



**MEET THE ACTING PENNDOT SECRETARY,
EMPLOYEE FEATURES, INNOVATIONS,
OUR PORTS' IMPORTANCE,
*AND MORE!***

Table Of Contents

Introducing Acting PennDOT Secretary Michael Carroll2

Letter From Acting PennDOT Secretary Michael Carroll3

Employee Maggie Jackson Has a New Title Outside Work4

Meet Steve Gravehouse, An Employee Who Has Served Many Roles at PennDOT4

PennDOT Innovations Awards Honor 91 Employees for Excellence ..5

Pennsylvania’s Ongoing STIC Efforts Tap Into Modern and Efficient Ways to Deliver Transportation Services7

Investing In Pennsylvania’s Ports Drive the Economy, Provide Job Opportunities8

Safety For All: Equity In Moving Towards Zero Deaths10

Tunnel Roadside Assistance Saving Lives, Receiving Recognition ...11

Meet Emily Adams, Engineering and Construction Contracts Manager12

Philadelphia Region Deploys a Big Tool to Protect Workers12

Fairer Funding for the Future: Exploring Mileage-Based User Fees .13

Meet Civil Engineer Mohammad Sujon15

Workplace Heroes Recognized in Clinton County16

When It Comes to Human Trafficking, PennDOT Reminds You To “See, Call, Save”17

Meet Nathan Reis, District 8 Safety Section Supervisor/Safety Engineer18

Motorcycle Safety Starts With Proper Training19

Western Pennsylvania Operators Win Truck Rodeo19



For more information please visit our website: www.PennDOT.pa.gov

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This quarterly newsletter highlights our latest efforts to improve mobility and quality of life in Pennsylvania.

As always, feel free to send story ideas or requests for information you want to see. If you’re involved in an interesting or innovative project or initiative, have ever wondered about other parts of PennDOT’s operations or have other suggestions, email the Communications Office at DOTcomm@pa.gov.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue!

INTRODUCING ACTING PENNDOT SECRETARY MICHAEL CARROLL



In early January, Governor Josh Shapiro nominated Michael (Mike) Carroll to be PennDOT Secretary, noting that he was among the leaders who will "...help make us a national leader in innovation, manufacturing, and job creation." Carroll has committed to drawing on his experience and department knowledge to make our state safer for Pennsylvania drivers while supporting jobs and our economy.

Mike was first elected to the Pennsylvania House of Representatives in 2006 and subsequently re-elected for seven additional terms, and he worked on transportation throughout his time in public office. Mike was Democratic chairman of the House Transportation Committee from 2018 through 2022.

Related to his legislative experience, in a message to employees Mike said "I saw and was a part of many significant changes in transportation laws and how our system is funded. I knew the importance of and voted for Act 89 of 2013 to invest in transportation and worked tirelessly to ensure a safe and efficient transportation network. As chair of the House Transportation Committee from 2018-22 I heard firsthand this agency's accomplishments, challenges, and opportunities across transportation modes, licensing and vehicle services, and more."

Not only has he had experience in PennDOT's many business areas and the many transportation modes it supports, but he also has a commercial driver's license (CDL) so he "...has a personal understanding of the commitment of [PennDOT's] thousands of team members who work around the clock to keep our roadways safe."

Additionally, his legislative service gave him a front-row seat to PennDOT's ongoing funding discussions to support ongoing

and future, expanded investments. He noted that "we are at a unique moment in time where we have significant federal funding coming to Pennsylvania for the first time in years, and...I'm committed to working on solutions to address our funding reliability and ensuring that every dollar that should be used on our roads and bridges will be."

In 2010, Mike was awarded the Boy Scouts of America Minsi Trails Council Distinguished Citizen Award for his work to rehabilitate the Stillwater Dam in Tobyhanna Township. In 2014, he was awarded the Jean Yates Award from the Pittston Memorial Library Board of Trustees based on his dedication and service to the library and the Joseph Battisto Award for his legislative service to the citizens of Monroe County. In 2015, he received the Pennsylvania Citizens for Better Libraries (PCBL) State Elected Official Award. In May 2016, he received the BAYADA Home Health Care Champion award, and in June 2016 he was presented with the Silver Bayonet Award by AMVETS in grateful appreciation of services rendered to the community, state, and nation.

Mike formerly worked as the chief of staff for then-state Rep. John Yudichak, served as legislative liaison for PennDOT under Gov. Robert Casey and served as district office director for Congressman Paul Kanjorski. A graduate of Pittston Area High School, Mike earned a bachelor of arts in liberal studies from the University of Scranton. A lifelong resident of Avoca, he is a member of the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick in Pittston, and the Ancient Order of Hibernians, Avoca Division. Mike is father of three adult children, Matt, Mackenzie, and Ali.



Colleagues,

I'm reaching out to share my excitement to be named as Acting Secretary for PennDOT, and my gratitude for what you do every day for Pennsylvanians. This agency is the very definition of public service in how it touches people's lives even when they may not realize it.

I first must thank and commend Yassmin Gramian for her outstanding work during her three years as secretary. It feels like a long time and somehow also a blink of an eye since the pandemic hit and we experienced incredible professional and personal challenges. She led the department through that response while also reinvigorating the transportation-funding discussion, implementing the federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and taking many steps to advance equity in our organization and industry.

From my seat as a state representative, I witnessed this recent progress and much more. From 2006 through last year, I saw and was a part of many significant changes in transportation laws and how our system is funded. I knew the importance of and voted for Act 89 of 2013 to invest in transportation and worked tirelessly to ensure a safe and efficient transportation network. As chair of the House Transportation Committee from 2018-22 I heard firsthand this agency's accomplishments, challenges, and opportunities across transportation modes, licensing and vehicle services, and more.

However, my appreciation for PennDOT began even earlier when I served as legislative liaison for PennDOT under Gov. Robert Casey. And I have a CDL, so I have a personal understanding of the commitment of our thousands of team members who work around the clock to keep our roadways safe.

We are at a unique moment in time where we have significant federal funding coming to Pennsylvania for the first time in years, and which we'll continue investing to make it safer for Pennsylvania drivers while supporting jobs and our economy. I'm committed to working on solutions to address our funding reliability and ensuring that every dollar that should be used on our roads and bridges will be.

I am honored to be chosen to join this team, and I'm looking forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the future.

Thank you,
Mike

Michael B. Carroll, Acting Secretary

EMPLOYEE MAGGIE JACKSON HAS A NEW TITLE OUTSIDE OF WORK

By Maggie Baker, Communication Relations Coordinator, District 3



Meet Maggie Jackson, professional engineer, wife, mother, and now Ironman. As if earning her Professional Engineer license in 2015 wasn't enough, or raising four children, current ages 12 through 4, Maggie decided she wanted another title under her belt....the Ironman title.

"The most important thing I've learned from this experience is that I am capable of doing big things when I put my mind to it," said Jackson. "Training for the Ironman took a lot of time, commitment, self-motivation, and scheduling with many mornings starting at 4:00 AM. During the Ironman, there were more times than I can count that I had to overcome thoughts that I couldn't do it, that I wanted to stop or that I wouldn't make the cut off times. My husband and daughter were a huge motivation that helped push me through the race."

Jackson began her career at PennDOT in 2009 after graduating from the Pennsylvania College of Technology. She currently serves as the Bridge Design Squad Leader in District 3's Bridge Unit. Her love for bridges began at a young age when her family would travel over the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Maggie and her husband, Justin, have four children, Molly, Gregory, Jillian and Jett.

Congratulations, Maggie, on your accomplishments!

"When the pandemic hit, I was faced with holding a full-time job from home, helping my older two children with their schoolwork, watching my younger preschool children, and meeting all other needs that come with having four children. I felt stuck and needed an outlet. I signed up for the Ironman 70.3, bought a bike and went for it," said Jackson.

