

INSIDER NJ'S 2023 INSIDER OUT 100:

LGBT POWER LIST

INSIDERNJ.COM

Let's congratulate Perry Farhat, Esq., together.



Congratulations to **Perry Farhat, Esq.**,
Director of the Babs Siperstein PROUD Center
and the PROUD Gender Center.

Thank you for your dedication to ensuring members of the LGBTQ+ community have access to the health care services they need and are treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.





Let's be healthy together.

rwjbh.org



INSIDERNJ 2023 LGBT POWER

WELCOME TO INSIDER NJ'S 6TH ANNUAL OUT 100 LGBT POWER LIST

P.O. Box 66 Verona, NJ 07044 insidernj@gmail.com

www.InsiderNJ.com





Max Pizarro Editor-in-Chief Max@InsiderNJ.com



Pete Oneglia General Manager Pete@InsiderNJ.com

Michael Graham CEO

John F.X. Graham Publisher

Ryan Graham Associate Publisher

A TRIBUTE TO POLITICALLY INFLUENTIAL LGBT **VOICES IN NEW JERSEY POLITICS.**



LGBT in NJ

What's it like to be LGBT in New Jersey politics in the year 2023?

Short answer: it's not that great.

In one corner we've got New Jersey's long-dominant Democratic Party which has a demonstrably better voting record on LGBT issues than the GOP

But is much of their support is performative?

New Jersey Democrats spent the

month of June spreading Pridethemed rainbow memes online. But that barely masks their decades-long track record of treating gays like an ATM machine or (at best) campaign help.

Where are the LGBT Chiefs of Staff in Trenton? Where is the bench of "next generation" LGBT candidates to run for office?

There are no (zero) Democratic LGBT state lawmakers serving alongside republican Assemblyman Don Guardian, who alone comprises Trenton's LGBT representation. Trenton Councilwoman Jennifer Williams, a moderate Republican, is the only transgender lawmaker at the municipal level in the state's history.

New Jersey is a blue state largely governed by Democratic gatekeepers and it's not working out that great for LGBT candidates, something professional gay Democrats appear loathe to admit.

INSIDER NJ

INSIDER OUT 100

And that gets me to the New Jersey Republican Party, which has an element that has been campaigning on crazy, anti-LGBT sentiment for as long as I've been paying attention. Early on in the battle for marriage equality, Republican legislators voted "NO" (mostly in lockstep) throughout the aughts and well into the Chris Christie era. Anyone watching a series of GOP lawmakers weaponize their faith *and indeed their God* against queer people remembers how rancorous the battle would become.

There are echoes of that rancor in the current debate over trans issues and New Jersey's novel and innovative LGBTQ-inclusive curriculum. If you're curious what the homophobic rightwing stands for, just remember we're now into the third month of a collective meltdown because a beer company put a transgender person in a commercial.

And *that's* pretty much the national Republican platform in 2023, alongside controlling the outcome of every pregnancy in America.

And thanks to GOP priorities, censorship of books in schools is on the rise. New Jersey is no exception as we see some school districts around the state actively work to eliminate any evidence of gay (and especially transgender) people from the curriculum and from the library.

Right-wing conservatives are on fire for this debate so if circulating petitions is our best response, we will surely lose this battle. Many LGBT advocates in New Jersey, myself included, were caught flat-footed at this sudden, rancorous embrace of regressive moves such as book bans. And instead of a nimble, aggressive ACTUP-style fight-back (complete with media- and-campaign strategy for Board of Education seats), we clutched our pearls. We decried what we observed with platitudes like "No Hate in the Garden State", despite ample evidence to the contrary that there is, in many quarters.

How we fight back? That's always on us.

And what we settle for? That's on us, too.

So *that's* what it's like to be LGBT in New Jersey politics: one party throws us under the bus for political points and the other party scores by pandering in obsequious and performative ways.

Most rank-and-file GOP voters don't hate LGBT people. Likewise, Democratic voters don't treat their gay friends like an ATM.

It's time the Democrats and Republicans running Trenton followed suit.

Sincerely,

Tay Lassiter

HYACINTH CONGRATULATES ALL OF OUR FRIENDS & COLLEAGUES FOR THEIR INCLUSION IN

INSIDER NJ'S 2023 OUT 100 POWER LIST.

INCLUDING OUR OWN



Kathy Ahearn-O'Brien Executive Director



Axel Torres MarreroSr. Director of Public Policy & Prevention

It is an honor to work with you as we ensure that NJ remains a safe haven for the LGBTQ communities.



WWW.HYACINTH.ORG



1. REED GUSCIORA



Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora has spent entire political career crashing the gate. He was the first openly LGBT state lawmaker in NJ history. Then he was the only out lawmaker to get reelected. After a decades-long career in the state house where he pioneered legislation on marriage equality and weed, Mr. Gusciora left a safe seat in 2019 to run for mayor of Trenton. That year, Mr. Gusciora's narrow 2nd place finish in the first round, earned him a berth in the runoff which he won handily to become the first openly gay mayor in Trenton's centuries-long history.

Reed's election win triggered the ugliest impulses of multiple members of Trenton City Council who spent the duration of Mayor Gusciora's fist term opposing anything (and everything) that came out of the front office because they didn't like a gay man running New Jersey's capital city. The homophobic bile coming from city council was so toxic it became a national news story highlighting Trenton Council's retrograde version of disarray.

Nevertheless Reed Gusciora persisted.

This past year, both of Reed's bigmouth detractors challenged the Mayor's reelection efforts and were roundly rejected by Trenton voters as Reed romped to victory in the first round, his vanquished foes reduced to an ugly footnote in Trenton's long history.

With a new city council not mired in drama and bigotry, Mayor Reed Gusciora begins his historic 2nd term as mayor of Trenton with the wind at his back.



2. SHAWN LATOURETTE



Whether the new trail runs through a State Park or the State House, chances are you will find Shawn LaTourette, NJ's Commissioner of Environmental Protection, blazing it. The first out gay man ever confirmed to a New Jersey Governor's Cabinet, Mr. LaTourette had led the state through an environmental infrastructure renaissance while delivering long-overdue progress on issues of climate change and environmental justice that has escaped past Governors and their DEP Commissioners.

In the past year, Mr. LaTourette and his DEP team have catapulted New Jersey to a position of national leadership on environmental justice by crafting cutting-edge regulations that aim to reduce pollution in already vulnerable-and predominantly black, brown, and low-wealth—communities. LaTourette's work has advanced a decades long fight led by social justice advocates who view him as a trusted ally. No doubt that LaTourette will continue to earn that trust.

Mr. LaTourette, who also serves as national chair for infrastructure with the Environmental Council of the States, has made New Jersey a model for getting lead and synthetic chemicals out of our drinking water. In January, he took center stage at a White House symposium on lead abatement headlined by Vice President Kamala Harris to demonstrate how New Jersey is improving public health while creating good-paying union jobs by deploying billions of dollars of new investments in water infrastructure. His leadership in the water sector has similarly earned Mr. LaTourette the trust of labor—no small feat for an environmentalist given that the two interests are often seen as being at odds.

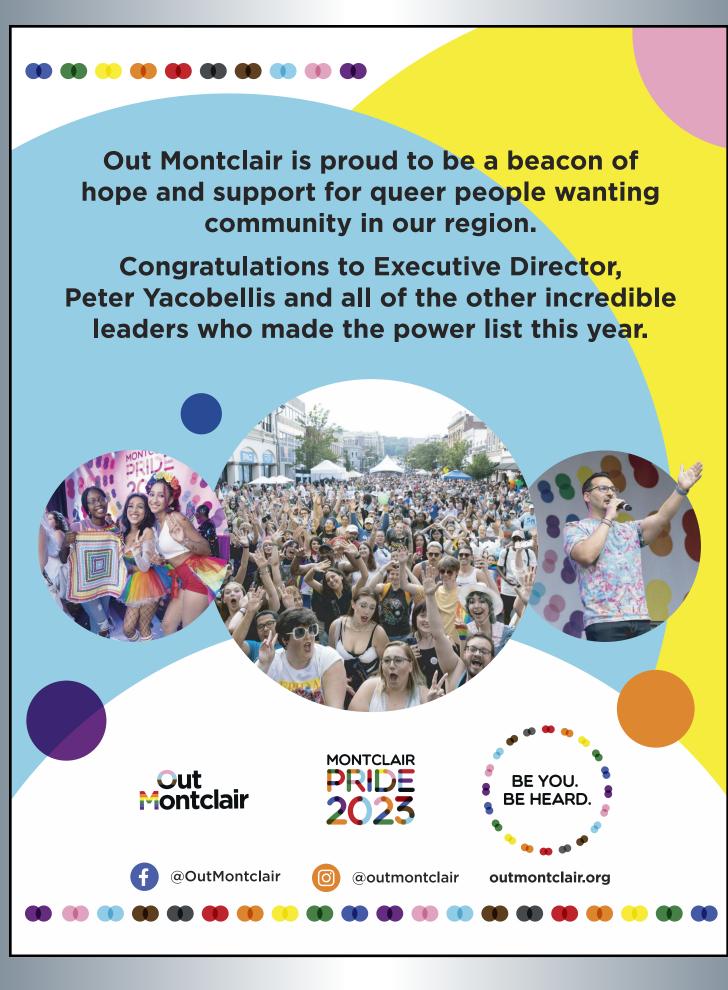
A champion for fixing New Jersey's abhorrent record of flooding, LaTourette has fought for more federal and state funding for flood control and shore protection, buoyed by steadfast support from the likes of his boss Governor Phil Murphy, Sen. Bob Menendez, Congress-

INSIDER NJ INSIDER OUT 100

man Frank Pallone, and Congresswomen Mikie Sherrill and Bonnie Watson Coleman. You'll likely find Commissioner LaTourette with them breaking ground on more flood relief projects in the next year. That is, if he's not too busy crafting climate change-informed standards to help make new development more resilient to stronger storms and rising seas.

LaTourette continues to deftly navigate the rough-and-tumble world of New Jersey politics while refusing to compromise his values. There is perhaps no better example of his political ability than the saga of Liberty State Park, which LaTourette has saved from greedy developers and commenced a transformative revitalization program to turn LSP into New Jersey's Central Park. All this without caving to the intense pressure of a billionaire political donor, and balancing the needs of sports enthusiasts and conservationists.





