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Saluting 20/20 Utility Vision: CS Week Announces Its 2020 Expanding Excellence Awardees

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**Sherman, TX, Thursday, April 23, 2020** – Announced early due to ceremonies being cancelled this year, CS Week’s annual Expanding Excellence Awards showcase utilities that have implemented major systems, aligned people with process and technology, used home-grown or market-based solutions to improve operations, and enhanced customer experience. CS Week CEO Rod Litke, along with its Board of Directors, is proud to announce this year’s winners and finalists for four corporate categories in two levels: Level I for utilities with \$500M and greater in annual revenues and Level II for utilities with less than \$500 million.

**Best Analytics Project** - Recognizes pilot projects or large-scale implementations that optimize analytics from devices, data and related technologies to address, remediate or enhance customer service.

	<b><u>Winners</u></b>	<b><u>Finalist</u></b>
<b>Level I:</b>	Eversource	PSEG Long Island
<b>Level II:</b>	Moulton Niguel Water District	

**Best CIS Implementation** – Salutes major implementations of customer information systems based on budget and schedule adherence, operational efficiency after go-live, innovative solutions and improved service levels.

	<b><u>Winners</u></b>
<b>Level I:</b>	Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission
<b>Level II:</b>	The Regional Municipality of Durham

**Innovation in Digital Customer Engagement** – Showcases technologically complex projects that improve services in the meter-to-cash customer experience lifecycle.

	<b><u>Winners</u></b>	<b><u>Finalists</u></b>
<b>Level I:</b>	Exelon Corp PECO	Southwest Gas Corporation
<b>Level II:</b>	London Hydro	Hydro Ottawa

**Innovation in People & Process** – Awards projects that emphasize soft skills, general solutions and non-automated, low-tech approaches to engage customers and improve services in the meter-to-cash customer experience lifecycle.

	<b><u>Winners</u></b>	<b><u>Finalist</u></b>
<b>Level I:</b>	Southern California Edison	Tucson Electric Power
<b>Level II:</b>	Hydro Ottawa	

“Presenting the Expanding Excellence Awards remains a favorite perk of my role,” says Litke. “I invite you to visit our website at [www.csweek.org](http://www.csweek.org) to watch the winners’ videos during 2020 Virtual Touch, our restyled CS Week conference experience utilizing today’s marketplace tools. There, you’ll see both high tech and high touch excellence from today’s utilities, industry leaders who are constantly analyzing, evaluating and tweaking the customer experience to become ever more valued and knowledgeable partners with their customers. The dedication, innovation and flexibility these utilities show in the face of budget constraints, tight schedules, scope changes, regulatory demands and shifting priorities produce shareable lessons learned. They inspire other utilities to imitate them, and they serve as role models and trailblazers for the industry.”

Added in 2019, two individual Expanding Excellence Awards recognize professionals who exemplify mature, nuanced leadership skills and who consistently rise above and beyond to develop, implement and foster advances in their utility’s services and programs. Two Distinguished Leader awards and one Rising Star award are presented for 2020:

**2020 Distinguished  
Leader:**

**Tiffany Dennison**  
*Dir, Accts Receivable – Interim Customer Connect Lead*  
Duke Energy

Dennison led a team across five states responsible for outstanding receivables that included a performance improvement and reporting component. She integrated a remote disconnect and

reconnect process into her team. Recognizing the need for closer collaboration between her team and the call center, she established regular leadership meetings to build service alignment. 'Always here and engaged,' according to her nominator, Dennison leads by example and easily pivots her team to focus on operational readiness and support.

**2020 Distinguished  
Leader:**

**Tomaso Giannelli**  
*Sr Mgr, Business Customer Division*  
Southern California Edison

Joining the team as a business analyst, Gianelli targeted service outage situations with unhappy customers and began efforts to streamline process improvements and more effective communication. He developed a 24/7 helpline to create the best customer experience possible, showing care and concern for them in stressful situations and leading other utility professionals by example. Ten years later, he is the team's leader. His individual award compliments the 2020 Innovation in People & Process Level I winner.

**2020 Rising Star:**

**Antonio Diaz III**  
*Sr Specialist, Specialized Customer Experience Center*  
Con Ed of NY

As co-founder of R.I.S.E. Academy, a leadership development program at Con Ed, Diaz creates curriculum, facilitates classes and prepares students for final presentations. Recently, he managed an 85-representative call center, establishing training, revamping work-from-home schedules and crafting new performance evaluation tools. Diaz is a current member of CS Week's 2019-20 LeadNext class. For more information about LeadNext, please visit [www.csweek.org/web/Summit/LeadNext/Summit](http://www.csweek.org/web/Summit/LeadNext/Summit).

Utility and individual winners were to be recognized personally by Litke at Fort Worth Convention Center ceremonies with short videos and photos; however, CS Week 2020 set for May 18-22 was cancelled as a precaution to thwart the transmission of the COVID-19 contagion. Despite this year's cancellation, CS Week's Expanding Excellence Awards stand firmly as meaningful, coveted industry achievements for utility customer service organizations. For more information about the 2020 award winners and finalists or about CS Week's Expanding Excellence Awards in general, visit [www.csweek.org/web/Awards](http://www.csweek.org/web/Awards).

## About CS Week

CS Week is the premier annual educational and customer service conference serving electric, gas and water/wastewater utility professionals across North America and around the world. CS Week provides learning and networking opportunities in support of the utility customer experience lifecycle: Analytics, Billing & Payments, Contact Center, Credit & Collections, Digital Customer Engagement, Field Services, and Strategies & Management.

Ten participation opportunities are offered during each CS Week and throughout the year:

1. **Executive Summit**
2. **Key Account Forum**
3. **College**
4. **Synergy Groups**
5. **ENGAGE311 with EXPO311**
6. **Conference**, with the largest Exhibit Hall in the industry
7. **CS Week Research**
8. **Expanding Excellence Awards**
9. **LeadNext**
10. **CS Week Publishing**

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, CS Week attracts attendees from utilities of all sizes. Besides the robust education venues and diverse networking opportunities during its week-long conference, CS Week enjoys a supportive partnership with scores of industry partners, sponsors and conference exhibitors. CS Week offers year-round webinars and content to showcase utility success stories, update attendees on marketplace trends and keep utility professionals connected. For more information, visit [www.csweek.org](http://www.csweek.org). Multiple advisory panels and steering committees shape and focus CS Week, ensuring content is aligned with mission. CS Week adapts to and reflects industry times while holding fast to its core foundation - providing utility professionals at every level valuable education and networking opportunities, with an emphasis on 'expanding excellence in customer service.'

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