



Office of the
County Executive
EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

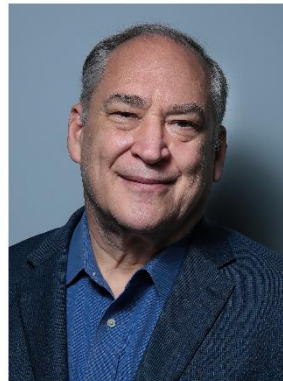


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- Winston
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This week's High Risers are: Ahron Burney; Amanda Cohill; Amy Daum; Calvin Jones; Hannah Henn; Jamie Cooke; Joe O'Donnell; Rebecca Jones; Lili Rojas; Steve Palmater; and the Street Outreach Network and Safe Space Program.



Again, this week our High Risers have exceeded expectations and risen to a higher level of performance. These employees are forward thinkers who strive for excellence in providing services during this time when our community needs us the most.

These employees delivered food to homebound and vulnerable families; ingeniously acquired personal protective equipment for employees; protected employee safety while ensuring that trash and recycling collections continued; organized food drives; effectively managed the Department of Transportation communications; helped make a young girl's wish come true; and coordinated the County's Wellness Team to assist employees with staying motivated and connected.

Over these past months, we have adapted our work to respond to the needs of our residents. This is a stressful and wearisome time. It is hard to keep giving it your all when there is no certainty of what lies ahead. While we do not know what the future holds, we do know that we are a County that values our residents and we are stronger because of

our employees. The work you do is important and makes a difference. Thank you for all you do to make MCG the best.

Stay safe and be well,

Marc Elrich, County Executive

Andrew Kleine, Chief Administrative Officer

HIGH RISER HANNAH HENN



Hannah Henn serves as the Department of Transportation's (MCDOT) Senior Engineer for Strategic Innovation. Since the onset of the County's COVID-19 emergency response, Hannah has taken on additional duties to serve as Acting Strategic Communications Manager. She has effectively overseen and coordinated all communications for MCDOT. Hannah's hard work and commitment during the COVID-19 crisis response has been critical to providing our community with exceptional service.

Experienced in public transportation planning, and as a policy practitioner, she is passionate about improving mobility options and the transit user experience. She focuses her efforts on the expansion and implementation of new and innovative services,

sustainable solutions, accessibility, fare and mode integration, and safety initiatives, while ensuring both strong internal and external communication.

Throughout the COVID-19 crisis, Hannah has enthusiastically written countless press releases and social media notifications, timely coordinating the translation of these communications to keep our community informed. She has supported the County's Public Information Office in communicating transportation news, developed marketing and outreach plans to ensure the County continually identifies, and always anticipated and satisfied customers' transportation needs. Hannah has spearheaded the formulation and implementation of MCDOT's 'Shared Streets' initiatives in support of recovery efforts to provide additional space for safer walking, biking, playing and dining.

HIGH RISERS MASK AND FACE SHIELDS TEAM



Ahron Burney, Jamie Cooke, Calvin Jones and Steve Palmetter make up the Department of General Services' Masks and Face Shields Team. The team has innovatively found ways to provide thousands of masks and shields to keep MCG employees safer.

Early in the COVID-19 emergency, the sourcing team struggled to locate resources among an international shortage of all personal protective equipment. The Mask and Face Team was formed to develop non-traditional sources for the manufacture of much needed masks and face shields.

These sources now include local garment manufacturers with the skills and ability to quickly shift production, as well as small local businesses who manufacture plastic face shields from 3D computer printing.

Once a supply chain was developed, the team continued to provide overall management and facilitation of the local cloth mask and face shield manufacturing process to include all logistical support. Currently, the local providers are producing on average 13,000 masks per week.

HIGH RISERS LILI ROJAS AND AMANDA COHILL



Since the COVID-19 crisis began, the Office of Human Resources' Wellness Team has worked nonstop to keep employees motivated and connected. Lili Rojas, wellness program manager, and Amanda Cohill, wellness coordinator, have been instrumental in supporting employees across our organization.

Making the transition from an active onsite wellness program to a virtual one was challenging. The team has always provided excellent resources to MCG employees that include different dimensions of wellness (such as physical, nutritional, emotional). As COVID-19 spread, Lili and Amanda knew they needed to continue to provide all the resources available to help employees deal with the many challenges they faced.

They quickly transitioned to the new, virtual environment and were able to provide most activities virtually that would have normally been offered onsite. On average, the team provides 25 virtual activities per month, all covering different dimensions of wellness:

- Health education is provided by live webinars (3-4 a month), which have more participation than previously recorded.
- Physical fitness is available through the Virgin Pulse and Burnalong programs. LiveWell has filmed several workout videos on the Burnalong platform. Virtual live fitness classes include bootcamp, chair yoga, and boxing, and a running club.
- Upon request, the team provides program presentations to departments via virtual meetings to talk about the LiveWell resources.
- Disease management programs are also offered online in diabetes education, weight management and musculoskeletal health.

