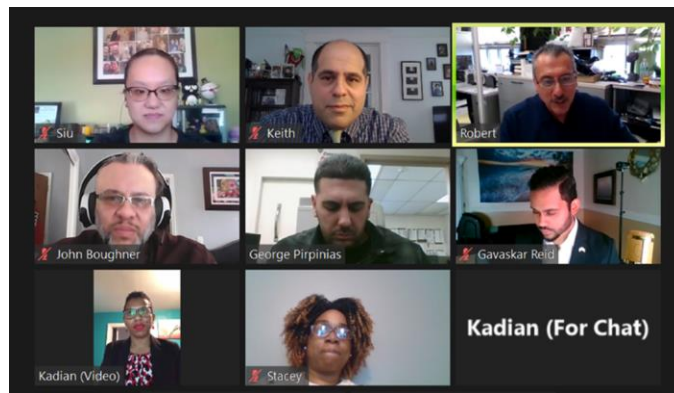


Promoting NYC Fleet Careers

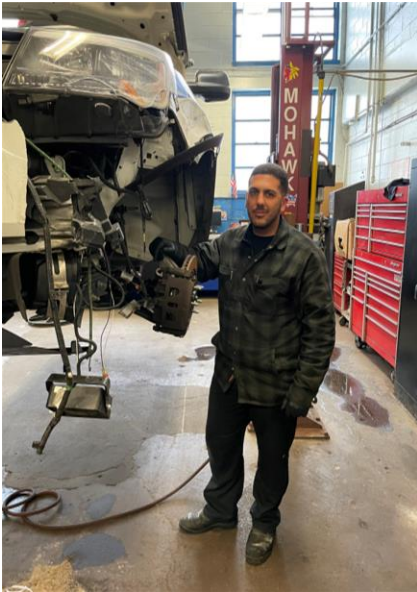
By: Keith T. Kerman and Henry Cornejo

This week, we would like to spotlight two NYC employees, George Pirpinias, NYPD Fleet, and Robert Bernacett, DOT Fleet, who were the guest speakers for the Automotive Careers in City Government Panel hosted by the DCAS Office of Citywide Recruitment on January 21, 2021. The purpose of the panel was to introduce students, recent graduates from Career and Technical Education (CTE) schools, and anyone else interested, to automotive career opportunities within city agencies and to highlight the current civil service exam for Automotive Service Workers (ASW). Both George and Robert began their careers as ASWs and were promoted up the ranks, demonstrating this important career path.



George Pirpinias has been with NYPD since 2008 and was promoted to Body Shop Mechanic from Auto Service Worker. For George, automotive is a family affair. His father was a mechanic for the NYPD and cars were a way of life for George. "I'd be right next to my dad," recalls George, "as he was working on a car in the garage." Early on, George was determined to follow his father's footsteps as a mechanic with the City. George attended Francis Lewis High School and also the New York Automotive and Diesel Institute. After a little private sector experience, he joined the City fleet as an ASW in 2008. In 2012, he was promoted to Auto Mechanic at NYPD Shop 1 in Queens where he currently works. George says "I love what I do, but most importantly I love that I can take a beaten vehicle and bring it back to life."

"There's always work to be done at the shop", George says. Shop 1 receives vehicles with varying degrees of problems, from minor fender benders to severely damaged vehicles. As a Body Shop Mechanic, George focuses on repairing the external frame and look of the vehicle, but also makes sure all internal components are in proper condition. When not working on NYPD vehicles, you can find George spending time with his family or working on his own vehicles, especially his fox-body Ford Mustang.



Robert Bernacett of DOT Fleet also began as an Auto Service Worker for NYPD. However, in his case, it was 45 years ago in 1976. He got his training at Brooklyn Automotive High School. Robert's Mom encouraged him to pursue an automotive career since the world would always need mechanics. This is as true now as it was then, and Robert continues his service to NYC.

From NYPD, Robert joined DOT Fleet Services in 1979 and never looked back, soon being promoted to an auto mechanic. "If it wasn't for mechanics," explains Robert, "things wouldn't move and operations would suffer. Being able to use your skills to find efficient solutions to difficult problems is why I loved being a mechanic."

Robert's career progress didn't stop there. Thanks to his experience and seriousness, Robert became a supervisor of mechanics for 12 years, then chief of operations for 2 years, and finally director of fleet allocations at Harper Street Yards.

In his current role as director, Robert makes sure that all vehicles DOT acquires are processed, registered into the Fleet Focus System, and distributed to the different divisions within DOT. Across six decades, Robert has seen the automotive profession evolve. "There is a very high demand of ASWs now and it's probably the best time to become one as well. Technology changes every year and having the ability to be a part of that is very exciting. If you put your mind together and believe you can do better, it is possible!" When he's not working, you can find Robert maintaining his own vehicles and practicing with his bass guitar to George Benson tunes.



George and Robert joined NYC Fleet Chief Keith Kerman to promote automotive careers to over 100 students and others on the recruitment call. The City Talk program was put together by Kadian Outar, Executive Director of the Office of Citywide Equity and Inclusion (OCEI) and John Boughner, Deputy Director of the Office Citywide Recruitment, who also discussed City government careers in general and how to pursue the ASW exam. Thanks also to Siu Cheng and Stacey Jacob of DCAS OCEI, and Reid Gavaskar, DOE CTE for partnering on the event. To learn more about NYC jobs and careers, please go to nyc.gov/jobs. To learn more about the civil service process, go to [DCAS's website](#).

Thanks to DOT, NYPD, DOE, and DCAS OCEI for supporting this important effort.

Check out past editions of the Fleet Newsletter

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 333, January 26, 2021](#): DCAS Rolls Out Fast EV Charging for Fleet and Public

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 332, January 13, 2021](#): Winter Fleet Operations

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 331, December 30, 2020](#): NYC Fleet Year in Review, 2020

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 330, December 23, 2020](#): Fleet Salutes Cliff Francis, DCAS Quality Assurance

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 329, December 16, 2020](#): Increasing Diversity in Fleet Service Suppliers

Check out the [complete archive](#).

// CONNECT WITH DCAS TO FOLLOW NYC FLEET //



Visit us on the web at nyc.gov/DCAS
