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## Governor praises sponsors of Youth Leadership Forum

By John McKay

What could representatives from Coca-Cola, the Outback Steak House and DAS possibly have in common?

A sustaining interest in the Youth Leadership Forum (YLF).

They met recently with Governor John Rowland to show their continued support and sponsorship for the program, while the Governor had his own

words of praise for their generosity.

"The YLF program benefits so many kids and it's great that they can count on these companies to come through for them. This is another great example of private and public partnerships and how much can be accomplished when working together," the Governor said.

YLF, a unique training program for high school juniors and seniors who have disabilities, helps develop leadership potential and skills through an intense, four-day curriculum.

Forum participants are chosen on the basis of their contribution to their schools and communities, as well as demonstrated leadership potential. Students selected for YLF are representative of Connecticut in terms of geography, gender, ethnicity and disability type.

In an effort to increase sponsorship of this ever-growing project, Suzanne Liquerman and Kathleen Sullivan orga-



Governor John Rowland is joined by YLF sponsors Jay Margnelli from Coca-Cola, DAS Commissioner Barbara Waters, and Tony Scacca from Outback Steak House.

nized a luncheon for current and prospective sponsors at the Governor's Residence in March. Both Liquerman and Sullivan also coordinate the YLF Forum which is held this week on the UConn campus in Storrs.

"After the first year we participated we knew we could do more. Outback Steak House employees love the idea of giving back to the community and when we post the sign-up sheets to work the reception at the Governor's Residence, we always get more volunteers than we need," said Tony Scacca who is from the Outback Steak House in Orange.

"We can never have enough sponsors," said Commissioner Waters. "But I think we're doing a great job of recruiting private companies to get involved with the Connecticut community. The benefits on both sides extend way beyond a four-day forum – they really last a lifetime."

# ERP winners celebrate their day in the sun

By John McKay

Once again DAS honored its own with the Employee Recognition Program luncheon at the Solomon Welles house in Wethersfield.

Even the weather couldn't have been more cooperative, allowing winners and their guests to enjoy their lunch on the gracious wraparound porch overlooking Wethersfield Cove.

Commissioner Waters met with the winners that morning and said, "I really love the recognition program because there is so much good work going on here at DAS and you guys have really shone



**Sonji Fonseca, Joann Figueiredo, Chris Roberts, Robert Lapointe, Alyce O'Neill, Tony Nunes and Paul Felix**



**Steve Bansavich with Abbie Wotkyns**



**Mary Gugliemino and Dave Lynn**

through. A big 'thanks' from me and everyone who appreciates all that you do."

The "Going the Extra Mile" award went to Steve Bansavich in FSC/Recovery. Part of his nomination read, "He helps with posting when people are out of the workplace, takes messages, and gets figures together to place into letters in addition to his own work. He is a perfect example of someone who goes the extra mile for the state and his team. He sets a high bar of excellence for his teammates to follow."

Mary Gugliemino in HR/Payroll was recognized for her excellent "Customer Service" in DAS since her transfer here in July 2001. Colleagues say she is extremely accurate and always friendly and courteous as well as dedicated and hard-working.

The "Team Excellence" award went to FSC's Joann Figueiredo, Paul Felix, Sonji Fonseca, Alyce

O'Neill, Robert Lapointe, Chris Roberts and Tony Nunes for their work on the Avatar System. They worked tirelessly to facilitate the conversion of six old disjointed systems into Avatar and are the primary reason the conversion/implementation succeeded.

Special thanks to ERP committee members: Arlene Watson, Dave Demott, Deanna Howard, Debby Hearl, Donald Casella, Donna Camillone, Eva Williams, Linda Shackett-Blue, Nancy Jones, Natalie Shipman, and Tracie Knapsack.

## **DAS Times**

The *DAS Times* is published monthly by the Department of Administrative Services Communications Office 165 Capitol Avenue Hartford, CT 06106

**John G. Rowland**  
Governor

**Barbara A. Waters**  
Commissioner

**Donna J. Micklus**  
Editor

*Contributions are welcome but may be edited for space and clarity.*

Visit our website at [www.das.state.ct.us](http://www.das.state.ct.us)

Elizabeth Shailor from the City of New Haven thanked **Commissioner Barbara Waters** and **Jim Passier** for their “commitment and dedication at the state level for the towns and cities of this state. You have provided a variety of services, which expanded our capabilities and worked in our behalf to secure better products at lower costs to us. I am personally grateful to **Lydia Rosario** for her abilities as a contract administrator and professional for they are the finest I have ever known. She is a true team player and advocate for the state and towns. My heartfelt thanks and gratitude.”

