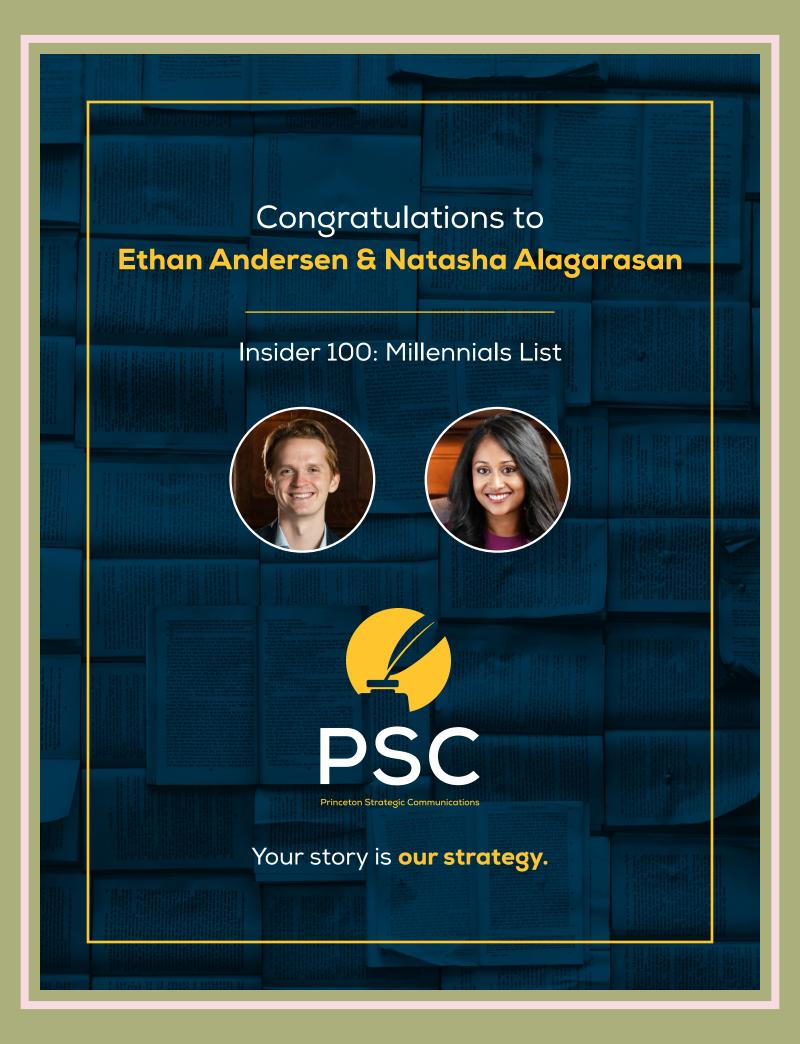


THE 2023 INSIDER 100

### MILLENNIALS

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

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**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



#### BY JOHN VAN VLIET

Millennials are the generation raised by the Baby Boomers, still often called "kids" despite the fact the eldest are entering their forties, and they have their work cut out for them. The Millennials have numerically passed the Baby Boomers who grew up in the post-WW2 era of American economic prosperity and Cold War fears of atomic annihilation. The Pew Research Center says that Millennials comprise those born between 1981-1996, and, like all generations, most Millennials identify with certain commonly shared experiences. Namely, they were old enough to be fully aware of the 9/11 terrorist attacks. They pride themselves on being the last generation to grow up in an "analog" world, a time long before parents decided to Instagram and TikTok their children's lives from the moment they came out of the womb, leaving a lifelong digital footprint. Millennials knew they were the last to have experienced any kind of childhood anonymity in the truest sense.

As Millennials grew up, like most generations before, they were idealistic, set to change the world. With the wreckage of 9/11 coloring their worldview, they were raised to be "global citizens" and embrace the world and its opportunities, while reconciling the cold facts that the world was still one where force and money were the actual levers of power, now and as they always have been. Millennials went to classes with the memory of the Columbine High School shooting in 1999, but schools were still largely as they had been for their Generation X predecessors. Few schools had lockdown drills, security cameras, or metal detectors. For many suburbanite Millennials, leaving school to go out to lunch and coming back in through a side door was nothing strange. If a former student decided to show up unannounced to say hello to a past teacher, nothing was thought of it. This would rapidly transform in the coming years, as school shootings increased in frequency and brutality. Calls to "harden" schools

arose, and debates took place as to whether or not it was appropriate to arm teachers and expect them to not only educate students, but defend them with lethal force from other students if necessary. If elder Millennials thought school felt like jail, younger Millennials and Gen Z students would come to be perpetually under the eyes of cameras and drilled like their Baby Boomer relatives had been during the Cuban Missile Crisis, learning to take cover in school that they might save their lives. In the end, the Missile Crisis was diffused and no 1960s student had to depend on diving with their hands over their heads in a classroom, but American schools in the 21st Century regularly appear on the news. Schools, which should have had no particular notoriety, became household names as massacres all too often. Politicians offer thoughts and prayers, swear that "something must be done," hold rallies, and, with the regularity of an atomic clock, brush the issue aside until next time.

