

DGS's March 2017 Employee of the Month!



By: Alex Lourido

Erica Gee was an employee of DGS for nearly 13 years. A human resources star in the Administration Division, her kindness and dedication bettering the lives of everyone around her shone through each day. Now, as she moves on to another City agency to further her career, she takes with her many memories and past successes of the projects she took on. Her memorable smile and laugh will be sure to find the hearts of her new co-workers.

Erica has been with DGS for her entire City career. She decided to go into HR because she enjoys helping people. She said, "Helping people was always something I wanted to do. When I was younger I wanted to help children, and, as a minister, of course I want to help those who may be lost. Within the HR profession I can support people to be the best they can at their jobs."

For Erica, working in the HR office is a combination of what she wanted to do career wise, but also because she worked with some really great people who are more like family than co-workers. She is a part of a team that supports one another which made more pleasant to commute to work each day.

Erica's outside interest includes her enjoyment of karaoke music and she loves R&B and Gospel. Whitney Houston is her favorite artist.

The Department thanks you Erica for all of your hard work and dedication to excellence through your years of service. The best of luck with your future endeavors! You will be missed.

Did you know? Poe House

Did you know that the name of Baltimore's professional football team, the Ravens, was inspired by writer Edgar Allen Poe's short story The Raven, and that Poe actually lived right here in Baltimore City? It's true! In fact, the building that Edgar Allen Poe called home for just under three years during his time in Baltimore still stands today. Built in 1830 and located at 203 Amity Street, Poe lived in the home with several family members, including his niece who he would eventually marry, from early 1833 until leaving in 1835 to attend college at the University of Virginia.

Believe it or not, the Department of General Services manages and maintains the Poe House. Since 2013, DGS has been subletting to a local non-profit organization, Poe Baltimore, Inc., to run day-to-day operations as a museum and center to teach about the life of Edgar Allen Poe, his work, and life at Amity Street. If you are interested in visiting the Poe House, the building will be open to the public starting in early April.

Check the website for the exact start date of the season and hours of operation.

<http://www.poeinbaltimore.org/poe-house/>

Hamilton at the War Memorial!



Good news! There is now a brand-new, FREE traveling exhibition located at the War Memorial Building entitled "Alexander Hamilton: The Man Who Made Modern America". It is on loan from the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History in New York City and on display from March 21st through April 17th.

The exhibit begins in the first floor exhibition hall and continues into the second floor Memorial Hall. Viewing is open to the public during the building's business hours, 8am - 4pm.

NOMINATE THE NEXT EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

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.

Each employee remains a candidate for 6 months once they are nominated for the recognition.

Questions regarding the Employee of the Month process please call Catherine Burns or Nick Fontanez at the Human Resources Office (410) 396-3627.

Person of Interest: Chichi Nyagah-Nash – Community Volunteer

The Baltimore City Public School System established Great Kids Farm in 2008, putting a fallow nature center into production as one of the nation's only working educational farms operated by a public school district. The initial goal was to support student wellness by engaging City Schools students in hands-on experiences growing and eating healthy foods. Since then, the Farm's programs have matured to provide standards-based education, teacher professional development, rich career training and revenue generation through the sale of produce to local restaurants and the City School Food and Nutrition Services (for school salad bars).

A few years ago Chichi Nyagah-Nash, Deputy Chief of the Fleet Management Division was yearning for something that would take her volunteering to the next level and realized that meant getting involved directly with a non-profit. After completing a year-long Civic Leadership program (<http://businessvolunteersmd.org/volunteer/give-program/>) through Business Volunteers Maryland, she felt ready to serve on a board. Her friend also happened to be the Executive Director of the Friends group so she had heard about the wonderful things happening at the farm.

Chichi serves on the Board as the Vice President and Chair of the Events Committee, roles that allow her to contribute directly to the planning of initiatives that further our support of the Farm's activities. Great Kids Farm receives over 3,800 students for educational visits annually, while more than 30,000 students from 60 City schools are served produce directly from the farm. The farm has also provided education materials (e.g., classroom grow kits, seedlings, small tools, etc.) to over 150 schools.

"Seeing firsthand the impact that our efforts make in the lives of these youths is extremely rewarding," Chichi said. The opportunity students get from spending time on the farm and learning about healthy eating and healthy living is a unique one. There is a proven link between nutrition and an individual's ability to learn and I feel that the farm tends to both of these. Chichi's favorite aspiration about the Farm is seeing little kids relish the experience of eating the fresh fruits and vegetables that they have harvested themselves.