(Most people would watch Netflix or write in a journal.)

In 2021, Jackson signed up for the Ironman 70.3, which is a half Ironman. This was held in Cambridge, Maryland. After completing the half Ironman, she signed up for the Ironman Lake Placid, a full Ironman, which she completed on July 24 of 2022.

The Ironman Lake Placid event requires participants to complete a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bicycle ride, and a 26.2-mile run, in that order, within 17 hours. Jackson entered the water at 6:40 AM and completed the Ironman at 11:34 PM, leaving 6 minutes to spare.



MEET STEVE GREATHOUSE, AN EMPLOYEE WHO HAS SERVED MANY ROLES AT PENNDOT

By Joel Morris, Business Performance Manager, District 12



Steve Greathouse began his PennDOT career in 1999 as a Temporary Transportation Equipment Operator A and became full-time in 2006. Currently, he serves as an Acting Assistant County Maintenance Manager in District 12's Westmoreland County. This role includes overseeing maintenance and specialized crews ensuring their planned work is completed to maintenance standards in a timely manner, building and

approving daily payrolls, and addressing customer concerns. In addition, he maintains inventory at his assigned staging areas to ensure crews have the supplies needed to perform their work. Over the course of this construction season, he's had the opportunity to manage the Patchco Crew, Bridge Flushing Crew, Sectional Maintenance Crew, Seal Coat Crew, and Bridge Crew.

Prior to his Acting role in Westmoreland County, Steve served as Fayette County's Roadway Programs Coordinator (RPC). The experience gained serving as RPC provided him the knowledge of maintenance activities from the planning stage through purchasing supplies and completion of the work. Gaining budget knowledge gave him the understanding of balancing

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

the needs of the county within the monetary guidelines set forth by the state and provided him the knowledge of the materials used by maintenance crews.

Greathouse and safety are synonymous in District 12, having been involved with the safety committee for over 10 years. He currently serves as Westmoreland County's Safety Committee Chairperson conducting monthly meetings and currently planning the fall Safety Stand Down Day. Through this role he educates fellow employees on safety standards, helps them create new safety innovations to make the workplace safer, and plans and conducts Safety Stand Down Days. He also has the tasks of researching follow up items discussed during meetings and participating in personal injury and fleet accident investigations. "Along with fellow committee members and managers, I've had the opportunity to develop many safety innovations with the county, implement them, and share them through avenues such as WorkSmart for other counties and districts to utilize," said Greathouse.

When discussing county maintenance operations, he describes them as very reactive – no matter what they have planned for the day, the weather and emergencies dictate what they can complete that day. These unforeseen issues can include

storms, flooding, downed trees, crashes, as well as other events requiring road closures.

Greathouse believes the most interesting and challenging thing he's worked on has been the Seal Coat Crew as it involves many people, a lot of equipment and materials, and adds longevity to our roadways. "I enjoy the complexity of the work and seeing the finished product," said Greathouse. When talking to him, it's clear he thoroughly enjoys his job. He takes pride in seeing the completion of projects, enjoys the challenges of being on call to handle emergencies and snow removal, as well as the camaraderie with his fellow employees.

If this wasn't already enough, he's also lending his knowledge and ideas to the district's newly formed Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, which includes employees from different units throughout the district. While still in the planning stages, he hopes his role within this committee will be an asset to achieving its goals.

When he's not working regular business hours carrying out the multitude of activities he's involved with (or answering after hours calls for emergencies and snowstorms), he can be found camping with his family, traveling, hanging out with his Goldendoodle dog named Dutton, and attending car/truck shows with his trucks and club.

PENNDOT INNOVATIONS AWARDS HONOR 91 EMPLOYEES FOR EXCELLENCE

By Rich Kirkpatrick, PennDOT Bureau of Innovations



For the first time since 2019, PennDOT was delighted to host an in-person Innovation Awards Ceremony at its headquarters building in Harrisburg on Nov. 30.

Then-PennDOT Secretary Yassmin Gramian, P.E., presided over the event, which honored 91 employees for their time- and money-saving innovations.

Since 2011, thousands of innovative ideas have been generated through PennDOT's employee-driven IdeaLink system. In

addition, more than 230 smart practices have been published in PennDOT's WorkSmart employee engagement system, where employees have the ability to share and learn about more efficient ways they are doing and can do their jobs each day.

The winner of the 2022 George W. McAuley Jr., P.E. Innovation Award was the Emergency Bridge Repair Team in PennDOT's District 12, based in Uniontown. The team had to respond quickly in December 2021 when an over-height truck traveling on

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

Interstate 70 hit and damaged the Route 51 bridge over the interstate. A large section of girder was damaged and had to be replaced. The 69-member team determined that the bridge could remain open with restrictions, and they deployed an innovative work order and a novel Design-Build-like approach that allowed the contractor to move more quickly and efficiently on the project. The repairs were completed in roughly five weeks.

Accepting the award on behalf of the team were District 12 Executive William Kovach, P.E.; Assistant District Executive for Design Rachel Duda, P.E.; Senior Civil Engineer Manager Jeremy Hughes, Civil Engineer Manager Brian Walker and Senior Highway Maintenance Manager Dave Forkey.

The runner-up McAuley Award winner was the Bulk Diesel Exhaust Fluid (DEF) Cube Team in PennDOT's District 3 based in Lycoming County. DEF is required to help meet federal near-zero emission requirements. The district wanted a more efficient way to buy and store the fuel. The team coordinated the permitting, purchasing and construction of bulk DEF tanks. Accepting the award were Neil Dietrich, transportation facility administrator, and Mark Grose, county equipment manager. Jimmy Adams, highway equipment manager, another key contributor on the project, was unable to attend the ceremony.

This award honors the late George W. McAuley Jr. During his career at PennDOT, he served as a district executive, deputy secretary for highway administration and executive deputy secretary.

Innovation Awards went to:

William Gipe, materials and services manager in the Bureau of Office Services, for working to implement a process improvement for purchasing and paying for highway equipment repairs. Through this improved process, vendors are paid more quickly, which saves PennDOT an estimated \$500,000 in replacement equipment rental charges.

Anne Jo Horosky, tourist information supervisor at the Interstate 95 Northbound Welcome Center in Delaware County. As a result of her idea, a white painted crosswalk and a fluorescent yellow and green pedestrian crossing sign were added to the Welcome Center parking lot. The new additions are helping to slow cars and improve safety for pedestrians and staff at the center.

Stephen Gault, P.E., Transportation Systems Management and Operations Arterials and Planning chief in the Bureau of Operations. He developed a streamlined agreement format that made the process more efficient for municipalities applying for traffic signal permits.

Samuel J. Moehler, civil engineer in PennDOT's District 1 based in northwest Pennsylvania. At his suggestion, PennDOT is allowing the use of old railroad flat cars to serve as temporary or permanent bridge replacements on low-volume local roads. The concept means potential savings for municipalities facing costly bridge repairs and replacements.

PennDOT's Crawford County garage staff for their smart practice to use parts off of no-longer-usable crew cabs to fix still

functioning crew cabs. Their system to source parts statewide from PennDOT's equipment fleet saves time and money by reducing the need for new vehicles. District 1 Executive Brian McNulty accepted the award on behalf of the team: Jeffrey Hershelman, automotive mechanic supervisor; Anthony Matola, maintenance repairman; Kody Kantz, diesel and construction equipment mechanic; Garret Boylan, automotive mechanic; Bradley Piper, transportation equipment operator B; and Matthew Semian, highway equipment manager 2.

Daniel Benson, transportation equipment operator B; and David A. Schwartz Jr., welder in PennDOT's Warren County in District 1, for their upgraded version of a PVC chute added to salt spreaders. It directs material off the roadway to fill low spots on the road shoulders.