The world was changing fast for Millennial kids. Their teenage years were the first to be influenced—but not yet dominated—by cyberspace. LiveJournal entries had replaced the traditional pen-and-paper diaries of generations before—you could share with your friends your thoughts, excitement, and worries right online. MySpace, while it lasted, was a chaotic sphere of pre-meme digital expression which would be swept away by Facebook, at first a boring,

grey website designed for students of a few specific colleges to connect in classes. Pandora's Digital Box had been opened and has continued to spew far-reaching consequences across all ages and backgrounds ever since. As Millennials came of age, protective parents, increasingly worried about a dangerous and insecure world, started putting mesmerizing cell phones into the hands of their children so that they could keep an eye on them—later to criticize them for spending so much time fiddling with their phones.

As Millennials left school for the workplace or went to college—pressured to pursue higher education while trades and vocational schools were downplayed—they took on loans. Tuition rates skyrocketed as government funding for college was drastically pared back. Saddled up with crushing debt, they knew that their education would have to pay off in the end. All they had to do was try hard. They had been told by their Baby Boomer parents and teachers that they were special and could be anything if they wanted it hard enough, after all. Once their Baby Boomer bosses decided to retire, they'd move on up to take their places, pay down those loans, get a house, get married, have kids, live that American Dream—just like Mom and Dad did.

It is almost 2024 now and many Millennials struggle to deal with massive monthly payments for a

degree that may or may not have helped as much as they were led to believe. They find themselves in ultra-competitive job markets where wages continue to stagnate while productivity, as a whole, has soared. Temporary respite during the worst years of the COVID pandemic is gone. The Biden Administration's attempts to enact student loan forgiveness—possibly one of the surest ways of turbo-charging the economy by allowing younger Americans to tangibly circulate money and make milestone purchases—have failed. This left Millennials feeling that yet another promise was undelivered by their leaders. They deal with a rapidly increasing cost of living and a crumbling, financially devastating healthcare system. Every Millennial knows of someone with a GoFundMe to help deal with medical bills, further sinking their worldview into cynicism as their old "Hope and Change" Obama posters curl and languish in their closets. Rents or, for some luckier few, mortgages, cost well over half of their monthly income. Millennial hope, so fervent in the first Obama years, was dampened, watching the decline of America's image as a secure hegemon in the world. The effect is that for too many Millennials, the American dream enjoyed by their generational predecessors is only a dream. What awaits Gen Z teens and young adults along with Gen Alpha children remains to be seen if things can turn around for them in time.

So when aging Baby Boomers continue to ask their Millennial kids, "When are you going to give us grandkids? You're going to be too old to have children soon," the reason isn't that Millennials are too busy eating avocado toast, drinking locally-sourced cruelty-free sugar-free grande frappe mocha chai hipsterchinos with a half-squirt of unicorn milk, or "killing the [insert here your favorite] industry." It is, as America's first Baby Boomer president's campaign manager James Carville said in 1992, "the economy, stupid."

As teenagers and young adults, Millennials watched - and many served in the armed forces - as the Bush Administration had led America and her allies to war. Intervention in Afghanistan was, at least initially, to get Bin Laden. It would take a decade before that happened and another before the US decided to cut its losses and finally end its longest conflict, which was being fought, in part, by those born after the 9/11 terror attacks, or Generation Z. The Iraq War would call into question America's legitimacy and moral certainty, but there would be no draft such as the one which called up our parents to serve in Vietnam and return, scorned, to a divided nation. This time, America was content to fight its wars abroad and ignore the human and moral cost of an ambiguous conflict, shifting that burden entirely on the standing, volunteer military. This was, after all, a war

against an idea or tactic—terrorism. Uncle Sam waterboarded and exported suspects to less-angelic foreign allies or to legal blackholes where indefinite detention and the suspension of habeas corpus was shruggingly accepted by America-at-the-mall. France, unwilling to get involved in Iraq, went from ally to object of ridicule as Americans felt betrayed. Who remembers "Freedom Fries"?

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At the same time, the last stand of pre-internet television-dominated news culture tortured young girls' body images. Meanwhile, corrupt military personnel hamstrung the national image of America's mission with the exposure of actual torture at Abu Graib in Iraq. Millennials were forced to question what was and what was not acceptable in a conflict that had ill-defined parameters and

where even the White House had no actual endgame in mind.

The divide had always been there, but polarization was widening as the dust from the New York Skyline settled and the Freedom Tower began its glacially slow construction. As bombs fell on Baghdad, the British (once again) hoisted the Union Jack over Basra, the French shook their heads, and US Marines stormed Fallujah, some folks rediscovered Lee Greenwood's 1984 song "God Bless the USA" or otherwise known as "Proud to Be an American" (today a MAGA anthem with Greenwood, now 80, having donned a red cap for Donald). Around the same time, Green Day's 2004 hit "American Idiot" drew a line in the sand. Young minds had to take sides as the War on Terror had also become a war for the American identity and sense of national purpose in the world. Millennials would eventually put away their baggy pants or low-rise jeans, butterfly clips, and chained wallets as adolescence fell away (if they saved any of those things, however, Gen Alpha and Gen Z are riding a 2000s style revival, although don't ask them to abandon their Crocs). At the close of the Bush years, the Great Recession struck. The slow economic recovery in the 2010s would handicap Millennials' financial prospects during their essential formative business years. With the 2008 election, Millennial voters were the ones who decisively carried Illinois Senator Barack Obama—an-

other Baby Boomer—into office, on the somewhat vague but optimistic message of "hope and change." Twothirds of voters under-30 cast their votes for Obama, hoping for a break with the Bush years that Millennials had come to permanently associate with terrorism, war, doubt, and recession. Stagnant wages were combined with "Too Big To Fail" socialism-for-the-rich that rewarded the failures of mega-banks, paid for by the rest of us. This saw Millennials entering young adulthood with their idealism supplanted by ink-dark humor and heavy debt, paired with a bitterness far in excess of the contents of their misspelled-name-bearing artisanal, Boomer-lampooning coffee cup.

