

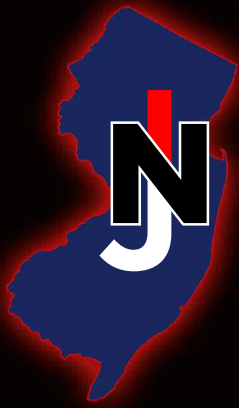
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THE 2018 INSIDER OUT 100  
**NJ'S LGBT POWERLIST**

WE'VE COME A LONG WAY!





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★★★★★★



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*Message from the Editor*

# INSIDER NJ

## 2018 LGBT POWER

Welcome to InsiderNJ's OUT 100 Power List, a first-of-its kind-tribute to influential LGBTs in New Jersey politics. This list was a reader's idea. My editor Max Pizarro and my General Manager Pete Oneglia green-lighted the idea so long as I promised to make it amazing. These Power Lists mean a lot to people. Making it amazing seems like the least I could do given this opportunity.



## WE'VE COME A LONG WAY, HAVEN'T WE?

When I acquired HIV as a teenager back in 1992, you'd be hard pressed to name a single politically influential LGBT person anywhere in America, let alone 100 from a single state! Nobody was talking about gay marriage. There were no workplace protections back then, no gays in the military. What we *did* have was a hostile government and an equally hostile Catholic Church driving our nation's AIDS policy. Which might explain why the life-saving AIDS "cocktail" was still years away, something I blessedly wouldn't need until 1998.

Many listed below played a huge role taming the AIDS crisis and then delivering a raft of pro-LGBT laws in its wake. This list also includes the next generation of LGBTs already making their mark on the New Jersey political landscape. They've snatched the baton in a purposeful manner befitting a generation raised to dream bigger than mine ever could.

And that's the point, isn't it?

This is a list of mostly progressives but we have many conservatives in our ranks too. You'll surely notice some familiar names doing the tributes. I wrote most of them, but it was thrilling how many of y'all, our readers, volunteered to do the honors for one (or more) people named below.

I was on the train when tributes came in via email from Senator Cory Booker and ex-Senator Bob Torricelli. Their eagerness to participate in the project was moving and also very empowering. And in that moment I recalled my time as an HIV+ teenager with a debilitating, deadly secret and reflected on the immense progress we've made in a single generation.

We've come a long way. And that's what we'll celebrate in the pages to follow.



Sincerely,  
JAY LASSITER

# GO BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF EXPECTED THINKING

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# **1 BABS SIPERSTEIN**

*The Grande Dame – Edison, Middlesex County*



Inspiring, outspoken, and tenacious, Babs Siperstein began her activism at a time when being transgender carried an even greater stigma than it does today, and has fought bravely and publicly to reverse that stigma and make change happen within the LGBT movement, the Democratic party, and our state and country.

A decade ago, Babs led the charge to make New Jersey one of the first states where anti-discrimination laws include protections for individuals targeted because of their gender identity. She has served courageously in leadership roles in a number of organizations fighting for equal rights for LGBTQ individuals, from Garden State Equality to the Gender Rights Advocacy Organization of New Jersey. Babs broke many barriers including as the first transgender member of the executive committee of the Democratic National Committee.

And most recently, recognizing her immense contributions to expanding civil and human rights, Governor Phil Murphy signed into law the Babs Siperstein Act, a law that makes important reforms to New Jersey's process for issuing amended birth certificates for transgender people.

Babs is a leader, a trailblazer, and a role model for an entire generation of New Jerseyans. If you don't know her, you probably know someone touched in some way by her tireless activism. It's an honor to know her, to work with her, and to call her my friend. Here's to many more years of activism to come and to a legacy that has changed the lives of so many.

**-CORY BOOKER, Senator**



## 2 MAYOR REED GUSCIORA

*Capital City Mayor – Trenton, Mercer County*



Mayor Reed Gusciora's path to Trenton's City Hall was anything but traditional. Gusciora's bid for mayor caught many off guard and didn't even resonate on the radar as a real possibility. Why? He's openly gay, white, and a Trentonian for "only" eight years. Trenton, whose 84,000 residents are predominantly black (51%) and brown (35%), had only known a black mayor in almost three decades. Many predicted voters would balk at a leader with Gusciora's profile. After all, Blacks and Latinos have sometimes been slow to approve of gay relationships.

Gusciora was undeterred. During the grueling campaign, the theme, #LiftTrentonTogether became a mantra throughout neighborhoods, churches, and among business leaders. Gusciora's down-to-earth style garnered him support in places where no one believed he'd succeed.

The first (and for many years, the only) openly gay legislator, Gusciora spent 22 years representing Legislative District 15. He often operated in the shadows of two legendary African American women, State Senator Shirley Turner and then Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman. But Gusciora found his niche championing progressive issues before they were popular, even among his own Democratic Caucus, among them marriage equality, legalization of medical marijuana, and animal rights.

In 2011, less than a month after he had closed on a Princeton home purchase, Gusciora learned redistricting snatched his town from the 15th Legislative District. Therefore, he decided to pack up and move to another City he loved...the Capital City...Trenton.

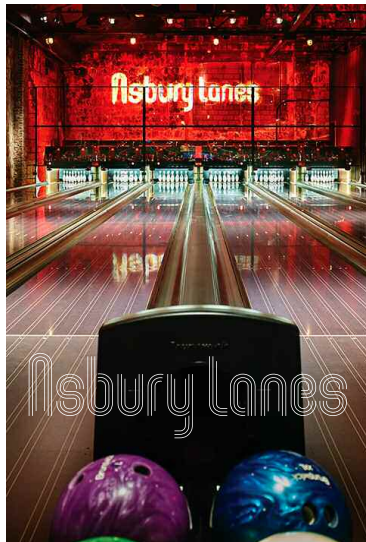
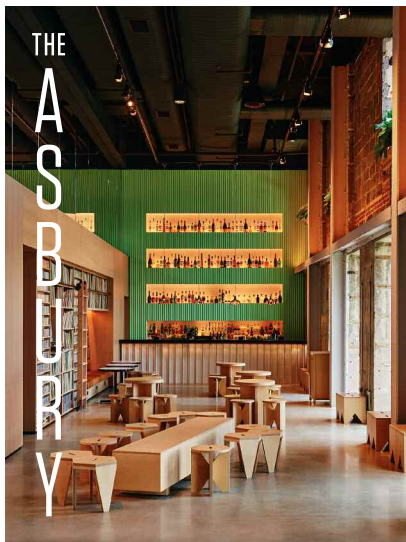
Mayor Gusciora has grown into his new digs just fine attending various church services almost weekly, becoming a regular at community events, and participating in neighborhood clean-ups. He's been meeting with both Federal and State officials on major issues such as water, HUD grants, and crime while also building bridges with his City Council members to continue in the spirit of #LiftingTrentonTogether.

This Mayor won more than the election...he has won the hearts of Trentonians.

**-JEANNINE LaRUE, Super-lobbyist**

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## 3 REBECCA WILLIAMS

*Union County Freeholder – Plainfield, Union County*



I have known Freeholder Rebecca Williams for over 15 years. From the beginning of her entry into public service, she put the needs of her constituents first and foremost, fighting with passion for providing better services and making more resources available for the residents of Plainfield.

Freeholder Williams served with distinction on the Plainfield City Council for seven years and always did her research before every vote.

She is a voice of reason and an advocate for the people. The majority vote she garnered in her last election is evidence of the relationship she built with our residents as she held onto her at-large council seat. She has been on the frontline of every political battle fought in Plainfield over the past decade, and has worked closely with my administration to move Plainfield forward. Rebecca operates with an "open door" policy and continues to do an outstanding job of connecting with people by employing the power of social media and her blog.

It was a pleasure for me to endorse and recommend her to replace now Assemblywoman Linda Carter on the Freeholder Board. I knew that she would take that same passion and dedication with her and exercise good and judicious judgment as she represents her constituents in Union County. She continues to be a partner to the City of Plainfield that she served for so many years.

As the first openly gay female freeholder to serve on the Freeholder Board in Union County, it should not be surprising that she fights avidly to ensure that LGBTQ rights are recognized and celebrated. Her inclusive agenda is representative and indicative of the diversity of ethnicity, orientation and religion we enjoy in Union County, and we are proud of her. Rebecca has earned her place on the top 100 list of LGBTQ elected officials in NJ.

**-ADRIAN MAPP, Mayor of Plainfield, NJ**

## 4 CHRISTIAN FUSCARINO

*Executive Director, Garden State Equality  
Belmar, Monmouth County*



When Christian joined Garden State Equality (GSE) as the Executive Director in 2016 at age 25, it was easy to dismiss him. He was young, and while he was joining a well-known organization, it was also an organization that was struggling to find its voice in a post-marriage New Jersey. Christian proved the critics wrong and firmly planted his flag as a statewide leader. Over the last two years he has re-affirmed GSE as one of the premier voices in the NY/NJ region for LGBTQ issues. Under Christian's leadership, GSE has become a leading voice on broader issues of social justice. He re-established GSE's ability to effectively fundraise while advocating for statewide legislation that will impact the LGBTQ community for years to come.

Over the last two years, Christian has been vocal and bold regardless of circumstances. Whether it's shootings at an Orlando nightclub or vandalism at a business flying the Pride Flag, Christian is well known for being early, visible, and strong in statements that were covered locally and nationally.

Most recently, Christian has been at the helm pushing NJ to move forward on a package of bills to better help the transgender community. His quote in NJ.com that "Here at Garden State Equality we make sure nobody is left behind" is very similar to the creed of his Marine Corps fiancé Aaron as all Marines boldly say nobody gets left behind.

Christian has truly adopted that motto to his work at GSE as he exemplifies leadership.

**-STEVEN FULOP, Mayor of Jersey City, NJ**





# Congratulations

to all the honorees for being named to  
InsiderNJ's OUT Power List. As Senator, I will  
fight for equality, liberty, and opportunity for  
**New Jersey's LGBTQ community.**



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## 5 BRUCE JAMES

*Passaic County Freeholder – Clifton, Passaic County*



As a Freeholder in Passaic County, Bruce James has served a constituency of half a million people for over a dozen years. But you'd be hard-pressed to find a single one of them who thinks of Bruce as "the gay freeholder." Instead, you're likely to hear him described as compassionate, hard-working and dedicated to helping the residents of Passaic County no matter what community they are from.

