

FDIC News

The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation Employee Newsletter

OCTOBER 2024

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Chairman's Awards Ceremony Honors Exceptional Achievements in 2023

By Sonya Weakley
Office of Communications

During a ceremony spanning two venues at the FDIC's Virginia Square campus in Arlington, Virginia, on September 26, 2024, the FDIC celebrated the heroic efforts of FDIC employees in response to both the unprecedented bank failures and the unexpected cultural shift that occurred in 2023.

"We exceeded our own high standards for hard work, creative problem-solving, leadership, community outreach, and teamwork," Chairman Martin Gruenberg said in his opening remarks.

Because so many employees were recognized for their dedication to executing on the FDIC's mission as well as implementing programs and processes to ensure that the FDIC provides a workplace that is safe, fair, and inclusive, the event was held both in the Shiela Bair Auditorium and the FDIC cafeteria.

"It is a reflection of the extraordinary breadth of talent and the extraordinary commitment of the employees of the FDIC to the mission of this agency," Gruenberg said.



"I want to thank the incredible team who made today's celebration possible," he added. "Pulling this all together was a tremendous team effort."

Making its debut at this year's ceremony was the Arleas Upton Kea

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The **FDIC News** is published monthly by the Office of Communications (OCOM) of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC), 550 17th Street N.W., Room 7102 Washington, DC 20429
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Chairman's Awards, from page 1

Culture of Excellence Award, honoring the FDIC's former Deputy to the Chairman for External Affairs. Though Kea could not attend the ceremony, she delivered a video message to the FDIC and was represented in person by her son Chase and daughter Mallory.

The new award recognizes an individual or team whose contributions to and support for the FDIC's mission

resulted in significantly improved administrative services; increased efficiency and effectiveness in processes, programs, or customer service; or increased trust and respect among individuals and teams through collaboration and adoption of FDIC's Corporate Values.

Below are the 2023 honorees and excerpts from the descriptions of their accomplishments presented at the

awards ceremony. The names of all the honorees, including all the members of the teams, are in the Chairman's Awards Ceremony program. A description of each award is on the awards page, and you can also watch a recording of the ceremony. 📺

Chairman's Excellence Award – Executive

Audra Cast, Senior Deputy Director, DRR

As a Senior Deputy Director in DRR, Audra played a critical role in the FDIC's response to the five bank failures and nine near-failures in 2023, including three of the largest, most complicated resolutions in U.S. history.

Audra consistently demonstrates an ability to manage large multi-disciplinary teams engaged in a wide variety of complex programmatic responsibilities across organizational lines. For the three large failures in Spring 2023, Audra oversaw the strategic operations of 21 functional areas, including staff from the CISR, Legal, DOA, and DOF.

Shawn Khani, Senior Deputy Director, DRR

With the Spring 2023 bank failures, assets in liquidation reached \$277 billion, more than twice what the FDIC managed during the 2008 financial crisis. For Signature Bank, Shawn's team disposed of \$60 billion in loans, including roughly \$30 billion of capital call and venture funding loans, and roughly \$30 billion in commercial real estate loans, of which \$15 billion were secured by rent-controlled, rent-stabilized properties.

To meet the FDIC's statutory requirements, including maximizing the availability of residential property for low- and moderate-income individuals and maximizing recovery, Shawn engaged with tenant groups, New York City and New York State housing authorities, and community organizations to obtain their input and achieve a positive outcome.

Chairman's Excellence Award – Individual

Michael Saulnier, Senior IT Specialist, Legal

Mike, who is now retired, put the mission and success of the FDIC above his own in 2023. He delayed his retirement by several months to ensure his successors in the eDiscovery group would be sufficiently trained so that Legal would have a seamless transition.

He spent nearly five months working closely with two newly hired employees, introducing them to Legal's clients and stakeholders. As a result of his selfless efforts, his successors handled their responsibilities effectively with little-to-no hesitation. *(no available image)*

Deborah Del Grosso, Senior Asset Management Specialist, DRR

Deborah was recognized for her exceptional leadership as the Post-Closing Asset Manager for the Signature Bridge Bank Receivership.

This sudden bank closing required Deborah's management of a \$60 billion commercial loan portfolio that involved critical sectors such as venture capital, private equity, and even rent-controlled real estate in New York City—one of FDIC's largest and most complex managed portfolios to date. During her year-long leadership of the Signature receivership, she directly oversaw more than 100 staff and contractors, managed intricate borrow relations, and implemented key financial processes.

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Chairman's Awards, *from page 2*



Chairman's Excellence Award, Team – 2023 Spring Regional Bank Failures Team



Chairman's Excellence Award, Executive – Audra Cast



Chairman's Excellence Award, Executive – Shawn Khani



Chairman's Excellence Award, Individual – Deborah Del Grosso



35-Year Federal Service Awardees

see **Chairman's Awards**, *page 4*

Chairman's Excellence Award – Team

2023 Spring Regional Bank Failures Team

In spring 2023, more than 600 staff in multiple FDIC Divisions and Offices and several Regions teamed up to manage the failures of Signature Bank, Silicon Valley Bank, and First Republic Bank.

Staff in DRR, RMS, and CISR worked with bank management to ensure receipt of bank documents necessary for franchise analysis and marketing, asset valuation, and formation of the bridge banks. The DRR closing team analyzed over 40 bids of varying structures and completed calculations to aid executive management in determining either the least costly or best value transactions.

Significant support came from the Security and Emergency Preparedness Section, the Legal Division, the Acquisitions Services Branch, the Office of the Chief Information Security Officer, the Corporate Services Branch, the FDIC Library, and the Office of Communications.

Arleas Upton Kea Culture of Excellence Award

Interdivisional Deposit Insurance Inquiry Surge Response Team

Following the bank failures in 2023, there was a near-historic surge in deposit insurance inquiries from bankers and the public. The total number of calls and written correspondence answered increased by 521% compared to the same period in 2022.

