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The 2021 Insider 100:

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INSIDER NJ

Message from the Editor

2021 MILLENNIALS

Welcome to the Insider 100: Millennial Power List

*A group that has truly come into its own during the
COVID-19 pandemic.*

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★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



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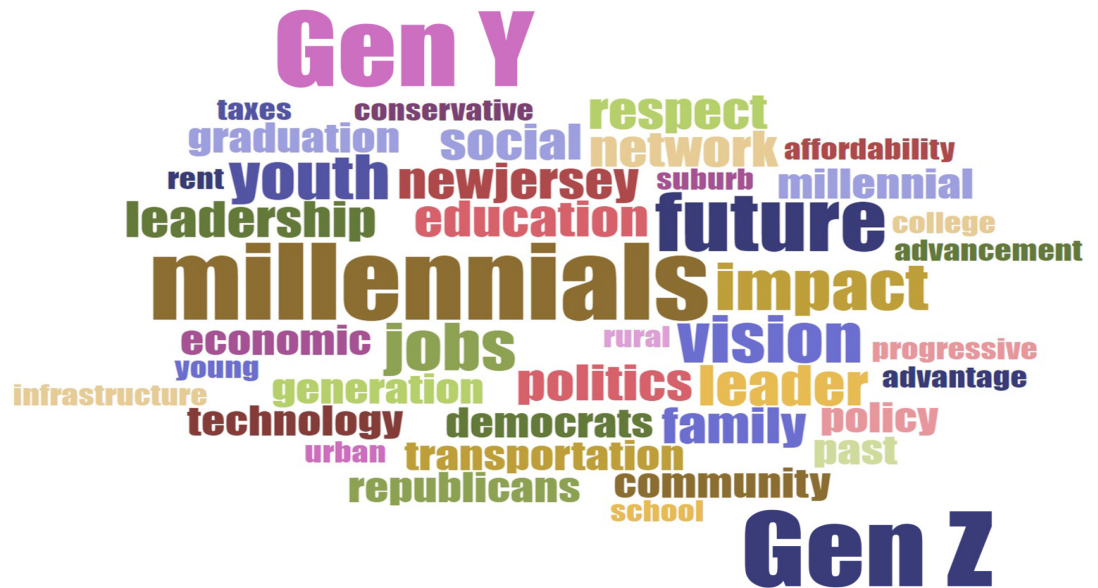


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As older sorts struggled to inhabit the virtual world, millennials assumed the cocoon position without too much trouble, and guided their elders through an infuriating Tron-like occupation.

It's not over, of course.

The challenges endure, as do millennials, who have their hands on the levers of both gubernatorial campaigns: that of incumbent Democratic Governor Phil Murphy and his Republican challenger Jack Ciattarelli, and work in all elements of government and politics.

Certainly, the ranks of elected officials have grown with millennial contributors since the first composition of this list in 2017, and those among them who lead a generation – state Senator Vin Gopal (D-11) comes to mind – now find themselves in the veteran position of defending themselves as they seek reelection.

This year marked a solemn milestone, one that forever stands as that mark of a terrible life initiation for this generation: the 20th anniversary of the September 11th atrocities. In addition to a bell rung for another round in the name of America, the anniversary reminded us of how much this particular group experienced or saw since the beginning of the millennium.

Two decades have passed since the attacks, and in that time, millennials found themselves confronted with new structures and new crises, compelled to live and operate within a world other than the cold one in which the earlier generation came of age. Within a grimness reaffirmed by COVID, the Delta variant, the savage divisions of politics, and the lurid concatenations of social media, millennials persisted, with a generational sure-footedness now, somehow still young enough to be vivid and romantic, and maybe sufficiently wise to bridge certain heartbreaking lunatic divides.