DGS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

This week the DGS Employee Engagement Committee will be releasing an anonymous survey to collect and track data about employee interest and involvement. Conducting engagement surveys is a useful way of gather insight into what is important to employees. The survey consists of 12 short questions based on a 1 to 5 scale and requests a bit of information regarding the area in which the respondent works so the committee can track and provide appropriate remedies to differences that may exist between divisions and/or shops.

The primary reason for issuing an engagement survey is to measure the engagement level of employees. Measuring the key drivers of engagement within DGS allows the Department's leadership to assess whether our staff are either engaged or disengaged. While there are no standard drivers of engagement, some commonly assessed factors are: advancement, recognition, pay & benefits, job role, training & development opportunities, leadership, work environment, etc.

Engagement surveys are crucial because they give employees a venue for open feedback. It is an opportunity to establish two-way communication and involve employees in the development process by giving them a direct voice to the management team.

The information obtained from the assessment will allow management to identify strengths and opportunities for improving engagement in DGS. Leadership can then develop a company-wide engagement plan or focus directly on action areas for each division or shop.

Filling out the surveys will help DGS consider necessary changes that further improve your working environment and strengthens support of the Department's mission.

Please take the survey using the QR Code below or by paper (accompanying your next paycheck). If you decide to use the paper version, to keep it confidential, please place it in the "Employee of the Month" nomination box nearest to you. It will be collected in the mail then given to the Employee Engagement Committee within a week; management will not see anonymous individual surveys responses, only results based on aggregated totals to help with decision making to improve engagement.



YOU ARE INVITED TO THE CENTENNIAL CEREMONY FOR THE U.S. ENTRY INTO WORLD WAR I

The Military Order of the World Wars and the Companions of the General George G. Meade Chapter supported by the Department of General Services cordially invite you to attend the Maryland Commemoration of the U.S. Entry into World War I on Thursday, April 6th, 2017 at 12:00 PM at the War Memorial Building.

The ceremony agenda includes an Invocation, a Presentation of the Colors, the singing of the National Anthem, a Wreath Laying Ceremony, the Retirement of the Colors, and a Benediction.

Invited guests include Governor Larry Hogan, The Honorable Mayor Catherine E. Pugh, The Honorable Michel Charbonnier, Consul General of the French Republic, Major General Bruce T. Crawford, U.S. Army, Commander Communication-Electronics Command, Colonel Tom Rickard, U.S. Army, Garrison Commander, Fort George G. Meade, and Ms. Patricia McCoy, Commander, American Legion.

Adjacent parking garages are available at a reduced rate.

H.T. Darling's Incredible Musæum Presents: The Treasures of New Galapagos, Astonishing Acquisitions from the Perisphere at the Peale Museum!



DGS is a partner with Submersive Productions, a Baltimore theater company to present an immersive theater experience at the Peale Museum, a DGS building. This historic property across the street from Abel Wolman will be the site of Submersive's new science-fiction theater experience, *H.T. Darling's Incredible Musæum Presents: The Treasures of New Galapagos, Astonishing Acquisitions from the Perisphere*. The show tells the fictional story of H.T. Darling: a high-society explorer who has just returned from an expedition to an area of outer space, "The Perisphere," and a planet he calls New Galapagos. Darling will share his curious discoveries at The Musæum, where each audience member choses their own path through the evening's strange events.

DGS collaborated with Submersive Productions to provide space and breathe life into the Peale Museum —one of the most historically significant buildings in Baltimore. This building, owned and maintained by DGS, was constructed in 1814 by the artist Rembrandt Peale and was the first museum building in the western hemisphere. It went on to be Baltimore's first city hall, later becoming the first public high school in Maryland to admit African American students. The creative team includes visual artists, puppet makers, a museum display, a carpenter, and a taxidermist. *Musæum* will conduct performances from April 1 until April 30, 2017, Thursdays through Sundays at The Peale Museum at 225 Holliday St. Tickets can be purchased at www.submersiveproductions.com.

DGS New Hires and Retirees

Employee	Title
New Hires	
Jason Ludd	Super. Public Building and Repairs
Work Study Students	
Jerry McDougald	
Antonio Holmes	
Tyler Nah	
Eric Riddle	
Retires	
Earl Williams	Bldg Project Coordinator

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REMINDER: Changed address? New number?

Have you changed your address, obtained a new phone number, recently added a new member to the family? If so, please see your Human Resources Office about documents to update your new status.