



# PHXCONNECT

SPECIAL EDITION

The Weekly Connection Newsletter for City of Phoenix Employees • May 29, 2024



## EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Join us in congratulating the 2023 City Manager's Employee Excellence Award recipients. This annual event recognizes colleagues who have made exceptional contributions in public service through their individual efforts or as part of a team.

This year, five teams and 12 individuals were recognized by the City Manager for their accomplishments during 2023. This special edition of *PHXConnect* highlights the award recipients and their nominations.

You can read each winning nomination by clicking on the image and [watch the awards video of all the winners.](#)

Although this is a time to showcase employees who have been standouts in 2023, we also recognize that City of Phoenix employees are the hardest working public servants in the country.

Thank you for your continued dedication and contributions to building the Phoenix of Tomorrow.

*Congratulations  
to all our honorees!*

THE FOLLOWING RECIPIENTS SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED AN INNOVATIVE IDEA,  
WHERE OUTSTANDING RESULTS WERE ACHIEVED OR AN EFFICIENCY THAT  
RESULTED IN LOWER COSTS OR SAVINGS TO THE ORGANIZATION



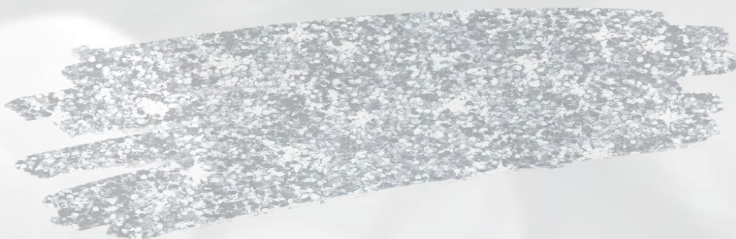
Water Conservation & Efficiency Team



Melissa Thomson, Risk Management  
Coordinator, Finance Department

Start thinking about nominations for 2024 as applications will open up in the fall.

To learn more about this program, visit the [Employee Excellence Awards](#) site.



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**PHX STEAM Tour Partnership Team**



**Gated Alley Program Team**



**EMPLOYEE  
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THE FOLLOWING RECIPIENTS SOLVED AN EXTRAORDINARY PROBLEM OR  
ACHIEVED A SIGNIFICANTLY DIFFICULT GOAL



Taylor Riske, Park Ranger II,  
Parks & Recreation Department



Mobile Home Resident Relocation Team

THE FOLLOWING RECIPIENTS DEMONSTRATED KINDNESS TO CUSTOMERS, WORKING TO  
PROVIDE THE BEST POSSIBLE SERVICE TO RESIDENTS AND GUESTS OF THE CITY



Dementia Friendly Travel Workshop Team



Sonia Chavez, Case Worker II,  
Housing Department



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# PILLAR AWARD



**Chad Blotkamp, Communications Engineer,  
Information Technology Services Department**

This award recognizes employees that excel every day in every way. These employees demonstrate the ability to multitask, willingly assists others in meaningful ways with a can-do attitude, actively engage in problem-solving and developing creative solutions and build good relations with employees and the public.



**Larry Jue, Procurement Officer Lead,  
Finance Department**



**John White, Police Lieutenant,  
Police Department**



**Elijah Tangenberg, Water Resource  
Specialist, Water Services Department**



**Steven Pieper, Equipment Service Worker I,  
Public Works Department**



## JEROME E. MILLER AWARD

This award continues the legacy of Jerome E. Miller, a former City employee who spent many years in his 17-year career as the Neighborhood Services Director. It recognizes an exemplary public servant who mentors staff and grows and develops those around them while also working on their own personal and professional development.



**Aracely Herrera, Planner III, Planning and Development Department**



## JANE L. MORRIS AWARD



**Jerome Pinacate, Park Ranger III, Parks & Recreation Department**

This award category is in memory of Jane L. Morris, a former Deputy City Manager who served Phoenix for 25 years. The recipient demonstrates strong leadership and leads high-performing teams. Through engagement and mentoring the winner of this award makes a mark grooming others with the creative problem solving and out-of-the-box thinking that makes strong future leaders.



**EMPLOYEE  
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## FRANK FAIRBANKS MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE AWARD

The Frank Fairbanks Management Excellence Award, in honor of former city manager Frank Fairbanks, was created to recognize those in management who excel as leaders in the organization.

Frank was the 7th City Manager of Phoenix since Charter reform in 1949, and the longest-serving City Manager in the City's history, serving 19 years from 1990 to 2009. During his tenure, Frank oversaw tremendous growth of the city; downtown revitalization efforts; the opening of dozens of parks, libraries, senior centers, police and fire stations; and the launching of light rail. But Frank was known to say that he liked to focus most on the thousands of city employees who do outstanding work for our residents every day.

Frank's leadership was known across the country as he earned numerous awards, including being named Public Official of the Year by Governing Magazine. The recipient of this year's Frank Fairbanks Management Excellence award exemplifies these same characteristics.



**Rachel Milne, Office of Homeless Solutions  
Director, City Manager's Office**



**John Chan, Deputy City Manager,  
City Manager's Office**



## EMPLOYEE CELEBRATION

All employees are invited to join the fun on either Thursday, May 30 or Friday, May 31, from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m., in the City Hall Atrium. The celebration will include giveaways, a photo booth, and other fun. Several food trucks will be on site:



- **Thursday:** *La Parrilla del Gordo, American Top Dog, Big Mamma Events Desserts*
- **Friday:** *Pizza Arno, La Parrilla del Gordo, Big Mamma Events Desserts*

During the event, free parking in the 305 garage (Washington St. and 3rd Ave.) is available for employees who present a City badge. More details about all the festivities can be found on [this special Employee Resource Hub](#)

**Donation Drive:** There's still time to donate [requested items](#) to support the Office of Homeless Solutions by June 7. Drop-off boxes are located inside the City Hall employee entrance and inside the Calvin C. Goode building lobby.

## THE WINNER IS ...

As part of the Parks and Recreation Department's ongoing efforts to involve the community in enhancing City parks, the department asked



elementary school students enrolled in our Phoenix Afterschool Centers (PAC) to create their "perfect park." Each PAC site envisioned and created miniature park models.

The votes have been tallied, and the winner is from the Clarendon site, with Desert Oasis in second place and Mariposa in third. Thank you for your participation!



As Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Heritage Month (AANHPI) wraps up, the Phoenix Asian League (PAL) features Suzanne Wang, a first generation Chinese-American. Currently an assistant Phoenix Fire director, she shares her career path and her favorite local Asian restaurants at [phxasianleague.com](http://phxasianleague.com).



Thank you to everyone who participated in our AANHPI Voices series with Kathy Nakagawa, owner of Baseline Flowers who shared the history of the Baseline Flower Fields through pictures. Join PAL now to learn more about upcoming speakers and events!



## NEW BUS CARDS START SOON

Don't forget to get and start using your new Valley Metro Platinum Pass! All buses and light rail stations will start using new fare readers on June 1.



If you currently have a "metro" card, it will stop working after May 31. You should have already been issued a new Platinum Pass. If not, please see your department payroll liaison for help.

# BRING YOUR CHILD TO WORK DAY

JUNE 12, 2024



DO WORK THAT MAKES PHOENIX WORK