



TOWNtalk

NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 6 • JUNE 2023

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On the Front Burner

I wanted to take a moment to provide an update on our pay and healthcare plan changes for next fiscal year.

As I shared last week, the Town Council approved the FY 2024 budget on June 7th. The budget includes a 5% of market rate increase for eligible employees. In addition, we have set aside funding to help us continue to be responsive to the findings from the ongoing Compensation and Classification Study, to provide language incentive pay, to begin building other incentives, and to undertake a progression system for many Town positions.

Pay Increase: FY 2023–24 Adopted Budget

The FY 2023–24 adopted budget includes a pay increase of 5% of the market rate for every pay grade. This increase will be effective with the July 14, 2023 payroll for all regular full-time and part-time employees who are employed before June 26, 2023. View a table which indicates what the 5% pay increase will be for each grade at bit.ly/3XaYNbd.

Regular full-time and part-time staff employed before June 26, 2023 will receive a 5% of the market rate of pay grade increase on the July 14th payroll.

Temporary and Program Support staff: Program Support employees, except for those who are limited by funding such as Internships, Summer Youth, etc., will receive a 5% increase to their hourly rate in July. Please speak with your department if you have any questions regarding your position's eligibility.



Healthcare Plan Changes

The FY 2023-24 budget includes a 2% decrease in healthcare costs which means that employees who have dependent care coverage will see a decrease in their share of the deduction that begins on the August 11, 2023 paycheck. This is great news for the Town and for our employees.

There were no other changes made to the Town's benefit package.

Compensation and Classification Study

The adopted budget for FY 2024 also includes \$400,000 to be continue to be responsive to the Compensation and Classification Study, to provide language incentive pay and to consider other incentives, and to begin building a progression system for many Town positions.

If you have any questions about the information provided above, please contact the Town's payroll office at payroll@townofchapelhill.org or your Human Resource Development Partner.

And as always, thank you for the excellent work you do for our community every single day.



Check out the new storm drain murals at Town Hall! This one was created by local artist Alice Holloman. See p 2 for more.

New Storm Drain Murals at Town Hall

Two local artists recently created nature-themed storm drain murals in front of Town Hall. This is part of an ongoing collaboration between Stormwater and Community Arts & Culture to creatively illuminate how storm drains connect with our local waterways.

"Storm drains are totally separate from the regular sewer system," explains Sammy Bauer, Community Education Coordinator for Stormwater. "When it rains, the water that goes into these storm drains flows to Jordan Lake through our rivers and streams, and these murals invite people to consider our water system and the downstream impacts of our actions."

Storm drain murals have also recently been added at the Airport Gardens Housing Community and along Rosemary Street. To learn more about this project, read [the press release](#) and visit chapellhillarts.org/murals.

The storm drain mural next to Town Hall on North Columbia Street (pictured) was painted by local artist Jesse White. The message "Protect, don't pollute: this drain leads to a creek" appears alongside images of local wildlife.



Transit Operators Bring Home Awards!

Transit operators test their skills in the Transit Roadeo, which requires contestants to maneuver through a timed course, negotiating obstacles that simulate the challenges they face daily.

The NC Public Transportation Roadeo was held in Concord in April. The Chapel Hill Transit team brought home some serious hardware competing against the best of the best from around the state:

1st Place Bus: Individual: Ricky Hunter

2nd Place LTV: Team: Tasha Harrington, Amanda Webb, and Phillip Laney

2nd Place Bus: Team: Ricky Hunter, Reginald Pasant, and Scott Gilliam

Our team members also managed the course and judged. Chapel Hill Transit demonstrated professionalism, teamwork and responsibility and showed that they are indeed the best of the best!



Congratulations to Transit Operators who qualified to participate in the State Transit Roadeo by placing in the Chapel Hill Transit Roadeo on June 3.

Bus Category:

First Place: Ricky Hunter

Second Place: Scott Gilliam

Third Place: Keica Hargraves

Rookie of the Year: David Denmark

LTV Category:

First Place: Amanda Webb

Second Place: Chance Benton

Third Place: Phillip Laney

A special thank you to Town Manager Chris Blue for helping with the awards ceremony. And, a huge THANK YOU to all the Transit Team members who volunteered to serve as judges.



Communications Team Receives Excellence Awards

North Carolina City & County Communicators (NC3C) recognized the Town with three Excellence in Communications awards at its Annual Conference in Wilmington in May.

Celebrating Successes (1st Place: Video, Special Programming) features 36 Town employees in a celebration of accomplishments from 2022.

Watch the video: youtu.be/91hJ5qhnuLY

Crisis/Emergency Public Information Plan (2nd Place: Crisis Communication) gives anyone who is tasked with sharing public information during a crisis or emergency a consistent set of tools, so we don't miss a beat in the face of disaster.

