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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

Message from the Editor

INSIDER NJ

INSIDER 100 POLICYMAKERS



If you're looking for a theme in here you might consider lack of transparency as the overall thrust, especially when you look for the name "Jeff Brindle" among the state's chief policymakers and come up empty.

Head of the state's Election Law Enforcement Commission since 2009, Brindle found himself forced out of his position this year by the Murphy Administration because of his outspoken opposition to hidden money – political contributions with shielded sources.

Whether it's Brindle gone, or a \$54.3 billion budget bloated into existence without public scrutiny or putrid air quality that suddenly sneaks up on us and chokes us nearly to death, schools that allow children to beat other children and film them as they cause traumatic injury, or storms that materialize without warning and kill, we reside in a state at last wholly sub-

servient to the recesses of political corruption.

It's real. It's present. It's dangerous.

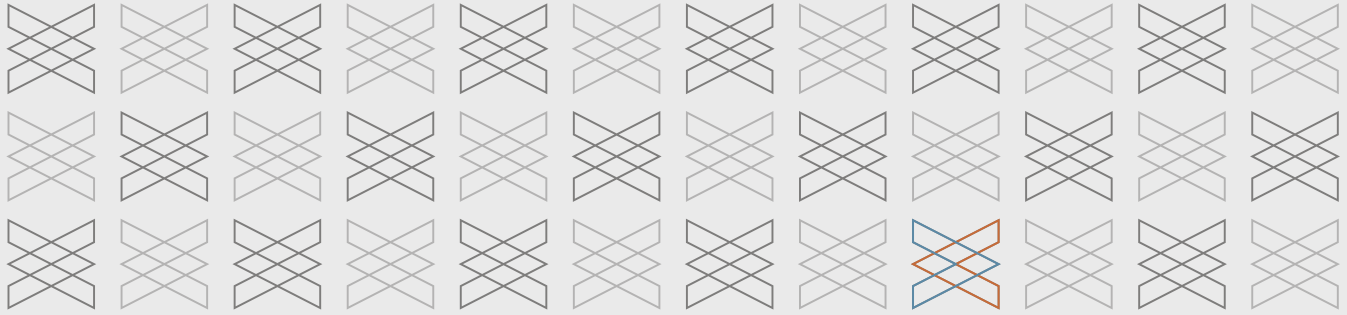
It doesn't help that the number one occupant on last year's InsiderNJ Policymakers' List, state Senator Ronald L. Rice, died in March of this year.

That said, good people – people like Senator Rice and others – continue to labor for noble purposes, even within the infernal latrine of NJ politics.

It's the system we have, and the system incumbent on us to improve and make functional for those who live and work in this place we still love in spite of it all, otherwise known as New Jersey.

See you at the beach, kids.

Max Pizarro,
Editor, InsiderNJ



Congrats to the Insider 100 Policymakers!

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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**.



1 Sheila Oliver

In Memoriam



The state's late LG Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs – a former Speaker of the Assembly – possessed one of the most extensive policy backgrounds in New Jersey. Never afraid to dive into the fray, she wrote a 2021 letter resisting Camden County's efforts to assume responsibility for the City of Camden's finances. "Our ultimate goal in Camden is to build capacity so they can be locally governed," Oliver told InsiderNJ. "We're not interested in stripping municipalities of local control. That is not the best thing for Camden." As speaker she fought then-Governor Chris Christie and then-Senate President Steve Sweeney as they sought to prioritize charter school education. As Acting Governor, she led the state in the early days of the COVID-19 crisis, with a grace and courage that characterized her public service. In the words many years ago of Charles Williams, "The speaker stands alone in terms of her knowledge of policy." Sheila Oliver also held a wild card wielded by nearly no one else in New Jersey political life: literacy. She is already deeply missed. May she rest in peace.



2 Matt Platkin

Attorney General of New Jersey



Ever since Chris Christie, law enforcement dudes in New Jersey like to go voraciously after headlines. It worked (kind of) for him, so why not make it work for me, or so runs the thinking, or the thinking of those insiders who like to lay odds on the next U.S. Attorney or state Attorney General making political waves. Notwithstanding his unpopularity in LD-27 (we'll be brief – if Murphy had airlifted McKeon into the AG's slot, Essex Dems could have avoided at least some of the mess that beset the Democratic Primary there this year – see our primary edition for details), Platkin fits the bill as a young superstar in the making. Bright – he might be the smartest guy in NJ politics right now. People shut up when his name comes up. This is New Jersey, so what you ordinarily get in response to a name is some wise guy making a crack. That never happens with Platkin. People leave him alone. Murphy kept this guy around for a reason. He does a lot of the thinking in there for the front office, most notably on guns, where he rode point as Murphy's public defender on New Jersey's controversial law limiting where you can – and can't – carry a gun in New Jersey.

**3**

Diana Houenou

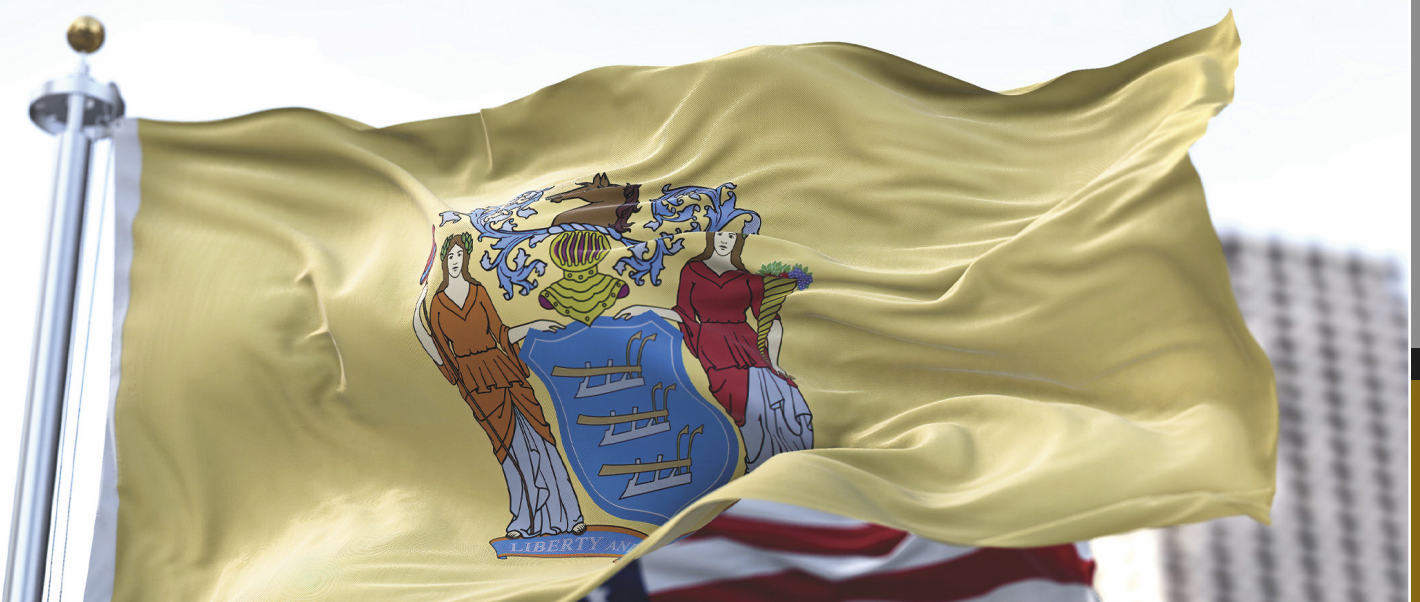
Chair, New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission



Appointed by Governor Murphy, Houenou works with other members of the Cannabis Regulatory Commission to regulate legalized cannabis. A former senior policy advisor and associate counsel for Murphy, fluent in French, Houenou advised the governor on policy and legislative issues concerning criminal justice, military and veterans, community affairs, and immigrants' rights.

