

PAPD Medal Ceremony Honors Dedication to Public Service

Dozens of members of the Port Authority Police Department were recently honored for their outstanding dedication and commitment to public service.



On November 17, the PAPD held a medal ceremony to honor 84 members of the force.

We all owe a huge debt of thanks to the PAPD for keeping our facilities and the region safe and secure, and this year's Medal Ceremony was an opportunity to recognize their extraordinary public service. There were four categories of recognition: the Meritorious Police Duty Medal, the Police Division Group Citation, the Medical Duty Medal, and the Excellent Police Duty Breast Bar.

The awardees were recognized for a host of commendable achievements, including reviving individuals who were unconscious, in medical distress, and in some cases, possibly experiencing drug overdoses. In other incidents, the PAPD seized illegal firearms and weapons.

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PATH Superintendent Named 'Woman of the Year' in Transportation

Keeping the trains running smoothly and on time is job one for PATH's **Raishea Haines**, the railroad's Superintendent of Transportation. For her success in fulfilling that mission, Raishea has been honored as a 'Woman of the Year' in transportation by Railway Age magazine.

Raishea was chosen from a large pool of nominees for the award, which was conferred to her and her fellow recipients on the basis of superior leadership, management skills, industry contributions, and community engagement. Her selection is highlighted in the magazine's November issue.

"I'm honored to be selected for this award," she said. "I couldn't ask for a better team or a more committed workforce. We see their exceptional performance and teamwork every day throughout the PATH system."

"Our mandate is to keep the region moving and Raishea is an invaluable part of that daily effort," said PATH Director/General Manager **Clarelle DeGraffe**. "She is an indispensable leader and strategist, working 24/7 to make sure we provide full schedule coverage and a clean, safe travel environment for our customers."

Raishea has been part of the PATH family for 18 years, starting as a passenger agent

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HRD's Miriam Simon Honored as a 'Hispanic Achiever'

Congratulations to **Miriam Simon**, Manager of Business Analytics and Departmental Performance in the Human Resources Department, who was honored with the 2023 YMCA of Greater New York Hispanic Achievers Award.

The award, which was presented at the YMCA of Greater New York's annual gala on November 15, recognized her leadership, career accomplishments, community outreach, relationships with colleagues, and demonstration of ethical behavior and integrity.

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Miriam Simon (fifth from left) with colleagues during the event

PAPD Members Honored

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Other times, the PAPD is called to assist in what becomes a joyous moment. In one such incident on May 27 of this year, officers were dispatched to a gate inside the Midtown Bus Terminal where they found a woman in active labor. The officers delivered a healthy newborn baby and comforted the new mother until the arrival of EMS.

This is just a small sample of what the dedicated members of the PAPD do every day. Congratulations to all 84 honorees, and our heartfelt thanks to every member of the force. You keep us safe, and we are grateful.



RETIREMENT

Angel Martinez, Chief of Engineering Operations, is calling it a career after more than 22 years of service and he's ready to hit the links!

A retirement celebration will be held at Liberty Prime Steakhouse at 111 Montgomery St, Jersey City, on December 28 at 4 p.m. \$115 p.p. includes a gift, salad appetizer, dinner, dessert, and an open bar from 4 to 6 p.m. The venue has validated parking.

Please RSVP by December 15 to **Elaine Almonte** at eamonte@panynj.gov. View the [retirement flyer](#).



Procurement Receives Prestigious Industry Honor

The annual P3 Awards recognize industry excellence in the design, build, finance, operation, and maintenance of public infrastructure.

The Port Authority was among those honored at this year's event, held on October 26, when **Luke Bassis**, Director of Procurement, accepted the award for Procurer of the Year on behalf of the agency.

The P3 Awards is recognized as the most prestigious event in the industry's calendar and provides individuals, organizations, and projects the opportunity to showcase their cutting-edge work. A P3, or public-private partnership, is a collaboration between public bodies, such as government or local authorities, and private companies to finance, build, and in some cases operate or maintain an infrastructure project.



Luke Bassis (left) accepting the Public Sector Procurer of the Year award.

Collect 'Em All: Meet PAPD's Canine Officers, via Trading Cards

Originally published in [Now Arriving](#), written by Steve Burns, Media Relations staff.

They may be the Port Authority's cutest, cuddliest workers, with their wide eyes and wagging tails. However while passersby are urged to keep their distance from the four-legged officers, there is a consolation prize. PAPD enthusiastically participates in what has become a national phenomenon: K-9 unit trading cards, offering inquisitive tourists and curious kids the chance to get to know the dogs via text, without getting too close.

2024 will mark 40 years since the PAPD established its canine unit. Dogs are trained in either narcotics or explosive detection, using their ultra-sensitive noses to patrol properties including Newark Liberty International, John F. Kennedy International, and LaGuardia airports, PATH stations, the World Trade Center, and Midtown Bus Terminal.

Keep reading on [Now Arriving](#).