In a broad sense, too many Millennials know they won't have it as good as their parents did. This is a statistical reality, and they are struggling to come to terms with this crack in American Exceptionalism that cannot be papered over by sophomoric MAGA chest-pounding or the hollow messaging of Obama-era Democrats who failed to deliver on the systemic "change" that Millennials had hoped for.

As "Fortune" writer Trey Williams noted, Millennials have been on the back-foot compared to their Baby Boomer parents and have to work harder and spend more to attain the same achievements. "Specifically, the average wealth gap between those 60 and older (mostly



boomers) and those 40 and younger (mostly millennials, plus Gen Z) has nearly doubled since the 1960s and 1970s. It makes sense that older generations, who have had more time to accumulate wealth, would have a thicker financial padding than their children. But boomers have been extraordinarily better off, while the wealth of those ages 20 to 39 has declined."

Money may not buy happiness, but it can buy medical care and improve one's quality of life. Research from Duke University in 2018 showed that older Millennials and Gen Xers are the first generations in living memory to have a shorter life expectancy than previous generations. Further, homeownership, for many, is a milestone delayed—like so many others. In New Jersey, where the housing market is such that properties are red hot and the median apartment rent in the Garden State is \$2,495 a month, many Millenni-

als put off getting married, having their own place, or having children. As Baby Boomers grow older, more and more become reliant on their Millennial children for help, finding healthcare and housing costs too difficult to bear entirely on their own.

Despite Millennials establishing themselves as more-or-less-functional adults with far too many watching milestone after milestone slip past (few have read Albert Camus but ask any of them about "existential dread"), Millennials are also hugely underrepresented in the US Congress. Given that there are no term-limits in Congress, nor any ceiling on the age to serve, this comes at a time when voters are increasingly conscious of age in their leadership. Former President Donald Trump, seeking to be the Republican Party's nominee, is 77. President Joe Biden is 81. Many liberals blamed octogenarian Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader

Ginsberg for not retiring during the Obama years to be replaced with an Obama-appointee and maintain the ideological balance within the Supreme Court. Justice John Paul Stephens had had the foresight (or humility) to retire in 2010 when he was 90. Justice Clarence Thomas is the eldest member of the Supreme Court today—and one of its most controversial—at the relatively spry age of 75. The US Constitution requires Senators to be at least 30 years old, although the average age of a Senator is 64, with 8 out of 100 sitting Senators born before or during the Second World War, the group known as "The Silent Generation." In the US House of Representatives,

the average age is 57, although the US Constitution provides for Representatives to be at least 25.

Incorrectly but frequently used to encompass "young people" as a monolithic whole, Millennials are inextricably part of the foundation of the nation. Despite inter-generational conflict, Millennials have clawed what piece of the American pie they could and have sunk their teeth into society. While still poorly represented nationally, Millennials on the state and local levels are at an age now where their networks and roots have firmly grasped the soil of the Garden State. Elected figures, activists, professionals, business leaders, engineers,

medical personnel, laborers, cultural figures, first responders, police, armed forces, teachers, journalists, and artists of the Millennial generation are working hard each day to try to deliver on the promise many felt they had been denied: to bring about a fairer, freer, and more just society. If figures such as the leaders and champions celebrated here in Insider NJ's 2023 Insider 100: Millennials can be successful and cement themselves, maybe they, and their fellow Millennial movers and shakers, will retain enough perspective to try to keep the door open wide enough-and long enough—for Gen Z and Gen Alpha to have a chance at rebuilding what was known as the American Dream.



### 1. VIN GOPAL



The State Senator representing the 11th Legislative District won a convincing re-election victory by a large margin this year in the state's premier battleground race. First elected in 2017, flipping the district from Republican to Democrat, he became the Senate's youngest member and holds the distinction of being the first South Asian elected to the chamber. He

subsequently won re-election in 2021, by a close margin, though his Assembly incumbents went down. This election year, with all eyes on the 11th District with issues such as abortion, offshore wind, taxes, and parental rights being front-and-center, Gopal handily prevailed in the Senate race but also proved to have electoral coattails, with Assemblywomen-elect Lu-

anne Peterpaul and Margie Donlon easily crossing the winning finish line against two incumbent legislators. Retaining his seat in the Senate, Gopal is most certainly the state's most influential and battle-tested legislators, and, without a doubt, the state's most influential and battle-tested millennial. All eyes are on Senator Gopal as he considers his future options.



