



WORKFORCE WEBINAR SERIES

Utility Workforce Diversity Programs

Office of Wastewater Management

Office of Water

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

June 23, 2020

**We will start in a couple minutes.
Thank you.**



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- Presenters will monitor these questions and respond to as many as possible during the “Q&A” session at the end of the presentation.



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Webinar ID: 979 0944 8935

Opening Poll: Please indicate the sector that you work in:

- Utility
- State or Local Government
- Federal Government
- Consultant
- Academia/Educator
- Other

If you do not see a poll window pop up, please use the **Chat function** to type in your answer.

Utility Workforce Diversity Programs

Jim Horne, U.S. EPA Office of
Wastewater Management

Speakers

- Stacy Thompson, Deputy Director, Saco WRRD
- Howard Carter, Director, Saco WRRD
- Jenn Zuchowski, Manager Programs & Administration, MCES
- Dr. Mitzi Kennedy, Equity Manager, MCES
- Nancy Jennings, HR Manager, MCES
- Suidi Hashi, Associate Outreach Coordinator, MCES
- Matt Hiatt, Program Supervisor, MCES
- Juan Berry and Jacquelyn Lebeis, Interceptor Service Worker, MCES
- Chuck LaPierre, Manager Electrical Maintenance, MCES
- Mustafa Shabazz, Electrician Apprentice, MCES

June 23, 2020



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Water
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ASSOCIATION OF
METROPOLITAN
WATER AGENCIES



American Water Works
Association



Water Environment
Federation
the water quality people®

Workforce Case Studies

Building the Water Utility Workforce of the Future: Making it Work on the Ground

At present, water, wastewater, and stormwater utilities across the country face significant challenges recruiting, retaining, and developing a prepared workforce to deliver the critical services that protect public health and support the vitality of our communities, natural environment, and economy. At the November 2018 *National Water Workforce Convening*, participants stressed the importance of documenting and sharing successful workforce development strategies through a utilities-learning-from-utilities model.

EPA Works to Develop Case Studies on Innovative Workforce Programs

In response, the Office of Wastewater Management and Office of Groundwater and Drinking Water at EPA, working closely with sector associations and utilities, are developing a series of case studies that will highlight successful utility workforce programs and practices in recruitment, retention, competency, and community partnerships. The EPA expects that these case studies will be available in Summer 2020 and then shared widely throughout the water sector. The case studies will include the following utilities and topics:

- **City of Atlanta & AlexRenew:** Building Community Partnerships to Engage Underrepresented Persons in the Community
- **Philadelphia Water Department & Power Corps PHL:** Recruiting Unemployed and Underemployed Young People for a Greener Future
- **Central Utah:** Developing an Internal Training Program to Support and Retain Employees
- **Louisville, MSD:** Working with Community Partners and Providing Employment for A Young Workforce
- **Moulton Niguel:** Creating a Healthy and Inspiring Workplace Culture
- **Saco, Maine:** Supporting Employees Through Team Building and Networking
- **San Francisco Public Utilities Commission:** Connecting with the Community and Building the Workforce Pipeline from Kinder to Career
- **WaterOne Johnson County:** Restructuring Career Pathways for Upward Momentum



Saco WRRD Acknowledgements: Presentation and Video Development

- **Emily Roy-** City of Saco, Director of Communications
- **Andrew Dickinson-** City of Saco, Communications Coordinator

MCES Acknowledgements: Design Team, Contributors, and Speakers from Met Council

- **Jenn Zuchowski** - MCES Manager Programs and Administration
- **Dr. Mitzi Kennedy** – Met Council Equity Manager
- **Nancy Jennings** – Met Council Human Resources Manager
- **Matt Hiatt** – MCES Program Supervisor and Plant Operator Trainee Graduate
- **Mustafa Shabazz** - MCES Electrician Apprentice
- **Juan Berry** - Interceptor Service Worker and Trainee Program Graduate
- **Roderic Southhall** – Met Council Equal Opportunity Consultant
- **Chuck LaPierre** – Manager, Electrical Maintenance
- **Kristi Goble** – MCES Program Coordinator
- **Suidi Hashi** – MCES Associate Outreach Coordinator and former Intern
- **Scott Bowes** – MCES Assistant Manager Performance Excellence and Analytics
- **Bert Tracy** – MCES Manager Interceptor Services
- **Kim Burbank** – MCES Programs and Admin Specialist
- **Leisa Thompson** – MCES General Manager



Workforce Case Study – City of Saco, ME WRRD

CITY OF SACO



The City of Saco is located on Maine's southern coast, approximately 85 miles north of Boston. Saco is an attractive destination for both residents and visitors due to Saco's beautiful beaches, the Saco River, and the historic downtown and shopping district.