Congratulations to Sonia Delgado and Bill Pascrell, III

2023 Insider 100 Power List



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**4**

George Helmy

Chief of Staff, Governor Phil Murphy

The Harvard-educated wonk deserves credit for having dumbbed himself down enough to convince long-serving legislative leadership staffers that they're smarter than he is, which had the supposedly public-interest effect of soothing egos and unruffling a sufficient number of feathers in time for the governor's (and the legislature's) 2021 reelection effort. The end result of that was they're gone now (the career of former Senate President Steve Sweeney exploded in spectacular fashion) and Helmy's still around, to rule the roost.



5 Craig Coughlin

Speaker of the New Jersey General Assembly



You can criticize the speaker and say he advanced what will inevitably prove a lie with his StayNJ Plan. Ok. But give him credit for actually summoning a plan and pretending (if that's all it is, with a lump in his throat no less) to care about seniors. He could have just shoved the budget through (and left a bunch of battleground allies hanging up to dry, too, in a low turnout election year). Of course, Coughlin himself occupies a legislative district that routinely hovers at the edge of a property tax revolt. It's Jersey. It's blue collar. The 19th is an ethnic sandwich scrunched together by Bon Jovi and the Boss, so he has to think about real world affordability. People talk about Coughlin as a possible statewide prospect. Nah, say skeptics – he makes too much money with his law firm. Whatever. If StayNJ actually comes to be (a big *if*, I grant you), he will have put himself in a rare stratosphere as an actual (NJ oxymoron coming up) statesman. If it doesn't, and Dems do ok in November, especially Gopal, a key Middlesex County ally, then Coughlin can rightfully assume a more sinister Machiavellian gleam. A win-win for him.



6 Marcia Marley

BlueWaveNJ President

Head of the state's progressive movement, Marley occupies a position on the New Jersey Policy Perspective Board of Trustees, and, critically, a seat on the revitalized Economic Development Authority (EDA), which needed some policy – and moral – authority after getting run into the ground during the Chris Christie years.



7 Parimal Garg

Chief Counsel, Murphy Administration

When Platkin left the Murphy Administration last year (only to later return to become the state's new Attorney General, see above), Garg stepped up to become the governor's new chief counsel. Formerly having clerked for state Supreme Court Justice Stuart Rabner, Garg received his B.A. from Georgetown University, magna cum laude, and J.D. from Harvard Law School, cum laude.



**8**

Dennis Zeveloff

Deputy Chief Policy Advisor

Former Director of Budget and Outcomes for the Murphy Administration, where he coordinated the Governor's state and federal spending proposals and helped jumpstart numerous initiatives across departments, Zeveloff has a reputation as a critical thinker with legitimate economic chops. Zeveloff previously served as the Policy Coordinator for then Governor-elect Murphy's transition team and as Policy Advisor during then-candidate Murphy's gubernatorial campaign. He grew up in Bergen County and received his Bachelors of Arts Degree from Dartmouth College and Juris Doctor and Master of Business Administration Degrees from Yale University.

**9**

Leroy Jones

Chairman, Democratic State Committee



The political leader of the Democratic Party in New Jersey, Jones simultaneously occupies the chairmanship of the powerful Essex County Democratic Committee. As head lobbyist at 1868 Public Affairs, he has more than a nodding acquaintance with the ins and outs of Statehouse-debated policy and proved his redistricting chops as co-chair of the legislative redistricting committee. When George Norcross III told Politico this year that he had retired from politics, he sought to remove a target from himself amid a region of the state whose rank-and-file Republicans swung against him with tidal wave consequences. With Murphy a lame duck and Senate President Scutari limited as a power projector, that leaves Jones and Coughlin as the state's main party leaders at this point in time.

~ Best Wishes ~

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10 Evan Weiss

CEO of the Newark Alliance

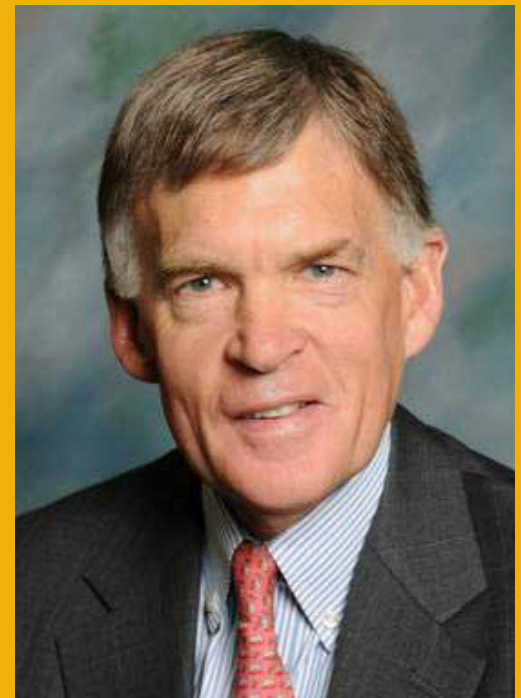
Formerly in the Governor's Office as Murphy's go-to person on finance and budgeting, Weiss in 2021 became head of the leading nonprofit dedicated to the ongoing economic revitalization of New Jersey's largest city.



11 Tom Bracken

President and CEO, New Jersey Chamber of Commerce

A retired banker who has led the chamber for 12 years, Bracken in 2017 helped establish and became co-chair of Opportunity NJ, a coalition of major state business organizations supporting government policies that pave the way for job growth, affordability and prosperity in the state. In 2014, Bracken became chairman of Forward NJ, a coalition promoting investment in the state's transportation infrastructure. Also in 2014, Bracken was inducted into the New Jersey Business Hall of Fame.





12 Michele Siekerka

President of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association

Siekerka's organization serves the state's private sector employee and business sector base. During the Murphy years, and especially during the COVID era, she effectively defined herself as a leading voice in opposition to those policies detrimental to the state's business community.



13 Kate McDonnell

Chief Counsel to the Attorney General

The ultimate behind-the-scenes Trenton power player. Formerly Deputy Chief Counsel to Governor Murphy, McDonnell served as General Counsel to the Assembly Majority Office for eight years, subsequent to a tour as Associate General Counsel in the Majority Office. A magna cum laude graduate from the University of Notre Dame, McDonnell holds both a J.D. from the Rutgers School of Law – Camden and a Master's Degree from Rutgers – New Brunswick's Bloustein School of Policy and Planning





14 Liz Muoio

Treasurer, New Jersey



An LD15 assemblywoman from Pennington prior to going to the Murphy Administration, Muoio steered into port the historically gigantic, federal surplus-assisted \$54.3 billion budget for FY2024. In her own words:

“From a fiscal perspective, the budget, again, includes full funding for the pension system which means for the first time in more than a quarter of a century, the State will have made the full pension payment three years in a row. With the FY2024 payment, the Murphy Administration will be responsible for nearly 73 percent of the pension contributions since *FY1995*. In the past three years, the Governor has included more than \$20 billion to fully fund the pension system, including a record \$7.086 billion in the budget we’re reviewing today. Those payments would not have been possible without the solid record of fiscal stewardship consistently demonstrated by Governor Murphy, working closely with the Legislature.

