



State Police/  
Correction Officer  
Exams



NBC 30 gets  
their answers



P-Card Purchases  
pay back

JULY 2012

# DAS TIMES

## MATCHMAKER<sup>2012</sup> *A Match Made in Hartford*

by John McKay and Nina Ritson

It was the second time DAS hosted a small business matchmaker conference at the University of Hartford, and it was twice as nice.

The Matchmaker event brought together 58 large prime government vendors and over 300 Connecticut small businesses to discuss business opportunities of mutual interest. In addition, over 25 government and non-profit business resources were available to educate small business representatives on how to access opportunities in the public marketplace.

Governor Malloy kicked off the event by admitting he was a product of small business ownership. He reflected on a time when his father had started his own small business which put the Governor and his siblings through school and that when his brother took over the business, the small insurance company continued to provide for the family.



Carol Wilson, Meg Yetishefsky, Commissioner DeFronzo and GSA's Rob Zarnetske

“Job growth in Connecticut is small business and new small businesses are what are going to save our state during these tough economic times. I want to salute small business owners who I consider survivors of the worst economic times since the Great Depression. All of your stories are stories of survival and I applaud you for all your hard work and effort.”  
“The matchmaker event gives DAS the opportunity to put small and minority-owned businesses in direct

*continued to page 2*



Governor Dannel P. Malloy addresses attendees at Matchmaker 2012.

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Dannel P. Malloy  
Governor

Donald J. DeFronzo  
Commissioner

Jeffrey Beckham  
Staff Counsel/  
Director of Communications

# DAS Matchmaker Conference *continued*

contact with large state and federal contractors who could potentially use their services,” said DAS Commissioner Donald DeFronzo. “This helps these small Connecticut based companies get work while assisting the contractors in meeting their small and minority business set-aside goals. State agencies currently hold contracts for the purchase of goods and services valued at about \$2 billion dollars. There are currently 2,500 certified businesses

within the DAS small and minority business program that could greatly benefit from this event and potentially get more of that business. In these difficult economic times, every opportunity helps.”



Secretary of State Denise Merrill highlighted the advancements of her website in assisting small businesses and the vast amount of online resources available at [www.sots.ct.gov](http://www.sots.ct.gov). “Every agency is working with the Governor’s office to make this happen,” she said. “We currently have an email list of 300,000 businesses in Connecticut that we contact with information. We need to streamline government and we are currently very close to introducing new forms of online payment. We are here for you and want you to contact us to help you facilitate your actions with the state.”

Bob Zarnetske, Regional Administrator for GSA is the first administrator from Connecticut to serve in this position that oversees Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire and Maine. Bob thanked the vendors for participating in the event and went on to thank the small businesses as well. He also noted that in Connecticut we have witnessed 27 months of job growth. Four years ago, the nation was down 8,000,000 jobs – currently that number is 4,300,000.

In addition, representatives from federal, state and local agencies will provide training on small business set-aside programs and how to become certified to bid on state and federal government contract work.

Mark Carozza of DAS Procurement demonstrated how to use the State Procurement Portal and where to find information there. As Murphy’s Luck would have it, the Wi-Fi at the University of Hartford was experiencing difficulty and Carozza was unable to access the DAS website for this presentation. So Mark did what Mark does best – ad lib an impromptu presentation filled with classic Carozza character! And he did so quite perfectly navigating his class of 32 attendees through the DAS website virtually through his memory and descriptions.

Carole Becker of Budget Printers said, “This is the first time for me. I have booked every other slot to meet with the prime vendors. I am excited to be here because it is very difficult for a small business to get the attention of these businesses. I am hoping by meeting and leaving information with them that this will bring business to Budget.”



# State Police/Correction Officer Exams by Nina Ritson

In the early spring and summer, DAS once again posted and tested for the long awaited State Police Trooper Trainee, Protective Services Trainee and Correction Officer Exams. This was no small undertaking! These exams usually receive heavy response, but this year broke records. There were 6,845 applicants for the Correction Officer exam. Of this amount 5,114 took the written test, 4,598 passed that test and from that number 4,370 scheduled themselves for the physical fitness test. For the State Police



Trooper Trainee/Protective Services Trainee, 5,147 signed up for the written exam, 3,793 took the exam, and 3,415 passed.

