Above and Beyond Employee Recognition

“The City of Rowlett provides innovative citizen-centered services that exceed the expectations of our residents, businesses, and guests. Our purpose is to serve.”

This is our City’s mission statement, and it is one your City staff takes very seriously. A career in public service is a true calling, and although often behind the scenes, these dedicated folks provide conscientious and exemplary care as they keep our water running, our parks a clean and safe place for you to enjoy, design and maintain our streets and alleys, create an environment for those in all stages of life to learn and find entertainment, bring new and exciting developments to our City, and administer sound financial stewardship to our taxpayer dollars.

A program is held each December to formally recognize those City of Rowlett employees who have truly gone above and beyond the norm in their respective positions. Many are nominated by their peers, some are submitted by citizens who want to recognize the impact made in a particular situation, and many are brought forth by the City Manager.

This month, I would like to highlight these staff members. I am so proud to serve as the Mayor of a city whose staff displays the level of commitment to the citizens they serve illustrated in these stories!

Mayor Tammy Dana-Bashian
Join me as we honor these City of Rowlett employees nominated by their peers for exemplary customer service.

**Service**
Given to an employee providing exceptional customer service.

**Team**
Given to an employee who promotes exceptional teamwork.

**Action**
Given to an employee who exhibits exceptional initiative while developing solutions to unique problems.

**Results**
Given to an employee who demonstrates exceptional performance. This includes bringing a successful resolution to a difficult or complex problem, following through on promises, and/or outstanding communication.

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Service Employee of the Year – Pat Atkins
Utility Billing Customer Service Representative

“You will always walk away with a smile on your face after visiting with Pat. She has been described as joyous, upbeat and extremely kind. Pat remembers even the smallest details and provides her Utility Billing customers with a sincere, personable visit each time they come in. She exemplifies what it means to be customer-centered, and customers even stay a little longer once their business is taken care of, just to catch up with her. Since joining the City of Rowlett as a temp, she has played a vital role within her department. Her positive attitude is contagious, and she has a special way of making everyone around her feel important. The level of service that Pat provides on behalf of the utility billing team each and every day is outstanding!”

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Team Employee of the Year – Dawn Smith
Police Department Administrative Services Manager

“Dawn promotes exceptional teamwork on a daily basis! She is reliable, kind, and is always willing to lend a helping hand. While she sits in one of the busiest departments, she never hesitates to provide support to her team members across the City. Dawn has the ability to humbly share ideas and provide encouraging input, making anyone feel welcomed and valued. She always has a positive attitude, and she sets an uplifting tone in any setting. Dawn serves on the City’s Employee Wellness Committee and volunteers for every employee event throughout the year, including the Holiday Luncheon, the Chili Cook-off and Bake-off, and the annual Salsa Challenge. Her dedicated efforts enhance staff’s sense of community and bring the entire City of Rowlett team together!”

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Action Employee of the Year – Eli Carmona Carrasquillo
Facilities Maintenance

“Eli is a gift to those lucky enough to be housed in the buildings he cares for. He always takes initiative beyond his regular job duties and his efforts have had an impact on several City departments, including some that he does not directly serve. He has a special way of anticipating the needs of his coworkers and “his” buildings, it is obvious that he takes pride in the work he does. Eli genuinely cares about creating and maintaining a pleasant work environment. You might see him holding the door open for a citizen or fellow coworker, lending a hand wherever it is needed without a grumble and with a smile on his face. He will drop whatever he is working on to help someone with a need. For example, he has been seen helping a citizen with a repair to her broken down car. He also gladly volunteers to escort employees and citizens into the building in the rain with an umbrella in hand. None of these charitable actions are required of him, and he does so without being asked. His courteous actions and considerate nature have not gone unnoticed.”
Results Employee of the Year – Mary Lynn Saxton, Librarian

“The dedication to Rowlett Library patrons exhibited by Mary Lynn is unmatched. She has a results-driven attitude, and her actions speak to that. She is always seeking the best options and works tirelessly to ensure that her department provides the highest level of service possible for our citizens. The driving force behind the Summer Reading Program, she handles any situation (and mobs of out-for-the-summer kids!) with poise and composure. Mary Lynn’s creativity and ingenuity have had a major impact on the operations of her department over the past year. Specifically, she started a learning program to occupy the after-school crowd that frequents the Library, helping them learn a little more about a topic they’re interested in while also allowing the nearby citizens to enjoy a peaceful environment.”