City of Saco WRRD's Mission Statement

The City of Saco Water Resource Recovery Department will provide our customers with the highest level of quality services through responsible, sustainable and creative stewardship of the resources and assets we manage. We pledge to do this with a productive and talented workforce, while always striving for excellence.

friendly by nature

Enterprise Fund & Drivers

- The WRRD utilizes an enterprise fund to promote and maintain long-term financial sustainability of its Water Resource activities.

Triple Bottom Line

- Protection of the health and well-being of all who live, work, and play within the city by conveying all liquid waste from their homes and businesses to the treatment facility for processing.
- Protection of one of the city's largest resources, the Saco River. It provides a tremendous recreational value to all citizens and a revenue stream to numerous entities.
- Economic and Business Development. A properly maintained and funded WRRD is crucial for private investment into Saco, which in turn, generates municipal revenues.

2019 in Review

4774

Residential sewer customers.



\$87.24

Average residential sewer charges per quarter.



\$186,246

Sewer Abatements.



2508

Average lbs of Biochemical Oxygen Demand per day.



378

Non-residential sewer customers.



770.51

Millions of gallons of water treated.



46.56

Inches of rain.

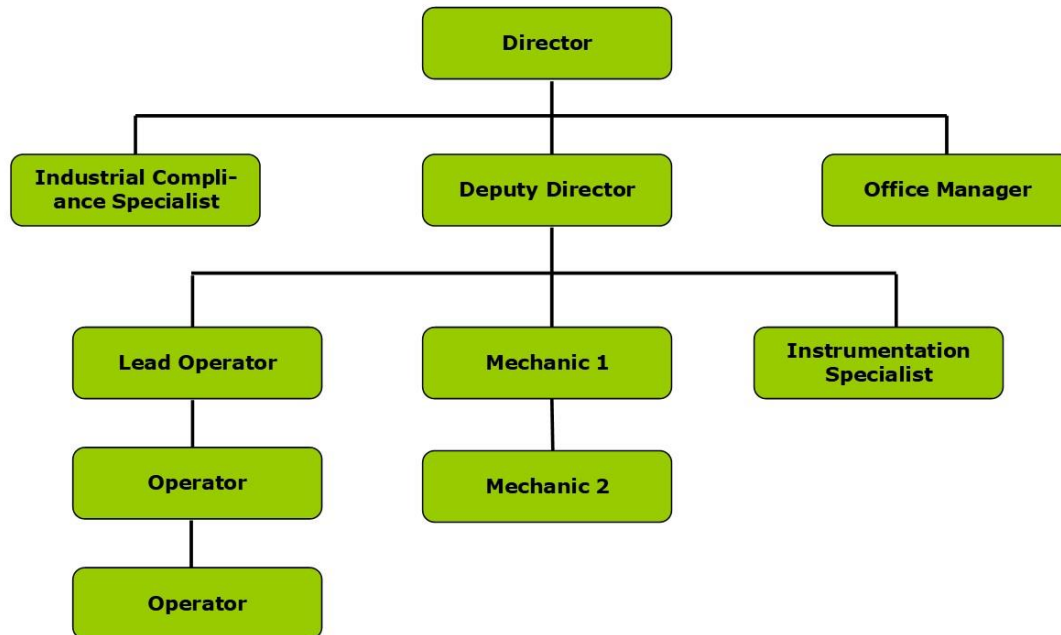


2029

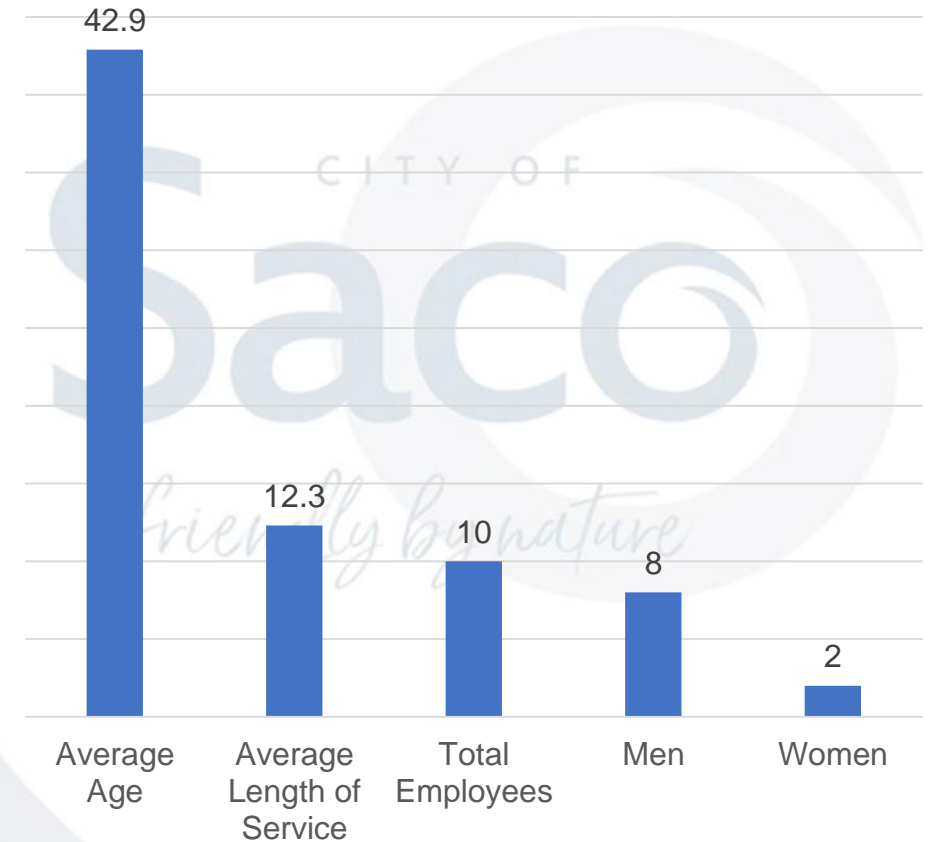
Tons of Biosolids Produced and Composted.

City of Saco WRRD - Organization Chart

Saco Water Resource Recovery Department 2020



Saco WRRD Demographic



Workforce Development – Why?