Let's Talk Town (2nd Place: Citizen Participation) sought to give community members an easier way to bring issues to the Town's attention and give input on particular topics.



Briefs

Cheonna Boyd (Transit) has been promoted to Lead Supervisor. She will oversee day to day operations for the Fixed Route and Demand Response Divisions. Cheonna began her career with the Chapel Hill Transit in 2014 as an Operations Supervisor. She has been working in the Transit industry for around 18 years and holds an Associates Degree in Business Administration.

Congratulations to **Atuya Cornwell** (Parks and Recreation) for passing the Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE) exam in March. The CPRE establishes a national standard for managerial, administrative, and executive parks and recreation professionals. The mastery-level credential focuses on the practical knowledge and real-world skills necessary in today's changing park and recreation environment.

Bobbiette Glover

(Transit) has been promoted to Administrative Analyst. In her new role, she will manage Transit procurement, purchasing and contracting activities. Bobbiette's experience and passion for community service will make her a great asset to this position.



Bobbiette is a member of Ebony Anglers, an all-Black, all-female competitive fishing team (ebonyanglers.com). One of the team's most important goals is teaching children to enjoy the sport. They started the groups Black Girls Fish and Black Boys Boat and are also launching camps for kids. Read more: ourstate.com/good-day-sunshine-north-carolinas-ebony-anglers

Anthony Pascuzzo (Public Works), our new Occupational Health and Safety Officer, started with the town in March. Anthony has nine years of occupational safety experience. He will be connecting with departments throughout the town to support employee and workplace safety.

A few current projects that Anthony is coordinating are the CDL Driver Training Program for Public Works and Parks and Recreation Maintenance CDL drivers and starting a process for updating chemical inventories and safety data sheets (SDS) for departments.

Chapel Hill Transit has positions available. If you love working for the Town and know a candidate, please share our information with them. We are looking for bus operators, mechanics, service lane attendants, and interns. Ideal candidates are reliable, customer service focused, and prioritize safety. Candidates for bus operators do not need experience and will receive paid training.

New Director for Parks and Recreation

After a national recruitment effort and a competitive selection process, Interim Town Manager Chris Blue has selected Atuya Cornwell as the Town's next Parks and Recreation Director.

"I am thrilled that Atuya has accepted the offer to serve as our next Director of Parks and Recreation," said Mr. Blue. "In his time with the Town, he has proven to be a collaborative and enthusiastic colleague and I cannot wait to see what he and the Parks and Recreation team will accomplish

together under his leadership."

Atuya started with the Town on April 4, 2022, as assistant director, and stepped into the interim director position on November 30, 2022. His career spans nearly 20 years within public sector recreation and athletic operations, programming, and management roles. He is a nationally Certified Park and Recreation Executive (CPRE) and has been recognized by the National Recreation and Park Association with several awards and

scholarships.

A native of Charlotte, Atuya holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Exercise and Sports Science from UNC-Greensboro and a Master of Business Administration degree with a concentration in government services from Pfeiffer University.



New Fire Chief

Interim Town Manager Chris Blue has appointed Jay Mebane as the Chapel Hill Fire Department's new fire chief effective July 3, 2023.

"I am honored to be selected to serve as the next fire chief for the Town of Chapel Hill," Jay said. "I am looking forward to building on the legacy that was established by the great fire chiefs prior to my appointment. We are committed to providing an exceptional level of

service and understand the level of trust and honor that is bestowed upon us as firefighters."

Jay currently serves as fire chief for the City of Burlington's Fire Department. His career began more than 15 years ago at the City of Burlington. He is a native of Burlington and holds an associate degree from Durham Technical Community College, a bachelor's degree from Fayetteville State University, and is a

2022 Master of Public Affairs (MPA) degree graduate at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro.

Jay has completed numerous other leadership and fire service certifications.



Chapel Hill Celebrates Small Town Pride

We're excited to celebrate the diversity and openness of Chapel Hill with Small Town Pride for the third year in a row!

We would love for you and your friends and family to join us at events planned this month. We'll wrap up Pride activities with Pride Dance Party and Food Truck Rodeo in Carrboro.

LGBTQIA+ Virtual Book Club

Thursday, June 29 | 12 p.m.

- We're reading *This Book Is Gay* by Juno Dawson.
- The book is available through Chapel Hill Public Library or Flyleaf Books.
- You can still attend even if you haven't finished the book!
- No book club experience required. This book club is open to all queer employees and allies.
- Email LGBTQ+ Resource Group at lgbtqerg@townofchapelhill.org to be added to the teams invite.

Pride Piper Walk

Friday, June 30 | 4:30 p.m.