A group of 60 employees from DCP and Legal volunteered to receive just-in-time training that allowed them to respond to calls and written correspondence—many from consumers who had concerns about the safety of their deposits and the stability of the deposit insurance system.

Sylvia Plunkett Examiner Excellence Award

David P. Lafleur, Review Examiner, DCP

In 2023, David displayed a combination of competence, creativity, dedication, leadership, and teamwork that led him to review and process 35 compliance reports, the most of any review examiner in the Chicago region, with an average turnaround time of 4.1 days.

When a violation of the Truth in Lending Act was identified at a bank in his portfolio and the bank proposed its remediation plan, David's quick and thorough research of the interagency policy led to acceptance of the bank's plan and effective correction of consumer harm.

Community Reinvestment Act Rule Writing Team

In October 2023, the Board issued the final CRA regulation, the first joint, comprehensive rewrite of the CRA in 25 years. This team worked long hours, reviewing regulatory and preamble text to ensure the language reflected all interagency agreements.

Thanks to mutual support, diverse talent, and years of expertise, this team brought a significant and complex project to a successful conclusion for the FDIC and the American people.

Edward J. Roddy Examiner Excellence Award

Janice Marble, Senior Review Examiner, RMS

In her 38-year career, Janice has been a field examiner, case manager, review examiner, instructor, corporate recruiter, mentor, and SME. In 2023, when the FDIC was faced with a series of rapid and significant bank failures, Janice drafted multiple failing bank Board cases, one in under a day due to rapid failure.

She also led the coordination of the interagency Mutual Forum for Community Bankers and the production of the monthly Projected Failure Report. And she completed numerous complex applications and enforcement actions under incredibly tight deadlines.

James R. McFadyen Award for Excellence in Research, Data and Policy Analysis

Community Reinvestment Act Rule Writing Team

In response to the bank failures in March 2023, Chairman Gruenberg requested that DIR write a history of deposit insurance and propose some options for reform to provide thought leadership on deposit insurance reform to researchers and policy makers.

Within a very tight deadline, the authors provided thoughtful and comprehensive material on the topics in the outline, supported by excellent and thorough data analysis, and released the report in about six weeks. The paper prompted discussions with researchers and policy makers on the topic of deposit insurance reform.

Chairman's Awards, from page 4



Chairman's Excellence Award, Team – Community Reinvestment Act Rule Writing Team



Arleas Upton Kea Culture of Excellence Award – Interdivisional Deposit Insurance Inquiry Surge Response Team



Edward J. Roddy Examiner Excellence Award (RMS) – Janice Marble



Sylvia Plunkett Examiner Excellence Award (DCP) – David P. Lafleur



James R. McFadyen Award for Excellence in Research, Data and Policy Analysis – Options for Deposit Insurance Reform Paper Team

see **Chairman's Awards**, page 6

Annie D. Moore Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Award – Executive

Sandra Macias, Assistant Director, RMS

As the Executive Sponsor of Partnership of Women in the Workplace (POWW), an FDIC Employee Resource Group, Sandy played an important role in shaping and advancing the Action Plan for a Safe, Fair, and Inclusive Work Environment in 2023, providing oversight, mentorship, and support to the group.

She also independently developed many recommendations that became core elements of the Action Plan, and she briefed the Chairman, Division Directors, and the majority of the 37

Action Plan working groups on these proposals. She developed a proposal to establish a collaborative leadership program called Connecting, Affiliating, and Sharing FDIC Culture.

Through her boldness, directness, and courage Sandy has given a voice to women and their experiences with harassment and discrimination at a critical time for the FDIC. Her actions strongly exemplify the FDIC's core values and align with the FDIC's mission.

Annie D. Moore Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Award – Non-Executive

Networking Inclusion and Advancement for African American Women: African American Women with a Purpose (NIA Women)

NIA Women Board Members have conducted research and analysis to formulate innovative proposals to improve the FDIC culture. One such proposal led to the development of the Leadership Connect program, which provides all employees, regardless of tenure or grade, access to FDIC executives in a unique engagement for dialogue or job shadowing.

NIA Women was also instrumental in developing the Safe Space program, which will provide a quiet space for employees to share workplace concerns without fear or intimidation.

Partnership of Women in the Workplace (POWW)

In 2023, POWW took swift and significant action that helped shape the FDIC's Action Plan for a Safe, Fair, and Inclusive Work Environment by holding listening sessions with the Chairman, Directors and senior staff in a number of Divisions and Offices, as well as the Board Special Committee overseeing the independent review of the FDIC culture.

POWW also advocated for increased childcare and fertility benefits for FDIC employees, highlighting the limited availability, cost, and burden of childcare responsibilities and how they disproportionately affect women. As a result of POWW's efforts, DOA designed a childcare subsidy benefit, which was rolled out earlier this year.

Robert F. Longworth Leadership Award, DRR

**Shivali Nangia, Assistant Director,
Claims and Strategic Operations, DRR**

Throughout period of the 2023 bank failures, Shivali guided and supported staff to efficiently complete resolution tasks, while serving as a leader and point person for these tasks, including reaching out to critical vendors to explain the importance of continuing business with the bridge banks.

Shivali expedited insurance calculations and implemented advanced payment to provide liquidity to depositors prior to the establishment of the bridge banks, and she arranged to pay out over \$3 billion in digital asset deposits left behind in one receivership by negotiating with an institution to serve as the receiver's paying agent.

Visionary Award

**Citizen Development Program Empowers
Innovation and Efficiency Team**

In 2023, CIOO established the Citizen Development Program (CDP) that allows the FDIC to rapidly create applications, automate business processes, and build reports and dashboards, resulting in improved operational efficiency and effectiveness. This program represents a paradigm shift in the FDIC's technology and processes.

Critical to the success of the CDP was the formation of an FDIC-wide Community of Practice of more than 300 stakeholders to engage, create learning opportunities, and refine capabilities, governance and architecture, and the team of Community of Practice leaders from across the FDIC were the force behind the program. Over 100 employees have completed the training to become citizen developers, and they have created automated solutions that are saving time and money.

