

Employee Communications Survey: Responses Needed by March 31

We want to make sure important information reaches all employees. Previous Employee Communications surveys have resulted in communications improvements such as providing informational toolkits for supervisors and a variety of collateral, including posters and table tents, for common areas.

Human Resources wants to know what your preferred communication mediums are now.

Do you prefer emails or flyers, or both? Communication from HR or communication from your supervisor?

Tell us! Take 2 minutes to complete this 5-question anonymous [Employee Communications Survey](#). If you prefer to submit a paper version, email employee_communications@pinellas.gov.

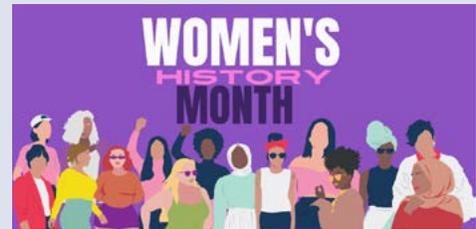
Once completed, please interoffice your survey back to Human Resources. The deadline to submit your responses is **March 31**.



Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights

Every year, March is designated **Women’s History Month** by presidential proclamation. The month is set aside to honor women’s contributions in American history. In this month’s edition of the *Pen*, we are celebrating female leaders and their accomplishments as part of the Pinellas County team. Below are just some of the women in leadership positions here at Pinellas County. We are honored to feature a few of them and their contributions to the organization and the community.

Employees are listed in alphabetical order by last name.



[Lourdes Benedict](#)



[Merry Celeste](#)



[Kimberly Crum](#)



[Teresa Del Rio](#)



[Rose DiGennaro](#)



[Barbra Hernandez](#)



[Belinda Huggins](#)



[Cynthia Johnson](#)



[Michelle Krickovic](#)



[Kelli Levy](#)



[Cathie Perkins](#)



[Jeanette Phillips](#)



[Megan Ross](#)



[Jill Silverboard](#)



[Carol Stricklin](#)



[Jewel White](#)



[Karen Yatchum](#)

Pinellas County to Observe Juneteenth

In June of 2021, [Juneteenth](#) was officially declared a federal holiday. This was a major milestone for our nation and the Black American community.

We'd like to share a bit of history to highlight the importance of this day.

In 1863, President Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing more than 3 million slaves in America. However, it took over 2 years for this news to reach all the Confederate states and be enacted nationwide. It wasn't until June 19, 1865, when Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, enforcing the proclamation that there was "...an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property between former masters and slaves..." that there was a true end to slavery.

Juneteenth has been celebrated by Black Americans for many years as it marks their official independence. For some, it is a day of celebrations, and for others, an opportunity to reflect on our country's history and the experiences of early Black Americans.

The Appointing Authorities are delighted to recognize the celebration of Juneteenth by providing 8 hours administrative leave to employees on Juneteenth (June 19, 2023). For those employees who need to work on this day, the Appointing Authorities are committed to being flexible in granting time off for this special day, and only deny the request if it creates an operational hardship. Please check with your Appointing Authority if your office will be closed.

The Pen

BCC Issues African American History Month Proclamation

At the February 28 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners issued a proclamation recognizing the month of February as African American History Month. Staff and board members from Pinellas County African American History Museum at the Curtis were on hand, as well as board members from the Rose Cemetery Association and Special Angels Investments.



INSIDE

- [Page 3](#) From the Director, Ask HR, R'Club Childcare During Declared Emergencies
- [Page 4](#) Your Total Rewards
- [Page 5](#) Tax Collector's Offices Envision a Better Future With Preserve Vision, Tax Collector Employees Give Back to Community With Donation to Homeless Empowerment Program
- [Page 6](#) Tax Collector Email Addresses Change, Employee Spotlight, From the Record Keeper
- [Page 7](#) Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights
- [Page 8](#) Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued
- [Page 9](#) Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued
- [Page 10](#) Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued
- [Page 11](#) Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued
- [Page 12](#) Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued
- [Page 13](#) Government Finance Professionals Week 2023 Employee Spotlights
- [Page 14](#) Government Finance Professionals Week Employee Spotlights continued
- [Page 15](#) BTS Project Delivery Team Spends In-Service Day at Cross Bar Ranch, Economic Development Department Staff Volunteer at Heritage Village for In-Service Day, Property Appraiser to Host Circle of Heroes Dive Trip
- [Page 16](#) 2023 Recycle Guide Now Available, Solid Waste Disposal Complex Tour Open to BCC Department Staff, Animal Services Officer Saves Dog
- [Page 17](#) Fun New Ways to Learn With Organizational & Talent Development, Everyday Leadership — Lollipop Moments and Purpose
- [Page 18](#) Welcome Aboard, Blood Drives
- [Page 19](#) Promotions, What is Your Total Compensation?
- [Page 20](#) Service Anniversaries
- [Page 21](#) Retirements, REPCO News, Protect Your Information When Filing Taxes
- [Page 22](#) The Pen Extra

From Kimberly Crum, HR Director



Kimberly Crum
Director of Human Resources

We are celebrating Women’s History Month by spotlighting some of our talented and dedicated women in leadership across the County. These women are leading our teams with integrity, dedication, and passion as they make a difference in the community. Please enjoy getting to know many of our leaders in this edition of the Pen on [page 7](#).

As you may recall, in June of 2021, Juneteenth was officially declared a federal holiday. This was a major milestone for our nation and the Black American community. The Appointing Authorities are delighted to recognize the celebration of Juneteenth by providing 8 hours of administrative leave to employees on Juneteenth (June 19, 2023). Please note that the Clerk’s Office must remain open when courts remain open; therefore, Clerk’s offices will remain open on June 19. For those Clerk employees who would like to commemorate Juneteenth by taking the day off, every effort will be made to approve that day off with the understanding that employees will need to use time from their leave banks. I hope that we can all take a moment on June 19 to truly think about our nation’s history.

HR communicates important information to our employees throughout the year. We need feedback on the best way to communicate with YOU. Please tell us your preferences by taking a quick 5-question [Employee Communications Survey](#) by March 31.

We are proud to offer an excellent [benefits package rated #1](#) compared to 12 public entities in West Central Florida. You can view a personalized Total Compensation Statement in OPUS at any time which includes your annual wages, health benefits, financial protection, and retirement benefits. See [page 18](#) to learn how to view your statement.

Enjoy the official start of spring and know that your HR team is here to support you by phone at (727) 464-3367 and by email at AskHR@pinellas.gov.

Find it Fast: HR from A to Z



Our [A to Z Index](#) was viewed over 29,000 times last year!

- Find what you need on the Human Resources website quickly and easily. Access the A to Z link on the left-hand side of any Human Resources webpage.
- New items are added to the listing frequently. Let us know if you have items to add by emailing AskHR@pinellas.gov.



Q. Where can I view a list of pay dates and the dates when timecards need to be submitted?

A. HR’s [A to Z Guide](#) contains over 700 links including the [Payroll Calendar](#) (internal link). The calendar includes pay dates, timecard deadlines, holidays, and annual leave exchange payment dates.

Q. Is UnitedHealthcare still handling Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requests?

A. Yes, [FMLA administration services](#) are provided by UnitedHealthcare, while Cigna administers Pinellas County’s [medical coverage](#). FMLA allows eligible employees to balance their work and family life by taking up to 12 weeks of continuous or intermittent unpaid leave for certain family or medical reasons.

Q. Am I able to attend an interview for an internal position on County time/pay?

A. Approving an employee to attend an internal interview while on County time/pay is at the discretion of each Appointing Authority; the Personnel Rules don’t specifically address the issue. For employees who choose to notify their supervisor of an internal interview, they may be granted a reasonable amount of time (usually 2 hours or so) of administrative leave to attend the interview, at the discretion of their Appointing Authority.

R’Club Childcare During Declared Emergencies

Attend an R’Club Virtual Open House Info Session: March 30 or April 4

Pinellas County is pleased to partner again with R’Club Child Care, Inc. for childcare when schools and childcare services are closed for an extended period of time due to a major emergency or disaster situation.



Once available, **R’Club will provide childcare services (ages 2 months through 12 and special needs children through age 22) for all employees.**

Childcare services are only effective during the period of recovery (in the case of a hurricane, it is after the storm subsides) during the state of emergency. If an employee needs the services once the state of emergency is lifted and schools have resumed, they will need to work with R’Club directly to complete a regular registration.