Mike Rogato, highway maintenance coordinator; Cody Conklin, highway Equipment manager; and Bruce Muthler, maintenance repairman 2, all in District 2's county maintenance organizations. Eric Thompson, Clinton County highway maintenance manager, accepted the award on their behalf.

Rogato, from Elk County, developed the smart practice to paint measuring marks in salt storage areas to help better manage salt inventory.

Conklin, from Clearfield County, developed the idea to design and fabricate folding forks on backhoes. The forks make it easier for crews to move large items such as pallets or pipe sections. The smart practice reduces the risk for injury to employees who otherwise would have to lift heavy objects.

Muthler, from Clinton County, developed the smart practice to refabricate snowplow blades to reduce snow coming over the plow and building up on the driver's side windshield.

Summer Koziel, senior civil engineer supervisor in PennDOT's District 4 in northeastern Pennsylvania. She created a Liaison Project Manager reference manual that provides an all-encompassing "how-to" document to support project managers.

John Serian, senior county maintenance manager in PennDOT's District 10, based in Indiana County, developed the concept of modifying an old grader blade that can break ice bonded to roadways into smaller pieces which can then be plowed off the roadway more easily. He led an Indiana County PennDOT team that created the new blade. Accepting the award during the ceremony were team members Rex Lichtenfels, welder, Heath Clark, maintenance repairman 2, and Chris Long, highway equipment manager 2.

Noah Forbeck, civil engineer in PennDOT's District 11 in the Pittsburgh region. Forbeck developed the idea for an over-the-shoulder strap that can be attached to PennDOT-issued iPad cases. The innovation helps prevent field staff from accidentally dropping and damaging their iPads.

Dennis Myers, highway maintenance coordinator for PennDOT's District 12 based in Uniontown. He developed an electronic Accident Notification Live Form that can be filled out in three minutes. This means district leadership can be apprised more quickly of incidents through emailed reports instead of having to wait hours or days.

PENNSYLVANIA'S ONGOING STIC EFFORTS TAP INTO MODERN AND EFFICIENT WAYS TO DELIVER TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

By PennDOT Bureau of Innovations



Pennsylvania's ongoing efforts to tap into more efficient and modern ways of delivering the best in transportation services were highlighted on Nov. 16 at the latest business meeting of the State Transportation Innovation Council (STIC) in Hershey.

The meeting featured updates on several innovations the STIC has championed and initiatives that received STIC Incentive Program funding.

Mark Kopko, PennDOT's director of the Office of Transformational Technology, outlined the new agreements in place to establish the Pennsylvania Safety Transportation and Research Track (PennSTART) in Westmoreland County, an initiative that received STIC Incentive Funding in 2017 and 2018.

PennDOT and the PTC have signed a Letter of Understanding (LOU) with the Regional Industrial Development Corporation of Southwestern Pennsylvania that also involves Carnegie Mellon University and Westmoreland County. A formal legal agreement is in process and should be completed soon, Kopko said.

This will open the door to a testing and research facility that will include a high-speed paved oval, a heliport, urban intersection, roundabout, rail crossing, signalized urban and rural corridors, hilly terrain, and an overhead bridge. The plan includes a 2025 target date for opening.

Kopko said the facility's research focus areas are connected and autonomous vehicles, tolling and Intelligent Transportation System technical testing, and safety testing and training. The facility will also meet the training needs for roughly 50,000 first responders in Pennsylvania and help Pennsylvania engage in opportunities for more than \$10 billion in research opportunities.

Ryan McNary, manager of the Transportation Systems and Management Operations (TSMO) Performance Section in PennDOT's Bureau of Operations, reviewed the MView initiative, which features a multi-state partnership to share real-time video to help law enforcement, first responders and transportation agencies do a better job being aware of and managing weather, traffic and security issues.

MView features over 15,000 cameras from over 200 agencies in Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, Baltimore, Maryland State Police and the Maryland Stadium Authority. The program was started by Maryland and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

In addition, McNary said, PennDOT is piloting automated protection messaging for adverse driving conditions on Interstate 81. The aim is to give drivers more forewarning about changing weather conditions so they will slow down and avoid crashes.

PennDOT continues to tap into crowdsourced data from such services as Waze and INRIX to give its Traffic Management Centers a better understanding of congestion triggers. The department is also working on systems to give drivers more advance notice of backups related to work zones, so they will slow down sooner.

McNary noted that more advance warning will have a big impact as research has shown 40% of crashes in work zone related congestion occur two or more miles back from the work zone. In 2021, there were 1,014 crashes in work zone congestion.

He also said PennDOT is working on adding audio to 511PA to replace Highway Advisory Radio since more vehicles are no longer equipped with AM radios.

Dan Farley, director of PennDOT's Bureau of Operations, outlined PennDOT's initiative of installing Variable Speed Limit (VSL) signs to help drivers respond better to rapidly changing weather conditions.

A pilot with 14 VSLs along Interstate 80 in Clearfield County showed positive trends, and PennDOT is now "looking at where to expand," Farley said.

Mark Nicholson, P.E., bridge engineer in PennDOT's District 1, based in Erie, provided an update on the STIC's Bridge Deck Link Slabs innovation currently in development.

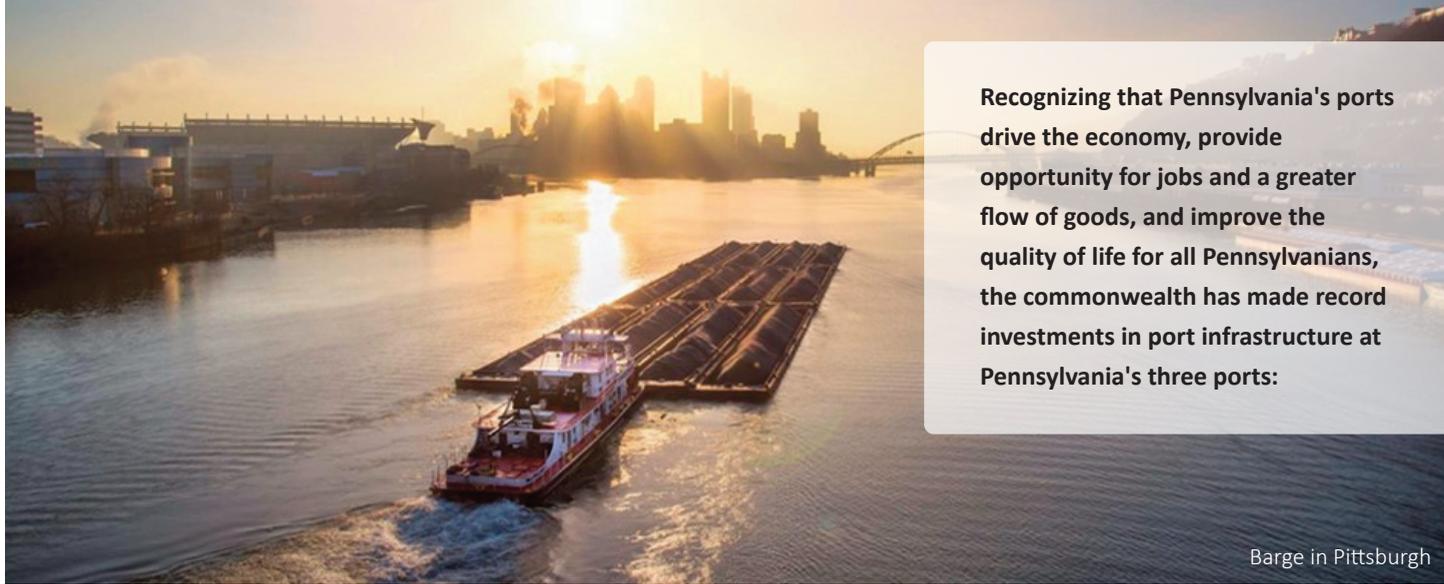
The innovation features connecting bridge decks together with reinforced steel and Ultra-High Performance Concrete. The innovation means replacing bridge joints and eliminating a thorny deterioration problem.

