to receive the bid authorization letter, and I wanted to jot a short note to express my deep appreciation for the support and guidance we have received from the department. In the several meetings we held to consider the project and review the design plans, I felt real support from the department staff. Bob’s thorough and competent review of the plans was a great help, and Michelle and Kosta provided clear direction as the project moves forward. On behalf of the children of Groton, I want to thank you.”

Steven Way from the Town of East Lyme commended **Scott Phelps** from the Office of the Building Inspector regarding the new electrical services under the 2016 CT State Building Code and 2014 NEC, “Scott, I can’t thank you enough for coming down to East Lyme to look at our schools new services. I learned a lot, and now have a MUCH higher level of confidence in these installations. Again, thank you.”

Paul Grady sent the following message of praise to Commissioner Geballe and Statewide Safety and Security Director Raymond Philbrick regarding **Diane Dalo** and her “superior service. Ms. Dalo and I spoke during the week of February 25, 2019 and she patiently listened to my statements and provided complete and concise answers to my questions. Everyone enjoys interacting with individuals like Ms. Dalo. When Ms. Dalo and others deliver excellent service, people are more productive. Please feel free to use her as an example of an individual promoting such high quality customer service.”

“Thank you” to **Jerry Lynn** and to the “**Business Office Team**” from Director of Fleet Operations Stephen McGirr. “Jerry, I just wanted to reach out and thank your team for all of the assistance they provide Fleet Operations on a daily basis. I understand that it is a function of the Business Office to provide the service you do, but it’s the people and the quality of service that really stand out in every interaction I’ve had. From my random questions, process training needs, informational calls, and ‘Surprise! Can you help me?’ requests, everyone has been extremely gracious and accommodating. Even just strolling through the office the few times I have so far, I REALLY enjoy the atmosphere! Additionally, I want to thank your team for assisting the rest of Fleet staff daily with what they need, as it is always an enjoyable process.”

Yolanda Williams from the Department of Public Health commended **Michael Guimond** and **Alex Caceres** from DAS Central Printing stating, “I have seen the new Opioid cards and they came out perfect! I told Stacey that you have been really good to us and you have gone above and beyond to meet our needs, especially at crunch time. Thank you so much!”

Jerry Lynn of the DAS Business Office commended **Rhonda Haskell** for her work assisting to receive a refund from Verizon Wireless for the Department of Labor in the amount of \$12,103.24 for wireless numbers that were requested to be disconnected that never were. These numbers are now all suspended or disconnected.

With the assistance of the Zero Usage Report provided by Verizon Wireless, Rhonda was able to have over 100 wireless numbers/service suspended or disconnected in the months of January and February, 2019. This will result in quite a savings.