If you indicated the need for childcare in your DAPA assessment, you need to pre-enroll to secure your childcare. To pre-enroll, complete the [registration packet](#) (internal link), notarize the original Emergency Medical Release Form, and submit the completed forms by **June 1** via U.S. mail or in person at R’Club, 13348 U.S. Highway 19 North in Clearwater. View the [R’Club Employee FAQs](#) (internal link).

Interested in signing up for R’Club services in 2023? To learn more and sign up, attend a virtual open house on [Thursday, March 30 from 12:00 to 12:45 p.m.](#) or [Tuesday, April 4 from 12:00 to 12:45 p.m.](#) R’Club staff will be available to answer questions. **Please register in advance.**

YOUR TOTAL REWARDS

Health • Wellness • Retirement • Compensation

Mammogram Bus is Back



Take advantage of the AdventHealth Mammogram Bus in April. A mammogram is

a safe, low-dose X-ray that can detect changes in the breast long before any symptoms appear or can be felt. A 3D mammogram screening is covered at 100% as an annual preventive screening for women age 40 and older. If you are outside the Pinellas County Government insurance plan, please check with your insurance provider.

You can get a mammogram on the bus in approximately 30 minutes during your work day. The mammogram also qualifies for [Wellness Incentive Program](#) rewards of 12,500 points or \$50 cash. Make an appointment today.

Clearwater Courthouse

315 Court Street, Clearwater

April 4, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

April 6, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Human Services

647 First Avenue North, St. Petersburg

April 5, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Parks & Conservation Resources

12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo

April 11, 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

North County Clerk of the Court

29582 U.S. Highway 19 North, Clearwater

April 11, Noon to 2:00 p.m.

For more information and to register, visit [Mobile Mammogram](#).

2022 FSA Claims Deadline is March 31



If you have a balance remaining in your 2022 Healthcare and/or Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts, you can submit a claim to TASC for expenses that occurred from January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2022 by **March 31, 2023**. TASC offers multiple convenient ways to [request a reimbursement](#) online and via the mobile app. See [Healthcare FSA eligible expenses](#) and [Dependent Care FSA eligible expenses](#).

Keep in mind that your itemized receipt or invoice for reimbursement must include the following: provider/merchant name, date of service/purchase, description of the service/purchase, and amount of the service/purchase.

If you enrolled for a 2023 Healthcare FSA, up to \$570 in unused 2022 funds will be rolled over in mid-April. If you did not enroll for a 2023 Healthcare FSA, then unused 2022 funds will be forfeited. No carry over is available for unused Dependent Care FSA funds.

Sign Up for Onsite Dental Clinic



Jet Dental will be at the following locations from 7:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.:

Annex Building, March 27

400 South Fort Harrison Avenue, Clearwater

Parks & Conservation Resources, April 6

12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo

Justice Center, May 2

14250 49th Street North, Clearwater

Solid Waste, May 30

3095 114th Avenue North, St. Petersburg

For more information and to register, visit [Jet Dental](#).

The Pen

2023 Benefits Partners

DENTAL

[Cigna](#)
(800) 862-3557

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

[Cigna](#)
(800) 862-3557

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA)

[TASC](#)
(800) 422-4661

HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT (HSA)

[HSA Bank](#)
(800) 357-6246

LIFE INSURANCE

[Securian Financial](#)
For questions, call Benefits
(727) 464-3367

MEDICAL/BEHAVIORAL/ MENTAL HEALTH

[Cigna](#)
(800) 862-3557

PRESCRIPTION

[Express Scripts](#)
(866) 544-9221

VISION

[EyeMed](#)
(866) 939-3633

VOLUNTARY IDENTITY PROTECTION BENEFIT

[AIP](#)
(800) 789-2720

VOLUNTARY LEGAL ASSISTANCE BENEFIT

[ARAG](#)
(800) 247-4184

VOLUNTARY SUPPLEMENTAL MEDICAL BENEFITS

[Aflac](#)
(800) 433-3036

Take Care of Yourself



In the [March To Your Health newsletter](#), you will find:

- How Title IX Shaped Equality in Women's Sports
- What Can a Health Coach Do for You?
- Wellness Webinars & Events
- Friend or Foe: How Our Immune System Can Actually Hurt Us
- Group Fitness Class Schedule

Tax Collector's Offices Envision a Better Future With Preserve Vision

This March, the Tax Collector's Office and [Preserve Vision Florida](#) are teaming up to build a brighter future for Florida residents by raising funds for vision care and education.

Preserve Vision Florida is the state leader in preserving eyesight. The non-profit promotes healthy vision through education, service, advocacy, and research. They also assist those who cannot afford eye care services by partnering with physicians and optical retailers to provide free vision screenings.

Through the end of March, Tax Collector customers can purchase lens cloths (\$1), sunglasses (\$5), an auto safety tool (\$8), a 7" teddy bear (\$10), or a large teddy bear that doubles as a glasses case (\$25). Voluntary donations of \$1 or more will receive a special thank you gift, so if you're heading to a local Tax Collector's office this March, be sure to ask how you can help.

Motorcycle owners also have the option to switch to the "Bikers Care" specialty plate. The red, white, and blue

plate not only looks great on a bike but also gives back to the community, with 40% of the proceeds going toward causes that support Floridians with vision-related disabilities (the other 60% goes toward other Florida non-profits).



"Promoting Preserve Vision this month is a great way for us to connect with our community," said Tax Collector, Charles W. Thomas. "Since healthy vision plays an important role in what we do every day—like conducting vision exams to help keep our roads as safe as possible—it makes sense that we support this cause."

Each year the Tax Collector's offices support six Florida non-profits, chosen from submitted applications based on the organization's mission and local impact. Preserve Vision is the second nonprofit of 2023.

The Pen

Tax Collector Employees Give Back to Community With Donation to Homeless Empowerment Program



Tax Collector, Charles W. Thomas (far right), presents the 2022 donation to HEP Marketing Coordinator, Megan Risser, with members of the tax collector team (left).

On the morning of Thursday, February 23, Pinellas County Tax Collector, Charles W. Thomas, and members of his team visited [Homeless Empowerment Program \(HEP\)](#) in Clearwater to present a \$1,402.25 donation.

Each year, Tax Collector employees nominate local nonprofit organizations to fundraise for, followed by an employee vote to determine the winning organization. For 2022, HEP received the most votes, and the employees internally raised funds for the organization all year long.

New for 2022—the employees created the "Thread of Hope" fundraising initiative. Employees who wish to participate provide a donation to break the usual dress code and participate in a fun themed clothing day, with all proceeds going toward HEP. Themes throughout 2022 included: Disney Day, Sports Day, Tropical Shirt Day, and more. The \$1,402.25 donation delivered to HEP came from donations made through this initiative.

"Our team is always eager to give back to our community, and our yearly internal fundraiser is just one way in

which we do that," Tax Collector, Charles W. Thomas said. "We are proud to support the Homeless Empowerment Program. With the recent affordable housing challenges that have arisen, it is crucial for programs like HEP to thrive."



Tax Collector employees participating in a "Thread of Hope" sports-themed clothing day

It was a great day for Mr. Thomas and his accompanying team members at HEP as they got to visit the various facilities and offices of the organization and get an insider's view of the vast amount of work HEP does for the homeless community in Pinellas County.

"HEP is a truly wonderful organization and the sheer amount of work they do within our community was really astonishing to see," continued Mr. Thomas. "I am thrilled our team could help their efforts in some way."

Founded in 1986, HEP provides homeless and low-income families and individuals, including veterans, with housing, food, clothing, and support services necessary to obtain self-sufficiency and improved quality of life.

For 2023, the Tax Collector's offices are internally fundraising for [Clothes to Kids](#) through the Thread of Hope initiative.

Tax Collector Email Addresses Change

As of March 6, all Tax Collector emails now end in @pinellastaxcollector.gov addresses, instead of @taxcollect.com.

The front end of the emails have not been affected. Since a .gov email domain is only available to legitimate U.S.-based government organizations, this move will reassure citizens that they are communicating with the actual and official governmental office of the Tax Collector. The .gov signifies trust and credibility to the public and migrating to a .gov domain means that correspondence from the office is less likely to be confused with other, potentially illegitimate, sources. In fact, it is the top-level domain for governmental organizations in the U.S.

Additionally, this transition aligns the organization's email addresses with the Tax Collector's modernized website that rolled out last May, pinellastaxcollector.gov.