As one of the first out elected officials in NJ, Bruce played a major role in making Passaic just the 6th County in NJ to extend health and pension benefits to the domestic partners of its county employees, and doing so in a 7-0 vote at a time when Ocean County and others were still resisting this most basic fairness. With friends on both sides of the aisle, Bruce is one of the few politicians who's actually better at governing than campaigning.





# 6 JIM MCGREEVEY

*NJ's 52nd Governor – Jersey City, Hudson County*



The dramatic announcement by Jim McGreevey that his truth was as a “Gay American” may always define him to many. It’s simply part of a longer and inspiring story to those of us who know him best.

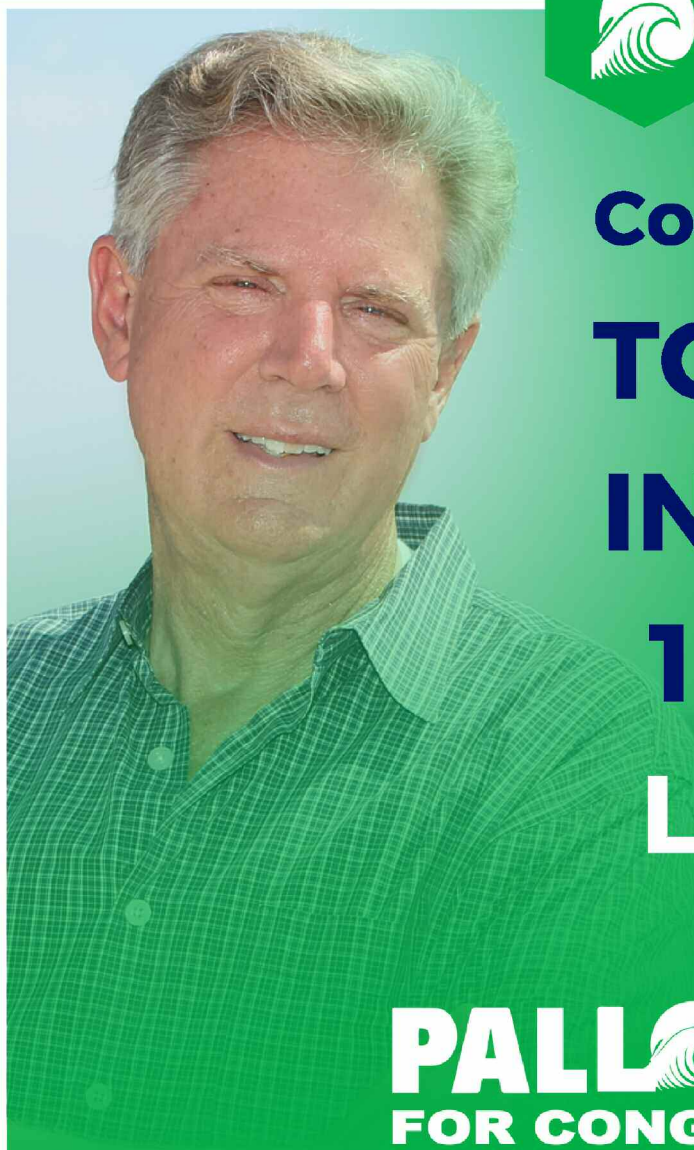
At a time when money substitutes for hard work and the mastering of policy and coalition building, Jim McGreevey was the most accomplished politician of his time. His campaigning was relentless. No personal detail was too small and no constituency was undeserving of his attention. I once advised him that his presence at political events was so omnipresent that he was devaluing himself. It didn’t matter, he couldn’t stop. He may have been the last of the breed. If awoken during the night with reports of a fallen bridge, he would know the place and the structure. He’d get there first and not a single worker would leave without his thanks.

The best measure of any man, however, isn’t what he did to advance himself or his cause in the light of day. There’s no shortage of heroes on that scale. The rarest quality is what a person chooses to do when the glare of the lights subside and there’s no reward but assisting others. Jim McGreevey’s truth on this scale is as our greatest former Governor.

Every ounce of his energy since leaving power has been devoted to those without power. The prisoner reentry program that he conceived and built has saved hundreds of lives. It’s a model for the nation and one of few social initiatives in our state to pay dividends to the taxpayer.

Jim McGreevey deserves to lead any list of Gay New Jersey Residents. Jim McGreevey deserves to lead any list of New Jersey Residents.

**-ROBERT TORRICELLI, former US Senator**



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## 7 JULIA FAHL

*Giant Killer – Lambertville, Hunterdon County*



When 28-year-old Julia Fahl announced her intention to run for mayor of Lambertville — the politically hyperactive city and LGBTQ beacon on the Delaware River — not many gave her a chance to defeat a 9-term incumbent in a primary. But any doubts were settled as the long-time political fundraiser and organizer, and new vice president for legislative affairs at Tonio Burgos and Associates, orchestrated a decisive, 9-point June victory. Unopposed in the general election in the overwhelmingly Democratic town, Fahl is poised to become New Jersey's first openly lesbian mayor in a decade, and the first-ever in Lambertville.

Fahl didn't win because she's a member of the LGBTQ community, however. In fact, that created its own hurdle among Lambertville's gay and lesbian voters, who told her flat-out they weren't going to vote for her "just because." But with a carefully planned ground game and multiple free-wheeling coffee klatches, Fahl proved an articulate thinker, projected a future-focused vision, and showed that she wasn't taking any vote as a given.

Now, with a much-retweeted New York Times profile in the pocket of her classic Bindle & Keep-tailored suits, and with other major-outlet interviewers calling, Fahl is breaking on the national radar. But don't expect her to go Hollywood. Ever the homebody, Fahl is focused on getting out the vote in her adopted hometown for her Democratic ballot-mates while preparing for her own first term.

**-DEREK ROSEMAN, gubernatorial speechwriter**

## 8 SUE FULTON

*Commissioner, NJ Motor Vehicle Commission  
Asbury Park, NJ*



Sue Fulton's life is a story of resilience, determination, and grit. She was part of the first class of women admitted into West Point, graduated in 1980, and then served with distinction until honorably discharged at the rank of Captain. She helped lay a foundation for LGBT service members by co-founding an organization for LGBT West Point alumni, and was a founding board member of OutServe, the association of actively-serving LGBT military members.

I imagine Governor Murphy didn't blink when he appointed Sue Fulton to his cabinet. After all, in addition to many other accomplishments, Fulton received an appointment from President Barack Obama.

She has also been recognized in NBC's Out #Pride30, and played active roles in repealing "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and removing the ban on Trans troops.

In December, 2012, after 17 years together, Fulton and her partner Penny Gnesin became the first same-sex couple to marry in the West Point Cadet Chapel. She continues to live a full life that has helped so many, and she now serves all of us in New Jersey by working with our proficient Governor.

**-CHRISTIAN FUSCARINO, GSE Chair**



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**Steve Swetsky**  
Assistant Executive Director

## 9 JEANNINE LARUE

*Super Lobbyist – Trenton, Mercer County*



Jeannine!! LaRue!! Traditionally in New Jersey, whenever one yells Jeannine! or LaRue!, there is only one truly breathtaking woman that comes to mind. You have to feel bad for every other Jeannine in the state.

Smart, strategic, shrewd yet humble, Jeannine embodies everything you would want in a person who has dedicated a lifetime to making New Jersey a better place to live. To see her at work is to see one of the best. It is no coincidence, given her remarkable talents, that she has held some of the most influential positions (from councilwoman to chief lobbyist to deputy chief of staff) that exist in New Jersey. Her communication skills – which always find the right tone of seriousness but are never immature or inappropriate – are a mixture of Diane Sawyer and Kamala Harris. Jeannine has the emotional fortitude of a winning NASCAR driver, which is all the more remarkable given all what she has sacrificed and the unbelievable life challenges she has faced (losing a child and raising her grandkids). Yet, somehow, those dramatic personal challenges have elevated her soul. She strives to not just do her job extraordinarily well, but to make us all better by constantly working for change. And because of her, often that change has come, whether it be civil rights, women's rights, or LGBT rights.

There is more to her than just her career though. Jeannine is a better friend than most people you encounter in life. For her, mentorship and friendship are not abstract ideas: they are the core of her being. She gives back to her peers, friends, community, state, country, church...you name it!

When I met Jeannine LaRue I fell in love and haven't stopped loving her ever since. She is one incredible woman.

**-MAGGIE MORAN, straight ally**



# 10 TOM PROL

*Law Guy – Franklin, Sussex County*



Winning a decisive victory in a contentious statewide election to become NJ's first openly gay State Bar President might not be what you'd expect from a Peace Corps alum, but NJ native Thomas Prol is anything but predictable. With Master of Public Health and law degrees in hand, he helped found and later co-chaired the state's LGBT lawyers organization that propelled the state bar to become a leading advocate for LGBT justice. Since 2004, he successfully lobbied for - and defended - court challenges to NJ's anti-bullying, marriage equality, and criminal justice reform laws. This, in addition to his work as a leading environmental lawyer. Tom was on the original executive committee that launched Garden State Equality where he still toils behind the scenes, helping plot the organization's strategy and outreach. He is a tenacious advocate, using his platform to advance social justice, continuing a career spanning nearly two decades.





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# 11

## DAVE PARANO

*Campaign Maestro, Maywood, Bergen County*



As the President and CEO of Parano and Associates, Dave Parano finds himself on the list prominently at #11. With significant Congressional and statewide victories under his belt – including Congressman Bill Pascrell’s 2012 Primary race and Governor Phil Murphy’s 2017 win – Parano brings decades of experience and an old school ground game to electoral politics. With recent wins in Trenton with Mayor Reed Gusciora and in the Lambertville primary with Julia Fahl, Parano remains a go-to for LGBTQ candidates and causes. Now with a team of associates who focus on grassroots organizing and traditional campaign field work, Parano is extending his reach beyond the State’s borders and engaging in issue-advocacy and political campaigns up and down the East Coast. A long-time ally and campaign strategist for Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg, Parano’s relationships in Pascrell-world, Murphy-world, and in his home-County of Bergen keep him poised to continue expanding his influence both within and outside of the State.