Max Pizarro



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1. Mollie Binotto & Eric Arpert



The two major party gubernatorial campaigns of incumbent Democratic Governor Phil Murphy and GOP challenger former Assemblyman Ciattarelli are being managed by two up-and-coming operatives, who both are making their marks on the campaigns on a daily basis. Murphy's campaign is being managed by Mollie Binotto, who helmed the victorious 2018 CD11 campaign of Rep. Mike Sherrill, who praised her as 'one of the brightest political talents in the United States'. The Ciattarelli campaign is being managed by Eric Arpert, fresh out of law school, a young GOP operative who cut his political teeth with former Burlington County GOP Chairman Glen Paulsen. Large-scale campaigns often employ an impressive array of younger political talent who make up the campaign infrastructure – and both gubernatorial operations this year are no different. With Binotto and Arpert in the management roles, they are in unique positions to craft their candidate's appeals to younger voters – and influence the policies of whomever will be the next Governor.



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2. Andrew Bruck



The Acting Attorney General was appointed by Governor Murphy earlier this year following the departure of former Attorney General Gurbir Grewal. A Princeton University graduate, Bruck is among the youngest Attorneys General in the nation and in New Jersey history, as well as the state's first member of LGBTQI+ community, to lead the state's law and public safety branch. His unique perspective, along with his legal acumen, will be instrumental in advancing solutions to some of the most pressing issues facing the state, especially issues important to the state's younger generation, such as criminal justice reform, marijuana legalization, strengthening community-policing relations, and environmental justice.

CONGRATULATIONS TO

Christina Zuk and Regina Appolon



Named to Insider 100: Millennials List



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3. Vin Gopal



Now a veteran and impactful Senator, still in his 30s, the perpetually rising Monmouth County star surrounds himself with young political and policy talent. The youngest member of the Senate, Gopal is routinely mentioned in insider conversations as a future candidate for higher office.

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4. Britnee Timberlake



One of the youngest members of the State Assembly, the Essex County legislator has had a stand-out year owing in part to her passionate advocacy of housing issues during COVID-19 – specifically in authoring legislation to protect families facing evictions and foreclosures during the pandemic.



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5. Brian Bergen



A veteran who is one of the younger members in the Assembly, Bergen has been a vocal critic of the Murphy Administration, and has thrown his hat in the ring to lead the Assembly Republican caucus. Bergen is making the case that the state Assembly Republican leadership should take a more aggressive approach in pushing back against the Democratic majority, saying ‘if we choose to be winners, we will win’.



Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey

Congratulations to Insider NJ's 2021 Insider 100: Millennials!

Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey thanks all of our statewide leaders – of any generation – who pledge to protect and expand access to reproductive health care services.

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Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey is a nonprofit, non-partisan group advocating on behalf of the tens of thousands of New Jerseyans who rely on Planned Parenthood health centers for high-quality, affordable reproductive health care.

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6. Maria del cid Kosso



The Director of Policy and Legislative Services at the NJDOH, del cid Kosso was appointed earlier this year to the state's newly-formed five-member Cannabis Regulatory Commission. As the Commission's work gets off the ground, she wields enormous influence over the implementation of the state's regulatory framework for legalized recreational marijuana – which has been a key issue for young New Jerseyans.

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CONGRATULATIONS

to **Dan Smith** for Being Named to the
2021 Insider 100: Millennials!

The partners and staff of 1868 Public Affairs possess the diverse backgrounds and skills reflective of the complex government and business environment in which they work.

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7. Andy Kim



Winning in a nail-biter race in 2018 and securing re-election against GOP challenger David Richter in 2020, Kim heads into his third election cycle while still in thirties, and uniquely positioned among the state's congressional delegation to advance policies that affect younger citizens – not just in New Jersey, but nationally.



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8. Zakiya Ellis-Smith



After serving as the state's Secretary of Higher Education, the Harvard graduate, in her mid-thirties, serves as the Chief Policy Advisory to Governor Murphy. She was instrumental in developing one of the Governor's key initiatives – a free community college program.

“However beautiful the strategy, you should
occasionally look at the results.”
-Winston Churchill

Warmest Congratulations to the 2021 Top 100 Millennials!



