

NYC Customer Service Newsletter

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**DYCD Resource Specialist
Jermaine Williams**

GET CONNECTED TO DYCD!

IN NYC Call 311 and ask
for DYCD Youth
Connect

Call Directly (800) 246-4646
Mon – Fri, 9AM – 7PM

OUTSIDE NYC

(212) 227-4005

EMAIL

youthconnect@dycd.nyc.gov

STAY CONNECTED TO DYCD!

Sign up for The
DYCD Youth Connect e-
BLAST at

<https://www.nyc.gov/dydc>

Thank you for calling DYCD Youth Connect, this is Mr. 50,000. How may I help you ?

Answering 50,000 phone calls is an amazing feat, but Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD) Resource Specialist Jermaine Williams takes this accomplishment in stride, "I didn't set out to answer 50,000 calls. It just happened as part of enjoying my job, of working with DYCD and giving back to the community. The fact that I'm being recognized is great, but like I said, it's just part of my job."

Jermaine has been involved with DYCD for over a decade. He was a proud participant in DYCD's Beacon afterschool program and its Summer Youth Employment Program. In 2005, Jermaine began his professional career with DYCD as a College Aide for Youth Connect, the City's information and referral service for youth and families. Jermaine was promoted to a full time position as a Resource Specialist in 2008 after proving himself a confident and compassionate call taker.

As a Resource Specialist, Jermaine responds to requests for information via telephone and the internet, helping manage DYCD's social media presence on MySpace, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. He is responsible for updating these pages each business day with free or low cost opportunities for youth.

"When I first started, [Youth Connect] was a listening line. Over time, and with the advance of technology, the service evolved into an information and referral service. In addition to the hotline, we're now accessible via email and our social networking pages. We no longer wait to be contacted; we distribute a monthly email newsletter to over 8,000 subscribers. I'm proud to have been part of improving the way we communicate with our audience and expanding our service's contact points."

When asked how he feels about the sheer number of people he's

assisted over the phone, Jermaine says "I never think much about it, except for when I get those 'thank you calls.' Usually when you hang up the phone, you never know if the caller will actually use the information you've given [him/her] or just throw it away. When customers call back to thank you for the information or to let you know how helpful you've been, that's when I feel proud. That's the reward for doing my job."

Always modest, Jermaine attributes his professional accomplishments to his co-workers. "Youth Connect's success has a lot to do with my co-workers and the great leadership of Anthony Ramirez II and Meka Nurse. Our team has allowed me to grow as a person and has made the past 6 years both a positive and rewarding learning experience. I guarantee that no matter what my future holds, I will continue to work to improve my community."



Volunteer Language Bank Ready to Serve Your Translation or Interpretation Needs

Is your agency one of the 39 city agencies that is required by Executive Order 120 to provide language services to the City's 1.8 million limited-English proficient population? As a citywide employee you have access to the citywide Volunteer Language Bank (VLB) to assist you in this task.

The VLB is an online database of City staff who speaks a language

other than English. You can access the Bank at <http://vlb.cityhall.nycnet>. After registering yourself as a 'User' on the Bank, you will have access to a pool of over 500 City employees that are able to assist with translating documents or interpreting in 46 different languages. The VLB was created by the Mayor's Office MIS together with the Mayor's Office of Operations and the

Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs. If you need a document to be translated into another language or reviewed, or an interpreter for a town hall meeting, consider the Volunteer Language Bank as your resource.

Register today! If you have any questions, please send an email to NYCertified@cityhall.nyc.gov.

Volunteer Language Bank Facts	
# of participating agencies	35
# of completed requests since formation of the bank	165
# of citywide volunteers	510
# of NYCertified volunteers	326
# of Languages served	46

Hail Yes! Special Taxis Proposed for the Outer Boroughs

New Yorkers in Manhattan have excellent taxi service. You put up your hand, hail a yellow car with a light on top, and it takes you where you want to go for a predictable price.

In the other four boroughs? Not so much.

As every New Yorker knows, the yellow taxis spend virtually all of their time cruising in Manhattan. So if you want to flag down a car elsewhere in the city, you have to rely on "gypsy cabs." These are a mix of licensed livery cars, which are supposed to provide only call-ahead service,

and completely unlicensed cars. "Gypsy" cars often lack adequate insurance, and many drivers lack the proper license. Passengers often say the experience feels "sketchy" or unsafe - particularly to women. The cars have no meter, requiring the passengers to negotiate the fare on the spot.

As part of his NYC *Simplicity* initiative, Mayor Bloomberg recently proposed changing the law to create Borough Taxis that would be able to accept street-hail passengers anywhere outside Manhattan. They would be painted a uniform color (not

yellow!), with a "roof light" to signal availability, plus a meter and credit card reader. In the mayor's vision, these Borough Taxis would serve Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, Staten Island and communities in Northern Manhattan, just as yellow taxis now serve Manhattan.

The Administration looks forward to working closely with the New York City Council to see this plan implemented, so that New Yorkers -- ALL New Yorkers -- can get where they are going safely and conveniently!