- Employees are our most valuable resource!
- Engage their minds.
- Strengthen skills.
- Make employees feel proud of their work.
- Employee Retention.
- Career Advancement.



Saco WRRD – Current Successes

- Started as Laboratory Technician in 2008.
- Promoted to Lead Operator in 2011.
- Promoted to Deputy Director in 2016
- Former Member of Maine Ops Challenge Team Force Maine.
- Currently enrolled in Water Leadership Institute – WEF.
- Graduate of Management Candidate School.

Stacy Thompson



“Workforce development is essential to the sustainability of the water industry. The “silver tsunami” is inevitable and we need trained and skilled employees to carry our industry forward.”

Saco WRRD – Current Successes

- Started as an Intern in 2012.
 - Promoted to Operator.
- Laboratory Technician in 2016.
- Promoted to Lead Operator in 2020.
- Member of Maine Ops Challenge Team Force Maine.
- Currently enrolled in Management Candidate School.

Riley Cobb



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“These programs have all been a great reminder to keep learning. It inspired me to take on new challenges and meet others in the field.”

Saco WRRD – Current Successes

- Began career in 2016 as an Operator.
- Attended Wastewater Operator School.
- Promoted to Industrial Compliance Specialist in 2019.
 - Newly created position.
 - Develop FOG Program.
 - Inspections on Commercial/Industrial Businesses.
- Promote from within Department.

Matthew Szuter



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“Protecting the waters of Maine is important, and professional development helps us to understand our process better and to stay ahead of changing standards.”