City Manager’s STAR Award

The Bayside/Sapphire Bay Team
- Daniel Acevedo, Assistant Director of Community Development
- Wendy Badgett, Director of Financial Services
- Jeff Cohen, Assistant City Engineer
- Tim Engle, Graduate Engineer
- Gary Enna, Interim Public Works Director
- Jim Grabenhorst, Director of Economic Development
- Tom Harris, City Engineer
- Dale Jackson, Building Official
- Munal Mauladad, Director of Community Development
- Mark McAvoy, Assistant City Manager
- Carlos Monsalve, Urban Designer
- Paul Stevens, Deputy City Manager
- Kaitlin Watkins, Senior Accountant

Each year, the City Manager provides a special award that focuses on teamwork. In 2015, the Rowlett Animal Services team was recognized for their extraordinary work in getting to a 99% live release rate. In 2016, the Building Inspections, Permitting and Fire Marshal’s Office teams were recognized for completing 16,683 inspections, 2,000 of which were in the areas of Rowlett impacted by the 2015 tornado. In 2017, Utility Billing, Meter Services and Meter Maintenance were recognized for directly improving customer service through the Automated Metering Intelligence (AMI) portal. Water customers now have access to alerts, charts, usage patterns, and more. And in 2018, the Library team was recognized for the extraordinary planning and execution involved in moving the Library back to the Village of Rowlett Downtown.

Sapphire Bay is one of the most important developments in Rowlett’s history. The employee team assembled to shepherd this $1 billion project through the legal transitions and into the future included a cross section of multiple departments including Community Development, Public Works, Financial Services, Economic Development, and the City Manager’s Office. This team worked with our City Attorney, third party legal team, financial advisors and our City Council and was essential to the success of this project. And they absolutely delivered – all while maintaining the daily tasks of their “regular” jobs!

On March 8, the City of Rowlett reached an agreement with Bayside Land Partners to acquire the property south of IH-30, including the marina, to enable its development with a future partner. In July, after 144 days, we closed on the property and announced our new development partner, Sapphire Bay Land Development, LLC.

Construction is now underway on Sapphire Bay. With features such as a Crystal Lagoons amenity and an island entertainment component with an incredible synchronized water and video show; a resort and conference center; a world class marina; and the Surf and Beach Club, Sapphire Bay will become a national destination for conferences, vacationing families, residents looking for a unique place to call home, and businesses who want to locate where their employees can live, work, and play.
A 911 call was received at 6:17am on October 11. The caller stated his mother was sitting in her chair, began gasping for breath, and then stopped breathing. Communications Officer Faustine Glass took the call, verified the address and dispatched Paramedics to the caller’s location. She then asked the caller to get her mother flat on her back on the floor and to begin chest compression per EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatch) protocol. CO Faustine stayed calm, while providing instruction and encouraging the caller during chest compressions. After a few minutes, the caller advised that the mother had taken a breath, and then a second breath! CO Faustine continued chest compressions with the caller, providing encouragement and instruction – helping the caller keep pace and count out loud during chest compressions. When help arrived, CO Faustine kept the caller calm, reassuring him Paramedics had arrived. Paramedics were able to get a pulse back and transported the patient to the hospital. Due to CO Faustine’s calm and steady response and demeanor, the caller was able to provide lifesaving care to his mother.”

Faustine Glass, Communications Officer

Police Chief Brodnax received a letter from the Dallas County District Attorney’s Office recognizing these three for hard work and dedication on the murder case of Laura Grillo. This was a murder for hire case, and Laura was not only a Rowlett citizen, but also a member of the Rowlett Police Department Volunteers In Police Services (VIPS). The Assistant District Attorneys state in their letter:

“On behalf of the Dallas County District Attorney’s Office, we would like to say thank you for the hard work and dedication of the Rowlett Police Department involving the untimely death of Laura Grillo. For seven long months, your detectives continued to collect and pursue evidence, interview countless witnesses, and meticulously connect the dots until the suspects were arrested and indicted.

None of these verdicts would have been possible without the hard work and perseverance of your officers and detectives. This case was an arduous three-year process. To adequately organize and prepare for the trials, we had to meet with your detectives – namely Chris Sawyer, Guy Helms and Cruz Hernandez – on numerous occasions. They never complained about our meetings, which often included long hours. We would especially like to recognize Detective Sawyer for his dedication. In our combined years as prosecutors, we have never seen a detective more invested in the prosecution of these cases. He should be lauded and thanked for his commitment. His work ethic, knowledge of the case and preparation for trial was astounding and appreciated.

We are all so proud and honored to have worked so closely with the Rowlett Police Department. Please continue the amazing work that you all do to keep our community safe.”

Sergeant Guy Helms (not pictured), Detective Cruz Hernandez and Detective Chris Sawyer

Thank you to not only these, but to ALL the members of our dedicated City of Rowlett staff for providing such exemplary service to our community each and every day!