



THE MANAGER

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MEA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER IRIS RODRIGUEZ-ROSA APPOINTED PARKS & REC FIRST DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

By Vanessa DeSantis



*First Deputy Commissioner
Iris Rodriguez-Rosa*

Photo: Malcolm Pinckney/NYC Parks

Earlier this year Mayor Eric Adams promoted Iris Rodriguez-Rosa to First Deputy Commissioner of the NYC Department of Parks and Recreation from Bronx Parks Commissioner. Ms. Rodriguez-Rosa now reports directly to Commissioner Susan M. Donoghue, another recent Adams appointee.

Iris is an MEA Executive Board member, the Department of Parks and Recreation Assistant Chapter Director.

Ms. Rodriguez-Rosa oversaw the borough's parks department as Bronx Borough Parks Commissioner since 2015. She was able to merge Friends of Van Cortlandt Parks and the Van Cortlandt Conservancy into the Van Cortlandt Alliance. She also implemented capital projects to renovate Bronx playgrounds and the Orchard Beach Pavilion.

Having worked borough-wide in the Bronx she will now focus on ways

to create more green space and encourage urbanites to enjoy the health benefits of City parks.

"She connects the community with green spaces that benefit their physical and emotional value," Mayor Adams told reporters in February.

Iris began her city career back in 1979 as Community Board District Manager in Brooklyn's Bushwick neighborhood. She began working in Parks in 1986 as Director of Community Boards and then as Operations Manager in Upper Manhattan, where she worked for two decades before serving as Chief of Recreation in the public pro-

grams division of the Bronx and Queens.

The Adams administration's Parks and Recreation Department intends on making City parks more equitable: improving the outer boroughs' parks to match those of Manhattan. That was part of the thinking in promoting Rodriguez-Rosa, whose career in the Bronx aimed to enhance the benefits of Bronx parks while upgrading areas and systems in need of repair.

Iris sees green city spaces as opportunities to increase public health. She plans to expand on her efforts to make parks places that enhance the lives of New Yorkers.

DEDICATED TO THEIR STUDIES DURING COVID

THE 2021 CDP JOEL FISHELSON SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

By Bendix Anderson

It takes grit and determination to stay focused during uncertainty. Last year, the MEA scholarship applicants didn't let the challenges of COVID stop them from pursuing their educational goals. The MEA's Career Development Program offers members and their children the chance to qualify for academic funds each year through the annual Joel Fishelson Scholarship Awards.

"Our member managers and their dependents are dedicated to their own educational development, despite COVID," said Edgar Landas, NYC MEA Vice President.

This year the selection committee was run by Mr. Landas as well as Tina Ramsey, the MEA Chapter Director for the Department of Citywide Administrative Services.

The MEA congratulates all the awardees and is proud to support such an accomplished group of winners. Scholarship winners are selected based on application essays as well as grade point averages and SAT and ACT test scores.

All six dependents won \$750 scholarships.

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BRIGHTER DAYS AHEAD

By Darrell L. Sims



Happy Spring Everyone! Changing of seasons invites the concept of revitalization of self-consciousness and the quest for improvement by establishing new hopes and dreams, and setting refreshed goals to achieve. Renewed energy is flowing among us and it is our challenge as to how we channel this vigor into tomorrow's search for brighter days.

MEA's life blood - "There is strength in numbers".

LISA YEE
It is with regret that I must inform you that Lisa Yee has resigned as MEA Recording Secretary because of personal reasons. Ms. Yee's invaluable service as an Independence in Action Team leader is sincerely appreciated and will be sorely missed.

NEW OFFICE MANAGER
After advertising, reviewing a multitude of resumes, and interviewing numerous candidates, MEA has hired Erin Jordan as our new Office Manager.

MS. Jordan's employment commenced in March.

I would like to congratulate and extend a warm welcome to Erin.

HAPPY SPRING
The MEA Executive Board acknowledges and appreciates the hard work of our members and continues representing NYC managers to the best of our abilities. We wish everyone a Safe, Healthy, and Happy Spring that is full of achievable hopes and dreams.

I would like to congratulate four of our distinguished MEA members, Iris Rodriguez-Rosa, Gary Jenkins, Lisa Fitzpatrick, and Joslyn Carter, who have been appointed by the Adams Administration to administrative and executive positions in their respective agencies. We are extremely proud of each of you and wish you the very best in your leadership positions. It is inspirational for managers to witness colleagues being appointed from within their agencies to administrative and executive positions by our Mayor. We also congratulate MEA member Georges Leconte who was appointed CEO of NYC H+H/Harlem by NYC H+H President and CEO Dr. Mitchell Katz.