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Annie D. Moore Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Award, Executive – Sandra Macias



Annie D. Moore Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Award, Non-Executive – Patricia Davison representing Networking, Inclusion, and Advancement for African American Women: African American Women with a Purpose (NIA Women)



Annie D. Moore Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Award, Non-Executive – Yolanda Thomas representing Partnership for Women in the Workplace (POWW)



Robert F. Longworth Leadership Award (DRR) – Shivali Nangia



Visionary Award – Citizen Development Program Empowers Innovation and Efficiency Team

see **Chairman's Awards**, page 8

Bobby Bean Award for Banking Policy Leadership

Luke Brown, Associate Director (Examination Policy), DCP

In 2023, Luke represented the FDIC on the interagency Task Force on Property Appraisal and Valuation Equity – the first-ever federal government effort to explore and focus attention on appraisal bias, which negatively impacts minority homeowners and communities. The task force produced new rules, guidance, and examination principles that will help address discrimination in the mortgage market.

In 2023, Luke also led an interdivisional effort to modernize the FDIC's sign and advertising rule. Beginning in 2025, banks will be required to display the FDIC official digital sign near the name of the bank on all bank websites and mobile applications and certain ATMs.

Elizabeth Falloon, Senior Resolution and Readiness Advisor, CISR

In 2023, Betsy was the lead author of the proposal to revise FDIC regulations that require large regional banks to submit resolution plans. Betsy also drafted guidance for Triennial Full Filers submitting resolution plans required under Title I of the Dodd-Frank, ensuring the text was harmonized, while also making sure they did not overlap and adhered to their respective statutory authorities.

Betsy also represented the FDIC's interest in interagency negotiations on the long-term debt rule and made sure that the rule mitigated the systemic impact of large bank failures.

Douglas H. Jones Legal Excellence Award

Cathy Costantino, Counsel, Legal

As the legal advisor to RMS on training and hiring, in 2023, and for the past several years, Cathy's role included reviewing on-the-job analysis that sets training benchmarks, evaluating criteria to assess students during core school training, and supporting validations and legal challenges to the technical evaluation.

Cathy has evaluated and defended the hiring assessments used to screen prospective Financial Institution Specialists. She helped institute the Automated Writing Assessment and has provided legal advice regarding the Automated Essay Assessment for bank examiner trainee applicants.

Phillip Sloan, Counsel, Legal

Phil's expertise with derivative contracts in bank failures was crucial in March of 2023, when Silicon Valley Bank failed. He was tasked with overseeing the transfer of the bank's derivative contracts to its bridge bank and then to the acquiring institution.

When Signature Bank failed in March only a small portion of assets were transferred to the deposit acquirer, leaving a huge asset portfolio to be managed by the FDIC receiver. Although he was not tasked as an asset management lawyer, Phil oversaw the Signature Bank Capital Call loan portfolio, providing legal support and overseeing outside counsel.

Nancy K. Rector Public Service Award

Treisha Thorpe Borris, Supervisory Examiner (Compliance), DCP

Treisha is the CEO and president of U.S. Elite International, a global non-profit organization that helps marginalized students, immigrants, and refugees obtain a higher education debt free, while supporting under-resourced teachers in developing countries.

At the organization's college fair in Jamaica, she worked with 15 U.S. colleges to recruit 30 international students, providing \$10,000 in sponsorships benefitting over 300 first-generation college students. Treisha also self-funded more than \$5,000 for this project and secured four-year U.S. college scholarships for 14 minority students.

Other projects included providing high schools with athletic apparel and running shoes, initiating a project to donate \$10,000 to two schools to improve education technology, and helping to create a teacher's summit attended by 3000 teachers in developing countries. *(no available image)*

Jitendra Rathod, Financial Analyst (Quantitative Risk), CISR

In 2023, Jitendra founded Farm Unity, a nonprofit organization in Crofton, MD, to help reduce social isolation and build community by motivating people to interact with others outdoors and to involve disadvantaged people in gardening and growing food. By spring 2023, Jitendra had brought together gardening experts, professors, and other volunteers to build two gardens of approximately 4,000 square feet at the Crofton Library.

Farm Unity offers a variety of services that teach people to grow their own food, learn about sustainable farming practices, and connect with others. To date, Farm Unity's gardens have produced approximately 600 pounds of more than 25 varieties of fruits and vegetables using zero chemicals.

Chairman's Awards, *from page 8*



Bobby Bean Award for Banking Policy Leadership – Luke Brown



Bobby Bean Award for Banking Policy Leadership – Elizabeth Falloon



Douglas H. Jones Legal Excellence Award – Cathy Costantino



Douglas H. Jones Legal Excellence Award – Philip Sloan



Nancy K. Rector Public Service Award – Jitendra Rathod

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FDIC Support Services Award

Rachel Floyd, Administrative Support Assistant, RMS

In 2023, Rachel built relationships across the Atlanta region to explain the timesheet coding and validation processes, revised the scheduling and proctoring of the Financial Institution Specialist accounting assessments, helped train more than 60 supervisors on Human Resources programs, and collaborated across Divisions on clearances and ethics letters, making suggestions that improved the process. *(no available image)*

Andrea Hill, Forms Developer, DOA

In 2023, Andrea designed, updated, and finalized eight P-Card forms under a tight deadline, enabling ASB to complete a 2023 FDIC Performance Goal. She also developed, updated, or revised over 25 new or current forms for the FDIC Office of the Inspector General, collaborating with CIOO and the Forms Team to develop a solution for opening fillable forms from the FDIC intranet. Andrea also edits products from other team members, improving the quality of final documents.

