



Employee of the Month Winners 2016

Ellen Pinder - October 2016



On October 6, 2016, Charlotte County opened a host shelter for east coast evacuees fleeing from Hurricane Matthew. The shelter was opened at the Harold Avenue Recreation Center and was managed by county staff and CERT volunteers. The shelter would be opened to all evacuees, including those with pets. Although everyone involved represented Charlotte County in an exemplary manner, Ellen Pinder and Reannon Juergensen went far beyond to make the shelter possible. Ellen began planning for the shelter at 10:00am by conducting a call down of the county Community Emergency Response Team volunteers, a program that she manages, and asking for volunteers. Once sufficient volunteers were secured, Ellen went to the Rec Center to prepare the site to receive evacuees. Ellen developed a check-in procedure for the evacuees, secured

cots from the Health Department, coordinated the responsibilities of staff and volunteers, and managed the shelter until closing at 8:00am the next morning, and then insured that the facility was cleaned and returned to its normal function. In total, Ellen worked nearly 24 hours, feeling the responsibility to do so as the CERT program manager and the shelter opening being unprecedented in Charlotte County.

There were many other people involved in the management of the shelter. Parks and Rec, Public Works, the Health Department, and the CERT team to mention a few. Ellen went far beyond what would be normally expected. She deserves to be recognized for representing Charlotte County in the highest order in her commitment to providing shelter and comfort to those that needed it the most.

Monty Rodriguez - September 2016



Monty has been an employee of Charlotte County since 1994 (21 years). In his role as the Parks and Recreation Foreman, he is responsible for the supervision, maintenance, and preparation of all ballfields in Charlotte County along with overseeing the Park maintenance operations at three regional parks. Monty continually supports the Charlotte County mission by exceeding the expectations of the department through delivering outstanding dedication and customer service to the youth sports leagues within our community. Monty has a "can do" attitude, is well respected by his staff, and consistently seeks out operational efficiencies. He is in daily contact with most of our youth sports organization

to ensure that their needs are met and is always willing to assist with any other departmental tasks as well. When inclement weather occurred during some construction improvements at Franz Ross Park, the sports lighting at the football fields were damaged. Monty coordinated with the on-site contractor, an outside vendor, and our Facilities Department to diagnose the problem, order the parts, and schedule the repair. While the lighting issues were being addressed, Monty developed alternative solutions that would allow the Port Charlotte Bandits to continue their scheduled season home opening games with as little impact to their schedule as possible. As a result, the Bandits were extremely appreciative and complimentary of his efforts. It is continual examples such as this that have now become the “norm” in our operation based upon the high standards that he displays and the desire to be a positive reflection of the organization.

Leah Williams - August 2016



Leah Williams, Recreation Specialist at South County Regional Park Recreation Center is an outstanding member of the Charlotte County Community Services Recreation team. Leah is a great leader, a customer service specialist, has excellent organizational skills and an exceptional work ethic. These attributes have earned her recognition from customers, her supervisor and coworkers.

Recognizing a need in the community where she works, Leah's commitment to **customer service and innovation** led her to plan and implement the first annual Back 2 School Bash at South County Regional Park in July and August of this year. The event was a great success attracting approximately 600 people. Leah formed **partnerships** with local businesses and organizations to not only raise money to provide school supplies for 300 Charlotte County children, the event also provided free haircuts, free bicycle helmets, free car seats and safety inspections and more.

Leah also developed a **partnership** with Jersey Mikes Subs who hosted a fund raiser this summer which raised enough money to send 7 Charlotte County children to

camp. Because of its success, this fund raiser will now be held twice per year.

Leah created relationships and partnerships with 17 different businesses and organizations which involved meetings and follow-ups (sometimes on her own time) in order to make the Back 2 School Bash event a success. Leah also planned games and activities to keep the event fun and entertaining for the children while their parents met with representatives of the various organizations.

Leah was able to run this outstanding event through sponsorships demonstrating **stewardship** of County resources.

Gerry Collins - July 2016



Gerry exemplifies Charlotte County's principles for customer service and it shows through the consistent feedback she receives from internal and external customers. In just one day alone, she received accolades from a former council member of Punta Gorda and internal recognition for going above and beyond for a citizen. Gerry maintains the core address database used by Emergency 911, property appraiser, tax collector, GIS website and other agencies. She regularly receives positive feedback from customers, which shows her high level of customer service skills. Congratulations Gerry on this well-deserved recognition!

Stephen Zawacki - June 2016



Stephen has been an instrumental part of the Community Services department's transition from our old registration software CLASS to our new registration software ACTIVE. This project included the data input, training, equipment set up and implementation of the software for 11 facilities and over 30 staff members. He served as the IT liaison from the beginning of the project and 3 months later when all facilities are up and running is still the go to person. Stephen is always available and when he can't resolve the issue by phone he will personally visit your location to make sure everything is operating correctly. He understands the direct impact that ACITVE has in staff exceeding the expectations of Charlotte County customers and gives 110% effort in making sure staff can deliver in a timely and efficient manner.

