

NYC Fleet Spotlight - Chris Towns, FDNY

By: Keith T. Kerman and Henry Cornejo

In this special edition of our newsletter, we have a first. Instead of presenting a great employee working in fleet, we discuss one who left us, Chris Towns, who is currently a firefighter in Battalion 1, Engine 7, Tower Ladder 1.

Before joining the FDNY, Chris was a part of the Fleet Management team at DCAS for over three years. He worked directly with Jon Ells, our director of sustainability and a volunteer firefighter himself, in bringing electric vehicles and charging infrastructure to agencies, and he is proud to have been part of the initial push towards electrification.

Chris first joined fleet with the used vehicle auction program. Each week, Chris would coordinate a list of relinquished vehicles from agencies for tow companies to pick up, and he would assist in deciding whether certain auction bids were adequate for the vehicle being sold. From auction, Chris moved to our green fleet program, helping monitor and place our EV charging stations and solar carports. Chris played a key role as we built the largest EV charging network in NY State, which we discussed in [last week's newsletter](#).

His last day working for DCAS was on the day of the Vision Zero Fleet Safety Forum on October 31, 2019. Immediately after the event, Chris went to Randall's Island, *The Rock*, where he would begin his journey at the FDNY Academy.

Chris was put to the test every day, constantly learning and being molded to become an NYC firefighter. As Chris relayed, "It was definitely a culture shock. I would come home exhausted and repeat it the next day."

Originally scheduled for 20 weeks, the academy was cut short when the COVID-19 pandemic began to hit the city and his class. In the 18th week of the academy, a few days after the city shut down, Chris and his class were sent to their designated firehouse to begin working.

A day after he joined his firehouse, Chris contracted COVID-19 as did many of his colleagues. "This was in the beginning stages of the pandemic and no tests were out yet," Chris reflected. "Once I was able to obtain a test, it confirmed that I did have COVID."



Thankfully, Chris recovered and had a mild case. As an emergency responder, Chris was also able to get the vaccine as soon as it came out, in his case, December of last year.

The role of an engine company is to protect a ladder company so that they have the ability to search for victims during a fire. Being part of engine company, Chris and his fellow firefighters work closely together using fire hoses to put out fires. Chris has been impressed with the comradery of FDNY firefighters when responding to a major fire. As per Chris, “watching them work in unison, some for the first time with each other, with the clear goal of getting the job done with few to no injuries has been great to see.”

If he’s not at the firehouse, you can catch Chris playing as much golf as he can, traveling, or spending time with his girlfriend.

While we miss him at DCAS, we are happy that Chris successfully made the change and proud that Chris has joined NYC’s Bravest. So much so, we’ll give him the last word: “It’s really an awesome job, I love it!”

NYC Parks 32nd Annual Equipment & Vehicle Show



[NYC Parks 32nd Annual Equipment & Vehicle Show](#) will highlight vendors who support NYC’s Clean Fleet and Vision Zero initiatives, as well as daily operations.

The show is free to all exhibitors and attendees and has been rescheduled to **Wednesday, September 22**
9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Fleet Vision International Summer 2021 Quarter 3

Fleet Vision International is an international magazine aimed at fleet, transport, and operational and workshop depot directors/managers.

[The Fleet Vision International 2021 Quarter 3 edition](#) has now been published and focuses on the City of New York’s vehicle telematics and DCAS 's Fleet Office of Real-Time Tracking (FORT).





DCAS's Inside Citywide Podcast

DCAS's new [Inside Citywide podcast](#) provides a behind-the-scenes look at New York City government. Episode 2 is out now and takes a look at the future of the City of New York's vehicle fleet as it transitions to all-electric by 2040.

COVID-19 Safety Reminder

For all fleet drivers, please be reminded to wear a mask when operating a fleet vehicle with others in the vehicle. Attached again are the [Department of Health's COVID-19 Safety Guidelines relating to vehicle operation.](#)

Check out past editions of the Fleet Newsletter

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 353, July 23, 2021:](#) Fleet Services First 1,000+ Public EV Customers

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 352, July 16, 2021:](#) NYC Fleet Spotlight: Peter Galvin, Parks Fleet

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 351, July 9, 2021:](#) DCAS Posts Record Fleet Revenue for Second Straight Year

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 350, June 30, 2021:](#) Back to Basics for the Summer: Seatbelt Challenge!

[NYC Fleet Newsletter 349, June 25, 2021:](#) NYC Fleet Spotlight- DOT Mechanic Joe Cappellino

Check out the [complete archive.](#)

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