"It provides a watertight connection between deck spans and prevents de-icing materials from contacting the underlying bridge components," Nicholson said. "Anything we can do to seal joints is more than a short-term fix. It's a long-term solution, which the link slabs provide."

Continued on page 15 bottom

INVESTING IN PENNSYLVANIA'S PORTS DRIVE THE ECONOMY, PROVIDE JOB OPPORTUNITIES

By Susan Heimberger, Executive Assistant, Multimodal



Barge in Pittsburgh

Recognizing that Pennsylvania's ports drive the economy, provide opportunity for jobs and a greater flow of goods, and improve the quality of life for all Pennsylvanians, the commonwealth has made record investments in port infrastructure at Pennsylvania's three ports:

PhilaPort

PhilaPort supports more than 10,000 jobs generating \$2 billion in economic impacts. International imports include cars, cocoa, forest and paper products, fruit, produce, frozen meats, pharmaceuticals, and electronics, among others. Funding for PhilaPort from Act 89 and the Governor over the last eight years totals \$569 million for the following:

\$30 million from PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF):

- Rail transportation study
- Inland port studies
- Strategic plans
- Construction projects
- PA International Cargo Growth Incentive Program established to increase containers

\$293 million to improve and rehabilitate existing infrastructure:

- Packer Avenue Marine Terminal
- Purchase and commission three new super post-Panamex cranes
- Improve the wharf structure to accommodate larger cranes
- Re-energize two existing cranes with electricity to increase efficiency & reduce carbon footprint
- Provide alternate power source to vessels docked in port (diesel to electric)
- Double the container capacity by relocating warehouses off the dock

Construct two new warehouses

Tioga Marine Terminal (TMT)

Build a food-grade warehouse with rail access for paper products to reach their final destinations

South Port Property

Develop 156 acres into a vehicle processing center

\$246 million to expand the Port and its freight capacity:

- Build a temperature-controlled warehouse
- Build a new berth at the Southport Terminal
- Purchase land for Expansion
- Construct Warehouses
- Modify dock configurations to maximize container storage

Port of Erie

Because the Governor invested in PhilaPort, more Act 89 funding was available to Erie. Importing windmill components, a new commodity to the Port, has drastically increased the total tonnage. Windmill components are temporarily stored at a terminal and then travel by truck to their final destinations.

\$36 million from PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF)

- Repaired 3 Major Seawalls and established direct lake access
- Rehabbed the 50-year-old Drydock at Donjon Shipbuilders & retained 250 employees with family sustaining wages
- Safety improvements to bike and pedestrian paths

Continued on page 9



Cranes at Packer Avenue Marine Terminal, PhilaPort

Continued from page 8

Expansion to support international imports of windmill components

Pittsburgh Port Commission

Inland waterways in 12 counties support 14,000-15,000 jobs, and the region benefits from about \$4.5 billion in total economic impacts.

\$10.7 million from PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF)

\$7 million in operational support to Pittsburgh Port Commission

\$3.7 million for infrastructure improvements at privately-owned terminals within the inland waterways



Port of Erie

SAFETY FOR ALL: EQUITY IN MOVING TOWARD ZERO DEATHS

By Jennifer Kuntch, Deputy Communications Director



"Our roads are not truly safe unless they are safe for EVERYONE." -Cheryl Walker, Associate Administrator for Safety, Federal Highway Administration Office of Safety

More than a year ago, PennDOT released the department's first Dismantling Systemic Racism and Inequities (DSRI) report, which evaluates PennDOT's diversity and inclusion efforts. The report discussed how PennDOT can achieve greater equity in the areas of contracting, public involvement, community investment, our boards and commissions, and of course, PennDOT's own internal culture.

Transportation equity doesn't stop there. It's also about safety on our roadways. PennDOT often says traffic safety is everyone's responsibility. It is – we all must work together to keep our roadways safe. But it is also everyone's right.

Everyone's safety on our roadways is a priority for PennDOT, but is our safety programming reaching everyone? Traffic safety is facing two significant problems – a rise in fatalities and disparities in those crash outcomes. It's more important than ever to identify and reach underserved communities across the state to achieve our goal of reducing fatalities on Pennsylvania roadways.

Recently, PennDOT gathered department Safety Press Officers, safety grantees, law enforcement partners, child passenger safety experts, and other partners to share ideas and successes from across the state. At this annual workshop, PennDOT Director of Equitable Transportation Nicole Tyler, along with National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Regional Administrator Rich Simon, and NHTSA Regional Program Manager Allison Beas, led a conversation on equity related to traffic safety.

PennDOT safety grantees, comprised of 18 regional Community Traffic Safety Projects (CTSP) across Pennsylvania, implement comprehensive highway safety programming in their respective communities throughout the year. These grantees have been called to ensure meaningful engagement with communities in their regions who are disproportionately affected by traffic deaths.

The grantees will be working to identify the challenges in their geographic area, as well as the relevant stakeholders. They will bring together key leaders from government, advocacy, community organizations, local industry, and more to build a collective alliance that will address safety through an equity lens. These groups will work together to see things from a new perspective, with a clearer focus contributing to full inclusion and participation by all, so that everyone can benefit from safe roads.

Working together, we can reduce fatalities and move toward zero deaths on our roadways.

If you have a stake in traffic safety in your neighborhood and would like to join the conversation, contact PennDOT Highway Safety Outreach Programs Manager Christy Timbrell at ctimbrell@pa.gov and she will connect you with the appropriate CTSP.

TUNNEL ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE SAVING LIVES, RECEIVING RECOGNITION

By Yasmeen Manyisha, Safety Press Officer, District 11



Tunnels Organization receiving the "Face of PennDOT" award. Left to right: Assistant Manager- Eugene Clifton, Current Manager- Paul Manyisha, Former Manager – Ben DeVore, Assistant Manager – Todd Caddy

The Allegheny County Tunnels Organization received the "Face of PennDOT" award in September 2022. Why? As the only tunnels organization in state, these individuals play a very pivotal role in maintaining and assisting motorists traveling through the City of Pittsburgh every day. While the average person barely realizes they exist, these first responder-trained crew members are serving the motoring public in ways that many would never expect.

This spring, the tunnels crew received a thank you letter from a set of grandparents who had a recent interaction with the crew from the Squirrel Hill tunnel. Their granddaughter had been in a multi-vehicle collision on Interstate 376 right outside the tunnel. The crew assisted everyone in the crash and ensured there were no injuries. Once the grandparents arrived on the scene and called for a tow truck, unfortunately, they had to wait eight hours for a tow truck to come. While they waited the kind crew assisted them and checked in on them regularly. The grandparents felt very appreciative for all the crew members did to keep them calm and comfortable during the stressful situation. The wonderful crew working that day consisted of Andre Faucette, Mark Lawrence, Nana Adusepoku, Fred Seibel, George Dyer, Nate Bodenheimer, Fred Seibel, and Ron Kalupson.

On another occasion, the quick and level-headed thinking of tunnel maintainers, Jay Varner and Greg Cox, saved a young man's life. After observing several vehicles stopped on Interstate 376 outside of the Squirrel Hill tunnel, the pair realized there was a person prepared to jump roughly 100 feet off the bridge to the roadway below. Varner and Cox immediately took action, calmly talking to the young man and encouraging him to step back from the ledge. Once this was accomplished, the two men continued to comfort the individual, brought him back to their nearby office and notified



Honorees and their Workplace Hero awards. Left to right: Joe Hassett – Tunnel Maintainer, Paul Manyisha – Tunnels Manager, Jay Varner – Tunnel Maintainer, Governor Wolf, Greg Cox – Tunnel Maintainer, Lori Musto – Assistant District Executive of Maintenance

authorities. The life-saving action of these two men, not only rescued a person going through a rough time, but also allowed him the opportunity to get the help that he needs.