3. JEANNINE LARUE



A venerable politico with an unimpeachable reputation, Jeannine LaRue is the matriarch of New Jersey's LGBT community. Ms. LaRue is a lobbyist and Senior Vice President at The Zita Group, a blue chip government relations firm. After decades in NJ politics that saw Ms. LaRue scale every mountain there is to climb, Ms. LaRue has devoted her "OUT" years to leading the PAC at Garden State Equality and her popular podcast "LaRue List Cafe."



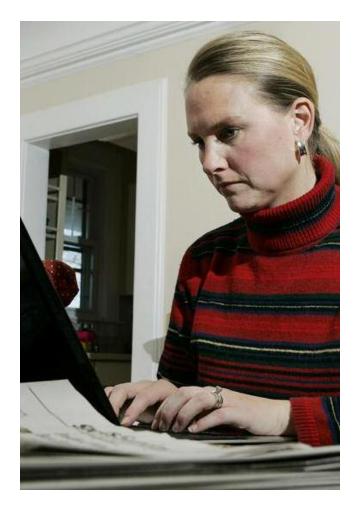
CO-3. MAGGIE MORAN



Maggie Moran is a cannabis consultant whose regional and national profile extends well beyond her Monmouth County base. Among other notable achievements, Ms. Moran founded KIVVIT, a politically-wired communications and PR firm.

Ms. Moran has served in senior roles for major public affairs campaigns both nationally and regionally in New York and New Jersey. Ms Moran has worked for two United States senators, three Governors, managed statewide political campaigns for president, governor, and served as the Chief of Management and Operations for the State of New Jersey. She has also been involved in countless ballot initiatives, regulatory issues, business development efforts, and public education campaigns including the passage of medical marijuana in NY and recreational marijuana in NI.

Ms Moran's work legalizing cannabis continues a long tradition of LGBT people doing the heavy lifting to reform America's backwards pot laws.



4. CHRISTIAN FUSCARINO AND **TEAM GARDEN STATE EQUALITY**



Over 250 pro-LGBT laws are on the books in New Jersey and Garden State Equality's fingerprints are on most of them. Founded in 2004 by Steven Goldstein, Garden State Equality remains the largest LGBT organization in the state. Under the stewardship of Executive Director Fuscarino, one of the state's top LGBT rights leaders in his own right, GSE has taken a leading role on important issues to the community, including protecting trans rights and decriminalizing HIV/AIDS. Team GSE also includes Deputy ED Brielle Winslow-Majorette, Erin Baskin Bradshaw, Deidre Belinfanti, Becky Dale, Aleyah Lopez, Damien Lopez, Justine Evyn Saliski, Jahmila Smith, Lauren Albrecht, Alisha De Lorenzo, Samantha Hanson, Aaron Potenza, Naj-Lah Wander, and Jay Wu.

GSE is a fundraising juggernaut with extraordinarily close ties to NJ Gov. Phil Murphy. Thanks also to a strong relationship with legislative leaders in Trenton, Garden State Equality's lobbying clout is stronger than ever. Bills they like get posted and those they don't never see the light of day.

That's power.



CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE 2023 INSIDER OUT 100 LGBT POWER LIST!



5. JENNIFER WILLIAMS



A gatecrashing LGBT pioneer, Jennifer Williams made history this year by becoming the first transgender municipal lawmaker elected to office in Garden State History. To claim her historic and groundbreaking victory, Ms. Williams battled a recalcitrant Democratic party who dominate Trenton politics and a batshit crazy GOP through multiple (endless) rounds of voting. When the dust settled on several rounds of vot-ing and multiple court challenges by her vanquished rivals, Ms. Williams claimed victory to become Trenton City Councilmember by a narrow two-vote margin.



6. DON GUARDIAN



NJ Assemblyman Don Guardian (R-Atlantic City) is a Caucus of 1 in the Trenton statehouse where he's New Jersey's solitary LGBT state lawmaker. Mr. Guardian is the 3rd openly gay state lawmaker in New Jersey's centuries-long history.

In addition to the sense of optimism and decency that Mr. Guardian brings to the table, his experience proves how much needs to line up just right for an openly gay person to get elected.

Don Guardian took NJ's political world by storm back in 2013 when Atlantic City voters chose him to be their mayor. It seemed novel that so many (non-white) Democratic voters would elect a gay white Republican to be their mayor.

Mr. Guardian is one of the few politicians in New Jersey with a winning record against George Norcross, the most powerful political boss in modern New Jersey history. A moderate Republican, Don Guardian has battled Norcross' much-vaunted Camden County Democratic Machine three times so far during his career and come out victorious on two occasions. This includes a thrilling victory in November 2021 when he triumphed in one of the most expensive races in Garden State history to become NJ's very first openly-gay GOP state lawmaker.

Along the way, Mr. Guardian claimed 15 of 17 towns in his district, a dominant performance that saw him neutralize an \$8,000,000 spending spree by his vanquished opponents. During the last few weeks of the campaign, the Norcross Machine targeted Don with a series of mean-spirited and dishonest mailers and radio ads clearly indicating that Don Guardian was their #1 target on the entire ticket.

But voters in Mr. Guardian's district tuned out the noise, sending his entire ticket to Trenton with a mandate, a stunning repudiation of a stagnant, out-of-touch Democratic machine.

7. REBECCA WILLIAMS



One of the of highest-ranking LGBT elected officials in New Jersey history, Rebecca Williams chairs Union County's 9-member Board of County Commissioners. Ms. Williams' oath of leadership was administered by Senator Nick Scutari, a close ally and the president of the New Jersey State Senate.

Ms. Williams' goals include better Internet connectivity and parks for Union County's residents and a renewed focus on mental health and social service programs. Ms. Williams is also working to elevate the arts as a cultural and economic engine in Union County, population 580,000.

For going on 2 decades, Ms. Williams has

been a professor at Essex County Community College where she's inspiring the next generation, a remarkable legacy for a remarkable, ground-breaking politician.





lead others higher

Great leaders continue to raise the bar, inspiring and empowering others to push to new heights. Bill Bradshaw, Director of Inclusion and Diversity and one of Insider NJ's Top 50 honoree is an advocate in supporting the growth of all our professionals to make better informed decisions by looking at challenges from a variety of perspectives and experiences, allowing us to better serve our clients and communities.

withum.com/inclusion

8. LIZ SCHEDL



It was a banner year for Elizabeth "Liz" Schedl, the executive director of Hudson County Pride Center which unveiled its new headquarters in the heart of Journal Square, Jersey City. This state-of-the-art 2500 ft.² easy-to-access community center is the culmination of Ms. Schedl's longstanding vision to created a vibrant home for the region's LGBT community. Under Ms. Schedl's leadership, Hudson Pride Center will provide mental health support, training, and clinical support for K-12 schools in Hudson County beginning in the fall of 2023.

This past year, Ms. Schedl teamed with North Hudson Community Action to innoculate 500+ people with Mpox vaccines during last year's outbreak that disproportionately affected LGBT people. Ms. Schedl is also a Community Council Member for NJ CASA, a statewide advocacy group representing NJ's 21 county-based sexual violence programs.



9. FRANCELINE EHRET



One of the most powerful and influential union leaders in the state, Franceline Ehret NI State Director of the Communication Workers of America. CWA represents more than 70,000 working families in the Garden State.

After decades working in the rough-and-

tumble cauldron known as Jersey politics, Ms. Ehret's powerful and withering denunciations of work place misogyny left Trenton shook. Appointed by Governor Phil Murphy to NJ's LGBTQ Taskforce, Ms prioritizes issues like homelessness (including young adults aging out of housing) and housing discrimination against LGBTQ seniors.

CO-9. TOM PROL



One of the most politically-wired lawyers in the state, Tom Prol (a member at Sills Cummis & Gross P.C.) is the newly-minted chair of the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission, the state's elections and campaign finance watchdog. Mr. Prol was appointed to his post by New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy in June of this year. The longestserving board member at Garden State Equality, the state's most influential LGBT organization, Mr. Prol was also the 118th President of the New Jersey State Bar Association, the first openly gay person to hold that leadership position.



10. MARSHA SHAPIRO & LOUISE WALPIN



In October of 2013, Marsha Shapiro and Louise Walpin tied the knot to become the first legally married same-sex couple in New Jersey history. Not resting on their legendary laurels and their place the pantheon of NJ political activism firmly entrenched, Ms. Walpin and Ms. Shapiro spent the past year countering the increasingly vitriolic anti-transgneder rhetoric that's trending in right-wing circles. Those efforts culminated with an executive order issued by Governor Murphy to protect trans folk (and their families) from the kinds of anti-trans legislation taking root in red states. Murphy's EO also welcomes trans folk from less hospitable states like Texas and Florida.

If New Jersey had a Mt Rushmore devoted to LGBT activism, the faces of Marsha Shapiro and Louise Walpin would figure prominently.

And they're not done yet.



PashmanStein WalderHayden

A Passion for Justice.

A Tradition of Winning

Congratulations to CJ Griffin, Partner and Director of the Justice Gary S. Stein Public Interest Center at Pashman Stein Walder Hayden, and to the others named on the 2023 Insider Out 100 LGBTQ Power List!

201.488.8200 pashmanstein.com **NEW JERSEY** Hackensack • Holmdel **NEW YORK** New York City • Purchase **DELAWARE**Wilmington

11. KARI OSMOND



Lambertville's Kari Osmond is the Chief of Staff for NJ Congresswoman Bonnie Watson Coleman. A seasoned political operative with experience on the government and campaign side, Ms. Osmond has run numerous campaigns in her storied career including managing the campaigns in the 15th legislative district that includes Trenton.

There are very few women chiefs of staff in Congress and even fewer gay women and so Kari Osmond's example provides a template for the next generation of LGBT politicos looking to make their mark.

12. GARY PAUL WRIGHT



Gary Paul Wright is founder and Executive Director of the African American Office of Gay Concerns, an HIV prevention and treatment services for an underserved population disproportionately harmed by the AIDS crisis.

A well-respected elder statesman, Mr. Wright has done more to combat AIDS-related stigma than anybody on this list.