### 2. ANDY KIM



The now-veteran Congressman, age 41, was first elected in 2018, flipping the Third Congressional District amid a solid electoral stretch for Democrats during the Trump Presidency. With the average age of a Member of Congress near 60, Kim is one of the youngest lawmakers in the House of Representative, and one of the

state's youngest. Forgoing a bid for re-election in the Third District, Kim was the first to announce his candidacy for the US Senate seat currently held by embattled Senator Robert Menendez. He faces a challenging primary, to be sure, with establishment support coalescing behind First Lady Tammy Murphy, but he's posted

impressive fundraising hauls and has been able to generate enthusiasm from rank-and-file Democrats and from the progressive wing of the Democratic Party. Should Kim prevail in the primary, and in the general election, he would be among the youngest in the Senate.



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# CONGRATULATIONS! TO ALL ON THE INSIDERNJ MILLENNIALS LIST



### FABIANA PIERRE-LOUIS AND RACHEL APTER WAINER





The New Jersey Supreme Court Associate Justices were confirmed to the highest court in the state in and 2022 respectively; their ascension to the court marks a generational shift and both stand poised to yield tremendous impact in shaping the state's legal landscape well into the future.

### H ANDALI KRISHNAMURTI AND SAM ALTMAN







The young trio, along with Westfield Councilman David Contract, are the leaders of 'Vote16', an organization that has proposed allowing high school students to vote in local elections. On their website, the group states that 'We have the right to drive, the right to work, the obligation to pay income taxes and we even have the right to register to vote at 17. But we can't vote until 18. This doesn't make sense to us, and we need you to change help us change this in NJ.'

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### **S**BRITNEE TIMBERLAKE

Britnee Timberlake: One of the youngest legislators in the Statehouse, the Essex County Assemblywoman in the 34th Legislative District won election this November to the Senate, in which she will be among the chamber's youngest members. The legislator has been on the forefront of issues important to younger residents – including affordable housing and social justice – and stands poised to be a critical voice for younger residents in the Senate.



### 5 MATT PLATKIN

Confirmed to serve as New Jersey's Attorney General last year, Platkin is the state's top legal and law enforcement officer. Still in his mid-thirties, he's been a key member of Governor Murphy's inner circle since the 2017 gubernatorial campaign, having served as Chief Counsel prior to assuming the Attorney General's position. Among the youngest in the role in the nation, and one of the state's youngest-ever, Platkin wields influence in shaping a wide range of criminal justice and legal policies in the state. As Attorney General, he's been on the forefront of state and multi-state lawsuits, criminal justice reform, policing reform, and has made strides in strengthening the state's gun violence prevention efforts.



### **7** RAJ MUKHERJI

The veteran legislator, heading into a full decade of legislative service, in the 33rd Legislative District will enter the Senate in January as one of its youngest members. He proposed legislation that would give towns the option of lowering the voting age for local elections.





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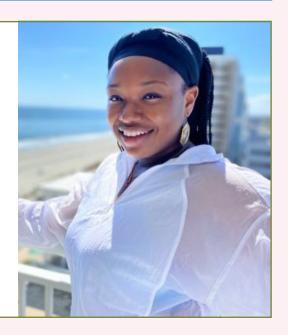


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### 8 A'DORIAN MURRAY -THOMAS

Starting out as the Newark Board of Education member – the city's youngest – Murray-Thomas was just elected to serve on the Essex County Commission Board, and will be the youngest on the county's governing body. She is the founder of SHE Wins, Inc., a leadership program for Newark's middle school and high school girls, with a focus on those affected by violence.



### STEPHANIE LAGOS

Lagos served as the youngest member of the state's Congressional Redistricting Commission last year, and serves as First Lady Tammy Murphy's longtime Chief of Staff – a role ever-more important and influential as the First Lady seeks the United States Senate seat.



### 10 JUSTIN MUSELLA

In his second year as Councilman in Parsippany, the young Republican is an energetic campaigner who won the Republican primary and general election two years ago, and has subsequently been a strong force in local government. He has made it a priority to engage lower-turnout voters, and hasn't shied away from controversial local topics, at times putting him at odds with the Administration. In gear for re-election in two years, he's considered a rising Republican star with higher office potential.





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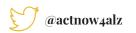
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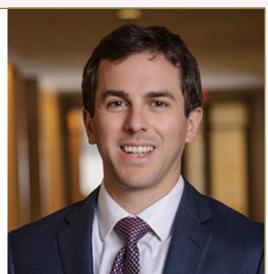
### 11 LAMONICA MCIVER

Hailing from Newark's Central Ward, Council President McIver was the youngest woman ever elected to the city's governing body, and is the founder of Newark G.A.L.S., a non-profit aimed at empowering and fostering future female leaders. McIver has proposed a municipal ordinance that would allow students ages 16 and 17 to vote in local Board of Education elections.



### ROB MENENDEZ JR.

Menendez is the youngest member of the state's Congressional delegation, and among the youngest in the nation, and won election in the 8th Congressional District in 2022. His mettle will be put to the test as he faces a primary challenge from Hoboken Mayor Ravi Bhalla in the 2024 Democratic primary, but thus far, the Hudson County Democratic establishment has coalesced around the young Congressman.



### 13 JACK DEGROOT

The Sussex County Republican, 24, defeated an incumbent Commissioner in the primary earlier this year, subsequently winning the general election, and will be the youngest on the county's governing body. Embodying a 'new generation of Republican leaders', DeGroot made it a campaign pledge 'unify all generations', 'assure previous generations that Sussex County will be in good hands', and 'ensure that future generations will have the same opportunities I had growing up'.