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9. Sam Joshi



The young Council Vice President in Edison, the state's fifth largest municipality, Joshi handily won the Democratic mayoral primary in June, defeating Edison Democratic Chairman Bhagia for the nomination. With incumbent Edison Mayor Lankey opting against an independent candidacy, the policy-driven Joshi is on his way to becoming the youngest Edison mayor in recent memory.



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10. Sadaf Jaffer



The first Muslim-American female mayor in the state, Jaffer concluded her second year-long term as the top official in Montgomery Township at the end of 2020 and is currently seeking a LD16 Assembly seat. Should she win, she'll make history again as the first South-Asian female legislator, in addition to being one of the youngest female voices in the Legislature.

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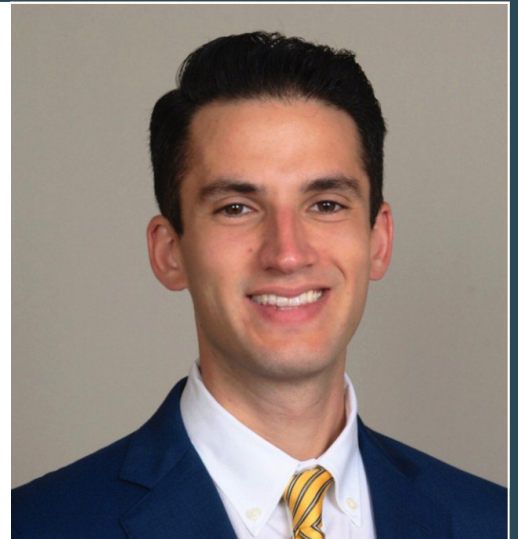
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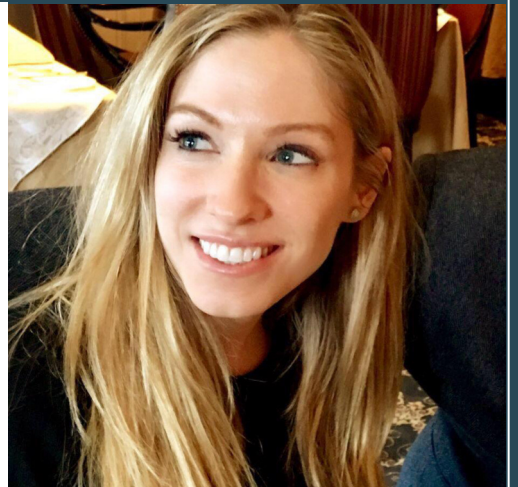
11. Justin Musella

The young Parsippany Republican, a rising star, was the lone victor on his slate in the June primary, and has been barnstorming the battleground town as his council candidacy impresses insiders and observers. He has attracted attention from GOP heavyweights such as NJGOP Chairman Hugin and Assembly Minority Leader Bramnick, who have headlined fundraisers for the young candidate. A rising star, Musella is a young Republican to watch.



12. Stephanie Lagos

The Chief of Staff to First Lady Tammy Murphy was named to the state's Congressional Redistricting Commission – a position that gives the millennial – and by extension, millennial voices – heavy clout in the process that determines congressional representation for the next decade.



13. Parimal Garg

Ascending to the position of Chief Counsel to Governor Murphy last year upon the departure of Matt Platkin, Garg, in his early thirties, wields tremendous influence in the shaping of Governor Murphy's executive orders.



14. Phil Swibinski

The head of Vision Media, Swibinski continues to helm one of the most powerful political media firms in the state, and is at the center of the state's Democratic communications structure, handling communications for the NJ State Democratic Committee and the Murphy re-election effort.



15. Amy DeGise

Embodying a generational change when she took the helm of the Hudson County Democratic Organization in 2018, DeGise's star continues to rise as she seeks an at-large council seat in Jersey City on incumbent Mayor Fulop's slate – and her influence will grow even further if she wins the seat.



16. Matt Anderson

A close ally of Senator Gopal, Anderson is the founder of Millennials For NJ, along with Rebecca Schwartz, Matt Clarkin, Kaylee McGuire, and Juan Carlos Nordelo on its Board of Directors. Since its creation, the PAC has grown its support throughout the state, and has been instrumental in the election of numerous young candidates around the state.