13. CATHY RENNA

Cathy Renna is Communications Director for The National LGBTQ Task Force, an organization devoted to political action for LGBT equality. A venerable and legendary icon whose sphere of influence extends far beyond her Montclair, New Jersey base, Ms. Renna has spent the past 3 decades working to secure the rights of LGBTs.

From the AIDS crisis to marriage equality and ending "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" until today's culture wars over book banning and LGBTinclusive curriculum, Cathy Renna has been steadfast and resolute about defending her people.

How steadfast? Everyone on this list stands on Cathy Renna's shoulders.

14. CARRIE DAVIS

Carrie Davis is Chief Community Officer at The Trevor Project, the world's largest suicide prevention/crisis intervention organization for LGBT youth. On Ms. Davis' watch, Trevor Project has expanded their advocacy and government affairs efforts into state capitals around the nation as they battle anti-LGBT lawmakers eager to throw LGBT students under the bus.

The Trevor Project's multi-million dollar budget and tremendous lobbying clout is helping to, among other things, end the practice of socalled "conversion therapy" that subjects LGBT folk to barbaric practices like electro-shock therapy, torture, and prayer to turn them straight.

15. JULIA FAHL



The former mayor of Lambertville, Julia Fahl is a currently a government affairs pro at Archer, a large and powerful South Jerseybased law firm. Archer's tremendous lobbying clout is greatly enhanced thanks by Ms. Fahl's political acumen and gilded Rolodex.

As mayor, Ms. Fahl navigated a municipality through a tenuous budget crisis, an unprecedented pandemic, and a massive natural disaster that resulted in destruction and displacement. She did all of that with compassion, competency, and by lifting the hard work of those around her as opposed to spotlighting herself. Ms. Fahl persevered despite close-minded naysayers and internet trolls, knowing the necessity of good government when her town was in need.

Ms. Fahl's passion for equitable services and affordable housing continues to drive her.























Johnson Johnson





16. CJ GRIFFIN

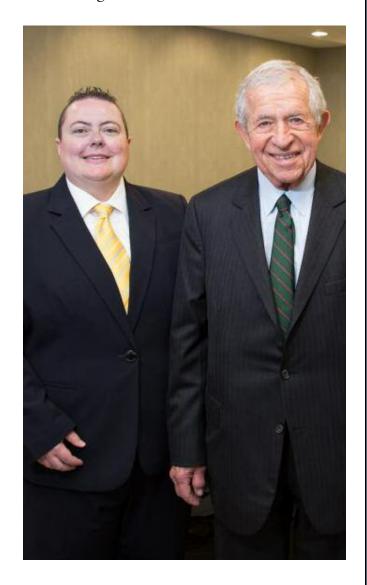


CJ Griffin is Director of the Justice Gary S. Stein Public Interest Center at Pashman Stein Walder Hayden, a powerful law firm devoted to, among other things, open government under CJ's leadership.

According to the firm's website "the Stein Public Interest Center is dedicated to a broad range of public interest impact litigation and appellate advocacy that advances social, racial, and economic justice; protects civil liberties and constitutional rights; and promotes an open and transparent government."

There's not an attorney in NJ more devoted to government transparency than CJ Griffin who's devoted to shining light into the dark

crevices of NJ government. With New Jersey's public records laws under attack from politicians who'd rather operate opaquely and out of sight, CJ Griffin's strident and brilliant defense of OPRA, NJ's open public record act, is more urgent than ever.



17. PETER YACOBELLIS



at-large city council member Montclair, Peter Yacobellis recently dove into the race to become Montclair's next mayor. In his day job, Mr. Yacobellis is executive director and co-founder ofde-voted Montclair, nonprofit a empowering LGBTs in Montclair and the region. Out Montclair's annual Pride event drew over 20,000 people this year, a remarkable impact for an event that's still relatively new.

Mr. Yacobellis remains at the forefront in the fight for LGBT liberty, his path to leadership propelled by a 1998 discharge from Air Force basic training under the Pentagon's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

Mr. Yacobellis also has an impressive and en-

during national leadership profile. Since 2004, he has advised elected officials around the U.S. about LGBT issues. In 2009, he helped organize the march on Washington that led to the policy's reversal. He's also founder of the Trevor Project NextGen Volunteer Organization, a direct response to the tragic death of Tyler Clementi.

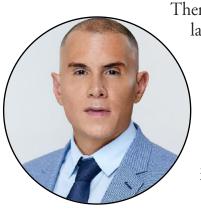


18. KATHY AHEARN-O'BRIEN & AXEL TORRES MARRERO



Kathy Ahearn-O'Brien is the long-serving Executive Director at Hyacinth AIDS Foundation, the first and largest AIDS service organization in New Jersey. Under Ms. Ahearn-O'Brien's leadership, Hyacinth stepped up when the COVID (and later MPox) pandemic hit and she saved lives in the process.

Hyacinth's lobbying prowess can not be understated. They're often in Trenton working to advance legislation in service to Hyacinth's goal of eradicating AIDS by 2025.



There are plenty of advocates focused on low-hanging fruit (and the victory lap afterwards.) Kathy Ahearn-O'Brien will always prioritize the harder, heavily-stigmatized stuff such as protecting IV drug users from harm.

Axel Torres Marrero is Hyacinth's Senior Director of Public Policy and Prevention. A government affairs wiz who's done more to modernize NJ's HIV laws than anyone on this list, Mr. Torres Marrero is often in Trenton demonstrating that the best lobbyists in Trenton are the ones who do it as a matter of principle.

19. BRENDA "SUE" FULTON



A former military officer who was among the first cohort of women to graduate from West Point, Brenda Sue Fulton is now the Chair and Chief Administrator of the New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC.)

Ms. Fulton was the first, and for a while the only, LGBTQ cabinet member in the Murphy Administration.



The Zita Group is a woman-owned, diverse, and innovative lobbying firm for today's complex and disruptive world that isn't afraid of change...Rather, we make it happen.



Congratulations to our dear friend and colleague, Jeannine LaRue and to all the outstanding leaders recognized on Insider 100 LGBT Power List!

INSIGHT
INTEGRITY
INFLUENCE



GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

thezitagroupnj.com ■ 609.530.1234

20. REGGIE BLEDSOE

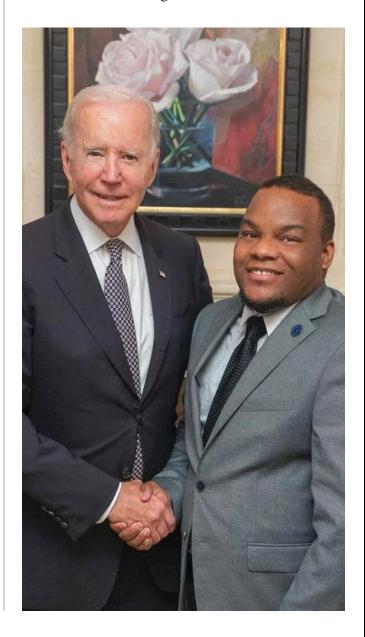


Reginald "Reggie" Bledsoe is Executive Director of the Essex County Office of LGBTQ Affairs. That means Mr. Bledsoe is basically Essex Co Executive Joe DiVincenzo's "Gay Ambassador" on issues important and relevant of the LGBT community in Essex County, population 870k, and home to Newark, NJ's largest city.

Reggie's leadership meant Newark reacted quickly to the Mpox virus, a heavily stigmatized disease (and potential pandemic) that disproportionately affected LGBT people.

Mr. Bledsoe was recently elected president of the Essex County School Board Association, a critical leadership perch at a time when LGBT students and educators are under

threat. Essex quickly thwarted attempted book bans in Glen Wood schools and the pubic library and has held the line as the book ban debate rages elsewhere.



21. ELVIN MONTERO

Elvin Montero wears many hats. For his day job, Mr. Montero is Deputy Executive Director at Chemical Council of New Jersey. He's basically one of Trenton's top lobbyists. Elvin is also Vice Chair at Capital City Redevelopment Corporation.

This past year, Mr. Montero helped re-elect Trenton's first gay mayor Reed Gusciora in overwhelming and dominant fashion. By spear-heading the campaign's record-breaking fundraising efforts,

Mr. Montero helped Mayor Gusciora crush his competition on election day. This result was especially satisfying as Gusciora's vanquished foe was a notorious anti-gay former councilmember.

22. JIM MCGREEVEY

New Jersey's 52rd Governor, Jim McGreevy has spent nearly two decades devoting his life to rehabilitating NJ's prison population so formerly incarcerated people can live meaningful lives and contribute positively to the society. Everybody deserves a second chance and the grace to amend thief life.

For many, Jim McGreevy is that grace.

There's growing chatter that Mr. McGreevy might run to become Jersey City's next mayor. If he runs and wins, look for his ranking to skyrocket.

23. MARIA RODRIGUEZ



Maria Rodriguez is the Director of Government Affairs at Montclair State University.

A former two-term state lawmaker from Medford, Burlington County, Ms Rodriguez is one of the most prominent and wellrespected anti-domestic violence advocates in New Jersey.

In 2013, she was the first Latina Republican elected to the statehouse.

24. TIM EUSTACE

Tim Eustace made history in 2012 as the first openly-gay candidate to run (and win) a seat in the New Jersey General Assembly where he served for 6 years. Previously, Mr. Eustace was mayor of Maywood, Bergen County.

Mr. Eustace is currently executive director of New Jersey District Water Supply Commission where he's aiming to be the first state agency to go 100% off-the-grid by the generating their electricity from the largest floating solar array in the nation.



Small Firm Service. Big Firm Results."



Government & Regulatory Affairs

- Labor, Employment, and Negotiations
- Public Finance
- Real Estate and Land Use
- Environmental Law
- Public Contracting and Procurement
- Affordable Housing
- Litigation



856-424-1808

MalamutLaw.com

25. PERRY FARHAT



Perry Farhat is Director of Diversity and Inclusion at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital Somerset and the Administrative Director of the Babs Siperstein PROUD Center. Mr. Farhat also serves on Gov Murphy's LGBTQ+ Taskforce and has been included in both ROI-NJ's 2022 Healthcare and the Diversity & Inclusion influencer's lists.

