



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EQUITY

Office Newsletter November/December 2023

Strengthening Food Access in Atlantic City



“Every New Jerseyan deserves equitable access to affordable groceries regardless of their zip code. My administration continues to be committed to expanding access to fresh and healthy foods in Atlantic City and across the state.” ~ Governor Murphy

Through a collaboration with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (EDA) and Virtua Health, a mobile grocery store offers affordable, fresh food to the people of Atlantic City. This effort is part of the “Eat Well” program that EDA launched to address the food deserts in our state, by providing nutritious, high-quality food and produce to these communities. With over \$5.5 million in funding committed to expanding healthy grocery options throughout the state, the work continues to strengthen food access in Atlantic City.

ROWAN UNIVERSITY: CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION



Nearly 700 professors gather on the University's green. Learn more about Rowan's history here. [#Rowan100](#)

As part of the celebration, the University highlights the notable contributions of alumni, faculty, and staff, including alumnus and founder of the geography department, Marvin Creamer, who is the only person to sail around the world without the use of navigational equipment. The record of Coach Richard Wackar was also recognized. He holds the distinction as the only coach in the New Jersey Athletic Conference to win championships in basketball, cross-country, golf, and football. Rowan University looks forward to continuing to make its mark over the next century.

Rowan University celebrates 100 years! To chronicle the University's journey from the first class of 236 students in 1923 to the more than 15,000 students currently enrolled, the University published a book entitled “100 Years Forward: The History of Rowan University,” culminating a 14-year effort that involved alumni, current and retired faculty and staff, and family supporters. For over 350 pages, the reader encounters vintage photographs, archival documents, and illustrative accounts.

When Henry Rowan and his wife Betty pledged a transformative \$100 million to Glassboro State College in 1992, it was the largest recorded gift to a public college. In that same year, Dr. Herman James oversaw the transition of the college to university status, and it was then renamed in honor of the Rowans.



Rowan University President Ali Houshmand



NJ GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EQUITY

ELEVEN NEW SUPERIOR COURT JUDGES

To further reduce the number of judicial vacancies, on Monday, December 11th, the New Jersey State Senate confirmed 11 superior court judges, the largest set advanced at once since May 2022 – a majority of whom are women and people of color. Governor Murphy said, “I am especially proud that my Administration has worked closely with the Senate to increase the diversity of our judges, ensuring that the bench looks more like the people of our state.”

- Kevin P. Barry** succeeds Judge Sallyanne Floria in Essex County
- John E. Bruder** succeeds Judge Anthony F. Picheca Jr. in Somerset County
- Sherwin G. Campbell** succeeds Judge Marlene Lynch Ford in Essex County
- Kimberly Casten** succeeds Judge Wendel Daniels in Ocean County
- Ana P. Esteves** succeeds Judge Martin G. Cronin in Essex County
- Leonardo A. Hernandez** succeeds Judge Thomas R. Vena in Essex County
- Roslyn D. Holmes Grant** succeeds Judge Sharifa R. Salaam in Essex County
- Anthony J. Parenti Jr.** succeeds Judge Karen M. Cassidy in Union County
- Wendy Reek** succeeds Judge Kathy Qasim in Somerset County
- Raquel Vallejo** succeeds Judge Theresa E. Mullen in Union County
- Kelly Waters** succeeds Judge Stuart Peim in Union County

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Jennifer Sellitti Nominated as New Jersey's Next Public Defender:** Governor Murphy announced that Jennifer Sellitti will succeed Public Defender Joe Krakora as the Public Defender of New Jersey, following Krakora's retirement on January 31st.
- **Expanding New Jersey Preschool Capacity:** Governor Murphy announced that \$51.9 million in federal grant funding was awarded to the State to support 30 projects in 23 school districts to assist with the creation, expansion, and renovation of preschools throughout New Jersey.
- **Doula Access Bill:** As part of the statewide Nurture NJ initiative, First Lady Tammy Murphy hosted a roundtable at University Hospital in Newark where she announced the introduction of A-5739; proposed legislation that requires hospitals and birthing centers to develop and maintain policies that allow doulas to accompany patients before, during, and after labor and childbirth, in addition to requiring these policies to be posted publicly.
- **Connecting New Jersey Families with Resources:** First Lady Tammy Murphy highlighted the Connected NJ marketing campaign's efforts to inform and connect families in New Jersey to essential health and social programs, services, and resources.
- **Unite New Jersey Veterans:** On Veterans Day, Acting Governor Tahesha Way announced that New Jersey has entered the implementation phase of “Unite New Jersey Veterans,” a digital platform designed to assist veteran service providers with helping New Jersey veterans find resources and services available to them.
- **Adeel Mangi Appointed to the U.S. Court of Appeals:** Governor Murphy applauded President Biden's recent nomination of Adeel Mangi to serve on a New Jersey-based seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. He will be the first Muslim-American to serve on a federal circuit court of appeals in the history of the United States.
- **First Phase of Greenway in Newark and Kearny:** NJDEP Commissioner Shawn M. LaTourette announced that the first phase of the Greenway project is underway. This initial development phase will be focused on a two-mile segment of a former rail line between Newark and Kearny.
- **Stay NJ Property Tax Relief Program Task Force:** Governor Murphy alongside Assembly Speaker Craig J. Coughlin and Senate President Nicholas Scutari announced the appointment of six notable public servants as members of a newly created task force. This task force is responsible for putting forth recommendations to implement the new Stay NJ property tax relief program for New Jersey's seniors.