At the beginning of the COVID-19 emergency response, many employees were suddenly juggling work and family responsibilities. Lili and Amanda quickly responded to these needs by offering family fitness programs, family art programs and an eco-adventure series for children to virtually visit a nature center.

Lili and Amanda also worked closely with MCG's healthcare providers to offer medical and science-based information regarding COVID-19. As the crisis progressed, they also realized the need to provide and promote mental well-being resources to employees, such as the Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and mindfulness programs through Virgin Pulse and Burnalong.

After hearing how lonely many employees felt, the team introduced weekly *Social Wellness Fridays*, which created a bright spot for many employees. These special events reconnect employees and provide fun activities such as sing-alongs, trivia games, dance parties, art sessions, and gratitude/mindfulness sessions.

HIGH RISER REBECCA JONES



The Department of Permitting Services (DPS) routinely strives to help customers, but when Claire Kruse from the Make-a-Wish Foundation contacted DPS Permit Technician Rebecca Jones for help to fulfill a young girl's wish for a pool, Rebecca knew this was a special request.

The nonprofit Make-A-Wish® Mid-Atlantic was working on a plan to build a backyard swimming pool this spring for a six-year-old from Damascus who has a neurological condition and whose major comfort comes when she is in a pool. However, the project was being held up by a significant need for property records, which the family was having a hard time obtaining. That is when the Montgomery County Department of Permitting Services (DPS) stepped in so the wish could more quickly become a reality.

When Hannah is in the water, it is one of the only times she does not need physical assistance. The water allows her to move around freely while she wears a floatation device and it helps relieve her joint and muscle pain.

Make-A-Wish was making progress in getting records and paperwork to get the pool constructed this spring, but had trouble accessing certain records regarding the family property. Rebecca is one of the few people who know about those records. She moved quickly to assist to move the paperwork forward.

The permit to build the pool was issued on June 5 and the pool is under construction.

HIGH RISER JOE O'DONNELL



Joe O'Donnell is the program manager for Recycling and Refuse Services, Recycling and Resource Management Division. Under Joe's leadership there are many hard-working men and women who have continued to collect recyclables throughout the COVID-19 emergency response. Joe modified the day-to-day operations to ensure his team of County collection inspectors were safe while continuing to provide essential services.

Joe's section provides curbside recycling services to approximately 220,000 single family homes and trash services to nearly 90,000 homes in the County. There are approximately 530,000 total individual collections per week.

Working closely with three recycling and trash collection contractors, Joe has made sure that all contract workers complied with the use of face coverings and other protective equipment while collecting on the routes.

Other neighboring jurisdictions had to temporarily stop the delivery of a number of collection services, but Joe's leadership has ensured continuous delivery of collection services throughout the pandemic.

HIGH RISER CAPTAIN AMY DAUM



Montgomery County Police (MCP) Captain Amy Daum and her core team have organized and facilitated multiple food drives. The collections have resulted in nearly 6,000 pounds of food delivered to Manna to be distributed to community members struggling to access food during this challenging time.

In addition to collections for humans, the team has collected more than 1,000 pounds of pet food for MCPAW to distribute to pet owners throughout the County. The idea for food drives began when Captain Daum and team saw the heightened food insecurity for many people due to the loss of jobs and severe economic impacts brought on by the pandemic.

Working with a team of dedicated volunteers, Captain Daum led a food collection drive at Public Safety Headquarters, coordinated multiple events in police districts throughout the County and in partnership with Montgomery County Sheriff's Office and the Rockville City Police. MCP collaborated with Montgomery County Public Schools to host several events.

Two districts will soon be using a tool that Senior IT Specialist Darren Dobkin and Shelby Roberson put together to collect food donations from people's homes.

The cooperative efforts of the many police department employees who have donated food, and the coordination of the MCP food collections, have meant that many families have food on their table and many four-legged, furry family members have food in their bowls.

HIGH RISERS STREET OUTREACH NETWORK AND SAFE SPACE PROGRAM



The Street Outreach Network and the Safe Space Program immediately responded in March when many families were impacted by COVID-19. The team quickly began door-to-door food delivery to ensure families who tested COVID-19 positive, and those who could not leave their homes due to medical conditions, had access to an adequate food supply.

Those weekly deliveries have expanded from approximately 50 to more than 500. The food distribution effort also services families who are unable to get to the Grab-and-Go food distribution sites.

Throughout the pandemic, an important focus of the team is to outreach to hard-to-reach youth to provide education about the importance of social distancing and wearing masks. They provide face masks to youth who do not have them.

To engage the youth on their turf, the team put together a home concert on Instagram Live that focused on promoting messages that were intended to help reduce the spread of COVID-19.

One highlight of their work was supporting the County during several Black Lives Matter Protests to help diffuse tension, encourage peacefulness, distribute face masks and provide water. This work assisted in providing peaceful protest and mitigation of the spread of COVID-19.