“This budget proposes to significantly increase school funding and reaches step six of seven in the S-2 school funding formula that was created in partnership between the Governor and Legislature, providing a record amount of direct aid for our schools. The \$10.75 billion proposed in this budget represents a \$2.6 billion increase since FY2018 – more than 30 percent – in K-12 funding.

“This budget proposes a second year of full funding for the extremely successful and impactful ANCHOR property tax relief program. Over 1.75 million renters and homeowners participated in year one of the program and in fact many taxpayers received their ANCHOR benefit earlier this week. The Governor’s proposed budget provides \$2 billion to fully fund year two of this program and we are hoping to build off the year one success and reach even more eligible homeowners and renters next year. ANCHOR delivers much needed property tax relief back into the pockets of our homeowners and renters at levels not seen in over a decade.”



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- 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
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- **Tile Setter**
- Truck Crane Operator
- Truck Driver, Heavy

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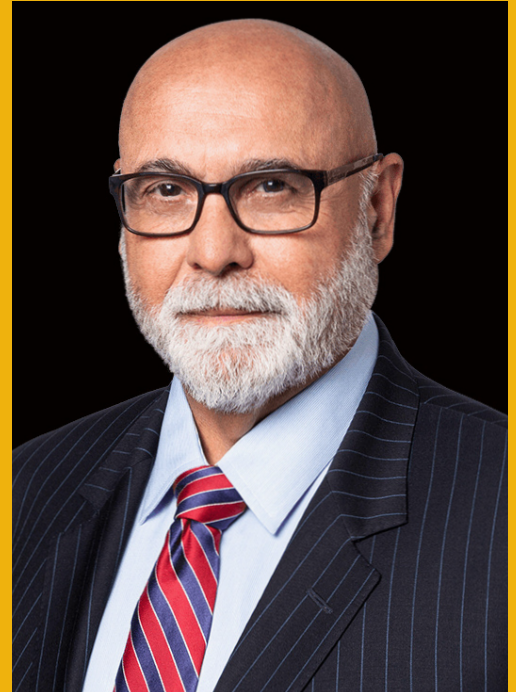
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15 Angelo Genova

**Chairman and Managing Partner,
Genova Burns, LLC**

The state's foremost election law attorney, the veteran legal mind will continue to aggressively engage amid official ongoing examinations into elections integrity, both in New Jersey and nationally.



16 Mark Magyar

**Director, Steve Sweeney Center for Public
Policy, College of Humanities & Social
Sciences, Rowan University**

The longtime Sweeney-affiliated policy nerd followed Sweeney out of the Statehouse to South Jersey, where he chairs the former senate president's embryonic academic endeavor, presumably as a celebrating catalyst for a Sweeney political comeback.





17 John Reitmeyer

**Budget Reporter,
NJ Spotlight**

There's no reason to look at the budget report or listen to "the experts," as long as NJ Spotlight pays Reitmeyer to pour through the beast and write about it. In a word, the best.



18 Ken Frazier

**Chief Executive Officer of
Merck and Co., Inc.**

Co-chair of Governor Phil Murphy's Restart and Recovery Commission, Frazier represents the real-world angle as a counterweight to the academic brain overload on the other side of the co-chairmanship.





19 Jane Cohen

Executive Director at the Governor's Office of Climate Action and the Green Economy

Governor Phil Murphy's Maplewood-based Senior Policy Advisor has her roots in government, international affairs and human rights, with expert focal points in energy, environment and climate policy, international relations, and investigative research. Proficient in Mandarin Chinese and French – she also speaks the language of enviros, who are routinely understandably apoplectic.



20 Andrew Zwicker

Senator, LD-16

The Princeton University-based plasma physics department outreach director, Zwicker brings a technocratic core intelligence to his assignments aboard Budget and Appropriations, Higher Education, Labor, and Veterans Affairs.





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21 Bill Pascrell III

Lobbyist, PPAG—Princeton
Public Affairs Group

Gaming expert Pascrell served as a prime mover behind the successful effort in the U.S. to legalize sports betting following a 2018 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that repealed PASPA (Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act).



22 Madeline Urbish

Ørsted

Don Quixote has nothing on the GOP, whose members this year vainly tilted at A-5651, a corporate giveaway to the wind-farm industry, by the reckoning of its critics, and an opportunity to pivot to alternative energy, according to its champions. They failed in both houses, as the legislation -and Urbish - prevailed. Head of Ørsted's New Jersey Government Affairs and Policy Office, Urbish successfully undertook the industry lead role in setting and shaping Ørsted's legislative and regulatory agenda in New Jersey and working with government and non-governmental partners across the state to grow the offshore wind industry in New Jersey and North America. Now, let's see which way the wind blows.





23 Nicole Rodriguez

NJ Policy Perspective President



The successor to Brandon McKoy, Rodriguez, formerly NJPP’s research director, has guided the think tank’s policy agenda and supervised its research staff since 2019. “I’m honored to take on the role of President of NJPP, an organization with a legacy of not only getting things done but doing so in a way that puts people first in the policy-making process,” said Rodriguez, a Boston native and former star at the Massachusetts Budget and Policy Center. “With democratic institutions and basic freedoms under attack in our nation’s halls of power, the need for community-driven policy has never been greater. We have a lot of work to do in building a state and economy that works for everyone, and I know that with this team we can get it done.”



24 Steven Perskie

Policy Adviser to Mayor Marty Small, City of Atlantic City



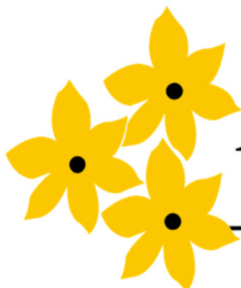
Elected to the New Jersey General Assembly in 1971 at age 26, and re-elected in 1973 and 1975, Democrat Perskie was the primary advocate and sponsor for the introduction of casino gaming in Atlantic City and was responsible for drafting what would become the New Jersey Casino Control Act. Perskie beat Republican Frederick Perone in the 1977 state senate race. In 1981, Perskie was again challenged in the general election by former Democratic Senator Joe McGahn, who ran as a Republican. Perskie won reelection with 29,151 votes, defeating McGahn, who received 28,149. Perskie was appointed an Atlantic County Superior Court Judge in 1982. In 1989, he resigned from the bench to manage James Florio's successful gubernatorial campaign. He served as Florio's Chief of Staff from 1989 to 1990. He was appointed Chairman of the New Jersey Casino Control Commission in 1990, where he served until 1994. During his tenure, Perskie oversaw a comprehensive restructuring of the agency.



25 Ryan Haygood

President and CEO of the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice (the “Institute”)

Haygood primarily concerns himself with policy that empowers at-risk urban communities. As such, he finds himself engaged 24-7, mostly against a political establishment primarily consumed with disempowering at-risk urban communities.



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26 Staci Berger

President of Housing Community Development Network

A real advocate, Berger assumed a frontline to save Affordable Housing Trust fund money for the last three years. She also radiates no fear when it comes to putting her name on a lawn sign, as she did when she ran for office in her home town of Piscataway.



27 Sean Spiller

President NJEA

The President of the powerful New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) also serves as Mayor of Montclair and generates buzz as a possible 2025 gubernatorial candidate. A policy expert on education and labor issues.





28 Tim Sullivan

Chief Executive Officer of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA)

Sullivan comes from New York, where he served as Chief of Staff to the New York City Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, and where he'll probably return once his gig in this state is over.



