



## Caliendo To Head Up SMART Unit

By Donna Micklus and John McKay

Despite its name, DAS' newest unit is not about intel. The Small Agency Resource Team (SMART) is the result of Commissioner Linda Yelmini's charge by the legislature to develop a plan to streamline and standardize the human resources, affirmative action, payroll and business office services for some 21 smaller state agencies.

In a recent letter to the 21 agency heads, Yelmini wrote, "I have consulted with Robert Genuario, Secretary of the Office of Policy and Management, and your agency has been identified as one of the agencies that will have its personnel, payroll, affirmative action and business office functions merged and consolidated within the Department of Administrative Services. The individuals within your agency who are performing these functions...will be transferred to DAS. The above referenced functions will be consolidated within DAS and performed by teams of individuals who will provide services to more than one agency. To the extent there is an abundance of staff at DAS to perform these functions once agencies are merged and/or consolidated, individuals will transfer to vacancies at those agencies that are not part of this process...You should be aware that it is not anticipated that there will be any layoffs as a result of the mergers and consolidations."

Yelmini said that according to the state budget, the consolidation is expected to save the state \$1 million.



Steve Caliendo takes on a smart role

SMART will be headed up by Steve Caliendo who is no stranger to DAS or the human resources field.

He began his public service career in 1978 with CHRO, investigating discrimination complaints.

He then moved to DAS in 1986 under a unit called Shared Affirmative Action Resource Program (SHARP).

Are we sensing a theme here, SHARP... SMART??

Anyway, after a couple of years he transferred to Consumer Protection where he handled both affirmative action and human resources programs until his recent move back here to DAS.

"I'm up for the challenge," Caliendo said enthusiastically.

"I really think this unit is going to have a big impact on streamlining processes for

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# Taming Mt. St. Helens on the Fifth Floor???

By Jerry Lynn

The Office of the State Comptroller set up the year-end deadline as June 29<sup>th</sup>, which was the final day to process transactions for fiscal year 2004/2005.

This truly is a combined, team effort and it is a wonderful meshing of personalities, backgrounds, styles and dynamics.

The annual year-end push begins with the rumbles of a tremor in early April, and as the pressure mounts over the last couple of weeks in June, it ends with an all out eruption on the final day, with everyone scrambling to get the job done.

To make things even a bit more interesting, this volcano of activity takes place simultaneously along with the normal, day-to-day activities and duties.

Despite the pressures to make this deadline, our dedicated folks were 100% committed to accomplishing a successful year-end closing. This fine bunch refuses to accept mediocrity, and they take great pride in what they do.

In all, there are 22 people involved from the Business Office, and there are so many heroes. Each person contributes to this annual frenzy of activity to monitor and track eight different state agencies, including the Governor's Office and the Lieutenant Governor's Office. The teamwork and camaraderie may be difficult for some to imagine, but each person is looking out for the other, and when one falls, there are many who step up to help. From Cathy Abadom hustling to reconcile all the P-Card statements, to capture that all important expense number in time for the June 29<sup>th</sup> cutoff; to Melissa Colonese-Scutt calculating and distributing the

agency's phone charges to their proper cost centers; to Tracie Knapsack, Juliet Colebrook and Brian Saczawa preparing all the last minute



business center orders, insuring timely delivery of the goods/services and the invoicing of these orders, plus reconciling all the Core-CT purchase orders, while finding time to submit the Small Business Set-Aside Goals Reports; to Kathy Sobieski and her staff of Lori Thibeault, Shirley Drueschler and Loretta Miller as they track down the state's delinquent payers, and they also manage to find time to help with transfer invoice mailings and year end data entry; to Diane Preble and Mike Felix for their "never say never" commitment to an impossible transfer of funds to the Department of Labor – which they made possible; to Karen Rakowski, Norma Villanueva and Patty Fazzino for their relentless drive to receive, process, pay and deposit the hundreds of accounts receivable and payable transactions; to Cathy Stankoski's last minute rush to calculate and submit all of the employee reimbursements to payroll, in time for the fiscal year's last payroll deadline; to Debbie Jeanfaivre and Donna Kmetzo for their focus and

desire to keep vigil on the daily cash flow and for preparing the daunting customer statements; and all the way to Carl Hosmer, Pauline Mahoney and Carolyn Koloseus as they made certain each of the budget numbers were rung up in their proper places, and that we stayed within the multiple budgets for the eight agencies that DAS is responsible for.

Over the years, DAS has built a fine reputation for staying within budget and for meeting all of its deadlines. This fiscal year end, the Business Office only enhanced that reputation. Fiscal Year 2004/2005 is history and we now begin a new chapter with Fiscal Year 2005/2006.

