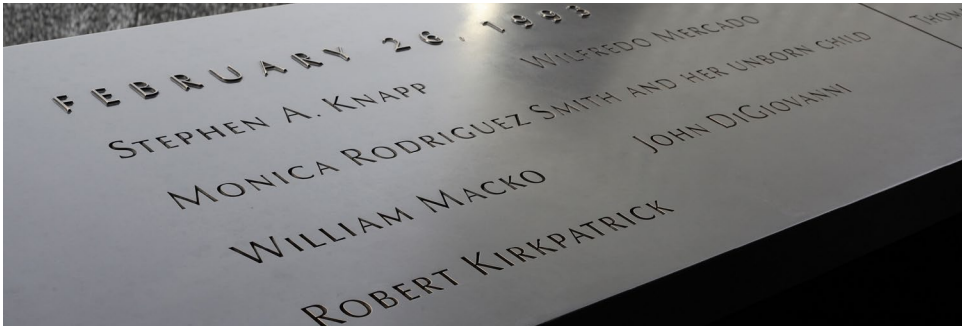


## Thirty Years Later: Their Names and Faces Remain in Our Hearts



It's been three decades since that fateful day on February 26, 1993. But just as we have done each and every year since, we reflect on our untiring commitment to our fallen friends — vowing to keep their memory alive for decades and generations to come.

We will forever remember their names. **Robert Kirkpatrick, Stephen Knapp, William Macko, and Monica Rodriguez Smith** and her unborn child — who, along with Windows on the World employee Wilfredo Mercado and visitor John DiGiovanni, lost their lives in the attack on the World Trade Center that also injured more than 1,000 others.

As is tradition, the Port Authority will host a Mass of Remembrance this Sunday at St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church to honor the faith shared by those we lost that day. For more information on the Mass, which is open to all and will be livestreamed, see the sidebar.

Please join us in remembering these cherished friends, and in sending peace and healing to their loved ones. As part of our unwavering commitment to commemorate their names and legacies, here are their stories.

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## A Safer City is Legacy of 1993 World Trade Center Attack

*Originally published in Now Arriving, written by Media Relations' Lenis Valens.*

Before Feb. 26, 1993, no one thought of concrete bollards on the street around building entrances or requiring employees to use security badges and turnstiles to enter buildings. Before 1993, no technology systems were in place to prevent trucks from entering an area while being screened.

Those security measures, emergency systems, and improvements to fire codes for buildings in New York City, among others, are the legacy of the day 30 years ago this Sunday when [six people, including four Port Authority employees, and an unborn child](#) died in a terrorist attack at the World Trade Center.



Heavy concrete planters around the WTC after 1993 are the precursors to the sidewalk bollards that are now commonplace throughout New York

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## Watch: 93 WTC 30th Anniversary Memorial Events

As is tradition, we will join together with family and friends on Sunday, February 26 to honor the memory of those we lost that day. This year, we invite agency employees to join us in person once again to share memories and pay tribute to their lives.

Following the annual ceremony on the National September 11 Memorial plaza, held at noon, the Port Authority will host a Mass of Remembrance at 2 p.m. at St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church, located on the corner of Church and Barclay streets. As is tradition, the Mass honors the faith shared by our fallen friends and colleagues, and is open to all agency employees and the public.

For those who cannot attend the ceremony in person, the Mass will be livestreamed at [www.panynj.gov](http://www.panynj.gov). The annual ceremony on the National September 11 Memorial plaza will additionally be shared on their website, [www.911memorial.org/watch](http://www.911memorial.org/watch).

# Thirty Years Later: Their Names and Faces Remain in Our Hearts

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## Robert Kirkpatrick

**Robert Kirkpatrick** lived in Suffern, NY, with his wife, Evelyn. Skilled in carpentry, plumbing, and locksmithing,

Robert Kirkpatrick in his office at the World Trade Center

he worked for the Port Authority as a Senior Structural Maintenance Supervisor. Robert spoke of retiring in November 1993.

