

Inside Citywide Podcast Transcript

Episode 4: Public Service: Careers in NYC Government

Michael Santos: You are listening to the Inside Citywide podcast, brought to you by the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services. Inside Citywide provides you with a behind the scenes look at some of the work we do to serve the people of New York City.

Belinda French: Hello everyone. Welcome to Inside Citywide. I'm Belinda French.

Nick Benson: And I'm Nick Benson. Thanks for joining us today. We're going to have a great conversation about careers in New York City government. We'll be discussing the kinds of jobs available, how to get hired, and why city government is a great place to work.

Belinda French: We have to really accomplish guests who know city government inside and out, both play key roles in opening doors for people who are interested in working for the City.

Nick Benson: Our first guest is Dawn Pinnock, who serves as executive deputy commissioner at DCAS. Dawn maintained citywide oversight of services provided to the human resources, equal employment and diversity and inclusion departments across city government. Thanks for joining us, Dawn.

Dawn Pinnock: Thank you. I'm so happy to be here.

Belinda French: And we are also joined by Claudette Hamilton, assistant commissioner for human resource operations at the New York City Department of Correction. Welcome Claudette.

Claudette Hamilton: Thank you, Belinda.

Nick Benson: Dawn, I want to start with you as we begin our conversation about careers in city government. As I mentioned, you currently serve as executive deputy commissioner at DCAS, but you've actually served in a variety of different roles with the City. Tell us a little bit about your personal story. How did you end up working for the City and what has been your trajectory?

Dawn Pinnock: Thanks Nick. I am a native New Yorker born and raised in New York City. I'm a proud product of the New York City public school system. I attended Baruch College, which is part of the City University of New York. Later, I went to grad school here as well. In addition, I'm from a family of government workers. My father formally served as part of the court system. My mother worked at New York City Transit, and my sister also held different positions in city government.

So, you would think with that background, that my transition into government would have been a no brainer, but, I think as most rebellious folks, when they're graduating from

college, I had no interest in doing anything that my parents did. So, my goal was to go to the private sector and be a marketing executive and make tons of money.

So, after doing a bit of freelancing, while I was good at marketing, I just wasn't interested in it. And eventually I landed in the not-for-profit sector. And I worked as a project coordinator, specifically for a public health program that serviced women and children in Haiti. And so, with that program, I was able to use my marketing skills, but also I immediately fell in love with the service aspect of the work.

I loved providing services, creating trainings and programs, and being indirect services to clients in need. The only part of the work I did not like was at that time, at least in the not-for-profit world while the work was great and it was valuable, it really did not help me cover my student loans.

You know, there were times, unfortunately, where we just did not have stable compensation and I needed to make a switch. My sister is actually the person who encouraged me to look at government as an option, and at that time, and I know I'm completely aging myself right now. That was the time when you would actually buy the newspaper the Sunday New York times. And you would scroll through all the job postings. And that's what I did. I submitted a cover letter and resume to a few agencies and the Department of Probation called me back. And ultimately, I was hired to serve there as a help health and safety coordinator where I provided training to probation officers and all staff. And I think as most people entering the city, I thought I'd be there for two years. And that was 24 years ago. So, after serving at probation, I went back to school, worked full time, still at probation, and then DCAS, which is one of the reasons why I love this agency, they hosted a job fair for recent grad students.

I participated in the job fair and then I was hired at another agency that no longer exists, that was DJJ, Department of Juvenile Justice. And following that role, I then had the opportunity to serve at the New York City Housing Authority, New York City Transit, and ultimately, being here at DCAS. So, I sit here with you today after serving five agencies, and this is my 11th job in government.

So, I'm so happy today to really highlight how to navigate the system because the City of New York has been great to me.

Nick Benson: So, I can definitely relate to what you're talking about with student loans. And I've found it interesting that several of the guests that we've had have, talked about how they also had a history of family that's in public service.

And you know, I'm actually a fourth generation working in public service as well. So, I just find that so interesting that even if you don't think you're going to go in that direction, so many people end up doing that.