For the Correction Officer physical fitness test, candidates were tested in four categories based on Cooper Standards for testing: sit and reach, one minute sit-ups, one minute push-ups, and a 300 meter run. The requirements to pass this portion of the examination depended on a candidate's sex and age, with candidates ranging from 21 to over 60 years of age.



Human Resources Consultant Francine Dew of DAS Statewide Human Resources, described the weeks of intensity administering the physical fitness test, "we tested approximately 600 people per day, so applicants were scheduled every 1/2 hour beginning at 8:30 in the morning. While there were some no shows, there were very few of them in the first few days."

"You know the economy has been terrible everywhere," said Francine, "There were candidates from all over the country. Many came from Florida and North Carolina and one even came in from Washington state. That person told me that he was willing to move to Connecticut for this position because the pay and

benefits were far better in Connecticut than on the west coast."

The average age for this round of applicants was early 30's, but DAS tested someone who was in their early 60's.

DAS provided candidates with plenty of instruction on every phase of the examination on its 'Law Enforcement' website, including a 'General Information and Preparation Guide,' that provided detailed instructions and information about the examination, how to prepare and the examination's requirements. Candidates were given plenty of time after the written exam to prepare for the physical fitness test.



Having up-to-date examination lists for the Department of Correction is important as there are between 700 and 800 Correction officers in the workforce who are eligible to retire.



As far as the State Police Trooper Trainee examination, DAS will submit a list of applicants who passed the written examination to the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection (State Police) for the next phases of the selection process. This is a lengthy process and it requires a candidate to pass a physical fitness test, polygraph test, psychological evaluation, background investigation, medical evaluation and an oral interview.

Once selected, a candidate becomes an employee of the State of Connecticut and begins several months of intensive training. For a State Police Trooper Trainee, this means attending training at the State Police Training Academy in Meriden. The individual must attend the academy for six months, staying overnight Monday through Friday. This alone has caused many potentially great troopers to leave the program because of the time away from their families. Candidates are compensated throughout training and upon graduation they are compensated as State Police Troopers.



So what sort of training did the DAS testing staff need to prepare for this exam? Francine described the grueling schedule for staff during the Correction Officer physical fitness test. “We began around 7-7:30 each morning to set up for the day and we sometimes did not leave until 6:30 that night. It really was physically exhausting, plus we tested in record heat.”



The Correction Officer written exam was administered in April and ran for 10 days, three sessions per day. “In between we would set up for the next group coming in,” Francine said. “This definitely takes a lot of effort - there were no egos here -- we all did everything! Everyone really pulled their weight and then some! We work closely with the state police and with members of the Corrections team chosen to administer the tests.

The examination list promulgated for the State Police Trooper Trainee/Protective Services Trainee and Correction Officer is valid for one year and can be extended to a maximum of three years. After that time a new exam will be required and a new list generated.

Francine credited Don Jordan for writing the exam, and Kimchi Le for designing and preparing the online system for the thousands of applications that came in to DAS. “She is so smart and so patient with us!” She also thanked the staff at DAS Central Printing for preparing the written materials.

Upon completion of testing Francine says she slept for two days. “We were all exhausted. Not only were the folks on the testing team doing double duty, but back at the State Office Building the staff in Human Resources were fielding calls from candidates that were pouring in as well as making sure all others tasks were being done.

Congratulations to the HR team for getting through another round of exams. Sit down and relax -you have three years until it starts again.

# Graduation Day for Aspiring Leaders

by Peggy Zabawar

Graduation day for the Aspiring Leaders Executive Development Program was held on June 7, and all 28 candidates representing 16 different state agencies, gave their capstone project presentations to a full house of agency heads, administrators and guests.

Candidates took their cues from a host of captivating speakers who joined them throughout the three month program to discuss leadership and government. This third graduation of the program was fortunate to hear from Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman for her keynote speech on opening day, DOC Commissioner Leo Arnone, Executive Director William Carbone from the Judicial Branch, State Representative Diana Urban, and OPM Secretary Benjamin Barnes, among others. Learning from their skilled mentors, and incorporating the training from classes, graduates discussed their projects to engage and inform their audience.

