

Employee of the Month: November



Congratulations Thomas Knox, you're the DGS November 2016 Employee of the Month!

Thomas Knox has been working for the City of Baltimore for nearly 17 years. He works in the Facilities Maintenance Division overseeing the maintenance of the police headquarters building. He began his career in the City as a maintenance assistant in the Abel Wolman Building which brought him great satisfaction.

Thomas said that working in facilities maintenance is the best job of his life. He feels that maintaining the Abel Wolman Building was a highlight of his career. But when asked about a challenge that he has to overcome Thomas mentioned the weather.

Thomas was inspired to work for the City because he never forgot the kindness of City employees from experiences he had a child skateboarding in Baltimore. He and his friends would skate up and down North Avenue and the City employees would help them tune their skateboards.

Fleet Hosts Auto Tech Students



Thirty-five students from Mergenthaler Vocational-Technical (commonly referred to as Mervo), Forest Park, and Edmondson-Westside high schools attended an Open House at the Fleet Management Division's Central Garage Facility to learn about the work of the Division and career opportunities.

The students toured the facility and heard about the Work Study and Apprenticeship programs offered by DGS Fleet Management. During the tour, Fleet's automotive professionals explained and demonstrated the wide range of diagnostic, installation, maintenance and repair duties performed on the variety of automotive, heavy trucks, and other mechanical equipment. Many students took the opportunity to ask questions about how what they are learning translates into practical tasks as well as about workplace expectations.

Camilo B., a junior at Mervo, said he wanted to learn about the "experiences working with coworkers in fleet management." He added, "Communication is a big part in the auto industry."

Employee of the Month: December



Congratulations Ray Lacher, you are the DGS December 2016 Employee of the Month!

Ray Lacher began working for the City in April of 1977, nearly 40 years ago! His first job with the City was as an auto mechanic. Ray came to Fleet because he had a family member working for the City.

Ray enjoys coming to work each day to do the best that he can to solve problems creatively. He also enjoys working and specifically likes the people he is working with. Outside of work Ray enjoys golf and model trains. He has his own personal large display for his trains at home.

Ryan is married, has two children, and one grandson. He also mentioned that he has 2 years and 4 months until retirement. Congratulations Ray!

Space Heater Safety

Please keep in mind: Portable, electric space heaters can be hazardous. There has been at least one incident in the past where such a device caught fire. Fortunately, no one was hurt in the incident and there was little property damage. However, the outcome could easily have been tragic.

Fire Code 605.10.3 states that portable electric space heaters shall not be plugged into extension cords.

Fire Code 605.10.4, Prohibited areas, says portable, electric space heaters shall not be operated within 3ft. of any combustible material, like paper, cardboard, and cloth, and that portable, electric heaters shall only be operated in locations for which they are listed.

Because portable electric space heaters have hot and arcing or sparking parts inside of them, adequate clearance from combustible materials must be maintained to avoid ignition of the combustibles. Likewise flammable liquid vapors could be liberated during liquid transfer or in the event of a spill during travel to the heater where the arcing of sparking components could cause ignition.



NOMINATE SOMEONE TO BE THE NEXT EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

ANYONE CAN NOMINATE A CO-WORKER!

There are 2 ways you can nominate your staff/team member!

1. Handy ballots located throughout General Services
2. E-mail DGS_H.R.@baltimorecity.gov

Employee nominated must exemplify the mission of the Department of General Services which is to provide effective and efficient government services to the people of Baltimore and to the City agencies we serve. We provide healthy work environments, safe and reliable vehicles for City employees, and deliver high quality support services. The Department of General Services is a key partner in improving the life for Baltimore City employees and citizens. All nominated employees must exhibit performance in at least one of the following characteristics: Customer Service, Behavior, Performance, External Recognition, Work Related Accomplishments, and Improved Efficiency/Cost Savings in the Work Place.

All employees will remain a candidate for 6 months once they have been nominated.

Should you have questions regarding the Employee of the Month process please call Catherine Burns at (410) 396-3627.

HOW DOES THAT WORK? BPIO Edition

The Business Process Improvement Office (BPIO) improves division operations by streamlining processes, exposing inefficiencies and introducing new standard procedures. Creating the optimal process environment is the mission of the team.

The BPIO not only engages with divisions to find potential projects, but also accepts project requests. Specific details must be delivered to clearly paint the picture of the problem. This includes a description of the problem, stakeholders and an explanation as to why the problem exists. It is important to describe the impact, including descriptive factors such as frequency and cost of resources (time, money, etc.). Being specific and thorough will enhance the BPIO's understanding of the problem. If the project identifies with any city, department or division KPIs, (Key Performance Indicator) this section is a good location to discuss that content.

