



FMCS
FEDERAL MEDIATION &
CONCILIATION SERVICE

NEWS RELEASE

Wednesday, December 7, 2016
For Immediate Release
Website: www.fmcs.gov

Contact: John Arnold
Director of Public Affairs
Phone: 202-606-8100

FMCS Honors Labor-Management Cooperation With 2016 Director's Award for Excellence To American Water and the Utility Workers Union of America

WASHINGTON, D.C. — FMCS Director Allison Beck today honored the outstanding leadership of the American Water Works Company, Inc. and the Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA) as a “shining example” of labor-management cooperation in the United States with the presentation of the FMCS Director’s Award for Excellence in Labor-Management Cooperation.

“Over the years, and in various ways, FMCS has paid tribute to great labor-management partnerships,” Director Beck stated. “This year, it is my distinct pleasure to recognize two very special organizations with the FMCS Director’s Award for Excellence in Labor Management Cooperation.” In bestowing the Agency’s highest award to labor and management, Director Beck cited joint efforts by the company and the union in support of efforts to rebuild the national water infrastructure with public-private partnerships and to improve the skills and safety of American Water employees with training.

“American Water and the Utility Workers Union of America have set a shining example of what a company and its workers can achieve when they choose cooperation over conflict,” Director Beck stated in presenting the FMCS award to American Water CEO Susan Story and UWUA President Mike Langford during an online presentation ceremony.

American Water Works, headquartered in New Jersey, is the largest publicly traded water and wastewater utility company in the country, serving over 15 million people in 47 states and Ontario Canada. The Utility Workers Union of America is the company’s largest union.

Many years of contentious labor-management relations between the company and union changed when American Water’s current CEO assumed her position in 2014 and decided with the UWUA president to explore a more cooperative labor-management approach. “Susan and Mike decided to put the past behind,” Director Beck said. “Today, we celebrate their commitment, their leadership, and some of the remarkable accomplishments they’ve achieved in just two short years.

Joint labor-management efforts between American Water and the UWUA include:

* Participation by American Water and the UWUA in two nationwide, joint labor-management conferences involving the FMCS, the most recent focusing on a “Trust Building Training Program” for conference participants at which the American Water CEO and UWUA president personally renewed their commitment to working together.

* Joint authorship by CEO Story and President Langford of a published letter to government leaders calling on them to jointly tackle the nation’s utility infrastructure crisis with practical and collaborative solutions for “Rebuilding America’s Water Infrastructure with Public-Private Partnerships.”

* Full support from American Water for the Utility Workers’ “Power for America Training Trust Fund (P4A),” which secured a Susan Hayward Department of Labor Grant to improve the skills and safety of American Water employees.

* An American Water Charitable Trust Foundation Awards Grant given to the Union Sportsmen’s (USA) Alliance for Water Conservation Projects to benefit three American Water communities with improved public access to water-based recreational opportunities and enhanced environmental sustainability of existing recreational areas.

* Recognition in 2016 for American Water because of the support of its worker as the only water utility named to Newsweek magazine’s list of 500 of “America’s Top Green Companies.”

After citing the American Water-UWUA list of labor-management accomplishments, Director Beck concluded, “We are honored to have worked with you, to have supported your journey thus far, and it will be our great privilege to be there for you in the future,” she said. “Thank you for your leadership, your commitment, and the great example you have set.”

###

The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, created in 1947, is an independent U.S. government agency whose mission is to preserve and promote labor-management peace and cooperation. Headquartered in Washington, DC, with 10 regional offices and more than 60 field offices, the agency provides mediation and conflict resolution services to industry, government agencies and communities.