Dawn Pinnock: Absolutely.

Belinda French: You know, Dawn, I can remember looking in the papers too for exams in City jobs. So, I'm right with you with aging myself. So, thank you for saying that. Claudette, what about you? Tell us about your own journey in city government. What got you into city

government? What are some of the roles you've played and also, what have you found to be the most rewarding?

Claudette Hamilton: Thank you, Belinda for that question. My personal journey is a bit different than most, I guess. I migrated to the U.S. In July of 1985 and started working with the City in September of 1985.

So, working for the City was my first job in the United States looking back. Hmm. This is quite unusual for most immigrants. And I consider myself very, very lucky. I remember my great aunt who worked for the Board of Ed, god bless her soul. She just passed away at the age of 99, sending me to the Department of Labor, downtown Brooklyn. Most people don't know this, to interview for a job at that time it was the department of labor and I interviewed for a position with the Department of Transportation, and I got that job. So, my first introduction to the City was as a provisional employee. I got the job. And from there I worked as a secretary and two years later I took the exam because she kept telling me, take a civil service exam . And I passed my civil service exam. And from then since 1985, I've been with the City. I worked in transportation as a recording secretary, coordinator, chief of staff at children's services, supervisor, deputy director in finance ,department of treasury, executive director in HR ,and now assistant commissioner in HR.

So, you know, quite a few positions and I've worked my way up and, I worked very hard, and I must say I like working for the City because it gives me the ability to help people , it sounds cliché, but it's the truth. Everybody talks about service and I like improving processes. I get a high level of satisfaction, knowing that I made a difference to someone on a project or anything that highlights concrete results. I really do like that about City service.

Belinda French: I can certainly appreciate your experience and just smile at you being able to walk in and interview and get a job with the City. So, I'm so glad that you're still here and I know most, most employees, even myself, wanted to join the City to really help people. So, thank you for that.

Nick Benson: And Dawn, you gave us some insight into your own career journey and you've clearly found City service to be rewarding. If you had to make an elevator pitch to somebody about why they should consider working for the City, what would you say to them?

Dawn Pinnock: Thanks, Nick. That's a great question. I usually try to prepare myself depending on the audience. And so usually I start off with a question. So for instance, I'll say, "Are you interested in getting paid to make a positive impact on the lives of New Yorkers?", And nine times out of 10 ,if folks live in New York City, they're going to say yes. And then I follow that up with you know, the fact that the City of New York hires in fields and expertise that rival the private sector. But what makes us unique is that we offer job stability, pension, and a generous benefits package that you won't find in the private and public sectors. And if 2020 hasn't taught us anything, it has certainly highlighted the importance of job stability and access to affordable healthcare. So if you'd like to talk more about a job with the City of New York, here's my card.

Nick Benson: Yeah, that's that is certainly true. It's something that you just don't see any more in the private sector. In the public sector you have unions and such like that in the private sector you just don't have that so much these days.

Dawn Pinnock: Exactly.

Belinda French: And Claudette, I'll pose the same question to you. Why should people consider careers in city government?

Claudette Hamilton: Thank you, Belinda. And I'm always an advocate for working for the City. Because I've always lived in New York City, like I said before, of course I landed in Brooklyn, New York when I came to this country. I get a special feeling working for the City because my contribution improves my lifestyle and the quality of life for everyone. So, if I touch on a few, I will say, it provides a security, stability for me and my family. I also have all the family members that are in city government or in the federal government, my sister served in the military, for example, and I have a niece that works in the law of Congress, and it just runs in my family, I guess. Similar to Dawn, but in a different country. I'm getting ready to retire in a few months. You may not believe, and it has paid off in more ways than one. My 36 years, I was able to work, go to college and raise my son all at the same time. Because I worked with some amazing bosses who had similar values, wanting to see others succeed. And that would be my pitch to anyone who wants to work for the City. Thank you.

Belinda French: I can surely understand, you know, especially today, stability and employment is so important. And I'm so glad we're doing this podcast with you because I had no idea you were retiring. So, thank you for being here with us.