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17. Brittany Hale

An attorney, Hale is the youngest woman of color to serve on the Rahway Board of Education – of which she is President – and was a founding member of the non-profit GEM Project to give opportunities and support to Newark youth.



18. Michael Suleiman

The young Atlantic County Democratic Chairman– the youngest chair in state history when he was first elected – was unanimously reaffirmed to lead the county organization as they attempt to gain ground in battleground LD2 this year.



19. Brandon McKoy

Though he'll be departing for a position within the Center For Budget Priorities, the President of New Jersey Policy Perspective, McKoy – and his entire team – provide a policy-oriented base for many of the Governor's Office's key initiatives. McKoy is widely considered among the foremost young policy experts in the state.



20. Tony Perry

Having served as Chief of Staff to former Senator Kyrillos, Perry has the distinction of being the youngest Mayor in Middletown history, and heads into his re-election bid this year with a massive campaign war chest – a sign of formidability for now, and for his political future.



21. Cristina Pinzon

The Stateside Affairs founder serves as a critical bridge between the state's political structure and the Latinx community – and has continued to earn accolades for her efforts.



22. Axel Owen

The campaign manager for Senator Gopal's winning 2017 candidacy, Owen managed the NJ CAN 2020 ballot referendum passage effort for the legalization of marijuana – a key issue of importance among younger residents. That effort, of course, was greeted with success by the voters last year.





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23. Bill Moen

Among the youngest legislators in Trenton, Moen has a keen awareness of policy issues facing younger residents, and has authored multiple pieces of legislation addressing student loan debt.



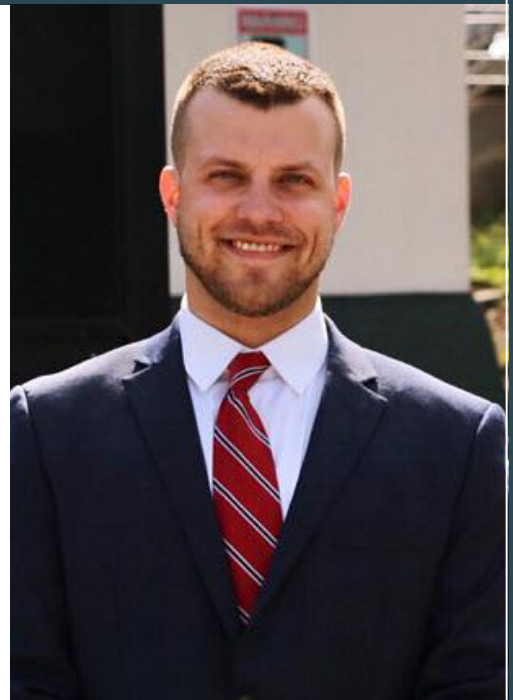
24. Kari Osmond and Julia Fahl

Osmond was recently elevated to Rep. Watson Coleman's Chief of Staff, succeeding the veteran James Gee in the role, while Fahl, a Vice President with Burgos and Associates, is serving the remainder of her term as Lambertville mayor, after being elected at age 28 in 2018.



25. John Francis Roman

The Linden Councilman has a dedicated constituent services track record, on-the-ground visibility, and aggressive approach to campaigning. Close to the Union County Democratic power structure, he's also been supportive of other younger candidates, and is certainly a prospect for higher office – especially as Linden gears up for a mayoral election next year.



26. LaMonica McIver

The Newark Central Ward Councilwoman, the youngest elected official on the dais, was appointed Council Vice President this summer, and continues to exhibit rising star vibes in the state's biggest city.



27. Christina Zuk

Recognized for her efforts to support female candidates running for office, the veteran Zuk is a highly-regarded policy expert at powerhouse firm Princeton Public Affairs.



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28. Intashan Chowdhury

Recently becoming the youngest Business Administrator in the state two years ago, the mentee of Prospect Park Mayor Khairullah works non-stop, and is tapped into the millennial power structure of the state.