Child Advocate Jeanne Milstein from the Office of the Child Advocate commended **Diane Mazar-Roberts** for all of her work over the past two years. “Diane has been consistently helpful, readily available, always responds in a very prompt manner, and is smart and creative. She has given us great advice on how to better organize, manage, and structure our agency.”

Doris Vieira thanked **Peggy Ramos** for helping their department with phone coverage during their annual physical inventory. “Your support is what makes DAS a great team. Thanks again!”

Jerry Lynn praised **Brian Saczawa, Diane Preble, Doreen Kearney, Jane Gore, Joe Mikulski, Karen Rakowski, Mike Felix, Norma Villanueva, and Patty Fazzino** for their “incredible job of closing another fiscal year. It looks as though this will be the best end of the year ever, and the credit goes to you! You are a terrific crew and you

make my job so easy. You are the best!!”

Jeanne Gray thanked **Michelle Burns** and **Robin Riddlesworth** for all of their help in preparing for a presentation for the Department of Environmental Protection. “Robin and Michelle were very busy with their own projects but they still dropped everything to help us meet our deadline. They both went above and beyond their duties in such a positive and cooperative manner. Many thanks again.”

Doris Vieira thanked **Diane Preble** for her assistance in preparing a Memorandum of Understanding with the State Department of Education regarding the FDP Paperless Billing System. “Your dedication is remarkable and it demonstrates teamwork all the way. Thanks for your support!”

Ronnie Magistrali from Torrington Public Schools applauded the **SBCH Data Entry Team** specifically **Will Hauschulz, Donna Golas, Eva Williams, and Mary Ann Scotti**. “The last three service reports were error-free when compared to our batches. I thought you might like to hear the good as well as the bad and the ugly!”

Recording Secretary Ester Luong from the Department of Social Services commended **Carlos Velez** for his “wonderful informative presentation at our April Annual Statewide Affirmative Action Employee Advisory Committee. The experiences that you shared, the insights you offered, and the motivational

speech you gave helped us to see that we can and do make a difference in the lives we touch.”

Deputy Commissioner Arthur C. Evans, Ph. D. from the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services applauded

## Hats Off

By Cindy Rusczyk

**Jimmy Civitello** “who assisted greatly in accommodating me with my vehicle at the State’s Pond Lily Fleet Service Center in New Haven. The staff there was very responsive and efficient.”

William R. Baldwin, Sr. from the Office of the State Marshall praised **Jeanne Gray** for “her fair, professional decision to process my Fire and Life Safety Specialist application. Jeanne accepted the application that I mistakenly sent to the Department of Public Safety because it was in fact dated and time stamped at their Personnel Office before the required cutoff date. I think she is an asset to your staff.”

Joel Schweidel from the Board of Parole commended **Diane Donato** for her “excellent service on our Affirmative Action Plan. Ms. Donato always responds in a timely fashion to any inquires we may have. The Board looks forward to a successful, continued relationship with your agency.”

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# Those kudos just keep on comin'!

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Elizabeth White from West Hartford Public Schools applauded **Laurie Melesko** for her assistance with developing several templates and adding items to one of her current templates for ordering. "Thank you for assisting me throughout the entire ordering process. You have been so kind to spend so much time with me."

Gerald Foley from the City of Norwalk thanked **Celeste Cashman** and **Carol Wilson** for getting back to him so quickly with the name for the electricity purchase of streetlights. "I always received positive feedback from all of you at DAS Purchasing."

The Wethersfield Housing Authority applauded **Bernie Blumenthal** for getting them more property insurance at a price of \$15,084 as apposed to their other carrier who was not renewing them and charging \$22,104 for their annual premium.

Bill O'Connor commended **Meg Yetishefsky** for her assistance in helping his client, TECAS Corporation, to obtain their set-aside certification. "Meg was professional, courteous, and a fine spokesperson for your department. It was a pleasure dealing with her."