Nick Benson: Yeah, congratulations that's wonderful. So, most people probably don't know this, but the City of New York has roughly 400,000 employees, which if this were a private company would make it the seventh largest company in America. These 400,000 employees span virtually every kind of job imaginable. There really is a place for people with every background.

So, if a person is sold on working for the City, they heard your elevator pitch, and they want to pursue a career with the City. Where do they start? Dawn, I'll let you take this one.

Dawn Pinnock: Okay, great. I just have to say this, and I know it's not directly tied to the question. Congratulations, Claudette. She just dropped a bomb during this conversation so I think I'm trying to compose myself from the shock because she will definitely be missed. But if someone is interested in starting a path here within the city, the first place that I would tell them to look would really be our centralized jobs portal. So, we have a jobs portal at nyc.gov.

And what it includes are various internship opportunities, fellowships, and part-time and full-time job opportunities. And really you have a chance there to see what the City is offering. In addition to that, I would recommend that if someone is looking to work within the City, that they follow a few paths, depending on where they are.

If they're currently in college, they may look for something that's part-time. So, working with the City, you can have a meaningful job on a part-time basis through an internship opportunity, you can learn the ins and outs of an agency and those transferable skills will serve you well, when you want full-time employment.

I would also recommend that they review our examination schedule. And I know that we touched upon this a bit when Claudette mentioned that she was hired as a provisional employee. The City of New York is considered to be a civil service municipality, which means that the majority of our positions may require a competitive exam in order for you to be eligible or deemed eligible for a job.

And so, I would highly recommend that if you are interested in full-time employment, that you want to really cast the widest net possible in terms of making sure that you can secure a job. And that would be either through an internship, fellowship, a job posting, or taking a civil service exam.

Nick Benson: So once somebody takes a civil service exam, kind of what's the next step from there? So, they sign up, they go to DCAS's website, they sign up for the test, they come in and they take it online or in person at one of our testing centers, and then what do they expect from there?

Dawn Pinnock: So generally, after the exam, they would be notified of their results. So, if they pass, generally they will receive a list number, which essentially is your rank on a list. So, let's say if 10 people took an exam, which definitely is not, it's not at all what happens here in this really large as dynamic city, but for simplicity's sake, if 10 people took this exam, you may have received 92% out of 100 that may have you serve in the rank of number three on that particular exam. So, number three would be your list number.

So, at the time that an agency has a vacancy, they would potentially call candidates from that list and conduct interviews. And so that would be the next phase in the process. Oh, and one thing I do want to add is that even after you received your results, considering the fact that our civil service system is grounded in fairness, equity, someone demonstrating their merit and fitness, there also is a process through which you can appeal your score. So, if you believe that your answer is just as good as an answer on our answer key, you have an opportunity to protest and that could actually result in increasing your grades.

Nick Benson: Yeah, you alluded to it, but one of the great things about civil service is it's truly an impartial and fair way to do hiring. You can't have favoritism and it really roots it out where it's not, you know, some elected official, just putting all their friends in jobs. It's really a way for everybody to have access and opportunity.

Dawn Pinnock: And you're absolutely right Nick. And that is one of the things that encouraged my parents to become civil servants, frankly, you know, they knew that it was going to be an equalizer for them that no one knew their gender, no one knew their race and they could take and pass an exam and ultimately be able to take care of their families.

Belinda French: Claudette, you have some unique insight into careers in city government in your role overseeing human resource operations at the Department of Correction. So, I have

a two-part question for you. What kind of career opportunities are available at the Department of Correction (DOC) and what would you recommend to someone interested in working for DOC?