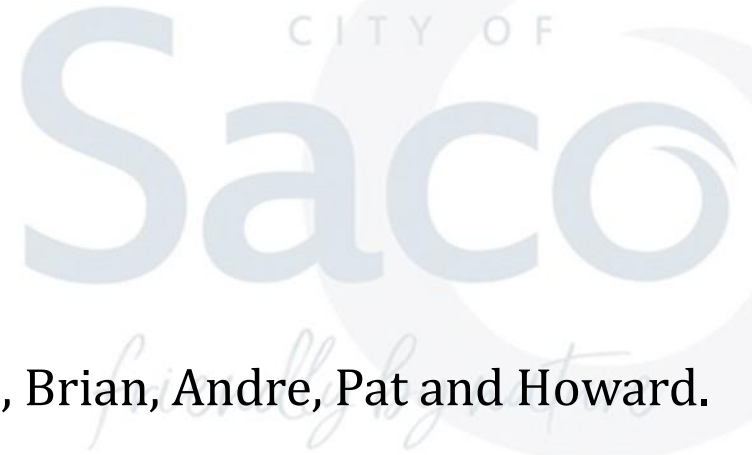
Saco WRRD – Past Successes

- Patrick Wiley, PhD
 - Began career as an Operator
 - Former Operation Manager of Portsmouth, NH Wastewater Facility.
 - Currently Director at SMCC for the new Water/Wastewater Technology Program.
- Brian Cataldo, P.E.
 - Operator at Saco WRRD
 - Sr. Project Engineer at Synagro.
- Andre Brousseau
 - Former Lead Operator at Saco WRRD
 - Current Superintendent of Sanford Sewerage District
- Travis Peaslee, P.E.
 - Former Lead Operator at Saco WRRD.
 - Current Superintendent at LAWPCA.



Involvement in Local and National Associations

- Maine Water Environment Association (MEWEA)
 - Past President's: Howard, Travis, Andre and Stacy.
- New England Water Environment Association (NEWEA)
 - Past President: Howard
- Water Environment Federation
 - Board of Trustees: Howard
 - Former Speaker of the House of Delegates: Howard
 - Operation Challenge Team Members: Stacy, Riley, Travis, Brian, Andre, Pat and Howard.
- National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA)



City of Saco WRRD - Workforce Video



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rUjGtAu9yXI&feature=youtu.be>

CITY OF
Saco

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Metropolitan Council Environmental Services Outreach and Workforce Programs: Using Equality and Equity to Drive Sustainable Performance



Introduction to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services

Featured Speaker Jenn Zuchowski, Manager Programs and Administration



About MCES



Metropolitan Wastewater Plant, St. Paul

- Wastewater treatment
- 9 wastewater collection and treatment plants
- 370 million gallons/day wastewater capacity (250 mgd average)
- 640-plus miles of regional sewers
- 60 lift stations
- 220-plus metering stations
- Water supply planning
- Water quality monitoring
- Industrial waste regulation and pollution prevention

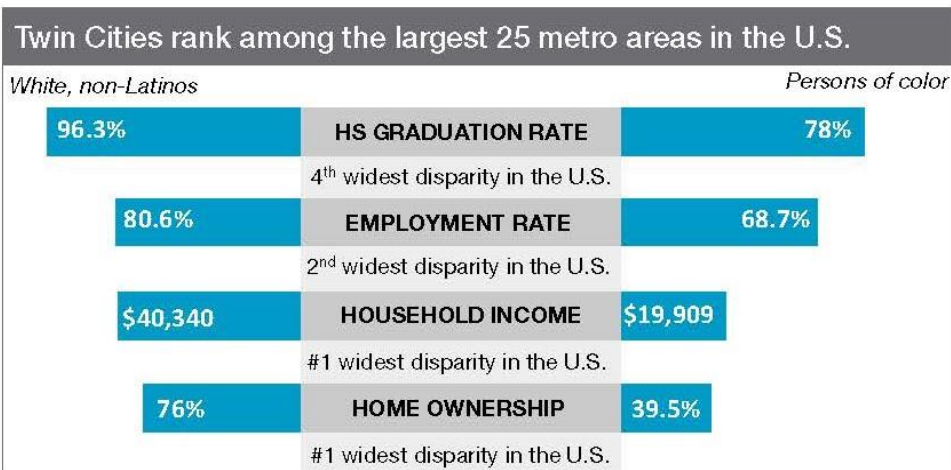


Diversity Having individual and group differences	Inclusion Being/feeling included in a group or structure	Cultural Competence Working effectively across cultures
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Equity is: Fair and just access to opportunity for all A way MCES can enhance its business to help people reach their full potential The type of community that's in everyone's best interest	Equity is not: Being nice Equality Favoritism Filling quotas
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INEQUITIES IN OUR REGION