**-CHRISTINA ZUK, Straight Ally**

## 12

## TONIO BURGOS

*Burgos and Associates, Jersey City, Hudson County*

Louis XIII had Richelieu, Henry VIII had Wolsey, New Jersey and New York governors have Burgos. Mindful of Richelieu's insight that "nothing is as dangerous for the state as those who would govern kingdoms with maxims found in books," Tonio was blessed to learn his earliest lessons on the harsh streets of Spanish Harlem. Having no familial financial wealth but a loving family, Tonio's native keen intellect witnessed, catalogued, and applied the successive power plays of difficult playgrounds and school yards, NYC rough and tumble brass politics, and eventually the marbled corridors of Albany.

Tonio's greatest patron was born of an Italian immigrant family. Mario Cuomo quickly identified the young Puerto Rican Burgos for his astute political acumen, exceptional strategic skills, and his superlative ability to foster relationships with persons regardless of adverse political interests. Tonio's sensibilities, skills, and sapient advice ensured his status as "operative extraordinaire" for the then rising New York Secretary of State, next to become Lieutenant Governor, and eventually Governor. As Appointments Secretary, Burgos held great sway toward ensuring that the politics of the Cuomo Administration were protected. As Director of Executive Services, Burgos exerted his far ranging influence upon government.

From his appointment as Commissioner, Port Authority and numerous boards and committees, including with Trans-Hudson Corporation for PATH, Lower Manhattan Economic Development Corporation, NJEDA, NJSCC, Camden Economic Recovery Board, NYC Police Foundation, President Clinton's Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, Robert F. Kennedy Center, and the DNC. Tonio moved effortlessly in corridors of power, effectuating the objectives of the leadership he served, while being devoted and partial to the Latino community, which was his family, and the LGBTQ tribe to which he belonged.

Tonio Burgos, his persona, gifted abilities, and access and ability to effectuate power have made him a powerful and influential person. For a man of his generation, to be in these places required wisdom, discretion, and subtlety. The practiced skills of Tonio have benefited not only the principals for whom he served, but our community in times of distress on both the national and state stage.

**-Governor Jim McGreevey**



# 13 JACKIE CORNELL

*Principal Deputy Health Commissioner  
Ewing, Mercer County*



While she worked with the Democratic National Committee, she was among an impressive group of people who wanted to make their mark on the world and weren't willing to "wait their turn" for that impact to happen. As President Obama's Health and Human Services regional director, she was a thoughtful leader who, even at a young age, led important efforts such as Affordable Care Act enrollment and the Zika epidemic. At the NJ Hospital Association, she compassionately balanced the issues of concern to the hospitals and the advocates. As Governor Murphy's Deputy Health Commissioner, she plays a critical position ensuring the voice of the patient/consumer is heard and valued.

Her current portfolio – from the public health response, to the opioid epidemic, to women's health, medicinal marijuana, and the state's response to HIV – speaks to her ability to tackle tough problems from a place of inclusion and respect.

My money is on her to make sure coalitions are developed so all voices are heard – regardless of how vulnerable.

**-AMY MANSUE, straight ally**



# 14 LUANNE PETERPAUL

*Living Legend, Mentor  
Long Branch, Monmouth County*



While I respect and admire the equality activists present in 2018, Luanne Peterpaul was paving the path towards equality back when marriage equality was opposed by leaders in both political parties. She never gave up and most importantly, she mentored so many others along the journey. As a candidate for State Senate, there was no one I turned to more in the LGBT community than Luanne – her guidance, her intellect and her deep appreciation of history is unmatched by any other equality activist. She has guided so many and I know she has much more to teach us in the years ahead.

**-VIN GOPAL, NJ Senator**

# 15

## ANDREW BRUCK

*Executive Assistant Attorney General  
Trenton, Mercer County*



I knew I needed a dynamic and talented team to help me lead the Office of the Attorney General, and Andrew was the first person I asked to join my leadership team. Andrew is involved in every aspect of the work of our office, especially our efforts to pushback against the never-ending assault on New Jersey coming from Washington, D.C. I value his exceptional counsel and guidance, his impeccable legal expertise, and his ability to see the larger picture while moving important projects forward.

He is an invaluable asset.

**-GURBIR GREWAL, NJ's Attorney General**



# 16

## MICHAEL DEFUSCO

*Councilman  
Hoboken, Hudson County*



As the current Councilman for Hoboken's 1st ward, Mike DeFusco has firmly established himself as the face of the opposition to the current administration in Hoboken. Mike DeFusco is smart, dynamic, media savvy, and policy oriented. That makes him just the type of opposition candidate nobody wants to face off against. Since losing an extremely close mayoral election in 2017, Mike has only grown stronger with grassroots support in Hoboken as he leads a referendum in November to change Hoboken elections to include a runoff. He's poised to run a full council ticket of allies in the Hoboken 2019 election. Mike DeFusco is a name on the rise in Hoboken and NJ.



Dean Serratelli  
Owner  
Serratelli Hat Company



Between *New Jersey Business* magazine and the *NJBT* e-news service, I stay informed about what's going on in the state and how it affects my company. It's my main resource for information in New Jersey.

— Dean

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# 17

## TIM EUSTACE

*Groundbreaker  
Maywood, Bergen County*



Assemblyman Tim Eustace made his mark in the New Jersey Legislature as a key supporter of Marriage Equality, as sponsor of a ban on conversion therapy making NJ one of only two states to ban this cruel practice, and as a champion of environmental protection and animal rights. When he and his partner, the late Kevin Williams, adopted two children with AIDS in 1988, they became the first openly gay couple in NJ to apply to the state for joint adoption and opened the doors of adoption centers and the eyes of their staff for gay couples seeking to have a family. Tim demonstrated he was not just a politician who cared about equality and justice in his political life, he also showed compassion and commitment in his personal life for helping those in need of help when little help was available. Tim continues his advocacy for environmental protection as Deputy Director of the North Jersey District Water Supply Commission.

**-RAYMOND LESNIAK, former NJ Senator**



# 18

## AMY QUINN

*Deputy Mayor  
Asbury Park, Monmouth County*



Amy Quinn exudes confidence and wit as Asbury Park's Deputy Mayor. Amy is synonymous with Asbury Park, the undisputed gay capital of New Jersey. As unique as she is intelligent, Quinn is an ambassador for Asbury Park, a leader to all people. Under Quinn's leadership, Asbury Park has become one of the top tourist destinations in the world while retaining the uniqueness of its extremely diverse community. As if being a wife, mother, attorney, and deputy mayor weren't enough, Amy dedicates a huge amount of her energy elevating women leaders. She co-founded the Asbury Park Women's Convention, an annual non-profit which highlights the role of women in politics, art, and the community.

**-JESS ALAIMO, co-chair Asbury Park Young Dems**

# 19 JAY LASSITER

*Gate-Crasher*  
*Cherry Hill, Camden County*



The Anglo-Irish playwright Oscar Wilde stated, “It takes great courage to see the world in all its tainted glory, and still to love it.”

The sentiment captures the raw integrity, unvarnished inquiry, and uncommon decency of Jay Lassiter. Confronted with life’s challenges, Jay abides by George Herbert’s admonition that “living well is the best revenge.”

Jay’s passion for the truth, determination to be an advocate for causes from needle exchange to Equality to ending the death penalty, and his fearless willingness to tackle unpopular causes has made him an uncommon force for progressive politics. Jay’s personal narrative is replete with struggle: former IV user, rehab, HIV+ for 26 years; his experiences of life at the margins have deeply informed and enriched his writings for Blue Jersey and InsiderNJ, his commentary as a statehouse blogger, and his award-winning podcast for 101.5.

Jay is a most unwelcome conscience for the political class, a self appointed conscience. Jay, like Joan, is our “Maid of Orleans,” who hears the voice instructing him to take charge of the New Jersey Democratic Party, if not the national party, and lead us to victory.

Being a gay man of his generation, Jay strides between our community’s closeted past and today’s relaxed acceptance. As with most tensions, real or apparent, Jay shares his voice and vision, while respecting the goodness and “hero’s journey” within each of us.

**–JIM MCGREEVY, NJ’s 52nd Governor**

## 20 CHRISTOPHER HILLMANN

*Councilman  
Hasbrouck Heights, Bergen County*



Chris represents Hasbrouck Heights's 11,800 residents as Councilman and also serves in the Murphy Administration as spokesman for the Department of Transportation. A former legislative chief of staff, he knows which statehouse levers to press. Most importantly, in the words of his protege Mike Spadaro, "Chris is an incredible leader in the LGBTQ+ community. He has spent his career lifting up members of our community, helping them run for office, and most importantly helping young LGBT people like me make their way into NJ politics."



## 21 BEN FELDMAN

*Westfield, Union County*



In a state with no lack of sharp people, there is simply no one wittier than Ben Feldman. A consummate professional, he worked his way up from a college internship in then-Senator Corzine's DC office to serving on Senator Lautenberg's last campaign to a prominent role on now-Governor Murphy's gubernatorial campaign, responsible, among many other things, for LGBTQ politics. Today, he is one of New Jersey's top appointees to the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey.

Ben has the uncanny ability to get along with every faction of New Jersey's often-divided Democratic Party, in large part because he is recognized both for his political savvy and easygoing personality. A Murphy administration appointee, he is a former executive director of the Middlesex County Democratic Organization, as much at ease with members of Speaker Coughlin's orbit as he is with members of South Jersey's political establishment. His power is derived from his vast experience in both politics and government and his ability to cross both New Jersey Democratic intraparty lines and interstate lines in his capacity as Federal Affairs Manager at PANYNJ.





