

New Safety Investigation Program Launches



Environmental consultant Drew Pardus (at left) discusses root cause analysis of on-the-job injuries with Operations supervisors. Up to 3,000 employees will be trained through March 2016.

NYCHA's Office of Safety and Security (OFSS) or a specially trained Incident Investigation Team conducts a thorough analysis of every serious on-the-job injury or accident to determine its root causes to prevent future incidents. But what about minor injuries like cuts or bruises that don't require hospitalization or result in lost time from work?

To ensure that important lessons are learned from even minor mishaps, NYCHA is implementing an extensive Injury Investigation Training Program for up to 3,000 property managers, property maintenance supervisors, skilled trades supervisors and other employees across NYCHA.

"The mandatory training in 'root cause analysis' and

investigation will help NYCHA workers identify what went wrong or what system failed, [causing] an injury," said Human Resources Deputy Director Cherry McCutchen. "What's even more important are the lessons about corrective action recommendations to prevent or avoid injuries in the future."

At one of the two-day training sessions held at 250 Broadway, environmental consultant Drew Pardus told employees that "every employee wants to go home in the same condition they arrived in. Yet at NYCHA approximately 200 workers are out every day because of an injury that occurred on the job." In investigating the reasons for these injuries, he explained, "we will

be looking for the causes of accidents, not the blame."

The early part of the training stressed the importance of:

- arriving early and securing the scene of the accident;
- notifying the proper supervisor;
- carefully gathering and inspecting evidence and information;
- getting statements from witnesses; and
- preserving information for an advanced injury investigation team.

Through lively discussions of real case studies, employ-

During a class break, Carver Houses Property Manager Helen George said, "It will be helpful to know what questions to ask when accidents occur to find out the real cause."

Bushwick Houses Property Maintenance Supervisor Santiago Eduardo remarked, "This training will help me to be more hands-on when directly investigating the causes of accidents."

Case Studies

The discussion of one scenario—where a superintendent fell from a ladder affixed to a

“
Investing in on-the-job safety
...makes financial sense, operational sense,
and—most important—human sense.

”
Patrick O'Hagan
Director of the Office of Safety and Security

ees practiced making sharp observations and avoiding assumptions while drawing conclusions from events and details. "We're trying to find and put together all the pieces in the puzzle," Mr. Pardus said. "Not just what happened but, most important, what led up to it."

roof tank after noticing a "funny smell"—revealed a number of possible causes and contributing factors. These included: non-compliance with prescribed procedures requiring a spotter for the ladder, a field radio, and a safety harness; a possible preexisting medical

(cont. p. 3)

CONTENTS VOL. 1 DECEMBER 2015 NUMBER 9

2 NYCHA Notes:

Staff Appointments and Promotions

A Thanksgiving Story

3 NYCHA Marathon Runners

4 "I am NextGen" Employees:

Technical Resource Advisor
Denise Torres
Community Outreach Worker
Robert White

5 Sandy Recovery Enters New Phase

6 A Thanksgiving to Remember

Diwali Celebration

7 Employee Reaches out to the People of Paris

Safety During the Holidays

8 News to Use:

Ethics Inquiries Numbers

MCU College Scholarships



Does
Technical
Resource
Advisor
Denise
Torres look
familiar?
See p. 4
to find out
why.

NYCHA Notes

Congratulations



Ivo Nikolic, formerly Administrator in NYCHA's Elevator Services and Repair Department, was promoted to Director of Materials Management. In this capacity, Mr. Nikolic is responsible for oversight and operation of the LIC warehouse and the satellite warehouses. In addition to his experience at NYCHA—where he managed NYC Department of Buildings-mandated elevator inspections,

elevator contracts and elevator modernization throughout NYCHA—Mr. Nikolic has extensive private sector experience in warehouse and logistics management. His wealth of public/private sector experience, and engineering background, will be critical as the Materials Management Department continues to streamline and overhaul NYCHA's inventory and supply chain management processes.



