



The Delaware Governor's Awards Ceremony

Recognizing State Employees,
Teams, and Heroes

MAY 5, 2025



**135TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY
HOUSE BILL NO. 604**

**AN ACT TO AMEND TITLE 29 OF THE DELAWARE CODE BY
PROVIDING FOR EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAMS.**

- WHEREAS, in the name of service, State employees have made great contributions to every aspect of life in the State of Delaware serving in the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches of government; and
- WHEREAS, the effectiveness, efficiency and quality of State government depends in large measure on its employees who provide such a broad range of services that few citizens remain unaffected by their work; and
- WHEREAS, the importance of public services rendered by State employees and the exemplary manner of their performance are too often forgotten and ignored; and
- WHEREAS, that the Statewide Labor-Management Committee has recommended that State take proactive steps to recognize dedication, talents and contributions made by State Employees at all levels of government; and
- WHEREAS, the Recognition Umbrella Committee has developed procedures and guidelines for statewide and agency level employee recognition initiatives,

NOW THEREFORE: BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE:

Section 1. Amend Chapter 59, Title 29 of the Delaware Code by adding thereto a new Section 5950 to read as follows:

§5950. Employee Recognition.

- (a) It shall be part of the function of State agencies to conduct employee recognition programs for Merit System employees and employees in positions that are assigned to comparable Merit System classes or pay grades. All such Employee recognition programs shall be approved by the State Personnel Director prior to implementation.
- (b) The first full week in May shall be designated Public Service Recognition Week. Employee recognition Programs shall not, however, be confined to this week.

This bill was passed by the House on June 26, 1990, by the Senate on September 25, 1990 and signed into law by Governor Michael N. Castle on October 15, 1990.

2024 Awards Recognition Ceremony

Opening

Yvonne Anders Gordon
Secretary
Department of Human Resources

Presentation of Colors

Department of Correction Honor Guard

Singing of the National Anthem

Serenity Fleming
Department of Natural Resources
and Environmental Control

Remarks

Chief Justice Collins Seitz
Supreme Court of Delaware

Representative Kendra Johnson
House of Representatives

Senator Trey Paradee
State Senate

Keynote Address

Governor Matt Meyer
State of Delaware

Presentation of Awards

Courtney Hutt
Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Resources

Lisa Tucker
Deputy Secretary, Department of Human Resources

Michael R. Smith
Secretary Department of Finance

Barbara McCleary
Director, Training & HR Solutions

Jim Robinson
Statewide Human Resources Administrator

Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service

~Nominees~

**Lee Cara James, Matt Koon,
Evelyn O'Neill**

Department of Human Resources

Amy Mann

Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Michael Monahan

Department of Health and Social Services

Joni Patterson

Department of Health and Social Services

Kim Reed

Department of Health and Social Services

Jonathan Rutledge

Department of Safety and Homeland Security

Tyler Sell

Department of Technology and Information

Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service

~ Recipients ~

Katelynn Cahall

Department of Transportation

**Sherrie Downs, Kathleen Rees,
Micheala Vanderslice**

Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families

**Allen Frazier, Anne Lattanzi,
Kathie Oberholtzer, Avery Peterson,
Matthew Tseronis**

Department of Health and Social Services

Sharay Knight

Court of Chancery

Tina Wagner

Department of Health and Social Services

Governor's Team Excellence Awards

Champions Award Recipients

Bridge Design Competition Team

Department of Transportation

Team Leader: Nick Dean

Team Members

Bryce Baker, Megan Beachy, Jerry Bedwell, Marie Burns,
Hayden Compton, Josh Fredericks, Jerry Guzman,
Paul Huhn, Brock Nowakowski, Matija Radovic,
Santiago Rodriguez, Jonathan Tice, Gus Toussaint,
Sean Weaver, Lucy Xu, and Eric Yoder

Election Security Team

Department of Technology and Information

Delaware National Guard

Department of Elections

Team Leader: Solomon Adote, Stuart Solomon

Team Members

Donovan Anderson, Joshua Bushweller,
Jordan Chambers, Christopher Chin,
Andrew Cronk, Christopher Curry, John Ewton,
Joel Harrison, DeWayne Lehman, Tim Li, Paul Neslusan,
Aashish Patel, Timothy Plimpton, Arthur Powell,
Ryan Rathbun, Alex Reuben, Chris Roberts,
Craig Ross, Tyler Sell, Kristin Skurla, Philip Smith
and Ross Smith