Projects included succession planning, improving outcomes for family therapy, database improvements and dashboard implementation, several training projects on motivating staff and improving morale, and many others. Following the presentations, Deputy Commissioner Dr. Martin Anderson addressed the graduates, and presented each with a certificate, including Brenda Abele and Carolyn Kozak from DAS. Aspiring Leaders has evolved in the last three years from an ambitious pilot to a well-respected leadership development training program, helping managers master the skills they need to lead and grow in state government. Invitations for the 2013 program will be sent to agency heads in fall 2012 for nomination for next spring.



# Connecticut School Breakfast Summit by Jeff Beckham

One of the critical services provided by DAS is the management of surplus food the State of Connecticut receives through the Federal Foods Distribution Program, administered by the US Department of Agriculture. DAS distributes the commodities to

school districts statewide through the Connecticut Food Distribution Program (FDP).

Another of the state's programs that assist local schools is the School Breakfast Program, administered by the State Department of Education. The program is a federally-assisted meal program operating in public and nonprofit private schools and residential child care institutions. In the participating school



*Commissioner Don DeFronzo addresses the crowd at the School Breakfast Summit.*

districts, the program provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free breakfasts to children each school day.

Connecticut, it turns out, is one of the lower performing states in terms of the percentage of our school districts that provide breakfast for our school children.

A "Connecticut Breakfast Expansion Team (CBET)" was formed in the spring of 2009 to address Connecticut's relatively poor performance in school

breakfast measures. CBET is a collaboration of several government and non-profit agencies dedicated to child nutrition.

On May 4, 2012, the DAS Food Distribution unit co-sponsored the first-ever Connecticut School Breakfast Summit at Rentschler Field in East Hartford. The summit brought together food service professionals from school districts around the state. Commissioner DeFronzo made remarks to the assembled group and introduced Governor Malloy who also addressed the summit audience.

Considerable progress is being made in the breakfast expansion effort. There are clearly financial obstacles to offering healthy and nutritious breakfasts in every school. The summit included discussion of innovative ways to improve quality of food, control costs and increase participation in the School Breakfast Program.

Governor Malloy is an enthusiastic supporter of the efforts to expand school breakfast programs. Last year, he helped kick off the No Kid Hungry campaign, appeared in a public service announcement for the campaign, and continues to work with End Hunger, CT! to eradicate childhood hunger. At the summit, the Governor recognized the hard work of the food service professionals in our schools and saluted their dedication and commitment to the children they serve.

It is important for all of us to be aware of the stress that hunger can create in some kids' lives and the impact it can have on their performance in school. At the summit, Commissioner DeFronzo noted that this is one of the areas we must address in our push to improve education across the state.

# NBC30 Interviews On Location



NBC 30's reporter Jo Ling Kent recently contacted DAS to do a story about DAS Fleet and the internal processes for handling comments, complaints, and compliments about drivers of the Fleet vehicles. Per her request, Ms. Kent interviewed Commissioner DeFronzo on July 3 at the Buckingham Steet station.



Her questions were based on reports about drivers of DAS Fleet vehicles. These reports are entered and tracked through the "Fleet.Ct.Gov" website that was created nearly four years ago. This website allows anyone to file a comment/complaint/compliment concerning a driver of a DAS Fleet vehicle, the comment or complaint is then tracked from start to closure.



Commissioner DeFronzo responded to Ms. Kent's inquiries about individuals who observed state cars driving out of state or parked at a movie theater.

"...these complaints, while legitimate, might not be fully informed. Those are legitimate questions," DeFronzo told NBC Connecticut, "but the public needs to know that sometimes we have group home operators, that take a state vehicle and bring the resident of the group home to a movie, shopping or to a laundromat. Those are real life issues that we respond to."

She also discussed the advantages/disadvantages about the proposed installation of GPS devices in Fleet vehicles. "It is DAS' hope that the investment in GPS devices will improve behavior and decrease unnecessary car usage." Commissioner responded.