"We are continually searching for ways to improve how we interact with our customers," Tax Collector, Charles W. Thomas said. "The .gov domain is already a trusted stamp of legitimacy that will help customers feel more secure when emailing us."

Tax Collector customers are encouraged to only use the new @pinellastaxcollector.gov email addresses to prevent delays in correspondence. However, correspondence sent to the former @taxcollect.com email addresses will redirect to the new domain indefinitely to ensure communication with the public is not disrupted.

The Pen

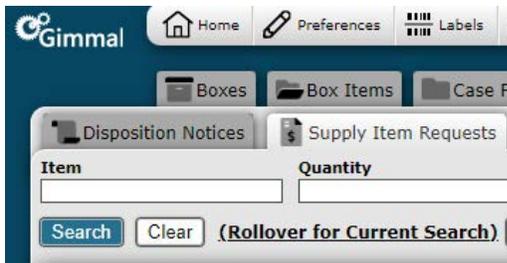
THE RECORD KEEPER

Order Empty Boxes through Gimmal

Did you know you can now place box orders in Gimmal? Click on the Supply Item Requests tab and create a new request. Boxes come in standard 1.0 size and 3.0 size for large drawings and maps.

They will be delivered via courier and come in bundles of 10.

If you need assistance or have any questions, please contact clkgimmal@mypinellasclerk.gov or give Records Management a call at (727) 464-5555.



Employee Spotlight



Donnie See

Position: Endpoint Analyst

Department: Innovation and Technology (IT) – Tax Collector's Office

How long with Pinellas County?
Almost 6 months

Describe your job in 25 words or fewer: I maintain, find creative solutions, improve processes, and assist with technology-related implementations and issues to help our internal staff to better serve our community.

Best part of job: That I naturally can feel like I make an impact with challenging and creative solutions; I enjoy the thinking and creative aspect of my work.

Most challenging part of job: I would have to say keeping track of information and useful knowledge, whether on a platform, files, or in my own memory. Making sure I can find it when needed, recall its location, and that specific users have access when needed.

Most memorable moment? It was when I was trusted to make a video for Yubikey use for the agency. I have not been with the Tax Collector's Office that long and to be trusted to make that kind of difference so soon felt empowering. The recognition in general at the Tax Collector's Office, for dedication given, even on my birthday, is amazing and seeing how everyone goes out of their way to take care of each other—I can't really ask for better than that.

What do you do in your free time? Other than being a father of twins, Cheyenne and Declan, I'd say my creative soul takes over. From being a movie buff, house projects, boardgame design, writing in many forms (keyboard at most), watching sports, and expanding my knowledge about technology, I'm a pretty mixed pot for hobbies, and a geek at heart!

Career Opportunities

Employees who introduce their friends or family members to career opportunities at Pinellas County may earn up to \$1,000 cash through our [Employee Referral Program](#).

Here's a tip for current employees—every Tuesday we email a list of postings open only to current employees. Look for the email or bookmark the [Internal Career Opportunities](#) webpage.

Follow Pinellas County Government Careers on social media by clicking the icons below:



Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights



In 1987, Congress declared March as National Women's History Month in perpetuity. We hope you enjoy these employee spotlights as part of the celebration. Employees are listed in alphabetical order by last name.



Lourdes Benedict

Position: Assistant County Administrator

How long with Pinellas County? I have been with the County since January 2015 (8 years).

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? Currently I am one of the Assistant County Administrators. I previously was the Director of Human Services.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: As the ACA, I oversee Safety & Emergency Services (911, Ambulance Services, Radio & Tech, and Fire), Animal Services, Emergency Management, and Human Services (Veterans, Consumer Protection, Justice, Behavioral Health, Homelessness).

Best part of job: The departments I get to work with.

The directors and teams are genuinely amazing people who give it their all every day to serve others.

Most challenging part of the job: We deal with difficult issues—anything from behavioral health, the pandemic, hurricanes, life and safety, and even horrific animal hoarding cases.

Most memorable moment? So many memorable moments but the best are times when we come together to solve problems or create programs to assist with the challenges we face as a society. Our teams work so diligently and make a difference daily.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? You can't be at the table and have a voice if you aren't prepared and aren't willing to work really hard. Put the work in; it will pay off in so many ways. Be kind to others and to yourself.



Merry Celeste

Position: Division Director, Purchasing & Risk Management

How long with Pinellas County? 15 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? Yes, my experiences in various positions helped me gain knowledge along the way to prepare me for my current position.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: Responsible for the County's centralized purchasing process, and risk management for Countywide insurance, claims handling,

and safety administration, as well as managing a hard-working staff.

Best part of job: All the wonderful people I have met along the way that took the time to share their knowledge and inspiration.

Most challenging part of the job: Conflict resolution.

Most memorable moment? At work, transitioning into Countywide procurement needs as COVID struck the world.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Ignore the glass ceiling limitation and concentrate on doing your work; if you focus on the limitations, then you will be limited.



Kimberly Crum

Position: Human Resources Director

How long with Pinellas County? 2.5 years

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I lead a team of dedicated HR professionals who are committed to our employees through outstanding customer service and providing support to the unique missions of all the Appointing Authorities.

Best part of job: Serving our employees and retirees who take care of citizens every day and getting to hear about all they do. After 16 years in government, I'm still fascinated by the depth of responsibility our employees take on.

Most challenging part of the job: I enjoy working with each of the Appointing Authorities to understand their business and their needs from the HR team. One of the

challenges of this role is ensuring that our policies and our day-to-day procedures support each business. This group is working well together and I'm pleased with all we were able to put in place in 2022: the improved general increase, retention supplements, and the employee referral award.

Most memorable moment? Your HR team solicits feedback on our in-person, email, and phone interactions. We appreciate corrective feedback and are always looking to improve. For 2022, we met every metric on our scorecard and this year we stand at 100% on each. I was also pleased to see employees' reaction to our implementation of voluntary benefits, which came about as a result of partnerships with the Employees' Advisory Council and the Benefits Advisory Committee.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Serving others is a noble calling, and government is a great career option. Staying curious allows you to learn and grow no matter where you are planted. Stay curious.

[Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued from page 7](#)



Teresa Del Rio

Position: Executive Director, Clerk's Court and Operational Services

How long with Pinellas County? I'll start my 38th year on July 1.

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? I have worked

my entire career with the Clerk's Office. I started as an entry-level Clerk Typist on July 1, 1985. Through the years, I've been promoted to a variety of positions, including Supervisor, Manager, Director, and now Executive Director.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I lead a division team, which has so many duties I can't single out any! Our team members genuinely care about the citizens and the work they do every day.

Best part of job: The diversity of the duties and responsibilities of the office.

Most challenging part of the job: Getting to know the people who work in the office—we have so many fascinating stories, and I want to hear them all.

Most memorable moment? After almost 38 years, it's hard to pick a single moment. My favorite memories are all related to fun times with people in the office; the after-hours events, the picnics, the conferences...good times with great people!

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Don't limit your ambition; seek out learning opportunities and the mentorship of people you admire and trust. Push your limits; be courageous and take risks.



Rose DiGennaro

Position: Deputy Tax Collector, Branch Operations, Tax Collector's Office

How long with Pinellas County? 17.5 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? Tax Collector

Staffing Coordinator, HR Manager, Sr. Manager, Deputy Tax Collector for Human Resources.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I am currently responsible for the Branch Operations Division of the Tax Collector's Office, which includes operations, compliance, budgeting, staffing, staff development and ensuring that the department is aligning with the vision, mission, values and strategic direction of the organization.

Best part of job: By far working with all of the amazing and talented Tax Collector employees. Connecting with the employees and learning more about each one of them.

Most challenging part of the job: The work the

employees of the Tax Collector do is very technical and at times very difficult. It's critical that we are supporting the staff and ensuring that there is balance for them in the form of participating in cross-functional teams, training, activities and team building to increase engagement and satisfaction in their work. The challenge is balancing time constraints and opportunities to participate in these activities with ensuring that offices are staffed appropriately to provide the excellent customer service the citizens expect and deserve.

Most memorable moment? Seeing the staff successfully complete and graduate from our Leadership Development program and CPM and to witness the growth we see in them.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Work hard, be engaged and committed, set achievable goals for yourself and never stop leaning and growing. Integrity and courage are so important. Believe in yourself, reach outside your comfort zone for opportunities and don't be afraid. Be authentic!