29 Cecilia Zalkind

President and Chief Executive Officer of Advocates for Children of New Jersey

Zalkind stands at the forefront of key policy advances in child welfare, early care and education and health care in New Jersey.





30 Charles Boyer

Founding Director of Salvation and Social Justice

Now Pastor of Greater Mount Zion AME Church in Trenton, The Reverend Pastor Boyer helms a powerful advocacy organization that harnesses the resources of the African American faith community.



31 Sonia Delgado

Lobbyist, Princeton Public Affairs

A former policy analyst with the New Jersey Senate Majority Office, Delgado is one of the state's healthcare systems experts. Prior to joining PPAG- Princeton Public Affairs Group in 1999, Delgado held senior executive positions at HIP Health Plan, UMDNJ-University Hospital, and Mercy Health Plan of New Jersey.



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DENNIS TRAINOR

CWA DISTRICT 1 VICE PRESIDENT

FRAN EHRET

CWA NJ AREA DIRECTOR



32 Jeh Johnson

Attorney, Paul Weiss

The former Secretary of Homeland Security occupies a seat on Governor Murphy's Restart and Recovery Commission. An expert on counterterrorism; cybersecurity; border, port, aviation and maritime security; enforcement and administration of immigration laws; response to national disasters; detection and prevention of nuclear, chemical and biological threats; and the protection of critical infrastructure and the nation's leadership.



33 Lisa Jackson

Vice President of Environment, Policy and Social Initiatives at Apple Inc.

Another bigshot from the Obama Administration reanimated in Murphy World, Jackson served as administrator of the national Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and had a no-nonsense reputation as Jon Corzine's Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Commissioner. Now she sits on Murphy's Restart and Recovery Commission.





34 Amy Torres

Executive Director at the New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice

Torres played a critical advocacy role during 2020-21 redistricting by advocating for greater political representation for key communities of interest.



35 Charlene Walker

Executive Director, Faith in New Jersey

Visible and energized, Walker has staked out ground on fair redistricting representation, anti-gun violence and same-day voting, among other progressive policy initiatives.

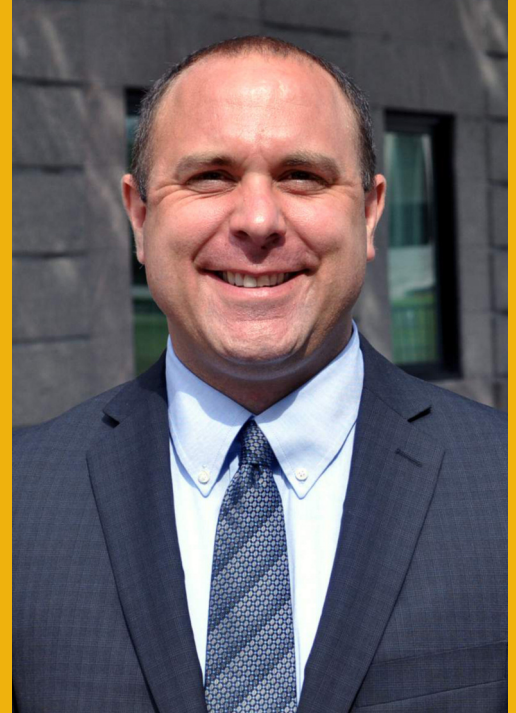




36 Kevin Drennan

Former Executive Director at New Jersey Senate Democrats and Office of the Senate President at New Jersey Senate Democrats

Bounced out of power with the rest of the Statewide cocoon around Sweeney that didn't see the marauding forces mobilizing back in LD3, Drennan resurfaced as a Mercury guy.



37 Shirley Tilghman

Policy Heavyweight

Co-Chair (with Merck CEO Kenneth Frazier) of Murphy's Restart and Recovery Council. The former Princeton University President (2001-2013) teaches molecular biology and public policy at Princeton.





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38 Bill Mullen

Building Trades President

Head of the state's Building Trades, Mullen is not only a fierce labor advocate but an expert on labor issues. With Sweeney gone from Trenton, Mullen has animated a whole new strata of connections.



39 David Bander

Executive Director, Policy Office of the Department of Labor and Workforce Development

The bow-tied former chief of staff to Senator Linda Greenstein – offers the whole package of policy and political expertise. One of the brightest minds in the state.





40 Pat Colligan

President NJ State Police Benevolent Association

Colligan is an in-the-trenches trained expert on public pensions and benefits, and provides critical overarching insight to power players into police reform issues at a critical time in law enforcement history



41 Shirley Turner

Senator, LD-15

What were you doing as insurrectionists tried to bury the country? While idiots wearing Confederate flags stormed the U.S. Capitol in 2021, the former chair of the Senate Education Committee continued to press forward with legislation to prioritize civics education. Turner also plays a critical role in the development of policy to combat youth mental health problems.





42 Patrick Murray

Director of Monmouth University's Polling Institute

Murray built his seaside operation into one of the country's most-discussed and respected polling institutions. You know how you know he's good? He makes squirm those same people who were comfortable sitting on their hands during the 2021 storming of the Capitol.



43 Larry Hamm

Founder of the People's Organization for Progress

Larry "Don't Shop Where You're Not Respected" Hamm descended on the Bridgewater Mall last year in the aftermath of a police knee on the back of a young Black man's neck. The truth of the matter is no one else mobilizes like the Princeton University-educated unreconstructed activist.





44 Catherine Tung

Government Affairs, McCarter and English

With a particular focus on economic development and recovery, Tung worked on the tax incentive bill that was designed to diversify EDA's economic development toolkit to support sustainable growth, as well as many business assistance bills to ensure small business wellbeing during and after the pan-demic.



45 John McKeon

Assemblyman, LD-27

A legal brain and the natural heir to intellectual heavy hitters from another era like Wilfredo Caraballo and Joe Doria, the Assemblyman from the 27th District came up short after he interviewed for the position of attorney general. Still one of the most educated elected officials on environmental issues, he remained on the LD-27 team in the aftermath of the retirement of Assemblyman Tom Giblin.





NJEA members



Proud advocates
for educators,
students,
and the nation's
BEST
public schools.

Pictured above:

Sean M. Spiller, President (center)

Steve Beatty, Vice President (right)

Petal Robertson, Secretary-Treasurer (left)



46 Britnee Timberlake

Assemblywoman, LD-34

In the aftermath 2020-21 redistricting, the 34th District Assemblywoman – very good on housing, healthcare and economic issues – stands poised to succeed state Senator Nia Gill (D-34).



47 Shereef Elnahal

President/CEO University Hospital

The 21st Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health in the State of New Jersey in July 2019 became president/CEO of University Hospital in Newark.





48 Shoshanna Page

Senior policy adviser to Newark Mayor Ras Baraka

An inner sanctum occupant of Baraka world, Page is one of New Jersey's premier experts on urban issues.



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49 Sarah Fajardo

Policy Director at the American Civil Liberties Union-NJ

Fajardo serves as the ACLU-NJ's policy director, developing and leading advocacy campaigns to advance the rights of New Jerseyans. Armed with a Masters in Urban Policy Planning, she has extensive policy experience stemming from her time in the NYC Mayor's Office, having served in the Office of Management and Budget, and leading advocacy efforts in education and child welfare.