Brian Loughlin recently joined NYCHA as Director for New Construction in the Department of Development. He will provide management and oversight for all new construction development programs, including affordable housing projects on NYCHA property, and will take the lead in executing a strategic plan. Formerly, Mr. Loughlin was the Chief Architect of the Jersey City Housing

Authority (JCHA) for 12 years, during which the JCHA received numerous awards, including Jersey City's first Green Building Award, the State of New Jersey Governor's Excellence in Housing Award for Community Revitalization, and the NAHRO National Award of Excellence for Project Design. A registered architect, Mr. Loughlin sits on the Advisory Board for the Institute of Public Architecture, is chairman of the Jersey City Zoning Board of Appeals, and served as the Special Advisor to the Mayor of Jersey City for Housing, where he was central to the current administration's recent release of Jersey City's first Housing Plan.



New York City Housing Authority
Department of Communications
250 Broadway | 12th Floor
New York, NY 10007

212-306-4384
NYCHANow@nycha.nyc.gov

A Thanksgiving Story



The Office of Disaster Recovery held a food drive and donated the items to the Astoria Senior Center Food Pantry. Above are Disaster Recovery staff, with Astoria Houses RA President Mrs. Cogger (center).

Seniors at Astoria Houses had something extra to appreciate this Thanksgiving, thanks to a food drive held by staff in the Sandy Project Management Operation Office of Disaster Recovery. The unit's community outreach team and others work closely with residents in NYCHA's Sandy-damaged developments. So when staff decided to have a food drive, "they knew that the NYCHA-run senior center at Astoria Houses could put their efforts to good use," said Michele Moore, Senior Advisor to the Vice President for Disaster Recovery.

"This will be a great joy to seniors at Astoria Houses, who have a gathering space but no steady funds to provide lunch," said Resident Association President Claudia Cogger, who has lived at Astoria Houses for 61 years. "The extra food will go into our food pantry and will really help."

"It feels good when my job can also help residents in my own community," said Vanessa Jones-Hall, a community outreach worker who resides at Astoria Houses.

"We recognize that residents' lives are still being affected at the Sandy-damaged developments, and we take that to heart in all of our interactions with them," said Deputy Program Manager Mike Cooper.

The close support between staff and residents can go both ways. When disaster recovery administrator Sylvia Williams lost her brother not long ago, Ms. Cogger consoled Ms. Williams on her loss. When they met on the 27th floor of 250 Broadway for the group photo, there were hugs all around.

"Sometimes it only takes a few words to make a big difference," Ms. Williams said.

For another Thanksgiving story, see p. 6.

Revised Human Resources Manual

NYCHA has released a revised Human Resources Manual, effective December 1, 2015, which is being distributed Authority-wide. You also can access the [HR manual](#) on NYCHA Connect, by clicking Departments and then Human Resources.

Safety Investigation Program (cont.)



Participants formed groups to practice root cause analysis.

condition; and exposure to chemicals. Class discussion revealed that only vendors are now permitted to use roof tank ladders, due to the risk of injury.

Another case study focused on a caretaker splashed in the eye when opening a sealed cap from a floor stripper. Possible root causes for this incident included lack of protective equipment (safety

goggles), lack of training for hazardous materials, and a defective container.

Breaking up into small groups, the class was then asked to list all the steps involved in a task performed by a group member so that its elements could be examined in greater detail. "Once you identify the root causes, what are you going to do about it?" Mr. Pardus asked. In some

cases, placing more warning signs and safety messages would be helpful; other times, alerting staff during weekly safety meetings to certain safety hazards was advised.

"When you work with something for a long time, you can lose the sense of risk in it," Mr. Pardus said.

A comprehensive Field Operations Guide distributed in class provided additional information on preventing, investigating, analyzing and reporting accidents and injuries for the participants, many of whom will serve on Location Safety Teams at developments that investigate less serious safety incidents.

The Field Operations Guide also supports borough Incident Investigation Teams that respond to more compli-

cated incidents

The large-scale location training initiative also included 30-minute "toolbox talks" conducted by NYCHA and Teamsters Local 237 during "musters" this summer at 175 developments. The talks provided an overview of the root cause analysis approach to incident investigation.