### THEATH

The youngest county party organization chair in the state, the 23-year old Heath was elected to lead the Sussex County Democratic Party earlier this year, and is the founder of Sussex County Pride.



15

MATT ANDERSON,
REBECCA SCHWARTZ,
JUAN CARLOS NORDELO,
KAYLEE MCGUIRE,
DYESE DAVIS,
AND MATT CLARKIN

Founded by Anderson, the group runs the ever-influential Millennials For NJ PAC, which continues to boost efforts for younger candidates across the state, with a proven track record.



### 16 ASHLEY

The Republican Chatham Township Committeewoman, who currently also serves as Mayor, was narrowly defeated for reelection, but remains a rising star in Morris County.



# THE MIRNE AND JULIEN CATALON

Who says Republicans and Democrats can't be bipartisan? The Chairs of the High School Republicans and High School Democrats led a lobbying effort for the 'Involve Our Youth Act', which would permit an excused school absence for attending a civic event. Mirne says that 'whether you are a Republican or Democrat, you should 100% fight for the future you want to see'.



### 18 KAITLAN BASTON

A medical doctor, Baston currently serves as Acting Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Health, succeeding former Commissioner Judith Persichilli. Having served previously as the Medical Director of Government Relations at Cooper University Health, Dr. Baston began her medical career with a focus on underserved populations.



### 19 MIKE INGANAMORT

The Republican mayor of Chester Township was elected to the office at age 36 in 2020, and now heads to the Legislature in January representing Legislative District 24 in the Assembly.





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### **SARAH**NEIBART

The Mendham Township Committeewoman served previously as Mayor, and made a run for Morris County Commissioner last year in the Republican primary; she has served as a strategist for several statewide Republican campaigns.



### **21** ADAM ARMAHIZER

The Raritan Borough Councilman, 24, is a proponent of lowering the established age requirement to run for State Senate from 30 to 21, making the case that young residents 'deserve more of a seat at the table than ever before in American history. If this is the land of opportunity, young leaders should not be restricted from the opportunity to fight for their people and for their rights' in the State Senate.



### 2 CODY MILLER

Having served as the youngest Councilman in Monroe Township's history, Miller is headed to the Statehouse to represent Legislative District 4 in the Assembly.



### 23 TONY PERRY

The youngest Mayor in the history of Middletown, a former Chief of Staff to former Senator Joseph Kyrillos, Perry is now serving his fifth term. Re-elected by a wide margin in his last race, and having formidable fundraising abilities, he's considered a rising star in Republican circles, with higher office potential. He also hasn't shied away from taking on his town's most politically powerful hometown resident – Governor Phil Murphy.



### NOHEMI SORIA-PEREZ

A first-generation Mexican-American who serves as a Camden Councilwoman-at-Large and Chief of Staff for the 5th Legislative District Senator Cruz-Perez, Soria-Perez has actively worked to engage Latinas and youth residents in civic engagement.



### T CHRISTIAN FUSCARINO

The energetic and affable Executive Director of Garden State Equality is a leading voice for the state's LGBTQ+ community; along with GSE's formidable team, including Lauren Albrecht, the organization has been at the forefront of advocating for protections for transgender and LGBTQ+ youth and students.



## 26 DANIELLE IRELAND-IMHOF

The Passaic County Clerk is the youngest constitutional officer in the state, and the only African-American female serving as a county clerk. Ireland-Imhof has worked to modernize the Clerk's Office and increase accessibility for services to residents. A popular presence on the campaign trail, she secured re-election earlier this year in despite facing a spirited challenge from Republicans.





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Congratulations to AMG partner,
Marshall Spevak, on being named to the
InsiderNJ Millennial Power List
SIX years in a row!

### 7 JESSE O. KURTZ

The youngest councilmember on the council in Democrat-dominated Atlantic City – and the lone Republican – Kurtz convincingly secured re-election earlier this year for another tour of public service duty in the seaside city.



### 28 ZACHARY DOUGHERTY

The Monmouth University graduate and Monmouth native has been an active voice for younger residents since he was in his teens, spearheading efforts that include the recently-established NJ Legislative Youth Council.



### **29** CHAD WOOD

The teenager was elected to the Sparta Board of Education earlier this year, making him one of the youngest elected officials statewide.



### Congratulations to Christina Zuk and Regina Appolon

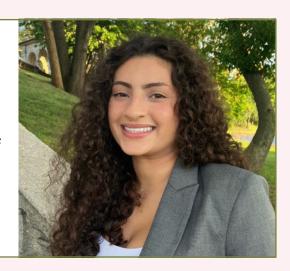
Named to Insider 100: Millennials List





### 30 MIRIAM BECHAY

Earlier this year, Bechay, a 21-year old college student, became the youngest Board of Education Trustee in the history of the City of Bayonne, saying that she hopes to give younger generations the same opportunities that she had growing up and going to school in the city.



### 31 JOHN METRO

The youngest Business Administrator in Jersey City's history when he was appointed at age 31, Metro has earned national recognition for his work, including being named a 'Top 100 Local Government Influencer' by 'Engaging Local Government Leaders'.