Barbra Hernandez

Position: Communications Director

How long with Pinellas County? 7 years

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I lead an amazing communications team in delivering critical information

and products that empower residents, build trust and help departments save money and operational resources.

Best part of job: Working alongside and being inspired by the most dedicated communications professionals I have ever met.

Most challenging part of the job: Unexpected media

deadlines and emerging priorities that require constant reprioritization.

Most memorable moment? The day voters resoundingly renewed the Penny for Pinellas. Our public education campaign was a Countywide team effort that lasted over a year and required broad community outreach. County departments, municipalities and partner agencies came together and worked with our residents on an initiative that will have lifetime impacts. It was very rewarding to see the results of these efforts and months later accept regional and state-level awards for the excellent communications work done.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? You are your best advocate; own the place you have earned through hard work and find great mentors to inspire you along the way.

The Pen

[Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued from page 8](#)



Belinda Huggins

Position: Enterprise Application Services Director, Business Technology Services

How long with Pinellas County? I have worked for Pinellas County for over 28 years.

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? I started with Pinellas County as a Programmer 3 in 1986. I left in 1989 as a Sr. Programmer Analyst and came back in 1998 in that same position. Through the subsequent years I have served in several additional roles: Team Lead, Supervisor, Manager and now Director.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: As a director, I serve a group of professionals who provide quality technical services for our Enterprise Applications in Pinellas County.

Best part of job: The best part of my job is the

wonderful people I work with on a daily basis.

Most challenging part of the job: The biggest challenge is the struggle to compete with the private industry salaries when seeking to hire qualified technical experts.

Most memorable moment? During one of the lowest times of my life, having to funeralize my mother, I received unexpected news that brought some joy in a time of pain. The day after her funeral, I opened an email stating I had been promoted to Director.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? I would tell them don't focus on the fact that you're a female, work to be the best at what you offer as a professional. You are just as capable a leader as anyone else, find your lane and excel past self-doubt. And lastly, don't chase money, take every opportunity to learn and grow, your gift will make room for you!

The Pen



Cynthia Johnson

Position: Economic Development Director

How long with Pinellas County? I have been with the County for 22 years.

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? I have always worked in Economic Development. I started as a Management Analyst. I've been a Business Development Manager, a Senior Economic Development Manager and now I hold the position as the Director of Economic Development.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I develop strategies to carry out the community's vision for business vitality and growth, foster opportunities for job creation and build relationships with business stakeholders.

Best part of job: The best part of the job is supporting

the economic prosperity of this community by identifying investment opportunities for business and job growth that afford our citizens to invest in their families.

Most challenging part of the job: Incorporating social media communication on various platforms throughout the day.

Most memorable moment? My most memorable moment was working with a small disabled veteran entrepreneur. I assisted him with his Federal 8A certification. After 6 months of document review, research, and assistance, I got the great pleasure to participate in the ribbon cutting of his business where he hired 8 technology professionals from the community.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? This job is a relationship business and my advice would be to stay determined, build productive relationships and don't let failures go to your heart and success go to your head.



Michelle Krickovic

Position: Director of Contractor Licensing and Deputy Director of Building and Development Review Services

How long with Pinellas County? Almost 5 and a half years.

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? I was originally hired by Bill Berger, transferred from Office of Management and Budget to Office of Technology and Innovation, then to Contractor Licensing and now I "live in two kingdoms" (as Assistant County Administrator Tom Almonte calls it) as Director of Contractor Licensing and Deputy Director of Building and Development Review Services.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: Strategic planning, performance management, organizational change, process improvement, and providing leadership.

Best part of job: The people! I love working with

talented, passionate, committed professionals across a wide range of disciplines for the noble cause of serving the community, making change and doing good. That may sound trite, but it's what drives me every day.

Most challenging part of the job: It depends what day it is!

Most memorable moment? There are so many. Maybe it was the day one of the long-serving managers at BDRS told me that they wish I had joined them years earlier. Or the day a Contractor Licensing applicant cried when he was approved by the committee to take his license exam. Or the day that a new employee gave me a hug when she learned she was being promoted. There are so many.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? There is no shortcut to success. You have to be willing to do it all; learn as much as you can about every job, invest in yourself through continuous education, recognize leadership excellence, adopt those best practices and follow a mentor. Surround yourself with those who have the same values as you. Be kind. Be honest with yourself and others.

[Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued from page 9](#)



Kelli Levy

Position: Public Works Director

How long with Pinellas County?
23 years in April

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? Yes, several.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I have the honor of leading a talented team that designs, constructs, and manages critical public infrastructure and protects and enhances the natural environment.

Best part of job: Being part of all the amazing work we do in Public Works that betters our community.

Most challenging part of the job: We are always juggling a lot of different priorities and it is challenging to bring it all in for a landing.

Most memorable moment? In 23 years there has been a number of memorable moments, but my first big one was the leading the development, adoption, and implementation of the County-wide fertilizer ordinance. I had no idea how far-reaching (in a very good way) our program would be.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? If the door opens, walk through. Don't be afraid to take on something you have never done; don't let opportunity pass you by.



Cathie Perkins

Position: Emergency Management Director

How long with Pinellas County?
Almost 4 and a half years

Describe job in 25 words or fewer:
Working with every facet of the

community to plan and prepare for emergencies that may be small or large and identifying and coordinating solutions to numerous challenges.

Best part of job: Learning more about our community and creating networks.

Most challenging part of the job: Never seems to end.

Most memorable moment? I spent two weeks in NYC after 9/11 working in their makeshift EOC in one of the piers. One day we went to the base of the debris pile of the World Trade Center—it was hard to envision the two 110 story buildings that used to stand there. It was surreal and seemed like it should have been a movie set. Seeing search and rescue crews on the pile and how small they were in comparison to the task at hand. It seemed insurmountable. Working behind the scenes to support field operations and the community is so essential.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Ask questions, make suggestions, be bold, be creative, have a sense of humor especially when things are challenging, be passionate about what you do and remember to take care of yourself.



Jeanette Phillips

Position: Chief Deputy Director, Clerk's Finance Division

How long with Pinellas County?
Since March of 2017

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? I have worked

for the Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller in 3 increasingly responsible positions, starting as Assistant Finance Director then Finance Director and most currently Chief Deputy Director of Finance.

Best part of job: Making a difference by serving the public. I also work for a tremendously caring and supportive organization and have an excellent boss,

great colleagues and dedicated employees. I am truly blessed.

Most challenging part of the job: Probably the same as most—it is highly challenging to balance competing priorities with an extensive number of mandatory deadlines.

Most memorable moment? The way the Finance Division responded to COVID. Our team worked collaboratively with many stakeholders and ensured service levels were maintained and in many instances exceeded expectations.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Government can be a very rewarding career; it's all about the organization and the people you serve and work with.

The Pen

[Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued from page 10](#)



Megan Ross

Position: Utilities Director

How long with Pinellas County?
About 9.5 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? Yes, I started as a Technical Project Coordinator at the

South Cross Bayou Advanced Water Reclamation Facility. I was then promoted to the Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager, then the Division Director of Water and Wastewater Operations. Since 2017, I have served as the Utilities Director.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: Improving the quality of life for Pinellas County residents and visitors through providing value-driven, innovative, and reliable services that deliver clean water.

Best part of job: I get to work with amazing people and make positive changes in the community which I love and grew up in. It's incredibly motivating to have the responsibility to impact people's everyday lives by providing the most vital resources that we have—water and wastewater collection services! Part of that means implementing innovative solutions and technologies to increase efficiency and sustainability while improving resiliency and quality. Every day is complex and challenging when working in an operating environment. Problems need to be solved quickly, priorities shift and change, and there is never a dull moment. There is also nothing better than seeing a project get built, concrete poured, and pipes going in the ground. Getting things done while improving the quality of our infrastructure—what could be better than that?

Most challenging part of the job: The Utilities Department is a complex operating environment. There is both breadth and depth to what we do. The role of water and wastewater infrastructure is critical to public health and the natural environment in Pinellas County. As stewards of these valuable water resources and supporting infrastructure, Pinellas County Utilities seeks to harness innovative strategies to meet the

needs of today while planning for tomorrow. Our strategic planning effort aligns effective utility industry management strategies with public outcomes that will allow us to continue to provide superior services to our customers and visitors for years to come. Some challenges faced include, managing and implementing technological advancements and adequate funding. As new technologies emerge, my team must evaluate the potential benefits and risks associated with adopting them. This involves significant research and development, as well as managing the implementation of new systems and equipment.