Julie Tran, Program Specialist, DOA

In 2023, Julie enhanced the knowledge base of her team, their clients, and leadership by creating and maintaining an inventory of directives and forms while ensuring periodic reports were provided throughout the process. She also organized over 3,000 files in the Directives and Forms shared drive and ensured the files were accessible and organized in compliance with FDIC policy. Julie also contributed to the development and approval of a new Section 508-compliant Corporate Directives template. *(no available image)*

Rakesia Williams, Secretary, RMS

As an Executive Secretary, Rakesia supports the entire Dallas regional management team for RMS and DCP. In 2023 she worked on the region's Quarterly Compliance newsletter; helped train assistants on processing applications, correspondence and exam reports; supported the region's audit function by helping to validate data; supported the Course Oversight Group by updating the Developmental Feedback Form tracking system; and supported the region's Newly Commissioned Examiner Training program.



FDIC Support Services Award – Andrea Hill



FDIC Support Services Award – Rakesia Williams

FDIC Scores with Financial Education at Puerto Rico Sports Camp

By Sonya Weakley
Office of Communications

It isn't every day that the FDIC goes to a football camp. But when the opportunity came up to present a financial education workshop to a captive audience of boys ages 8 to 18, along with their parents, attending Delgado's International Flag Football Camp 2024 in Dorado, Puerto Rico, it offered too many possibilities to ignore.



Atlanta-based United Athletes Foundation Inc., which sponsors youth sports programs under the name Memphis Magic Athletics, had contacted the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI) to ask whether the FDIC would be able to provide financial education as part of the June camp, which



also featured a social justice panel, a vaccination clinic, and former professional football players.

OMWI passed the inquiry to Community Affairs in the Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP), and Lekeshia Frasure, Assistant Director, was intrigued, so she reached out to Ken Worthey, Assistant Director for Consumer Education, DCP, who oversees the Money Smart Financial Education program. Together, they contacted the foundation.

"They wanted a two-hour session on financial literacy and asked if the FDIC could help," Frasure said. "Of course we can. We have our own financial education curriculum, and since part of my staff already is responsible for the Puerto Rico territory, I thought it was a great opportunity to do outreach to the Hispanic community."



The Money Smart program provided hands-on training to the workshop participants through Mark Gonzalez, Senior Consumer Affairs Specialist, Consumer Affairs, DCP, who used the Money Smart curriculum for part of the financial literacy session.

"So, the unusual part here is that we were going straight to the end user, which is something we don't do," Gonzalez said. "We usually provide this to organizations nationwide, mostly banks, and they



Mark Gonzalez, Senior Consumer Affairs Specialist

provide it to their consumers."

He said the participants enjoyed the "How Money Smart Are You?" game and asked a lot of questions. "We made it fun," he said. "And of course, I took the opportunity to provide resource information to the parents and to everybody in attendance."

MONEY SMART AND MORE

The range of ages and interests at the camp, which attracted more than 100 students and their parents, was fitting not only for providing financial education resources, such as the Money Smart curriculum, but also for offering bank account information and conducting recruiting.

"Because economic inclusion is a primary focus for us, I thought it was also a good opportunity for account access, since in Puerto Rico, the unbanked numbers are still really high," Frasure said.

Alexis Luna, Community Affairs Specialist, DCP, New York Region, who coordinated the event, invited Banco Popular, a Money Smart Alliance member that offers a Bank On certified deposit account, to provide account access as well as assist in the financial education sessions.

"They have a foundation within the

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Sports Camp, from page 11

bank that has been operating for decades, providing financial literacy using Money Smart, and they have over 200 employee volunteers. So, we felt like it was a great



fit for this event,” Luna said.

Another institution, Oriental Bank, heard about the event and asked to participate, so their branch staff also provided information to parents about affordable banking products, particularly those that catered to students. “We took the opportunity to make it a bankable moment,” Luna said.

In addition, Corporate Talent Sourcing from the Division of Administration (DOA) provided corporate recruiters from the Division of Risk Management Supervision (RMS) who were already

based in Puerto Rico and who highlighted employment opportunities, including student internships.

The recruiters, Andrea Vega and Enrique Ares, both Financial Institution Examiners, said they enjoyed connecting with the kids. Native to Puerto Rico, it was easy for them to connect and share information about the FDIC.

“It’s a way of giving back to these kids all that we’ve been able to absorb throughout our careers,” Ares said. “And making sure that at least there’s a seed planted in their brains about financial topics, something that is probably lacking in the educational system.”

The event involved pulling together a lot of resources in a short amount of time. “This was truly a collaborative effort,” Luna said.



“It was a win-win on so many fronts,” Frasure said, adding that everyone who participated spoke fluent Spanish.

Even some of the former professional football players who attended the event were impressed. “They asked how they could get more information because a lot of them have foundations,” Frasure said.

And several players echoed the importance of managing money during the workshop. “The students look up to them. So, when they say it, it sticks,” she added.

She said Community Affairs plans to continue working with the United Athletes Foundation to explore other opportunities for collaboration. “What we concluded is that this is something that we would like to move forward with.” 🏦

Juntos FDIC Brings Together FDIC Employees for a Common Cause

By Sonya Weakley

Office of Communications

It started as a proof of concept for how to conduct targeted outreach to quickly raise awareness of the FDIC's Spanish resources among a broad range of the Spanish-speaking community.

Thanks to the 10 FDIC employees from six Offices and Divisions who responded to a request for help, it became a pilot program for conducting a national financial and economic empowerment initiative that resulted in delivering the Money Smart curriculum training in Spanish for the first time.

Juntos FDIC was a year-long FDIC effort aimed at quickly expanding financial education to the U.S. Hispanic population through collaborations with two large organizations that have networks of community-based affiliates across the country.

With the help of the volunteer detailees, who served as "train the trainer" instructors, a four-person team in Consumer and Community Affairs in the Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection (DCP) was able to deliver the FDIC's Money Smart curriculum in both English and Spanish virtually to 217 potential Money Smart trainers from 23 organizations across the country in less than six months.

"We never had the capacity to do it at that level, and we did it in a very short amount of time," said Jackie Steller, Special Assistant to the Deputy Director of Consumer and Community Affairs and project manager of the Juntos FDIC pilot. Liz Ortiz, Deputy Director of Consumer and Community Affairs, was the executive sponsor.