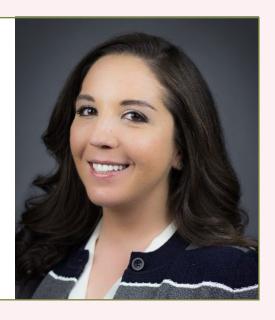
### 32 COSMO CIRILLO

Having cut his Statehouse chops working side-by-side with then-Speaker Vincent Prieto, Cirillo made a strong play for the West New York mayoralty in May. While former Rep. Albio Sires emerged the victor, Cirrillo made a credible argument for generational change in the Hudson County town.



### 33 KAITLYN WOJTOWIC

The Vice President of the Planned Parenthood Action Fund of New Jersey, she has been at ground zero of one the central issues in the 2022 midterm elections, this year's legislative elections, and undoubtedly will be a key issue in 2024's presidential and congressional elections.



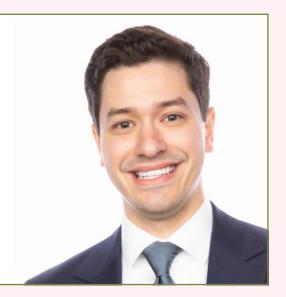
### 34 PAUL KANITRA

The Point Pleasant Beach Mayor, a Republican, gained international admiration for his efforts in support of Ukraine, and heads to the Assembly in January representing the 10th Legislative District.



### 35 ANDRES ACEBO

Acebo, a lawyer, was named the President of New Jersey City University in early 2023, and is the youngest-known president to take the helm of a public university in the state.



### - Best Wishes -

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### 36 SAM DEALMEIDA

The President of the Associated Builders and Contractors of New Jersey, the young Republican is a rising labor force and a respected voice; under her leadership, the ABC-NJ held a summer program to introduce the trades to middle-school students.



### 37 SAM

Serving his first term as Mayor of Edison, the fifth largest municipality in the state, having won the 2021 general election, Joshi is one of the youngest mayors in the state.



### 38 CRISTINA PINZON

A veteran organizer in the Latinx community with ties around the state, the Elizabeth native has built a strong team at her firm, Stateside Affairs, as they continue to receive accolades and awards for their work.



### 39 JOHN VAN

The Insider NJ reporter and columnist is one of the most historically-grounded and knowledgeable millennials in the state, with a unique ability to correlate current events with historical precedents. When you get to the end of a Van Vliet piece, you'll be a little smarter than you were at the beginning.



### 40 JOHN FRANCIS ROMAN

The Linden Councilman, serving his second term, won an off-the-line challenge in 2017 and has been one of the most visible on-the-ground presences and maintains close ties to Union County Democratic Chairman and Senate President Nicholas Scutari.



### ALYSSA KAYE DAWSON

An advocate for increasing youth involvement in the Republican Party, the Westwood resident served on the council, the youngest in the state, served as Bergen County Young Republicans President, and works as Senator Schepisi's Chief of Staff.



# Harrison Clewell, Esq.





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### 42 PHIL SWIBINSKI

The President of Vision Media President remains one of the most sought-after political consultants in the state, handling communications for the New Jersey State Democratic Party and scores of local elected officials and candidates in his home county of Hudson, and across the state.



### 43 ROBERT

A former campaign staffer for State Senator Holly Schepisi and a political activist, Fisher was elected to the Park Ridge Board of Education at age 18, quipping that 'I may be young, but I'm not stupid, and neither are the people of Park Ridge'.



### INTASHAN CHOWDHURY

The youngest Municipal Business Administrator in the state, still in his mid-20s, Chowdhury has been a local force for modernization and progress, and has begun to receive national recognition for his innovative approach and leadership skills.





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### 45 MICHAEL SULEIMAN

The Atlantic County Democratic Chairman, one of the youngest chairs in the state, was quick to come out early in support of former Senate President Sweeney's recently-announced gubernatorial candidacy.



### 46 ROSS TRAPHAGEN

The Republican Councilman in Hunterdon County's Clinton Town, Traphagen was among the youngest statewide candidates running for office this year, making a strong bid for a 16th Legislative District Assembly seat.



### JUSTIN HARRIS

The 20-year old ran for Essex County Commissioner in the June primary on outgoing Senator Nia Gill's slate; while ultimately coming up short, Harris prioritized increasing youth representation, saying that the 'importance of having representation for Generation Z cannot be overstated, as our generation brings fresh ideas and innovative solutions to the table and has a direct stake in the County's future'.



#### 48 ARMAN FARADASH

Beginning his life of public service at the age of 16 when he started volunteering on the local ambulance rescue squad, the 34-year old was elected to the Upper Saddle River council in 2021 and ascended to the mayoralty last year.



### 49 SABEEN MASIH

The Capital Impact Group Vice President has prioritized encouraging young up-and-coming thought leaders and policymakers, serving as a Mentor for the Rider Women's Leadership Council, and is the co-founder of the Asian Women of Trenton Networking Group.



#### CRISTINA ZUK

The veteran lobbyist with Princeton Public Affairs Group has a strong legislative and union background, and serves on the board of PAM'S List in support of women seeking office around the state.