Most memorable moment? I remember working through Hurricane Irma when I was a Plant Manager at the South Cross Bayou Advanced Water Reclamation Facility. Massive power outages were experienced at our plants and pump stations. We came in every morning at 4:30 a.m. for recovery and worked 12 to 16 hour days. It was an adrenaline-packed several days, but our team did an amazing job, no one gave up, and no one threw in the towel. Everyone knew that we were essential to getting our community up and running again. I also learned a lot about our critical vulnerabilities in a storm, and I have since used that experience to plan and implement multiple improvements to infrastructure and our response.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? We tend to focus on our handful of weaknesses, instead of focusing on our strengths. Ask yourself—what are you good at? Then take those things and maximize them and use them to expand your capabilities. No one is good at everything, and if you try to be, you will fail at everything. I also tell young people not to shy away from moving into a leadership role. Leadership is not a magical power, it is a skill that can be learned by anyone. Read about it, take courses to help you, and put what you've learned into action. That will give you real experiences that are incredibly valuable. You will get bruised and scraped along the way, but then you will also grow back a thicker skin. Anyone can learn how to lead if they are willing to change, adapt, learn and grow—and stay optimistic along the way.

The Pen



Jill Silverboard

Position: Deputy County Administrator/Chief of Staff

How long with Pinellas County?
A little less than 4 years

Describe job in 25 words or fewer:
Supporting effective and efficient

operation of BCC departments and delivery of services with positive communications among elected officials, employees, partners, and the public.

Best part of job: Working with a supportive County

Commission, County Administrator, and very committed employees.

Most challenging part of the job: Communicating programs and projects, before, during, and after impacts upon our communities.

Most memorable moment? Without a doubt, COVID-19 and all the challenges and impacts it had on our County, way of life, and delivery of services.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Don't hesitate to create and pursue new opportunities and challenges. Work hard in each position and prepare for the next.

[Women in Leadership Employee Spotlights continued from page 11](#)



Carol Stricklin, AICP

Position: Housing and Community Development Director

How long with Pinellas County? I joined the County in October 2020.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: My department works to make communities vibrant and livable through the implementation of strategic initiatives in land use, community revitalization, and affordable housing.

Best part of job: Working with a team of talented and dedicated professionals.

Most challenging part of the job: Addressing complex issues such as the current affordable housing crisis.

Most memorable moment? When the Community Development team received the Employee Recognition award in 2022 for the Emergency Rental Assistance program as part of the pandemic response.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Develop your leadership skills and cultivate strong professional relationships with your colleagues. You are a future leader.



Jewel White

Position: County Attorney

How long with Pinellas County? I started with Pinellas County as an Assistant County Attorney in July of 1996.

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? While I have had various, progressively responsible positions during my time with the County Attorney’s Office, I have always worked in this office.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: My staff and I represent the County, Constitutional Officers, and other agencies, such as Forward Pinellas. This includes all departments under the County Administrator, as well

as Human Resources, the Office of Human Rights and Business Technology Services.

Best part of job: Having had the opportunity to work with such great people over my career, at all levels of County government and beyond.

Most challenging part of the job: Managing a law office that covers every area of the law, with very few exceptions.

Most memorable moment? I have many, but I have to say being appointed County Attorney.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? Recognize and appreciate the challenges women who came before us faced and be sure to take advantage of every opportunity we are now presented because of their hard work.



Karen Yatchum

Position: Human Services Director

How long with Pinellas County? I was hired in 2018 as the Health Care Administrator with Human Services.

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County? I was employed as the Health Care Administrator from September 2018 until February of 2021.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: As the Human Services Director, I am responsible for facilitating access to critical supportive services across Pinellas County. These services strive to protect consumers, connect veterans to benefits and resources, expand justice system supports, reduce homelessness and housing instability, improve access to health/behavioral health services, fight food insecurity, support local emergency response and coordinate with partners for consistent system improvement.

Best part of job: The best part of my job is interacting with the amazing Human Services staff. I have the luxury

of being surrounded by passionate, intelligent, team-oriented staff who continue to amaze me each and every day. The staff in this department continue to ask, “What more can we do to help each other, residents or the system?”

Most challenging part of the job: There is so much need for services and service connection in our community, that it sometimes makes it hard to see how much progress we are making.

Most memorable moment? Honestly, my most memorable moment was when Lourdes Benedict asked me to join Pinellas County. This job means the world to me and allows me to make system changes/improvements and work with such a talented group of staff and colleagues.

What would you like to tell young females starting out in your industry? I would say this to both males and females—that it is important to love what you are doing and to enjoy who you work with. It is also very important to have work-life balance and that you can love what you do, and love spending time with your family.

The Pen

Government Finance Professionals Week 2023

Between March 20–24, the Florida Government Finance Officers Association is sponsoring Government Finance Professionals Week, which aims to recognize the vital services that finance professionals provide for local government and the community in which they serve.

We hope you enjoy these employee spotlights as part of the celebration.

Employee Spotlights



Brett Allmond

Position: Manager, Finance Division

Department: Clerk's Accounting

How long with Pinellas County?
8 years and 3 months

How long have you been in this

position?

8 years and 3 months

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?

I've always been dedicated to the Clerk since starting with Pinellas County.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: Responsible for the administration of fines and fees for the various agencies

and municipalities in Pinellas County, as well as the recording funds.

Best part of job: Serving the citizens of Pinellas County.

Most challenging part of the job: Keeping up with legislation, and adapting to new best practices with emerging technology.

Most memorable moment? During my first week I had a meeting with the Inspector General regarding our collection process.

What do you do in your free time? Being a parent to my two children, and a husband to my amazing wife of 10 years.



Sharon Concannon

Position: Finance & Accounting Analyst 1

Department: Clerk's Finance Division, Treasury & Revenue Management

How long with Pinellas County?

I have been with the Clerk's Office for

7.5 years.

How long have you been in this position?

1 year

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?

Yes, my first position was Finance Operations Technician in Clerk's Accounting. I received a promotion to Finance Operations Assistant Supervisor in Accounts Receivable, then last year was promoted to my current position.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: My job involves the pre- and post-audit of revenue and payment transactions. Payments from various sources must be researched and recorded into specific fund and account combinations.

Best part of job: I get to work with an amazing team in a beautiful location surrounded by warm and caring people. Everyone in finance is knowledgeable and friendly and I feel valued and supported. Our Treasury and Revenue Management team is like a family.

Most challenging part of the job: Three years ago, we had a management reorganization that was challenging in the beginning but grew into something wonderful. It took time to teach and learn from each other about past practices and current expectations. There were some staff changes and retraining. It was all worth it for the team we now have.

Most memorable moment? The Christmas Cruise, a few years ago. I met so many people from different departments; we had dinner and danced. I made some new friends. We cruised by waterfront homes and piers all decorated for Christmas. It was so beautiful.

What do you do in your free time? My husband and I are active in triathlons and travel to events. Our next big trip is to Ireland and Iceland. We also visit Disney World every chance we get.

[Employee Spotlights continued from page 12](#)



Daniel Coughenour

Position: Manager, Financial Accounting

Department: Clerk's Finance Division, Accounts Payable

How long with Pinellas County?

I celebrated my 10-year anniversary

with the Clerk's Office this past January.

How long have you been in this position?

Almost 1 year

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?

I joined the Clerk's Office as a Senior Finance Clerk in Accounts Payable which was later reclassified to a Finance Operations Technician. I have also previously served as Finance Operations Assistant Supervisor, Finance Operations Supervisor, and most recently as Assistant Manager in Accounts Payable prior to my current role.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: Manage and oversee the pre-audit, processing, and payment of invoices and expense reports for the Board of County Commissioners and the Clerk's Office.

Best part of job: Seeing our team succeed.

Most challenging part of the job: Our team's responsibilities include ensuring that spending serves a public purpose and is in compliance with County policies and code, State Statutes, Federal law, and other applicable rules/regulation. Educating on all of the various requirements to ensure compliance can be a challenge at times.

Most memorable moment? During my time here, my former boss and mentor Anne Lawler encouraged me to pursue getting my CPA license. I was able to take advantage of the County's [tuition reimbursement program](#) to go back to school to obtain the credits needed to sit for the exam. One of my most memorable moments was finding out when I finally passed all of the exams necessary to obtain my license. It was such a huge relief and gratifying moment to see all the hard work and studying pay off.