NJ GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EQUITY

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE ARRIVE TOGETHER PROGRAM MARKS ITS TWO-YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Governor Murphy and Attorney General Matt Platkin marked the two-year anniversary of the Alternative Responses to Reduce Instances of Violence and Escalation (ARRIVE) Together program that was developed in response to statewide data showing that two out of every three uses of force by law enforcement involve a person who is either suffering from mental illness or who is under the influence.



Under the ARRIVE Together program, when responding to emergency calls involving a behavioral health crisis, a State Trooper, trained in crisis intervention and de-escalation techniques, is paired with a certified mental health screener and crisis specialist. A national model for improving trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve, ARRIVE Together is improving how law enforcement officers across New Jersey engage with our neighbors who are suffering from mental and behavioral health emergencies. With the recent launch of the program in Paterson – the first municipality in Passaic County to join the program – ARRIVE Together is now operating in 21 counties throughout the state.

NEW JERSEY TAKES THE LEAD IN AI INNOVATION

In keeping with its history of invention and innovation, Governor Murphy and Princeton University President Christopher Eisgruber announced that New Jersey will be the site of a new AI innovation hub. Located at Princeton University, the new AI hub will be “a new home for the world’s boldest and brightest to pioneer breakthroughs for the betterment of humankind.”



In collaboration with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) and the New Jersey Office of Innovation, the hub will bring together researchers, entrepreneurs, industry leaders, and collaborators to advance AI research and development.

The AI hub announcement follows the launch of the state’s AI Task Force earlier this month. The task force is charged with identifying the potential impacts of AI on society as well as preparing recommendations to identify government actions encouraging the ethical use of AI technologies. Governor Murphy also announced a nation-leading initiative, in collaboration with InnovateUS, to promote the responsible use of generative AI for state employees and educate the State’s workforce about the development, use, and risks of AI.

NOKIA ANNOUNCES NEW HEADQUARTERS IN NEW BRUNSWICK

After a nationwide search, Nokia announced its plans on December 11th to relocate the headquarters of its research arm, Nokia Bells Labs, to New Brunswick. Recognizing that New Jersey draws the best talent and center for innovation. Nokia will remain in New Jersey and relocate to the new HELIX innovation center being developed in New Brunswick. This campus relocation is set to be complete by 2028, following the completion of the state-of-the-art research and development facility, equipped to continue the delivery of cutting-edge technology.



Nokia Bell Labs has already developed some of the world’s most groundbreaking technologies, including cellular and satellite communications, solar cells, and 6G.



NJ GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF EQUITY

We pray for continued peace in our state and may New Jersey be a shining example of how diverse communities can live, work, and pray together. - Governor Phil Murphy
See the full statement

NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 2023 HOLIDAY OBSERVANCES

November - Native-American Heritage Month

November 11th - Veterans Day

November 12th - Diwali

November 20th - Transgender Day of Remembrance

November 23rd - Thanksgiving

November 24th - Native American Heritage Day

December 3rd - International Day of Persons with Disabilities

December 7th-15th - Hannukah

December 24th - Christmas Eve

December 25th - Christmas Day

December 26th-January 1st - Kwanzaa

Congratulations to Jersey's own Dionne Warwick and Queen Latifah on being named 2023 Kennedy Center Honorees!

The Office of Equity, in coordination with the Governor's Office ERGs, spread holiday cheer and celebrated the season of giving by supporting a toy and clothing drive for families in the Trenton community.

Thank you to all who contributed!



Jayné J. Johnson,
Director of the Office
of Equity

Thank you for connecting with the NJ Office of Equity! We appreciate your interest in learning more about our work.

If you are not receiving this email directly from us and would like to subscribe to our mailing list, please click here.

BEST WISHES FOR 2024! HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Many thanks to Awn Rizvi, Mel Walker, and Natasha Camhi for their contributions to this issue!