"This is our largest-ever agency-wide safety training initiative and it reflects the priority placed on employee safety in NextGeneration NYCHA," said OFSS Director Patrick O'Hagan. "Investing in on-the-job safety is the right thing to do because it makes financial sense, operational sense and—most important—human sense."

NYCHA Notes (cont.)

Congratulations NYCHA Marathon Runners



Runners David Eng, Ramon Lugo, Kevin Turney, Bob Nordman, Jenelle Hudson and Lee Trotman. Names of additional runners are at right.

Congratulations to nine tenacious runners who successfully completed the TSC New York City Marathon on November 1 or other recent marathons as far away as Alaska. Just finishing a 26.2-mile marathon is an accomplishment, and some of these runners, who are all members of NYCHA's Running Team, did it with extra challenges or goals in mind.

Computer Specialist Bob Nordman, team co-captain, plans on reaching his quest to run marathons in all 50 states *this year* and has just two more marathons to run next year for a lifetime total of 100 marathon races or longer.

Supervisor Carpenter Kevin Turney didn't let being sick the

New York City Marathon

		Time
German Echeverry	Bklyn. Prop. Mgt. Dept.	04:08:28
David Eng	IT - Business Solutions	05:05:28
Nicole Ferreira	Dept. for Development	06:00:00
Larry Hillman	Carpenter, Tech. Svs.	03:55:00
Lee Trotman	Resident Engagement	06:17:19
Kevin Turney	Capital Projects	07:56:30

Employees who competed in other marathons

Bob Nordman	IT - Infrastructure	Anchorage, AK
Ramon Lugo	IT - Infrastructure	Schenectady, NY
Jenelle Hudson	Resident Engagement	Phili., PA

night before stop him—he walked and coughed the last five miles. How's that for persistence?

Supervisor Plasterer German Echeverry overcame tendonitis until mile 18 then had to finish the race "almost on one leg." Comparing a marathon to life, "No matter what happens, don't give up," he says.

"My objective in running is to stay healthy," said Computer Specialist David Eng. "The sight and sounds of thousands of cheering fans lining the sidewalk was priceless," he added.

Each of NYCHA's runners deserves recognition for all the training and endurance that completing a marathon entails. See you all next year! For information about NYCHA's Running Club, contact Bob Nordman at 212-306 8193.

“I am NextGen” Employees Denise Torres and Robert White

The “I am NextGeneration NYCHA” campaign continues to bring to the attention of the public outstanding employees, residents, and supporters of NYCHA who embody the commitment to service that’s required to transform our NextGeneration NYCHA vision of safe, clean and connected communities into a reality. The October issue of *NYCHANow* featured Supervisor of Caretakers Harrison Torres, the first employee honoree.

Below, meet two more employees whose job dedication makes them ambassadors to the public, through the campaign’s coverage in various media. You may also have seen them featured throughout NYCHA in the series of exceptional posters by the Department of Communications’ photo unit.

Denise Torres grew up in Clason Point Gardens and has worked for NYCHA for 29 years. On the way to serving as NYCHA’s first Technical Resource Advisor in the Maintenance, Re-

pair & Skilled Trades Department, she also was the first woman to serve as supervisor of exterminators. Ms. Torres was nominated for the NextGen campaign by NYCHA’s partners in the Healthy Homes Program at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene for her “leadership to improve [public] housing quality and protect the health of NYCHA families.”

Robert White was nominated by residents at Sandy-damaged developments, including Red Hook East Houses, where he also resides. He joined NYCHA as a Recovery to Resiliency Community Outreach Worker a little more than one year ago and feels that his life experience as a resident makes him more effective on the job.

If you know someone you’d like to nominate for the “I am NextGen” campaign, send your suggestion to nextgen@nycha.nyc.gov.



Technical Resource Advisor Denise Torres

What do you do as a Technical Resource Advisor?

We maintain all the Police Service Areas throughout the five boroughs, address all the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) asthma referral jobs, and do any emergency that the director requests. We also try to assist developments when they are overwhelmed with a certain situation, such as a rat infestation, and they don’t have the time or staff.

What happens when you’re called by the IPM program?