The Babs Siperstein PROUD Center is the first primary care center in New Jersey dedicated to the specialized health care needs of the LGBT community. During Mr. Farhat's tenure, the Babs Siperstein PROUD Center has been recognized as a "Leader in LGBTQ Healthcare Equality" by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation, received The NJBIZ "Innovation" in Healthcare Award, and was

honored as the National Association of Social Worker's 2022 New Jersey Organization of the Year.

Prior to joining RWJBarnabas Health, Perry served as an Assistant US Attorney at the United States Attorney's Office for the District of New Jersey.



26. CHRISTOPHER HILLMANN



The Director of Legislative Affairs at the NJ Motor Vehicle Administration, Christopher Hillmann is borough councilman in Hasbrouck Heights where he's also running for mayor. A longtime Trenton insider, look for Mr. Hillmann's ranking to skyrocket if he becomes mayor of his hometown in Bergen County.

27. AMY QUINN



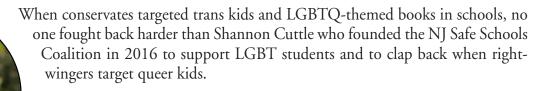
Amy Quinn is Deputy Mayor of Asbury Park and one of New Jersey's more prominent and outspoken voices to roll back the patriarchal status quo. Ms. Quinn's advocacy for things like affordable housing and increased lesbian visibility have helped to transform Asbury Park back into the cultural and political powerhouse it deserves to be.

28. JACKIE CORNELL

The Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Action Fund of NJ, Jackie Cornell has put the B in LGBT for as long as anyone can recall.

With red states curbing abortion access at an alarming rate, NJ has become a bastion for reproductive rights thanks in part to Ms. Cornell's leadership. A longtime NJ political operative with decades of experience on her side, Ms. Cornell previously served as NJ's Principal Deputy Health Commissioner. She also served as NJ state director for President Barack Obama's 2012 re-election campaign.

29. SHANNON CUTTLE



When they first ran for school board in 2018, Mx. Cuttle emerged as the top vote-getting of the election cycle. With that with that, Shannon Cuttle, who uses pronouns they/them/their, became the first openly Trans/Non-Binary elected official in New Jersey history.

Mx Cuttle currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Maplewood Memorial Library, a timely perch given the upward swing of book bans taking shape around the nation.

30. CHRIS CANNELLA



A longtime teacher and labor leader, Chris Cannella is first Vice President of the Essex County Education Association. Mr. Cannella might be the most politically influential LGBT person at the NJEA, New Jersey's immensely powerful union representing teachers and educational professionals.

31. TERRENCE MCDONALD



An award-winning journalist with a biting prose style, Terrence McDonald is editor at New Jersey Monitor, a non-profile media watchdog and news site. Mr. McDonald has become more opinionated since founding New Jersey Monitor and the Garden State is fairer and more ethical because of it.



Driving Positive Change in Public Attitudes & Public Policy

Congratulations to Julia Fahl, our colleague and friend, and to other leaders recognized on the Insider NJ's 2023 INSIDER OUT 100 Power List!



archerpublicaffairs.com

TRENTON, NJ

128 W. State Street Trenton, NJ 08608 609.310.4000

WASHINGTON, D.C.

300 New Jersey Ave, NW Suite 900 Washington, DC 20001 609,310,4000

HARRISBURG, PA

1007 N. Front Street Suite 302A Harrisburg, PA 17102 717.686.4107

32. SONIA DAS



A seasoned veteran with an unimpeachable reputation, Sonia Das is now Deputy Executive Director of the Assembly Majority Office and Senior Advisor to the Speaker Craig Coughlin. Ms. Das also serves as a Board Member for Women's Political Caucus of NJ.

33. TODD SLOVES & **BRITTON BURDICK**

Congress codified gay marriage into Federal law this past year and NJ lawmakers (and their staff) led the charge, including Todd Sloves and Britton Burdick, Congressman Donald Norcross' deputy chief of staff and former comms director, respectively.

Wait didn't we already legalize gay marriage in NJ? Actually no.

There was no gay marriage referendum here and NJ never got gay marriage legislation over the line. Marriage equality in New Jersey is the result of a series of US Supreme Court rulings (Windsor, Obergafell) which brought marriage to the parts of America that hadn't yet legalized it.

Around the same time that New Jersey passed marriage equality into state law, Congress codified gay marriage into Federal law starting when the US Senate voted 61-36 to legalize gay marriage. Eleven GOP Senators joined the entire Democratic caucus to pass the bill.

The US House of Representatives quickly passed their version of marriage equality legislation by an uncommonly bipartisan vote of 267 to 157. On a day when 47 Republicans joined all the Democrats to pass the bill, the NJ delegation voted 11-1 in favor. NJ Congressman Donald Norcross' floor speech about his grandson's birth after one of his two moms beat cancer left the House rapt.

It might have been the stemwinder of the day and it put Norcross' office in the national spotlight where they shined brightly.

President Joe Biden signed the legislation in a lavish White House ceremony alongside many of the advocates who toiled to make marriage equality the law of the land.

34. ZOE HEATH

The newly minted chair of the Sussex County Democratic Committee, Zoe Heath is the youngest (we think!) and first openly-lesbian county chair in New Jersey history.

Zoe Heath is not waiting for some gatekeeper to give her permission. She's part of a cohort of young LGBT activists not satisfied to wait their turn like the stale tatus que demands. Instead she snatched the baton with competence and confidence and New Jersey politics is is better

(and less swampy) for it.

35. KATE TRIGGIANO



Red Bank Councilwoman Kate Triggiano used brains, guts, and guile to out-muscle and out-maneuver the misogynistic gate-keepers telling her to wait her turn. July marks her first anniversary of her leadership at Red Bank Democrats. Ms. Triggiano was the top votegetter in a field of 13 candidates in May's primary election. The entire slate Ms. Triggiano helmed swept to victory.

It takes a certain *je ne sais quoi* to consolidate power after crashing the gate in New Jersey.

Kate Triggiano shows how it's done.

36. EILEEN DELLA VOLLE



A stalwart from Ocean County, Eileen Della Volle is VP of Business Development at KS Engineers PC, a NJ firm with regional reach. Ms. Della Volle roots in NJ politics run deep. A long time board member at Women's Political Caucus of NJ, Ms. Della Volle's commitment to electing more women (of both parties) into office is hard to match.



Providing Supportive Services to Families Living with Dementia

- **Support**
- Crisis Management
- **Long-Term Care Planning**
- **Cognitive Assessments**
- Care Coordination
- **Disease Education**



400 38TH STREET SUITE 405 UNION CITY, NJ 07087

P:201-721-6721 | F:201-721-5363









37. DAVE PARANO



New Jersey's premier field campaign maestro, Dave Parano has been running and winning campaigns in NJ for decades. He record includes a big win this past year re-electing Reed Gusciora to a second term as Mayor of Trenton. Mr. Parano and his firm Parano and Associates ran Reed's field campaign that laid waste to the vanquished competition.

38. LA'NAE GRANT

La'Nae Grant is the Director of the Child and Adult Care Food Program for the City of East Orange. She's also one of NJ's more prominent and well-respected transgender activists. A long time advocate for incarcerated transgender folk, Ms. Grant was appointed by Governor Murphy to basically clean up a huge mess at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women Board of Trustees.

"These appointments, combined with the many other reforms and efforts made under our Administration, will effectuate improvement in oversight of the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility," said Governor Murphy. "I look forward to working with La'Nae on important prison reform efforts as we move to responsibly close this facility."

Previously, Ms. Grant worked closely with Garden State Equality to ensure East Orange (pop. 66k) provided comprehensive health care for its transgender employees.

Ms. Grant, who epitomizes the very best in community organizing and advocacy, was principal lobbyist to ban to so-called "panic defense" cited repeatedly by those who do violence to LGBTs, especially to our transgender sisters who are repeatedly targeted for living openly.

39. DEB GUSTON



A partner at Guston & Guston, LLP, Deb Guston also chairs Bergen County's LGBTQ+ Advisory Board.

Ms. Guston is also a longtime board member of ACLU NJ where she uses her experience and legal brilliance to protect the liberties of NJ's 9m+ residents.

Deb was recently awarded the Inspire! Award for Community Impact from Cardozo School of Law, a fitting tribute to a remarkable, ongoing legal career.

40. MARC SOLOMON



Marc Solomon is a partner at Civitas Public Affairs Group and the former national campaign director at Freedom to Marry. In a year where gay marriage equality legislation passed in NJ and on the federal level, it's worth remember that Mr. Solomon wrote the book, literally, on the fight called Winning Marriage: The Inside Story How Same-Sex Couples Took on Politicians and Pundits – and Won.

41. WESLEY MCWHITE



Wesley McWhite III is Director of Diversity and Inclusion at New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission, the agency that governs NJ's medical- and recreational cannabis marketplace.

It's Mr. McWhite's job to ensure the lucrative spoils of legalization find their way into neighborhoods disproportionately harmed by the War on Drugs.

42. BRIAN HACKETT

One of the most prominent and well-respected animal rights advocates of his generation, Brian Hackett is Legislative Affairs Manger at Animal Right Legal Defense Fund.

Mr Hackett has directly led or strategically supported numerous campaigns to pass landmark animal protection legislation, seeing over a dozen new animal protection laws to completion in New Jersey, including a comprehensive ban on the use of wild animals in traveling shows

and circuses, a prohibition on the sale and trade of shark fins, criminalizing the possession of animal fighting paraphernalia, stopping pet leasing schemes, reforming dangerous dog laws, prohibiting the sale of cosmetics tested on animals, and passing a major structural reform of animal cruelty law enforcement, ensuring that the state's extensive animal cruelty and protection laws are properly enforced.

43. JEREMY FEIGENBAUM

A stalwart from NJ's Office of Attorney General, Jeremy Feigenbaum is our State Solicitor, the top appellate advocate in New Jersey. That means he argues on behalf of the Attorney General on issues before the U.S. Supreme Court, federal circuit courts, and the New Jersey Supreme Court.

NJ's recent 9-0 blowout victory against New York, argued by Mr. Feigenbaum before the US Supreme Court, mean NJ can exit the scandalplagued Waterfront Commission of New York Harbor. It was a big victory against a stale (and easily- corruptible) status quo.



Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey

Planned Parenthood is PROUD to provide high-quality sexual and reproductive health care for ALL.