29. Elton Custis

The leader of the opposition in the City of Camden lost his bid for mayor this year, but the local grassroots Board of Education member showed courage in the loss, and plans to have another go in the future. Certainly, when it comes to identifying problems in Camden, there's plenty to work with, and Custis now has citywide campaign experience in the resistance.



30. Brandon Umba

The Lumberton business administrator is running for Assembly on the Republican ticket in battleground LD8, alongside Senate candidate Assemblywoman Jean Stanfield. With GOP Assemblyman Ryan Peters opting against a re-election bid, Umba specifically can appeal to younger voters and their issues in the district.



31. Hillery Brostchol

The CD11 Republican primary candidate announced her candidacy earlier this year, and has made it a point in her campaign to call for a 'fresh perspective' in the Republican Party to attract younger voters.



32. Nick D'Agostino

The young Wantage Board of Education President, a Republican, is a motivational speaker who has been active in the non-profit world, specifically towards raising awareness and funds for spinal muscular atrophy. D'Agostino, who uses an electric wheelchair due to SMA, has announced his intention to challenge Rep. Gottheimer next year.



33. Jesse O. Kurtz

The lone Republican on the Atlantic City council made a play for the LD2 GOP Assembly seat nomination earlier this year, and remains a vocal advocate for the city's younger residents and younger families.



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34. Daryl Eisenberg Knegten

The young Watchung councilwoman, a Democrat, has been critical in making inroads for the party in the Somerset County town, and is running for re-election this year. An avid campaigner, she's a natural candidate for higher office.



35. Joseph Signorello

Part of the fifth-generation of a family with deep roots, the Roselle Park Mayor is taking aim for higher office this year, running for the vacant LD21 Senate seat against Assemblyman Bramnick, in a race that provides a clear generational contrast.



36. Mussab Ali

The young and popular Jersey City Board of Education President, a Harvard Law student in remission after battling cancer, opted against seeking re-election this year – but there's no doubt he'll be back in public office in the future.



37. Sam DeAlmeida

With Statehouse credibility, DeAlmeida is establishing herself as a powerful labor voice as President of the Associated Builders and Contractors of New Jersey. In 2019, she made the case for the GOP to appeal to younger voters when she screened for the LD10 Assembly nomination.



38. Briana Vannozzi

The NJ Spotlight News anchor, who is moderating the second gubernatorial debate in October, is an ace journalist with a trusted and reliable reputation.



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39. Raj Mukherji

The veteran LD33 Assemblyman, who chairs the Assembly Judiciary Committee, is a popular Statehouse presence, and among the youngest lawmakers.



40. Fatima Heyward

The Camden County resident serves as President of the New Jersey Young Democrats, the first African-American female elected to the role.



41. Quinton Law


The Moorestown Councilman, a Democrat, is running for re-election this year and has proven to be an avid campaigner who's in touch with his town and constituents.



42. Tommy Russo

An attorney, Russo, a Republican, is now the Deputy Mayor of Howell, and has been a conduit between younger residents and families and their town government.





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43. Dyese Davis

The Chief of Staff to LD11 Senator Gopal, Davis is on the board of Brookdale Community College and the Affordable Housing Alliance.



44. Andrew Trenk

The up-and-coming consultant is schooled in Essex County politics, and is a rising go-to operative for local Democratic campaigns.



45. Felisha Reyes-Morton

The Camden Councilwoman, the youngest on the dais, broke from the powerful party organization to make a primary run for Mayor earlier this year; despite losing, she says it was a 'sacrifice worth making to stir the pot'.



46. Dan Scharfenberger

A rising Republican star who's now at the helm of the Senate Republican Majority Campaign Committee during the 2021 legislative cycle, Scharfenberger ran Senator Kean's 2020 razor-close congressional race in CD7.