The collateral duty volunteers, seven of whom spoke Spanish, conducted nine training events—five in Spanish and four in English—of 1.5 to 3 hours each. Due to the additional Spanish language capability, it was the first time the Money Smart training was conducted in Spanish, including follow-up meetings and needs assessments.

The local organizations that participated in the training have provided the FDIC's financial resources to consumers in 17 states and Puerto Rico.

GETTING OFF THE GROUND

Juntos FDIC was initiated because Hispanic households are unbanked at a rate that is more than twice the national average and 4.5 times more than white households, according to the 2021 FDIC National Survey of Unbanked and Underbanked Households. Additional research in June 2022 showed that the FDIC's Spanish resources were underutilized due to lack of community awareness.

One of the first efforts to improve Spanish outreach was to work with the Office of Communications to expand the Spanish version of the FDIC website to improve the user experience.

Then the question was what to do next, Steller said. "How can we have a targeted approach of reaching out to Hispanic-serving organizations letting them know about the FDIC's programs and resources, and can we do it in Spanish?"

Steller said the team, which included Sandra Hernandez, Senior Consumer Education Specialist, and a former Community Affairs employee, decided to focus on the three Money Smart products that were already available in Spanish, "Money Smart for Adults," "Money Smart for Small Businesses," and "How Money Smart are You?"

With those products, the outreach would involve engaging partner organizations who have direct access to the Hispanic community and taking a "train the trainer" approach.

The team first forged partnerships with two national organizations serving the Hispanic population, the National Association for Latino Community Asset Builders (NALCAB), which focuses on small businesses, and UNIDOSUS, a large organization with multiple focus areas.

Combined, these organizations have more than 400 community-based affiliates, but the Community Affairs team did not have the capacity to train that many organizations.

"So while we were thinking about how to leverage partners in the community, we knew we needed more



Jackie Steller, Juntos FDIC Team Lead.

capacity to expand our reach, so we partnered with DCP's Administrative Management and Operations Branch to develop an EOI."

The Expression of Interest announcement did not require applicants to speak Spanish, since the curriculum could be taught in English, but Spanish was preferred. "While it would be helpful to have some volunteers who were bilingual, we were looking for participants who wanted to contribute to the community," Steller said.

Steller, Hernandez, Paola Diaz, and David Ramos, Senior Community Affairs Specialists, also engaged the Hispanic Organization for Leadership and Advancement (HOLA), an FDIC-recognized Employee Resource Group (ERG) to help recruit volunteers, in addition to conducting brown-bag lunches with HOLA and other teams in DCP.

HOLA also conducted a poll of its membership to come up with the pilot name, Juntos FDIC, which translates as "Together FDIC." Hernandez led the training of the volunteers, who then delivered the curriculum training themselves. Ramos engaged with the partner organizations to learn how they conduct programs at the local level.

Steller attributed the program's success to being able to harness the

see **Juntos**, page 14

talents of the FDIC volunteers and collaborating across the organization to initiate the pilot.

THE TEAM AND THE VOLUNTEERS

The Juntos FDIC volunteers expressed having an interest in learning about the work of Consumer and Community Affairs and said they enjoyed reaching out directly to the community-based organizations. They also developed a network among themselves and said they found the experience rewarding to be able to work with team members from across the corporation to advance an important FDIC objective.

The entire Juntos FDIC team, including the collateral duty detailees and the Consumer and Community Affairs team:

VOLUNTEER DETAILEES

- Edsson A. Acevedo, Senior Consumer Affairs Specialist, DCP
- Jason P. Ahrenholtz, Chief, Governance and Ops Risk, CISR
- Wilbert (Will) Castillo, Internal Review Specialist, DRR/Dallas
- Rachel M. Herbst, Program Manager, Insider Risk Operations, OCISO
- Rick Ho, Senior Capital Markets Specialist, DRR
- Carlos J. Irizarry, Resolutions and Receiverships Specialist, DRR
- Alberto Navarrete, Consumer Affairs Specialist, DCP/Chicago
- Ryan M. Rappa, Deputy To The Director (Appointive), Legal

- Estefania Sasone, Acting Supervisory Examiner – Detailee, DCP/Dallas
- Sasha E. Willis, Management Analyst, DIR

CONSUMER AND COMMUNITY AFFAIRS TEAM LEADS

- Jackie Steller, Special Assistant to the Deputy Director of Consumer and Community Affairs
- Sandra Hernandez, Senior Consumer Education Specialist
- David Ramos, Senior Community Affairs Specialist
- Paola Diaz, Senior Community Affairs Specialist

Below, several of the team members provide their thoughts on the experience. 🏠

It was great to be part of a program that touches outside the FDIC. My work is very internally focused. We protect banks and help ensure they don't fail, but it's nice to have a better understanding of how FDIC works within communities. – **Sasha Willis**



Working with Hispanic and multi-cultural organizations was nice to see in government. It was nice to hear these groups really enjoy seeing the material we were presenting and engage with it. They would ask questions about presenting to certain demographics and if there would be more webinars to continue learning.

– **Edsson Acevedo**

The Juntos FDIC program allowed me to contribute to FDIC's consumer protection mission through financial literacy targeted for the minority and immigrant population. I also developed valuable relationships with colleagues outside my Division and had lots of fun working with them throughout the program. – **Rick Ho**





Working on Juntos FDIC was a fantastic opportunity. Not only were we able to collaborate with colleagues across Divisions to develop financial education for consumers, but we also met part of the FDIC's strategic goal for economic inclusion through the implementation of the FDIC Economic Inclusion Strategic Plan. Juntos provided a sense of pride, knowing that what we created would help provide financial education to others in low-income neighborhoods like the one I grew up in and serviced during my banking career. – **Will Castillo**