We stand with our LGBTQIA+ allies. In a time when our rights and identities are under attack – from restrictions on abortion, gender-affirming care, sex education, and even the books in our libraries – we'll never stop fighting for the ability to make our own decisions and lead our own lives.



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.

www.PPActionNJ.org

44. ALLISON CHRIS **MEYERS**



The first (and only) transgender member of Phil Murphy's cabinet, Allison Chris Meyers is Acting Chair/CEO of the New Jersey Civil Service Commission, an agency whose core mission is to advance NJ government with fair and nimble HR responsive to the needs of the workforce. Ms. Meyers took the lead at NJCSC after a 30-year stint in government including 21 years at the commission she now leads.

45. JOE FORTE

Joe Forte is a seasoned state government professional with over a decade of experience in senior leadership roles and vice chair of the NJ DSC LGBTQ caucus. Currently, he serves as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief Diversity Officer at the New Jersey Department of State. In this capacity, he leads the Communications team, Business Action Center, and the Cultural Trust, overseeing a wide range of initiatives and programs. With a focus on diversity and inclusion, Joe has contributed to Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action, Ethics, and Diversity

efforts at the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and the New Jersey Civil Service Commission. In 2020, Joe was Co-Chair of NJ's Presidential Day of Service event and Co-Chair of LGBTQ for Biden NJ.

46. BILL BRADSHAW



Bill Bradshaw is Director - Diversity and Inclusion at Withum, a blue chip accounting and cyber security firm.

As part of Withum's firm leadership team, Mr Bradshaw heads their Employer of Choice Initiatives – supporting innovative change and aligning with strategic corporate partners, including Disability:IN, Human Rights Campaign and most recently, the National Association of Black Accountants.

No stranger to DEI leadership positions, Bill also sits on the Board of Garden State Equality (GSE), New Jersey's largest LGBTQ organization, and The Center, a non-profit HIV/AIDS service organization at the Jersey Shore.

47. ALYSSA KAYE DAWSON



Alyssa Kaye Dawson is chief of staff for NJ Senator Holly Schepisi (R-Bergen.) Ms. Dawson remains one of very few openly gay chiefs of staff in Trenton.

Her very public battle with mental illness means Ms. Dawson has done more to destigmatize mental illness than anyone on this list, a remarkable legacy especially for someone so young.

This past year, Alyssa Kaye Dawson became a kidney donor. So the next time you see her in New Jersey's halls of power, be sure to ask her about kidney donation and get on that lifesaving bandwagon. It's a lot easier than you might think.

48. DANIELLA MENDEZ



In a year filled with (let's be honest) irrational and mean-spirited antitrans hysteria, Daniella Mendez became the first transgender woman elected to Dover's Board of Education. A longtime AIDS and antiaddiction advocate, Ms. Mendez' lifesaving activism perfectly complements her impressive political acumen and toughness.

49. ALANA BURMAN

Alana Burman is a public policy wonk who was recently appointed to the Essex County LGBTQIA+ Advisory Board. A former public educator turned political public servant with a bent for equity, Ms. Burman is passionate about people being safe to be their authentic selves in any public or governmental space. In addition to her professional role as the Director of Jewish Community Relations at Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey, Alana is a mentor and an adjunct at Rosemont

College. She's also the the Vice Chair of the New Jersey Democratic State Jewish Caucus. Her life is still thankfully blessed with her cuddlycats Mr. Boo and Miss B.

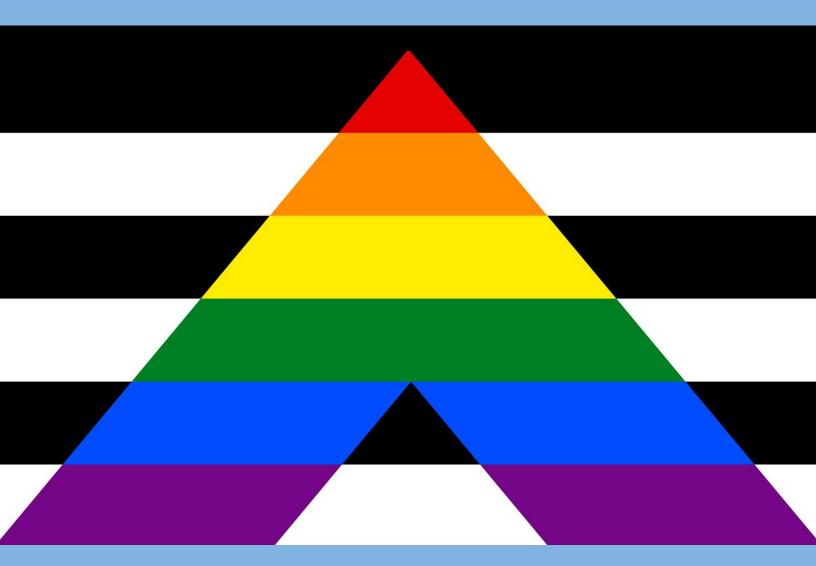
50. AARON WILLIAMS



Aaron Williams is one of NJ Governor Phil Murphy's top advisors on Veterans issues. A USMC vet in his own right, Mr. Williams spends his free time growing the game of tennis in underprivileged neighborhoods.

STRAIGHT BUT NOT NARROW

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO STRAIGHT ALLIES BY JAY LASSITER



Years from now, someone (probably me) will write the definitive anthology of NJ queer liberation with the historical perspective it deserves. And when that happens, you'll surely notice that many of the heroes weren't even LGBT.

Here we honor the straight allies who made our cause their cause.

ANDREW ZWICKER

NJ Senator Andrew Zwicker reacted quickly to the book-ban trend sweeping the nation by those who want to cancel anything remotely LGBT-related. Calling it a 1st Amendment free-speech issue, Mr. Zwicker's high-profile media campaign to protect free expression also included legislation to ban book-bans in New Jersey.

"This is about preventing censorship and keeping intolerance and hatred from being infused into public libraries in New Jersey," said Senator Zwicker. "The fact that we are in 2023 and debating whether or not we should be banning books and ideas is just outrageous. Ideas and information are meant to be discussed and debated in a society that respects the right of free expression and values the pursuit of knowledge."

M. TERESA RUIZ

NJ Senate Majority Leader Teresa Ruiz, the co-prime sponsor of Zwicker's anti-book ban legislation, has been sticking up for LGBT people her entire career, including the multiple times marriage equality legislation faltered in Trenton.

Before she voted YES for marriage equality back in the day, Ms. Ruiz had this to say: "If I have the opportunity to continue to serve here and the honor and privilege, I don't ever want to take a vote that says 'it's okay for me, but not you."

Nearly 15 years later, Senator Ruiz is equally strident about these book bans.

"Our libraries are a sacred community resource, not a place for careless censorship. The materials they offer should not be restricted based on partisan views or revisionist history," Mr. Ruiz said. "Libraries often provide the foundation for children's education and become incubators of ideas." We must protect these critical institutions which continue to be instrumental in shaping young minds."

NICOLE DAVIDMAN



A one-woman fundraising juggernaut, Nicole Davidman played a critical, unsung role of the campaign of NJ Assemblyman Don Guardian who trounced his well-funded completion to become NJ's only gay state lawmaker.

Mr. Guardian is one of Trenton's only Gay state lawmakers and Nicole Davidman was instrumental in making that happen.

Maybe NJ Democrats can learn a thing to two from Ms. Davidman (a Republican) about electing LGBT candidates to the State House?

ANJALI MEHROTRA



A board member at NOW and an advisory cabinet member at Emerge NJ, Anjali Mehrotra has preached the importance of substantive allyship for her entire career. It's fine to slap a rainbow flag on your socials but what are you doing to protect and to materially improve the lives on LGBT people?

If you ever meet Anjali Mehrotra in person, be ready to answer that question.

DONALD NORCROSS



The South Jersey Congressman delivered the stemwinder of the day when Congress was debating (and ultimately passing) Federal marriage equality legislation.

DEBORAH CORNAVACA

Deborah Cornavaca is Director of Government Relations – Politics and Policy at NJEA, NJ's powerful teacher's union. From the AIDS crisis until now, Ms. Cornavaca's ally-ship has been without peer. And from her perch as NJEA's top lobbyist, she's poised the combat the growing wave of LGBT marginalization in schools and libraries.

Ms. Cornavaca's LGBT activism is an ongoing tribute to her (gay) sister Karen Sara Erdman, of blessed memory.

SHANNON PRESTON



Sometimes Garden State Equality nails it. And one of those times was their very public recognition of Shannon Preston, Program Manager at Visiting Nurse Association of Central Jersey, for her work protecting LGBTs (and everyone) from HIV, COVID, and MPox.

For that and her work safeguarding the long-term heath of NJ's IV drugusing population, Ms. Preston and VNACJ received GSE's Corporate Responsibility Award for 30+ years "as a pillar of healthcare in the community."

We couldn't agree more.

JEN EHRENTRAUT



A candidate for NJ Senate in LD40, Jen Ehrentraut's status as a legendary ally was cemented during the Chris Christie era. It was Ms. Ehrentraut's cousin Tyler Clementi, of blessed memory, whose bullying-induced suicide led to NJ's comprehensive anti-bullying legislation to protect all kids. Ms. Ehrentraut's heartfelt, emotional testimony while testifying propelled passage of the bill and left everyone watching breathless.

STACI BERGER



Staci Berger is President and CEO at the Housing and Community Development Network of NJ where she works to combat homelessness, something that disproportionately affects LGBT youth in NJ and America. Ms. Berger is the leader of the progressive group that ensured non-binary residents in NJ can run for county committee posts, something previously not on offer until Ms. Berger (and her brilliant legal eagle Yael Bromberg) made their winning case in court.

ED DEVEAUX, SCOTT RUDDER & TARA SARGENTE







The heart, brains, and soul of the NJ Cannabusiness Association, this pro-pot trio lead the largest cannabis trade group in New Jersey. Ed, Scott, and Tara never miss an opportunity to remind the world that Queer activism during the AIDS crisis set the table for cannabis legalization in America.