#### SI EMY GUISPE

Having served as Deputy Director of Latino and Faith-Based Outreach on Governor Murphy's re-election campaign, Quispe now is the Deputy Chief of Staff for Labor Relations and Stakeholder Engagement. Active in education non-profits with labor and legislative credentials, Quispe has served as a mentor to teens in her hometown.





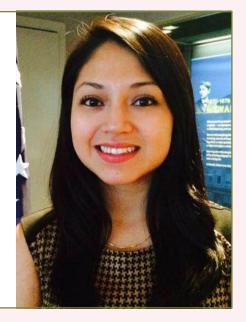
#### 52 JAMES SOLOMON

The independent and progressive Ward E Councilman in Jersey City, Solomon has proven his independence on the city's governing body, and could be a future mayoral candidate.



#### S MARIA DEL CID KOSS

Having served as Chief of Staff to the late Assemblyman Green, at age 23, del cid Koss serves on the statae's Cannabis Regulatory Commission, and founded the 'Del Cid Dreamers' scholarship program at Union County Collegee.



#### SUINTON LAW

The Moorestown Councilman is a South Jersey rising star, made history as the town's first African-American councilmember, and this year served as Deputy Mayor.





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# 55 HARRISON CLEWELL

An attorney at Genova Burns LLC, Clewell made a strong play for Mayor of his hometown of New Providence in last year's election.



#### 56 KATIE CERICOLA

One of the youngest female Republican elected officials in the state, Cericola serves on the Waldwick Council and ran for Bergen County commissioner two years ago. She is the founder of the 'Millennial Minute' podcast.



# RICHARD MEJIA

The 23-year old, who works as the Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Felician University, was elected to the Clifton Board of Education earlier this year, making him the youngest in the city's history.



# HENRY DE KONINCK, MATT KRAYTON, AND SAM LIEBMAN

The Publitics team continue to deliver cutting-edge communications to a diverse array of clients around the state.



## 59 AL ABDELAZIZ

The first Palestinian-American elected to the Paterson council, with close ties to Passaic County Democratic Chairman Currie and Mayor Andre Sayegh, the veteran councilman stands poised for higher office in the future.



#### 50 JOSEPH SIGNORELLO

The Roselle Park mayor, in his mid-thirties, won re-election last year and mounted a brief primary challenge to incumbent Senator Menendez earlier this year (before the subsequent indictments against the Senator); he has prioritized issues important to younger voters in his campaigns.



# **61** SARAH

The Somerset County Commissioner is serving her second term on the county's governing board, and is the youngest female county elected official in the state.



# CONGRATULATIONS

TO THE INSTITUTE'S YANNICK WOOD AND ALL THE MILLENNIALS ON THE INSIDER NJ LIST!





# **62** MARSHALL SPEVAK

The Cherry Hill resident is veteran of Statehouse politics, and helped build the New Jersey Young Democrats during his tenure as President. Recently named as the interim CEO of the Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial, Spevak joined the veteran Trenton firm Advocacy and Management Group last year.



# 63 KYLE HANSON

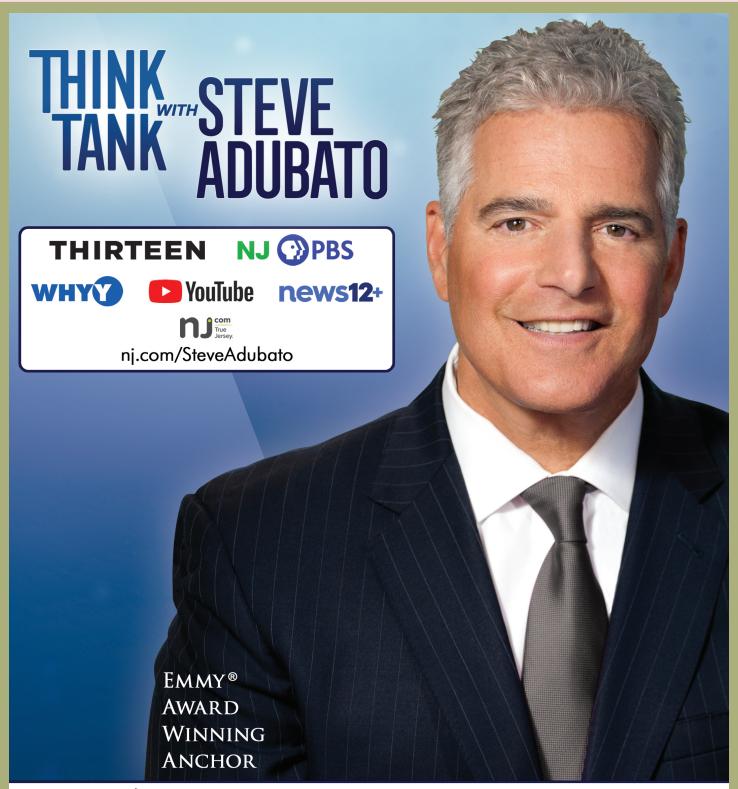
The Chief of Staff to 5th Legislative District Assemblyman Bill Moen – a millennial himself – Hanson was elected Mayor of Barrington, and successfully led the effort for the consolidation of the fire services of Barrington and Haddon Heights.



# 54 REGINA APPOLON

An advocate for expanding diversity for immigrants and first-generation Americans, Appolon works at Princeton Public Affairs Group and has legislative credibility stemming from her time working with former Assemblyman Wisniewski and Assemblywoman McKnight.