50 Kristine Allen & Cary Lopez

Act Now Foundation in Hudson County

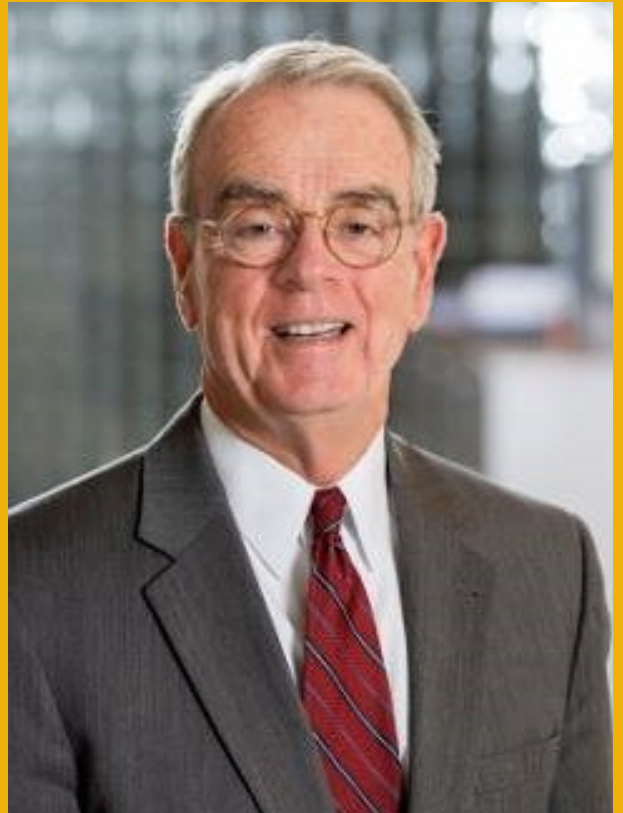
Both excel at navigating the politics there to further their policy goals – which in its own right is laudable – increasing Alzheimers awareness, care, and funding. They combine policy chops with an on-the-ground understanding of the reality of the issue, advocating in the Statehouse, while caring directly for those afflicted – patients, caretakers, and families.





51 Joe Hayden

Attorney, Pashman Stein Walder Hayden P.C.



We're biased – Hayden serves as InsiderNJ's legal adviser – but the celebrated criminal defense attorney possesses one of the best legal minds in the state, and has the moral foundation to match. During the Civil Rights era, Hayden drove down to Alabama to march at the side of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Look at this quote by Hayden on the ongoing legal challenges of former President Donald Trump: "I lived through the turmoil of the sixties and the assassinations of JFK, RFK, MLK and Malcolm X,

as well as the turmoil of the Civil Rights movement and Vietnam war protests, but despite the violence we did not have the systemic societal challenges we have here. Then there was no challenge to democracy and no challenge to the efficacy of the court system. Trump inevitably will claim the DOJ has been weaponized but the way the special counsel functioned independently of President Biden or the AG refutes that false claim. The problem is an independent voter has to go into the weeds to see how the special counsel operates independent of the president in order to be convinced by the objective facts. Trump's people will never do an objective analysis. The dilemma is you can't not bring charges against somebody who tried to overthrow democracy or who refuses to abide by the rule of law and obstructs justice merely because you cannot convince the Trump voters. This is what will lead us to the inevitable clash of ideologies around the election because justice and democracy demand justice be brought. For legitimate law enforcement to refuse to bring charges is to surrender the rule of law to the extremists. You've got to fight. You've got no choice. We learned all this from Neville Chamberlain."



52 Jeannine Frisby LaRue

Sr. VP, The Zita Group

A former elected official, lobbyist, educator, healthcare executive, and government official, she lives at the nexus of NJ politics.



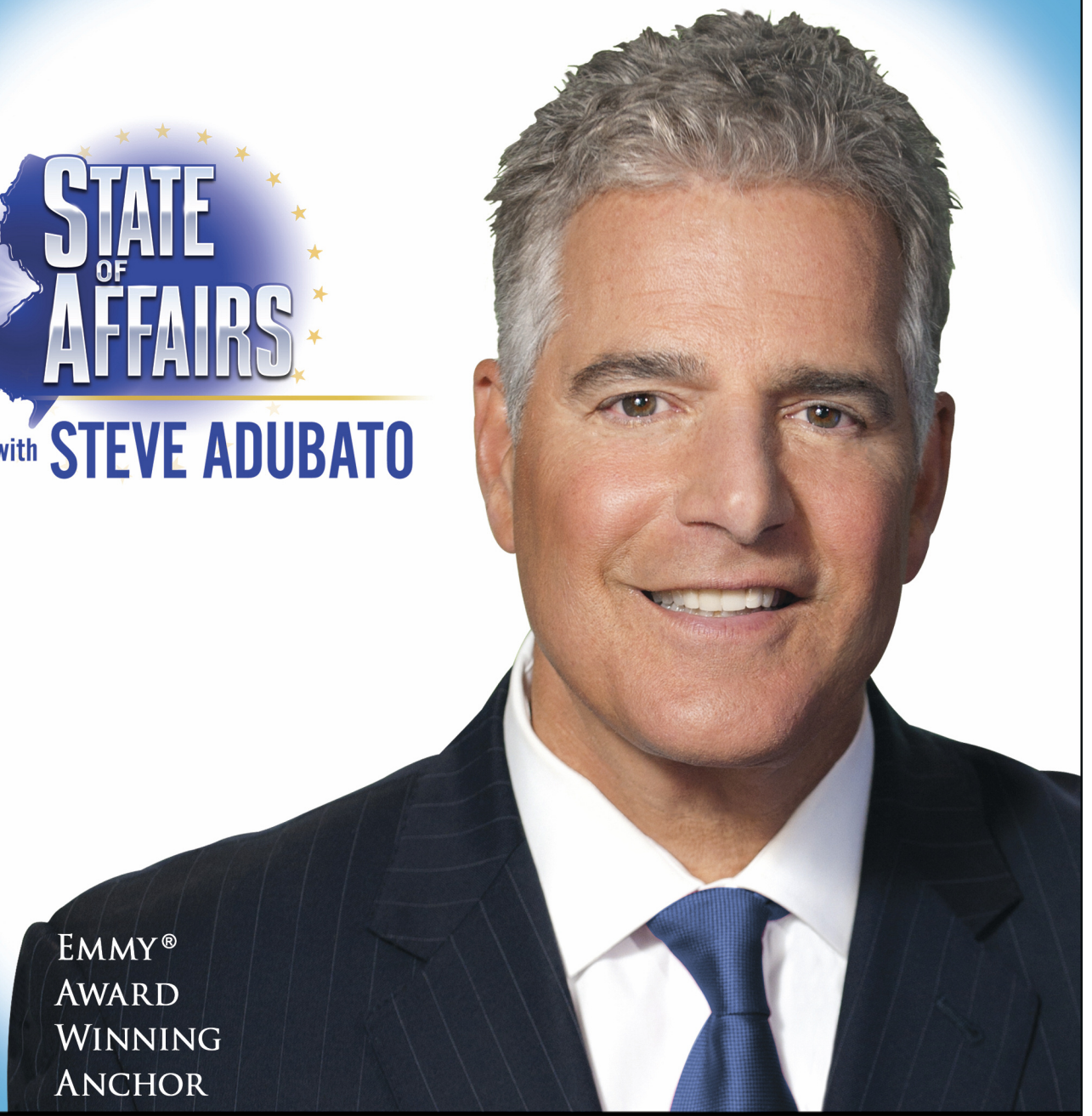
53 Jennifer Sciortino

Communications Director at New Jersey Department of the Treasury

Former Statehouse veteran Sciortino, an active community member with years of government experience, who currently serves as Communications Director for the NJ Department of the Treasury, two years ago scored a seat on the Bordentown City Commission.