3000 JOHN F. KENNEDY BLVD, SUITE 306 JERSEY CITY, NJ 07306 201-963-4779 | INFO@HUDSONPRIDE.ORG

Hudson Pride Center (HPC) is a home and voice for the diverse LGBTQ+ community. Our 501(c)(3) non-profit community-based organization is the largest LGBTQ+ social services center in New Jersey! Our mission is to enhance the lives of LGBTQ+ people by creating a safe physical and virtual home, social services and programs that meet the ongoing needs, and to build trust with each and every person that seeks our help.

Set with the goal of enhancing our members quality of life, Hudson Pride provides a range of mental and physical health resources and support. These range from, HIV/PrEP services, mental health referrals, HRT and other gender affirming assistance, to food and toiletry supplies, and housing and shelter support. We also provide hundreds of workshops, groups, and events that are all FREE and led by our dedicated staff and interns, keeping Hudson Pride Center community-driven and accessible. This includes weekly support programs for our youth, elders, and our transgender and non-binary members. Hudson Pride Center prides itself on providing a lifeline to people in need, to help them not only to survive – but to thrive









51. JAMIE ZUG



Jamie Zug is a lawyer at McCarter & English, a politically-wired Jersey-based law firm where Mr. Zug provides pro bono representation for transgender and non-binary name change applicant through McCarther's name change project. A former NJ Deputy Attorney General, Mr. Zug also serves on Garden State Equalty's board of directors.

52. MICHELE KIDD

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE BY HER FRIEND ANDREW ZWICKER



Michele Kidd, the Chair Emeritus of the Somerset County LGBTQ+ Advisory Board, is the owner of Avalanche Workshop, a political consulting & fundraising firm. A proud member of the Somerset County LGBTQ+ Democratic Caucus (the first ever in the state of NJ), as well as the NJ Democratic State Committee LGBTQ+ Caucus, she works across caucuses to help support the needs of our diverse population, while representing the needs for allyship of the LGBTQ+ community.

Ms. Kidd continues to advocate against biphobia within the community and to heal the divide between the LGBTQ+ Community and Law Enforcement. An out-and-proud bisexual woman, Ms. Kidd is also the Chair of the Hillsborough Democratic Organization and a fierce advocate for veterans.

53. ELAINE HELMS

Elaine Helms is a seasoned activist/advocate who spent the past 2 decades creating opportunities to LGBT youth facing homelessness and addiction.

Ms. Helms founded the Reaching Adolescents in Need (RAIN) Foundation in East Orange after noticing the high rate of prostitution among homeless LGBTQ kids who engaged in so-called "survival sex" out of desperation. It's gritty, unsung work and Elaine Helms is (still) there

in the trenches lifting up our most vulnerable youth and helping them reach their vast potential.

Recently, Ms. Helms' organization broke ground in Newark's West Ward on new housing for 11 homeless LGBTQ individuals. In the long run, supportive housing saves money and saves lives in a vulnerable, often stigmatized population that's disproportionately queer.

Ms. Helms won the support of powerful politicians like NJ Governor Murphy, Essex Co. Executive Joe DiVincinzo, and Newark Mayor Ras Baraka who already pledged support for RAIN Foundation's 2nd and 3rd supportive housing buildings.

54. LUANNE PETERPAUL



A former municipal court judge in Long Branch, Luanne Peterpaul stepped back from the bench to run for the NJ General Assembly in NJ's 11th legislative district which includes Asbury Park, NJ's unofficial LGBT capital. If Ms. Peterpaul wins her race in November, she'd become the first out lesbian elected to the state legislature in NJ's history.

55. MICHAEL PENNA

A longtime award-winning educator, Dr. Michael Penna has spent his career nurturing his students' love of English and the dramatic arts. He also chairs the Monmouth County Dem's LGBTQ Caucus.

As a newly-elected Asbury Park Board of Education member, Dr. Penna toils to combat the damage done to our educational system by anti-LGBT culture warriors. The race to ban books and (while erasing evidence of LGBT people from the curriculum) is hotter than ever, high-

lighting the importance of recruiting and running LGBTs (and allies) in school board races.

56. JARED LAUTZ



Working for the county executive in NJ's most populous County, Jared Lautz is on the inside for all decisions made from trans-inclusive healthcare, non-gendered bathrooms, hosting New Jersey's largest GSA summit + a task force on youth homelessness, Jared is guiding the Bergen County government to be more inclusive for the LGBTQ community in Bergen County.

57. JASON DEALESSI



Jason DeAlessi owns/runs Fuerza Strategies, a growing campaign juggernaut with tentacles in campaigns all over New Jersey. A former member of the Kinnelon Board of Education, Mr. DeAlessi currently serves the League of Women Voters of New Jersey as a board member.

Best Wishes to InsiderNJ and Everyone on Their 100 LGBT Power List for 2023



Congratulations to #20 Reginald Bledsoe

Essex County Director of LGBTQ+ Affairs



Joseph N. DíVincenzo, Jr. Essex County Executive

Paid for by Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. for Essex County Executive

58. DAVID ROSEN

David Rosen, Hudson Pride Center's Clinical Director/Health Educator, has done more to combat HIV/AID stigma than just about anyone on this list. Mr. Rosen delivered LGBTQ+ and HIV sensitivity trainings to social service providers, health care providers, mental health counselors, K-12 teachers, academic administrators, college students, public safety officers, child protection staff, nursing home staff, municipal staff and business leaders, among many others over the past 20 years. His trainings have helped public and private organizations

and institutions across not only Hudson County, but also the state of New Jersey, other U.S. states, Puerto Rico and even abroad in Germany and Costa Rica, among others.

Over the past 12 months alone, Mr. Rosen has delivered over 85 LGBTQ+ and HIV sensitivity trainings that have reached more than 2,500 employees of health clinics, universities, public schools, mental health practices, corporations, and businesses, City, County and State governments, museums, libraries, shelters and more. More recently, he has provided technical assistance to two HIV service organizations, one nursing home, two public middle and high schools, one sexual assault survivor program and two County shelter systems on how to establish more LGBTQ+ affirming and welcoming environments for their clients.

59. SAM PARKER



Sam Parker is currently the Director of Appointments for Gov. Phil Murphy. She works with senators, senior staff, the First Lady's office, and stakeholders to field suggestions for not only judicial appointments (superior court, workmans comp, etc.) but also to our many boards /commissions which govern a wide range of things like our bridges, the gaming industry, professional boxing, and weed.

60. ZACHARY EHRLICH

Zachary Ehrlich is the immunization coordinator for the NJ Department of Health's Vaccine Preventable Disease Program. He works to prevent the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases by developing and implementing immunization campaigns to improve vaccination rates.

In an era when vaccines and LGBT heath have become breathtakingly politicized, Mr. Ehrlich's healthcare expertise is both invaluable and lifesaving.

PROUD TO SUPPORT OUR COLLEAGUE Contents Cont

and all the OUT and PROUD New Jersey leaders on the 2023 Insider NJ Out: 100 LGBT Power List





Equilibrating Equality

www.chemistrycouncilnj.org | www.statestreetassociates.org

61. IAN MOSLEY



Lindenwold's Ian Mosley is a NJ Democratic State Committee member and a former delegate for President Joe Biden.

62. MARK MCSPIRIT & PATRICIA NAGLE

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE BY RICK KAVIN

Mark McSpirit and Patricia Nagle currently serve as co-Interim Presidents of the Pride Center of New Jersey, an all-volunteer LGBTQ+ community center and gathering space founded in 1994 and located in Highland Park. With more than two decades of service on the Pride Center's Board of Trustees between them, Mark and Patricia previously held – among others – the roles of Vice President of Operations and Vice President of Programming & Development, respectively. Patricia also facilitates the TrueSelves support group for transgender patrons.

Beyond working locally with the Mayor and Borough Council to maintain Highland Park as a safe and welcoming place for all, the Pride Center provides in-person and online programming and services to all of New Jersey's LGBTQ+ community so that both youth and adults may find needed support, health and education resources, and social opportunities within a community of acceptance.

63. DAVID GRANT



David Grant has played many roles in Trenton over the years including that of lobbyist and legislative chief of staff. Currently, an independent strategic communications consultant for progressive campaigns and cause, Mr. Grant's deft use of clever political TikToks and Insta reels has already caught the attention of conservative wingnuts hellbent on banning books. They're mad that Mr. Grant is really good at cutting through their anti-gay bullshit with short, punchy, pithy video clips. – They can stay mad.

64. DANNI NEWBURY



Danni Newbury is a councilwoman in Rahway, NJ and the newly minted Chair of the Rahway Democratic Committee.

In her day job, Ms. Newbury is Coordinator for Union County's Office of LBGTQ Affairs, a first-of-its-kind county government agency in NJ focused on the needs of LGBT people and their families in Union County, population 577,345.

65. BRIAN K. EVERETT

Brian K. Everett is a PhD candidate focusing on suburban community development at Rutgers-Camden. He fights for labor rights and general reform as a University Senator, receiving broad support from peers in Camden, New Brunswick, and Newark. Brian seeks out systematic ways to end the soft-corruption nature that is New Jersey's political culture by supporting the end of the county line, filing a statewide ethics complaint against police departments receiving gifts, and asking for a seat at Governor Murphy's table for the Rutgers strike "postmortem". You'll catch him throughout Camden County cleaning parks, advocating for environmental

Justice, and supporting other progressive initiatives.

66. JULIO CEASAR ROMAN III



A brilliant and venerable HIV/AIDS activist from Newark, Julio Ceasar Roman III is Director of Latinx Gay/Bi Men's Initiatives at the Latino Commission on AIDS. Mr. Roman wears quite a few hats, including that our author, thanks to his book, Out of Space, Creating Safe Spaces in Unlikely Places. Mr. Roman's track record is hard to match when it come to sticking up for the most marginalized among us as evidenced by his time at the National Harm Reduction Coalition.

67. JESSE BURNS

A voice for open governance and election transparency, Jesse Burns is the longtime executive director of League of Women Voters of New Jersey where she's held a leadership position since 2007. During that time, the League has strengthened its position as a critical, influential, and trusted voting rights and civic engagement organization, educating hundreds of thousands of voters about important election and advancing equitable policy reforms. Under Jesse's leadership, the organization has added several new chapters, tripled its staff, and has been instrumental in passing several pieces of voting rights legislation in-

cluding online voter registration, automatic voter registration, an end to prison-based gerrymandering, in-person early voting, and rights restoration for people on parole and probation.

