

The Fund for the City of New York and the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation  
congratulate the winners of the

# 2018 Sloan Public Service Awards

Honoring extraordinary New York City public servants



## Jane Bedell, MD

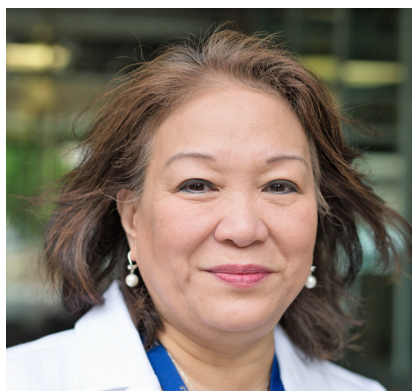
Assistant Commissioner and Medical Director  
Bronx Neighborhood Health Action Center  
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

Dr. Jane Bedell is the “go-to” doctor for the NYC Health Department in the Bronx. Dr. Bedell’s medical and public health background, her respect for the community and her ability to both listen and lead, have made her without peer in creating effective collaborations that include many government and community agencies. As a result, the Bronx has seen significant improvement in reducing infant mortality and reducing unintended teen pregnancy as well as providing increased access to healthier food, among many other successes. Says Dr. Bedell, “My work as a public servant is similar to being a primary care physician. For both, I want to help build the mutual trust that is critical to saving lives. Being a public servant is as close as I can get to being part of democracy, because public service is democracy in action.”

## Sandy Bryant-Townsend

Executive Director, Office of Legal Affairs  
Fair Hearing Administration, NYC Human Resources Administration

In 1989, Sandy Bryant was hired by HRA as a temporary employee earning the minimum wage of \$3.25, assigned to the Family Independence Administration. From her initial position as a clerical employee, she was promoted nine times to positions with ever-increasing responsibility. From 2013 through 2017, Mrs. Bryant was the Regional Manager of the nine Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offices in Brooklyn, Queens and Staten Island, overseeing 400 employees who serve 290,000 New Yorkers annually in need of food assistance. In January 2018, Mrs. Bryant was named the Executive Director for the Office of Legal Affairs, managing Fair Hearings for Cash and Food Assistance for the entire city. Her goal is to streamline the system to get fairer outcomes for clients and to save millions of dollars for the City. Based on her past accomplishments, no one doubts that she will accomplish this.



## Jocelyn C. Perez, RN, MA

Director of Nursing for Behavioral Health  
NYC Health + Hospitals/Metropolitan Hospital

Jocelyn Perez has spent 31 years in NYC government as a psychiatric nurse and administrator. Her first 22 years were at Bellevue Hospital where she was Associate Executive Director of Nursing in Psychiatry before she moved to Metropolitan Hospital in 2008. At Metropolitan, as its Director of Nursing in Psychiatry, Ms. Perez has a nursing staff of 200 who provide psychiatry inpatient, outpatient and emergency services. As an innovator in improving patient experience, safety and quality of care, she initiated the first inpatient Peer Counseling Program wherein consumers of psychiatric care who complete training are employed as staff. Say Ms. Perez, “My work focuses on helping staff understand that patients with psychiatric disorders can get better and lead normal lives. Like any human being, they want to have a job, a sense of purpose, to have families, to belong and to be loved.”

## David Piersante

Director of Eligibility, HIV/AIDS Services Administration  
DSS/HRA Special Services, NYC Human Resources Administration

In 1985, the City created the HIV/AIDS Services Administration (HASA) to help people with HIV/AIDS get emergency financial and housing services. David Piersante joined HASA in 1989 as an entry-level case manager. In 2013, he was named to his current position as the Director of Eligibility. In this capacity he oversees the Agency’s Intake Office, which supports and assists the 12 field offices located throughout the city. HASA provides case management services for 33,700 individuals, most of whom have limited resources. Mr. Piersante receives accolades for his expertise, experience and commitment from staff, clients and organizations that serve the larger HIV community. Notes a colleague, “David is a humanist whose knowledge of policy borders on brilliance. He is the expert everyone relies on.” As Mr. Piersante says, “I have been committed to this agency and the people it serves and I am in it for the long haul.”



## Edward Toth

Director, Greenbelt Native Plant Center and Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank  
NYC Department of Parks and Recreation

On 13 acres on Staten Island, Ed Toth directs the Greenbelt Native Plant Center (GNPC) and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank (MARSB). GNPC has grown more than 12.5 million native plants for restoration and conservation projects in New York City. After Hurricane Sandy, GNPC replaced hundreds of thousands of plants on destroyed wetlands and dunes. While working in Brooklyn’s Prospect Park in the 1990s, Mr. Toth helped lead the native plant movement in park restorations. A key obstacle then was that native plants were not available, so Mr. Toth helped create GNPC, the first and largest municipal native plant nursery and seed bank in the U.S. In 2011, Mr. Toth founded MARSB, recognizing that to respond to climate change and plant conservation challenges, a regional response was essential. Says a colleague, “Ed has made a huge difference in our world. Ed looks out for New Yorkers and the planet.”

## Annette Whyte

Associate Director, Vendor Management  
Mayor’s Office of Contract Services

Each year, New York City spends over \$21 billion on 10,000 contracts with vendors, contractors and consultants. Over the last 30 years, Annette Whyte has been integral to the successful administration of VENDEX, the City’s contract and vendor management system. Ms. Whyte has been instrumental to VENDEX from its inception as an offline paper-based system to its current iteration as NYC PASSPort, a fully online-based system. Developed in 1988, as part of the City’s anti-corruption efforts to track and monitor contracts, VENDEX has undergone substantial transformations since then. Ms. Whyte’s ability to foresee and correct potential system pitfalls, her talent for staff management, and her understanding of City regulations have ensured that each stage of the system’s evolution has succeeded. She is revered by staff and colleagues and is described as “inspirational, motivational and visionary—soft on the outside, steel on the inside.”



Photography by Julia Disenza



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The **Fund for the City of New York** was established by the Ford Foundation in 1968 with the mandate to improve the quality of life for all New Yorkers. For over four decades, in partnership with government agencies, nonprofit institutions and foundations, the Fund has developed and helped to implement innovations in policy, programs, practices and technology in order to advance the functioning of government and nonprofit organizations in New York City and beyond.  
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The **Alfred P. Sloan Foundation** is a philanthropic, not-for-profit grantmaking institution based in New York City. Established in 1934 by Alfred Pritchard Sloan Jr., then-President and Chief Executive Officer of General Motors, the Foundation makes grants in support of original research and education in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and economic performance.  
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