Earlier this summer, tunnel maintainers, Joe Hassett and Bruce Ferguson did not hesitate to put themselves at risk to save a stranger's life. As Joe and Bruce were the first on scene to respond to an impaired driving crash outside of the Liberty Tunnel, they noticed the vehicle had caught on fire, with the driver outside and a passenger unconscious in the front seat. While Bruce attempted to extinguish the fire to no avail, Joe began trying to unwedge the smashed car door with a crowbar and get to the passenger. With great persistence and urgency to rush against the increasing flames, Joe finally was able to pry the door open and climb into the burning vehicle. He quickly unfastened the passenger's seat belt and carry them to safety. By the time Emergency Medical Services were on scene to address the fire, the entire front seat was engulfed, confirming a far worse outcome for the trapped passenger. Joe and Bruce's fearless attitudes and quick-thinking is the reason that individual is still alive.

As a result of Jay, Greg, Joe, and Bruce's heroic acts while on duty, each of the four tunnel workers were presented with the PennDOT Workplace Hero Award. As the award was given to them earlier in the year, on December 7, 2022, Governor Tom Wolf invited each of the men and their spouses to his office in the City of Pittsburgh to officially present them with the awards and thank them for their service.

During the meeting with Governor Wolf the group discussed the privileges and challenges of public service, as the governor applauded the crew members for being ideal government employees and representing the department in the best light, both during and beyond their admiral heroic acts. From the

Continued on page 16 bottom

MEET EMILY ADAMS, ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS MANAGER

By Susan Heimberger, Executive Assistant, Multimodal



Emily Adams has been with PennDOT for 15 years.

"I started my career at PennDOT as a Clerk Typist 3 in 2007 with the Tourism and Welcome Center Division. In 2010, I was promoted to an Administrative Assistant in the Bureau of Public

Transportation (BPT). In 2014, I was promoted to an Administrative Officer 1 in BPT, while simultaneously acting as the Executive Secretary for the Multimodal Deputy Secretary. Over the next few years, I worked hard and took advantage of all opportunities presented, and was then promoted to an Administrative Officer 2, and then to my current position as an Administrative Officer 3 (Section Manager)," Emily said. As a Section Manager, she supervises the day-to-day operations of the engineering and construction contracts section. She oversees all administrative aspects of Multimodal's 55

engineering contracts that total \$210 million. Ensure the execution of contracts, new work orders, amendments, and supplements, as well as processing the day-to-day submittals for these work orders are done in a timely manner. Responsible for preparing new projects to go to bid in the construction wave of ECMS. Current, active construction projects are throughout the Keystone Rail Corridor and total over \$75 million. Lastly, she trains new consultants doing business with Multimodal on expectations and processes.

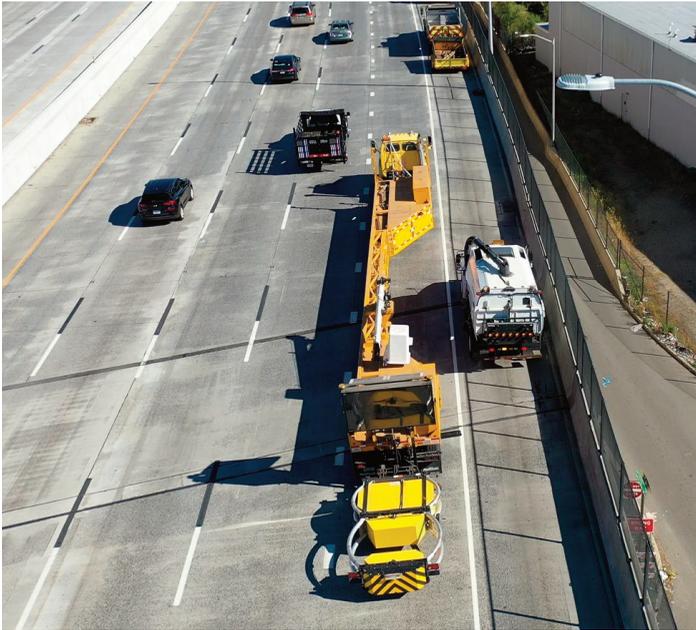
"PennDOT is a large agency with a lot of opportunities. Being with PennDOT allowed me to learn many new skills and really grow in my career," Emily said.

When people think of PennDOT they automatically think of just driver's licenses and registration, when PennDOT is so much more than that. Before coming to Multimodal, Emily never realized public transportation, aviation, rail, and bike/pedestrian were parts of the Department.

Emily has been married for 13 years to her husband, Chris, who is a U.S. Army veteran and Professor of Medical Science at Central Penn College. They have a 9-year-old son, Samuel, who is in fourth grade at Susquenita Elementary. He plays soccer and loves trains! They also have a cat, dog, leopard gecko, beta fish, and two aquatic dwarf frogs. They reside in Perry County.

PHILADELPHIA REGION DEPLOYS A BIG TOOL TO PROTECT WORKERS

By Brad Rudolph, Deputy Communications Director, District 6



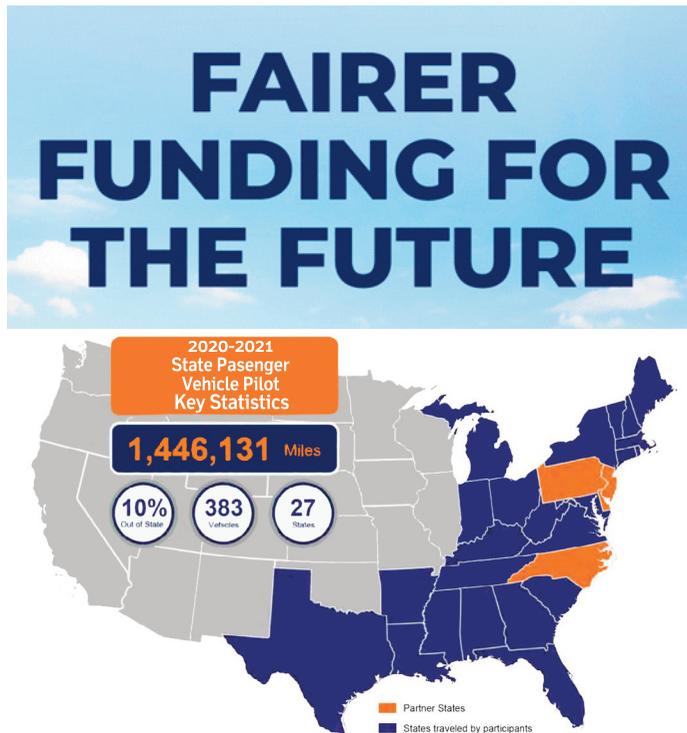
Safety is PennDOT's focus, and it is always thinking of new and innovative ways to keep its road crews better protected while working on state highways. So, when Central Office Fleet Management asked District 6 to pilot a new 110-foot-long mobile barrier truck, Philadelphia County's Maintenance Manager Dan Graham embraced the opportunity.

When Graham first learned about the mobile barrier, he thought, "Let's give it a try." Anything to make his crews safer.