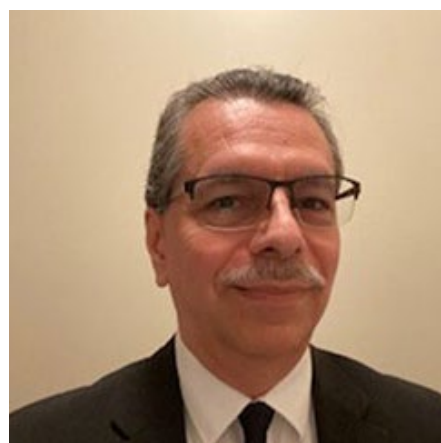
I had two goals—working to further support the FDIC's financial education programs and also to help with Hispanic serving organizations. Juntos met both.
– **Jason Ahrenholtz**



Juntos FDIC gave me the opportunity to be part of a unique program that was a first for the FDIC. Through our great team effort, we were able to reach out to the Hispanic community to help give the message that the FDIC offers more than insuring deposits and examining banks. Thanks to our efforts, more people were able to discover and use the valuable consumer protection and financial education resources the FDIC offers in Spanish. – **Alberto Navarrete**



I am extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to contribute to the Juntos FDIC pilot. It was one of the most rewarding projects I have been involved with, professionally and personally. Non-profit organizations, universities, schools and community banks across the nation are in search of programs like Juntos FDIC to help them connect to and support the communities they serve. While I saw firsthand what the pilot achieved in a short period of time, I've learned there is still much work to be done for the Hispanic and Latino communities. – **Carlos Irizarry**



Juntos, from page 15

At an early age I was responsible for helping my parents navigate the U.S. financial system as the primary English speaker in our family. The Juntos FDIC project resonated with me and thanks to our leadership's support, colleagues from across the organization came together and we made the pilot happen. Juntos can be replicated for many underserved communities, and I loved the inclusiveness of the effort. Several of our volunteers were not Spanish speaking or of Hispanic/Latino backgrounds, but they shared in the interest of wanting to do more for underserved communities and using our roles at the FDIC to show up for them. – **Jackie Steller**



Being a part of Juntos FDIC allowed for a great opportunity to support and foster positive banking relationships within underserved Hispanic Communities. Even more rewarding was the ability to work with team members from across the corporation that all share the same passion and positivity. – **Estefania Sasone**

I am so impressed to see how Juntos FDIC expanded FDIC's outreach and train the trainer capabilities both in English and Spanish. The support, dedication, and passion of our detailees was remarkable. I am incredibly proud of the team's commitment and the success stories that have emerged from this effort. "Juntos" means "Together" and that is exactly how we have made a lasting impact in the lives of many Hispanic communities who have been financially empowered through the programs deployed by the organizations participating in the pilot. – **Sandra Hernandez**



The Juntos FDIC pilot provided an opportunity to contribute to the important work of many great organizations helping advance opportunities for Spanish-speaking communities across the nation. The families that the financial education programs are designed to reach reflect my own family as we benefited from such programs. The organizations we impacted offer a hand-up, which is different from a hand-out. We all have benefited from a hand-up at one point in our life! For this reason, I walked away with a great sense of accomplishment knowing that Juntos made a difference in many households. – **David Ramos**

Hispanic Heritage Month Event Highlights Pioneering Change

By Sonya Weakley

Office of Communications

During the FDIC's observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, featured speaker Glorimar Maldonado shared her thoughts on building relationships, networks, and communities from her experiences across a number of federal positions focusing on advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA).

Maldonado, Diversity Program Manager for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, spoke on October 9, 2024, at the Hove Auditorium on the FDIC's Virginia Square campus as part of the Diversity and Inclusion Education Series sponsored by the Office of Minority and Women Inclusion (OMWI).

Expanding on the theme, "Pioneers of Change: Shaping the Future Together," Maldonado emphasized the importance of first knowing oneself and then building relationships as the foundation for advocating for change.

"At the heart of DEIA is relationships—building them, strengthening them, establishing them, amplifying them," she said. "Relationships are where you get to the heart of someone. You get past the stereotypes, the assumptions, the myths, to the facts, to the story."

She advocated learning about the achievements of pioneers in the area of DEIA, and using those stories as inspiration.

"Are you inspired to make your organization, your business unit, your division, your branch, your brand better than how you found it? Are you willing to take a risk and try new things? What's the worst that can happen? It doesn't work out. But you don't know until you try," she said. "Find folks to be inspired by."

She also highlighted Hispanic trailblazers. "If Guillermo Camarena had not tried to invent the chromoscope, we would not have color television today."

She added the being a problem solver involves looking for problems. "We need to find what's wrong. We need to find the red flags and the pain points in order to improve something. If we're never talking about those things, nothing will ever get better."



Brian Guy, Senior Deputy Director, OMWI; Joel Eguiluz, Special Emphasis Program Advisor, OMWI; Glorimar Maldonado; Jill Oliver, Senior Risk Officer, DCP

She described herself as always asking why. "Being a problem finder means you have to be intellectually curious... constantly thinking about how do I change this to make it better? Questioning conventional wisdom," she said. "It is extremely uncomfortable when you're the only one in the room asking why or why not. I do it anyway."

However, she said no one can effect major change alone. "Building alliances is absolutely crucial to being a pioneer and a trailblazer. No person is an island. Collaboration and partnership are absolutely essential to getting stuff done. You have to work across boundaries."

She encouraged the audience to know their networks and their communities. "I encourage you to get a piece of paper and draw your network. If you don't know who's in your corner, that's a great way to find out. Because you will need people to call on."

A native of Puerto Rico, she said it wasn't until she got into federal service that she started to learn about her own community. Working in an agency of about 4,000 people, she could find only four of Hispanic heritage across the agency. "I remember one day looking around like, why don't more people look like me? Why am I having to hunt for other Latinos?"

Her curiosity led to a position with the White House Initiative on Advancing Educational Equity, Excellence, and

Economic Opportunity for Hispanics, where she learned about grassroots movements and minority-serving institutions and made connections across the country with Latino organizations.

"You have to know your community. Find a group within your agency with whom you identify, with whom you have an affinity. You can get your support and your nurturing and empowering from your own community."