On February 26 of that year, Robert was in the World Trade Center basement on his lunch break. He was 61 years old.



## Monica Rodriguez Smith and her unborn child

Born in Manta, Ecuador, **Monica Rodriguez Smith**

Wedding photograph of Monica Rodriguez Smith

lived in Seaford, NY, with her husband, Edward. She was pregnant with their first child, Eddie, and had recently renovated their home and set up the baby's room. Monica worked at the World Trade Center as a Mechanical Unit Secretary for the Port Authority.

On February 26, 1993, her last day of work before maternity leave, she was having lunch in the World Trade Center basement. She was 35 years old.



Stephen Knapp on the rooftop of the North Tower of the World Trade Center

## Stephen Knapp

**Stephen Knapp**

lived with his wife, Louise, and their two children on Staten Island, where he was born. Stephen worked at the World Trade Center since its

opening and was the Port Authority's Chief Maintenance Supervisor. Stephen enjoyed playing with his kids and their friends, and he would often have just as good a time as the young ones.

On February 26, 1993, Stephen was on his lunch break in the World Trade Center basement. He was 47 years old.

His son, **Stephen Knapp, Jr.**, is the current General Manager of Staten Island Bridges.



## William Macko

**William Macko**

lived in Bayonne, NJ. He and his wife, Carol, had four children. William

was a former U.S. Marine and enjoyed fishing and cooking. He worked for the Port Authority as an Assistant Chief Mechanical Supervisor at the World Trade Center.

On February 26, 1993, William was on his lunch break in the complex's basement. He was 57 years old.



## Wilfredo Mercado

Born in Lima, Peru, **Wilfredo Mercado** lived in East New York, Brooklyn, with

his wife, Olga, and their two daughters. Wilfredo worked two jobs at the World Trade Center — on weekdays as a purchasing agent for Windows on the World, the restaurant atop the North Tower, and on weekends as a security guard.

On February 26, 1993, he was receiving food deliveries in the complex's basement. Wilfredo was 37 years old.



## John DiGiovanni

Born in Brooklyn, **John DiGiovanni** lived in Valley Stream, NY, with his

mother. He worked as an East Coast sales manager for Kerr Chemicals.

Heading to a sales call on February 26, 1993, John had just parked his car at the World Trade Center's underground parking garage. He was 45 years old.

Their names are forever inscribed in bronze on the North Memorial Pool, together with the thousands of names of those lost on September 11, 2001. They remind us that these events are inextricably linked, and of our sacred obligation to *never forget*.

## Watch: NBE Marks Black History Month

February is Black History Month, a time dedicated to recognizing the history and achievements of Black and African Americans in the U.S. While it is crucial to highlight the many influential figures and changemakers past and present, we also remember that Black history is American history and must be recognized and celebrated year-round.

In recognition of Black History Month, the Network of Black Employees (NBE), which has championed equity and inclusion of Black and African American

colleagues, hosted **Black History Month: Recognizing Black Trailblazers Who Shaped the Port Authority**, on Wednesday, February 22. The event honored key figures in PA history with a panel discussion featuring current and former agency leaders **Jawauna "Jo" Greene**, Director of Brand and Customer Partnerships; **Norma Hardy**, former PAPD Assistant Chief; **Rebecca Doggett**, former Director, Office of Business and Job Opportunity; **Frederick Redd**, former Director of the Project Management



Office, and **Henry DeGeneste**, retired Port Authority Police Superintendent.

A [recording of the event](#) is available on the Port Authority YouTube channel.

## PA Staffers Help the Next Generation Plan a 'Future City'

Dating back to 1992, the [Future City competition](#) has promoted STEM in middle schools. Today, over 45,000 students across the country (and abroad) participate in a hands-on, cross-curricular education program using the Engineering Design Process and project management skills. This year's topic was climate change. Several Port Authority employees supported both the New Jersey and New York City region competitions with volunteers who helped organize and judge.