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# 22

## STEVEN GOLDSTEIN

*Teaneck, Bergen County*



If you ask Steven how he spells his name he'll reply, "Steven with a V as in very gay". His parents refused to accept his sexuality so when he came of age, it was the first thing he wanted you to know about him. It became a badge of joy and pride.

Steven took up the fight for Laurel Hester and her partner to receive Laurel's police pension benefits. It was clear this was a seminal story that could change the narrative in the battle for marriage equality. While Steven Goldstein is much better looking than Steve Carell (who played him in the movie *Freeheld*) his instincts were spot on. He is the very founder of New Jersey Garden State Equality and inspired me personally as we guided the state through domestic partnerships, to civil unions to finally marriage equality. During those ten years, we dealt with supportive and antagonistic legislators and governors. Through it all Steven's voice was constant, dramatic and always truthful. Steven is a warrior in the fight for social justice, relentlessly committed to inclusion and a leading voice in the LGBT community. He's in it for the long haul. It's that commitment which helped achieve Marriage Equality.

He is currently studying for the rabbinate at the Academy for Jewish Religion in Yonkers, New York.

**-LORETTA WEINBERG, NJ Senator**



# 23

## JAKE HUDNUT

*Pot Reformer*

*Jersey City, Hudson County*



Never one to shy away from a bold move, Jake first burst onto the Jersey City political scene as a candidate for city council last year. He didn't win, but his campaign was a scorching indictment of business as usual in Hudson County. It's really no surprise that within the first week of being sworn in as chief prosecutor for the city, he ruffled more than a few feathers—including those of the state's attorney general—by announcing that his office was in effect decriminalizing marijuana. There's some debate over whether he can really do that or not (the AG says no), but he was at least successful in drawing attention to cannabis legalization as both an urgent issue and one with serious civil rights implications. Since becoming the lead attorney for the city, some have noted that Jake's criticisms of Mayor Steven Fulop been tempered, but his love of making waves certainly hasn't been. Expectations are high for this former defense attorney who is fueled by a calling to social and criminal justice.

**-AMY WILSON, Columnist NJGlobe**

24

**PAMELA RENEE***Councilmember**Neptune City, Monmouth County*

Her constituents recall Pamela Renee as the feisty progressive underdog who snatched her council seat in a delicious upset on election day in 2014. She won by 13 votes, the first Democrat in 20 years to snag a council seat in Neptune City. Pamela was more comfortably elected to another 3 year team last November. Under Pamela's leadership, the Dems are poised the flip control of Neptune City Council for the first time in 40 years.

When not she's busy winning Election Day squeakers, Pamela's pretty much a professional do-gooder, devoting countless hours to her church and to the Ladies Auxiliary. Her ranking is boosted a few notches for working so hard to elect more LGBTs to office in New Jersey.



25

**JEREMY FEIGENBAUM***Council to NJ's Attorney General*

Jeremy joined our team from a major law firm, having clerked for U.S. Supreme Court Justice Kagan prior to entering private practice. Jeremy's legal mind is second to none and his energy level and wit are contagious. He has been the point person on some of our most important work, including efforts taken to protect our environment and firearms actions aimed at keeping our communities safer.

**-GURBIR GREWAL, NJ's Attorney General**



# 26

## BRUCE HARRIS

*Mayor, Chatham, Morris County*



After an 8-year stint on the Chatham Borough Council, population 9,000, voters choose Bruce Harris to be their mayor in 2012. In a rare spasm of good judgment, former Governor Christie tapped Mayor Harris as a candidate for the NJ Supreme Court.

Sadly, the nomination fell victim to ricocheting recriminations between Christie and Senate President Steve Sweeney, who kaiboshed the nomination. Our Surpeme Court would be better with Bruce Harris on it. What a pity for New Jersey that a man of Bruce Harris' character became another casualty of state house pettiness.



# 27 & 28

## WARTYNA "NINA" DAVIS & RICK ROCKWELL

*Council members, Bloomfield, Essex County*



When Wartyna "Nina" Davis was elected to Bloomfield's Town Council in November 2013, she was among the first openly gay women of color to be elected to office in the state. Dr. Davis is an Associate Dean and Professor of Political Science at the William Paterson University. She lives in Bloomfield with her wife Kim and their twin middle schoolers.

When Rick Rockwell was appointed as Councilman-at-large in Bloomfield, pop. 48,000, he became the second openly gay person to be sitting on the town's council! He's lived in Bloomfield for 16 years with his partner, Rodolfo "Rodgee" Cao. Passionate about history, he conducts tours of the Morris Canal, is developing a walking tour of historic Bloomfield, and published a book called "Bloomfield Through Time."

**-MOIRA NELSON, straight ally**



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29

**KARI OSMOND***Lambertville, Hunterdon County*

Her political career began in earnest in Assemblyman Reed Gusciora's Poli-Sci class at TCNJ. She went on to serve as Reed's chief of staff and ultimately become Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman's district director. Along the way, she helped engineer her wife Julia Fahl's upset win in Lambertville's democratic mayoral primary. So on top of all that, she's poised to become Lambertville's next first lady.

Kari and Julia, a brilliant, glamorous, lesbian power couple, are ample proof that the next generation is already soaring.



30 &amp; 31

**JOE DEIORIO & THOS SHIPLEY***Roselle Park, Union County*

The Republican power couple from Roselle Park (population 13,500) occupy not one, but two seats on borough council. Thos, who reps Roselle Park's 5th ward, is an amazing jazz singer who also performed in Miss Saigon on Broadway for many years. Joe's an at-large councilman who also did a long stint as Roselle Park's mayor. The *NYTimes* video'd the pair after their wedding back in 2013 and it's the sweetest thing I've seen this week. Google it.



# 32

## JEANNE LOCICERO

*Acting Legal Director, American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey*



Burlesque dancers challenging a decency ordinance. An Afghan refugee detained post-Muslim Ban despite a visa for working for the US. Two grandmothers who fought discrimination when they couldn't have their civil union at the Ocean Grove pavilion. Jeanne represented them all. (And won.) In the case of the grandmothers, Harriet Bernstein and Luisa Paster, she also officiated their 2013 wedding. Jeanne is a civil rights advocate who's in it for the long haul. She's led strategy for some of the boldest cases and causes the ACLU-NJ has taken on. Along the way, she's mentored a generation of lawyers who are better advocates because of it. I count myself among them.

**-AMOL SINHA, ACLU-NJ Executive Director**



# 33

## DON GUARDIAN

*Atlantic City, Atlantic County*



He's white, he's gay, and also a Republican. But that didn't stop Atlantic City voters from choosing Don Guardian as their mayor in 2013. It was a stunning upset. His reward: the unenviable task of stabilizing a city in economic free-fall. Mayor Guardian fought Gov. Chris Christie's takeover of Atlantic City while putting AC on the path to stability. Don Guardian stopped the bleeding in Atlantic City and he doesn't get enough credit for that.

He only got one term as mayor before getting rolled by the South Jersey Democratic machine. But Don's reputation as a happy warrior endures. He's now the business administrator for Tom's River NJ.

## 34

**MATT ARCO**

*Princeton, Mercer County*



Matt Arco, ace *Star Ledger* politics reporter, is among the best political writers of his generation. Newspaper layoffs have decimated press row in Trenton. That makes voices like Matt's more critical than ever. Matt is old enough to be properly seasoned, but also fresh and nimble enough to thrive in a rapidly changing media landscape.

## 35

**ED WENGRYN**

*Trenton, Mercer*



The Farm Bureau's man in Trenton, Ed's one off the most seasoned, well-respected lobbyists in the game. Also, he is an avid rower in his spare time.

## 36

**AARON POTENZA**

*Director of Programs of Garden State Equality  
Montclair, Essex County*



Aaron has been with GSE for 3 years and works tirelessly behind closed doors fighting and advocating for the LGBT community. Aaron gets the nod for all of his work on the legislative side (Birth Certificate Bill, Death Certificate Bill, and Trans Taskforce Bill.)