*Top: Commissioner DeFronzo explains the process of vehicle reports to Jo Ling Kent of NBC 30.*

*Middle: Communications Director Jeff Beckham and Assistant Director of Fleet Jim Palmer observe the interview*

*Bottom: Cameras roll at the Buckingham Garage.*

The interview aired on Friday, July 20 on NBC30.

# P-Card Purchases Pay Back!

by John McKay

Thanks to the JPMorgan Chase rebate program, the state will deposit monies into the General Fund.

In May, Department of Administrative Services Commissioner Donald DeFronzo and State Comptroller Kevin Lembo accepted a rebate check in the amount of \$460,534.34 from JPMorgan Chase, stemming from the state's use of purchasing cards issued by the bank.

The State of Connecticut Purchasing Card Program was established in 1998 by the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of the State Comptroller. The program was designed to meet the purchasing and travel needs of state agencies. The purchasing card allows the cardholder to purchase with greater efficiency by reducing processing time and by obtaining commodities and travel services faster.

Use of the charge card by state agencies reduces the time and paperwork associated with purchase orders, invoices and checks for less than \$2,500. The card also

offers an alternative to a variety of other processes including petty cash, low-dollar purchase orders and travel reimbursement.

Currently 84 executive branch state agencies, five state universities, and 46 municipalities and non-profits use the P-Card program. Specifically the City of Norwalk will receive a rebate of \$38,107.63, the City of Norwich will receive \$12,204.22, and the Connecticut Institute for the Blind at Oak Hill will receive a \$13,518.33 rebate. Less these amounts, the total deposit into the General Fund is \$396,704.16. The program is calculated on a January to December calendar year basis.

DAS Commissioner Donald DeFronzo said, "Each year we try to find new and innovative ways of saving money for the state and Connecticut taxpayers. We are pleased to see the results of our efforts with this rebate check being deposited into the general fund. This program is a good example of the benefits of two state entities working together."



May 14, 2012. From l to r: Sam Johns, Carlos Velez, State Comptroller Kevin Lembo, Tim Noble, Commissioner Don DeFronzo, Kerry DiMatteo, John McAuley, Amy Cunningham, Joanne Cusano, Carol Wilson and Deputy Commissioner Martin Anderson.

# Emergency Exercise Brings out the Best at BEST

by John McKay

It was a disaster...actually a simulated “cyber” disaster.

DAS/BEST hosted the Connecticut portion of The National Level Exercise (NLE) 2012 exercise last month that simulated various cyber attacks on a multitude of state systems.

The premise was that a hacker group was exploiting information and internet security systems across several states. Water systems were compromised, false reports of infrastructure destruction were being reported, phone service interrupted and network firewalls were being circumvented.

“It really was an excellent test of our systems, how we would react to various situations and, more importantly, how we could fix and find solutions to simulated compromised systems. Overall I think we did a very good job of shutting down systems, fixing the problem and getting services back up and running in a timely manner,” said BEST CIO Mark Raymond.

The National Level Exercise 2012 focuses on the nation’s ability to coordinate and implement prevention, preparedness, response and recovery plans, and capabilities pertaining to a significant cyber event or series of cyber events. NLE 2012 is composed of a series of exercises, each linked by cyber-related scenario that increases in complexity as the exercise progresses.

The Capstone portion of the exercise simulated a steady state cyber attack against targeted networks, control systems and applications with the intent to overwhelm traditional response capabilities thus driving the discussion toward an examination of the various response and mitigation capabilities and resources available.

The State of Connecticut has participated in a number of exercises including the Cyber Incident Management/Virtual Effects in April which was held in Washington, DC, the FEMA Region 1 Information Exchange Tabletop Exercise in May held in Boston, and the Capstone/Cyber Physical Effects which was held in various locations with DAS/BEST hosting the Connecticut portion from June 4 through 7. The event culminated with a full scale communications exercise which was held at Rentschler Field on June 8. DAS/BEST deployed the Mobile Internet Communications Asset (MICA) as a participant in this part of the exercise. Various federal, state, local and neighboring states also participated.