Division of Communications Team

Department of Safety and Homeland Security

Team Leader: Ed Hennen

Team Members

Jawon Alexander, William Aponte, Lee Ashlock,
Brian Ayars, Ian Brooks, Jimmy Bullock,
Melissa Caligaris, Judi Crimmins, Mark Fels,
Johnny Fennell, Jr., Kevin Forry, David Friess,
John Healy, Jimoh Jackman, Wilterson Joanem,
Nakiyah Jones, Kyle Legates, Samuel McLamb,
Joseph Moran, Jessie Ogden, John, Robinson,
Zackorie Seymore, James Slody, Isabelle Trudel,
and Eric Wagner



Governor's Team Excellence Awards

GEAR P3 Innovation and Efficiency Award

Combating Delaware's Teacher Shortage Team

Department of Education

Team Leader: Rick Konysz

Team Members

Linnea Bradshaw, Katherine Burns, Lisa Condon,
Brandie Foxx, Tiffany Green, Michael Hill-Shaner,
Ann Hlabangana-Clay, Wendy Modzelewski,
Juliet Murawski, Karin Pleasanton, Keeley Powell,
Denise Purnell-Cuff, Michael Saylor, Angela Socorso,
Leigh Weldin, Rhonda West, Jonathan Wickert,
and aQuena Williams

Updated Retention Schedules Team

Department of Services for Children,

Youth and Their Families

Team Leader: Jill Hamilton

Team Members

Alexandria Blake, Lindsey Joslin, Varina Marshall,
Benedictine Ramos, and Allia Smith

GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award Recipients

Paul Huhn

Department of Transportation

Trap Pond Dam Spillway Repair Project

**Nicole Brown, Jacob Carey,
Tina LaFace, Mallory Taylor,
and Jillian Troumouhis**

Department of Transportation

DELLA Team



Delaware Award for Heroism

~ Recipients ~

Nicholas Geannakakes

Department of Safety and Homeland Security
Delaware State Police

David Cross, Yvonne Dickerson, Kelly Diem, Lauren Tulloch, Cressa Vines

Department of Transportation

Jennifer Gabriele

Department of State

About the Awards

Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service

Established in 1990, this award recognizes up to five individuals or small groups (up to five employees) for their outstanding accomplishments, contributions, and performance in state service. This recognition may be based on the results of a one-time special act, outstanding service or accomplishment, or sustained excellence over time. Many nominees for this statewide award are selected from the Employees of the Year within their agencies.

GEAR P3 Trailblazer Award

This award, inspired by the Governor's Team Excellence Award, honors individual employees or teams of up to five state employees for work on projects that enhance government efficiency. Recipients are recognized not only for using continuous quality tools to achieve excellent outcomes but also for developing innovative designs and processes, establishing best practices, and producing sustainable results that can be adapted to other areas of government.

Governor's Team Excellence Awards

The Governor's Team Excellence Award Program was created to recognize and encourage teamwork and collaboration within state government. It is presented to teams of up to 20 state employees who have demonstrated excellence by working together and using continuous improvement tools to deliver superior customer service, improve work processes, reduce costs, and discover innovative ways of doing business. The program has two levels of recognition: Champions Award and the GEAR P3 Innovation and Efficiency Award.

Champions Award

This award recognizes teams that demonstrate a superior level of knowledge and use of continuous quality improvement tools and techniques. They must also have produced tangible results that lead to significant increases in efficiency, customer satisfaction, and/or cost savings.

GEAR P3 Innovation & Efficiency Award

This award recognizes teams with the highest levels of performance excellence and is sponsored through a public-private partnership (P3) initiative. It honors teams that not only use continuous improvement techniques to achieve excellent outcomes but also develop innovative designs and processes, establish best practices, and produce verifiable results that are sustainable, scalable, and adaptable to other areas of government. These teams serve as clear role models for other organizations.

About the Awards (Cont.)