What do you do in your free time? COVID and studying for the CPA caused me to develop a few unhealthy habits over the past few years so I've been working on trying to correct course with diet and exercise.

The Pen



Donna Morahan

Position: Manager, Finance Division

Department: Clerk's Finance Division, Payroll

How long with Pinellas County?

17 years and 7 months

How long have you been in this position?

3 years

Have you had any other positions with Pinellas County?

Yes, all with the Clerk's Office in Payroll—4 years as Assistant Payroll Supervisor and 11 years as Payroll Supervisor.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: Responsible for overseeing a wide variety of payroll operations with the assistance of a dynamic payroll team.

Best part of job: Hearing the team say, "Payroll is a wrap"—our employees are paid.

Most challenging part of the job: Managing compliance with federal, state, and personnel rules and regulations.

Most memorable moment? I remember when Hurricane Irma hit and all the challenges that came with it. County sections worked collaboratively to keep operations functional through tenacity, teamwork, communication, and dedication to the citizens of Pinellas County.

What do you do in your free time? I like spending time with my family and spoiling my grandchildren.

BCC Issues Government Finance Professionals Week Proclamation



At the February 28 meeting, the Board of County Commissioners issued a proclamation recognizing the week of March 20–24 as Government Finance Professionals Week. Clerk of the Circuit Court & Comptroller Ken Burke and staff from the Clerk's Office, as well as Director of Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Chris Rose and staff from OMB were present.

BTS Project Delivery Team Spends In-Service Day at Cross Bar Ranch

The Business Technology Services (BTS) Project Delivery team spent In-Service Day at Cross Bar Ranch in Pasco County. Cross Bar Ranch is a Pinellas County Government site and is home to 17 wells that produce 22.5 million gallons of water per day to contribute to the region's drinking water supply. Cross Bar Ranch is managed by Tampa Bay Water, which serves Pasco, Pinellas, and Hillsborough counties.

Dave Adams and Dan Umberger from Utilities Engineering were the perfect tour guides, providing interesting facts and stories about Cross Bar Ranch. Thanks to the Fleet Department, the tour was conducted on an open-air safari tour bus. This was a great day of team development, information sharing, and relationship building.



Economic Development Department Staff Volunteer at Heritage Village for In-Service Day

For In-Service Day, the Economic Development Department took advantage of the beautiful weather to do some team building outside. Together, staff opted to help preserve Pinellas County history at Heritage Village. With rakes and pitchforks in hand, the staff cleaned up pine needles around the buildings on the property. The staff also gave the H.C. Smith store a good dusting, and "Esther", the classic fire engine, was shined up bright and clean for public viewing. Thank you to the Heritage Village staff for hosting Economic Development.



Property Appraiser to Host Circle of Heroes Dive Trip



Pinellas County Property Appraiser Mike Twitty will be leading a group of scuba divers to the Circle of Heroes Veterans' Memorial, the world's only underwater Veterans' memorial, located off the coast of Clearwater.

County employees and their family and friends are invited to join.

The trip is planned for **Saturday, May 27** at 8 a.m. This is a two-tank trip, so this will include a second dive site. Book your trip directly with the operator at [2 Tank Scuba Dive Trip](#). When booking, be sure to include the group name *PCPAO* to ensure that everyone is put on the same boat. You can also learn more about the [dive operator](#). The boat leaves the dock from 198 Seminole Street in Clearwater at 8 a.m.

All divers must hold an Open Water scuba diver certification.

Pricing:

- 2-Tank Trip (Circle of Heroes & second dive site) – \$125 (Includes weights, no tanks)
- Full Equipment Package no Wetsuit – \$50 (Includes air tanks, BCD, regulator set with dive computer, mask, fins & snorkel)
- Full Equipment Package with Wetsuit – \$60 (Includes air tanks, BCD, regulator set with dive computer, mask, fins, snorkel & wetsuit)
- 2 Aluminum Air Tanks – \$20
- Wetsuit – \$15

Note: in addition to booking with the operator, all Pinellas County Government divers will also need to sign the waiver from Pinellas County Risk Management. After booking, send an email to PAOcommunications@pcpao.gov with your name and the names of any guest divers in your group for a headcount. You will be sent the waiver form to complete and return.

2023 Recycle Guide Now Available



The new and updated [2023 Recycle Guide](#) is now available at schools and at libraries throughout Pinellas County. The guide provides readers everything they need to know to be a responsible recycler in Pinellas County. The guide also highlights local recycling facilities and how recycling works in the Tampa Bay area. Feature articles include how recyclables are sorted at a local Materials Recovery Facility, where to find contact information to set-up curbside recycling at home, how to locate recycling drop-off sites and how to properly discard household chemicals. In addition, activities for children are included in bonus Going Beyond the Text sections.

While what should be placed in the recycle bin has not changed in Pinellas County for decades, it is a best practice to review local recycling rules on an annual basis. The cover of the Recycle Guide makes it easy for users to identify the five material categories that should be recycled in Pinellas County, which include glass bottles and jars, metal food and beverage

containers, paper and cardboard, plastic bottles and jugs, and cartons. For materials not on this list, residents can check the online [Where Does It Go? Search Tool](#) to find the best options to reuse, recycle or dispose of hundreds of different items in Pinellas County.

The Department of Solid Waste has a vision of zero waste to landfill by 2050, so recycling and proper waste management are a top priority for the community. To support this vision, the guide provides an overview of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's [Waste Management Hierarchy](#) and includes resources to locate the most responsible options to get rid of something.

The Recycle Guide was created in a partnership between the Department of Solid Waste and the Tampa Bay Times Newspaper in Education program. This year's guide is expected to reach more than 120,000 customers in print and countless others in its virtual format.

Residents can request a printed copy from the Department of Solid Waste by calling (727) 464-7500 or emailing recycle@pinellas.gov.

For more information about recycling in Pinellas County, view the [Recycling FAQ](#). You can also learn about [why recycling is important](#) in Pinellas County.

The Pen

Solid Waste Disposal Complex Tour Open to BCC Department Staff



Department of Solid Waste tour team (left to right): Leslie Caplin, Ashley Wyland, Emily LeMay, Jasmine Scott, and Stephanie Watson.

Have you ever wondered what happens to your garbage when you throw it away? Are you interested to learn about the Department of Solid Waste's vision of zero waste to landfill by 2050 and why it's important that we create less waste?

Join us on **Thursday, May 4**, from 10:00 a.m. to

11:30 a.m. for a tour of the Solid Waste Disposal Complex, which includes an overview of Pinellas County's integrated solid waste management system and includes a classroom and driving presentation. Participants will see the Waste-to-Energy Facility, landfill, and more!

This tour is open to staff at departments under the Board of County Commissioners. Tours are capped at a maximum of 13 participants, so hurry to [save your spot!](#)

If you can't join us on May 4, email recycle@pinellas.gov or call (727) 464-7500 to request a tour. Tours are for those at least 8 years old and in third grade or above.

Animal Services Officer Saves Dog

Source: [10 Tampa Bay](#)

[Animal Services](#) Officer **Jacob Laboy** was on his lunch break at [Sawgrass Lake Park](#) in St. Petersburg when a few people notified him that a small dog was wandering around close to the water. Sawgrass Lake Park has one of the largest maple swamps on the Gulf Coast and is filled with wildlife and gators.



The dog fell into the water and was unable to get out. Officer Laboy jumped in and brought the dog back to land. "We found out that she had been seen in this area for the past several days," Laboy said. "We had no idea when she ate last, no idea how long she had truly been out here."

The dog was not chipped, but Officer Laboy's actions ensured that the dog has now been adopted into a loving home.

"It's one of the best parts of the job, it's lovely to be able to provide that kind of service," Laboy said.

Looking for a dog or cat to be part of your family? View [Animal Services' Adoption Center](#).

Your Learning Opportunities

Learn Today. Be Ready for Tomorrow.

Pinellas County supports a learning culture for all employees. For more information, visit [Organizational & Talent Development](#) or call the team at 464-3367, option 2.

Fun New Ways to Learn With Organizational & Talent Development

2023 is off to a great start with exciting new ways to engage in learning. Through feedback from our employees and departments, the Organizational & Talent Development team have developed new opportunities to fit the needs of employees across the County. We are currently running two new programs that allow for quick and easy learning that can be utilized by employees in any role.