Claudette Hamilton: Thank you, Belinda. As you know, our core business is in protecting people that are in our custody, persons in our custody. So, we hire correction officers, which is the majority of our staff. And that comes with taking an exam, as Dawn mentioned before, and going through that process of being selected for a correction officer positions. We also have correctional counselors and program counselors that work directly with our programs division providing services for our persons in custody. We also hire staff, nurses, recreation coordinators. Believe it or not, yes, we do hire cooks, institutional aids, dietary aids, and the support services, in titles like maintenance workers, electricians, plumbers, social workers, and some of these titles, you have to take an exam and some, you do not have to take an exam. And the pathway into getting into these jobs or applying for these jobs is, as Dawn mentioned, through nyc.gov job opportunities, and you just search for Department of Correction and all the available job postings that are there will come up and you can apply for a position there. For those that take the correction officer exams, whenever we are hiring a class, we reach out to the passers on that exam and they go through that orientation process and selection process to become correction officers.

And I want to note that there's a clear path as a correction officer to rise through the ranks. Do you become a correction officer? You take an exam, you become a captain, another exam to be an assistant deputy warden, and the highest position to warden or other bureau chiefs or chief of department. And it is possible because the historically the chief of department started out as a correction officer.

Belinda French: That's so interesting. So many times, when you hear DOC, you only think of correction officers. So, hearing some of these other positions like counselors, nurses, cooks, it's really good to know that information.

And that's actually a good segue to something that I want to ask you, Dawn. You discussed where a person can start if they're interested in city government. But another important part of DCAS's work is to proactively recruit people for City jobs and make sure we're recruiting a workforce that reflects the diversity of our city.

So, what I want to ask you, Dawn, is how does DCAS do this? And how does the City generally try to reach diverse populations, including those who both of you have said may have not initially considered a city job. So, if you could tell us a little bit about that.

Dawn Pinnock: Thanks, Belinda. You're actually touching upon one of my favorite projects that I had the opportunity to be a part of.

So, during my time here at DCAS, I had the awesome privilege of being able to create and establish the City's first office of citywide recruitment. The team there, they're amazing. Their reach across the city has been tremendous and really their sole job is to market the city as an employer. One of the things that we noticed was that, you know, just mentioning the fact that you could have a stable job and, and a pension that really wasn't enough for us

to really have true diversity across every job category. And when I say diversity, I mean across gender, race, age. And so, what we wanted to do was take a more data-driven and thoughtful approach to really opening the City's doors to anyone who wanted to serve.

And so, through the creation of the office of citywide recruitment, we use our information across job categories, our utilization data, our representation data, to determine where within the city, we should go truly market the city as an employer. Whether we're talking about an upcoming exam and explaining the examinations process or being able to walk someone through what it means to work for the City of New York for an upcoming internship or job that doesn't require an exam, you know, the OCR team, they're there. One thing that I'm so proud of is how they've not only marketed the city. They've done a great job at informing individuals of what it means to be part of a civil service environment. Because when individuals hear about taking an exam, we sometimes scare off some of our potential candidates.

And what they do is they demystify civil service. They walk them through that process. They let them know what they can expect after taking an exam. And they also create really solid partnerships with community-based organizations and also a host of religious groups, political groups as well in order to cast the widest net possible for everyone to know that New York City is a great place to work and serve if someone is interested. So, to date I think that they've reached over 100,000 job seekers and considering the fact that they have less than a handful of staff, they have really done a tremendous job to market the City of New York and I'm super proud of their efforts.

Belinda French: In my role, I work with them as well. So, you know, I can also personally say that OCR has been a great team, just even in recruiting jobs for DCAS so we're so happy to have them here.

Nick Benson: And Claudette, in preparing for today's conversation, I looked at some of the data about the Department of Correction workforce, and I was really impressed to see that like New York City, DOC's workforce is majority minority. I also noticed that even in a field that's, you know, I'm sure traditionally male dominated, close to 45% of DOC workforce is women. So, what are some of the ways DOC has found success in building a diverse workforce? And what would you say to women in particular who might have an interest in working at a place like DOC, but you know, maybe they're a little bit apprehensive because of traditional gender roles.