For the New Jersey region competition, **Scott Lubarsky** and **Lucas Baskayan** served on the steering committee. **Patricia Chen, William Drost, Matthew Taffet, Benjamin Engle,** and **Bobby Kuriakose** volunteered as judges. **Tej Desai, Eduardo Jose, Ahsan Ali, Bharat Faldu,** and **Kess-Ann Grant** spoke to students about their careers and the Port Authority.

For the New York City region competition, **Jason Del Nero** served on the planning committee and **Raul Garcia, Steven Wong,** and **Jami Bjornstad** volunteered as judges.



From left: Kess-Ann Grant, Tej Desai, Scott Lubarsky, Bharat Faldu, Eduardo Jose and Ahsan Ali

## PA Staff Give Students an Inside Look at WTC Campus

On February 6, employees from the World Trade Center Department and members of the Women in Transportation Seminar gave a group of local students a tour around the World Trade Center campus. The 14 students are current juniors and seniors at Brooklyn Technical High School who are interested in the transportation industry. The group of students got an up-close look at the WTC Memorial Pools, 1 WTC, and the Oculus Transportation Hub.



Taking part in the tour were **Donia Abdelmotaal** (Project Engineer, WTC Construction), **Jenna Acierno** (Project Engineer, WTC Construction), **Tom Amoia** (Director of Construction, Major Capital Projects), **Ryan Darrow** (Designer, Major Capital Projects), **Tahvia Francis** (Senior Project Manager, Major Capital Projects), **Brian Kramer** (WTC Construction), and **Karina Santos** (Project Engineer, WTC Construction).

## OCI Spotlights Excellence in Continuous Improvement

Last month, the Office of Continuous Improvement (OCI) hosted its annual Excellence in Continuous Improvement Week. On January 25, over 100 Port Authority employees joined the in-person project showcase, where they heard from 28 colleagues representing 14 continuous improvement efforts. Across a range of departments, staff shared their work from the past year with attendees, highlighting the impact of their projects and lessons learned.

A [video recap of the event](#) is available.

Then on January 27, over 300 staff joined OCI's virtual recognition event to hear about employees and teams across the organization who exemplified continuous improvement through their work in 2022. Following remarks from executive leadership and a recap of the earlier event, department leaders recognized over 100 of their staff members for their work in building a culture of continuous improvement. To learn more, view a [recording of the event](#).



## CALENDAR

### [PAWC: Women's History Month](#)

*Wednesday, March 8 at 8:45 to 11:30 a.m., 4 WTC 23rd floor, Board Room and Conference Rooms 1 and 2.* In honor of Women's History Month and International Women's Day, the Port Authority Women's Council (PAWC) invites you to its International Women's Day: Embrace Equity event. There

will be a networking breakfast and a panel of women agency leaders. The **Hiloreen Woods-Hyatt** award will also be presented. A virtual option will be available. PAWC members do not need to register. [Non-members can register here.](#)

### [PAVA: JFK Runway 5K Run/Walk](#)

*Sunday, April 30.* The Port Authority Veterans Association (PAVA) will take

part in the annual JFK Runway 5K Run/Walk on Sunday, April 30 at JFK Airport, Building 14. Check in is from 7 to 8:15 a.m. and the race starts at 9 a.m., rain or shine. For more information and to sign up, [click here](#). Be sure to select the **Port Authority Veterans Association** team when you sign up. The registration fee increases on April 9, so sign up now! Contact [PAVA@panynj.gov](mailto:PAVA@panynj.gov) with any questions.

## STAFF NEWS

**Jacqueline Grossgold** has joined the Office of the Chief Operating Officer as Program Director, Customer Experience, effective February 20. Jackie will be responsible for leading our agency-wide customer experience strategy and program.