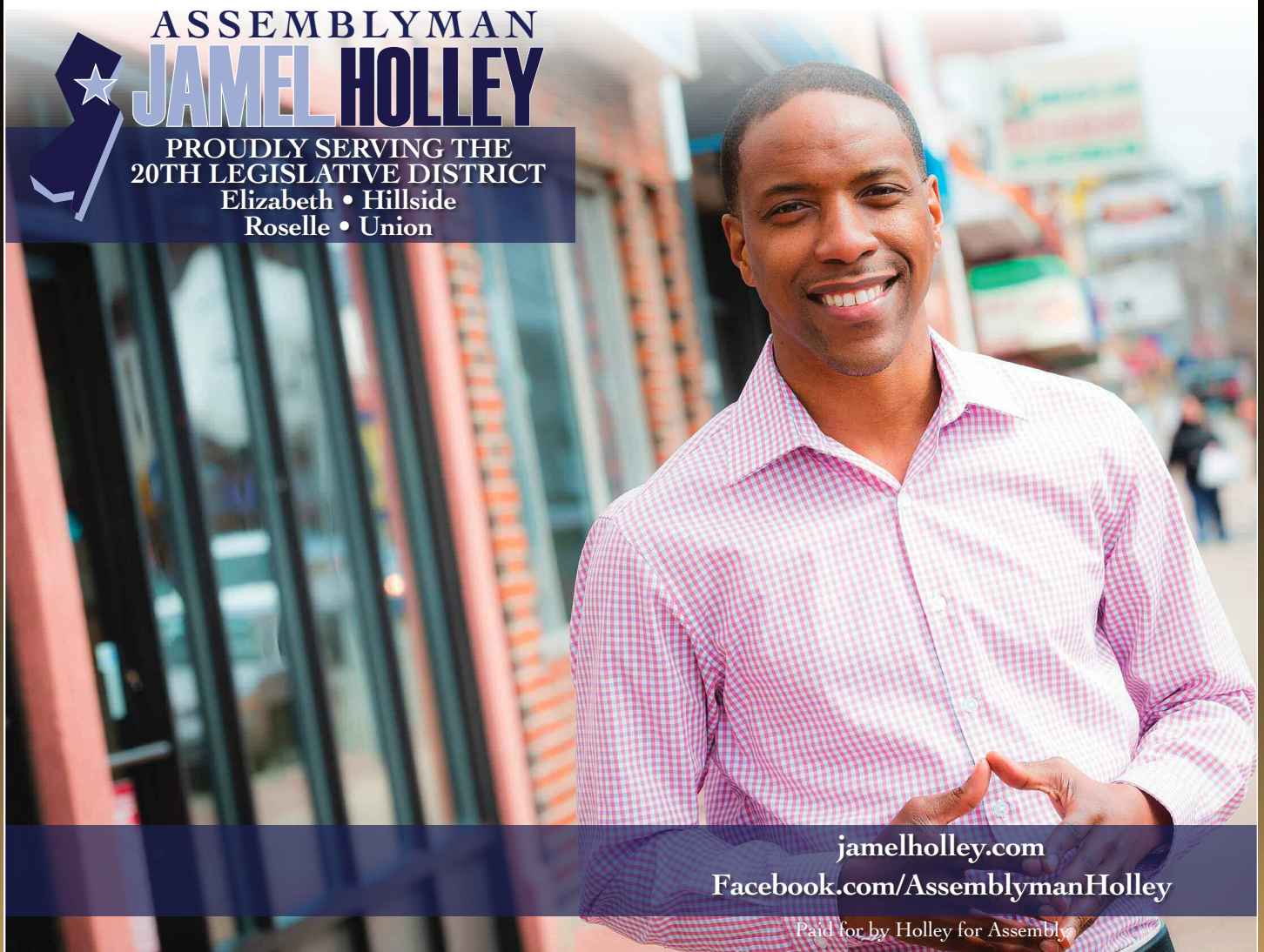
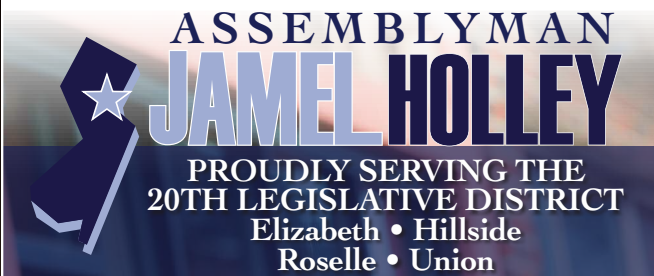
Aaron also travels throughout the State of NJ to provide cultural competency trainings to corporations and healthcare facilities. He has made a difference in the lives of thousands of individuals throughout NJ.

**-KAYVON PAUL, straight ally**

# Assemblyman Jamel Holley Congratulates the LGBTQ Leaders Who Are Moving New Jersey Forward!

“ *There has never been a more important time for people of all backgrounds, all races, all sexual identities and genders to come together in the name of progress. I am proud to congratulate all of the LGBTQ Leaders who are doing the important, meaningful work of making New Jersey a more progressive state each and every day. Let's Go!*

- Jamel Holley ”



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37

**BRIAN HACKETT***Wrightstown, Burlington County*

Brian directs the Humane Society of the United States' New Jersey chapter. He's a fierce advocate for better treatment of companion animals, wildlife, and farm animals. His fearless omnipresence in Trenton is matched by his capacity to form winning coalitions in the State House.



38

**ALYSSA KAYE DAWSON***Councilwoman – Westwood, Bergen*

A state house lieutenant in the last administration, Alyssa made her move onto Westwood City Council making her the youngest woman city council member in NJ history. She's up for reelection in November, this time for a full term.

Alyssa was nominated by ex-NJ Lt Gov Kim Guadagno, her former boss.



39

**MICHAEL BILLY***Jersey City, Hudson County*

As the Executive Director the Hudson Pride Center, the largest LGBTQ advocacy organization in the city that happens to have the largest LGBTQ community in the state, Michael Billy is relevant to any statewide discussion. He is a close ally of Mayor Steve Fulop with an ability to rally hundreds of people to progressive causes in the city. NJ residents should be on the lookout for Michael to run for office in the not-too-distant future.

## 40 &amp; 41

**MARSHA SHAPIRO &  
LOUISE WALPIN***Monmouth Junction, Middlesex County*

It's debatable whether the wedding vows of Marsha Shapiro and Louise Walpin at my home at 12:01 am on October 21, 2013 marked the first same sex marriage in New Jersey, but their impact on the journey for Marriage Equality is not debatable, as attested to by the presence of LGBT rights icons Senator Loretta Weinberg and Garden State Equality founder Steven Goldstein at the historic marriage.

Marsha and Louise were chosen to be plaintiffs in Garden State Equality et al. v. Dow, which held the rights of same sex couples to marry were guaranteed under the New Jersey Constitution, because they were tireless advocates for Marriage Equality from the beginning of the movement, demonstrating by their love for each other that Marriage Equality was both a legal and a moral right.

**-RAYMOND LESNIAK, former NJ Senator**



## 42

**FRANKLIN CUMBERBATCH, JR***Asbury Park, Monmouth County*

Cable TV executive by day and savvy LGBT activist/fundraiser by night, Franklin Cumberbatch, Jr joined Garden State Equality's PAC board to inject a new strategic acumen into GSE's election day efforts. He's surely the most fashionable and sartorially gifted person on this list, no small feat given the competition.

# 43

## REGINALD BLEDSOE

*Newark, Essex County*



Reginald Bledsoe embodies what I hope all Montclair State University students can achieve: he is smart, educated, energetic, and passionate about his work. He recognizes the opportunities that have been bestowed on him, and he lives a life committed to giving others the opportunity to realize their potential. Reggie was born and raised in Newark, and upon completing his degree he immediately chose to give back to his community: in 2010, he was elected the youngest Democratic District Leader in District 5 of Newark's Central Ward. In the years that have ensued he has grown into a passionate supporter of Newark students as a member of the Newark Board of Education. Serving in the NJ Department of Education, Reggie has served as a tireless advocate and thoughtful mentor. None of this should be surprising, as while at Montclair, Reggie was elected as a student representative to MSU's Board of Trustees, the first African American student to serve in that role.

Today, Reggie continues to give back to the community serving as an advisory board member for New Jersey Child Assault Prevention (NJ CAP), a statewide community-based prevention program, and he serves on the Board of Directors for United Community Corporation (UCC), Newark Pride, and One Voice for LGBTQ issues.

**-BRIGID HARRISON, Ph.D. Professor of Political Science and Law,  
Montclair State University**



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# 44

## ELVIN MONTERO

*Trenton, Mercer County*



In politics, everyone is looking for their “ride or die” person. The guy who is there regardless of turn out, weather, or location. The guy who shows up, check in hand and sleeves rolled up. The guy who rolls in deep by BRINGING other people out to support. The guy who walks into a room, and people are both thrilled and relieved to have him there.

That guy is Elvin Montero.

When he commits to you, he’s in it. He’s knocking on doors, blasting events through his network, bending over backwards not for glory or credit, but because you asked him to. He has brought a fresh face to the word loyalty.

Elvin’s commitment knows no geographical boundaries, although his heart is in Trenton. Native to the Capital City, his love for Trenton has pushed him both behind the scenes and out in front to get the attention Trenton needs and deserves. He’s giving back by serving as a close ear to the Mayor, serving as a top adviser and leading the transitional committee.

**—KARI OSMOND, Lambertville, Hunterdon County**



# 45

## BETH ASARO

*Lambertville, Hunterdon County*



Beth started her 4th term on Lambertville town council in January. Many of the same voters who elected Beth four times just sent Lambertville’s old mayor into retirement in favor of a wonky lesbian. Exciting changes are coming to Lambertville and Beth Asario will provide the perfect amount of continuity.

Beth and her partner Joanne were among the very first couples to legally marry in NJ, a ceremony officiated by the outgoing mayor David Del Vecchio.

46

**JOE FORTE***Bridgewater, Somerset County*

Joe started in Assemblyman Upendra Chivukula's office and worked his way to Chief of Staff for Andrew Zwicker. After helping Zwicker win his first re-election in a landslide he moved onto Governor Murphy's office as communications liaison for the Civil Service. He was most recently past president of the Somerset County Young Democrats and currently serves as Secretary of the NJ LGBT Democratic Caucus and National Board for the Victory Fund. A workhorse.



47

**BOBBY TULLOCK***Boonton, Morris County*

Alderman Bobby Tullock is in his second term representing Boonton's 2nd Ward. He also leads the Morris County chapter of NJ's LGBT Democratic Caucus, a PAC to elect more LGBTs to office. His stock will rise if Democrats flip the 11th Congressional district which includes all of Boonton's 8,400 residents.

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48

**RUSSELL LEWIS***Asbury Park, Monmouth County*

One of the pioneers of Asbury Park's turn from blighted shore town to one of the premier LGBTQ small cities in America, the former entertainment and production professional's insistence on quality over quantity, has made Watermark, which he owns his husband Andrew, the hub of high-end revelry on the Jersey Shore.

Unflappable in his progressive values, when Chris Christie's 2013 campaign asked to hold an event at his club, Lewis invited the then-Governor to explain to him why he wanted to celebrate in a venue that was conceived, designed, owned, and operated by a gay couple whose marriage he vetoed.

Russell, of course, never heard back.

**-GIUSEPPE GRILLO, spiller of tea**



49

**TERRENCE MC DONALD***South Orange, Essex County*

As a reporter for the *Jersey Journal* and professional thorn-in-the-side of Hudson County politicians, Terrence has a lot of ground to cover—and few people understand the terrain better. The stories he can't fit into the paper often make it to his Twitter feed, which is a must-read for NJ political junkies.

**-AMY WILSON, Jersey City Textile Aficionado**

# 50

**BRIAN McGINNIS***Collingswood, Camden County*

R-E-S-P-E-C-T -- When you think of Brian McGinnis there are many words that come to mind: change-maker, brilliant, hilarious but mostly... RESPECT. Brian is respected and he worked so hard to be influential and to make New Jersey and our country a more civilized, respectful place to live.