Claudette Hamilton: Thank you for that question, Nick. Actually, many moons ago, the department did not hire females. So, it is interesting that you asked that question. And it's a little nuanced, but while I cannot point to a distinct reason why females are attracted to working for correction, I want to say that this job provides security and stability, as mentioned earlier. Most women are busy raising their families and being caregivers. They want stability and I think a natural instinct to be empathetic and compassionate and nurturing, looking to turn someone's life around is like second nature. And what better combination than to be strong, bold, and compassionate at the same time.

And yes, we did have a robust, a recruitment team that went to job fairs. We partnered with DCAS as well for our recruitment campaigns to attract test takers, to being correction officers. Females are motivated. Everyone is motivated. Everyone is motivated to be a correction officer, to be a captain, to be a deputy warden.

They move up through the ranks. Our last chief of the department was female. And while I cannot point to a distinct reason why females are attracted to this job; I do believe that we make a concerted effort to make our workforce diverse. Thank you.

Nick Benson: And it seems like there's really something to be said when people enter the workplace, and they see people who look like them or share an experience that they've had.

Do you feel like the employees at DOC like that's a big thing for them when they come in and they're like, "okay, I fit in here, I belong here. I'm included here." Do you think that makes a big difference when they see a diverse workforce, diverse colleagues?

Claudette Hamilton: I think that's definitely a motivation, and I'm glad that you mentioned seeing people that look like you, because that was one of my motivations in terms of being so inclined to move up and to work hard, and because I saw someone that looked like me doing something that I liked and that motivated me to like move forward and be aggressive, if I may use that word, and move up in the City and changing jobs in different city agencies, because I saw somebody that looked like me.

Nick Benson: Great. That's one of the wonderful things I just found across the City in general. So that's really great to hear.

Belinda French: Okay, Dawn my question is for you. We have talked so far about attracting people to city government, and how to get in. But this question speaks to once you're in, how do you move up? So, your own career is a great example of this, but once someone begins a career with the city, what kind of growth potential exists? How can you move up, take on new responsibilities, and really make your career as satisfying as possible?

Dawn Pinnock: That's a great, great question. So, in terms of growth. The short answer is yes, because the city, we have one close to 80 agencies, we have over 400,000 employees, over 2000 titles. Within the City of New York, there's never a shortage or problems that require resolution, right? So, if you're looking for interesting work, the City of New York is a great place for you. But what I would say is that sometimes the pathway is not as clear depending on where you currently sit. And I know that Claudette provided a really solid example of how when you come in as a correction officer, there is a very clear path to promotion that generally is done through an exam up until a certain point, but then you have other titles where, when I started with the City, I didn't take an exam. I was hired into a title that's considered non-competitive, meaning that I went through a more traditional way. And when I say traditional, I mean something that is similar to what happens in the private sector. I submitted my resume; I was interviewed, and I was ultimately appointed because that title did not require an exam.

So, when you serve in a non-competitive title, you don't have an exam that you can take to move to that next level. So, in navigating your career, I think the first thing you need to do is

to ask yourself a very, very clear question. What's your primary driver? So, if your primary driver is money, then you need to make sure that you are looking at job postings, that position you to earn more, right?

It makes no sense for you to waste our time or interviewer's time. But if your primary driver is to potentially switch careers and transition into something new to expand your skillset? Certainly, there are stretch assignments that are always readily available. You know, I am a big fan of someone volunteering for the project no one wants to take on. That certainly has been a secret to my success. There was a database that no one could get working. If there was a stakeholder relationship that needed to be developed, that helped us move the work forward and no one else could do it, and it was considered a headache. I would volunteer for that work.

It also helped me to create this solid toolkit of experience that I was able to use for making a transition as a health and safety professional into HR, and then ultimately to go into a space that involves equal opportunity and diversity and inclusion. So, I'm a big fan of not only looking to move up, but also looking to expand your breath of knowledge.

And so, one of the other things I did want to add was after you ask yourself that question, and if you do want to promote up through a particular title series, then you should also take a look at what exams currently exist, work with your HR departments. Most agencies I know, and I know we have a larger audience than just city agencies, but if you work at a city agency, you may also have a career counselor. Talk to them about what you think that next logical step is in your career.