We initially do an apartment inspection with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. [Their representative] speaks with the tenant, touching on all the sighted issues that are creating allergens, and I write everything

“
Each of these tenants
could be our mother, father, sister,
or brother, so I want my team to
go above and beyond.”

”
Denise Torres

down. This can be mold in the bathroom or standing water, if cabinets are roach infested or have frazz (roach feces), or even if there’s a plaster or painting job that needs to be done. I send an email out to all the skilled trades involved.

But I send my crew in first. We apply gel throughout the apartment, including in bathrooms, closets, and bedrooms. We use the HEPA vacuum to remove all the live and dead roaches. And we use glue traps as monitors.

(cont. p. 5)



Recovery to Resiliency Community Outreach Worker Robert White

What do you do as a Community Outreach Worker?

As Community Outreach Workers, we visit residents in Sandy-impacted developments to see how the storm affected them. These housing developments are people’s homes and the team respects that. We bring information to the residents, if they’re looking for work, if they’re looking for training, if they have issues with NYCHA with the conditions in their building or outside of their building, we’re there to listen. And we always follow up.

What’s today’s meeting at Riis Houses about?

I’m facilitating a meeting where the Project Management Office informs the Resident Association president,

the maintenance superintendent, and property managers about the scope of work to take place in their development. We want to make sure that what we do is approved and [people are] informed because it’s disrespectful to come onsite without giving residents the information.

We don’t want to displace trees [or where] kids have been playing, and we don’t want large structures blocking someone’s window—so we have to understand what the community wants but also provide what’s necessary expeditiously.

How long have you been a Sandy Community Outreach Worker?

I have been a Community

(cont. p. 5)

Sandy Recovery Enters New Phase with Webpage Updates



Chair Shola Olatoye (second from left) welcomed residents and reporters to view the work in progress at the senior center.

Marking the third anniversary of Superstorm Sandy, NYCHA announced progress on October 29 in transitioning more recovery work from the planning to the construction phase. The new work has started with a complete rebuild of the Red Hook Senior Center—which has remained closed since the storm. The \$2.9 million project is made possible by recovery funding and \$1.8 million allocated by the New York City Council to rebuild the center.

NYCHA's restoration and rebuilding efforts at more than 30 Sandy-damaged developments have been directly tied to the access and pace of recovery funding.

After nearly three years, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reached an agreement with NYCHA earlier this year to provide \$3 billion in Sandy recovery assistance—the largest single award in FEMA history. As funding begins to flow for recovery and resiliency proj-

ects, NYCHA has also created a [Sandy Recovery webpage](#), which provides information on recovery projects and will include additional features, such as an interactive map with funding, progress and contractor information.

"With much-needed recovery dollars in place, NYCHA residents and communities affected by Sandy will begin to see construction and progress in a very real way," said Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye. "As NYCHA builds back our buildings stronger and more resilient than ever before, we are committed to transparency and communication with our residents and community members on our progress."

NYCHA's Disaster Recovery team, in partnership with Congresswoman Nydia Velázquez and Council Member Carlos Menchaca, have been meet-

ing regularly with Red Hook Houses residents and seniors at informational sessions to review designs and proposed services for the new center.

Additionally, FEMA has started to obligate some of the \$3 billion in recovery funds, allowing NYCHA to move forward with sending contracts out for bidding and awards. To date, FEMA has obligated \$92.6 million for Coney Island Houses, \$21.1 million for Coney Island Site 1B, and \$24.5 million for Carleton Manor in the Rockaways. Pre-construction work, including boiler demolition, asbestos abatement, electrical feeder line replacement, and boiler room restoration, are currently underway ahead of permanent repairs in five developments in Brooklyn and Downtown Manhattan.

I am NextGen (cont.)

Denise Torres

We try to follow up within two weeks to see what kind of situation we have now.

I continue to reach out to the tenants, educate them, let them know that in the beginning it seems a little rough but just give us the opportunity and you'll see the difference. We give them a little brief education on housecleaning and the do's and don'ts that they should know...to maintain the apartment so you don't get a re-infestation of the roaches.

What is the best thing about your job?