When Brian became my Director of Communications, I knew from the beginning his impact would go far beyond that. He delved deeply into policy issues like pay equity and earned sick leave. And he knew that NJ could do better to strengthen our gun laws.

Motivated to improve the lives of those he knew (and the lives of people in the LGBT community he'd never meet) Brian worked to deepen his scholarship at law school. While workin full-time, he attended law school at night, as rigorous as it was Brian graduated one of the top law school students at Rutgers Camden.

For many that know him, they know about his love of food and family, but also his passion for being a great democrat and fighting social injustice while igniting others to rally and make change happen.

**-PAMELA LAMPITT, Assemblywoman**



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# STRAIGHT. BUT NOT NARROW.

Any way you slice it, the LGBT community is a demographic minority. Our best work is in collaboration with straight allies. Frankly, given the math, we don't have much choice. And luckily for us, there's no shortage of straight allies here in New Jersey. **THANK YOU TO THEM ALL!** This list is reserved for the *crème de la crème*, the most enduring straight allies for LGBT liberty in New Jersey, the ones whose loyalty to our cause never faltered.

- **Senators Loretta Weinberg & Raymond Lesniak.** Our godparents.
- **Maria Rodriguez-Gregg.** The most pro-LGBT legislator in the history of the NJGOP. If Maria had her way, we'd be called the TLGB community. Such is her commitment to trans equality.
- **Mayor Steve Fulop.** I hope others mayors try to surpass Mayor Fulop's impeccable record on LBGT rights. The bar's currently very high.
- **Kim & John Otto.** Ensured South Jersey representation during marriage equality and anti-bullying debates. Kept GSE on life-support at a brittle time in the organization's history.
- **MaryEllen Cervanak.** She works every day to ensure better educational – and social outcomes for LGBT students in NJ public schools.
- **Bonnie Watson Coleman.** Unintimidated in the Assembly and now in the US Congress, BWC's always willing, ready, and able to battle for equality.
- **M. Teresa Ruiz.** Her impassioned plea for marriage equality on the Senate floor left us weak. We're still weak.
- **Dianne Allen.** The former GOP state senator from Burlington County never wavered on our issues.
- **Joe Vitale.** As long as LGBTs suffer higher degrees of addiction and HIV, having Vitale as chair man of the Senate Health Committee is an incalculable blessing.
- **Valerie Huttie & Pam Lampitt.** Our indefatigable allies in the General Assembly.
- **Passaic Freeholder John Bartlett.** He lent his legal expertise to the equality movement waaaaay before it was cool.
- **Michele Jaker & Chris Donnelly.** Garden State Equality Executive Board members, each with a massive Rolodex.
- **Missy Rebovich & Giuseppe Grillo.** The (heterosexual) wind beneath our (LGBT) wings.

## HONORABLE MENTIONS:

Archer Law's Bill Caruso, Labor queen Hetty Rosenstein, NJDSC's Lizette Delgado-Polanco, Collingswood Mayor Jim Maley, Steve Clayton, New Jersey Department of Education Woodbury mayor Jessica Floyd, & More Monmouth Musing's Art Gallagher.



# CONGRATS *to the* INSIDER OUT 100 LGBT POWER LIST!

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## LGBTS ON THE NOVEMBER BALLOT.

# REMEMBER IN NOVEMBER!

Despite the massive leap forward for LGBT rights this passed generation, the number of LGBT elected officials in NJ continues to lag. There's presently not a single member of the NJ General Assembly from the LGBT community. That's not progress. *That's the opposite of progress.* This list represents an attempt to address that imbalance and elect more LGBTs to office in NJ. **EVERYONE ON THIS LIST IS ON THE BALLOT THIS NOVEMBER.** They all grabbed a clipboard, got the right amount of signatures, and earned their way onto the ballot. They're all campaigning fervently right now to GOTV. It takes guts to run for office. And here we honor our gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender brothers and sisters out on the campaign trail.

**Rebecca Williams** – for Union County Freeholder (Dem)

**Alyssa Dawson** – Westwood Council (GOP)

**Dan Ward** – for Barnegat Township committee (Dem)

**Rich Rockwell** – for Bloomfield Council (Dem)

**Thos Shipley** – for Roselle Park Councilman (GOP)

**Pat Hansen** – for Evesham Council (Dem)

**Julia Fahl** – for Lambertville Mayor (Dem)

**Len Resto** – for Chatham Councilman (GOP)

**Meghan Huryk** – for Neptune City Council (Dem)

**Betsy Driver** – for Flemington Mayor (Dem)

**Bobby Tullock** – Boonton Council (Dem)

**Patrick Curreri** – for Sussex County Freeholder (Dem)

**Tami Peterson** – for Frenchtown Borough Council (Dem)

**Caitlin Giles-McCormick** – for Flemington Council (Dem)

**Bryna Elder** – for Union Township Council (Dem)

**Robert Crook** – 11th Congressional District Congressman (Independent)



## Latinas United for Political Empowerment PAC

Congratulations to Insider NJ's  
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**Patricia Campos-Medina, President**

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Delgado-Polanco, Margarita Echeverria, Aida Figueroa-Epifanio, Shawn Laurenti,  
Kay Licausi, Analilia Mejia, Carmen Mendiola, Felicia Reyes,  
Ana Maria Tejada, and Noemi Velazquez.



LUPEPAC is a non-partisan political action committee whose mission is to increase the number of  
Latinas in elected and appointed office in the State of New Jersey.  
We promote and support progressive Latinas running for local, state and federal office.

# 51 OUR DEAD FRIENDS



I'm holding this spot as a tribute to all those brilliant, beautiful, talented dead queers who perished from AIDS. HIV/AIDS, and our government's feeble response to AIDS, was the existential crisis that forced the LGBT community to organize and find its political mojo. That's a good thing. But this list would look very differently without a deadly plague called AIDS.



# 52 DAVID GRANT

*Trenton, Mercer County*



I met David on the dance floor at Garden State Equality's annual Equality Gala in 2017. I am not sure what drew me in; his shoes, his stellar good looks or his insatiable love of life. Whatever it was, I am better for having met him. At 31, David has made his rounds in New Jersey politics. Working with various Assembly and Congressmembers, David made his way from Legislative aide to Chief of Staff for Tim Eustace. David's current position of Director of Legislative Affairs at New Jersey Realtors brings the former north Jersey boy down to Trenton.

David hails from Florida, and I have to believe that when he left to come here, that state lost a little bit of their sunshine.

**-MARYELLEN CERVENAK, Straight Ally**



53

**JAYSON SCHIMMENTI***Reading, Middlesex County*

Jayson has been a valued member of Team TMac since my first campaign for Congress in 2014. He is smart, talented, and an effective communicator. Maybe most important – he is dedicated. As a legislative staffer, he has done an incredible job of ensuring our legislative priorities in Washington, D.C., are in line with the priorities of the Third District. I rely on Jayson to help me cut through the dysfunction in Washington to achieve real results for the folks we represent. With a focus on defense issues and addiction, Jayson is helping to lead legislative efforts on some of the biggest issues facing our district. I am proud to work with him and even more proud to call him a friend.

**-TOM MACARTHUR, Congressman**



54

**JENNIFER WILLIAMS***Trenton, Mercer County*

The first openly transgender delegate at the Republican National Convention in 2016. She transitioned with the love and support of her wife and children and has reorganized the Trenton GOP. Jennifer lobbied hard for the transgender birth certificate bills over the past few years. She's also a member of the Mercer County Federation of Republican Women and serves her hometown in Trenton on the Trenton Zoning Board of Adjustment. She's also the Chairperson of the Trenton GOP.

**-KIM GUADAGNO, past NJ Lt. Governor**

55

**BOB BRESENHAN, JR***Rahway, Union*

Bob Bresenhan, Jr is the 3rd Ward Councilman from Rahway, population 28,500. Bob was standing by when Gov. Jon Corzine signed the civil union bill back in 2006. Bob was among the first to persuasively articulate why civil unions wouldn't cut it. Bob and his husband Roland Ceniza were married in 2014, just a few months after the US Supreme Court's affirmative ruling on gay marriage.



56

**ED ZIPPRICH***Red Bank, Monmouth County*

Ed Zipprich was first elected to the Red Bank Borough Council in 2008 and re-elected to three subsequent terms as its first openly LGBT member.

In the eight years since his election as municipal chair, this powerhouse of political energy has re-energized the Red Bank Democratic organization. As Councilman, Zipprich has been involved in historic planning and preservation issues on the town's Planning Board, Historic Preservation Commission and the Shade Tree Committee.

**-GIUSEPPE ("Joe") GRILLO, straight ally**

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# 57

**JOHN TRAIER***Wayne, Passaic County*

John Traier was the first openly gay person to ever be elected to public office in NJ – his local Board of Education. He was most recently the Chairman of the Republican Party of Passaic County where he served during the Christie Years. He successfully held onto the County Clerk's position in an overwhelmingly Democratic County.

**-KIM GUADAGNO, former NJ Lt. Governor**



# 58 & 59

**GARY HILL & JOHN SCHULTZ***Atlantic City Atlantic County*

John was a leader in the LGBTQ+ community before there was an organized face and voice for the community. Except that he looks so young I would call him a statesman of that community. Gary and John have made an incredible and positive impact on South Jersey in general and Atlantic City in particular with the Schultz-Hill Foundation. Although they are clearly leaders in the LGBTQ+ community, what makes them so impressive to me is they have for over two decades been leaders in the general community as well.

**-LOU MAGAZZU, past Freeholder Director, Cumberland County**



60

**CJ GRIFFIN***Hackensack, Bergen County*

In the age of police dash-cams and surveillance, the public's right of access to video and other government records is still being defined. CJ Griffin is one of the people defining it. CJ has been involved in all of the key transparency cases in New Jersey courts in recent years. In the course of her advocacy and leadership, CJ built her law firm's media law practice from scratch. She's also vice president of the ACLU-NJ board and a frequent volunteer. CJ has also been a fearless voice in the legal profession for LGBTQ people. She openly identifies as nonbinary/genderqueer, and works to ensure we all have the right to define ourselves.