Jackie joins the Office of the Chief Operating Officer from the Aviation Department, where she led numerous initiatives to transform the airport customer and employee experience. Prior to joining Aviation, Jackie held numerous positions within the Port Department, Tunnels, Bridges & Terminals, and several staff departments including the Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, where she spearheaded the implementation of the agency's Title VI / Non-discrimination and Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance programs.

Jackie holds a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from New Jersey City University as well as Master's degrees in International Business and in Management, both from St. Peter's University.



Jacqueline Grossgold

## Li Pei Wang

**Li Pei Wang** has been appointed Director, Project Management Office, effective February 6.

The Project Management Office (PMO) is responsible for the development and oversight of the agency's \$37 billion Capital Plan. Li Pei joined the PMO in 2017 as Assistant Director and has played a pivotal role working with line departments to significantly improve the agency's on-time, on-budget, and on-plan performance.

Prior to joining PMO, Li Pei worked in a variety of roles within Engineering, World Trade Center Construction, and Aviation. Over his nearly 20 years of Port Authority service, he has contributed to some of our most critical and impactful projects including the rebuilding of the WTC campus and the redevelopment of LaGuardia Airport's Terminal B.

Li Pei holds a Bachelor of Science in Architecture from National Cheng Kung University in Taiwan and a Master of Science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is a Licensed Architect in the state of New York.



Li Pei Wang

## Board Recognizes Recent Retirements of Agency Leaders

During this month's Board of Commissioners meeting on February 9, the agency honored two recent retirees and long-tenured PA stalwarts, former Acting Chief of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion **Carrol Bennett** and former Chief Engineer **James Starace**.

"We celebrate our greatest asset — the people who work for the Port Authority," said Chairman **Kevin O'Toole**. "They've always been our greatest asset."

"You perhaps more than anyone else I've met at the Port Authority represent the wonderfulness of this agency," Chairman O'Toole said of Bennett. "You represent all 8,000 individuals in every single walk of life. Your body of work touches us all. What you have done, starting as an Associate Accountant in June of 1980, to where you finished in December, Acting Chief, you are amazing."

On Starace, Chairman O'Toole remarked, "Jim is one of the pillars. You've been with us since May of 1986 as Assistant Civil Engineer. You have been a role model for not only those in Engineering at the Port Authority, but also those outside of the Port."

You can view the portion of the Board meeting recognizing them on the [Port Authority YouTube account](#).



Carrol Bennett



James Starace

## A Safer City is Legacy of 1993 World Trade Center Attack

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"Today and every day, we honor the memories of the people we lost 30 years ago," said **Alan Reiss**, director of Major Capital Projects and a survivor of the 1993 and 9/11 terrorist attacks. "After the attack in 1993, we concentrated on improving the life-safety and security systems at the World Trade Center. The changes made then are now part of the city's building and fire codes laws."

From lessons learned in the 1993 attack, the Port Authority invested more than a quarter of a billion dollars to enhance its life-safety and security systems. Among the investments were a new security command center, an improved operations control center, new decentralized redundant fire alarm systems, a backup power system, battery packs for fluorescent light fixtures in stairwells, a new elevator intercom system, and elevators equipped with cab lighting and alarm bells. Evacuation chair stretchers also were purchased for mobility-restricted people, and enhanced fire safety training was conducted regularly.

The agency also added to its perimeter and building-access security at the World Trade Center by installing 10,000-pound planters to prevent vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices and protection barriers in parking lots and truck docks to stop a truck from entering while being screened. The Port Authority Police Department's K-9 unit began training its canines for bomb detection after the 1993 attack.

Continue reading on [Now Arriving](#).

## RETIREMENT

Staten Island Bridges' **Frank Guariglia** is ready to pack up and set sail after 36 years of service with the Port Authority! A retirement celebration will be held on Monday, February 27 at the Goethals Maintenance Garage at noon. Contact **Frank Bailey**, **Mark Gonzalo**, or **Thomas Zanzalari** or [see the flyer](#) for more details.