Tech4U

Tech4U is a new streaming channel that will house short videos that will look at a variety of technology-based tools available to County employees. The videos will focus on what tools to use, how to use them, and when to use them. With so many different tools available, it can be tricky to navigate and take a lot of time. Let us do the work! Watch for insight and tips. New videos will be added every month. Our first Tech4U stream is about [Microsoft Forms](#).



Microsoft Forms is a great way to gather information from your team, request feedback, come to a consensus on a decision with a group, or even to use as a fun, easy way to quiz a group you work with. In our video, we go through the basics of getting started by creating a form and how to gather responses.

You can also find Tech4U by going to our [Learning Catalog](#) and clicking on the Tech4U tile.

Power Hours

[Power Hours](#) are a great way to fit a learning opportunity into a busy schedule. These are one-hour virtual learning opportunities through Microsoft Teams that explore a variety of subjects from positivity to ULearnIT and everything in between. These hour-long classes are full of content and activities, and give participants another option of course format. It is important to note that these classes will not satisfy requirements for Learning Paths. However, they can be a great way to be introduced to a topic that can be taken as a traditional class to satisfy those Learning Path requirements.

Everyday Leadership — Lollipop Moments and Purpose

Source: [Samantha Young \(LinkedIn\)](#)

How do you define a leader? As someone in control, powerful, influential, the ultimate decision-maker? What if that concept of leadership missed the leaders' true purpose and the enormous potential of moments in everyday life?

[Drew Dudley's TEDx Toronto Talk](#) sums up everyday leadership in an inspiring and engaging way. He calls it a "Lollipop Moment" which he illustrates by sharing a story from college where he inadvertently introduced two students in line at freshman orientation using a lollipop. The couple later married after college. Four years after this initial event he learned that he was the catalyst for their first encounter, yet he has no memory of it.

Drew defines his concept of lollipop leadership as "a moment when something that you said or did made someone else feel fundamentally better".

Each of us influences or leads people every day. Our actions impact people whether we are conscious of it or not. Leaders are not just the people who run countries or companies—they are everyday people. What if real leadership is revealed in daily small moments and interactions? This is about the heart and human connection, 2 things too frequently overlooked in leadership theory and learning.

If leadership is an act of service (which it is), then part of serving others is engaging their hearts. The key to creating lollipop moments for others begins with mindfulness, kindness, courage and action to create a culture of lollipop moments by encouraging those around you to do the same. Lollipop moments are impactful, contagious, and often life changing.

Edward Sheehy, Assistant Manager in Recording Services for the Clerk of the Circuit Court, a recent graduate of Boot Camp: Leadership Essentials, created his own lollipop moment recently with his son, Aedan. While helping to prepare Aedan for a 5th grade class presentation, Ed noticed him fidgeting and being unsure of what to do with his hands. He used the opportunity to explain the steeple hand gesture, which Ed had recently learned is a universal sign of confidence often used in leadership positions and it gives you something to do with your hands while speaking. When Ed took a picture the next morning before school, with Aedan in character, his son instinctively did the pose. What are your lollipop moments?



Ed Sheehy's son, Aedan, demonstrating the steeple hand gesture.

Welcome Aboard

New employees listed are for February 2023.

Board of County Commissioners

Administrative Services

Sean Geraghty..... Fleet Mechanic 2
George Lamb.....Administrative Support Specialist 1

Building & Development Review Services

Craig Bernhart..... Building Services Specialist
Kyle Conner Code Enforcement Officer 1
Robert Heiss Building Permit Technician 1

Emergency Management

Kyle Condren..... Application Analyst

Housing & Community Development

Alissa Hevesh..... Program Planner

Human Services

Stacie RossOffice Specialist 2

Parks & Conservation Resources

Robin OrrPark Ranger 1

Public Works

Jeff ArnoldEngineer 2
Yi KuEngineer 3
Amy Lloyd.....Office Specialist 1

Utilities

Marcellino Brown..... Trainee Underfill A
Timothy Cleveland .. Water/Wastewater Plant Operator Trainee
Kevin Hoffman..... Accounting & Finance Technician
Calvin Lockett..... Trainee Underfill A
Dwite McKinney Utilities Maintenance Specialist 2
Deonte Mixon Trainee Underfill A
Katherine Roman.... Water/Wastewater Plant Operator Trainee

Business Technology Services

Felix Guerra Endpoint Specialist

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Ashley HenryFiscal Records Specialist
Kevin Vohnoutka.....Fiscal Records Specialist

Forward Pinellas

Paige Knotts Management Intern

Supervisor of Elections

Melissa Bancroft Administrative Support Specialist 1
Dustin Cox Elections Information Technology Coordinator
David Turngren..... Administrative Support Specialist 1

Tax Collector's Office

Boone Bowen Tax Technician 1
Lee Hoisington..... Tax Technician 1
Danielle Prue Tax Technician 1
Diana Quiroz..... Tax Technician 2
Bonita Shelby..... Tax Technician 1

The Pen



February New Employee Orientation via Zoom

The Pen

A monthly publication by
Pinellas County Human Resources

Would you like to put something in the Pen?

[Submit News to the Pen](#)

[Submit a Classified Ad to the Pen](#)

Contact us with questions at
employee.communications@pinellas.gov

Upcoming Blood Drives



Did you know that one blood donation can save up to three lives? You can donate whole blood, red blood cells, platelets or plasma. Please consider donating! Walk-ins are welcome or [schedule an appointment](#).

Public Works

22211 U.S. Highway 19 North, Clearwater (in front of the Survey building)

April 13, 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Solid Waste

3095 114th Avenue North, St. Petersburg

April 5, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

STAR Center

7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo

March 28, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

April 20, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Utilities

14 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue, Clearwater

April 13, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Promotions

Promotions listed are for February 2023.

Board of County Commissioners

Animal Services

Kelli CopplaAccounting Manager

Human Services

Dwayne Adams.....Veterans Services Officer 2

Office of Management & Budget

Tiffani Schrader Finance & Accounting Analyst 2

Parks & Conservation Resources

Jolanda JordanSection Manager 2

Nina Serritella Chief Park Ranger

Aimee Zuniga..... Park Ranger 1

Public Works

Kevin Hernandez..... Automotive Equipment Operator 1

Michael Schoppe Operations Manager

Safety & Emergency Services

Kaitlyn Hinegardner ... 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator

Schuyler Jones..... 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator

David Strickland..... 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator

Utilities

Aaron EubankElectrical/Mechanical Technician 3

Tess Kaiser Water Quality Management Specialist

Business Technology Services

Reginald Blanc..... Network/Telecommunications Engineer

Ruth Borkowski..... Management Analyst

Mason Parianous..... Endpoint Analyst Sr.

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Karleen Clark..... Court Clerk 1

Leena Delli Paoli.....Records Specialist Supervisor

Thomas Dunne Director, Court & Operational Svcs. Div.

Darcy EckertAssistant Inspector General

Jason Stanley.....Assistant Inspector General

Dacia Wright.....CCC Lead Budget Analyst

Human Resources

Judy Breadon HR Specialist

Tax Collector's Office

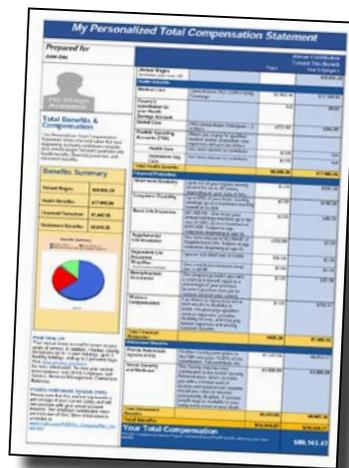
Melody Coville..... Tax Technician 2

The Pen

What is Your Total Compensation?

Benefits choices can have a significant impact on both the health of our employees, as well as their families. We are proud to offer the [#1 benefits package](#) in employer-provided value compared to 12 public entities in West Central Florida. The value of employee benefits is an important part of your [total compensation](#). To best understand the value of your total compensation, you are able to view your personalized Total Compensation Statement on demand in OPUS so that you can view an updated statement any time during the year.

The Total Compensation Statement shows the total value your employer contributes to your wages (including paid time off), health benefits, financial protection, retirement, and other valuable benefits. We want you to be aware of all the benefits provided to you.



How to View Your Personalized Total Compensation Statement

1. Log into OPUS using the Edge browser and the [internal OPUS link](#).
2. From the navigator icon (3 lines at top left), click *PIN Employee Self Service, Requests and Schedule*.
3. Click the *magnifying glass* next to the Program Name field.
4. Click *Go*.
5. Click the *Quick Select icon* next to PIN BEN Total Compensation Statement.
6. Click *Continue* at top right.
7. Click *Submit*.
8. Click *OK*.
9. Click the *arrows/papers icon* below Output to view your statement. Click *Refresh* if you don't see the icon.