The “War Room” was located at DAS/BEST in East Hartford where the simulation and injection of cyber scenarios were addressed. Various compromises to Core-CT, state human resources and financial records were simulated and solutions had to be addressed quickly and efficiently by DAS/BEST personnel.

“You never know what the situation is going to be with these drills,” said DAS Deputy Commissioner Martin Anderson. “And that’s exactly the intention. Regularly testing our security systems, policies and emergency response procedures is very educational as to what is working and where improvements can be made. We’ll continue to participate in cyber security drills and we will continue to prepare for not ‘if’ but ‘when’ there is a cyber emergency.”



*The “War Room” was located at DAS/BEST in East Hartford where the simulation and injection of cyber scenarios were addressed.*

# A Special Kudos to Dan Sears by Nina Ritson

For many years the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has hosted a web page for beachgoers to check the status of the swimming areas at state parks and forests.



In just a click of the mouse they could see if a state beach at the ocean or on a lake was open - or

if water quality did not permit. To the average web user this was a very convenient tool, but behind the scenes the DEEP staff maintaining this site on a daily basis was burdened with ensuring edits were made in accordance with a preset schedule.

DAS' Dan Sears changed all that. The Mac-Gyver of MIS, Sears can build an application for anything and he is constantly generating creative, and easier ways for the state to do business electronically. In just under a week of de-

sign time Sears created a BIZNET application that would allow DEEP staff to post the beach status data immediately. And maintenance is a cinch - the author only need to update what has changed.

“This is so much easier and it is already a huge improvement. We are assigned approved roles so designated employees can post changes to the site. The application is dynamic - we will no longer be struggling with access database files and then waiting to post,” said DEEP’s Naomi Davidson who was very pleased when she saw the unveiling on April 5. With this new application comments posted to the site are saved and, characteristic of all BizNet applications, changes to the site as well as other information are saved in history. Links to detailed information including directions, have been added for each park and forest. Matt Fritz of DEEP said, “This site is so easy to manage and we can easily change site elements in addition to the data.”

The beauty of this is that there is no application hosting - no annual fees - no site fees - nothing! This is just another example of how DAS is helping agencies to do business the best way they can and save money, too!

## May Blood Drive

With all the confusion DAS Blood Drive coordinators experienced with the new Red Cross registration system, the changes they had with different dates scheduled and even switching to different rooms, they would like to say they had another successful blood drive! But we can't say that...because, “It was so much more than just successful! It was incredible! It was awesome! It was fantastic! Our final count at the end of the day was 50 pints! I don't recall ever collecting that many at any of our drives these past few years. Think about that...that is up to 150 lives we saved,” said Teresa Dupont, DAS' blood drive coordinator.

“I cannot express my gratitude and thanks to all of you who helped to accomplish this by donat-

ing blood, volunteering your time, or by bringing in refreshments for the donors at yesterday's drive. What a true honor and pleasure it is to be surrounded by such a great group of people who are all willing to help out and understand how important these blood drives are,” added Dupont.

**Our next DAS Blood Drive is Thursday, August 9 from 8:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m in Room G-38. If you haven't yet done so and would like to schedule an appointment, or if you'd like to donate refreshments for the donors, please contact DAS Blood Drive coordinator Teresa Dupont at [Teresa.Dupont@ct.gov](mailto:Teresa.Dupont@ct.gov)**

## People are talking..... by Cindy Rusczyk

Director of Communications Donna Tommelleo from the Department of Insurance “just wanted to thank” **Nina Ritson** and **Mike Guimond** “for the great work you did on our Disaster Recovery posters. They look wonderful, we had them promptly and they will help us help others in tough times. One of my colleagues who is the point guy for us at the EOC during storms is getting one framed for his office! He loves it! So thanks again. It’s always good doing business with you.”

Raphael Amaya from Business Development and Telecommunications International, Inc. thanked **Kevin Nodwell** for his company’s Supplier Diversity Certification. “I have to say that I am very grateful and impressed with your personal involvement and interest in seeing this matter through. This kind of attention and professionalism from an official agency was, I thought, a thing of the past. Once again thank you and hopefully we can take full advantage of this membership.”