**-JEANNE LoCICERO, Acting Legal Director, ACLU of New Jersey**



61

**LAURA KNITTEL***Hoboken, Hudson County*

After several decades of LGBT advocacy, Laura was appointed LGBTQ liaison to the city of Hoboken. She's basically Hoboken's LGBT ambassador to Mayor Ravi Bhalla and City Council, pressing home the issues important to Hoboken's LGBT community. She was honored at this year's Hudson County Pride with a NJ Senate proclamation.

# 62 & 63

## TONY HOWLEY & CHRISTOPHER STARK

*Freehold, Monmouth County*



Tony directs the field operations for the conservative advocacy group Americans for Prosperity of NJ, an organization whose footprint recently expanded with a new Monmouth County office. The former director of the Monmouth County Chamber of Commerce and long time political operative makes up 1/2 half of a bona fide power couple with his husband Christopher Stark. Christopher is VP at the Insurance Council of New Jersey. Both Tony and Christopher have deep roots in the NJGOP stretching back to their days as Young Republicans.



# 64

## GARY PAUL WRIGHT

*Newark, Essex County*

Gary Paul Wright co-founded AAOGC, African American Office of Gay Concerns, a center for HIV/AIDS testing, prevention and resources in 2001. He now serves as its Executive Director. He's been on the front line fighting HIV/AIDS for over 30 years. We don't have to watch our friends get skinny and die covered in lesions any more. If you're happy about that, send Gary Paul Wright a thank you note.





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# 65

## LAUREN ALBRECHT

*Wall, Monmouth County*



To witness the future of boots-on-the-ground political activism, look no further than Lauren Albrecht. The Monmouth/Ocean LGBTQ Democratic Caucus chair has expanded the radius of progressive LGBTQ candidates beyond the county's Asbury Park/Ocean Grove epicenter...and she's getting them elected. (She near single-handedly ran LGBT Democrat Pamela Renee's improbable win in GOP-dominated Neptune City.) More importantly, Lauren knows how to build relationships that aren't merely transactional. She just wants you to grab a clipboard and knock on some doors for good candidates because it's simply the right thing to do. If Vin Gopal is the brains behind the upsurging Monmouth County Democratic juggernaut, Democratic State Committeewoman Lauren Albrecht is its heart.

**-GIUSEPPE "Joe" GRILLO, straight ally.**

# 66

## BRENDAN NEAL

*Ewing, Mercer County*



He helped drive the cannabis debate as then-Assemblyman Reed Gusciora's chief of staff. He also proved his campaign mettle managing Reed's successful campaign for Trenton mayor. Two wins actually, the campaign squeezed into a run-off and then scored the election day victory a few weeks later.

# 67

## MARC SOLOMON

*South Orange, Essex County*



The venerable marriage equality advocate wrote the book on how gay marriage equality was won. Literally. An actual book called *"Winning Marriage: The Inside Story of How Same-Sex Couples Took On the Politicians and Pundits — and Won."*



68

**DAVE D'AMICO***Highland Park, Middlesex County*

A career law enforcer, Dave is committed to expanding career opportunities for LGBT first responders. Dave was among the NJ cops and first responders in Manhattan on 9/11. A member of Garden State Equality's executive board, Dave and his husband Ronald will celebrate their 2nd wedding anniversary in a few weeks.



69

**GINA GENOVESE***Long Hill Township, Morris County*

The ex-tennis pro, former mayor of Berkeley Heights, and one-time candidate for NJ governor, Gina is probably best known for her tireless work on municipal consolidation. It's gritty, unsexy work and no one does it better than Gina, a righteous advocate for NJ taxpayers. If Gina had her way and some of NJ's small towns merged and consolidated their duplicative bureaucracies, all of our property tax bills would shrink. Listen to Gina, you know she's right.



70

**STEVE MCINTYRE***North Plainfield, Somerset County*

There are lots of show horses on this list. Steve McIntyre is us workhorse. It's hard to imagine a time when Steve McIntyre wasn't plugging away doing the grunt work for equality far out of the limelight. Steve's been part of Garden State Equality's executive board from the earliest days and his finger prints are on every one of the 250+ pro-LGBT laws passed on GSE's watch.

# 71

## KIM TAYLOR

*Trenton, Mercer County*



Trenton Housing Authority (THA) Commissioner Kim Taylor, a native of Trenton, is dedicated to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion. An engaged and active Republican, she ran twice for the NJ General Assembly and once for Mercer County Freeholder. In the process of her three campaigns, she gained the respect of both Republicans and Democrats as an effective agent of change. She was the first NJ resident and first Black female ever appointed to the national board of Log Cabin Republicans and was a co-founder of EqualityGOP-NJ. In addition to serving the THA, she is a member of the Lawrence Township Planning Board, where she served several terms as Vice Chair, and also currently serves on a number of international, national, and regional public housing advisory committees focused on diversity and inclusion issues. Kim Taylor's public service is her vocation and her most powerful tools are her voice and her shining example.



# 72

## DEBRA GUSTON

*ACLU-NJ Board President  
Teaneck, Bergen County*



In the last 50 years, LGBTQ rights have advanced so dramatically it can be hard to keep up. With a career spanning four decades, family law attorney Debra Guston's mission, from domestic partnerships to civil unions to marriage, has been to stay on top of those laws and help people navigate them.

Deb has long been a leader in civil rights, including as ACLU-NJ board president since 2014 and past president of the State Bar Association's LGBT Rights Section. She's recognized nationally as a pioneer in LGBTQ-focused family and adoption law, guiding a generation of New Jerseyans from birth certificates to estate planning, plus whatever life throws in between.

**-ALLISON PELTZMAN, communications director, ACLU-NJ**

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73

**ANNA WONG***Paramus, Bergen County*

Anna Wong wants you to know that election day is coming. The virulently anti-gay Congressman Scott Garrett is no long in office because of people like Anna Wong, a firebrand with a laser-like focus on flipping the House of Representatives in November.



74

**ED POTOSNAK***Franklin, Somerset County*

The one-time Congressional candidate, Ed Potosnak has led the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters for nearly seven years. One of the state's leading voices on environmental issues.



75

**JENN SCIORTINO***Bordentown, Burlington County*

Woodbridge native Jenn Sciortino got her start in communications with the City of Perth Amboy in the 90s. Since she moved into state government she worked as Deputy Press Secretary to Governor Dick Codey and spent the last dozen years making Democratic legislators look good in the press. Jenn has the stunning ability to turn around a press release within minutes, so it's no surprise that former Assemblywoman, now Treasurer, Liz Muoio snatched her from the Assembly Majority Office to be Communications Director. Jenn serves on the Bordentown Democratic Committee in Burlington County as Democrats try to flip NJ-3 for Andy Kim and take over county government this fall.

**-CHRISTOPHER HILLMANN**



# 76

## ANDREW FENWICK

*Trenton, Mercer County*



Good natured and politically precocious, Andrew demonstrated campaign savvy on the Gusciora for Mayor campaign, which pulled off successive upsets to claim the prize. As one of Mayor Gusciora's top aides, Andrew helps implement innovative policies like rolling out the welcome mat so Trenton can cash in on the inevitable cannabis green-rush.



# 77

## JARED LAUTZ

*Hackensack, Bergen County*



Jared Lautz has the ear of Bergen County's highest ranking elected officials. Starting out as an aide to Bergen County's longest serving Freeholder, David Ganz, Jared has continued to make himself an asset in New Jersey's most populated county. Now serving as a senior advisor to Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco, Jared will continue to be a voice for the LGBTQ community in a government serving one million New Jerseyans.

**-CHRISTOPHER HILLMANN**



# 78

## DANNI NEWBERRY

*Rahway, Union County*



She coordinates the Office of LGBTQ Services for Union County NJ's 555,000 residents. A proud alum of Drexel University in Philly, Danni lives with her wife Christy in Rahway.

## Congratulations to Insider NJ's Out 100!

The ACLU-NJ is proud of Acting Legal Director **Jeanne LoCicero**, Board President **Deb Guston** & Board Vice President **CJ Griffin** for their work to make the Garden State a better, fairer, and more equal place for the LGBTQ community and all New Jerseyans.



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79

**JENNIFER MARIE LONG***Kearny, Bergen County*

Army Veteran, infantry soldier, and Bronze Star recipient Jennifer Long is why transgender US Service Members can update their military discharge records to reflect their transition. She took on the Pentagon and she won, ensuring transgender Americans who choose to serve can focus on keeping America safe instead of fighting Department of Defense bureaucracy.



80

**MICHAEL SPADORO***Asbury Park, NJ*

Michael Spadaro, better known as Mikey, is the son of a former Mayor of Edison. He's been blazing his own trail in Democratic politics since 2014 when he started working for the Monmouth County Democratic Freeholder campaign. For several years he was the go-to person working at the NJ Democratic State Committee helping keep the party offices afloat during the doldrums of the Christie years. Now Mikey is Chair of the LGBTQ Young Democrats and working as political and finance director for the re-election campaign of Bonnie Watson Coleman.

**-CHRISTOPHER HILLMANN**

81

**CELESTE &  
JODI ARGENTINO-FIORE***Rahway, Union County*

A power couple from Montclair comprised of two leading LGBT family legal minds in the state, Jodi and Celeste tower above their peers with queer-friendly family law expertise that's unmatched. The pair married in 2013, shortly after marriage equality became the law of the land.

83

**LENAE GRANT***East Orange, Essex County*

She worked closely with Garden State Equality to ensure East Orange (pop. 64,000) provided comprehensive health care for its transgender employees. LeNae epitomizes the very best in local, community organizing and advocacy.



84

**EILEEN DELLA VOLLE***Brick, Ocean County*

Grassroots at all levels. She serves locally as the treasurer of the Brick Democrats, she's on the Ocean County Democratic Committee, and she's also a committee-woman for the NJDSC. If that weren't enough, she reps Ocean County for the Monmouth/Ocean LGBT Democratic Caucus.



