

Governor Markell Announces the 2015 Governor's Team Excellence Award Recipient and Finalists

Governor Jack Markell announced that this year's recipient of the Governor's Team Excellence Award is the *Delaware Bayshore Initiative Team*. This team from the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control worked with the Department of Transportation and the Delaware Economic Development Office to develop, enhance, and promote Thousand Acre Marsh and Augustine Wildlife Area as important areas for conservation, recreation, and community engagement in the Delaware Bayshore region.



The Delaware Bayshore is widely recognized as an area of global ecological significance. The focus of this team is on protecting and restoring habitat of this area, enhancing recreation access compatible with habitat conservation goals, increasing education and outreach that foster support for conservation, and engaging Bayshore residents in ways that will strengthen their communities.

"The Delaware Bayshore initiative builds on our reputation as a state of unique and beautiful natural resources, while also strengthening our economy by encouraging Delawareans and visitors to enjoy the area through activities like birding, fishing, and boating." Governor Jack Markell (October 30, 2015 – press release on milestones of initiative)

This team has accomplished several important milestones over the last year:

- Securing a competitive federal grant of \$1.4 million to purchase 142 acres on Thousand Acre Marsh, including raising more than \$55 thousand of match funding from conservation partners.

- Increasing recreational and educational opportunities by constructing an entrance road and gravel parking area and installing new signs to support hunting and wildlife-viewing access.
- Developing a new wildlife-viewing area including ADA-accessible parking, access trail, viewing platform and interpretive signs
- Developing restoration plans and securing a grant to restore the Lang Impoundment dike and water control
- Partnering with DelDOT's Byway Program, DEDO's Downtown Delaware Program, and community leaders to create a brand for the Delaware Bayshore to enhance the region as an eco-tourism destination.

These milestones demonstrate how leadership, enthusiasm, and a shared spirit of accomplishment can move projects forward with lasting impacts for conservation and ecotourism in Delaware. For its efforts, the Delaware Bayshore Initiative received national recognition as one of 100 projects included in the U.S. Department of the Interior's "America's Great Outdoors 50-State Report" highlighting the country's most promising ways to reconnect Americans to the natural world.

The Governor's Team Excellence Award is an annual award that encourages teamwork by recognizing groups of state employees for their efforts to produce tangible results and superior customer service through the use of continuous quality improvement tools. The teams recognized by this award demonstrate excellence in leadership, team dynamics, and communication.

In addition to the award recipients, three other teams were recognized as finalists:

Pedestrian Accessibility Standards Development Team – Department of Transportation



This team of transportation project experts developed a design and construction manual for pedestrian accessibility that will benefit pedestrian mobility projects for decades to come. Prior to establishing these standards, these infrastructure projects had to struggle with multiple competing guidance manuals, as well as overlapping and sometimes conflicting regulations at the federal level. These conflicts caused sharp increases in construction change orders, cost overruns, schedule delays, and ADA complaints for either not delivering pedestrian improvements at all or not delivering ADA-compliant improvements.

The manual developed by the team, the *Pedestrian Accessibility Standards for Facilities in the Public Right-of-Way*, synthesized these varying guidance sources into a single document, establishing one clear rule the DelDOT project staff could understand and follow. As a result, a backlog of pedestrian improvement projects that needed clear direction has moved forward. The standards led to the start of hundreds of new designs that meet or exceed all federal requirements. These designs will allow paving projects to move forward so Delaware's roadway pavements can be maintained in a state of good repair. This standardization will usher in a new era of pedestrian infrastructure development and construction. It will improve mobility for the disabled - and it will improve safety for everyone.

Delaware Libraries Emerging Technologies Team - Department of State

The Division of Delaware Libraries Emerging Technologies Team explores new technologies that would strengthen Delaware's libraries and provides tools and training to allow public library staff to incorporate those technologies into the services they provide. One of the team's major accomplishments over the past year was their 3D Printer Road show. The team traveled to fifteen libraries across the state to introduce Delawareans to 3D printers and give patrons the opportunity to see in person what many have only read about or seen on television. An example of the results from this program is the building of a prosthetic hand for a boy using the 3D printer at the Wilmington Library. Another achievement was the implementation of ILEAD (Innovative Librarians Engage, Apply, and Discover) - a nationally renowned professional development program providing intensive training on leadership, team building, and the innovative use of participatory technologies to address community needs. As a result of the program, the state has seen a notable increase in cross-library collaboration, particularly in the area implementing new technologies.



Libraries are transitioning from a place to go to get something (books, videos, etc.) to a place where you can use library resources (books, videos, 3D printers, video equipment, etc.) to learn, explore, experiment, and innovate. The Delaware Libraries Emerging Technologies Team has been at the forefront of preparing and equipping Delaware libraries for this transition. In November, the team was recognized as the Community Group of the Year in the first ever Delaware Innovation Awards.

DHSS Modernization Team – Department of Health and Social Services



The Modernization Team is a collaborative group of staff from the Divisions of Management Services, Social Services, and Medicaid & Medical Assistance tasked with upgrading and integrating several Department systems. These changes were needed to carry out the implementation of the Affordable Care Act. One of the major achievements of this team was the complete transition of several critical mainframe-based systems to a web-based system. Working with partner agencies and seeking frequent input from multiple stakeholders during the process, the team was able to complete this transition on time and under budget.

This improvement will help integrate services and ensure that client benefits are issued timely and accurately, and it will expand access to services for the Medicaid population. The new system will enhance security, provide better tools to track key business metrics, and improve quality control. It will also reduce fraud, waste, and abuse in the system and allow the Department to maximize federal funding.