The initial plan was to deploy the mobile barrier when crews were working along shoulder areas removing litter and debris and clearing storm drains, but on day one, the barrier was used for an emergency incident. There was an overturned asphalt truck and spill along southbound Interstate 95 at the Philadelphia International Airport Interchange. The crew was able to utilize the new mobile barrier to quickly close seven lanes, which included transition lanes and the shoulder, to

Continued on page 14 bottom

FAIRER FUNDING FOR THE FUTURE: EXPLORING MILEAGE-BASED USER FEES



PennDOT is continuing to look into new, more equitable and innovative ways to fund transportation infrastructure needs. A potential solution could be Mileage-Based User Fees (MBUF), also known as Road-User Fees (RUF), refers to charging drivers by the number of miles they travel – not by the amount of gas they buy and use.

Interested in comparing MBUF with the state gas tax on your vehicle? Try our new MBUF Gas Tax Comparison Calculator at: www.penndot.pa.gov/about-us/funding/solutions/MBUF

To explore this funding option—and contribute to the national conversation on it—PennDOT in partnership with The Eastern Transportation Coalition (TETC) a coalition of 17 states and Washington, D.C., is working to better understand how drivers view this alternative funding mechanism and its impacts.

PennDOT has participated in numerous TETC studies and surveys over the past several years to assess the potential benefits to Pennsylvanians of an MBUF model. For TETC's state passenger vehicle pilot, more than 500 Pennsylvanians participated along with drivers from Delaware, New Jersey, and North Carolina.

Electric Vehicle Use on the Rise

Another reason Pennsylvania and other states are increasingly focused on MBUF/RUF is rapidly changing market and consumer choices with vehicle types. With advances in fuel efficiency and the popularity of alternative fuel vehicles increasing in recent years, gas tax revenue is trending downward and is expected to continue to do so. In Pennsylvania, the number of registered EV (Electric Vehicles)

YEAR	MFG	Number of Models
By 2025	TOYOTA	Options on all
	GMC	20 models
	BMW	12 models
By 2028	VW	70 models
	CHRYSLER	All models
	HYUNDAI	6 models
By 2030	FORD	40% of models
	VOLVO	All models
By 2035	GMC	All models
By 2040	HONDA	All models

increased 320% between March 2019 and September 2022.

Moreover, automobile manufacturers are committed to offering fully electric fleets in the near future:

Rural Drivers Could Save With MBUF

While there is an early focus on EV or alternate-fuel vehicles, all types of drivers need to be

considered. In its partnership with TETC, Pennsylvania focused on rural drivers, logging 226,267 miles over four months with over 14 states traveled. TETC's latest report on its pilot program found rural drivers in Pennsylvania could potentially save \$34 a year on average using an MBUF model – depending on the rate – because they tend to drive less fuel-efficient vehicles. Motorists with more efficient vehicles are currently paying less in gas tax on a per-mile basis than those with less fuel-efficient vehicles. With MBUF, everyone would pay the same amount per mile travelled.

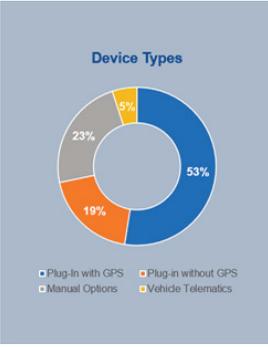
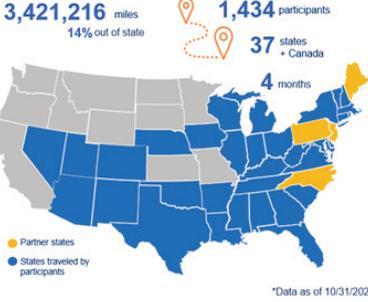
Studying the Best MBUF Approaches for Trucks

PennDOT also has been participating in TETC pilot programs to learn about the unique perspective and needs of the trucking industry to alternative transportation funding policies. The multi-state truck pilots show that one rate for all trucks does not work because of the vast differences in vehicle operations, types, ages, performance, and mileage travelled. Sharing results from the pilots and highlighting key differences between trucks and passenger cars help reduce misinformation about motor carriers and will help the industry to craft an acceptable approach to MBUF that considers their interests.



For example, PennDOT is part of a Phase 4 Pilot examining the best way to enable MBUF technologies for commercial trucks. The study has 1,434 participants and looks at four types of measurement devices over 3,421,216 miles, in 37 states plus

Phase 4 Pilot (2022): PA, NJ, NC, and ME



Canada. The results will help to determine which type of device is the most useful for a variety of trucks over specific distances.

MBUF Activity Across the Country

A widespread need for new transportation funding sources has raised the issue to the national level. In fact, Oregon and Utah already have MBUF programs in place and Georgia has proposed conducting their own pilot study like TETC's.

Additionally in July 2022, Virginia launched its Mileage Choice program where participants can volunteer to pay a fee for the miles they drive. As more states face the same funding challenges, solutions like MBUF will continue to become more prominent in conversations and testing. For example, the Washington State Transportation Commission (WSTC) recommended to state legislators to replace the state's gas tax with a road usage charge (RUC) during their December 2022 meeting.

The Federal Highway Administration is encouraging states to consider MBUF and other user-pay approaches through its Surface Transportation System Funding Alternatives (STSFA) program, which in 2021 announced \$18.7 million in grants to eight projects.

They include:

-  **Delaware Department of Transportation and TETC** will demonstrate and test paths for MBUF in seven states, including Pennsylvania.
-  **Ohio Department of Transportation** will obtain data for a large-scale outreach program geared towards educating the public about RUC.
-  **California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)** will evaluate the viability of GPS technology to determine which roads are part of a public network and may be subject to a fee.
-  **Kansas and Minnesota Departments of Transportation** will participate in a joint effort to explore the impacts of implementation in the Midwest, with focus on rural and agricultural populations and intrastate and interstate commercial freight and supply chain operators.
-  **Hawaii Department of Transportation** will investigate the current state and completeness of digital mapping data to determine which roads are part of a public network and may be subject to a fee.
-  **Oregon Department of Transportation and RUC West** will host a summit to explore opportunities and barriers to interoperability, expand knowledge about RUC and foster new partnerships

For more information on transportation funding challenges brought about by market forces including but not limited to increased adoption of hybrid and electric vehicles, cultural shifts in travel habits, inflation and the reduced buying power that results from it, visit www.pennidot.pa.gov/funding to get the latest news about PennDOT's alternative transportation funding, visit our Contact Us page to subscribe to the PennDOT Pathways newsletter.

Continued from page 12

prevent vehicles from accessing the roadway so the crash and spill could be cleared.

The mobile device has a barrier on the one end that faces traffic and built-in work shelves on the other side for crews. Graham said the barrier made the roadway safer for crews when used to divert traffic away from the emergency.

"The barrier allowed us to close down the lanes, where in the past it would have taken us about six to seven trucks to do the same," said Graham. "That incident allowed us to see that the best use of the device would be during an emergency incident. It worked well to divert traffic."

Graham suggested that because of the barrier's massive size, counties will need plan accordingly before deploying it tactically.

"My thoughts for our district are to use it for emergency situations and we can also easily move it to other counties within our district when major incidents occur on interstates."

Graham said the City of Philadelphia had asked, if necessary, if

PennDOT could use the new tool to help close ramps to Interstate 676 if the Phillies won the World Series. Graham also thinks the mobile barrier would have played a role during the historic flooding on I-676 due to Hurricane Ida in September 2021.

The 110-foot-long barrier, which has the potential to be 130-foot-long with a 20-foot connector, does allow for more protection for crews, besides using just cones and trucks, but Graham said it is up to Fleet Management to decide now if they will keep it in District 6 or move to other parts of the state for test runs.

Crews deal with aggressive and distracted drivers every day, so Graham said he was happy to pilot the barrier. "We are going to do anything we can to make things safer for our crews. We don't know if something helps, unless we try it."

MEET CIVIL ENGINEER MOHAMMAD SUJON



Mohammad Sujon is a Bangladesh native who completed his B.Sc. in Civil Engineering from the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology and his M.Sc. in Advanced Computation and Civil Engineering Structural Studies from the Technical University of Dresden, Germany.