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# \$3 Million Contract Award Goes to Bridgeport Small Business

By John McKay

DAS has awarded a \$3 million contract to Fairfield Uniform Company of Bridgeport. The Uniform Company will supply uniforms to the state's Department of Correction.

The company has been a registered small business with the state's Supplier Diversity program since 1999. The Supplier Diversity or Set Aside program targets at least 25% of the state's business be transacted with small businesses including those owned by

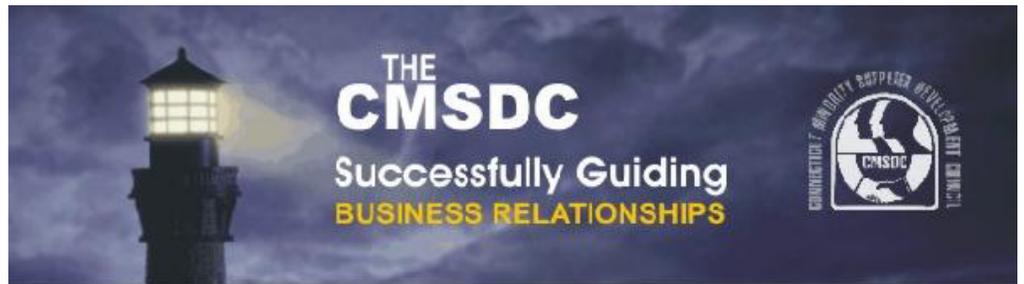
minorities, women and the disabled. "We've been registered with DAS' Supplier Diversity program since the beginning," said company owner Don Reiter, "and it's really worked for us. We have a number of uniform contracts with the state and look forward to doing more."

"This is also a big victory for our Supplier Diversity unit," said DAS Commissioner Linda Yelmini. "Not only working with a small business, but helping sustain their success by

having them qualified through our system ensures a good relationship on both sides. Governor Rell has repeatedly stressed her desire to nurture Connecticut's small-business community, including minority and women-owned businesses, and this news marks yet another positive step forward in our collective effort."

The contract will be awarded for a 5-year period.

**Meg Yetishefsky hits the front page of the Connecticut Minority Supplier Development Council's July Newsletter. Is she starting to get more press than Carlos? Time will tell.**



Connecticut's Department of Administrative Services (DAS), in keeping with the reforms instituted in state procurement policy, now lists all state contracts on the web. Minority business owners with annual sales less than \$10 million can apply for certification with the State as part of their Supplier Diversity Program that was previously know as the State Set-Aside program. The DAS allows state-certified MBEs to receive notices of contract opportunities when they become available in their areas of expertise. This is an excellent service that we encourage all MBEs to take advantage of. For more information you can visit the link below or contact Meg Yetishefsky, Supplier Diversity Manager at 860-713-5228. Ms. Yetishefsky is a member of the CMSDC Board of Directors.



[The Connecticut Department of Administrative Services](#)

# DAS Holds Sixth Nurse Hiring Event

By *Nina Ritson*

**W**hen Denise Tyburski of Department of Mental Health Services needed nurses immediately, to whom did she turn?

You got it – the Department of Administrative Services HR Team.

With the great success of five earlier hiring events, DMHAS decided to call on DAS again for help in a large-scale hiring of registered nurses.

Two hiring events were held – one at the Connecticut Valley Hospital (CVH) on July 28 for positions in Middletown, Newington, Hartford, New Haven and Norwich and on August 3 for positions in Bridgeport, Stamford, Waterbury, Torrington, and Danbury.



How did it all come together? “The event was extremely well organized,” said HR’s Patsy McLaughlin. It began with the DAS hiring team of Pam Libby, Diane

Fitzpatrick, Patsy McLaughlin, Carla Martin, Diane Mazar-Roberts, Dale Greenwood, Jeanne Gray, Deb Atkinson, Sue Turko, Kevin Turko, Dan Currey, Andrea Yurcak, Keith Anderson, Michelle Fournier and Heather Tweeddale. DAS web guru Bill Skyrme, posted a registration area on the DAS website so that potential applicants could register online and schedule their interview at the location they chose.

“The website is so comprehensive and informative that applicants could not only schedule the date and time of their interview, but also review the requirements of eligibility, find what to expect on the hiring day, what documents to bring, download the application form and of course, directions to the hiring sites,” McLaughlin explained. As of this printing there were 122 nurses scheduled for interviews.

At the July 28 event at CVH in Middletown, the interviews ran from 8:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. McLaughlin explained the procedure.

“The registration team greeted candidates, documented their paperwork and had the applicants complete a writing sample and a job related questionnaire,” she said. “Applicants were then escorted to one of the eight interview panels that consisted of a DAS HR representative, a DMHAS registered nurse and



**Jeanne Gray, Dale Greenwood and Diane Fitzpatrick (below) review applicant information at Nurse Hiring Day in Middletown**

person from DMHAS human resources. All job applicants were asked the same questions and each candidate had to receive a passing score before they could be considered for employment.”