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**54****Gene Lepore****Executive Director of the NJ Association of State Colleges and Universities (NJASCU)**

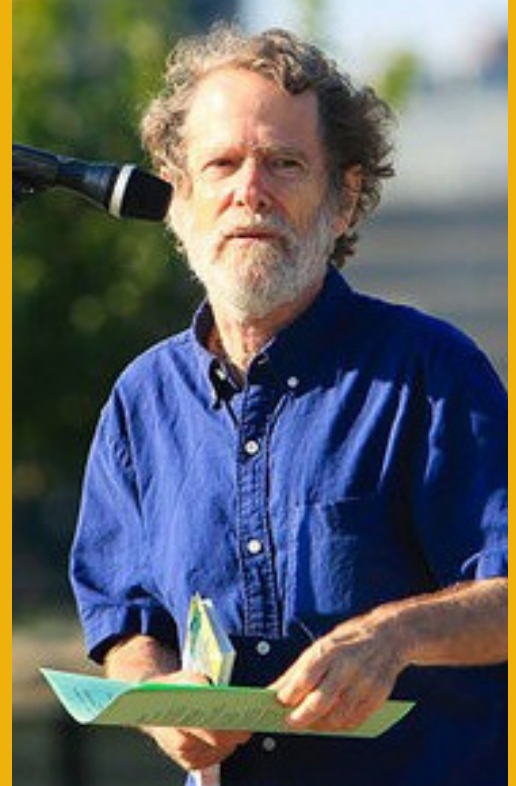
Assuming leadership of the NJASCU in 2020, Lepore works with seven key public colleges and universities in the State. Previously, he spent over 10 years in the Senate Majority Office, where he served as Deputy Executive Director and Director of Budget and Fiscal Analysis. He has become a go-to higher education policy expert for legislators, staffers, the executive branch, and members of the media since taking over NJASCU. Of his recent accomplishments, he ushered in helpful changes to the State College Contracts Law (S-4043/A-6005 signed in Jan. 2022) for member institutions. He has also been an instrumental part of higher education budget negotiations given his extensive experience in the budget process while working in the Legislature.



55 Sam Pesin

President, Friends of Liberty State Park

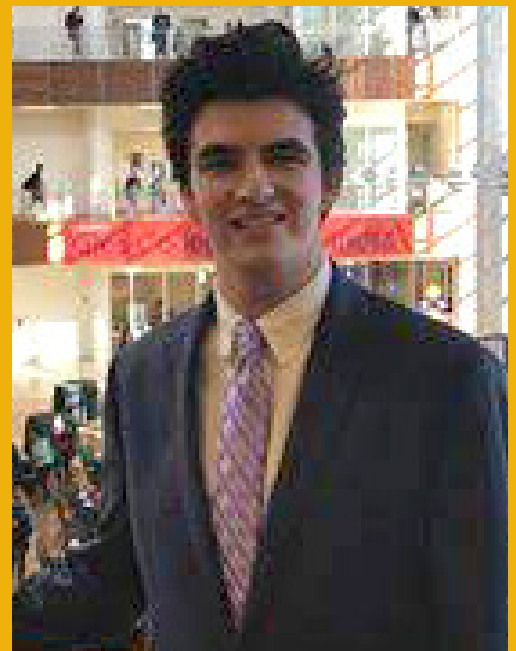
New Jersey's leader in the protection of Liberty State Park, Jersey City's Pesin fights doggedly to withstand the commercialization of a precious national resource. Critical in exposing Fireman's donations to his second LSP front group of Bob Hurley and Commissioner Jerry Walker to push misinformation and smear attacks on behalf of the billionaire wanting LSP's Caven Point Natural Area, and the LSP Sports and Entertainment complex.



56 Luke Wolff

Budget Director, NJ Senate Democratic Caucus

A frontline staffer on the budget – a go-to guy on Senate Budget and Appropriations – Wolff made the transition from Sweeney to Nick Scutari, much to the relief of the caucus.





57 Vin Gopal

State Senate, LD11

Known as a relationship and party builder, Gopal in under two terms has proved a quick learner in the senate, rising to the position of Senate Education Committee chair. Influential on issues pertaining to mental health, Gopal also has his name all over that StayNJ bill, which means if it actually does what it purports, Gopal will instantly turn into a strong statewide prospect. Running in the most-watched battleground of this election cycle, he stands to rise a few more levels too if he out hustles and beats businessman Steve Dnistrian.



58 Tara Colton

Executive Vice President for Special Projects at the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA)

As the system absconds with people's tax dollars, and Legislative leadership attempts to figure out how to keep its dream of domination alive, Colton's actually doing something substantive and humane. She's acting to eliminate New Jersey's urban food desert crisis in cities like Camden, which coincidentally serves as the epicenter of political power in the state.





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59 Medinah Muhammad

**Director of Intergovernmental Affairs
at New Jersey Economic Development
Authority**

Now in a leadership position at the EDA, East Orange-based, Muhammad studied politics at Rutgers-Newark and proved a critical policy resource as chief of staff for Timberlake, as the assemblywoman rammed COVID-19 era legislation providing rental and mortgage relief to at-risk New Jerseyans.



60 Tai Cooper

**Chief Community Development Officer,
New Jersey Economic Development
Authority**

The veteran Cooper has an intimate knowledge of government at all levels.





61 Henal Patel

Social Justice Champion

The former clerk for Justice Stuart Rabner is the Director of Law and Policy at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice.



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62 Phyllis Salowe-Kaye

Executive Director, New Jersey Citizen Action

In an era of diminished trustworthy media sources, Salowe-Kaye leads a staff of public-minded commandos.



63 Jack Ciattarelli

Former LD-16 Assemblyman

Ciattarelli, the 2021 Republican nominee for Governor, ran a very credible campaign for governor, coming within three points of defeating incumbent Democratic Governor Phil Murphy. A CPA and small businessman by trade, Ciattarelli is very strong on budget and financial issues.





64 Marcus Randolph

President/CEO Invest Newark

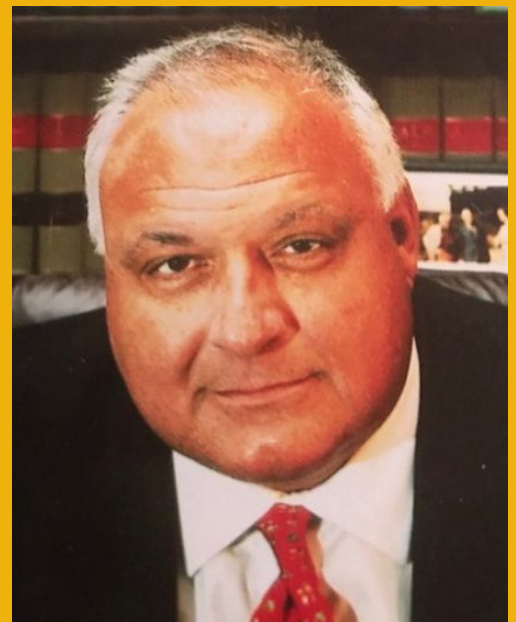
Formerly executive director within community development real estate for JPMorgan Chase Bank, Randolph oversees the City of Newark's Economic Development Corporation, which supports small, women and minority-owned businesses, invests in world-class internet service, spurs real estate development and executes economic development activities to produce and sustain equitable economic growth, generate jobs and create wealth for the citizens of Newark.