68. GUS PENARANDA



Gus Penaranda is Executive Director of the New Jersey Pride Chamber of Commerce where he, among other things, advances the business interests of LGBT and allied professionals in the tri-state area. An avid sports and soccer/football fan in his spare time, Mr. Penaranda works at the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General where Mr. Penaranda is public information officer.



CONSULTING

is proud to support

INSIDERNJ

&

CONGRATULATES
OUR COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS

named to the

INSIDER OUT 100 LGBT LIST

Sean M. Darcy, President

PO Box 397, Belmar, NJ 07719 | 609-610-0543

69. ELVIS GUIRACOCHA

Elvis Guiracocha is the Community Health Programs Manager for the Hudson Pride Center. He is responsible for the implementation and oversight of all health-related programs, including, but not limited to the HIV, Prevention/PrEP, and Transgender Health Programs at Hudson Pride Center. In the past year, Elvis has built and strengthened partnerships to expand current PrEP/HIV programs throughout Hudson County. He established monthly HIV testing events in Union

City, Guttenberg, & North Bergen as well as at local academic institutions like Hudson County Community College & New Jersey City University.

Elvis provides educational trainings centered on LGBTQ+ sexual health, PrEP, & HIV amongst entities who work directly with the LGBTQ+ community like Hackensack Meridian Health Medical School for medical students and Eastern International College – dental students.

Lastly but extremely important- Elvis created a support group for Latinx Gay/Bisexual Men in Spanish! The support group focuses on creating a safe space for Latinx Gay/Bisexual men to discuss issues and learn about coping mechanisms/resources through community building, healing, group interaction/discussion/participation, presentation, and resources being shared

70. RYAN JIMINEZ

The longtime doyen of Asbury Park, Ryan Jiminez is the manager of Paradise nightclub and a prominent fundraiser for equality. Mr. Jiminez is why May 7 is now Drag Queen Visibility Day in New Jersey.

Ryan did not one BUT THREE fundraisers this spring to support New Jersey's drag community. With drag performers under attack by rightwingers who want us under the bus, Ryan Jiminez's strident defense is a stark reminder that drag queens have almost always led the charge for Queer Liberty.

71. CARA PARMIGIANI

A volunteer attorney for Unchained at Last, the only nonprofit in the U.S. dedicated to assisting women seeking to leave or avoid arranged/forced marriages, Cara Parmigiani is a lawyer and activist based in Morris County.

Ms. Parmigiani is also the founding Co-Chair of Morris County Pride and the founding chair of the Morris County Democratic LGBTQA+ Caucus.

72. JASON BERGMAN



The Director of Government Relations at Hoboken Strategy Group, Jason Bergman previously served Trenton's halls of power serving as chief of staff legislative director for various state lawmakers.

73. ELOY DELGADO



A long time teacher and educator, Eloy Delgado is Associate Director of Government Relations at the NJEA making Mr. Delgado one of New Jersey's more influential lobbyists. Mr. Delgado also serves on the Linden Board of Education.



McCarter English



McCarter & English congratulates our colleague and friend

Jamie Zug

and all of the

2023 Insider OUT 100 LGBT Power List Honorees

For More Information Contact:



Guillermo C. Artiles Chair, Government Affairs Practice gartiles@mccarter.com



Grace S. PowerPartner
gpower@mccarter.com



Omar A. BareenttoAssociate
obareentto@mccarter.com



Catherine TungGovernment Affairs Advisor ctung@mccarter.com



William J. Palatucci
Partner
wpalatucci@mccarter.com



Michael MaitlandGovernment Affairs Advisor mmaitland@mccarter.com



Azreen RehmanGovernment Affairs Analyst arehman@mccarter.com



Alexandra Viqueira
Government Affairs, Public
Interest Liaison
aviqueira@mccarter.com

Four Gateway Center, 100 Mulberry Street, Newark, NJ 07102 162 West State Street, 2nd Floor, Trenton, NJ 08608

www.mccarter.com

74. DAVE MCMILLAN



David McMillan serves as top aide to Trenton's first openly gay mayor Reed Gusciora. He handles public policy and communications for the Capital City and propelled the mayor to a landslide re-election victory.

In collaboration with the NJDOT and the Governor's Office, Mr. McMillan manages Trenton MOVES, which is on track to be the first autonomous vehicle-based urban transit system in the United States.

Mr. McMillan, a rising star in New Jersey politics, previously served as president of the College Democrats of New Jersey.

75. DANIELLE EARLE



A longtime educator in Orange in Essex County, Danielle Earle snagged the LGBTQIA+ Justice Advocacy from the Essex County Education Association

Ms. Earle continues a long tradition of LGBTQ people using art (in this case film) to change the world. Ms. Earle is also a trustee at OUT Montclair, a rapidly growing nonprofit created to provide awareness and provide support for Montclair's vibrant Queer community.

76. LARRY TRAYLOR



A Trenton native representing the venerable House of Frisby//LaRue, Larry Traylor is part of a new crop of LGBTQ activists making their presence known and their voices heard in New Jersey politics. A longtime aide and confidante to Mercer Commissioner Samuel Frisby, Mr. Traylor helped usher in a new era on Trenton City council this year, replacing multiple anti-gay municipal lawmakers with LGBT (or gay-friendly) candidates.

77. REBEKAH BRUESEHOFF

A brilliant activist wunderkind with boundless potential, Rebekah Bruesehoff is a transgender teen just trying to live her life at school and with her family and friends. According to her website, Ms, Bruesehoff more or less stumbled into activism when a photo of her holding a sign saying "I'm the scarey transgender person the media warned you about" when viral.

With the mean-spirited and politicized battle over what's appropriate healthcare for trans kids like Rebekah raging, the Bruesehoff family have stepped up to provide a measured, faith-based antidote to the rightwing craziness over trans issues best evidenced by the ongoing conservative meltdown over a beer company's Instagram collab a trans person.

Rebekah Bruesehoff's powerful voice of reason and potential to matter can not be overstated.

78. DR. D.J. "DEE" FANIEL



An Ivy League-educated lawyer and educator, Dr. Dee Faniel is National Senior Director at the ACLU where she's the Senior Director of Organizational Management, Equity, and Inclusion. Ms. Faniel is also an appointee at the NJ Department of Environmental Protection focused on climate change and environmental justice.

79. JOHN TRAIER



An accountant by trade, John Traier serves on the board of the NJ Pride Chamber of Commerce. The former longtime chair of the Passaic County GOP, Mr. Traier's fundraising efforts propelled Don Guardian to become the first GOP state lawmaker in NJ history.

80. MEAGAN WARNER



pac

A campaign veteran by her early 20's, Meagan Warner serves on the South Hunterdon Regional School Board. Ms. Warner also chairs her hometown of Lambertville's Democratic Committee.

81. ALONZO S. BLALOCK **AKA PRINCE DEREK DOLL**

Alonzo S. Blalock (aka 'Prince Derek Doll') is an American performing artist, media personality, journalist, entrepreneur, and LGBTQ advocate. He serves as the Co-Executive Producer/Moderator for Queered Millennial's "The Ki", Co-host of "The Darren Greene Show" podcast, and is the Executive Vice President for Newark Pride. He is a resident reporter for the Newark News and Stories Collaborative, entertainment writer for *The Newark Times*, and inaugural scholar of the

Center for Black Equity's Ron Simmons Leadership Institute. Balancing a life in the arts and public service, Mr. Blalock been featured in Out In Jersey Magazine for his contributions to LGBT representation in music and recently produced the 16th Annual Newark LGBTQ Pride Festival.



NON MORE THAN EVER

NEWARK • NEW YORK
JERSEY CITY • PHILADELPHIA
BASKING RIDGE

GENOVA BURNS LLC • WWW.GENOVABURNS.COM



82. ED POTOSNAK



A champion for education and the environment, Ed Potosnak is Executive Director of NJ League of Conservation Voters, a statewide political voice for the environment. A chemistry teacher by training, Mr. Potosnak also serves as a Franklin Township Councilman.

83. MARIE COTTRELL



Marie Cottrell is Event Director at Montclair Pride & Major Events, an annual festival that's quickly become a contender for the best Pride event in the state.

84. JUDY AMOROSA



An indefatigable anti-machine Liberal from Cherry Hill, Judy Amorosa has devoted herself to bringing transparency and accountability into NJ politics. Ms Amorosa helped carve the niche for today's crop of grassroots-minded gatecrashers to thrive.

85. KOREN FRANKFORT

Another one putting the B in LGBT since basically forever, Koren Frankfort is a one-woman political fundraising juggernaut.

When Ms. Frankfort demanded an honest (and long overdue) discussion about sexual harassment culture in NJ politics the world was (for the most part) not yet ready to hear it. Fast forward the #MeToo era, Ms Frankfort's words were more prophetic than ever.

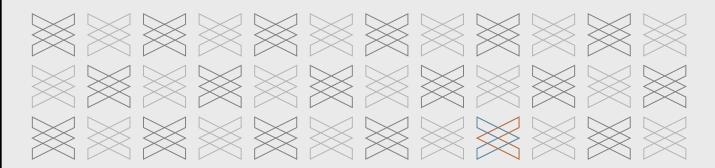
When she's not dealing with the BS caused by men behaving badly and creating a better climate for those who follow, Ms Frankfort is one of the most prodigious political fundrais-ers in NJ and the region.

On the topic of sexual harassment culture, we should have listened to Koren Frankfort to begin with.

86. AMIE MARIA BABISCHKIN

Amie Maria Babischkin is an ER nurse who spent the past year helping NJ's healthcare system better incorporate SOGI data into their treatment repertoire to better serve the healthcare needs of LGBT patients.

A native of Cumberland County, Ms. Babischkin's promotion of LGBT candidates for office often puts her at odds with a South Jersey Democratic Political Machine that treats LGBTs like hood ornaments. The much-vaunted Norcross Democratic Machine, perhaps the most powerful in the state, has never once elected an LGBT person to higher office. That's a status quo that Amie Maria Babischkin is working 24/7 to disrupt.



Congrats to the 2023 Insider Out 100!