TELEWORKING
Based on a member survey that overwhelmingly supported teleworking, MEA recently sent a letter to NYS Assembly Speaker, Heastie and NYS Senate Majority Leader Stewart-Cousins endorsing the New York City Teleworking Expansion Act Bill. MEA strongly believes that teleworking will help agencies, particularly in times of crisis, by allowing alternative work sites for many employees. It would also establish new means of

attracting highly qualified employees who have been able to work remotely even before the COVID-19 pandemic to civil service employment.

CHAPTER ELECTIONS
The schedule for chapter elections has been finalized by Executive Director Alice Wong. Approximately half of the chapter elections will take place this year and approximately half will take place next year. Because of the pandemic, all chapter elections will be conducted remotely via Zoom.

We encourage members to participate in chapter elections and volunteer as candidates to fill chapter officer positions. It is extremely important for all agency chapters to be represented on the Executive Board. As chapter director, you are an ambassador for your agency and MEA - sharing managerial concerns and issues, and having a vote on the Executive Board. We also encourage members to invite non-MEA managers to the chapter meetings in an effort to recruit new members for your chapter as well as to increase MEA's membership. Please remember, recruitment leading to membership growth is the



FROM THE PANDEMIC FRONT LINES TO A NEW ROLE IN HARLEM

MEA PROFILES GEORGES LÉCONTE

By Vanessa DeSantis



CEO of NYC
Health + Hospitals/Harlem
Georges Leconte

Another MEA member was promoted this year — in January Georges Leconte became CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals/ Harlem. Before that he'd worked for two decades at Elmhurst Hospital in Queens which saw the highest case rates citywide at the peak of the coronavirus pandemic in 2020.

It was Mr. Leconte's "team spirit" and "nimbleness" working on the front lines at Elmhurst that caught the attention of the President and CEO of NYC Health + Hospitals, Dr. Mitchell Katz, when hiring for the job.

"Georges has proven his commitment to our health care system for over two decades, not only as a seasoned hospital administrator," said Dr. Katz in a recent statement, "but also by rolling up his sleeves and joining other frontline providers during the early days of the pandemic."

Mr. Leconte was the Senior Associate Executive Director for the Ancillary Services Division at NYC Health + Hospitals/Elmhurst, which oversaw cardiology, respiratory, radiology, labs, biomed, radiation oncology departments and where he managed a staff of 600.

"YOU DID A LITTLE BIT OF EVERYTHING."

Mr. Leconte is also a licensed respiratory therapist — a skill that proved invaluable when the virus first broke out. When many of the patients at Elmhurst needed oxygen, Leconte found himself filling multiple roles: as a manager, a respiratory therapist and even an equipment supply person.

"Things happened so quickly," he said. "You did a little bit of everything."

As more and more staff became ill with the virus, Mr. Leconte remembers how everyone at the hospital "chipped in" to get as many supplies and save as many lives as possible. People worked 14 to 18 hour days, seven days a week.

"The team at Elmhurst was tremendous," he said. "I can't tell you how proud I am."

Now as CEO of H + H/Harlem this year, Georges feels more optimistic. Being better able to detect the virus and see trends ahead of time is likely to help prepare for another wave of the coronavirus, if and when it arrives.

"We now have better ways of treating patients and are properly prepared for it."

CHILDHOOD OBESITY

Harlem Hospital will also focus ways to address what Mr. Leconte believes is a worldwide issue of childhood obesity. "We will look at areas called "food deserts," where children aren't offered opportunities to easily access healthy food — and put resources there."

And at Harlem Hospital Center, Leconte's team is already working with nutritionists to bring in plant-based food to give patients more options. "It's time for New York to get healthy," he said.

CDP 2022 SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE ONLINE

This year, MEA members and their dependents will be able to apply for the Career Development Program's Joel Fishelson Scholarships online.

"I'm excited — it makes it easier for members to apply online and submit all their paperwork on their preferred smart device or computer," said Vice President Edgar Landas. "I'm especially proud of the work that my co-chair Tina Ramsey and our Executive Director Alice Wong did to launch the online scholarship application web-site on time."

ADAMS ADMINISTRATION APPOINTS THREE MEA MEMBERS TO LEAD DSS

By Vanessa DeSantis

A new mayoral administration plans to strengthen the city's safety net and make access to services easier. One way to demonstrate that effort is to hire the right team. Three MEA members have been hired to bolster social services to the city: Gary Jenkins is the new Commissioner of the Department of Social Services (DSS), Lisa Fitzpatrick will assume the role of Administrator of the Human Resources Administration (HRA) and Joslyn Carter was reappointed to her position as the Administrator of the Department of Homeless Services (DHS).