65 Eddie Kologi

Attorney

A key legal adviser to Senate President Scutari, the courtroom veteran continues to play a critical role in defending New Jersey's controversial and stringent gun laws.





66 Dan Benson

Assemblyman, LD-14

A savvy political player, Benson also possesses deep-set progressive policy chops, which will serve him well as he prepares to succeed longtime Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes.



67 Roy Freiman

Assemblyman, LD-16

Chair of the Assembly Agriculture and Food Security Committee, Freiman has a problem-solving knack for avoiding the nonsense that goes into most governmental decisions, and a personality that makes people around him want to do better. A retired vice president of strategy and analytics for Prudential Financial, Freiman does something rare for powerful people in our solipsistic age: he actually listens.



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68 Kathleen Long

Chief Operating Officer for the City of Paterson

Long prides herself on paying special attention to urban, grass-roots, and faith-based institutions. In her own words, this includes operations, budgets, strategic planning, project management, government / foundation / corporate relations, communications and marketing, social media engagement, and strategic fundraising (major gift solicitation, special event management, capital campaign design, grant writing, planned giving).



69 Michael Powell

Director of Economic Development for the City of Paterson

Powell has on his plate the reestablishment of former silk factory town Paterson as a North Jersey economic engine. Paterson took significant swings of the bat on that front this year as it reopened the historic Hinchliffe Stadium.





70 Hugh O'Beirne

NJ Cannabis Industry Association President

Skilled in cannabis regulation and policy, government relations and legal writing, O'Beirne founded Hawthorne Ave. Strategies, which focuses on optimizing business outcomes and strategic goals for US and international cannabis operators.



71 Allison Ladd

Deputy Mayor/Director Economic And Housing Development (EHD) for the City of Newark

Expert in Real Estate Finance, Affordable Housing, Policy Analysis, Economic Development, and Real Estate Development, Ladd has key allies in Newark as a consequence of her constant insistence on equity. Key in the development of the Gant-Gilbert Arts Collective at 505 Clinton Avenue.





72 Richard Smith

President of the New Jersey chapter of the NAACP

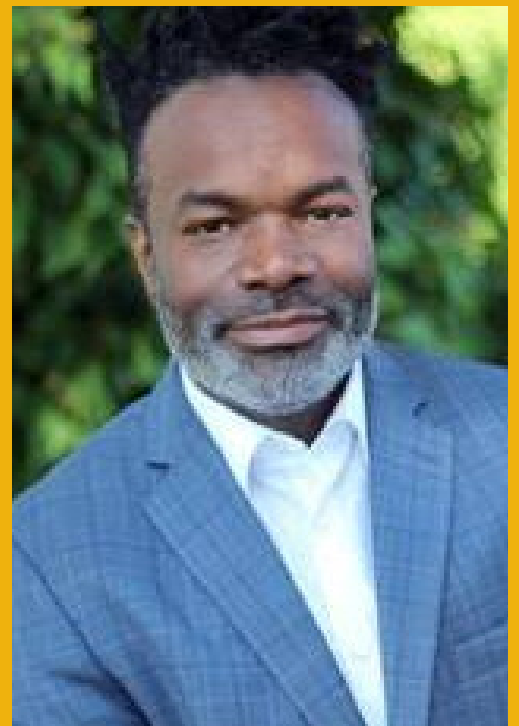
Trenton native Smith, a retired corrections officer, played a critical role in bringing last year's national NAACP conference to Atlantic City.



73 Eric Dobson

Fair Share Housing Center Deputy Director

A major lowkey force, ordained minister Dobson possesses deep powers of coalition building, the result of interfaith outreach.



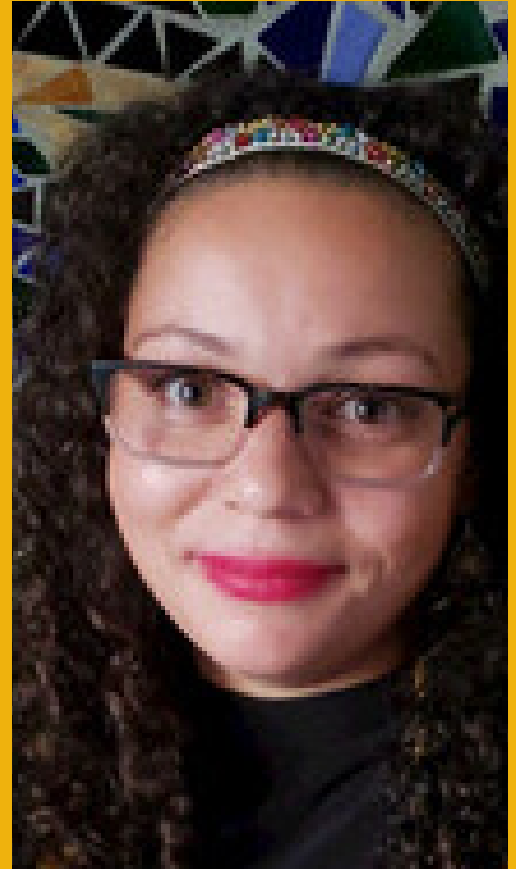


74 Jesselly De La Cruz

Executive Director at Latino Action Network

A licensed social worker, De La Cruz partners with Latino advocacy nonprofit agencies to support traditionally underserved populations.

De La Cruz focuses on systemic approaches to the prevention and treatment of sexual abuse, and the healing of intergenerational trauma in families through the use of mindfulness based psychotherapies, play therapy and multi-systemic family therapy.



75 Patricia Campos-Medina

Labor Policy Expert

No critical Latino issue moves in New Jersey without the input of the good doctor, who is a key leader on campaigns including the Excluded Worker Fund, Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, and various union organizing campaigns. Now the host of Activista Rise Up!, a substantive social issues platform.





76 Dan Harris

Legislative Director for Speaker Craig Coughlin

Harris possesses real world grounding as a member of the Woodbridge Board of Education. Critical in the development of StayNJ.



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ELEC825 is the labor management fund of Operating Engineers Local 825



77 Declan O'Scanlon

13th District State Senator

As a member of the state Senate Budget Committee, the Monmouth-based Republican provides a crucial watchdog role in a Democratic Party-dominant legislature.



78 Stephen M. Scheinthal

Chair for the Department of Psychiatry at Rowan University's School of Osteopathic Medicine and President of the New Jersey Association of Osteopathic Physicians and Surgeons

Especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, Scheinthal serves as a key New Jersey resource on the issue of mental health.





79 Priscilla Garces

Activist

Blind since birth, Garces wants to keep people connected worldwide, and to that end this year she co-organized a summit with representatives from different groups for a “Discussion on Empowering Different Abilities.” A member of Emerge New Jersey, Garces worked in the office of U.S. Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and later ran for the School Board in Newark. She also works as a climate activist and routinely publishes articles related to her work in climate and disability advocacy.



80 Wayne Richardson

President Laborers Local 55

Richardson also serves as President of the Essex County Commissioners Board. An expert on labor training issues, he co-founded the Pathways to Apprenticeship New Jersey, which helps prepare Black and Brown for Building Trades jobs.



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81 David Pascrell

Chair, Government and Regulatory Affairs for Gibbons

Lobbyist Pascrell possesses expertise in the areas of finance and insurance, health and hospital, technology, utilities, development and construction, and public entities. He has particular experience with the New Jersey Department of Banking and Insurance (NJDOBI), Department of Human Services, Department of Community Affairs, Board of Public Utilities, and Department of Labor and Workforce Development.