And they can also provide you with guidance as to whether that could be through another exam or through recommending or volunteering for certain assignments where you can get an exposure opportunity. And so, I certainly think that that's the way to have a rewarding and enriching career in the City because you will certainly stumble upon a host of interesting problems that needs to be addressed, but also you then create relationships and a body of work that people will ultimately respect as you are seeking to advance.

Belinda French: I wish you were with me 16 years ago when I joined the City, because you dropped some really good gems there. And while I think I followed some of that pathway, it certainly probably took me a lot longer than it should have, so thank you for that.

Dawn Pinnock: Absolutely.

Nick Benson: So, as we wind down our conversation today, I really want to personalize city government a bit for people. People often see government as this big intimidating entity, or maybe don't quite understand how it works at times. So, this question is for both of you, but what is your proudest achievement in city government, or what is something that's really memorable? You know, where you feel like you, you made a big difference. Claudette let's start with you.

Claudette Hamilton: Where I did I feel I made a difference? Well, it's those moments where the results may not be monumental, like a huge shift in policy, but where you helped someone rather. Whether it's to navigate a process or untangle a web or steer them along

the right career path or provide clarity on how to get services outside of city government, when all their internal resources have been exhausted.

It is the moment when someone remembers your name and says, "thank you" and they may say when you did something. Sometimes it brings tears to my eyes. At the end of the day, I want to be seen so that someone else will know that they too can be seen because someone saw me. And for that, I am grateful and as I wind down, I said before that I'm getting ready to retire probably by the end of the year, the City has been awesome. The City has been good. I don't think I would want to live anywhere else other than New York City. And I'm so happy and glad that I chose this career path and met so many great people during my journey.

Nick Benson: Yeah, that's so great. You know, we're just meeting each other here today and just to hear the love and the passion that you have for the work that you've done and the personal connections and relationships you've made. I just think that's one thing people maybe don't think about in city government, that the people here truly are mission driven and care about uplifting and helping other people.

So, it's just great to hear how much that that's meant to you and congratulations again on your retirement and for putting in so many years of wonderful service to your fellow New Yorkers.

Belinda French: And Dawn, I know you've won a lot of hats in your time in city government, but what stands out to you as something you're really proud of where you felt like you made a difference?

Dawn Pinnock: Thank you Belinda. During my 24 years, I have had the awesome privilege of working on a host of policies and programs that I know I've had a direct impact on people I will never see, and that makes me feel wonderful. But if I had to narrow it down specifically here at my job at DCAS where we have citywide reach and we get the opportunity to work with every agency, there are three projects that I've had a chance to be part of that I am profoundly grateful for having that experience. The first, we were able to develop a new civil service exam that had never been developed, which required that we change civil service law, and for those of you who know anything about civil service law, it dates back to the 1880s.

So changing laws that go back that far is no easy feat, but we created an exam that provided jobs stability for thousands of New Yorkers who were concerned about the stability of their job. And through creating that test type, we provided them with that comfort that they so richly deserved. And we also helped to assure continued operations across the city.

I also had the opportunity to partner with CUNY and the team here to create the Civil Service Pathways Fellowship, which as a CUNY grad, it is an awesome privilege to be able to give back because I knew how difficult it was to just jump into a City job after graduating. And just the caliber of talent that has come out of that program has certainly lit even more of a fire within me when I see what the City can do in years to come. And then the last is a more recent project where DCAS specifically has decided to create internally a Race Equity

Initiative, where some colleagues and I have had the opportunity to create safe spaces for our employees to be seen and heard, as credit mentioned, and specifically talk about matters related to race and equity.

Our goal is really to advance the workforce, and if we don't have tough conversations, we can't do it. So, I feel absolutely privileged and honored to have been part of those programs, and I'm hoping that they stay here for many years to come.