I've had so many good turn-arounds where people said, "Denise, without you I don't

know where I would be." I just try to help as many people as need my help. It doesn't only have to do with pest control. If it's other things, I'll listen to them. I've held tenants, I've cried with tenants, I've gone to funerals. That is probably the best, getting to know people. When you join the Authority, if you have a great heart, this is where it's supposed to show.

Each of these tenants could be our mother, father, sister, or brother, so I want my team to go above and beyond. We change a lot of things in these tenants' apartments and we give them a new outlook on how the Housing Authority is working and the direction we're going.

Robert White

Outreach Worker for over a year. I was in Red Hook East for the storm. I was without heat, without electricity for over a month...so when I joined the team, I brought that background. When I address residents, I come to them as a worker and a resident that's experienced what they have.

What is one issue you run into as a Community Outreach Worker?

A lot of people are cautious; they didn't want to have any repairs done to their units because they think they're going to be in trouble. We're not trying to catch [them] with a washing machine and

raise their rent. The old way of NYCHA has a lot of people fearful but we're changing minds and hearts. People tell us, "It's never been done, nobody ever called us just to say, 'Did that repair happen?' But this is the new NYCHA."

I think it's because this is from the top down. Because my immediate supervisor, her immediate supervisor, and all the way up to [Chair and CEO] Shola Olatoye and the General Manager—they don't play around. They're out here in the community just as well. So, lots of things are happening and we're a part of it, everyone is working together.

Thanksgiving Teamwork to Remember



From left are: Jonathan Soto, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit; Jennifer Montalvo, Deputy Director of NYCHA's Office of Intergovernmental Relations; Council Member Helen Rosenthal; Tahira Moore, Mayor's Community Affairs Unit; Karla Keatinge, Hillsong Church; and a staff member from Council Member Helen Rosenthal's Office.

"The efforts of many people to provide meals to families without gas in NYCHA developments was a tremendous success," said Marcela Medina, State Legislative Affairs Officer in NYCHA's Office of Intergovernmental Relations. On Thanksgiving Day, more than 600 NYCHA residents were treated to Thanksgiving meals at seven developments

located in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan.

For safety reasons, some residents were without gas in time for the Thanksgiving holiday. NYCHA's Office of Intergovernmental Relations, along with the Mayor's Office of Community Affairs and Hillsong Church NYC, joined together to make sure these residents would still get the

chance to enjoy a special holiday meal. All food was provided by Hillsong Church.

"At De Hostos, residents not only got their meal for the day, but they were also given a frozen turkey and a bag full of groceries. By noon, over 600 residents in three boroughs were fed," Ms. Medina said. The enthusiasm of the message served as a reminder that the best part of Thanksgiving, or any holiday, is sharing the spirit of the occasion with others.

Meals were delivered between 10 a.m. and noon to families at the following developments: Borinquen Plaza, Brownsville Houses, Howard Houses, Fort Independence Houses, Soto-mayor Houses, De Hostos Towers, and Fort Washington. Some residents also received first-come, first-serve food to take home, which included a

frozen turkey and a bag full of groceries.

Approximately 60 people volunteered to help make the event a success, including Councilmember Helen Rosenthal, volunteers from Hillsong Church, NYCHA, and PSA 6. "This was a real collaborative and creative effort, which showed how much we can accomplish when we work together as a team," said Intergovernmental Relations Deputy Director Jennifer Montalvo. "A special thanks has to go to the wonderful people at Hillsong, New York, who provided the food and great group of volunteers."

"The Mayors Community Affairs team were also tremendous partners from beginning to end," Intergovernmental Relations Director Brian Honan noted. "Council Member Rosenthal and the local PSA were also on hand for the day."

Shub Diwali, Happy Diwali



GM Michael Kelly lights the Diwali lamp, with AAA Secretary Premananda Vittal (left) and President Chirag Patel (right).

The Asian American Association at NYCHA (AAA) and its many friends celebrated Diwali, known as the celebration of lights, with the traditional lighting of the Diwali lamp and a lavish luncheon at DC 37

headquarters on October 30. The five-day, 3,000-year-old festival is generally viewed as marking the beginning of the New Year by hundreds of millions of people on the Indian sub-continent and their families around the world.