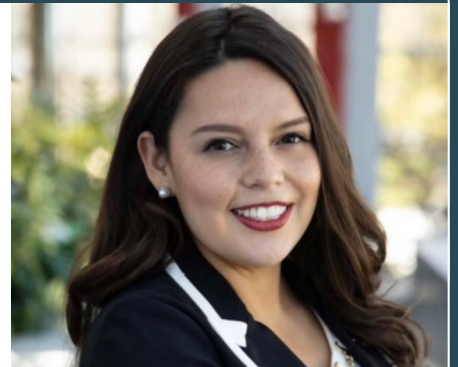
47. Sabeen Masih

Serving as a member of Senator Weinberg's panel to address sexual harassment, the Capital Impact Group Vice President was an instrumental and young voice in crafting the panel's recommendations.



48. Sara Sooy

The Deputy Director of the Somerset County Commissioner Board, Sooy was part of the Democratic wave that eventually turned the county blue over the past few years.



49. Missy Rebovich

The Public Affairs and Government Relations Director for NJ Future is a key young voice on smart growth and development, as the state grapples with post-Ida climate realities.



50. Marshall Spevak

A veteran South Jersey operative, Spevak is a Vice President at MWW and also the Chairman of Battleship NJ.



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Kaylee McGuire

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Juan Carlos Nordelo

Legislative Director, Assemblywoman
Yvonne Lopez, Board Member



Matt Clarkin

Parsippany Municipal Chairman,
Board Member

51. Christian Fuscarino

The young Executive Director of Garden State Equality remains a highly influential LGBTQI voice, and commands respect from all sides of the political aisle.



52. Bryce Robins

The young Leonia Board of Education member is gearing up for his second term, having won his first term while still a senior in high school. He has made it a priority to increase communication between the BOE and district students, and could be a potential candidate for higher office someday.



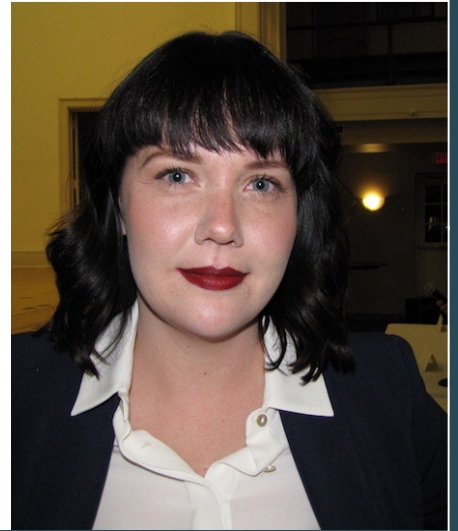
53. Henry de Koninck, Matt Krayton and Sam Leibman



The trio at Publicity continue to win awards for their innovation with political communications, including campaign work for President Biden and Montclair Mayor Spiller.

54. Kate Triggiano

The young Red Bank Councilwoman, a Democrat, survived by a few votes in a bruising off-the-line primary which saw her colleague Hazim Yassin defeated by only a handful of votes, in a bruising off-the-line primary, in a race that was seen as a proxy battle between the older establishment Democrats and the younger generation of party leaders. In the end, Triggiano made it through.



55. Al Abdelaziz

The veteran political insider and current Ward 6 Councilman remains a key voice within the state's Arab-American population.



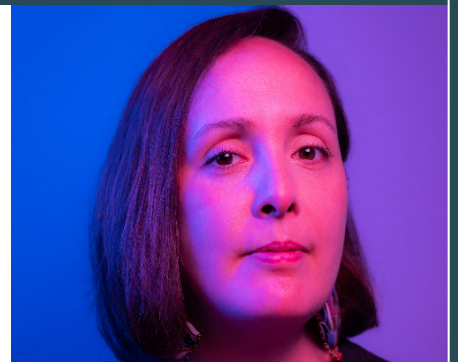
56. Jason Cilento

The Dunellen Mayor has been a hands-on official in town, where a number of development projects are in progress.



57. Sarah Fajardo

The ACLU-NJ's Policy Director is at the center of the organization's highly influential advocacy campaigns.





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58. Dan Smith

A former aide to Speaker Coughlin, Smith has been a critical behind-the-scenes policy mover-and-shaker, specifically on marijuana legalization legislation. He's now a Senior Associate at powerhouse firm 1868 Public Affairs.



