

# TRANSIT ALL-STARS

## Recognizing our Employees

Our teams across NYCT continue to do incredible things to improve performance and increase customer satisfaction, moving the needle closer to our North Star goals. This month we are showcasing some of our outstanding employees and their contributions.

### April 2024 Honorees



#### John Beauregard

Cleaner

*Department of Buses*

is credited for having experience and knowledge to identify potential issues before they become hazards.

In his spare time John loves to be with his family, especially his grandchildren. He is a loyal fan of the New York Mets, Jets, and Rangers and enjoys going to games.

Keeping buses and facilities clean is a continuous challenge. However, more than 7 out of 10 Queens customers tell us that they are satisfied with the level of cleanliness on their bus, exceeding other indicators and the overall department goal. We are proud of John and all bus cleaners and commend them for a job well done each and every day!

Buses' Transit All-Stars include a team of dedicated and skilled employees out of College Point Depot. Established in 1998, College Point serves 26 bus routes in Queens, transporting an average of 76,000 customers every weekday. The team includes about 536 bus operators, 137 bus maintainers, 15 dispatchers, and 17 line supervisors. College Point transports customers to their destinations with 158 local and 169 express buses.

Collectively, College Point's Transit All-Stars boasts around 184 years of operational experience, and all have worked in College Point throughout their whole tenures.

John Beauregard has dedicated his 42-year career at NYCT to keeping buses and facilities clean. By contributing to NYCT's North Star Goals, John is a Transit All-Star because of his commitment to prioritizing cleanliness for customers and employees.

John began in the Department of Buses in 1981 at College Point Depot and continues to be a cleaner/shifter at this location. His role includes cleaning, shifting, and fueling buses. John is responsible for cleaning and maintaining the depot's yard and maintenance shop.

John is well respected by his colleagues and encourages the importance of keeping work areas clean and safe. He is known to his coworkers as the depot "Head Sanitational Engineer". John

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## **Kenneth Webb**

Chassis Maintainer  
*Department of Buses*

Kenneth Webb is a 45-year career employee at the Department of Buses. Celebrated for his tenure and mechanical acumen, Kenneth continues to contribute and provide value as a leader and mentor among his peers at College Point Depot.

We salute Kenneth as a Transit All-Star because of his success as a mechanic who transformed his skills and abilities with each new generation of NYCT bus vehicles. The Department of Buses' efforts to transition to a clean air bus fleet will depend on employees like Kenneth to update their skills to support a zero-emission bus fleet.

Kenneth began his career at College Point Depot in 1979 as a cleaner. He was later promoted to a helper and in 1983 he was promoted again to a mechanic. As the Department of Buses introduced alternative fuel systems to the bus fleet, Kenneth became very skilled and knowledgeable about bus systems. In 1990, he was assigned to diagnose and repair engines and transmissions.

His management recognized his talent and mechanical abilities. In 2004, Kenneth was again promoted to Lead Mechanic, a role of that assists the supervisor during trouble shooting, diagnostics, and bus repairs. Kenneth has had the opportunity to work on a variety of bus types—from 6 to 8-cylinder engines to those powered by compressed natural gas and, most recently, electric-power systems for NYCT's future bus fleet.

Kenneth is known to many of his coworkers as "The Preacher" because he is also a minister. They say that he is always willing to assist and guide them in the right direction at work and beyond. Some noted the invaluable outreach he provided immediately after the nation's 9/11 tragedy.

Kenneth is very fond of cars and sports. In his spare time, he likes playing with his grandchildren and attending soccer games.

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## Robert McDonough

Chassis Maintainer  
*Department of Buses*

Robert McDonough will celebrate his 50th year at NYCT in August 2024. We are proud of Robert and his contributions to the Department of Buses at College Point Depot.

Robert is an experienced mechanic and has transformed his skills and abilities as bus technology has changed over the decades. The Department of Buses' efforts to transition to a clean air bus fleet will depend on employees like Robert to support the next generation bus fleets which are targeted towards zero-emissions.

Robert has worked at College Point Depot since 1974, beginning his career as a cleaner. In 1980, Robert was promoted to a helper and then to a mechanic in 1982.

During his tenure, Robert has done everything from building bus engines and installing transmissions, to working in "the brake room". His history includes overhauling chassis on our Grumman buses. When Robert started his career, buses were not fully automated and did not have air conditioning. This meant buses had no power steering, cable linkages for transmissions, or accelerators, and hand brakes were used. Robert adapted as technology changed and can now work on any of these systems. He is a great support to his peers and up and coming bus mechanics because of his experience.