Carol Wilson thanked **Dan Donahue** and **Dan Sadowski** for assisting her with getting a spare TV hooked up in their conference room. "We were pleasantly surprised with the fact that we could have a TV/VCR for our

meeting room, and within minutes it was in place, installed and working."

Kudos to **Jane Gore** from Jerry Lynn for her work in generating, mailing, and processing of all billings during a very hectic time of our fiscal year end. "You were nothing short of sensational working extremely hard to get out the May billings, cleaning up past due accounts, and generating accounts receivable reports each month for our customers. Nice going Jane, you're awesome!"

Commissioner Barbara Waters commended the **MIS Staff** on their IT presentation on June 21 "making us an IT leader in the state. I was so very proud this morning when Peter Sullivan and Eric Lindquist from DOIT reported out that we were unique in having almost all of our applications in the top rated area. Proud but not surprised. I have always said you are top shelf...think, only six years ago we were on a few WANG terminals and lots of electric typewriters. This is nothing short of miraculous!"

Jessica DeAntonio thanked **Phil Karas** for taking the time to speak with her and for sending her the information needed for her search for state employment opportunities.

Roy Dion commended the **FDP Team** for all of their great accomplishments for SY 02. "What great accomplishments - setting a record of 411,029 cases of commodities sold, online ordering, paperless billing, being chosen as a

pilot for the new federal system, excellent customer relations, and cost management. Each and every one of you is to be congratulated!"

Robert King of the Core-CT Team praised **Nancy Jones** for the "excellent work she did using manual and automatic reclassification and calculations. Nancy created a report that allowed the Core-CT project to better understand the e-mail account status of its more than 4,000 likely end users. I really appreciate it."

Maureen Friedman and Teresa Dupont applauded **Chris Smith** for all of his work in sending out their WIN newsletter and other communications through their contact database. "Even when he is not scheduled to work he checks to make sure that the newsletter has gone out without any problems, and when we ask him to do something last minute, he helps out with a positive attitude. He is a great asset to DAS and such a pleasure to work with."

In response to the DAS Make a Wish Day, Joel Schweidel from the Board of Parole commented, "**Juanita Woolfolk, Toni Alphonse, Pauline Mahoney, and Edra Osgood** all do a great job, so I have no wishes other than to continue your excellent service."

**DAS**

# Meet your new Diversity Council

**And learn the who, what, where, and why**

***Who is the Diversity Council?***

The Diversity Council is made up of DAS employees who have volunteered to serve for a minimum of one year.

***What is the Diversity Council working on now?***

Teaming up with the Strategic Learning Center, the Council will soon be announcing the results of the diversity survey and will develop a plan to address those issues identified in the survey. Also, the Council has a number of short-term goals: maintaining a presence in the *DAS Times*, developing a celebration calendar of holidays, ethnic and cultural events, and, of course, planning our next “Taste of DAS” celebration.

***Where is the Diversity Council headed in the future?***

The Council has developed a list of ideas and objectives to pursue: awareness and sensitivity training, focus groups to define diversity issues and behaviors, and “lunch and learn” sessions about diverse traditions, holidays, or other subjects of employee interest. But we need your help. The council is here to serve **you**, so it is important for you to contact any of the members regarding any diversity issues or ideas.

***Why have a Diversity Council?***

DAS employees come from such diverse cultures and creeds, it is important that we have an awareness and understanding of our similarities and differences, as well as an appreciation for our diversity. The Council strives to achieve that level by guaranteeing that all DAS employees receive diversity training, by ensuring that all activities of the Council are communicated, by addressing any diversity issue brought to their attention, and by serving as role models in their actions regarding diversity. **DAS**

Deb Atkinson, HR/SLC



Maureen Friedman, BE/Procurement



Isabelle McKinney  
Chair, OTC/BAG



Reuben Lusack  
BE/Procurement

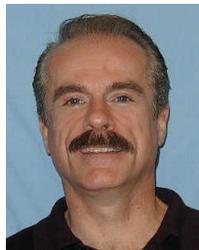
Diane Donato  
OTC/BAG



Pam Libby, HR

## Up Close

By Maureen Friedman



Dan Duggan  
SLC/MIS



Tracie  
Knapsack  
FSC/Bus. Off.