⋈ SUBJECT MATTER **KIVVIT**

PUBLIC AFFAIRS STRATEGY

Immersive Research

Campaign and Coalition Management

Issue Advocacy

Stakeholder Engagement

MEDIA & PUBLIC RELATIONS

Message Development & Opinion Research

Media Training

Executive Positioning

Crisis Communications

Rapid Response

Earned Media

Paid Media Advertising

DIGITAL CAPABILITIES

Digital Strategy

Social Media

Creative Design

Data-Driven Analytics Targeting

Video Production

Content Development

Advertising

BRAND POSITIONING

Branding

Strategic Consulting

Public Affairs Risk Management

Start-Up Incubation

The merging of Subject Matter+Kivvit now provides clients with the highest level of problem solving, creative campaigns, strategic counsel, and smart, customized policy advocacy. We are here for what is **now**, and what is **next**.

TEAMSUBJECTMATTER.COM-//-KIVVIT.COM WASHINGTON,-D.C. CHICAGO

NEW-JERSEY

NFW-YORK

MIAMI

87. HARMONICA SUNBEAM



Using the art of Drag to change the world, Harmonica Sunbeam weaves a heaping helping of her political sensibilities into every performance, leaving her audiences both entertained and empowered.

In a world where some lawmakers want to legislate us out of existence, those challenging gender norms are still leading the fight for queer liberty.

88. PAM DANIELS



A GOP stalwart, Pam Daniels remains a voice of common sense and moderation in a party that doesn't always appreciate its own LGBT voices.

Ms. Daniels serves on the NJ Federation of Republican Women Board of Governors.

89. AMANDA HOFFMAN



Amanda Hoffman is one of New Jersey's most enduring and resilient pot activists. Everything good about legalization in NJ has Ms. Hoffman's fingerprints on it and everything not good, she's still working to fix.

90. DAVID MIXNER

He lives in Manhattan but to honor the NJ Hall of Fame induction of of Salem County's David Mixner, we're proud to reprise this special tribute from 2020 by former NJ Senator Bill Baroni.

In the quiet corner of New Jersey that is Salem County, in the quiet corner of Salem County that is Elmer, came one of New Jersey's most powerful LGBTQ+ figures ever. Arguably among New Jersey's first gay rights activists, DAVID MIXNER went from the farms of Salem County to the White House and beyond, making a life that used power to make lives better for all of us.

David Mixner started his activism in high school, when laws against deviant behavior were enforced everywhere. He marched with Dr. King. Jailed registering voters in the South. Formed the nation's first LGBT political committee. Campaigned against California's Briggs Amendment, which would have banned gay people from being teachers. Fought Anita Bryant in Miami – eventually stopping her from ending legal protections for gay Floridians. He led the California fight against Lyndon Larouche, who nearly passed a referendum to place HIVpositive people in permanent quarantine. In the battles in New Jersey for trans rights and marriage equality, he called countless legislators. He lost 300 friends to AIDS, but never stopped agitating with his friend Larry Kramer against the government slowing down treatments. He was an early supporter of Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton (his former roommate) and became the first out White House staffer in American history. Yet when President Clinton approved Don't Ask Don't Tell, he resigned in protest – getting arrested for chaining himself to the fence of the very White House he just left.

That is power.

After a lifetime of that kind of power and influence, it's clear that David Mixner is one of the most powerful LGBTQ+ New Jerseyans ever.

But that is not what gives David Mixner power.

For David Mixner, power is not what he has done in the past for the community; it is what he does every day for the future of the community. Because of David Mixner, countless LGBTQ+ people have become LGBTQ+ activists.

For David, mentoring is not just an aside to a life in power. That mentoring IS the life in power. I have watched David meet with countless progressive activists and help them become leaders in politics. He teaches how to be a force for good, for inclusion, for progress, for the community. These activists have gone on to Congress, to the State House, Town Councils. He has worked with Phil Murphy, Cory Booker, Corey Johnson, Tom Prol, Peter Yacobellis, Jake Hudnut, and countless others.

That is power.

But David's real power, the one that makes him truly unique, is how he brings people together that would not ever be expected to be fighting together for the same causes. Democrats and Republicans call on David Mixner for guidance and to use his vast network to help the community. David has raised more than \$1 Million for the Ali Forney Center – an extraordinary place for LGBTQ+ homeless youth from New York, New Jersey, and beyond. And he has raised that money by telling the stories of how we all got here – our history.

This September, the Victory Fund is honoring David Mixner for his lifetime of helping LGBTQ+ candidates win public office. The Victory Fund, the natural successor to the first PAC that Mixner formed in 1976, helps new and upcoming candidates get the resources they need to win office – and power – in their own right.

That night among the speakers are two of David's closest friends, former Republican National Chairman Ken Mehlman and Congresswoman Maxine Waters (with whom David Mixner was jailed during protests in California) who will both talk about the impact David Mixner – son of Salem County and Woodstown High School – has had on America. These two leaders Waters and Mehlman – from different parties, different states, different backgrounds – come together to show the world the work that David Mixner has done.

Now that, is power.

- Best Wishes -

PLUMBERS AND PIPEFITTERS LOCAL UNION NO. 9 CENTRAL NEW JERSEY



Business Manager
MICHAEL K. MALONEY

Assistant Business Manager
CHARLES "CHUDDY" WHALEN III

Business Agents
JOHN E. HOEY, JR.
MICHAEL A. TRANBERG
JOHN E. BOYLE III
EDWARD F. BURNS
DEAN FEASEL

Organizers
WILLIAM K. GRAYBUSH
PATRICK M. SCHARNITZ

President
JUSTIN MALONEY

Vice President MICHAEL DOS SANTOS

Executive Board
MICHAEL J. SIMON
BRIAN THOMS
MICHAEL BELL
RANDALL DAVIS

There Is No Substitute for Skilled U.A.

Building and Construction Trades Craftsmen

2 IRON ORE ROAD AT ROUTE 33, ENGLISHTOWN, NJ 07726
Telephone: (732) 792-0999 • Fax: (732) 792-1999 • Website: www.ualocal9.org

91. GORDON SAUER

Gordon Sauer is a retired language teacher and a facilitator of the Jersey City SAGE chapter. Mr. Sauer has also represented the chapter at various events including roundtables with Atlantic Healthcare (a consortium on NJ hospitals) and with the NJ Attorney General.

In addition Gordon is a board member and committee chair at GLSEN Central New Jersey and at GAAMC-the oldest LGBTQ+ organization in NJ.

92. MICAH GARY-FRYER

Longtime educator and Union labor leader Micah Gary-Fryer is the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee chair for the Essex County Education Association, one of NJ's most influential county-wide teachers unions.

Micah is one of very few openly HIV+ names on this year's list, a testament to a powerful stigma that forces many with HIV back into the closet.

That same stigma makes Mr. Gary-Fryer's openness both remarkable and impactful. Standing on the shoulders of the ACTUP generation of queers who demanded a better Federal response to the AIDS crisis, Micah's longevity is a powerful reminder of how (borderline miraculously) far HIV treatment has come.

93. FRANKLIN CUMBERBATCH, JR.

A cable TV executive by day, Franklin Cumberbatch, Jr remains the longtime chair of Garden State Equality Education Fund 501(c)(3) Board.

94. JAY LASSITER'S IMMUNE SYSTEM



Jay Lassiter has been HIV+ for over 31 years. He's literally got STDs older than half the people on this list.

95. ANYONE CLOSETED



Even in 2023, the closet remains a damaging and corrosive place. Life in the the closet can be profoundly lonely. We bear witness to that loneliness here.

96. ED ZIPPRICH



Ed Zipprich is the longtime president of the NJ Stonewall Democrats and a former 5-term Red Bank Councilman.

97. JESS ALAIMO



A comedian who has long used the art of comedy to change the world, Jess Alaimo is a Monmouth County-based activist and feminist who co-founded the Asbury Park Women's Convention. Ms. Alaimo also writes the "Rainbow Room" column for the TriCityNews.

98. RICK KAVIN



Rick Kavin spent much of last year as President of the Pride Center of New Jersey and as Trenton's LGBTQ liaison before leaving the Mayor's office to work for the Trenton Police Director. Mr. Kavin currently works on the policy and programming side at the Trenton Community Streets Team's violence program while pursuing his PhD at Rutgers.



ABC New Jersev **Associated Builders and Contractors**

Apprenticeship Education & Training Fund







Train (lie Best. Build the Best.

TWO NEW TRADES JUST ADDED!

21 US-DOL APPROVED APPRENTICE PROGRAMS

- Bricklayer/Mason
- Carpenter
- Carpenter (Roofer) Specialist)
- Construction Craft Laborer
- Dock and Wharf Builder
- Electrician
- Floor Cover Layer

- Glazier, Architectural
- HVAC/R Technician
- Operating Engineer (Heavy Equipment)
- Millwright
- Painter (Industrial Coating and Lining)
- Painter (Commercial/ Residential)

- Pipefitter
- Plumber
- · Sheet Metal Worker
- Structural Iron Worker
- Tile Finisher
- Tille Setter
- Truck Crane Operator
- Truck Driver, Heavy

EARN WHILE YOU LEARN

At ABC New Jersey, we train the next generation of craft professionals utilizing a combination of classroom and hands-on training.

Stanttwitht a job and build your career.



BC New Jersev Associated Builders and Contractors Apprenticeship Education & Training Fund

YOUR CAREER BEGINS NOW! Visit ABCNJC.org Email apprentice@abcnjc.org Call (856) 437-4130









99. KATIE WERTHEIMER

Katie Wertheimer spent years as a Trenton insider, most recently as Chief of Staff for former longtime Assemblywoman Valerie Huttle. She's also a longtime leader in the fight for reproductive freedom here in NJ and nationally.

After serving at Comms Director for Tina Kotek's winning campaign to become Oregon's (first lesbian) Governor, Ms. Wertheimer left Jersey and decamped to Philly. But we still honor her on this list (first of all) because she's right next door and because as a board member of PAM's List, Ms. Wertheimer's influence on New Jersey politics endures.

100. RIP

This list would look very different without AIDS, a deadly plague that decimated our community barely a generation ago. We'll always reserve a spot on this list as a tribute to reflect on all those brilliant, beautiful, talented LGBTs who perished.

Spare a thought for our government's feeble response to HIV/AIDS, the existential crisis that forced the LGBTQ community to organize and to find its political mojo. If you like your marriage equal and your pot legal, don't forget that profound societal progress came on the backs of dead queer people.