Delaware Award for Heroism

This award recognizes acts of heroism and courage that go above and beyond the call of duty. Recipients of this award must have demonstrated outstanding judgment, exceptional courage, extraordinary decisiveness and presence of mind, and unusual swiftness of action, regardless of their own personal safety, in the attempt to save or protect human life and/or property.

“

Day after day,
ordinary people
become heroes
through extraordinary
and selfless actions to
help their neighbors.

~Sylvia Mathews Burwell

”

Delaware Award for Excellence and Commitment in State Service ~ Selection Committee ~

Yvonne Anders Gordon

Dick Carter

Angela LaManna

Josette Manning

Carole Mick

Melissa Minor Brown

Tasha Olfus

Rebecca Salmon

Governor's Team Excellence and GEAR P3 Trailblazer Awards Selection Committee

Aundrea Almond

Yvonne Anders-Gordon

Charles Clark

Vernita Dorsey

Shanté Hastings

Natalie Keefer

Angela LaManna

Andrew Lubin

Molly Merrill

Margaret Zimmerman

Special Thank You To Our Sponsors

**Our Private Sector Partners whose support helped
make this year's GEAR Awards possible:**

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The Precisionists Inc.

W.L. Gore & Associates

WSFS Bank

Thank You to our State Recognition Coordinators

Department of Agriculture

Carissa Stevens

Auditor of Accounts Office

Tori Parker
Kim Satur

Department of Correction

Holly Stacy (DHR)
Doris Tatman (DHR)

Administrative Office of the Courts

Sarah Bowers
Zoe Carter
Shawnta Jackson

Criminal Justice Council

Jacqui Thornton

**DE Criminal Justice Information
System**

Jennifer Dickinson

Department of Education

Sheri Minear

Elections

Anthony Albence

Department of Finance

Diane Bourne
Daniel Madrid

Fire Marshall's Office

Rebekah LePore

Delaware State Fire School

Christine Murabito

Office of the Governor

Sherine White

Delaware State Housing Authority

Melissa Cullen

Department of Human Resources

Cherie Dodge Biron (DHR)
Rebekah Taylor (DHR)

**Department of Health and Social
Services**

Sharie Matos

Delaware Insurance Department

Roberta Jones
Brenda Prillaman

Department of Justice

Diane Haase

Department of Labor

Tristan Press (DHR)

Legislative Hall

Mark Cutrona
Bobbie Higgs

Office of Management and Budget

Tamara Ben Addi (DHR)

**Department of Natural Resources
and Environmental Control**

Leslie Reese

Office of the Public Defender

Tamara Napier

**Department of Safety and
Homeland Security**

Tammy Menard
Donna Moran

**Department of Services for
Children, Youth & Their Families**

Alison McGonigal

Department of State

Lisa Callaway

Delaware State Police

Krista Gallo
Deborah Klezics

**Department of Technology and
Information**

Linda Hyler (DHR)
Kim Thornton (DHR)

Department of Transportation

Candyce Greene (DHR)
Sierra Martinez (DHR)
Aurthur Merriweather (DHR)

Office of the State Treasurer

Monai Washington

We would also like to thank:

Modern Maturity Center: Venue and Catering

Daniel Sato and Wade Stimeling: Video and Livestreaming

Deafinitions & Interpreting: ASL Translators

Serenity Fleming: National Anthem

Department of Correction: Honor Guard

Charles Clark, Daniel Madrid, and Bryan Sullivan:

GEAR Executive Management Team

Those behind the scenes...

Lee Ashlock

Ashley Blok

Keisha Brown

Reggie Brown

Kit Carson

Amber Clendaniel

Judy Cook

Darlene Hicken-Gott

Kraig Hoffman

Tom Johnson

Ashley Kavanagh

Matthew Koon

Shelley Koon

Nick Leloux

Sierra Martinez

Barbara McCleary

Arthur Merriweather

Daneen Ratigan

Maya Rattan

Jim Robinson

Candyce Rodgers

Daniel Soto

Larry Trunfio

Bobbi Tyre-Edwards

Dawn Warman

Jessica Washer

Lori Watts

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event on the Delaware
Department of Human
Resource's Flickr Page.

