

## ALL SCRIPT AWARDS GO TO GCA “HURRICANE HARVEY HEROES”

GCA’s SCRIPT Awards are presented to employees whose performance best exemplifies the Authority’s values: [Stewardship](#); [Communication](#); [Reliability](#); [Integrity](#); [Planning and Teamwork](#). The third-quarter 2017 awards recognized 33 GCA team members for their extraordinary contributions during and after Hurricane Harvey. Script Award recipients are nominated by their supervisors and peers.

These remarkable employees represent the human story behind GCA’s successful operations during one of the worst natural disasters ever to hit the United States. Their tales provide a glimpse of what it was like at each of the facilities affected in the midst of a massive hurricane.

The **Bayport Facility staff** recognized eight winners:

- **Chief Operator Keith Campbell** -- He was on duty Saturday night (Aug. 26, 2017) when Harvey stalled over Houston, flooding out homes, businesses, roads and bridges and preventing relief crews from reaching the facility. Supporting Keith at Bayport during the worst of the storm were **operators Marco Araujo, Nick Guess and David Williams**. This group of heroes stayed on the job, running the facility, solving storm-related operational challenges and maintaining uninterrupted service to the more-than 70 industrial users who rely on Bayport to process their wastewater. They alternated shifts, remaining on site through the Wednesday day shift despite personal flooding at home. Even after two more dogged employees finally made it to the site on Monday, the original crew stayed on for two more days to help.
- **Chief Operator Eddie Carrillo and Operator Chris Calloway**– These are the “two more dogged employees” who never gave up trying to reach the Bayport Facility to relieve its water-surrounded crew. Knowing that their own families were safe wasn’t good enough; they were driven to get to their fellow team members stranded at the plant for 24 hours straight. And get there they did, where they spent another 48 hours alternating shifts, keeping everything going. Together they caught some potential issues that could have negatively impacted the site, including loss of the discharge to bay (DTB) pumps due to a bleach pump interlock, higher overflows from a pond as a result of heavy rainfall and other concerns. They also provided a huge morale boost to the exhausted original crew.
- **Compliance Supervisor Mike Cunningham and Purchasing Coordinator Susan Calhoun** -- Although Mike’s home suffered damage and flood conditions prevented him from physically reaching the facility, he manned the phone offsite Monday through Wednesday to ensure proper documentation of all compliance issues occurring during the storm as well as providing guidance and other support to

GCA. Throughout, he was in constant communication with facility personnel and GCA leadership, while finding time to take on the responsibility of helping fellow employees cope with their damaged homes. Susan was considered a non-essential employee but jumped into action upon learning that the Bayport Facility needed deliveries of critical materials during the storm. She twice secured deliveries of diesel fuel to keep the site's rental DTB pump running. Without the fuel, the facility would not have been able to handle the volume of rainwater and influent (incoming water), which could have led to environmental issues, reduced water treatment capacity or a complete User shutdown. She also did everything in her power to maintain bleach supply so that Bayport's disinfection would remain operational. On top of that, she refused hurricane pay, saying "It's my job; I'm happy to do it for my GCA family."

In GCA's **Central Office**, **Joanne MacDougall, Process Engineer**, was recognized for taking the lead in running GCA's Technical Services Department which were undermanned due to the technical director being out of town and his deputy stuck at home successfully fending off the floodwaters. Though unable to reach the facility itself, she stayed in close communication with the site throughout the hurricane, including monitoring oxygen supply and helping calculate pond capacity timelines. Day and night, she assisted the Chief Operator with critical advice and counsel, including how to keep the DTB pump running by bypassing a non-safety interlock.

The **Blackhawk Regional Wastewater Treatment Facility staff** nominated **Operators Albert Smith III and Jay McMillan** for their successful efforts to keep everything running at this critical facility serving residents of the Friendswood Community and surrounding area in the Clear Creek watershed. Albert was called in on Saturday to check out a momentary power outage at the facility as Hurricane Harvey stalled over Houston. He restarted the lift station (flagging down a passing boat to reach the remote station) and other equipment required to keep the plant operating but became stranded there by the floodwaters. He remained at the facility four days, refusing to be relieved and then returned to help after his long shift. Throughout, he documented storm damage to the facility with photographs and notes. Jay used his own canoe to reach Blackhawk and relieve Albert on Wednesday, Aug. 30, and then stayed overnight to monitor plant operations. He played a vital role in restoring the facility's Trojan UV (ultraviolet) disinfection system and lift station to service during the storm.

GCA's **Washburn Tunnel Facility staff** recognized eight employees with SCRIPT Award nominations for their heroic efforts to keep that facility online throughout Hurricane Harvey.

- **Chief Operator Errol Currie, and Operators Willie Miller and Chuck Williston** were on duty at Washburn Tunnel from Saturday

night until Monday morning as torrential rains pounded the facility and the Houston Ship Channel. Chuck's home was flooding during this time period. Some equipment at the plant was out of service due to storm-related electrical issues and did not restart automatically, but this team was able to utilize a portable pump to remove storm water in some areas of the plant thereby prevent flooding of crucial equipment.

- **Chief Operator Craig Pogue and Operators Erik Freund and John Mletkzo** safely made it to the Washburn Tunnel Facility on Monday morning and remained on duty until they could be relieved on Wednesday morning. They and the original crew collected all on-site samples through the duration of the storm.
- **Instrumentation and Electrical Lead Kenny Gasaway and Mechanic Lead Junior Bernal** also arrived at the facility on Monday morning during a momentary lull in the flooding. Both had been in contact with operations since Saturday night regarding issues at the plant. Junior helped talk the original crew through startup of the portable pump. Both remained on duty until Wednesday afternoon. Except for a brief period Monday morning, GCA's Washburn Tunnel Facility was unreachable by vehicle from Saturday until Wednesday.

GCA's **40-Acre Facility staff** nominated **Mechanic and Relief Operator John Bourman, Operators David Espinoza and Joanne Vasquez, and Chief Operators Cliff Pabon and Kevin Perkins** for service above and beyond the call of duty during Hurricane Harvey. During the storm, John and Joanne worked 36 hours, Kevin for 58, Cliff for 74 and David for 75 hours. The 40-Acre facility only received 25 inches of rain during the hurricane, but access to the coastal plant was off and on, depending upon the tides. Throughout the event, this team of dedicated employees maintained operation of the facility without any interruption of service, treating the equivalent of 166 Olympic-size swimming pools. The facility had zero unauthorized discharges or washouts from treatment equipment, though influent (incoming water) did exceed permit levels a couple of times due to unprecedented volumes of storm water.

GCA's **Central Laboratory staff** nominated nine employees for Hurricane Harvey-related contributions: **Labbies Chris Levy; Victoria Mathews; Martha Espinosa; Jaren Hayashi; David (Fidel) Pineda; Karen Villerman; Marie Branum; Lingmei Ma; and Mai Bui**. When Harvey hit Houston, Marie was the first to make it into the lab to perform testing. Lingmei and Mai could not reach the lab due to street flooding, but by Tuesday, Aug. 29, they had joined Marie in setting up analysis for as many tests as possible and in organizing samples for staff to test the next day. They worked tirelessly to perform much needed analyses for GCA's facilities.