Belinda Hall, BE/Fleet



Tony Ferreira  
BE/Fed Foods



Doris Vieira, BE/Fed Foods



Joyce Chin HR/SLC



Barbara Waters  
Commissioner



Vin Lombardo, FSC



Cheryl Drolet,  
FSC/Collections

# So, what's the big idea?

By Cheryl Sawina

**A**lmost two years ago, we created the online Suggestion Box for employees to write in their ideas for improvements here at DAS.

Suggestions are first screened for propriety and then forwarded to the appropriate person or business center for review. Items that come in the form of a complaint are weeded out and placed off-line – employees that have problems with personnel, supervisory, or fairness issues should deal directly with their supervisor when possible, Human Resources staff, or their Communication Coordinator.

We've received 75 suggestions to date, 32 of which have been accepted – these range in subjects as varied as making system and process improvements to making our work environment more secure.

One of the more recent submissions that was implemented had to do with the Suggestion Box itself.

An anonymous source had the idea to archive older suggestions so the current status page was not bogged down with dated material.

This was immediately forwarded to MIS' Chris Smith who created an archive area that stores suggestions 6 months or older that are no longer being reviewed.

In response to another suggestion, Smith is creating a link on DAS Central that will send interested DAS staff to the DPW website and the Emergency Response Manual for the State

Office Building. There have been several inquiries from employees concerning procedures, phone numbers, etc.

The manual provides all of that information, and by placing it online it, the full-scale plan detailing procedures for fire and medical emergencies is at the fingertips of every DAS employee. Credit Teresa Dupont as the originator and Dan Donahue and Chris Smith for making it happen.

Even the DAS Hawks originated from the Suggestion Box!

Julie Ahlstrin had wanted to start a team when FSC Collections was in Newington, but wasn't able to generate enough interest or find other teams to play. Hearing about the Suggestion Box, she wrote in. Subsequently the team was formed and Ahlstrin also took on the added role of team captain.

"I started talking to friends of mine, made some great new friends from other departments, and a team was born," Ahlstrin said.

With the help of the Communications Office putting out infograms to generate team interest and Julie finding a league to get into, we now have a DAS Softball Team. Competing teams in their league are AAA (the car people), Dept. of Corrections, Performance Wheel (out of East Hartford- not a state facility),

DEP, Public Utilities and the New Britain Bar Association.

The team has about 14 to 16 people on a good day, and though they've won only one game so far, they're having a terrific time and remain optimistic about improving their record – the season doesn't end until September 25.

And as that famous Yankee philosopher Yogie Berra would say, "It ain't over till it's over." **DAS**

**The Suggestion Box works! Check out DAS Central for some of the great ideas your colleagues have submitted!**



**Because that's the way we've always done it!**

# FSC/Collections: They've done it again!

By Donna Micklus

**T**hey just keep breaking their own records. DAS' Collections team reached a new high in revenues for this past fiscal year, posting more than \$744 million.

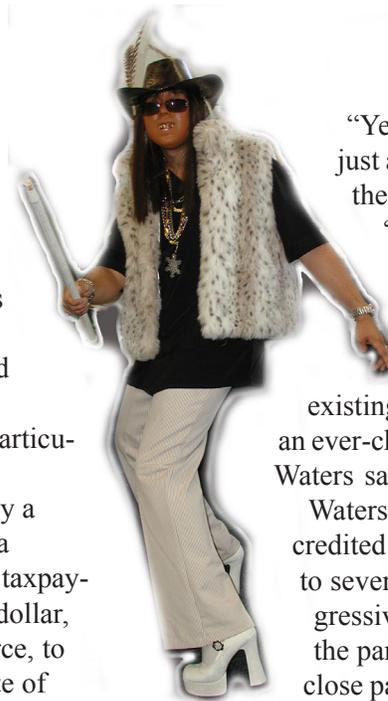
"That is \$68 million more than last year...an unbelievable achievement," said Commissioner Barbara Waters. "Just think about how staggering these figures are," Waters continued.

"We managed to recover almost twice the revenue collected just five years ago, and with half the staff. That just speaks volumes about how our employees are doing things better

and smarter," she said.

Waters said the timing was certainly propitious since the collections revenue goes back into the general fund at a juncture when budget dollars are particularly tight.