- Meet at the Carrboro Century Center at 4:15 p.m.
- Join local officials and the Bulltown Strutters to help roll "Rainbow Ram" down Weaver Street from the Century Center to Town Commons for the Pride Food Truck Rodeo & Dance Party.



Pride Food Truck Rodeo & Dance Party

Friday, June 30 | 5-8 p.m.

- Join for food, dance, and frolicking on the lawn at Carrboro Town Commons (301 W. Main St.). More information at townofcarrboro.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=2429

If you have any questions, contact

Matthew DeBellis.

mdebllis@townofchapelhill.org

Ombuds Corner

I recently spent a week in bed isolating with a second bout of what my grandson calls "the covid." I was pretty sick for four days and so I entered a world of enforced silence. I didn't know what time it was. I didn't know anything about world events. I didn't check my email. I didn't answer my phone. I didn't watch Netflix or listen to podcasts. My husband was sick too, so I didn't even talk to him, other than two quick FaceTime check-ins to be sure he was still alive up there on the third floor.

The room where I was camping out was on our ground floor. It has huge windows where the sun streams in and the wildlife around our house puts on a wonderful display. I watched deer on their daily walkabout, tramping through the woods in front of our house; two

woodpeckers spending at least an hour trying to establish just which one of them was the master of 'that' tree; baby squirrels emerging from their nests; dragonflies flitting about, and birds endlessly chattering and singing and dancing to each other.

Though I was sick, this interlude was a gift to my soul. It reminded me of the value of silence and the healing power of nature. It's so easy for me to get caught up in the doing, the busy, the work, the worry, and the expectations I put on myself.

That four days in bed healed more than 'the covid' for me. It reminded me that I am part of a larger whole. It allowed my mind, as well as my body, to rest and reflect on the goodness of life.

I'm planning to make quiet, outdoor



meditation part of my personal self-care plan in the future. As the weather gets warmer, I encourage you to turn off the electronics and spend some time each week outdoors, listening to the sounds of silence and enjoying our beautiful world. You might be surprised at how good it makes you feel.

Contact the Ombuds at abadrock@townofchapelhill.org or 919-260-3153. All communication is confidential.

—Anita Badrock, Ombuds

Compliments

Anthony Santana (Transit) was commended by Jesse A. Baldwin for being thoughtful, responsible, and alert. "Earlier this week I left the traffic circle at Estes and Greensboro, and witnessed a rather charming scene. A city bus headed south was stopped to unload scores of youth, evidently the McDougal boys tennis team. ... The bus driver had stopped many cars in both directions, but after he returned to the bus he emerged with a tennis racket and held it in the air so it could be reunited with its rightful owner, an appreciative young man who walked over to retrieve it from the thoughtful driver."

Huong Kratochvil commended **Christina Riddick** (Transit), a driver on the G route, for being on time, professional, and a careful driver. "[Christina] is ABSOLUTELY STELLAR! ...She deserves a lot of praise! I couldn't ask for a better bus driver in the morning."

Josh Davis (Transit) was complimented by Vicki Hamby. "My friends and I ride every morning and he is always so friendly and quick to offer help putting the seats up for our stroller! Chapel Hill transit has an awesome crew thanks y'all!"

Anna Jefferson commended Transit operators for being kind and helpful. F bus morning operator **Tracy Mabinton** is welcoming and friendly to her toddler. **Charles Hatcher** helped to make her toddler's first bus ride a special experience by driving them to the bus depot after the last stop on their route.



Habitat for Humanity of Orange County, NC
@orangehabitat

It was so great to host @chapelhillgov Housing and Community Connections department at Gattis Court last Friday! The Town has invested \$200k in this community which will soon be home to four families in the historic Northside Neighborhood.



Reggie Mebane (Housing) thanked **Gary Beneville** (Police) for finding his wallet in the Chick-fil-A parking lot and taking the time to return it.

Lisa Earle from the Seymour Center stopped by to thank everyone who participated in the Meditation with a Cop.

Elizabeth Houghton thanked **Sammy Bauer** (Stormwater) and **Steve Wright** (Community Arts and Culture) for their leadership, creativity, and coordination in bringing colorful storm drain murals to Chapel Hill. This is a lovely way to educate our community about the local water system, reduce pollution, and bring unexpected beauty to public spaces.

Janet Whitesides thanked street resurfacing crews for getting the job done quickly and efficiently. "I forgot to move my car out of my drive before they started the scraping work and assumed I wouldn't be able to drive for a couple of days. By the same afternoon, I could get out and about."

Town Staff Recognized at Golden Modes Event

At the annual regional Golden Modes event on June 8, recognitions and awards were presented for outstanding commute efforts.

The Town has worked on alternative modes of transportation since 1991 with the Go Chapel Hill program. To learn more, contact Len Cone at lccone@townofchapelhill.org or visit GoChapelHill.org.