Director John Suchy from the Department of Consumer Protection commended **Alicia Nunez** for her great assistance. “As you may recall I requested assistance from you on May 10 and you were able to complete and submit the complicated forms back to me early on May 14. WOW! Your quick work and analysis are a key component part of our Combating Underage Drinking grant application, which will allow us to submit the grant application complete and on-time. I appreciate all that you do for us. I’ll let you know if our grant application is accepted and if we are successful and obtain a grant award. If we are successful, it will be, in part because of efforts like yours, working behind the scenes. Once again, may thanks.”

Operations Director Liz LaCava from Powerstation LLC sent the following message of praise to Program Manager **Meg Yetishefsky**: “I wanted to take a moment to thank you and your staff for your quick response to our emails and the wonderful level of service we were given from **Kevin Nodwell and other members of your team**. When working with state agencies the process can sometimes be difficult and complex, but your team was excellent with their assistance and guidance in successfully navigating through this process. This was my first time working on the recertification and maneuvering the DAS website, Kevin and Ada Rivera were wonderfully responsive and took the time to explain all the details, and even guided me to the helpful web training videos. Thank you.”

Executive Administrator David Guay from the Office of Governmental Accountability praised State Victim Advocate Michelle Cruz and **Peggy Zabawar** for the latest version of the Workplace Prevention manual posted on the DAS website. “Thank you Michelle for the extra effort and reminding me of what public service is truly about. Peggy – thank you for being so receptive of Michelle’s efforts. Clearly the results prove working together is better.” Michelle Cruz also commented, “I am so delighted! Not just by the finished product but more importantly the partnership and team work. Thank you all. It’s amazing how easy change is when people are open! Thank you!”

Nan Peckham from the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection applauded the **DAS Print Shop** for “the Pit Stops Guide fact sheet that just arrived at my desk. As usual, guys, you did a great job printing and assembling the guidebooks and getting the checklists laminated – and got it done so fast! It is a pleasure working with you. Everything looks beautiful. Thank you!”

Food Distribution Program Director Linda Hubeny wrote to Procurement Director Carol Wilson to commend the **DAS Print Shop**. “The shop did a spectacular job for me when I gave them a bunch of stuff to print for the Breakfast Summit. One of the Breakfast Summit sponsors, End Hunger, CT!, reached out to me last week because they couldn’t get a commercial printing company to print their Summer Feeding campaign material on time and I mentioned the Print Shop. I hooked them up with Mike Guimond and now the Print Shop has a \$10,000 project!”

Nina Ritson would like to thank **Ken Morales** “for his help accessing a locked office for which camera equipment was stored and needed immediately, and also for providing driving directions that proved far quicker than what was available on Google maps. He calmed a very stressful emergency situation instantly. Thank you.”

# Heroes 4-Hire Career Fair by Jeffrey Beckham

It is estimated that 6,000 to 8,000 military veterans will be returning to Connecticut in the next year or so and they will be looking for jobs.

On April 27, 2012, DAS personnel participated in the eighth annual Heroes 4-Hire Career Fair at Rentschler Field in East Hartford. This was in response to Governor Malloy's directive to state agencies to take the steps necessary to encourage the application of veterans for state jobs.

The annual event was sponsored by the Department of Labor (DOL) and the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), the Travelers, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Prudential, Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve, and CBS Radio. The fair allowed DAS personnel to share information about obtaining employment with the State of Connecticut, including how to find job and exam postings on the DAS website and registering for exam and job e-alerts.

Nearly 100 employers were joined by educational groups and community organizations – all in an effort to match veterans to jobs, educational opportunities or related services. Résumé experts from the Connecticut Department of Labor also were present throughout the day to review and critique résumés at no cost.

Every effort is being made to interview qualified veterans for approved positions

where appropriate. As always, merit system and contractual rules must be followed and affirmative action plans must be considered when filling positions.

For many of our returning veterans, finding employment will be one of their most significant challenges. DAS is proud to play its part in welcoming our veterans home with a meaningful commitment to job opportunity.