The Twin Cities region is one of the best places to live, *but not for all.*



A POTENTIAL LOST OPPORTUNITY

In our region, things are changing rapidly.	If we don't become a more equitable region, in 2040 we will have:
In 2010, 24% of residents in our region were people of color.	124,000 fewer people with jobs 186,000 fewer homeowners
By 2040, 40% of the region will be people of color.	274,000 more people in poverty \$31.8 billion less income

HOW MCES IS ADDRESSING EQUITY ISSUES

The MCES Equity Team's work supports its Strategic Values that include Excellence, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Respect, and Commitment.

- 1 Employed Council-wide outreach, public engagement plan
- 2 Enabled senior managers to serve as advocates, role models
- 3 Ensured workforce received education, tools and skills to achieve its equity goals

For more info, visit the MCES Equity MetNet page: metnet/es/adm/e/SitePages/Home.aspx



MCES Diversity and Inclusion

Strategic Plan 2019 -2020

Sustainable Services Outcome –

We are a high performing organization with an engaged and innovative workforce that is competent, motivated and diverse with opportunities to develop and grow.

Racial Equity Work Plan 2020 – 2022 Outcomes

Engage

Collaborate with communities to increase public engagement and shared decision-making

Embed

Racial equity into our work culture and how we do business

Invest

Financially invest in divisional racial equity work



Policies and Strategic Plans

Featured Speaker Dr. Mitzi Kennedy, Equity Manager



Metropolitan Council Equity Strategy Highlights



Operational structure for the integration of equity



Change Process



Community Engagement, Workforce Equity and Investments



Council roles in advancing equity



Division measurements of progress



Implementation

Human Resources

Featured Speaker Nancy Jennings, HR Manager



Human Resources Role



No salary questions



Diversity report continuously reviewed by recruiter



Ban the Box



Interview more candidates to increase diversity

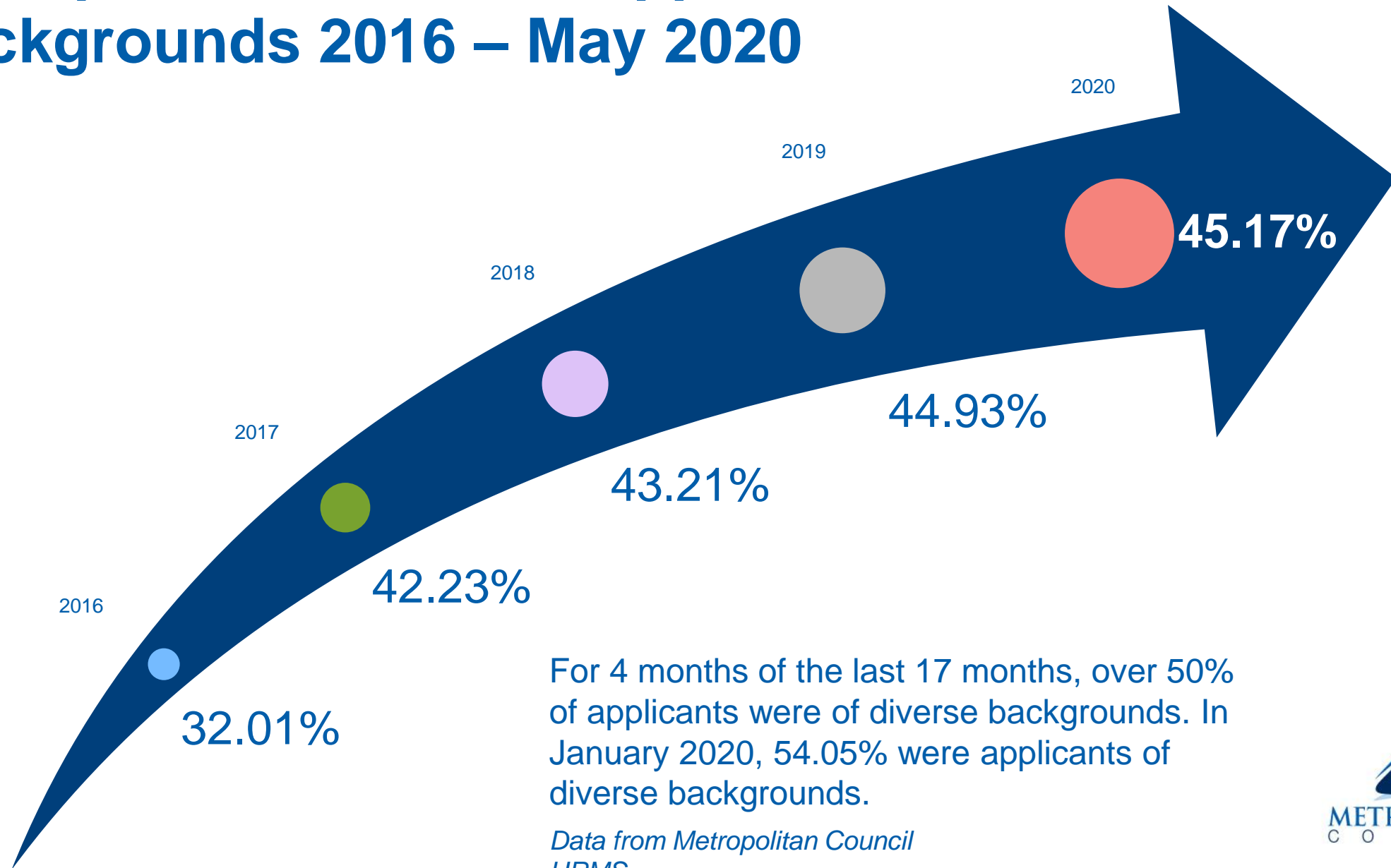


Assessment testing process approved by OEO



Concur to hire by OEO

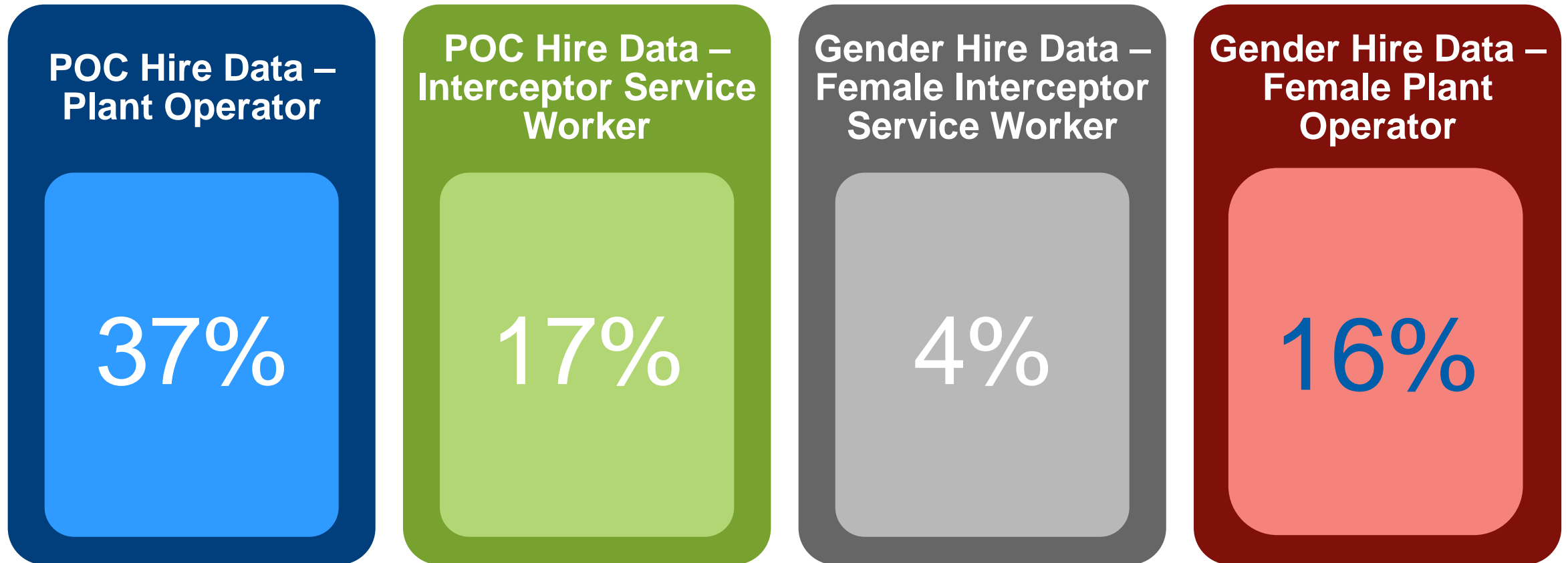
Metropolitan Council – Applicants of Diverse Backgrounds 2016 – May 2020