He then worked as a project engineer in Bangladesh and later joined WVU as graduate research assistant in 2019. Sujon worked on a research project under the supervision of Fei Dai, associate professor of civil and environmental engineering at WVU. Sujon's research aim was to develop a low-cost virtual weigh-in-motion technology that utilized traffic data to

meticulously evaluate present road conditions and could make predictions of the future condition of the pavement.

Sujon believes his research will facilitate the United States Department of Transportation to employ their collected big data for developing a sustainable transportation infrastructure management system and SOY award is a recognition of his hard work.

This research can effectively help to improve society by developing techniques that can bring sustainability to the management system and finally obtain a sustainable transportation infrastructure system.

In the pathway to achieving this, Sujon has joined PennDOT as a Civil Engineer as this position can provide him the opportunities to prudentially utilize his gained knowledge and experience for sustainable transportation infrastructure asset management in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Sujon is married to Bushra and has a baby boy named Adyan. He enjoys watching movies and soccer matches. He is a big fan of the soccer club Real Madrid.

Continued from page 7

PennDOT is working with an engineering consultant to develop a design analysis software tool for use on selecting bridges for deck link slabs.

"It is another tool in the engineering toolbox for preserving infrastructure," Nicholson said. "This tool will help engineers do repetitive analysis and make it easier to decide if bridges are good candidates for link slabs, which is more efficient than doing a hand calculation for each bridge. It will save time from repeated evaluations and calculations."

Aaron Raible, Armstrong County highway maintenance manager in PennDOT District 10 introduced a new STIC innovation for consideration. The airfoil device for use on snowplow trucks to keep snow and other debris from covering the back of the trucks during winter operations. The airfoil, originally piloted by the Oregon Department of Transportation, improves the visibility of the back of the truck, enhances safety and reduces the amount of cleaning needed for the trucks.

In celebration of the STIC's 10th anniversary, three successful innovations from the past 10 years were highlighted during the meeting for their far-reaching benefits, especially in the areas of safety and extending pavement life.

Jeff Bucher, P.E., chief of PennDOT's Highway Design and Technology Section, reviewed the progress being made with the installation of roundabouts. Since their first use in Pennsylvania in 2005, roundabouts are now at 77 locations on state routes and 19 on local routes, and 38 more are under design.

The benefits, he said, are reduced speeds and reduced conflict points for traffic negotiating what had been cross intersections. Data shows a 76 percent reduction in serious injuries, a 62 percent reduction in all injuries and a 9 percent crash reduction.

Bucher also highlighted the Diverging Diamond Interchanges (DDI) innovation. Use of this interchange design is recommended for interchanges with large left turn movements and provides for fewer conflict points – 14 versus 26. Three DDIs have been built in Pennsylvania – one in Washington County, a second in York County and the third in Lancaster County. One DDI is currently in construction in Westmoreland County, with five others under design – one in Lehigh County, two in Berks County, one in Chester County and one in Allegheny County.

Halley Cole, P.E., chief of the Pavement Testing and Asset Management Section in PennDOT's Bureau of Operations, reviewed the Hot Pour Mastics innovation. Introduced in 2018, it involves combining a mastic melter, polymer modified asphalt binder and specially selected aggregate to provide a much better paving material. The product, heated on the worksite, is used to fill cracks over 1-inch long; for repairing distressed pavements, longitudinal and shoulder joints; for smoothing pavements around raised manholes drains and culverts; for improving rough driving surfaces; for leveling bridge approaches; and for repairing bridge decks.

Since its introduction, Hot Pour Mastics' use has grown from 374,265 pounds in 2019 to more than 780,000 pounds this year.

WORKPLACE HEROES RECOGNIZED IN CLINTON COUNTY

By Marla Fannin, Community Relations Coordinator, District 2



Left to right in the photo: Tom Zurat, District 2 Executive; Ryan Hollobaugh; Jason McCauley; Rob Rockwell; Willie Nelen; John Packer; Matt Graw; John Lambert; John Green; Damon Wagner, District 2 Assistant Executive for Maintenance

Central Pennsylvania recently recognized eight Clinton County employees as Workplace Heroes. The acknowledgement occurred during Clinton County's Fall Safety Day event in Lock Haven.

The men were part of a road crew on August 29, 2022, that helped save the life of an injured logger. As DE Tom Zurat noted, "These employees responded to a unique challenge with calm, resourcefulness, and focus. They showed the very best part of our work force, and we could not be prouder of their actions."

The workplace heroes included flagger Matt Graw, foreman Jason McCauley, crew-member Rob Rockwell, crew-member Ryan Hollobaugh, crew-member John Lambert, crew-member John Green, crew-member John Packer, and crew- member Willie Nelen.

Upon hearing cries for help in a wooded section near Renovo, some of the crew conducted a coordinated search and rescue to eventually find and free an injured logger. The rest of the crew mobilized and relayed messages to County 911 for further aid, as well as provided traffic control.

Each crew member played a part in this successful operation. Without their quick action, the logger could have been

trapped for hours without aid.

As a group, this team boasts more than 100 years of field experience. Ryan Hollobaugh was serving as a temporary Highway Maintenance Worker but has left the Department for a full time position elsewhere. Jason McCauley is currently a Highway Foreman 2. Jason was hired in fall of 2003 and primarily works out of the North Bend stockpile. Robert Rockwell, a current Transportation Equipment Operator B, has been with PennDOT since January 2011. He currently works out of the Mill Hall stockpile. Willie Nelen was hired in 2006 and is a current Transportation Equipment Operator B. He primarily works out of the North Bend stockpile. John Packer was hired in fall 2005 and is a current Transportation Equipment Operator B. He primarily works out of the North Bend stockpile. Matt Graw came on board in December 2004 and currently serves as a Transportation Equipment Operator B. He primarily works out of the North Bend stockpile. John Lambert currently serves as a Transportation Equipment Operator B and came on board on 2018. He currently works out of the Mill Hall stockpile. And John Green serves as a Transportation Equipment Operator B. He came on board in 2004 and primarily works out of the North Bend stockpile.

Continued from page 11

extreme acts of bravery, they show when the public needs it the most, to the daily encounters they have, helping motorists safely travel to and from the City of Pittsburgh, these honorable people display what government service is all about.

With the equivalence of a county within PennDOT's District 11 (Allegheny, Beaver, and Lawrence counties), the tunnels not only assist motorists as they make their daily travels but the also help save lives. District 11 is pleased to have such a strong and dedicated organization within their region and proud they have been honored for all the great work they do. Thank you tunnels crew! Check out the PennDOT Tunnel Video @ www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofped75DAcQ

WHEN IT COMES TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING, PENNDOT REMINDS YOU TO “SEE, CALL, SAVE”



Human Trafficking Awareness Month

Human trafficking is a global crime that happens every day – even right here in Pennsylvania. In 2020, 84.7 percent of the calls to the National Human Trafficking Hotline were for females, 57.8 percent of calls were for adults and 909 calls were from Pennsylvania, with many more incidents going unreported.

Our vast transportation network – including airports, trains, buses, rail stations, ports, and more – is a key point of access for traffickers to scout for and move their victims. Catching these criminals while in transit is often one of the few opportunities to recognize and report traffickers before the victims disappear.

Whether you work in transit, law enforcement, retail, or are simply traveling, it’s important for everyone to know the signs of trafficking, because anyone can be a victim. In fact, a common misconception is that only women and girls can be victims. A study by ECPAT-USA, the Leading Anti-child Trafficking Organization in the United States, found that as many as half of human trafficking victims and survivors are male, with LGBTQ boys and young men at particular risk.