CALENDAR

NBE: Holiday Gift & Bake Sale Fundraiser at Journal Square

Tuesday, December 5, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., JSTC - PATH Administration Office Lobby. The Network of Black Employees will host a holiday gift and bake sale at JSTC. With the holidays around the corner, this is your chance to shop for gifts and baked goods while supporting a great cause - the NBE **Carl Creque** Book Scholarship. [See the flyer](#) and for more information, contact nbe@panynj.gov.

HR's Miriam Simon

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A [video of the awards presentation](#) is available.

Since 2016, the Port Authority has sponsored the Hispanic Achievers Program, an important fundraising initiative that recognizes excellence in corporate and civic leadership of Latinx leaders.

The funds raised help support community-based endeavors that provide opportunities for young people, including a scholarship program. This year, \$104,000 was raised for the YMCA's youth and community programming, as well as funding of two scholarships for outstanding Hispanic Y scholars.

PA-AAA Celebrates the 'Festival of Lights'

The Port Authority Asian American Association (PA-AAA) recently hosted its annual Diwali celebration, bringing together employees from across the agency for the 'Festival of Lights.'

Diwali, which symbolizes the victory of light over darkness, good over evil, and knowledge over ignorance, is celebrated by millions of people across the world, including Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, and Buddhists.

At this year's event, held on November 15 at 4 WTC, **Hersh Parekh**, Director of GOCOR, NY, shared the importance of this festival among the South Asian-American community and his personal experiences of celebrating Diwali while growing up in Queens. PA-AAA members and guests were also treated to a lesson in Indian Classical Dance by Sandhya Rajkumar of Shehnaaz Dance Academy.

Diwali is increasingly becoming a mainstream festival in the U.S., having recently been declared as a New York City school holiday.

To learn more about Diwali and PA-AAA, please contact paaaa@panynj.gov.



From left: PA-AAA Board members Sawmya Abraham, Courtney Fong, Azra Syed, Ritika Reikhy, Jia Dee Li, and Raj Vasan (back)

COVID-19 Leave Enhancements and Vaccine Stipends to End December 31

On behalf of the Offices of the Chief Health & Safety Officer, Chief Medical Officer, and Chief of Human Capital, **please be advised of the following updates:**

- The agency will discontinue COVID-19 Leave Enhancements and the Vaccine Stipend Program at the end of 2023.
- Employees must follow their respective absence protocols. On their first day of absence, [civilian staff](#) must call the Absence Evaluation Unit at 844-667-2255, and [PAPD](#) must call the Absence Control Unit at 800-451-7425.

COVID-19 Leave Enhancements

- Effective January 1, 2024, employees who are absent due to COVID-19 illness or side effects from the vaccine/booster can use their standard agency Sick Leave:
- Non-represented employees are provided Sick Leave as set forth in [Administrative Instruction \(AI\) 20-3.03](#).
- Represented employees should refer to their collective bargaining agreement for their Sick Leave benefit.
- Employees who experience severe COVID-19 are advised to apply for Family and Medical Leave (FML), which will not impact eligibility for career opportunities or count towards certain criteria for excessive absenteeism. See the [non-represented](#) or [represented](#) FML policy for complete details.

Vaccine Stipends for Represented Staff

Represented employees have until December 31, 2023, to submit a photo of their vaccine or booster card to OMS@panynj.gov to receive the stipend. Employees can receive the vaccine through the Express Scripts, Inc. (ESI) prescription plan at a [participating retail pharmacy](#).

GOT NEWS FOR NEXT TIME?

Do you have news from your team, department or employee group to share in the next PA News? Send it to panews@panynj.gov by December 8 to be included in the December 15 issue.

PATH Superintendent Named 'Woman of the Year'

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and rising to her current role in charge of day-to-day transportation operations. She oversees an operation that transports nearly 200,000 passengers each weekday, with ridership increasing as the region continues to rebound from COVID-19.

In her capacity as superintendent, she is in charge of PATH's largest division, with more than 400 employees under her command. Raishea also works collaboratively with regional rail transit partners and with key labor unions representing PATH employees engaged with the Transportation Division.

PAPD Bi-State Coalition Hosts Community Turkey Giveaway

The PAPD Bi-State Coalition shared the spirit of Thanksgiving with local community members, serving over 75 families at the Beloved Community Charter School in Jersey City during its annual holiday turkey giveaway on November 16.

The coalition shared that it was truly an honor to bring forth joy and happiness to families in the community as they prepare for the Thanksgiving holiday. They wish to extend a special 'thank you' to all of their sponsors for making this a successful event.

Among those in attendance were **Sergeant Kyle King, Officer Jordan Archibald, Officer Pria Duhaney, Officer Rebecca Ford, Officer Kyle Izzard, and Officer Javon Price** as well as Network of Black Employees President **Anthony Miller**.



Officers Javon Price, Jordan Archibald, Pria Duhaney, and Kyle Izzard with community members