"DAS has not only a clear goal, but also a responsibility to the taxpayers to collect every dollar, from whatever source, to which the State of Connecticut is legally entitled. We chase down every source of debt collection revenue and reimbursement," said FSC Director Vin Lombardo.



"Yet, we are more than just a collection agency for the State," Waters said.

"We work closely with other state agencies to develop new revenue producing programs, and refine existing programs to adapt to an ever-changing environment," Waters said.

Waters and Lombardo credited this year's successes to several key factors: aggressive collection efforts on the part of DAS employees, close partnerships with sister state agencies, and new program initiatives. **DAS**

**Who was that mystery guest at the FSC/Collections celebration? Hint: Initials are FR!**

## Victories

### SAVE THE DATE!! DAS Summer Picnic August 14, Wickham Park in Manchester

The Picnic Committee will hold a Beach Bag Bonanza Raffle to lower the ticket price for the DAS Picnic. The raffle package includes a beach chair, towel, sunscreen, water bottle, books, snacks, CD, and more! Raffle tickets will be on sale until the drawing which is July 31 at 2 p.m. Price per ticket is \$1.

For tickets contact: Kathy Valone x5008, Nancy Jones x5004, Aimee Gagnon x5250, Carlos Kebe x5429, Cathy Kulas x5477 and Diane Fitzpatrick x5259.



# Make a Wish Day is a huge hit

By Donna Micklus  
and Tina Costanzo

Phones were ringing and the emails just kept coming as DAS hailed July 9 as “Make a Wish Day.”

And what a great day it was!

In just a few short hours, we had a total of 74 “wishes” that ranged from suggestions for new services, wishes for better service, wishes for specific job positions, to hopes for building improvements.



Of the 74 items, six were specific to praising the idea of “Make a Wish Day” itself, so people clearly warmed to the concept.

Customers calling in and emailing came from all over the state. Some were vendors, some were from other state agencies such as DSS, Education, Board of Parole, Housatonic Community College, Comptroller’s Office, and Environmental Protection to name a few. Even our own DAS folks responded!

Here are some of the creative wishes:

*“Automate gas pumps at state gas stations after hours.”*

*“Ask DAS to explore ways to encourage all state agencies to have a ‘Make a Wish Day.’”*

*“Make SP-10’s vanish into thin air.”*

*“Once you pass a test, you should not need to take the test over and over again. Be kept on a list for up to 10 years.”*

*“Improve the cafeteria in SOB with a better environment and food (there were several of these!).”*

*“I would like to get a job as a network specialist or as an engineering customer support specialist.”*

*“Eliminate the necessity of having to go through DAS to obtain certificates for all PSA (individuals) over \$3,000.”*

*“Do away with state exams for jobs.”*

*“State workers making \$60K + should be evaluated through job performance consultants who are professionals in the field.”*

*“I would like to have the category ‘job descriptions’ easier to access on the DAS Website. I have also found it confusing to try to look up other job descriptions unless every detail is exactly right.”*

*“That DAS analysts are assigned and stay in assignment for more than a few months.”*

*“Replacement of 1995 Ford Escort #5482.”*

*“I think all the state jobs should be posted in here (DAS page) instead of looking each agency’s web page. Sometimes I notice that there are jobs posted in the other agency’s page but not in the DAS page.”*

*“Procurement make vendors accountable to their contracts.”*

*“DAS reviews the tuition reim-*

*bursement rules for managers and updates the amounts that can be reimbursed.”*

*“Medical Room with bed for need to lie down (if headache, ill, tired, etc., then get up and work).”*

*“Add a centralized resource center for state employees - model after Hartford College for Women Career Counseling Center or similar centers and services offered by private sector companies like The Hartford or Pratt & Whitney.”*

*“To have ALL contracts posted on the DAS website, i.e., DOIT contracts, moved or included on the DAS website.”*



It was a GREAT experience, and, based on both the number and variety of responses, DAS customers were excited about the idea.

The Make a Wish Team will now address each of the 74 items, and we will meet with each of the business areas to discuss the particular wish that affects them.

A response will be given to all participants who sent in their wishes.

We’d love to grant every wish. But we also need to be realistic and consider the feasibility of the content and its compatibility with DAS business strategies.

We hope we can do this again - as some of the wishers strongly encouraged! **DAS**