



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®

# YANKEE ENGINEER

Volume 55, No. 11, August 2022

BUILDING STRONG®



US Army Corps  
of Engineers®  
New England District

## New England District Civilian Gallery



Christine Johnson-Battista

Christine Johnson-Battista joined USACE as a DA Intern in June 1987 after graduating from the University of New Hampshire's Civil Engineering Program with honors. During her career, Ms. Johnson-Battista has been heavily involved in the USACE's DA missions in Maine, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island, and became a subject matter expert on environmental consultation. She led the field effort for the H&A cleanup at Fort Devens. Her involvement in the environmental program led to the District's growth into a USACE Center of Expertise. She served on the National R&M Committee and became a regional expert on S&A Management.

In addition to environmental work, Ms. Johnson-Battista took on the task of building Boulder Field Station at Camp Belknap and Fort Belknap, Maine. She reviewed 21 CA-18 reports over seven years, passing on important information that will serve USACE many years into the future. She took the lead in implementing Construction Division to the new EPA/USACE Performance Appraisal System and trained more than 40 supervisors and employees in its use.

She retired on June 30, 2020 with 33 years of service.

# 2022

Johnson-Battista named Distinguished Civilian Gallery  
inductee for 2022  
Story on page 6



# Commander's Corner: Celebrating Women's Equality Day

by Col. John A. Atilano II  
New England District Commander

Today, August 26, is Women's Equality Day. It commemorates the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920 and the culmination of the long struggle to afford women the right to vote.

It took a lot of courage and tenacity to challenge the nation to live up to its founding principles. Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott founded the Women's Suffrage Movement in 1848 in Seneca Falls, New York, and the movement spread nationwide. The long, hard battle continued until Congress passed the 19th Amendment in 1919 and it was ratified in 1920.

Although the 19th Amendment passed, the ability for women to vote was not equal. Despite women of all cultures and color fighting side by side with their white sisters to bring the 19th Amendment about, women of color were not allowed to vote until much later. It wasn't until the 1965 Voting Rights Act passed that all women obtained suffrage.

Passing the 19th Amendment was only the beginning of the fight for women's equality. It is a battle that still rages on today, but the struggle has not been without some victories. Protections for women in the workplace have come in the form of several laws:

- o Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- o Title VII of the Civil Rights Act
- o Equal Pay Act of 1963

- o The Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)
- o The Family and Medical Leave Act
- o The Whistleblower Protection Act

To read more about these laws and why they're important, you can go here: <https://careersidekick.com/womens-labor-laws/>.

Even with all these enacted laws, things are not equal, but we are working hard so that one day it will be. The U.S.

Army Corps of Engineers is dedicated to ensuring equality for all its team members. I am dedicated as well. Women make up a large percentage of our team. Each and every one of them are valuable to me and I thank them all for what they do for the nation every day.

I end this message with a request. This year is an election year. I ask that everyone exercise their right to vote, especially the ladies. So many before you fought hard for you to have your voice heard. Honor them by stepping into that election booth and casting your vote. I don't care how you vote, just vote.

Resources:

<https://www.dodea.edu/dodeaCelebrates/upload/presentation-womens-equality-day.pdf>  
<https://careersidekick.com/womens-labor-laws/>





Park Rangers Robert Skaret, Dylan Dickson and Marc D'Amato receive Steel DeFleury medals for their work for the District.

Photos by Brian Murphy

## Park Rangers recognized for outstanding work during Founder's Day ceremonies

Three members of the Operations Division team received the Steel DeFleury Medal during the Founder's Day Awards ceremony at Concord Park, Concord, Massachusetts, July 29.

Col. John A. Atilano II presented the awards to Marc D'Amato, Park Ranger, West Thompson and Mansfield Hollow Dam; Dylan Dickson, Park Ranger, Otter Brook and Surry Mountain; and Robert Skaret, Park Ranger, Hop Brook Lake.

D'Amato was recognized for distinguishing himself by providing exceptional professionalism while serving as a Park Ranger for the Thames River Basin, New England District.

"Marc's accomplishments in his relatively short career has been a credit and immensely valuable to the execution of USACE missions," said Jon Belmont, Chief of Staff. "He exemplifies commitment to team and serves as a model of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers tradition of excellence."

Dickson received the Steel DeFleury in recognition of his dedication to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the New England District, and Upper Connecticut River Basin.