Golden Mode Rising Stars

Jay Paskins, Ian Baltutis

New Coin Recipients

Sally Warther Shader – Silver Level
Lisa Baaske – Bronze Level

Coin Recipients: Chase Barnard, Natalie Bontrager, Cori Breslauer, Carla Burnette, Lisa Dailey, Pinal Depani, Rachel Gaylord-Miles, Anya Grahn-Federmack, Walker Harrison, Tina Love, Deb MacDonald, Josh Martin, Dave Milkereit, Mansir Petrie, Jennifer Reed, Lauren Ryan, Samantha Slayer, Sabrina Smith, Stephanie Smith, Shelley Stewart, Michael Sudol, Pat Tyler, Anna Whichard, Liza Wick



Dylan Horne, Town Traffic Engineer and Across America Cyclist, provided music for the Golden Modes.

Celebrating Our Public Works Team

The Public Works Day Celebration was held on May 25 to recognize National Public Works Week. Municipalities across the country celebrate this occasion annually, and the theme this year was "Connecting the World". This relates to the wide range of skillsets used in infrastructure projects, health and safety, extreme weather resilience, and other crucial services—and since these duties are largely universal, the scope of this work has global significance. Hats off to all Public Works employees!





wellness @ work

UNC HEALTH | FAMILY MEDICINE

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

Who Will Win \$100?

Thank you all for participating in the 2023 Health Risk Assessment Drive! 98% of employees completed their HRAs!

Now, a chance to win a \$100 gift card! Please take a moment to complete the Annual Employee Interest Survey by Friday, June 30. Your feedback helps Wellness@Work bring programming and services that YOU want to see!

Complete the survey at:
unc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5d2BN9SiVFVAfmC

Summer Book Club

Join fellow employees at 2 p.m. on June 29 on Zoom to discuss the book Creativity, Inc., by Ed Catmull, co-founder of Pixar. More information at chapelhillwellnessatwork.org. To sign up, contact Liska Lackey: llackey@email.unc.edu or 919-968-2796.

Save the Date: Wellness@Work is coordinating a Town of Chapel Hill Team to participate in the St. Jude's Walk/Run on Sept. 16. More details coming soon! Check for updates: chapelhillwellnessatwork.org.



Share Your Favorite Recipes!

Does your chili set hearts on fire? Are your cupcakes to die for? Here is a new way to showcase your most coveted recipes and favorite foods. Wellness at Work is collecting recipes for an employee cookbook, and we are seeking your input of your favorite recipes!

Submit the name of your dish, what it means to you, and ingredients and instructions to Natalia Adamson (natalia.adamson@unchealth.unc.edu).

Mental Health First Aid Program

The Town now has 50 certified Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Responders!

Mental Health First Aid is an evidence-based program that teaches people how to identify, understand, and respond to the signs and symptoms of mental stresses in their families, friends and colleagues. The Town first rolled out this certification program in October 2022, and we now have more than 50 Town employees who are certified Mental Health First Aid responders.

Here are two stories of how this program has already been a help to our employees.

One employee realized while taking the class that they were exhibiting some increasing signs of mental stress and that they were not doing well. They reached out to another MHFA-trained employee, who helped them talk through their situation. As a result, the employee sought out appropriate resources to assist them, and is doing better.

Another employee said the class

helped her talk to a family member who was behaving strangely. The family member admitted they needed help for substance use. The family member is receiving help.

These are only two of the many stories we have already heard about how Mental Health First Aid is making a difference in our workplace. Additional training opportunities are on the way—stay tuned!

For more information contact:
Anita Badrock, Ombuds, 919-260-3153
abadrock@townofchapelhill.org

Lauren Ryan, Instructor
lryan@townofchapelhill.org

MaryLee Tyndall, Instructor
mtyndall@townofchapelhill.org
www.townofchapelhill.org/mhfa



Mental Health
FIRST AID

from NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR
MENTAL WELLBEING

Congratulations Spring Into Action Participants!

We made it there and back! With more than 45 people and 5 teams participating, we had a total of 12,213,458 steps! Or a total of 6,106 miles! That is more than enough miles to get to Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, then to Santa Monica, California on Route 66 AND back to Chapel Hill! AMAZING!

The winning team is the Hotsteppers, with an average of 368,634 steps! In addition to bragging rights, the Hotsteppers will be treated to lunch!



The Hotsteppers: (front, l-r) Cliff Turner, LaTonya McNair, (back, l-r) Chris Kearns, Robert Pruitt, Roland Falana and Chris Covington (not pictured: Chris Blue, Maurice Jackson, Ann Anderson, Judy Johnson, and Loryn Clark)

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info@townofchapelhill.org or (919) 968-2743

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