Belinda French: I would agree, as both you and Claudette said that being seen and heard as a City employee is so important, and you mentioned something else that I wanted to talk about also is the policies behind our procedures and just also making a difference there is so helpful to all of us who work in city government. So, you know what I want to thank both of our guests today for joining us for this conversation, it's really incredible how many opportunities are available in city government and how much of a difference you can make for others. Dawn, Claudette, both of you are a great example of this. So, thank you. Thank you so much.

Dawn Pinnock: Thank you so much for having us.

Claudette Hamilton: Thank you. It was my pleasure.

Nick Benson: So that was a really great conversation and I love it any time we get to highlight the importance of public service.

Belinda French: I agree.

Nick Benson: So, I know we asked our guests this question, but, Belinda, what is something you are really proud of where you felt like you made a difference as a public servant? Cause I know you love the work that you do.

Belinda French: Yeah, I really do, and I would have to say my answer would be similar to what Claudette said. I think over the years, just based on my role, I've had some really great opportunities to be a part of some groundbreaking city initiatives that support diversity and inclusion, this podcast, even being one of them.

And I think over that time, just being given the opportunity, I never took that for granted. So you know, did my best, and along the way, I think the reward was having so many mentors and so many supportive working relationships that are actually really solid to this day. So just hearing people say, "Oh, you know Belinda should know something about that, go speak with her," or just, you know, different things. What people say about me or what happens and leads people to me, I think is just, again, the most rewarding thing. It helps me know that I'm doing an okay job, I think. And what about you, Nick? Where do you think you've made a difference?

Nick Benson: Well, first of all, you have are definitely a trusted resource to so many people across the agency. I hear it all the time from staff that I manage or other people I interact with. They definitely love your counsel and the wisdom and advice you bring to the table. So that's, that is definitely true, and you should definitely be proud of that.

Belinda French: Thank you for that.

Nick Benson: So, you know, I've had a number of different roles. I worked for the Ohio state treasurer, the Ohio attorney general, some political campaigns, New York attorney general, and then here in city government, and most of those jobs have been communications related.

And I think what I really love and I'm proudest of, is telling other people's stories. Letting people get a behind the scenes, look of what government is doing for them, because a lot of times people maybe don't have faith in government or have a lack of trust, or you see a lot of times in the media government and elected officials getting beat up for things fairly or unfairly sometimes. And there's just so much good work that's happening. And so many really great and talented, passionate, hardworking people. And I think anytime that I get to shine a light on that and highlight them, it's great because I know they appreciate it and it helps New Yorkers in this case, really understand what's being done on their behalf and that they've got a lot of people, 400,000 people who are looking out for them and trying to make their lives a little bit better. And then, you know, when I worked for the New York attorney general, that office, has such an incredible reach, not just within New York state, but because so many businesses are based out of New York, and this is sort of the financial capital of the country in the world. A lot of the cases they took on, they got to take on, some of the biggest, most powerful banks and financial institutions, powerful interests in this country. And we were able to fight for the little guy and really make a difference, level the playing field, hold people accountable when they were fraudsters or were doing wrong, and I just loved being able to amplify that work because day in and day out, we were making lives better for people. And so, I really valued that particular time in my career and the work that we did.

Belinda French: Well, I can certainly say here at DCAS, working with you, you know, you think communications is just about branding or something like that, but through your role, you've really given people who might not have a voice, a voice, whether it's through our website or through our newsletters, and things like that. Just really spotlighting, the workers every day. So, I appreciate that as well.

Nick Benson: Well, thanks. And yeah, anytime you can do something to kind of boost people's morale and to highlight their work. It's good to make people feel appreciated.

So, I want to thank all of our listeners for joining us for this conversation. We love hearing from you and getting your feedback. If you enjoyed today's conversations, you can like and subscribe to Inside Citywide on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, or wherever you listen. You can also leave us a review on apple podcasts, every review helps other listeners find our podcasts. So, you can definitely do that to help us out. So, thank you for tuning in.

Michael Santos: Thank you for listening to Inside Citywide. Insights Citywide is brought to you by the New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services and is produced by Michael Santos.

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