Livery cab waits for passengers at Hugh Grant Circle in the Bronx

Jobs-Plus Program Comes to NYCHA's Residents in the Bronx

NYCHA residents in the Bronx neighborhood of Mott Haven soon will have a new tool to assist them in training for and finding a job. A new Jobs-Plus site is scheduled to open this spring thanks to grants from the Corporation for National and Community Service, financial services company Morgan Stanley and other private foundations.

Jobs-Plus provides job training and work experience for unemployed and employed public housing residents. The new Jobs-Plus site will be operated by BronxWorks, in partnership with NYCHA, the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity and the Department of Consumer Affairs Office of Financial Empowerment.

BronxWorks will work with as many as 600 residents every year from Betances Houses I, Betances Houses II 9A, Betances Houses III 9A, Betances Houses IV,

Betances Houses V, Betances Houses VI, Moore Houses and East 152nd Street-Courtland Avenue. Jobs-Plus participants will be eligible for employment placement, retention and advancement services, training and education, including pre-GED, GED and ESL classes, and financial counseling, among other services.

The East River Development Alliance operates a Jobs-Plus site in Western Queens, and a City-sponsored site opened in October 2009 at Thomas Jefferson Houses in Manhattan. Joel Polanco is one of the residents who received services at Jobs-Plus, and now is an assistant manager at a Best Yet Market in Queens.

"Jobs Plus is awesome!" said Mr. Polanco. "The staff gives resources and job opportunities to get people where they want to go. Being involved with Jobs Plus and the staff has proved that it just takes dedication and believing that you can do whatever

you want to do."
"NYCHA is thrilled to support the replication of the proven, evidence-based Jobs-Plus model in the Bronx and is grateful to our partners and funders for their investment in public housing residents and neighborhoods," said NYCHA Chairman John B. Rhea. "We are committed to providing residents access to the tools and resources needed for economic self-sufficiency and success."

The \$500,000 Morgan Stanley grant also will support the first-time addition of financial counseling to Jobs-Plus services. Counselors trained by the City's Department of Consumer Affairs Office of Financial Empowerment will provide participants on-site financial counseling, focusing on issues like debt, credit, savings, budgeting and financial literacy.



Joel Polanco with Jacqueline Saltares, Assistant Director for the Jobs-Plus Program

NYCHA Facts
There are approximately 44,074 families residing in public housing in the Bronx; and 176,273 families NYCHA-wide.
Over 33% percent of public housing families in the Bronx and close to 36% of families NYCHA-wide are headed by a person 62 years of age or older.
47.5% of public housing families in the Bronx have at least one member who is employed; and 47.7% of public housing families, NYCHA-wide, have one or more members employed.

Jobs Plus Facts
There are three Jobs Plus sites that will serve NYC public housing residents.
The East River Development Alliance (ERDA), a nonprofit community based organization, is the first Jobs-Plus site in NYC. ERDA serves a cluster of public housing developments in Western Queens.
The City sponsored two additional Jobs Plus sites: the first is located at Jefferson Houses (Manhattan); and the second, soon to be open, will serve a cluster of public housing developments located in the Mott Haven neighborhood of the Bronx.



NYCHA residents learn about job training and placement services at a NYCHA Jobs-Plus site