"Your selfless service and commitment to excellence continues to be a tremendous asset to the Operations Division."

Skaret's award nomination hailed him as a true asset

to our USACE team.

"He is a responsible individual who shows great integrity and is not afraid to express his ideas and opinions to create positive change," said Belmont. "He is an active listener, mentor and model team player. He strives to learn from others and to develop himself. Mr. Skaret is goal-driven, compassionate and trusted team player."

Marc D'Amato began his career with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers as a Summer Ranger in 2014 and was hired as a career Park Ranger in 2016.

Dickson joined the New England District, Upper Connecticut River Basin as a Summer Ranger over nine years ago.

Skaret has 24 years of military service and joined the New England District in 2017 as a Summer Ranger in 2017 and then was hired on permanently.

The Steel DeFleury Medal may be presented to an individual whose selfless service provided to the Engineer Regiment as it supports the Army to assure mobility, enhance protection, enable expeditionary logistics, and build capacity in order to provide commanders with the freedom of action needed to win full spectrum operations in an era of persistent conflict.



## New England District marks Founder's Day with awards celebration

The New England District team got together July 29 to celebrate the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 247<sup>th</sup> anniversary at Concord Park headquarters. The observance included an awards ceremony and picnic with activities.

It was the first in-person Founder's Day since the beginning of the pandemic. The awards ceremony was live streamed for those who could not attend in person or still had reservations about coming to Concord Park. Elizabeth Gosselin, Chief, Public Affairs, served as host for the ceremony.

"Officially, Founder's Day commemorates a moment in time when we, the United States Army Corps of Engineers, celebrate our contributions to our nation," she said. "Unofficially, it's usually a time for us to get together in the nice weather and socialize. Isn't it wonderful we can get together in person today?"

Gosselin introduced Col. John A. Atilano II, New England District Commander, who provided opening remarks.

"Today is a great day to celebrate the Army's and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' 247th years of service to the nation," he said. "Why is it a great day to celebrate? Because, finally, we are all here together! I've wanted to do this for quite some time and I'm so glad to be looking out at real-time, smiling faces, instead of looking at everyone on a computer screen."

Col. Atilano welcomed all of the team members who joined the District since last Founder's Day and explained the meaning of the day and how the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers came to be.

"That's our history," he said. "And what an amazing history it is. We have been an agency of engineering excellence for nearly two and a half centuries. As we did back then, — we continue to provide exemplary



Dan Vellone, assisted by his son, Jack, won Col. Atilano's design contest for his new challenge coin.

Photos by Brian Murphy

engineering services. And we will continue to do so for another two centuries."

The District Commander thanked the offices that arranged the picnic and activities that followed the awards ceremony.

"Resource Management, Real Estate, Internal Review and our EEO Offices have all collaborated together to make this year's festivities special," he said. "Today is going to be a really fun day and I can't wait to get started. I have my family here today and am so proud to introduce them to you all. I look forward to walking around and participating in some of the events."

Col. Atilano also thanked the two anonymous team members who paid for all of the children's lunch tickets and subsidized the amount adults had to pay for their lunches. This led to a significant cost savings for attendees and their families. Before he allowed the awards ceremony to continue, he took the opportunity to caution team members and their families about water safety.

"Summer is here and many of us gravitate to the water," he said. "Already I am hearing about preventable, water-related tragedies in the news. Wear.

Your. Life jacket! I say it every year, but I do so because I want you to have a safe and enjoyable summer."

Col. Atilano concluded by saying that 2022 has been a good year for the New England District and that he was grateful for all the work the team put in to deliver the program.

"You have all worked hard and deserve to celebrate your accomplishments today," he said. "I want to thank every member of the District team for all you do. We are, in my opinion, the best District in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and it is an honor to be your commander."

Scott Acone stepped up to the podium to induct Christine Johnson-Battista as the latest New England District Distinguished Civilian Gallery inductee. See story on page 6.

Lt. Col. Michael Carvelli, Deputy District Commander, recognized District staff who organized the ceremony as well as the field team members who were continuing to deliver the program.

"I am still trying to get out to all of our projects, but I love and respect all the work they are doing out there," he said.

Lt. Col. Carvelli gave out the Length of Service awards to team members with 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35 and 40





Col. Atilano addresses the audience.

years of service.