McLaughlin said that after the interview phase, candidates were taken to a waiting area, where they viewed a Powerpoint

presentation about the DMHAS mission, programs and services.

DMHAS nursing representatives were available to answer individual questions. Applicants with passing scores then met with DMHAS administrators for a final interview. Candidates who passed this qualifying point were then directed to Diane Fitzpatrick, where the hiring rate was determined; they left with a conditional offer of employment and start date.

“This process has been so successful, not only for the amount of time it saves in the hiring process, but statistics have shown that DMHAS’ retention rate is very high compared to previous hires,” McLaughlin stated. The stats should be available in early August.

Best wishes to the new hires!

# Here They Are Now!

# Where Are They Now?

By Nina Ritson

October 24 is less than three months away. For most of us that date means rake the leaves, take down the screen windows, put up the storms, and find a Halloween costume.

For Michelle Fournier, our new HR Consultant working in Classification and Compensation, this date means all that - **plus** a new baby!

"I have so much to do in the next three months," Fournier says. "On top of all this, my husband Andy and I just bought a house, so I will be living at my in-laws for the month of August until we close on the new house and begin renovations!"

Fournier, who recently transferred from the University of Connecticut, is also a UConn graduate. Her background is in public personnel administration, so the move to DAS Human Resources was a good fit for both Fournier and DAS.

"I grew up in New Jersey and my family still lives on the Jersey shore. I try to see them on weekends. I really want my daughter to be a part of our family summers at the beach. It is what I grew up with as a little girl."

Her daughter Sydney is now three, and she is anxiously awaiting her new baby sister **and** her new bedroom. "She has already told me she is going to teach her new sister how to feed her stuffed bears and teach her how to cook."

Fournier laughs as she describes the motivating factor for buying a new home, "We have one bathroom in the home we own now - I have another girl on the way. We were delighted when we found this house - it has double vanities for the girls. I am just thinking of the teenage years!"

"We still have one dilemma to be resolved before October 24<sup>th</sup> - the baby's name." Fournier's research into baby names brought unexpected changes.

"We were set on the name Cameron, until I looked it up and found out Cameron means 'crooked nose.' I think we are going to call her Avery now."



Before retiring in 1997, her days used to be filled with scheduling appointments, memos, typing DAS - 1s, filing and answering phones. She was the executive secretary for Richard Sheehan in the DAS Business Office, and she knew where everything was at any given time.

So what is Lois Fleischmann doing now?

"I am redoing my kitchen - maple cabinets with a sandalwood finish and granite countertops. I still do water aerobics and volunteer at the Glastonbury Historical Society giving tours. As a matter of fact, my husband Joe and I are working the Glastonbury Antique Festival." She visits her mother regularly and notes - "she still has her wits about her!"

As I spoke to Lois, her voice was spry as she occasionally broke our conversation to disrupt a squabble between her two grandchildren, the loves of her life, Natalie age 14 and Ethan age 5. She was laughing as she told me "Ethan is cheating at cards and his sister is getting mad at him!" Well, Ethan's love of cards is in his blood because his grandmother is still playing mahjong every week!

Her days are filled with her grandchildren and their busy schedules - like taking Natalie to swimming lessons and camp. She boasts with pride as she describes Natalie's beautiful singing voice and the fact that she will be going to Bacon Academy in the fall.

Remember how Lois used to travel? Well, she admits they have stopped traveling out of the country since 9/11, but loves to go to Sarasota, Florida in February every year.

"I want to say hello to all my dear friends and former coworkers there at DAS, wherever they may be." If ever there was a pillar of strength and a model for perseverance it was Lois Fleischmann, "Life goes on, Nina," her voice as strong as she, "and we must go on with it."

Who ever said retirement slows the pace, never met Lois. I feel honored to have been able to work with her.

*"Here They Are Now!"... "Where are they now?" is a new feature that will appear bimonthly in the DAS Times. Many folks are curious not only about new DAS employees, but about our retirees as well. We're tracking them down and bringing you the latest news. If there is a particular DAS alum that you are curious about, tell us...or better yet, let us know if you want to make the contact yourself and send us your comments! As always, your feedback is welcome!*

# News Bits

## DAS Comes Through for DEMHS

Commissioner James M. Thomas from the Department of Emergency Management and Homeland Security wrote the following message to Commissioner Linda J. Yelmini regarding the purchase of new Support and Tow Vehicles for the Mass Casualty Decontamination Trailers:

"As this project is now in the final stages, its success is the direct result of the collaborative efforts made between our state agencies and the fire service. DAS has played a crucial role in this partnership. I want you to know that **Jill Belisle** and **Theresa Anderson** have provided their technical expertise and played a significant role in the overall outcome of this project. We would like to thank you and your staff for all your assistance."