For 4 months of the last 17 months, over 50% of applicants were of diverse backgrounds. In January 2020, 54.05% were applicants of diverse backgrounds.

*Data from Metropolitan Council
HRMS*

Hires from Diverse Backgrounds: 2016-2019



New class starting June 2020 for Plant Operator Trainee includes 3 candidates of diverse backgrounds and 1 veteran (all male).

New class starting June 2020 for Interceptor Service Worker includes 2 candidates of diverse backgrounds (all male).

Data from Metropolitan Council HRMS



Community Connections

Featured Speaker Jenn Zuchowski, Manager Programs and Administration





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Building relationships is the primary focus.

Plant and construction site tours, job shadowing, teacher externships, career panels, internships and Urban Scholars, career fairs, open houses, using employee connections to community organizations and personal networks to strengthen relationships and build trust

Meet Suidi Hashi – Associate Outreach Coordinator, former Urban Scholar Intern



Plant Operator and Interceptor Service Worker Trainee Program

Featured Speaker Matt Hiatt, Program Supervisor



Trainee Program





Program beginnings



Onboarding



Content Delivery



Mentoring Relationship

Meet Juan Berry and Jacquelyn Lebeis – Interceptor Service Workers



Electrician Apprenticeship Program

Featured Speaker Chuck LaPierre, Manager Electrical Maintenance





2019

**Affirmative
Hires**

**Opportunity to highlight our
agency and create interest
in wastewater careers**

**2-Way
Learning**

**Partnership with
Local Electrician
Union**

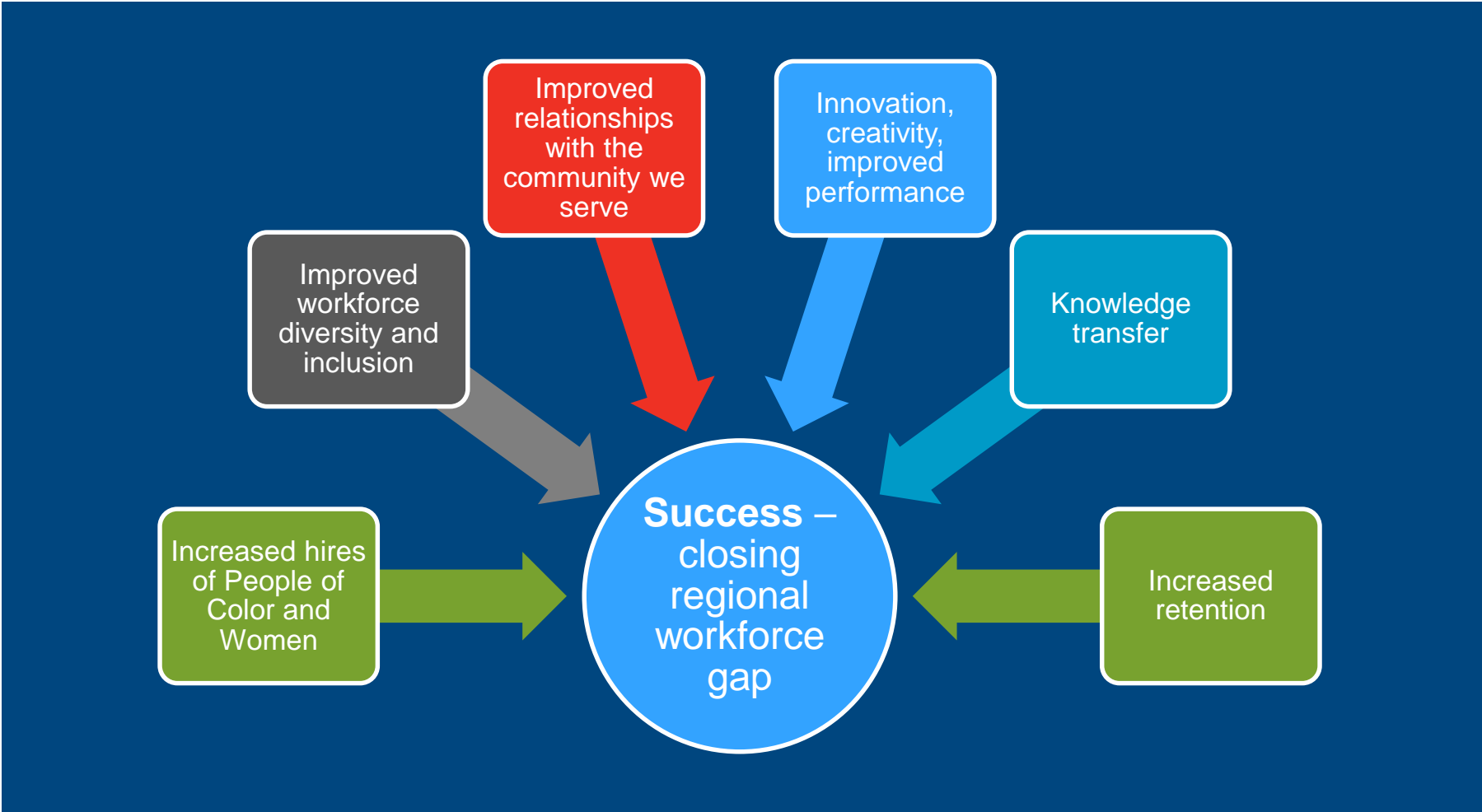
Meet Mustafa Shabazz – Electrician Apprentice



Challenges & Successes

Featured Speaker Jenn Zuchowski

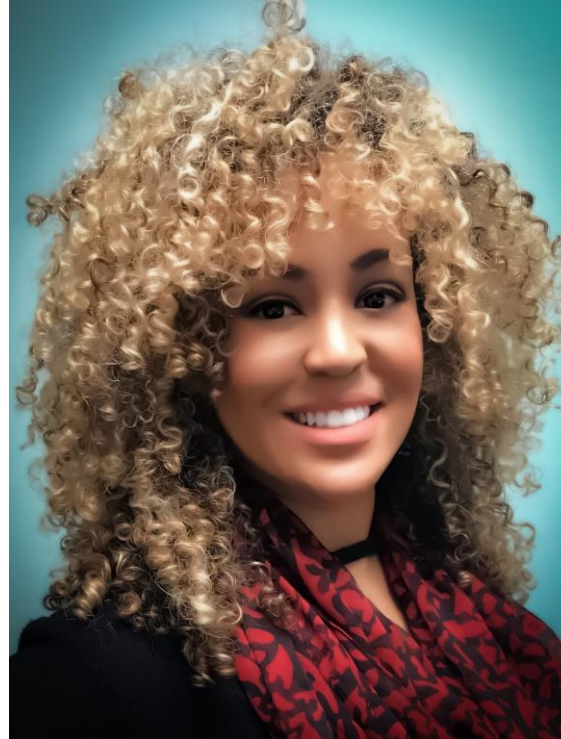




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METROPOLITAN
C O U N C I L

Question & Answer Period

Please submit text questions using your webinar dashboard



Mute



Chat



Raise Hand



Q&A

Leave Meeting

Closing Poll #1

On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the best score and 1 being the worst, how would you rate today's webinar?

If you do not see a poll window pop up, please use the **Chat function** to type in your answer.

Closing Poll #2

Finally, what other topics would you like to see covered in subsequent webinars?

Please type a brief response in the chat box.





Thank you!