59. Maria Fruci

The young attorney at Genova Burns, recently named to the 'New Leaders of the Bar' by the NJ Law Journal, is a rising star in the legal community.



60. Danielle Ireland-Imhof

Elected the Passaic County Clerk in 2018, Ireland-Imhof has made strides in the modernization and accessibility of the Clerk's Office.



61. Karlito Almeda

The young Bergen County Democrat serves as an aide to retiring Senate Majority Leader Weinberg, and is seeking an Assembly seat in LD39 – one of the youngest candidates in this cycle.



62. James Kern

Once the youngest mayor in the state, the Warren County Commissioner Director, a Republican, took a lead role in crafting the county's COVID-19 response.



63. Joseph M. DeCotiis III

The youngest, and newest, attorney within the venerated DeCotiis legal family is a cannabis legal expert and serves as municipal prosecutor for Carteret.



64. Anthony Fasano

First elected to Hopatcong BOE at age 19, the young Republican won a seat on Sussex County Commissioner Board in 2019, and was elected Deputy Director earlier this year.



65. Erin Delaney

The former Deputy Mayor of Garfield, Delaney earlier this year stepped down to take the City Manager position – and also serves as municipal clerk in Elmwood Park and Prospect Park.





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66. Paul Kanitra

The Point Pleasant Beach mayor has made it a priority to increase accessibility and modernize communications between town government and residents.



67. Regina Appolon

Known for her legislative abilities and policy experience, Appolon is a rising star at powerhouse firm Princeton Public Affairs.



68. Petra Gaskins

The Chief of Staff to battleground LD16 Assemblyman Zwicker, who's running for Senate, Gaskins elected the NJ Chapter Director for the influential New Leaders Council.



69. Zachary Dougherty

The Monmouth County native, now in college, has been a key advocate for gun control legislation and continues to be a voice on issues facing students.



70. Juan Carlos Nordelo

The Legislative Director for LD19 Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez sits on the Board of Millennials For NJ.



71. Katie Cericola

The founder of the 'Millennial Minute' podcast, Cericola – who sought a Bergen County commissioner seat last year, recently stepped down as Chair of the Bergen County Young Republicans to focus on her Waldwick council candidacy.



72. Pearl Gabel

Along with Megan Coyne, Gabel created the state's first Twitter account, which gained national recognition last year; she's taken her unique talents to Kivvit, where she directs brand strategy and digital integration.



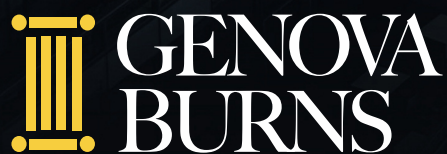
73. Jenna Mellor

The Executive Director of the NJ Hard Reduction Coalition has emerged as a leading advocate for advancing drug policy reform, most evident in the fight to restore Atlantic City's syringe access program.





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74. Matt Rooney

The founder of the popular Save Jersey, provides must-read content for the state's younger Republicans.



75. Jason D'Alessi

The former Kinnelon BOE member is the Managing Director of Fuerza Strategy, which employs a young and talented team, and has been an advocate for building a bench of younger candidates for office.



76. Nohemi Soria-Perez

The Chief of Staff for the LD5 legislators, Soria-Perez is running for Camden City council this year, and has a track record of advocating for the Latino community in Camden County.



77. Sarah Neibert

The young Mendham Township Committeewoman was again selected to serve as Mayor earlier this year, and could be a formidable candidate for higher office.



78. Vanessa Falco

The first African-American woman elected at-large to the Hoboken Council, Falco is an affordable housing advocate in the dense Square Mile City, and works at Stevens Institute to promote STEM to high school students.



79. Clinton Calabrese

The Bergen County Democrat is among the youngest legislators in the Assembly.



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JASON DEALESSI, MANAGING DIRECTOR

80. Billy Prempeh

The CD9 Republican candidate, a veteran in his thirties, has a large social media following and has an energetic presence on the campaign trail, despite the uphill climb in CD9 for a Republican.