## Lobo to Speak at CT \$hops

*By John McKay*

DAS Communications has arranged for UConn basketball legend Rebecca Lobo to be the keynote speaker at this year's CT \$hops. "We're simply thrilled to have her for CT \$hops and to draw as much attention as possible to our event," said Procurement Director Carol Wilson.

Lobo will be the luncheon speaker and will have a booth for signing autographs after her presentation.

CT Shops, chaired by Tony DeLuca and Susanne Hawkins, will be held on Wednesday, November 9, 2005 at the new Hartford Convention Center. This opportunity is open to vendors with state contracts, state agencies, and not-for-profit organizations that may participate either as an exhibitor, sponsor, or supporter.

It's one of DAS' signature events of the year.



**Rebecca Lobo**

Procurement staff work all year to entice vendors to attend, and customers to come see the savings that are only a sign-up away.

"Many state contracted businesses are unaware of the savings we can offer them," said Wilson. "Some don't realize the vastness of our resources. We offer so much more than they realize and this is a great opportunity to show them."

### SMART, *cont. from page 1*

human resources and affirmative action issues, and enhancing service delivery to the agencies in these important areas. I'm looking forward to getting the team up and running."

Caliendo said his staff should all be in place by mid-August. Natalie Shipman, another DAS alum, will be heading up the affirmative action function of the unit.

The DAS Business Office under Jean Michael will expand their role in providing business office services to additional agencies as

they have been doing for a number of years for the Office of the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Board of Firearms, State Marshal Commission, Judicial Selection Commission, and Police Officers Standards and Training.

"I really believe that having a uniformed system for human resources and affirmative action will have a huge savings in time, administrative costs, and even fiscally," said Caliendo.

"And everyone here at DAS has been so welcoming, I don't see how we can't succeed," he added.



...our strength is in our differences

# Happenings

## An Interview with Franky Rivera

By Maureen Friedman

**B**orn 25 years ago in Ponce, Puerto Rico, Francisco “Franky” Rivera of DAS Collections Services came to the United States with his family when he was 9 months old.

To preserve his culture, Franky’s mother felt that it was important that he learn his native language, Spanish, first and that it be spoken at home. This has served Franky well because he is able to act as a translator for calls and correspondence from Spanish speaking customers.

When asked about Puerto Rican customs, Franky grinned and said “food is a big part of our events.”

At large gatherings you can expect to find a pig roasting and traditional dishes like pasteles, which is ground pork and grated plantain (green banana) that is stuffed inside a banana leaf and pastelón, a dish he equated with lasagna. There’s a big difference though. Forget the lasagna noodles. Imagine instead plantains sliced lengthwise, fried and layered between a ground beef and olive filling.

To celebrate birthdays, a piñata is a must. For girls, there is a special celebration when they turn 15 years old. It is called Quinceanero and is similar to a wedding celebration in many ways. The event usually begins at church with a Mass and special blessing for the birthday girl. A reception follows with food, music and dancing. The whole time she is escorted by 15 damas (girls), all dressed in their finest.

In the Puerto Rican culture, Christmas is observed and gifts are exchanged, but the biggest celebration is Three Kings Day that occurs on January 6.

Traditionally, children put grass in a shoebox and place it along with a glass of water under their bed the night before. Before morning, parents exchange the grass and water for gifts. When the children awaken, they immediately look under the bed to find gifts waiting for them.

When asked about the significance of the grass and water, Franky explained, “The three kings traveled with their camels to bring gifts to the baby Jesus. When they got there, the camels were hungry and the kings were thirsty. The grass is to feed the camels and the water is for the kings. If you leave the grass and water for them, they will leave a gift for you.”

Not until 1993 did Franky have the opportunity to visit Puerto Rico again. There he found a whole family of relatives he had never met. Since then he visits each year to keep in touch with them and to visit his mother who moved back to the island four years ago.

Franky is well known for his love of photography but people may not know that he also makes jewelry. He creates bracelets, necklaces and earrings by stringing pearls.



**The talented Franky Rivera is now a new dad!**

Another thing people may not know is that he was recently honorably discharged from the Army. Serving in the Army Reserves for the past 8 years, Franky was honorably discharged in April of 2005, shortly before his unit was sent over to Iraq.

The Rivera family recently grew. Franky and his wife (and high school sweetheart) Marisol, who also works at DAS, now have a one-month old baby girl named Amanda.

He and Marisol intend to instill the same cultural traditions in their daughter. She will learn Spanish first and speak it at home. She will have her own Quinceanero on her fifteenth birthday. And she will feed the camels and quench the thirst of the three kings and marvel at the gifts they leave her.