NYC Fleet Spotlight: Juana Garcia and the New York Harbor School

By: Keith Kerman and Valentino Balzora

While NYC Fleet is mostly about vehicles, DCAS also partners in many areas with the City’s boating and marine programs. Today’s spotlight discusses Juana Garcia, the City’s first female dockmaster, and the NYC Harbor School on Governors Island.

NYC Parks Marine Division manages three in-house marinas as well as other boating facilities citywide. Juana Garcia is a Supervising Dockmaster at the 79th Street Boat Basin in Manhattan and began working for Parks on May 1, 2018.

Maritime education is very important to Juana, an alumnum of the New York Harbor School, a public high school located on Governors Island focused on careers on the water. Harbor School is part of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) program at the Department of Education. This program also includes the automotive high schools and DCAS toured the Harbor School on November 14.

When Harbor School officially opened in 2003, Juana, “had no idea what that was or meant, but was thrilled to learn about it.” After graduating, she attended Kingsborough Community College and was employed as a deckhand with New York Water Taxi. While there, Juana set a personal goal of becoming a captain. Harbor School operates a high tech simulator, pictured here, to help students learn to take the helm.

In March 2013, after working ten years in New York Harbor, Juana achieved her goal of becoming a captain and managing

Now, as Parks Department dockmaster, Juana helps operate the Boat Basin, safely directing vessels in and around the marina, enforcing regulations, and promoting boating activities. Juana thoroughly enjoys the customer service aspect of her job as it allows her to meet and interact with people from all over the world. True to her roots, Juana also assists with marina education initiatives, including supporting the historic vessels that operate at the marina.

Juana lives in Brooklyn with her two young children Charles and Jeanine, as well as her fiancé John. She enjoys spending as much time as possible on or near the water with her family.

Congratulations to Juana. Thanks also to Captain Aaron Singh, Waterfront Director at the Harbor School, and Chief of Waterfront and Marine Operations Nate Grove for all their great work on the water.

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