General Manager Michael Kelly thanked the almost 25-year-old employee organization on behalf of Chair and CEO Shola Olatoye for the contributions of its members and wished them *Shub Diwali*, along with happiness and prosperity in the New Year.

"With this celebration of renewal, this is a perfect time to recommit ourselves to our mission to assist those who

need our help," the General Manager said. Referring to the Diwali lights that symbolize the victory of good over evil, he continued, "at NYCHA, we are faced with a fight to survive and our inner light will help us make the world a better place."

In closing, AAA Patron Vishnu Sharma observed, "there are almost 250 people from all backgrounds here today. We meet and learn together. We speak different languages but we understand each other through affection and love."



Employee Reaches out to the People of Paris



Readers may recall that NYCHA's graphic artist Keith De Cesare was honored at the first anniversary of the National 9/11 Memorial Museum (as reported in the [August 2015 issue of NYCHA Now](#)) for his series of Angel Memorial Tributes honoring first responders who lost their lives saving others.

When Mr. De Cesare learned about the acts of terrorism that struck Paris on November 13, he felt "compelled to respond in the way [he knows] best, as a graphic artist," and created yet another stunning image—"Angel of Liberty," with wings of an angel placed on the Statue of Liberty, declaring New York's solidarity

with the people of Paris.

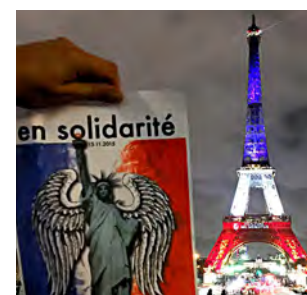
Upon seeing the image on social media, a citizen of France printed and posted a copy held in front of the Eiffel Tower in Paris, and another copy was placed at the entrance to the French Embassy in New York, as part of another memorial. The artwork was also presented to Bertrand Lortholary, the Consul General of France, at the French Consulate, who will deliver a copy to French President François Hollande.

Another photograph of the image—this time placed on a memorial in Paris (above)—was also posted and widely commented on in social media such as [Facebook](#) at <https://www.facebook.com/ArtAID/>.

"Since 9/11, I have focused on creating works that elevate the human spirit, tangible

healing art in the form of prints, banners and installations, to console and provide uplift in times of need. They often take on a life of their own when they are widely shared and displayed around the world," Mr. De Cesare said.

NYCHA is proud of its tradition of employees and employee organizations reaching out in response to tragedies around the world. Thanks to Mr. De Cesare, NYCHA is part of the solidarity expressed by this city and the nation with the people of Paris.



Safety During the Holidays

A message from Vice President for Public Safety Gerald ("Chief") Nelson



The holidays are a time of joyful celebration with our friends and loved ones. Unfortunately, this fun can come to an abrupt end if you become the victim of a crime or fire. Around the holidays, burglaries, thefts (especially credit card and identity theft) and fires tend to increase.

To assist the employees and residents of NYCHA in staying safe through the season, I would like to offer you the following tips:

- This is a popular time of year for thieves to run scams on unsuspecting persons who are filled with the joy of the season. Always confirm that any charities collecting donations are legitimate and if solicited on the phone, ask the organization to mail you materials. NEVER GIVE OUT YOUR CREDIT CARD NUMBER OVER THE PHONE.
- Your social media presence offers a wealth of information to those who may commit a crime against you. Thieves view profiles to find out what charities and organizations you support, when you are

on vacation, and any large purchases that you may have recently made. Limit those who can view your page and the information you share in cyberspace.

- When withdrawing cash from an ATM, avoid those that are out on the street. Place your cash and card immediately in your pocket or bag and arrange everything later.
- Carbon monoxide-related deaths are the highest during colder months. These deaths are likely due to inappropriate use of alternative heating, cooking, and power sources. If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to fresh air outdoors or by an open window or door.
- Frostbite can occur when the skin and the body tissue

just below it freezes. Signs include loss of feeling and white or pale appearance in fingers, toes, earlobes, faces and the tip of the nose. If you suspect frostbite, cover exposed skin and seek medical help.