Legacy experience is invaluable to an organization with a bus fleet of over 5,000 and includes vehicles that are aging and at the same time transitioning to electric powered buses. Robert is perceived by his peers as a strong leader and "his guidance and expertise is always welcomed on the maintenance floor".

When not at work, Robert enjoys playing with his grandchildren. He likes spending time around his home just as much as he enjoys going away on vacation.

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**Rowan Porter**  
Chassis Maintainer  
*Department of Buses*

In his spare time, Rowen enjoys spending time with his family and friends. Congratulations Rowan for being a Transit All-Star!

Rowan Porter has 48 years of service at NYCT, beginning his career in 1976 at College Point Depot.

Beginning as a cleaner/shifter, Roman was promoted to a helper in 1979. He learned all that he could by working alongside a bus mechanic. In 1983, Rowan was promoted to a mechanic. He was assigned to work on Diesel 2 stroke engines. Rowan began to work on the floor/brakes and running repairs in 1988. He remained in that role for almost 10 years.

As compressed natural gas technology was being introduced to bus fleet, Roman decided to pick an assignment to work on bus engines again. Next, he worked on bus wheelchair lifts, performing daily inspections for bus reliability and customer safety.

In 2004, Rowan became the Depot Instructor to develop helpers into mechanics. Next, Rowan moved to the yard where he formed relationships with the Transportation staff.

Rowan is often referred to as the “All Yard Man” because of the respect he has gained from his colleagues and peers due to his varied knowledge and experiences. Rowan enjoys working hand-in-hand with the operators and has formed many friendships during his tenure at College Point Depot.



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## Senna Phillips

Senior Transportation Planner  
*Operations Planning Department*

Senna Phillips is a Senior Transportation Planner who joined the Operations Planning Department's Bus Service Planning team in 2020. In a short time, Senna has made a significant impact on several important bus initiatives that are contributing to improving bus speeds and service reliability for thousands of customers throughout NYC.

We celebrate Senna as a Transit All-Star because of her many accomplishments and, most notably, her success on one of NYCT's most highly visible and impactful customer-facing projects, the Brooklyn Bus Network Redesign. This project is part of NYCT's larger effort to modernize New York City's bus network and improve bus service borough by borough. The project takes a fresh look at the legacy Brooklyn bus network, with the goal of meeting customers' priorities: frequent service, faster travel, reliable service, better connections, and an easy ride. NYCT released the Brooklyn Redesign Draft Plan in late 2022 that proposed 69 local routes and 19 express routes to better serve the borough's 650,000 weekday riders.

Senna joined the Brooklyn Redesign team in 2022 and immediately took the lead on many important aspects of this project. She organized staffing for five stakeholder briefings and 18 public workshops where, along with the team, she presented the Draft Plan to over 1,000 attendees and gathered valuable feedback. She developed easy-to-understand materials to communicate complex changes, which were critical for successful community and stakeholder engagement.

As a result of her expertise, collaborative spirit, and leadership, Senna was then assigned to serve as the acting project manager between October 2023 and March 2024 and skillfully led the team, which includes coordinating across multiple stakeholder groups. The team has been working diligently to prepare the release of its Proposed Final Plan later this year. With more than half of Brooklyn residents not owning a car (and where many communities rely solely on bus service as their only transit option), this plan is critical for the vitality of the borough. We look forward to Senna's future work on the Brooklyn Redesign as the project continues to advance.

Senna's colleagues say she is not only "a great worker, but she displays a natural warmth, with a smile that effortlessly lights up any room she enters". "Her easygoing nature and beautiful soul reflect a deep kindness and empathy, always quick to offer a helping hand".

One special note is one of Senna's hobbies is to knit items for new babies of the Bus Service Planning team.

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## Duane Thorne

Conductor

*Department of Subways*

Duane Thorne is a conductor in the Department of Subways and recognized as a Transit All-Star for his outstanding customer care.

Duane joined NYCT in 2017 and has proven himself to be a key contributor to the Service Delivery team.

Recently, an MTA employee reported that she was on his Jamaica- bound  train where she witnessed four high school students boarding his train. The train continued for one stop before abruptly stopping. Duane quickly exited the conductor location and swiftly proceeded through the train cars, informing customers that he needed to address an incident of possible “train surfing”. He returned shortly and told customers the train would be moving momentarily.

The MTA employee inquired what the situation was, and the conductor told her that he had encountered these children attempting to “subway surf” on his train in the past. He explained that during the previous incident they were hanging on the outside of the last train car. The employee noted that the train had jerked twice during the trip and believes had the conductor not intervened, the outcome would have been tragic.

Duane’s situational awareness that resulted in his quick action prevented a potentially horrific accident from occurring.