Common signs of trafficking might include:

- Lack of control over travel identification/documents;
- No freedom of movement/social interaction;
- Difficulty articulating reasonable/logical travel plans; and
- Non-genuine relationship; particularly parent or guardian/child.

Since 2016, PennDOT has been a national leader in working with the Department of Homeland Security Blue Campaign, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and other government, non-governmental, law enforcement, and private organizations to make Pennsylvania a safer place and bring those who exploit human lives to justice. To date, PennDOT has trained close to 1,400 driver license and welcome center employees in how to spot the signs. We also shared our initial training with transit-agency partners and they continually conduct training using state, federal, and nonprofit resources. And our efforts have served as a model for other states and jurisdictions across the country.

WHEN YOU ARE FORCED TO WORK AGAINST YOUR WILL

If you are made to work against your will for little or no pay, you may be a victim of human trafficking.

To report suspected human trafficking, call the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) tip line:
1-866-347-2423

If you are a victim and need help, call the National Human Trafficking Hotline:
1-888-373-7888

BLUE CAMPAIGN
One Voice. One Mission. End Human Trafficking.

Human Trafficking Happens in PA. If You See, Call, Save.

888-292-1919
PA State Police Human Trafficking Hotline
Call 911 in Emergency

This year, PennDOT has unveiled a new campaign to ensure that everyone is aware of what to do when they spot human trafficking when it happens. Using window clings that will be displayed at 56 rest areas and Welcome Centers around Pennsylvania, we are training employees and the public to “know it and use it,” referring to the universal hand signal for help – a simple hand gesture where you curl your thumb into your palm and fold your fingers over it. A second window cling will remind the public to “see, call, save” – meaning that if they SEE human trafficking in Pennsylvania, they should CALL authorities and potentially help SAVE a life.

MEET NATHAN REIS, DISTRICT 8 SAFETY SECTION SUPERVISOR/SAFETY ENGINEER

By Dave Thompson, Community Relations Coordinator, District 8



District 8's Nathan Reis's career in transportation seems like a natural choice, given his family ties to PennDOT.

Born and raised in the Williamsport area, his mom, Denise Reis, was the CADD (Computer Aided Design and Drafting) manager at PennDOT District 3, headquartered in Montoursville, Lycoming County.

"Just growing up – (attending) Bring Your Child to Work Day – I had experiences at PennDOT at all ages," Nathan said. "I had a lot of connection to PennDOT and the civil engineering world."

It wasn't exactly what he first envisioned doing, however. He initially considered a career as a lawyer.

"Growing up I was always told I would make a great lawyer because I liked to talk and argue and always had to be right," he said.

Academically, Nathan was also good at mathematics, so when his junior year of high school rolled around and he began focusing on career choices, he chose civil engineering.

He attended Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, graduating in 2016 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering. While in college he interned at District 3, working as an Engineering, Scientific, Technical Intern (ESTI) first in the survey unit, then in bridge inspection, and finally, bridge design.

His experience as a youth and in college, including his summer internships, cemented his belief that a career in transportation, specifically PennDOT, was the right path. Following graduation, he applied for a job at District 8 and was hired almost immediately.

"I got a job at PennDOT right out of the gate," Nathan said. "I started out in 2016 as a CET (Civil Engineer Trainee) and did a full year rotation."

In October of 2017, he started working in District 8's Safety Management Section as a Civil Engineer – Transportation, which he held until being appointed to the dual role as Safety Section Supervisor/Safety Engineer. He actually held the latter position in an 'acting' capacity before being appointed to the permanent position.

As Safety Section Supervisor, Nathan oversees traffic engineering and safety studies related to things like speed limits, truck restrictions and so forth. He said he enjoys that aspect of his work, but his role as Safety Engineer is the most interesting and rewarding.

That part of the job entails selecting safety improvement projects for available Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding. These types of projects include roundabouts, traffic signals, high tension median cable guide rail and high friction surface treatments. He also manages the district's Highway Safety Plan, an annual plan submitted to Central Office that details how the district intends to reduce crashes and traffic fatalities.

Nathan said the rewards come from developing projects that achieve the goal of reducing crashes and fatalities.

"It's really rewarding to go back and see what we did making a difference," he said, adding that his ultimate goal is zero traffic fatalities.

"I'm trying to put hospitals out of business, as far as traffic injuries and fatalities," he said. "No one wants to get the news that a family member was injured or died as a result of a vehicle crash."

"I enjoy my job," he said. "It's busy, it can be stressful, but at the end of the day, we're making an impact. I think that it's an important job."

He notes that his work is a team effort. Although only in his mid-20's, Nathan supervises a team of seven employees.

"My staff is fantastic," he said. "They make my job so much easier."

He also counts the Traffic Engineers who he has worked with for being great mentors and leaders. Former Traffic Engineer Jason Bewley, and current boss Chris Flad are always "willing to help me grow as an engineer," Nathan said. Each has been generous in sharing their experience and knowledge, he said.

He said he appreciates and supports the department's continued focus on highway safety.

"I want to flesh it out and make it a good program," he said. "There's so much emphasis now on safety. We want to stop people from being hurt or killed in crashes."

MOTORCYCLE SAFETY STARTS WITH PROPER TRAINING

By Craig Yetter, Community Relations Coordinator, Driver & Vehicle Services



With the rapid approach of spring and better weather, PennDOT reminds motorcycle riders gearing up for the open road that safety begins with proper training.

Through the Pennsylvania Motorcycle Safety Program (PAMSP), PennDOT offers free courses under the supervision of certified rider coaches to all Pennsylvania residents who have a motorcycle learner's permit or motorcycle license.

PennDOT has contracted with several third-party motorcycle training providers to offer motorcycle safety training classes

that will include the motorcycle skills test licensing waiver. Individuals interested in training are encouraged to contact the training providers directly for class availability, as additional courses may be offered and providers may offer additional walk-in or waiting list opportunities when individuals fail to report for the training. Customers are encouraged to check our vendor's website for updated class offerings.

Successful completion of a basic or intermediate course waives the requirement to take a skills test at a PennDOT Driver License Center and automatically earns the permit holder their motorcycle license. Motorcycle permit holders who complete a 3-wheel basic course will earn a motorcycle license with restriction prohibiting the operation a of 2-wheel motorcycle.

Classes can be scheduled at multiple training sites throughout Pennsylvania. Class schedules are coordinated by each third-party training provider for their individual locations and additional information can be found at www.penndot.gov/PAMSP. Additional classes and locations will continue to be added.

WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA OPERATORS WIN TRUCK 'ROADEO'

By Saxon Daugherty, Safety Press Officer, District 1



A regional truck "ROADEo" competition was held in Pittsburgh in November to put some of PennDOT's best operators in western Pennsylvania to the test. When it was all said and done, District 1's team of Dave Root from Mercer County and Bob Skelton of Erie County walked away with the top score.

The duo was tasked with completing a variety of evaluations, including a safe maneuvering offset course, an air brake test, a serpentine driving course, an alley dock backing exercise, parallel parking, and straight backing exercise.

The event was held on Nov. 9 at the Western Pennsylvania Training Academy (WPTA) and each district's team scores were tallied to determine a winner.

Root and Skelton earned the right to compete at the regional level after receiving the highest marks at the District 1 ROADEo held earlier in the fall.

Donald Gray and Justin Schmidt from Crawford County, Frank Sovaia from Erie County, Charles Witherell and Cliff Custer from Forest County, Casey Krizon from Mercer County, Jim Egger and Travis Stover from Venango County, and Dennis Peterson and Dan Benson from Warren County also participated in the district competition.

District 1 has regularly held truck ROADEo competitions since the 1980s, except for the last several years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"It's a great way to acknowledge the skills and abilities of our operators," said Doug Schofield, Assistant District Executive-Maintenance. "It also promotes our culture of safety and helps them perform efficiently during our winter operations."