- Shop with friends or relatives if possible; there IS safety in numbers. Be alert in crowded places. Among pickpockets' favorites are: revolving doors, jammed aisles, elevators, and public transportation stops.

Thank you in advance for your attention to these tips, and I look forward to continuing to share additional lessons I have learned in my 43-year career protecting the citizens of our great city.



News to Use

Ethics Inquiries Phone Numbers



The holiday season can bring job-related questions about receiving gifts or other gratuities. Employees may obtain confidential information concerning potential conflicts of interest matters from NYCHA's Law Department. Questions regarding public servants' obligations under the NYC Conflicts of Interest Law may be directed to a NYCHA agency attorney at: (212) 306-3355.

Employees, who may remain anonymous, may inquire about such matters as:

- accepting gifts, favors, meals, etc.;
- outside business or financial interests;
- outside employment or volunteer work;
- relationships between supervisors and subordinates;
- use of NYCHA resources;
- misuse of public office;
- post-employment restrictions; and
- political activities.

Information and advice about the NYC Conflicts of Interest Law is also available from the NYC Conflicts of Interest Board at (212) 442-1400.

Floating Holiday - Use It or Lose It

Employees hired before February 12, 2003, who are not serving in skilled trades titles (which includes maintenance workers) are reminded that they are entitled to a "floating holiday" during calendar year 2015, in recognition of Lincoln's Birthday. This paid holiday must be used this year (with prior supervisory authorization), as it cannot be carried over to next year.

Employee Discounts for Zip Car Through 2015



"You can drive MINIs, hybrids, VWs and more by the hour or day. Just reserve online, unlock with your Zipcard and drive. New York City believes in making an impact on the environment. By using Zipcar along with public transit, walking and biking, you're helping too. New York City has partnered with Zipcar. Now that's commitment. Zipcar is available in a bunch of cities. No matter where you drive, gas and insurance are always included in the low hourly and daily rates."



Order valid for new members only. Limited offer must be rendered by December 31, 2015. Not valid with other offers or promotions. Promotion offers a \$20 discount on first year of membership only. Join now at <http://www.zipcar.com/nycemployee>.

Municipal Credit Union College Scholarship



The Municipal Credit Union is currently accepting applications for its 2016 Scholarship Program. This year, MCU will award \$66,000 in scholarship grants to college-bound high school seniors, including eight memorial scholarships worth \$45,000 each and thirteen grants of \$2,000 each, respectively. The deadline for submissions is January 15, 2016.

Eligibility for participation in the program is open to an MCU member, or a child or grandchild of a member in good standing.

Selection criteria is based on academic performance, extracurricular and community activities, references, and an essay expressing personal goals.

Information on how to apply for the scholarship can be found at: http://www.nymcu.org/disclosures_forms/how_to_apply_2016_press.pdf.

You can download the scholarship application [here](http://www.nymcu.org/disclosures_forms/mcu_scholarship_application_2016_fillable_form) or at http://www.nymcu.org/disclosures_forms/mcu_scholarship_application_2016_fillable_form.

The Passing of Former Vice Chair Blanca Cedenó

Dear NYCHA Community,

We regret to report the passing of Blanca Cedenó, former NYCHA Vice Chair, on December 2, 2015, at the age of 94. Ms. Cedenó began working for NYCHA in 1952 as a housing assistant and worked her way through leadership positions in the Intergroup Relations Division and the Office of Community Affairs. In 1978, Mayor Ed Koch appointed her NYCHA's then-Vice Chairwoman, where she served for ten years.

Ms. Cedenó's career was marked by significant awards and achievements. In 1976 she received the New York City Public Service award for Professional Achievement. In 1978 President Jimmy Carter appointed her to the Board of Directors of the National Institute of Building Sciences. And in 1984 she was elected to the Hunter College Hall of Fame, and inducted into the YWCA's Academy of Women Achievers.

In addition to her work for the City of New York and the Housing Authority, Ms. Cedenó was an ardent advocate for the rights Puerto Rican youth. She was the chair of the board of trustees at Boricua College and helped found ASPIRA and the National Puerto Rican Forum.

Sincerely,
The family of Blanca Cedenó