Often times, the process actors can recognize a clear and obvious solution. If there is recognition of a solution, please provide insight on your perspective. The BPIO applies project management techniques to projects selected by the program office.

Projects are systematically selected based on project outcome characteristics. The projects that most closely relate to agency strategic objectives, city objects, or have the greatest impact on process or resources are prioritized.

For example, one project that was largely successful involved process improvement for urgent-work invoices in the Facilities Maintenance Division. The project was initiated by identifying an internal issue that related to a city-wide agenda: vendor relations and prompt vendor payment. Prior to the BPIO involvement, the method for processing invoices resulted in many invoices outstanding for more than 30 days.

The project went through a VSAP analysis to determine process inefficiencies. As a result, bottlenecks in the process were determined, improvement tools and techniques were identified and duplications of effort were eliminated.

The invoice processing duration reduced significantly within the first thirty days of implementation. The BPIO still monitors and controls the process, regularly re-evaluating the system to find more room for improvement.

DGS News Letter Person of Interest... Azza Rizkallah, MSM

Azza Rizkallah is a Contract Administrator with DGS Design and Construction Division where she has been a team member since 2010. Born in Gaza City in Palestine, she moved to Baltimore in 2005. Prior to that move, Azza had briefly lived in California, before returning to Palestine. For most of her professional career has been focused on public administration, capital development and infrastructure. While living in Gaza, Azza worked with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) focusing on infrastructural projects, sustainable development, poverty reduction, energy and environment, and social development.

Azza's history is amazing; she grew up in a close knit family with strong family values. She credits her mother for her wisdom and the desire to always be happy. One of five siblings, education was always a high priority for her family. With many social and economic levels and despite being faced with the limited ability to move between countries, Azza was able to obtain a permit to leave the country to attend school. She studied at the Bethlehem University which was the first university founded in the West Bank and established under Israeli rule in 1973. After 3 years of study, the school closed and she returned home to Gaza and continued her education through arranged make up classes and graduated with a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration. Between 2014 -2016 she pursued her dream of completing her Masters and received her degree of Masters of Science in Project Management (MSM) in July of 2016.

Living in the US, she reflects on how she has experienced the many challenges of coming from a county that has limited freedom of movement, which meant a permit was required to travel between countries and even between cities in Palestine, the lack of basic amenities like electric power, and no major fresh water source.

While working with her family and sister in Palestine, Azza forged through a normally difficult process of obtaining a permit for her mother to leave Palestine. Being the focused and determined person that she is, she was successful and in 2012 her mother arrived in the United States.

Her dream to obtain a Master's degree never wavered, and she achieved it. While her life took a different path and she was unable to pursue her goal of attending Engineering School, she is fulfilling that particular dream through her children. Azza is blessed with four children and her oldest twins are currently studying Civil Engineering. Supporting her children until they graduate and helping them secure good jobs to support themselves is an ultimate goal of Azza's.

DGS Plays Role during Inauguration and Swearing-in Ceremonies

On December 6th and 8th, 2016 the Baltimore City Department of General Services hosted the Mayoral Inauguration of Catherine Pugh and the City Council's swearing-in ceremony at the War Memorial Building. The events were a tremendous success thanks to the diligent work of the DGS Facilities Maintenance crew, the Historical Properties Program, the War Memorial Arts Initiative, and the Emergency Operations Unit, which oversaw Abacus security and ensured a smooth transition into Baltimore's new Mayoral and Council leadership.

A lot of time, energy, man power, and cross-departmental cooperation was needed to carry out this momentous occasion. The operation involved multiple agencies within the city government to carry out their Emergency Support Functions (ESF) during the two events. Agencies involved included DOT, OEM, the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods, the Parking Authority, BPD, BFD, OHS, and MOEM. The Department of General Services would like to sincerely thank the aforementioned agencies for their flexibility, cooperation, and tireless labor.

Over 1,000 attendees, consisting of private citizens, government employees, and elected officials in various seats of power, were present to witness the inaugurations of Catherine E. Pugh and the members of the City Council. The Assembly Hall on the first floor of the War Memorial was used as a VIP section and hosted Maryland Governor Larry Hogan and Maryland Senator Barbara Mikulski, just to name a few.

Thank you again so much to all those who contributed their efforts, both within DGS and outside of DGS, to make the 50th Mayoral Inauguration and 72nd City Council swear-in ceremony for Baltimore City a complete success.

DGS New Hires and Retirees

New Hires	
Employee	Title
Maurice Tillage	Electrical Mechanic II
Nikkia Harris	Storekeeper II
Joseph Schmidt	Automotive Lead Mechanic
Promotions	
Emily Kollin	Fleet Quality Control Analyst

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Happy holidays to you and your family!