85

**BILL BRADSHAW***Tinton Falls, Monmouth County*

He took the stage at Garden State Equality's annual gala last spring and raised almost \$100,000 for LGBT equality in 15 minutes without breaking a sweat. That's power.



86

**MIKE WARREN***Rochelle Park, Bergen County*

Last year, first time candidate Mike Warren won his race for town council in Rochelle Park, population 5,700. His squeaker election day victory was a bellwether for Democrats who now control 4 of 5 council seats in a town long dominated by the GOP.



87

**RICHARD GREEN III***Metuchen, Middlesex County*

A rising star in the Middlesex County Democratic Organization, Richard Green is the Chair of the Middlesex Democrats LGBTQ Caucus, Treasurer of the Middlesex Democrats, and the Manager of several successful Metuchen Council Campaigns. In his profession as a Graphic Designer, Rich has excelled, currently the Senior Manager of Technical Sales at Ideal Jacobs.

**-LAUREN ALBRECHT**

88

**PAM DANIELS***Tinton Falls, Monmouth County*

Pam Daniels is an openly gay transgender woman on the Board of Governors of the New Jersey Federation of Republican Women. Because of her seat on the New Jersey Board of Governors, she is also on the national board of the Federation.

**-KIM GUADAGNO, former NJ Lt Governor**

89

**CAROL RIZZO***Neptune, Monmouth County*

A transplant Canadian, Carol Rizzo is making her mark in Monmouth County as the only woman on the Neptune Township Committee. Currently serving as Deputy Mayor, Carol Rizzo's business acumen from years of leadership in Fortune 500 companies alongside her compassion for her residents has made her a powerful voice in the Democratic stronghold. A former Freeholder candidate, Carol is now on the Board at Emerge NJ, helping train and elect more women to office. Look for Carol to be elected Mayor of Neptune in 2019 making her one of a handful of LGBTQ mayors in NJ. Look for Carol to be selected Mayor of Neptune in 2019 making her one of a handful of LGBTQ mayors in NJ.

**-CHRISTOPHER HILLMANN**

90

**SHAWN LATOURETTE***Highland Park, Middlesex County*

Shawn is the newly minted chief counsel at the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. He'll be much higher on next year's list, after he's had an opportunity to put his imprimatur on NJ environmental policy.

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# 91

## JOHN KEATING

*Glassboro, Gloucester County*



A lawyer and one of Garden State Equality's longest serving executive board members, John Keating's immense contributions include giving voice to LGBTs living in the rural parts of South Jersey. A dual Irish citizen, John was in Dublin in 2015, canvassing and knocking on doors, during Ireland's historic marriage equality referendum.



# 92, 93, & 94

**BARBARA LESINSKI, CONNIE BREECH, & ERIC PICKNEY** *Asbury Park, Monmouth County*

Asbury Park's school board has three LGBTQ elected board members. Barbara Lesinski, a former Board president, and decades-long resident, fought for greater transparency and accountability throughout her multiple terms on the board.

Connie Breech, an APPD officer as well, is the founder of the city's popular Toys for Tots charity drive.

Eric Pickney AKA Miss Savannah Georgia, the board's newest member (and the first ever drag queen elected to NJ public office, hello!) is the founder of the annual Pink Prom charity event and has been an advocate for more literacy programs in Asbury Park's schools.

All three stand as a collective testament to Asbury Park's LGBTQ community's ethic of civic engagement, public service, and giving back to the community.



**-GIUSEPPE GRILLO, Asbury Park Board of Ed**



**THE FOLLOWING SLOTS ARE RESERVED FOR THOSE WHO DON'T RESIDE IN NJ FULL TIME BUT WHOSE INFLUENCE IS UNDENIABLE.**

## 95

**HAZEL GLUCK**

Hazel Gluck is a former GOP state lawmaker and Lobbyist namesake of bluechip firm MBI-Gluck/Shaw, among the most venerable on State Street.



## 96

**DAVID BOWD**

*Hotel Magnate*

*Asbury Park, Monmouth County/Provincetown MA*

Since its early influx of LGBTQ residents, the visage of Asbury Park's waterfront underwent multiple facelifts. But few have successfully, and at times controversially, reconfigured its public face to globally embody its progressive LGBTQ identity as thoroughly as boutique hotel titan David Bowd.

He compelled the world to take notice when he opened The Asbury Hotel. He went one step further and looked to Asbury Park's community to train and hire 100+ residents to work there through his innovative Salt School.

Bowd's commitment and investment in Asbury Park signalled to the world that its LGBTQ-fueled Renaissance was no fluke.

Alright, Mr. DeMille, Asbury Park is ready for its closeup!



**-GIUSEPPE GRILLO, Asbury Park Board of Ed**



*Congratulations!*  
**TO ALL HONOREES  
CHOSEN FOR THE  
LGBT POWER LIST!**



**CONGRATULATIONS  
TO ALL MONMOUTH COUNTY HONOREES**



**Monmouth and Ocean County Democrats LGBTQ Caucus,  
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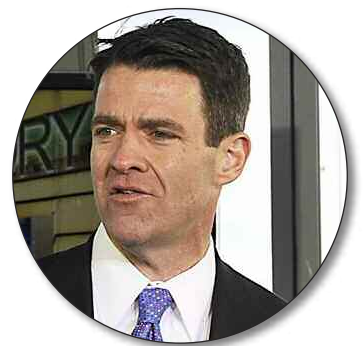
97

**ALFRED P DOBLIN***NYC*

As a columnist and editorial page editor of The (Bergen County) Record, Alfred P. Doblin, was among the most influential voices on gay rights in New Jersey, including passionate support of the ill-fated 2009 legislation to legalize gay marriage. He's upped the ante, departing The Record to join the staff of Senate President Steve Sweeney, where he will provide sage support for a boss who could use a strong LGBTQ voice in his ear. Al never lived in NJ so we're grandfathering him in on account of the summer he spent in Cape May.



98

**BILL BARONI***Hamilton, Mercer County/NYC*

One of the smartest, most talented politicians of any generation, Bill hooked up with the wrong guy, in this case Chris Christie, to give us Bridgegate, a scandalous tale of ambition run amok. Bill was the fall guy for the whole thing and now he's paying a heavy price for those judgment calls. But New Jersey loves a redemption story. And once the dust settles, I suspect Bill Baroni will marshal his immense gifts and reemerge in a meaningful way. Hopefully with a dishy tell-all. Hopefully co-written by me. While keeping a lower post-Bridgegate profile, he's toiled behind the scene to raise boatloads of money for homeless LGBT kids.

# 99

**JOE ROBERTS**

*Camden County/Florida*



He was Speaker of the NJ General Assembly from January 2006 – January 2010. New Jersey ended the death penalty in his watch. Joe shepherded through civil union legislation. He later led the legislative re-discticting commission after the last reapportionment, expanding the map for the Democrats. He should be way higher on this list, but we're ending with a big name like they do in the opening credits of most movies.



# 100

**EVERYONE STILL CLOSETED**

*Everywhere, NJ*

A few of y'all joked that I should do an "IN" list, as in who's IN the closet. I'm a monster for laughing so hard at that suggestion but you gotta admit, it's funny, isn't it? But it's also sad. Because the closet is a lonely, damaging place. With all the recent advances on LGBT rights, its easy to forget that there's still plenty of anti-LGBT stigma out there. If everyone in NJ politics came out of the closet, this list would look very different. I hate to end on a down note, but its important to bear witness to that loneliness.

We do that here.





**Brendan Gill**  
President & CEO

## Congratulations to Insider NJ's 2018 LGBT Power List

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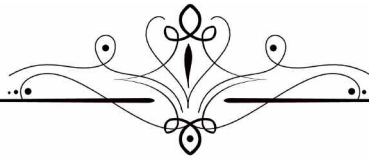


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# *Love Note to Asbury Park*

BY DAVID BOWD

From the first time I visited Asbury Park over 10 years ago I knew I was somewhere special and decidedly different from the rest of the Jersey Shore.

Asbury Park has long been an oasis for the LGBTQ community, according to some dating back to the first world war. In today's turbulent political environment Asbury Park continues to provide a safe and accepting space for people from all walks of life.

When we were initially doing our research for The Asbury Hotel I was intrigued to learn that It was not the local police who raided bars or harassed its patrons. Instead it was agents from the State of New Jersey Alcohol Beverage Control. In fact, locals, including the police and politicians – for years – had a live and let live attitude. Pretty much responding only to complaints of lewd or rowdy behavior.”

I think that live and let live attitude which still very much exists today has been at the core of making Asbury Park so relevant in the LGBTQ community. New businesses (like ours) are not only encouraged

but are truly welcomed into the community are able to thrive where I am positive in other towns it would not be the case.

As exclusive LGBTQ bars have decreased everywhere with a widely more accepting culture it's great that in Asbury Park you still have tremendous venues like The Empress, Paradise, The Tides and Georgies.

I personally love how mixed our hotel crowds are, you don't get that everywhere.

Asbury Park continues to remain loyal to its wonderful history, accepting of everyone, promoting creativity and a positive culture and mostly maintains an incredible and wonderfully unique community. As Asbury Park enters into a new chapter with new hotels and beautiful residential buildings I think it is the spirit of the people that will ensure its success and prosperity. Being only 70 minutes from Manhattan and with the changing way people now work remotely I think a new wave of people will come to the city and fall in love with it the same way many of us already have done.

**-DAVID BOWD, CEO, The Asbury Hotel**

# Congratulating all those named to the InsiderNJ LGBT Power List

*"For Democracy is never a thing done. Democracy is always something that a nation must be doing."*  
- Archibald MacLeish

**CORYBOOKER**  
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## BREAKDOWN BY COUNTY

Atlantic County	3
Bergen County	10
Burlington County	2
Camden County	3
Cape May	1
Essex	11
Gloucester	1
Hudson	6
Hunterdon	3
Mercer	13
Middlesex	7
Monmouth	18
Morris	2
Hudson	6
Hunterdon	3
Mercer	13
Middlesex	7
Monmouth	18