For a printable guide with screenshots of the steps listed above, see the [Total Compensation Statement OPUS Screenshots Guide](#).

Service Anniversaries

Service anniversaries listed are for February 2023.

35 YEARS



Tawana Cooks
Clerk of the Circuit Court



Mark Smith
Property Appraiser's Office

25 YEARS



Joseph Borries
Emergency Management



Dontell Green
Public Works



Toyanne Swindell
Clerk of the Circuit Court

20 YEARS



Robert Burke
Utilities



Elizabeth Giaquinto
Tax Collector's Office



Melissa Harrison
Public Works

Unavailable for Photo

35 Years

Mark Carver
Utilities

30 Years

Donna Beim
Safety & Emergency Services
Debra Vacca
Safety & Emergency Services

25 Years

Paul Bellhorn
Public Works

Joseph Lauro
Administrative Services

Rachel Retzer
Utilities

20 Years

Kenneth Houston
Utilities

John Mize
Utilities

Carlton Peters
Administrative Services

3 TO 15 YEARS

15 Years

Jeanette Brazzell..... Tax Collector's Office
Jonathan Garish..... Business Technology Services
David Knoph..... Public Works
Gregory Lepper..... Tax Collector's Office

10 Years

John Bishop..... Public Works
Marisa Chartier..... Administrative Services
Scott Glaeser..... Human Services
Paul Hayes..... Solid Waste
Dennis McCloud..... Business Technology Services
Zeffery Mims..... Human Services
Ben Panike..... Solid Waste
Joe Passaretti..... Business Technology Services
Mario Ruggia..... Solid Waste
Anthony Stran..... Bldg and Development Review Services
Randall Vandermolten..... Business Technology Services

5 Years

Charles Byrd..... Parks and Conservation Resources
Jessica Ealy..... Bldg and Development Review Services
Liz Fogo..... Safety and Emergency Services
Heidi Hartsock..... Bldg and Development Review Services
Jacob Laboy..... Animal Services
Rocky Luoma..... Administrative Services
Joshua Quattlebaum..... Solid Waste
Edgardo Roman..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Tiffany Spallone..... Public Works
Kathleen Sterling..... Bldg and Development Review Services
Kimberly Williams-Tomlin..... Tax Collector's Office

3 Years

Victoria Ayala..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Sierra Boetje..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Julie Bolfa..... Convention and Visitors Bureau
Katherine Carpenter..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Rachel Castleman..... Property Appraiser's Office
Terri Doheny..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Reujuan Farrell..... Utilities
Nina Fester..... Animal Services
Brad Fisk..... Public Works
Clariss Franklyn..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Kayla Freeman..... Convention and Visitors Bureau
Shannon Frick..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Zasha Guzman Torres..... Parks and Conservation Resources
David Hare..... Safety and Emergency Services
Brandi Kasprzyk..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Natasha Kokash..... Utilities
Joan Landis..... Parks and Conservation Resources
Susan Leverette..... Office of Asset Management
Kongsamay Loushin..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Kim Meador..... Administrative Services
Cindy Ramtahal..... Utilities
Brooke Reitz..... Animal Services
Amanda Richardson..... Administrative Services
Susan Rourke..... Parks and Conservation Resources
Cynthia Sizemore..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Willie Talbert..... Utilities
Max Tang..... Property Appraiser's Office
Carlos Thomas..... Utilities
Omar Tucker..... Public Works
Leida Valdez-Marte..... Property Appraiser's Office
Kim Walker..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Rachel Wilkins..... Public Works

Retirements

Retirements listed are for February 2023.

Over 35 Years



Sandra Knoebel-Peebles
Planner,
Pinellas Planning Council

Over 22 Years



Karen Pape
Application Analyst,
Business Technology Services

Over 19 Years



William Ruffin
Programmer/Analyst 2,
Safety & Emergency Services

Retirees Unavailable for Photo

Over 38 Years

Joyce Stevens, *Building Permit Tech 2, Building & Development Review Services*

Over 37 Years

Brian Wallace, *Crew Chief 2, Public Works*

Over 26 Years

Anne Lawler, *Accounts Payable, Clerk of the Circuit Court*

Over 25 Years

Catherine Marjan-Rengert, *Property Records Specialist, Property Appraiser's Office*

Over 22 Years

Hans Bollenbacher, *Section Manager 3, Utilities*

Over 17 Years

Daniel Little, *Mosquito Control Tech 2, Public Works*

REPCO News

The next REPCO lunch meeting will be a picnic at Eagle Lake Park in Largo on April 10, 2023 at noon. The menu includes fried chicken, baked beans, and Greek salad with potato salad. Beverages available include iced tea, lemonade, and water. You may bring a dessert if you wish to do so. The cost is \$10 per attendee and can be paid at the picnic. RSVP is required by April 3, 2023. To RSVP or if you have any questions, contact Rudy Garcia at rdgarcia@verizon.net or (813) 855-3466.

Protect Your Information When Filing Taxes

The April 18 deadline for filing your taxes is quickly approaching. Here are some helpful tips when filing:

Don't fall for fake emails and calls. If you owe payment to the IRS, they will send you a letter in the mail. They will never contact you by telephone, text message or email demanding money or personal information.

Use an IP PIN. This stands for Identity Protection Personal Information Number, which is a unique six-digit code that eligible taxpayers can use when they file their tax returns. This way, even if a scammer gets a hold of your Social Security number, they still can't file a fraudulent tax return without your IP PIN.

Use multi-factor authentication. If you use tax preparation software, use multi-factor authentication. Multi-factor authentication offers extra security by requiring two or more credentials to log in to your account.

Instant refunds could cost you. Many tax preparation services advertise "instant refunds". These cash advances, known as Refund Anticipation Loans (RAL) could cost you. RAL is not your actual refund, it's a short-term loan. You are borrowing money against your tax refund. If your refund is less than the expected amount, you will still owe the entire amount of the loan.

Protect documents that have personal information. Keep your tax records and Social Security card in a safe place. When you decide to get rid of your tax records, shred them.

For more information on how to protect your personal information, to file a complaint, or check the complaint history of a business, call Pinellas County Consumer Protection at 727-464-6200 or visit [Consumer Protection](#).



The Pen Extra

Your Source for Employee Info

Employee and family news including kudos, weddings, births, graduations, memorials, and classified ads. Send your news to employee.communications@pinellas.gov or call (727) 464-3367.

Classified Ads

The following item is offered for sale:

BowFlex Pro Max Trainer M5, \$750. Like new, hardly used. Complete with manual and personalized programming guide. If interested, text or call (727) 742-7769.



Congratulations



Sylvia Andino's (Criminal Court Records) son, **Jorge Andino Jr.**, and his wife, Amber Beilstein, were married on February 17, 2023. Sylvia's grandson, Alexander James Andino, was the best man (pictured with the couple).

Gone but not Forgotten

The Pen is saddened to report the passing of the following retirees:

Michael Agliano, 67, of Fleming Island, passed away on February 8, 2023. Agliano retired in 2021 as a Chief Park Ranger with Parks & Conservation Resources after 16 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View his obituary.](#)



Doris Chartrand, 64, of Largo, passed away on February 22, 2023. Chartrand retired in 2020 as a Tax Technician 2 with the Tax Collector's Office after 33 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View her obituary.](#)



Gertrude Graska, 97, of Clearwater, passed away on February 1, 2023. Graska retired in 1993 after 16 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View her obituary.](#)



Oscar J. Laurence, 78, of St. Petersburg, passed away on February 11, 2023. Laurence retired in 2007 as a Branch Office Manager with Clerk of the Circuit Court after 17 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View his obituary.](#)



Robert Lowry, 86, of St. Petersburg, passed away on February 4, 2023. Lowry retired in 1997 with the Tax Collector's Office. [View his obituary.](#)

Gone but not Forgotten

The Pen is saddened to report the passing of the following employee:



David Browning passed away on December 17, 2022. Browning was a Craftworker 1 with Administrative Services. He had over 38 years of service with Pinellas County Government. A Celebration of Life will be held on March 25 at 10:00 a.m. at Clearview Baptist Church, 4301 38th Avenue North in St. Petersburg.