Cigarette butts found during survey of Parks litter

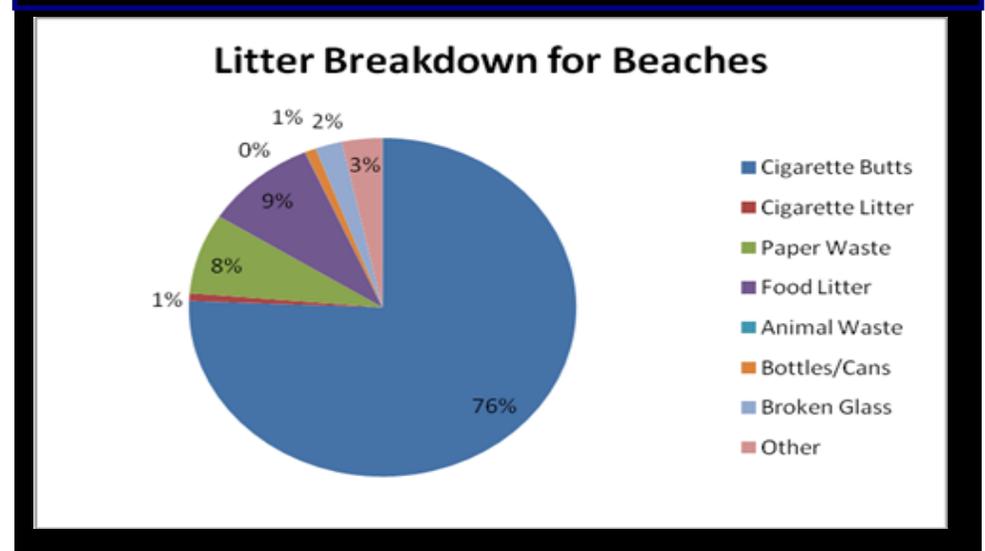
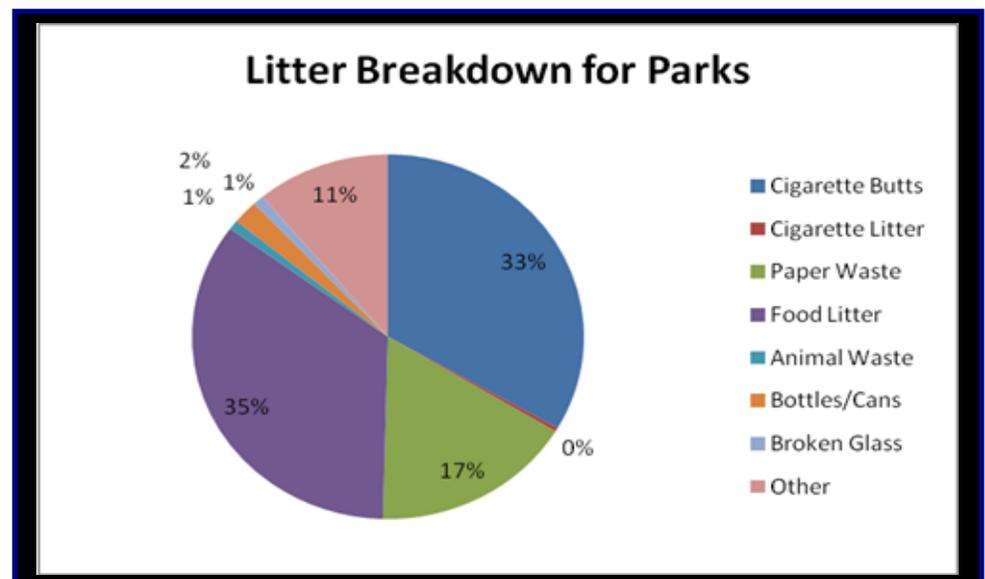
Parks Department Releases Litter Survey Results: Cigarette Butts Biggest Offenders

From July 26 to August 6, 2010 the Parks Department's customer survey team at Citywide Operations, in partnership with staff from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, conducted a survey of waste and litter on the ground at 75 park sites including parks, playgrounds and beaches in all boroughs. A dirty or littered site distracts from the experience of parks customers and patrons, and Parks wanted to get

a closer look at the types of litter at a typical site.

By far, the most predominant form of litter debris was cigarette butts. Seen as individual items of litter, fifty one percent (51%) of all litter was cigarette butts. At the beaches, cigarettes were even more prevalent at 76% of litter items. Based on the survey, there could be as many as 78 cigarette butts on every acre of parkland.

Starting May 23, 2011 the City's new smoking law goes into effect. Smoking will not be permitted within park sites or at beaches. Smoking is already barred at City playgrounds, recreation centers and marinas. Along with improving the health of New Yorkers, this law will improve the customer experience, helping non-smokers avoid the presence of smoke as well as keeping our parks clean.



NYC 311 Unveils New “Service Request Map,” Providing Unprecedented Transparency to 311 Data

In 2010, New York City 311 received 19.7 million calls and more than a million visits to 311 Online from New Yorkers who had a question or complaint about City services. Such an enormous amount of data provides valuable insight into what New Yorkers care about. Since Local Law 47 was passed in 2005, 311 and DoITT have taken steps to continuously improve the quality of the data it shares with elected officials and the public. With the release of its new “Service Request Map,” 311 has taken this sharing to an unprecedented new level. Hundreds of thousands of location-based 311 “service requests” are now plotted and accessible on a street level map. Visitors to the map can search by address, intersection, zip code,

Community Board or City Council District and see yellow markers at the locations where a problem has been reported to 311 in the past 365 days. By clicking on a specific marker, users can see a list of the service requests at that location, the date they were opened, and the most recent message sent by the agency to the customer. Most service requests have been plotted on the map, including those pertaining to City infrastructure, public safety, health, and consumer complaints. Customer account information and private data remain excluded from the map.

In addition to representing a giant step forward for municipal data transparency, the Map also represents a breakthrough for 311. As

311 continues to see its total annual call volume climb, the importance of driving more traffic to 311 Online becomes increasingly important to relieve stress on the 311 system and keep expenses and wait times down. The Service Request Map represents the first time that 311 Online will offer the user access to more information than they can access by calling 311. By phone, the caller can ask about the status of an individual service request by providing the service request number; by visiting the Map on 311 Online, users can see the status of all service requests across the City at the click of a mouse.

You can check out 311’s Service Request Map by visiting 311 Online: <http://www.nyc.gov/apps/311/homepage.htm>

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About the Customer Service Group

The Customer Service Group (CSG) was established by Mayor Bloomberg’s Executive Order 115 to support and implement the mandates of the order. CSG is part of the Mayor’s Office of Operations.