82 Jeff Tittel

Former Director, New Jersey Sierra Club

Even in retirement, Tittel remains a vital resource on New Jersey's environmental apocalypse. His secret? Policy groundedness, political astuteness and intimate awareness of local issues statewide.





83 Rob Asaro-Angelo

Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development

Asaro-Angelo fought through criticism over his department's handling of massive unemployment claims at the height of the COVID-19 crisis, but had the public support of Governor Murphy.



84 Steve Adubato, Jr.

State of Affairs Host

The veteran, award-winning television journalist – a former Assemblyman from Essex County – thrives on creating a public forum for policy substance. Pay attention. We won't have someone like him ever again.





85 Maria Lopez-Nuñez

Deputy Director, Organizing and Advocacy

Ironbound Community Corporation for her work on the strongest environmental bill in the country and organizing Compassion NJ for grassroots advocacy policy work on all tenant and landlord relief bills, including the People's Bill.



New Jersey: Meeting The Moment

As Americans fight to defend their bodies and their identities from political attacks, New Jersey's policymakers are meeting the moment.

The SFY24 budget includes historic increases to Medicaid rates for reproductive health care – the first increases in over a decade – as well as essential funding for preventative family planning services.

As states across the country are going backwards by making abortion illegal, eliminating LGBTQ health services, enacting book bans, and more, New Jersey is charting a different course.

Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey congratulates the changemakers on this list who are holding the line for bodily autonomy, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and every person's ability to make personal decisions about their health, lives, and futures.



Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey

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



86 James Williams

Fair Share Housing

Highly regarded for his work on Ban the Box and tenant landlord relief bills, including the People's Bill.



87 Beverly Brown Ruggia

New Jersey Citizen Action

Brown Ruggia is highly prized for her work on consumer protections and tenant landlord relief bills, including the People's Bill.





88 Jody Stewart

Organizer, New Jersey Resource Project II

Started policy work after Superstorm Sandy, noted for her work during COVID-19 on tenant landlord relief bills, including the People's Bill. Stewart helped whip bi-partisan support for each housing bill that made it to the floor.



89 Richard Henning

President and CEO of the New Jersey Utilities Association

Head of the statewide trade association for investor-owned utilities, Hemming is a veteran of corporate communications having previously served as Senior Vice President, Communications, Marketing & Government Affairs for Veolia. With New Jersey's energy future among the forefront of issues in the state, NJUA is playing a prominent role in the discussion. Hemming has become a go-to source for commentary on the issue in addition to his public testimony and discussions with legislators. He will play a key role as these issues continue to play out.





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90 Jackie Cornell

Executive Director of Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey (PPAFNJ) as well as the Chief Government Relations Officer with Planned Parenthood of Northern, Central, and Southern New Jersey (PPNCSNJ)

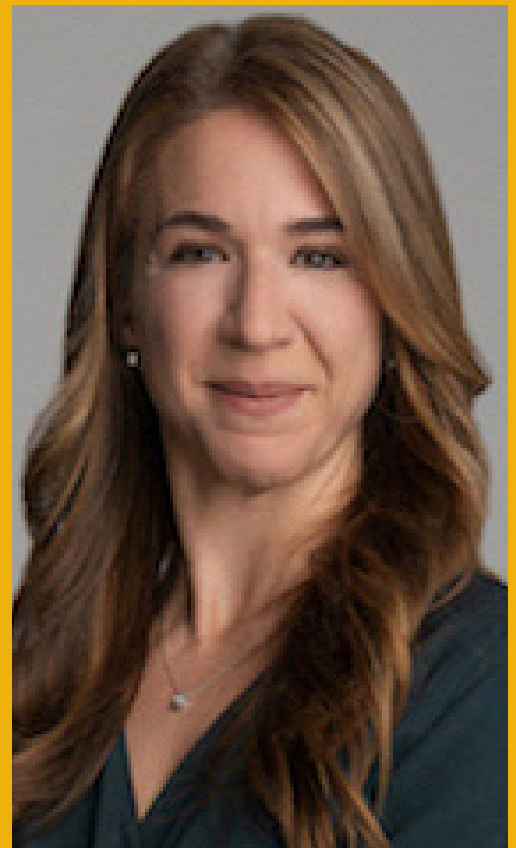
Her leadership at Planned Parenthood helped secure \$10 million in funding for Medicaid reimbursement rates for reproductive care in this year's state budget.



91 Janice Fuller

President, Mid-Atlantic of Anbaric

Fuller leads efforts to develop offshore wind transmission infrastructure in multiple states. This includes a years' long effort in New Jersey to change policy to allow for separate planned transmission for offshore wind which ultimately resulted in the first in the nation SAA. She has been a prominent voice in the offshore wind discussion, bolstered by her years of public service, including serving as Chief of Staff to Congressman and House Energy and Commerce Committee Chair Frank Pallone. Fuller also served as the New Jersey Democratic Congressional Redistricting Chair prior to the 2022 mid-terms.





92 Dave Rible



Utility and Transportation Contractors Association's Executive Director

Poised to assume the role of Chief Executive Officer upon the retirement of the current CEO, Robert Briant, Jr. Rible has been with UTCA since 2019. The UTCA of New Jersey represents approximately 1,000 member firms in the public and private sectors, active in all phases of heavy, highway, utility, and marine construction, as well as site work including remediation of brownfields and contaminated sites. The organization played a key role in the reauthorization of the state's Transportation Trust Fund as well as efforts to increase funding for and the speed with which the state's water infrastructure is replaced and rebuilt. UTCA is also advocating for a smart, sustainable plan to implement renewable energy policy in the state. Prior to joining UTCA, Rible was the Director of the New Jersey Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission (ABC) and served in the New Jersey Assembly from 2008 until 2017. He is also a former Wall Township police officer and detective.

93 John Minella



Chief of Staff in City Hall for Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop

As the mayor leans on municipal government and knowledge, Minella is phenomenal on the nuts & bolts of local government.



94 Janice Kovach

Mayor of Clinton and former President of the League of Municipalities

Another key Fulop ally, Kovach was among the first mayors to endorse him for Governor and is a wealth of knowledge on local government.



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95 Joe Baumann

**Managing partner at McManimon
Scotland and Baumann**

He is one of the most widely respected lawyers on municipal government in NJ – and another critical Fulop ally.



96 Shaya Brodchandel

**CEO and President of the Board of
Harmony Dispensary**

Critical expert on cannabis issues impacting real world players.





97 Elizabeth Stavola

Marijuana Maven

Leading female entrepreneur in the cannabis industry.



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98 Fayemi Shakur

**Arts and Cultural Affairs Director,
The City of Newark**

If you're familiar with Newark, you know that the Baraka administration takes pride in realizing the artistic and cultural vitality of the city, the specific purview of Shakur.



99 Jie Li

**Electrical Engineering Associate
Professor, Rowan University**

Critical expert on cannabis issues impacting real world players.





100 Bob Hennelly

Investigative Reporter



One of journalism's prized possessions, investigative reporter Hennelly has occupied a relentless forward position on every major issue of our time: from housing to healthcare, from education, economics, and social justice, to voting rights and labor. A specialist in drilling down into the core of where real people live and work, Hennelly gathers his materials on the ground, to unleash the toughest, most uncomfortable questions on those at the top of the ivory tower power chain.