Cross-pollinating with another community, however, is the path to positive change, she said. "I encourage you to join an employee organization with which you do not identify. You don't have a clue about their history, about their traditions, about their language, about anything. Join them."

"We all have shared challenges," she continued. "We all have shared mountains that we have to climb. So why aren't we sharing resources and best practices across those boundaries? If we have the same challenges, we should be working together."

While there is a lot of work to do within one community, much more could be done if communities help each other. "You can become an informed ally, a powerful ally, and then teach others to do that. We need more of that."

see **Hispanic Heritage**, page 18

Hispanic Heritage, from page 17

She also stressed the importance of resilience. “I don’t know of any pioneer, any trailblazer that did not get knocked down and have to pick themselves back up again.”

Trailblazers do what they need to do to make something better than they

found it. They also grow themselves. “Even if nobody else recognizes your achievements, you can recognize your own. So, I would encourage you all to be proud of what you’ve achieved today.”

In her own career, Maldonado said she was grateful to mentors who took

the time to develop the potential they saw in her, and this is what she tries to do with others. “The only thing I can do is provide you the information. You’ve got to be brave enough to take up that mantle yourself.” 🏠

FDIC Employees Support Feds Feed Families Campaign

By Joleen Macek

Employee Life & Career Development

For the 13th year, FDIC employees stepped up to participate in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA’s) Feds Feed Families campaign, donating 17,714 pounds of food to local food banks over a three-week period, which closed on September 30.

According to [Feeding America](#), this amount of food equals approximately 14,762 meals, which are desperately needed across America.

In 2023, 47.4 million people—about 13.5 percent of households—in the United States were living in food-insecure households. Of those, 14 million were children. The USDA defines “food insecurity” as when people don’t have enough to eat and don’t know where their next meal will come from.

Since Feds Feed Families launched in 2009, the campaign has collected more than 107 million pounds of food for donation. All employees of the federal government are welcome to participate.

Robyn Poole, Chief, Employee Life & Career Development (ELCD), served as the Chair for the FDIC’s 2024 campaign. The campaign wouldn’t have been successful if not for the support and efforts of the Feds Feed Families Champions.

2024 FEDS FEED FAMILIES CAMPAIGN CHAMPIONS

Headquarters

- Robyn Poole, Chief, Employee Life & Career Development; Chair
- Joleen Macek, Lead Human Resources Specialist; Lead Champion



Gregory Menchan, Feds Feed Families champion, Atlanta

- Sandra Toussaint, Contractor, Employee Life & Career Development; Champion

Atlanta

- Gregory Menchan, Support Services Specialist

Chicago

- Lynn Piraino, Facilities Operations Specialist

Dallas

- Betty Crane, Facilities Operations Specialist

Kansas City

- John Strickert, Support Services Specialist
- Jill Nichols, Facilities Operations Specialist

New York/Boston

- Michael Brady, Support Services Specialist

San Francisco

- Susan Stampfel, Facilities Operations Specialist

While this year’s campaign has ended, employees can continue to support local food banks through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) or independently. ELCD extends gratitude to those who donated as well as to the campaign champions. 🏠

Briefs

FDIC Podcast: Why Money Smart Matters

October 8, 2024

In our latest episode of the [FDIC Podcast](#), we explore the growing demand for financial education with Peggi Gill and Ken Worthey who lead the [FDIC's Money Smart Financial Education Program](#).



Tune in to hear about teaching 'money smarts' to consumers of all ages...and the curriculum the FDIC offers to help spread financial education to students and teachers.

View the FDIC Board of Directors September Meeting

October 11, 2024

The FDIC Board of Directors will meet at 10 a.m. on October 17, 2024, at FDIC Headquarters in Washington, DC. Employees may [view the agenda](#) and are invited to [view the live webcast](#) of the meeting. Those needing auxiliary aids (e.g., sign language interpretation) for this meeting should email DisabilityProgram@fdic.gov.

The FDIC's Advisory Committee on Community Banking Meets November 7

November 1, 2024

Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC) Chairman Martin J. Gruenberg will host a meeting of the FDIC's Advisory Committee on Community Banking on Thursday, November 7, at 9 a.m., at the FDIC's Washington DC headquarters. The [meeting's agenda](#) includes a discussion of banking conditions, information regarding the Deposit Insurance Fund and small business lending, and various supervisory policy issues. 🏠

Moving On

Name: Karen L. Olson

Most recent position: Compliance Examiner

Division / Office: Division of Depositor and Consumer Protection

Location: Fargo, ND

When and where joined the FDIC:

I joined the FDIC as a Mid-Career Compliance Examiner in the Grand Forks, ND office on July 9, 2007.

Other experience: For many years prior to joining the FDIC, I was a community banker.

Career highlights: My assigned examination territory included the states of ND, MN, and SD. However, having a broad banking background I was also

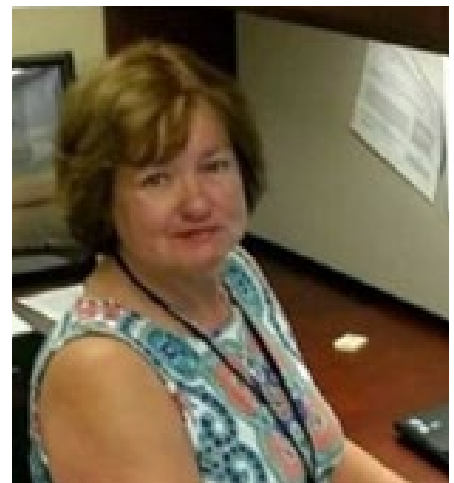
sent to work on examinations in AL, GA, IA KS, MA, MT, NE (3) OH, PA (4), WA (2), and WY. Additionally, I was assigned to extended details in Chicago, San Francisco, Kansas City, and Dallas.

Retirement date: October 18, 2024

Plans for retirement: Disney Land!

Spending more time with my grandkids and other family. After a break, I will likely look for work!