*Top: Lt. Governor Nancy Wyman addresses veterans*

*Bottom: Veterans visit with representatives from many businesses at the Heroes 4-Hire Career Fair.*

# THE 10TH ANNUAL TASTE OF DAS

Wednesday, May 16, 2012

11:30 am - 1:00 pm

Fifth Floor Mechanical Room

by John Mckay

It was an international smorgasbord at this year's Taste of DAS. The DAS Diversity Council hosted the event and, as always, there was a real cross section of cuisine. From Polish to Italian, to German to everything in between, DAS employees' generously donated dishes and desserts for the luncheon affair.

"It really comes together nicely every time we host the event," said Diversity Council Chairwomen Glenda Rollins. "Employees are so creative with their recipes and there are always a few new dishes every year." Deputy Commissioner Martin Anderson stopped by and said, "It's a great way for employees to express their diversity. So many cultures express their heritage and traditions through special meals and food."

Anderson added, "I want to thank all the Diversity Council members for their efforts in organizing and executing the Taste of DAS. We all look forward to it."



# Happy Birthday DAS Portal!

by Nina Ritson and Joe Giliberto

On Tuesday, July 10 the Procurement Team took a moment from their busy day to celebrate another milestone - the second birthday of the State Contracting Portal. The portal, cleverly crafted by tech guru Dan Sears, officially turned two on July 4 and has been *the* revolutionary tool completely transforming how the state does business with vendors, contractors, and the public. Plus, the portal has saved the state millions of dollars by making all information and processes available online.

Joe Giliberto, Procurement Team Leader noted. “The system was developed to be flexible and to be able to add applications allowing all agencies to utilize the database of vendors. In two years it has accomplished far more than was expected.”

Currently, Procurement is working on Phase 2 of the new vendor On-Line bid submitting application. The first phase of the On-Line bid submitting application was rolled out on February 1 of this year. Vendors can now upload their bid submittals on-line and no longer have to deliver paper bids to Procurement. This application will soon be available to all state agencies, towns and municipalities.



From l to r: Eva Orlinski, Dan Sears, Arlene Watson-Paulin, Melissa Marzano, Marisol Rivera, Joe Giliberto and Dana Soderlund celebrate another year of the Portal.



# Summer Picnic at Quassy!



*Clockwise:  
Commissioner Don DeFronzo with his granddaughter Victoria, Deb Peterson and her niece, Heather Cascio and son, Amanda Rivera. and Chris Roberts, Kevin Nodwell and Will Hickey.*



Good food, friendly coworkers, a roller coaster and prizes – what more could you ask for when it comes to an agency summer picnic.

This year’s DAS Summer picnic was held at Quassy Amusement Park in Middlebury, Connecticut. The menu had hotdogs, hamburgers and corn in typical picnic fashion. Later the menu expanded to include pulled pork, spare ribs, macaroni and cheese, cookies and more.

Those who attended enjoyed the Wooden Warrior rollercoaster, bumper cars, the arcade and other amusement park attractions.

Commissioner DeFronzo and Deputy Commissioner Dr. Martin Anderson wanted to thank everyone who organized the event. “It’s always a great time to socialize outside of work and enjoy each other’s company,” said Anderson. “An agency-wide ‘thank you’ to the organizers of the summer picnic. I understand these events aren’t always easy to plan, but they are very much appreciated.”



# Comings.....

## *New employees to DAS (l to r):*

- Lauren Christopher - Business Office/Core-CT
- Lori D'Amico – BEST
- Tony Martelly – Core-CT
- John Blauvelt III – BEST
- Queen Lighty – BEST (from DSS)
- Thomas Kelly – BEST (from DSS)
- Robindrana Davis – BEST (from DSS)



# ....and Goings

## *Employees that left DAS (l to r):*

- Amanda Starbala – Core-CT
- Kevin Dempsey – Facilities Management
- Diana McKenney – SmART Division
- Tres Calloway – Facilities Management
- Stephen Link, Facilities Management
- Ngina Gibson, SmART Division
- Johnette Tolliver, SmART Division