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## Elisa Hamilton

Group Station Superintendent  
*Department of Subways*

Elisa Hamilton, Group Station Superintendent, is being celebrated as a Transit All-Star because of her courage, quick thinking, and fast action to safeguard other employees and customers during a very serious incident that occurred on March 14, 2024.

Elisa was on an **A** subway train at Hoyt-Schermerhorn on her way home from work when a commotion broke out and gun shots were fired. Realizing what was happening, Elisa, who had extensive incident management training, acted quickly to help safeguard transit employees and other riders.

She immediately alerted NYPD officers at the station and notified Subways' Operations Control Center (OCC). Elisa's prompt action was instrumental in facilitating a rapid police response, which ultimately led to the apprehension of the perpetrator.

This was a highly volatile and dangerous situation, and we commend Elisa for her extraordinary leadership throughout the incident. She remained calm and in control to not only get help fast, but to also assist in escorting customers off the train safely.

Elisa began her career at NYCT in 1994 and has been a Station Superintendent since 2015. We are proud of the above and beyond effort Elisa made to help our customers.

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## Joshua "Matt" Cawthon

Staff Analyst

*Department of Subways*

Joshua "Matt" Cawthon, Staff Analyst II, joined NYCT and started working in the Department of Subways in 2017. He began working on Enterprise Asset Management (EAM) initiatives in 2023.

Matt is a Transit All-Star for his success in deploying the Winter Weather Event (WWE) project, which will improve tracking the Division of Stations' snow response activities using a new EAM application. This work is critical for proper resource management and cost control.

Matt managed, designed, and implemented the project from conception to deployment. This involved designing, testing, and developing the new application, HxGNEAM. He worked with the EAM GIS Team to also deploy an accompanying GIS Dashboard. The work was intricate, and it included preparing and performing necessary data uploads, staff training, and coordinating/hosting a User Acceptance Testing (UAT) Drill.

Matt's work has resulted in helping management during critical weather emergencies. In fact, the new technology was successfully used during two past snow events and included coordination across multiple subdivisions: Stations, Facilities (Station Maintenance & Facilities Operations), MOW Infrastructure, MOW Track, and the Division of Car Equipment.

The expectation is that this work can be expanded and used across other divisions in the department including MOW Infrastructure's snow response at Fan Plants, Pump Plants, and Emergency Exits.

We are proud of the work Matt did to help Subways manage operations during critical times.





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## Samson Onilude

Director, Eligibility Determination Unit  
*Paratransit*

from OpenText.

Samson is also currently leading the opening of a new Manhattan assessment center, which is scheduled to open Quarter 3, 2024. His invaluable service and proactive management approach has not only improved operations but has dramatically reduced the scheduling timeframe for new customer assessment appointments.

We recognize Samson for his demonstrated commitment to innovation, customer service, teamwork, and leadership.

Samson Onilude, Director for Paratransit's Eligibility Determination Unit, manages the team that handles Access-A-Ride (AAR) applications for service, customer service calls, and requests for the AAR zero fare MetroCards. This team processes over 4,102 AAR applications per month, 33,257 customer calls each month, and 296 AAR MetroCard requests monthly.

Samson's hard work and dedication is the driving force behind Paratransit's eligibility team's efficiency and has garnered him great respect from his team and appreciation from those who work with him.

His commitment to success is helping Paratransit improve performance metrics and customer ratings, including answering over 90% of all incoming customer service calls in under 180 seconds, completing application processing within 21 days - all while investigating and responding to all customer correspondence concerning eligibility within 7 days.

Samson's 11 years of experience at NYCT Paratransit has included working on a wide range of projects including the AAR OMNY pilot, MYAAR App inquiry form, modification of assessment center scheduling module, implementation oversight of new scanning software, and a new document management system

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## **Natalie Garcia**

Director, Project Cost Management  
*Paratransit*

Natalie Garcia is the Director of Project Cost Management in Paratransit's Project Management Unit. Natalie has been with NYCT for 15 years.

Natalie is a Transit All-Star because of her contributions in helping launch the OMNY pilot for 84 Paratransit customers. This included leading Paratransit's web and app ( Mymta Website and Mymta) development and testing. This resulted in an increase of 15% online Access a Ride reservations—an all-time high for Paratransit.

Natalie has been an integral part in bringing technology solutions, such as scheduling, automatic vehicle location monitoring, and integrated voice response systems, in Paratransit. She works in conjunction with vendors, contractors, and procurement groups.

Her management describes her as self-disciplined, maintaining focus on her goals with determination and effective time management, despite ever-present distractions or obstacles. Her behavior is marked by unwavering consistency and a principled approach, maintaining composure even in challenging situations.

Natalie is family-oriented and in her personal time, and she enjoys reading and travelling.