Comments and thoughts: It was an honor to have been a representative for the FDIC. I worked with numerous excellent co-workers and made a number of lasting friendships with "my" bankers. 🏠



Karen L. Olson

Moving On, *cont.*

Name: Carolyn Tipton

Most recent position: Senior Facilities Operations Specialist

Division / Office: Division of Administration/Corporate Services Branch

Location: Dallas Regional Office

When and where joined the FDIC:

I joined the FDIC in March of 1990 as the Unit Chief/Facilities in the Addison Consolidated Office (ACO) as a Liquidated Graded (LG) employee. LG personnel were on 12 month "Temporary" appointments. This timeframe was during the height of the Savings and Loan crisis and FDIC was opening a number of Consolidated Offices throughout the country. The largest number of these offices was in Texas which experienced the highest number of financial institution failures during this financial crisis.

Other experience: At this time, the Facilities Unit was a part of the then Division of Liquidation (DOL). ACO Facilities staff provided all of the onsite support for bank closings in the North Texas area. One or even two closings per week were a common occurrence during these early years. In addition to bank closing support, the ACO Facilities Unit provided onsite mail and copy services, offices supplies, in-house relocations, security services, receptionist/switch-board services and even telephone switch administration/programming and telephone relocations. The ACO was having to expand so rapidly that the first Friday night of my employment saw the first of many office expansions/internal moves when I managed the relocation of the Division of Accounting Services (DACS) group to their new offices on a different floor.

Within a couple of years, the Addison Consolidated Office merged with the Dallas Consolidated Office (DCO), a former Federal Savings and Loan Corporation (FSLIC) office. My ACO Facilities Unit combined with the DCO Facilities Section for a total staff of 17. The combined offices eventually became the Southwest Service Center (SSC) and our DCO Facilities Section continued to support bank closing activity as well as providing all of the operational support and services to the

much larger SSC. As the Unit Chief/Space Planning, I prepared all of the initial floor plan designs for the expansion/reconfiguration of the Southwest Service Center as well as coordinated all of the logistics and schedules for multiple internal moves and relocations between the Service Center, the Inwood Warehouse Records Management Center and a third temporary offsite location to house Documentation and the Investigations sections. As the S&L financial crisis began to wind down, DCO Facilities also helped with the closure of and relocation of records and furniture from all remaining consolidated offices in Texas, Oklahoma City and Bossier City.

During this time, the Division of Administration (DOA) was created and the DCO Facilities Section moved under DOA. A number of "permanent" positions were posted and I was fortunate to obtain one of these positions as a Facilities Operations Specialist in the Dallas Regional Office located in Downtown Dallas.

Over the subsequent years, as the Facilities Section evolved into the Corporate Services Branch, I held a variety of positions – from Facilities Operations Specialist and Section Chief/Support Services to Senior Leasing Specialist and Senior Facilities Operations Specialist. I performed numerous functions, providing oversight, direction of and technical support for all areas of CSB Support Services in the Dallas Regional office.

As the CSB Budget Coordinator for over 20 years, I monitored all overall CSB/Dallas expenses, reviewed all CSB initiated Procurement Requisitions and P-card statements for coding accuracy and funding availability and initiated all Expense Adjustments to correct coding errors. I also prepared the CSB annual budget submittal package each year for submission to DC. I was also the Oversight Manager or Technical Monitor for numerous local, regional and even national DOA contracts including copier equipment and copy services, Regional beverage services, interagency agreement to provide temporary clerical assistance to DOA, mail equipment maintenance/services, office supplies, Express Mail Services, the FDIC commercial real estate broker contract, and the national voice/data contract.



Carolyn Tipton

In addition, I provided direction/administration of leases, building operations and facilities services programs for up to 15 RMS/DCP field offices and one OIG satellite office. At one time, I coordinated and managed all new Field Office site searches and leasing activity. This activity included developing preliminary space requirements (using confirmed staffing numbers and current Field Office space guidelines) and developing market surveys. Also, analyzing market/real estate information, conducting site visits of prospective properties, preparing cost analyses of proposals, making the final determination/recommendations on prospective sites, preparing lease cases and project cost estimate, and, upon approval of lease case, conducting all aspects of the final lease negotiations in conjunction with the appropriate Legal representatives.

Upon execution of the lease, I coordinated all space planning and design for the new site, working with the Landlord and their architect to develop construction plans and the build out schedule. Oversaw all aspects of the project from developing the relocation logistics, new furniture procurements, moving services, voice/data cabling, telecommunications hardware, and final removal of any excess furniture items.

Career Highlights: Looking back on my service as a "Leasing Specialist", the fact that I initiated and coordinated up to 40 Field Office and Memphis Area Office

see Tipton, page 21

Moving On, *cont.*

Tipton, *from page 20*

leasing/downsizing/reconfiguration/closure actions from the very beginning until the end is one of my career highlights. Another highlight was serving as the Oversight Manager for four DOA National Support Services contracts over the past 17 years. These contracts ensured DOA in Headquarters and all Regional/Area offices could provide all essential operational services and support to all of our customers. Over the years, these contracts included up to 100 or more contractors in multiple locations throughout the corporation.

Retirement date: September 30, 2024

Plans for retirement: Relocating to Arlington Heights, IL to be closer to both of my daughters and son-in-law who all live in Chicago. Also, start checking off some of those “bucket list” trips I’ve always wanted to do. We are definitely a “Disney” family; so will finally be able to start making more of those family trips again. And believe me, you do not need to be a “kid” to enjoy Walt Disney World.

Comments and thoughts: I never expected to make working for FDIC my lifelong career. Or that I would be fortunate to spend that entire career in Dallas. I have had so many great

experiences on this roller coaster ride that has been the FDIC. I’ve also been blessed to get to work with so many wonderful people across all divisional lines over the years. Finally, to repeat something I’ve often said before—I sincerely cannot think of a single day in the past 34+ years when I went home and either told my family or thought to myself what a boring day I had had at work. Not many people are that fortunate. I’m truly going to miss FDIC and all of my amazing coworkers so very much and want to send best wishes to all for continued success at FDIC, both today and in the future. 🏠