"As your Deputy District Engineer, it is my honor to recognize our District employees who have achieved some major milestones in terms of the years of selfless public service they have dedicated to the federal government," he said. "Now I did some math earlier of just the length of service award recipients. Can you guess how many total years of service they have given to the government? 855 years, WOW, thank you!"

The names of team members who received milestone certificates can be found in the Founder's Day brochure.

Jon Belmont, New England District Chief of Staff, presented several honorary awards to members of the New England District team. Dan Vellone, assisted by his son, Jack, won Col. Atilano's design contest for his new challenge coin, with Vellone receiving the very first coin. He also received a Civilian Service Achievement Medal in recognition of his efforts. Col. Atilano wanted to give special recognition to Jack Vellone, who not only assisted his father in coming up with the final design, but also submitted one of his own.

"Jack was helping out his dad, but if you were at my coffee hour, you saw the last submission with my face on the coin," he said. "That was Jack's idea.



Rose Schmidt receives the Timothy Skeen Geotechnics Professional of the Year Award.

If I ever run for President, Jack's going to design my Presidential Coin!"

Over 60 submissions came in, with 12 runners-up. Those individuals also received coins: Crystal Daley, Mark Godfrey, Don Hassett, Stephanie Morrison, Brian Murphy, Sally Rigione, CPT Giancarlo Rindone, Heather Stukas, Jason Tremblay, Jack Vellone, Lisa Winter and Joe Zanca.

Belmont recognized John Gartland, who was not in attendance, on receiving the Civilian Service Commendation Medal and a Global War on Terrorism Medal while he was deployed overseas for Operation Inherent Resolve. Gartland served as a supervisory civil engineer from April through December 2021.

The Chief of Staff praised Kevin DiRocco for receiving the Headquarters Levee Safety Professional of the Year award. Rosemarie Schmidt was also acknowledged with a headquarters-level award, receiving the Timothy Skeen Geotechnics Professional of the Year Award for all of USACE. Col. Atilano presented the award to her.

John Kedzierski is this year's Bridge Safety Engineer of the Year. Kedzierski could not attend the ceremony, but Belmont congratulated him and encouraged the audience to do so when they see him in the office.



Anastasia Papadopoulos is recognized as NAD's nominee for the Tommy Schmidt Dam Safety Professional of the Year.

Belmont called up two employees who were selected by North Atlantic Division (NAD) to compete against other Division-level nominees.

Anastasia Papadopoulos was NAD's nomination for the Tommy Schmidt Dam Safety Professional of the Year. Jessica Rudd, who was unable to attend the ceremony, was NAD's nominee for the Early Career Geotechnics Professional award.

DiRocco, Schmidt and Papadopoulos all received Commander's Coins from Col. Atilano.

Belmont called up Operations team members Marc D'Amato, Dylan Dickson and Robert Skaret to receive the Steel DeFleury Medal. See story on page 3.

The final award of the day went to Steven Lehmann, Operations. Lehmann was named the Federal Women's Program Supervisor of the Year for 2022. See story on page 7.

Lehmann's award was the last of the day, and Gosselin concluded the awards ceremony with a few housekeeping details and urging everyone to meet at least one new person during the unofficial activities.

Col. Atilano closed the award ceremony by wishing several employees happy birthday and led the audience in singing "Happy Birthday" to them.



# Johnson-Battista is latest Distinguished Civilian Gallery inductee

Christine Johnson-Battista, Construction retiree, became the latest to be welcomed into the New England District's Distinguished Civilian Gallery. Scott Acone, Deputy District Engineer for Programs/Project Management, inducted her during the Founder's Day ceremonies, July 29.

Johnson-Battista was accompanied to the ceremony by her husband, Paul Battista, also a Construction Division retiree.

"Each year the New England District recognizes a retired employee who made a lasting impact on the District. These employees are inducted into our Distinguished Civilian Employee Gallery," said Acone. "Each inductee embodies the spirit of the New England District. Inductees accomplished their duties to a level that is clearly exceptional and preeminent among others in that position."

Acone said that often these valued team members developed methods and procedures which produced extraordinary benefits for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and contributed substantially to the reputation and honor of USACE.



Photos by Brian Murphy

Col. John Atilano II presents Christine Johnson-Battista with a Distinguished Civilian Gallery certificate while her husband, Paul Battista, looks on.

"Christine is a consummate professional who continues to give selflessly of her time and expertise for the sake of the mission and those who execute it—an embodiment of Superior Civilian Service," he said.