As the city recuperates from being hard hit by the Coronavirus for two years in a row, the Adams administration is seeking to make New Yorkers more aware of the social services the city provides. He also hopes to expand and increase their quality.

Much of that will depend on what happens within departments tasked to create improved community support.

In an AM New York article published back in February this year, the mayor was quoted saying of the three new hires: "[They] have shown throughout their long careers in public service that they can deliver for New Yorkers who need help the most, and we are proud to have them join our team as we work every day to 'Get Stuff Done' for New Yorkers."

The new administration seeks to "build on the progress" the City and its respective agencies have made in addressing homelessness and financial hardship.

GARY JENKINS, NEWLY PROMOTED TO COMMISSIONER OF DSS

Before being promoted to Commissioner of DSS, Mr. Jenkins was the Administrator of HRA.



With over three decades professional experience at DSS, Commissioner Jenkins held leadership roles in the SNAP, Medicaid, and Temporary Cash Assistance programs at HRA. In his role as HRA First Deputy Commissioner he oversaw the Homelessness Prevention Administration, Employment Services, the Office of the Child Support Services, and the Fair Fares Program.

In his new role, Commissioner Jenkins reports to the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Williams-Isom.

JOSLYN CARTER, RE-APPOINTED TO ADMINISTRATOR OF DHS



Back in 2017, the de Blasio administration promoted Joslyn Carter to her Administrator position and the focus was to make clients feel safe by "customizing" the shelter system.

She worked at DHS for over a decade before she became the Administrator.

"My favorite part of the role is to support and applaud the staff that do the work daily," said Administrator Carter. "They are true heroes... the work we do directly affects humans, and that we make a difference in the lives of New Yorkers every single day."

She chooses staff members who relate with clients. "They need to have the ability to be persistent, relatable and read between the lines," she said.

LISA FITZPATRICK, NEWLY PROMOTED TO ADMINISTRATOR OF HRA



During her 37-year career at HRA, Ms. Fitzpatrick's jobs included Chief Program Officer for the Medical Assistance Program and the Family Independence Administration (FIA) as well as the Assistant Deputy Commissioner of the Office of Procedures and Deputy Commissioner for FIA Operations.

In her new role as Administrator, she will report to Commissioner Jenkins.

She hopes to improve how HRA serves New Yorkers in need and make sure they have access to critical resources such rental assistance.

Administrator Fitzpatrick looks forward to working with Mayor Adams, Commissioner Jenkins and the HRA staff.

All three appointees will work to assist our city's recovery from the pandemic in 2022.

THE 2021 CDP JOEL FISHELSON SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Oluchukwu Amadife



Jeremy Edmond Scotto



Daniel Wang



Lina Zigha



Edan Marcial



Yasha Zaman

DEPENDENTS

Oluchukwu Amadife attends Harvard College; her major is so far undeclared. Her mother, **Justina Amadife**, is a manager in NYC H+H.

Jeremy Edmond Scotto, son of **Dina Desiderio** of DOITT, attends St. John's University, studying for a degree in Adolescent Education and Literacy.

Another Harvard College student, **Daniel Wang**, is using his scholarship towards his studies in Computer Science and Economics. DOITT's **Roger Wang** is his proud parent.

Furthest afield geographically, **Lina Zigha**, daughter of DOITT's **Toufik Zigha**, will be spending her award money in Quebec as a student at University of Montreal majoring in Biomedical Sciences.

Edan Marcial is a student at Binghamton University majoring in Mathematical Physics. His father, **Edan Marcial**, is a manager in the Administration for Children's Services.

Hofstra freshman **Yasha Zaman** is putting her award towards her studies to become a Physician Assistant. **Kazi F. Zaman** is a Department of Corrections manager.

MEMBERS

Three MEA members won scholarship to help advance their careers.

Karene Slowley, Director of Field Operations in ACS won a \$1,000 scholarship towards her tuition at Hunter College.

Deepthi Yellapragda, NYCHA Deputy Director of Development and Operations, is using her \$600 to help defray her costs at Rutgers Business School.

Khalida Nisimova is attending Columbia University while serving as Assistant Director of Pharmacy Services at Harlem Hospital Center.



Karene Slowley



Deepthi Yellapragda



Khalida Nisimova