In addition to the ACTIVE transition Stephen is an employee that is always available to the Community Services staff. When asking other supervisors and employees about their experience with Stephen there comments are never anything but positive. Stephen has assisted with other issues that didn't initially involve IT such as, preparing equipment at 4:30 in the afternoon and meeting staff early to drop it off for them. He is known throughout our department as someone who is reliable and follows through on his commitments.

When Community Services supervisors were initially discussing submitting Stephen for Employee of the Month there was no debate over whether we thought he deserved this recognition. Stephen has shown consistent commitment to the County, his work and co-workers on a regular basis in the Community Services department. We are confident we are not the only department experiencing this stellar level of commitment and customer service.

Brian Orlando-Reno - May 2016



communicate anything from the top down and then focus on the daily goals and activities for each team.

The concept sounded simple, you needed a board, a huddle packet and people. However, as with most great ideas the devil is in the details. How could we get the staff on board to make it work? Brian started from the very beginning involving every level of staff. He developed a presentation outlining the concept and the purpose to senior management to get their buy in. He created focus groups where each group worked on designing their own board and content. He trained the managers to become facilitators and we then trained our team members. He developed a guide for us to use. We learned how to communicate information in a very short amount of time. We learned “how to get the point”, and for most of us that is a difficult task in itself. Brian was not only instrumental in the training on “huddles”, but over a course of a month he created the functional boards by hand employing skillful graphic artwork. The managers did a dry run of huddle meetings for a week and then began huddle meetings with our teams the first week in January.

After a month, it's been a huge success. It's been a great way to bring a little bit of fun into our mornings and at the same time it promotes transparency and accountability. The best part of having huddle boards and meetings is that it eliminates any mystery on the work we do. It's on display every day for anyone to see. So I encourage everyone to take a break and come into our offices and check out our huddle boards.

Brian has been a huge asset to the organization. This is just one example of a fresh, new idea that Brian has brought to the Fiscal Services Division. He introduced and implemented an innovative concept that has not only created a buzz around the County, but a bit of curiosity from staff county-wide. We just finished consolidating 34 staff into work teams with new managers and new services to provide to our internal and external departments. But something was missing, we redesigned our physical space to create individual teams but at the same time we didn't want to lose the connectivity of us all working together as one large team. Brian observed this disconnect and shared with me what worked in his previous job to close this gap. He suggested that we build huddle boards and meet 15 minutes at the start of everyday to discuss daily work priorities, projects and announcements. Every team would have their own huddle board and rotate facilitators on a daily basis. The concept is not complicated, managers meet for 15 minutes first thing in the morning and then meet 15 minutes with their team members to

Carl Stamps - April 2016



For the many years I have worked alongside Carl, he continuously demonstrates a high level of dependability, punctuality and flexibility in his job of customer service. He often goes well above his job description to help a patron who is seeking a certain book or DVD but is not quite sure how to get it.

When needed, Carl can be counted on as more than willing to change his schedule to accommodate the needs of the public and his fellow co-workers. Staff knows that they can depend upon him to help when there are long lines, ringing phones, lots of library items to check in, reference questions to answer and filling in with additional hours if someone is unexpectedly out. All this qualities make Carl an asset to the library system.

Dawn Anspach - March 2016



When Dawn first started with the County Attorney's Office, she had previously worked in the legal field, but not in a local government law office. She very quickly learned those aspects of our practice that are unique to local government. She also enrolled in the Ambassador Program to learn about what other County departments do. She is the consummate "team player" and is always willing to assist with whatever needs to be done.

Through Dawn's initiative, the County Attorney's Office closed litigation files, which were voluminous and somewhat in a state of disarray, were finally organized. Dawn was recently dealing with a husband who had a serious illness, yet during that time, she kept a positive attitude and did not let it affect her work. Dawn never says no if she is asked for help and she always goes above and beyond to ensure that her work product is the best it can be. She is very deserving of being named Employee of the Month!

Richard Lisenbee - February 2016



Richard Lisenbee is responsible for monitoring and operating the County's Automated Traffic Management System (ATMS). He has full power and authority through Venkat Vattikutti, County Transportation Engineer granted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to adjust traffic signal timings on the State Highway System through Charlotte County should traffic conditions at any time warrant changes. On the morning of Sunday, February 21, 2016, the FDOT closed south-bound lanes on I-75 at Toledo Blade Blvd. due to an overturned tanker truck transporting gasoline. At approximately 8:00 a.m. due to the road closure at I-75 and the subsequent detour route, Richard was contacted by FDOT for his assistance in the monitoring of traffic flow along U.S. 41 from Toledo Blade Blvd to Veteran's Blvd (SR 776) including County owned signals along Veteran's Boulevard to King's Highway.

Richard worked diligently both from home and in the field from the time he was contacted early Sunday morning through the entire day and into the early morning hours of Monday, February 22, 2016. Richard's skill, knowledge and experience in traffic signal operations sustained consistent and smooth traffic flow through the following intersections as south-bound I-75 was re-routed onto US 41 and Veteran's Blvd:

- King's Highway @ Veteran's Blvd
- Veteran's Blvd @ Peachland Blvd
- Veteran's Blvd @ Atwater Drive
- Veteran's Blvd @ Cochran Blvd
- Veteran's Blvd @ Murdock Circle
- US 41 and SR 776/Veteran's Blvd
- Toledo Blade Blvd @ Hillsborough Blvd