81. Alyssa Kaye Dawson

The Chief of Staff to Senator Schepisi ran last year for Bergen County Commissioner, and previously served on the Westwood council, the youngest female GOP councilmember in the state at the time. Chairs the Bergen County Young Republicans.



82. Will Gruccio

The former Cumberland County Young Republicans Chairman is the President of Renati Solutions, a rising public relations firm in South Jersey.



83. Samantha Minchello

The former aide to Governor Murphy and DOBI staffer worked on the 'Get Covered NJ' outreach program, and serves as Chair of the Monmouth County Young Democrats.



84. Selaedin Maksut

The Columbia University graduate serves as Executive Director of CAIR-NJ, and has been a vocal advocate for the Muslim community in New Jersey.



85. Alex Keiser

The Springfield Township Committeeman also serves as Chief of Staff to the policy-grounded LD27 Assemblyman McKeon.



86. Colston Reid

The Chief of Staff to CD7 Rep. Malinowski since his 2018 victory and through his nail-biter re-election bid last year, Reid will continue to play a critical role as Malinowski navigates redistricting and the 2022 electoral landscape.



87. Cody Miller

The former Monroe Township councilman currently serves on the BOE, and is well-connected in South Jersey, serving as a fundraising consultant for the Senate Democratic Majority PAC and Senate President Sweeney's campaign treasurer.



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Executive Director

Kevin Kelleher
Deputy Executive Director

88. Mark Gyorfy

The youngest Deputy Mayor in Morris Township history, the former Sires staffer has led initiatives to increase communications with residents and reform land use development.



89. Matt Clarkin

The Parsippany Mayor's Chief of Staff, Clarkin sits on the board of Millennials For NJ PAC, and is at ground-zero of this year's battleground mayoral race.



90. Robert Field

The affable operative got his start in Somerset County and has worked on various campaigns and in the Front Office as a Senior Aide.



91. A'Dorian Murray-Thomas

The youngest woman ever elected to the Newark Board of Education, Murray-Thomas is the founder of a non-profit aimed at empowering young girls.



92. Thomas Bushnauskas

A rising star in Passaic County, Bushnauskas is making his third run for council in Hawthorne, and is the youngest candidate in the town this year.



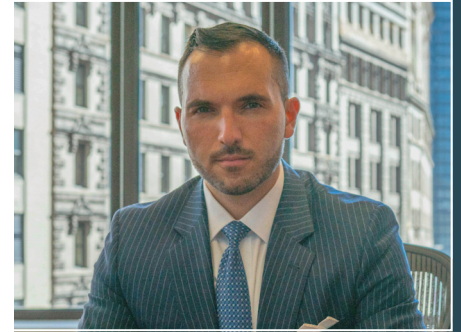
93. Greg Vartan

The Summit councilman, seeking his second term, has been widely praised for his straight-forward approach and commitment to restoring civility to political discourse.



94. Mike Crispi

The former Morris County Freeholder candidate launched a national podcast earlier this year with Right Side Broadcasting Network.



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95. Steven Spurr

The Summit GOP Chairman made a play for the LD21 Assembly nod; while ultimately unsuccessful, he's running for Summit council this year and has received praise for his efforts to expand the party's reach.



96. Dave Pilmenstein

The founder of Activate Media, the Union County resident is an innovative digital communication, and won his first Reed Award this year.



97. Alex Zdan

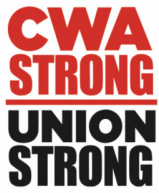
The 'Power and Politics' host on News12 has a respected reputation as an impactful interview, and is a rising star within the younger generation of state-based journalists.



98. Imani Oakley

A diehard progressive activist and policy expert, Oakley is mounting a CD10 Democratic primary challenge, and is already running a strong campaign as she looks to make inroads among the electorate.





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99. Kason Little

The Elizabeth-based Black Lives Matter activist remains an outspoken advocate statewide for black liberation and racial justice issues.



100. Zach Myshkoff

The up-and-coming Republican operative has clients throughout the state – from the local through legislative levels.