Col. John A. Atilano II, New England District Commander, presented Johnson-Battista with a certificate of induction as Acone summarized her distinguished career. Following the certificate presentation, Col. Atilano and Johnson-Battista unveiled the

display that will hang in the Building 2 corridor for one year before it is moved into the permanent gallery.

During her acceptance speech, Johnson-Battista said she was honored and humbled to be inducted into the Distinguished Civilian Gallery. She thanked Sean Dolan, Chief, Construction Division, for nominating her and believing in her and giving her the flexibility to do what she needed to do. She thanked the Distinguished Civilian Gallery selection board who approved her nomination.

"Thank you to Paul for all those times I was TDY or had a late night and to my kids for understanding when I wasn't around," she said.

She acknowledged the Construction Division team and thanked them for "making her look good."

"If you told me 35 years ago I'd be on the wall, I would have said, 'Oh my gosh, that's not going to happen,' but here I am," she said.

Johnson-Battista said she reflected on her career and credited her mother for her outgoing personality. "She's interested in people, she cares about people and I think that rubbed off on me," she said. "She always instilled on



Christine Johnson-Battista shows off the temporary gallery display that will hang for one year before the permanent version is placed in the gallery.



me to be on time and to pay attention to who I was talking to.”

The latest inductee said her late father taught her to have a good work ethic and confidence in herself. She said that her three supervisors – she only had three – were the most influential in her career. They were the late John Winmill, Jim Morocco and Sean Dolan. Johnson-Battista summarized what each one taught her and how she grew through their mentorship.

“They all had my back and gave me the flexibility to do my job,” she said of her supervisors.

She concluded by thanking everyone who helped her along her career.

Christine Johnson-Battista joined USACE as a DA Intern in June 1987 after graduating from the University of New Hampshire’s Civil Engineering Program with honors. During her career, Johnson-Battista was heavily involved in the DERP/FUDS mission in Maine, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, and became a subject matter expert on environmental remediation. She led the field effort for the BRAC cleanup on Fort Devens. Her involvement in the environmental program led to the District’s growth into a USACE Center of Expertise. She served on the National RMS Committee and became a regional expert on S&A Management.

In addition to environmental work, Johnson-Battista took on the task of building Border Patrol Stations in Calais, Jackman and Van Buren, Maine. She mentored 21 CP-18 interns over seven years, passing on important information that will serve USACE many years into the future. She took the lead in transitioning Construction Division to the new DPMAPs Performance Appraisal System and trained more than 45 supervisors and employees in its use.

She retired on June 30, 2020 with 33 years of service.



Photo by Brian Murphy

Col. John Atilano presents Steven Lehmann with his FWP Supervisor of the Year 2022 certificate.

## Lehmann named FWP Supervisor of the Year 2022

Steven Lehmann, Operations, is the Federal Women’s Program’s Supervisor of the Year for 2022. He received the award during the Founder’s Day Award, July 29.

Jon Belmont, Chief of Staff, read Lehmann’s award citation on behalf of Elliott Ashby, the District’s new EEO Officer, while he was traveling to New England with his family and home goods. Col. John Atilano II, New England District Commander, presented the certificate and a Commander’s Coin to Lehmann.

“This award recognizes a supervisor who has significantly promoted the employment and advancement of women and minorities and/or individuals with disabilities in support of the principles of EEO during the period of June 2021 to present,” he said.

Belmont said that Lehmann has created a culture of cross training within the Lower Connecticut River Basin, constantly making it a point

to check in with all employees and asking them how he can best set them up with success.

“He strongly supports employee-work life balance embodying family-friendly principles throughout his workforce,” said Belmont.

Lehmann is an active participant and advocate for Equal Opportunity programs that promote hiring, advancement, training and fair treatment of all demographics.

“His drive and passion to set his employees up for success is second to none,” said Belmont. “And you can tell because they’re the ones who wrote up the citation and you can genuinely feel the care that his employees have for him as their supervisor.”

Creating and reminding dedicated and hard-working employees of healthy work boundaries is just as important as holding them accountable for their work, according to Belmont, and Lehmann is top-notch at both.



# Dredging up the past



Photo by Brian Murphy

Beverly Lawrence receives a Distinguished Civilian Gallery certificate from Col. William Conde, New England District Commander, during the June 2019 Founder's Day ceremonies.

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