**PSC** 

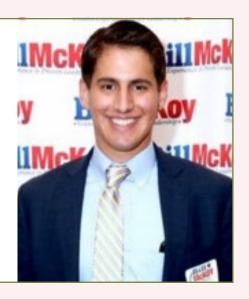






# 55 ANDREW

The West Orange-based political consultant – and laundromat proprietor – has ties up and down the state and is a sought-after operative.



## 55 HARRIS

The former staffer to Senate President Nicholas Scutari now works at the Jewish Federation, and was recently appointed to a Springfield Committee seat, and subsequently secured re-election in November.



## 57 JASON CILENTO

The young Republican Mayor of Dunellen, re-elected this November, is an outspoken advocate for confronting climate change and has had success in working towards increasing governmental accessibility and communications for the residents.



# 68 MAYROSE WEGMANN AND ROB MATOSMORAN

Wegmann, a NJEA Region Director, and Matos-Moran, an aide to Governor Murphy, serve as Director and Deputy Chapter Leader the New Leaders Council-New Jersey; founded in 2011 by Justin Braz and Jackie Cornell, the NLC-NJ continues to build a deep bench of up-and-coming political and governmental leaders each year.





# 59 PETRA GASKINS

Having overcome homelessness at an early age, Gaskins serves as Chief of Staff to recently re-elected 16th Legislative District Senator Zwicker, and she secured a council seat in New Brunswick this year.



## 70 JAMES

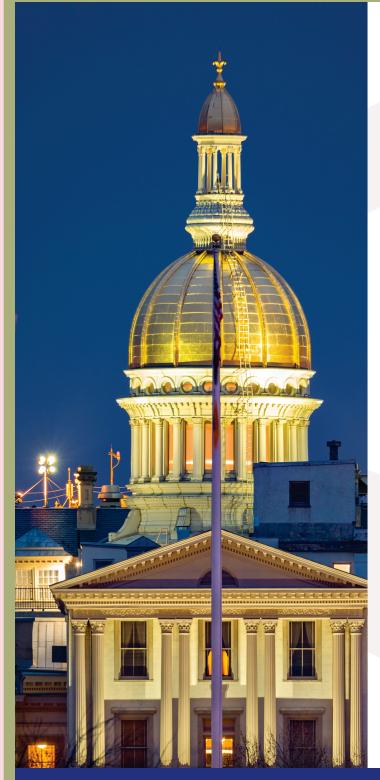
The Republican Warren County Commissioner serves as Deputy Director of the board following his re-election in 2021, and served as Pohatcong mayor previously, at one point the youngest mayor in the state.



#### 71 REGINALD BLEDSOE

The former Newark Board of Education Trustee has government and political experience at every level, and serves as the Director of Essex County's Office of LGBTQ Affairs, the first such office in any county; he has received accolades for his leadership.





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#### 72 MEDINAH MUHAMMAD

The former Chief of Staff (the youngest in the state) to 34th Legislative District Assemblywoman Britnee Timberlake serves on the East Orange Board of Education, is a Governor's Office staffer, and was recently named the Advisory Board Chair of the New Leaders Council-NJ.



#### 73 JUSTIN BRAZ

A Statehouse veteran and founder of the New Leaders Council-New Jersey, Braz has been a mainstay of Murphy Administration's Front Office and NJDOT, and is headed to MAD Global Strategy's to head up their Trenton lobbying efforts.



#### JASON DEALESSI

The former Kinnelon Board of Education member and franchisee of several TAPinto sites is the founder of Fuerza Strategy Group, and has been supportive of younger candidates running for office.



#### 75 JEN EHRENTRAUT

The Hawthorne Board of Education Trustee, a rising star in Passaic County, made a spirited run for Senate in the 40th Legislative District this year and generated enthusiasm among Democrats, and her labor allies, in her grassroots campaign.





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#### 76 HABIB KADER

A former press staffer for Senator Cory Booker, Kader recently joined forces with Paterson Mayor Andre Sayegh, succeeding Christian Callegari as his Chief of Staff in a city in which politics and government require a deft touch to navigate.



#### 7 CHRIS HUGHES

The Mahwah resident won a seat on the Board of Education at age 24, and currently serves as Chief of Staff to 40th Legislative District Assemblyman Chris DePhillips.



# 78 FATIMA HEYWARD

Currently serving as President of the New Jersey Young Democrats, the organization's first African-American President, Heyward also is the founder of the South Jersey Young Democrats Black Caucus, and has made it a priority to expand diversity and inclusion in politics.





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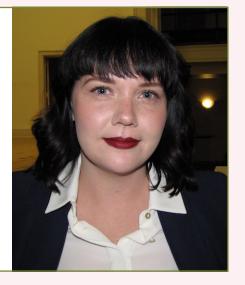
# 79 ROBERT

A well-regarded Democratic operative with a diverse resume and a powerful personal backstory, the affable Field has connections up and down the state.



#### 80 KATE TRIGGIANO

The Red Bank Councilwoman, now serving as Deputy Mayor, won re-election this year in the town's first non-partisan election.



# B1 THOMAS BUSHNAUSKAS

Armed with county and legislative experience, an affable personality, laser-focused determination, a superior campaign work ethic, and a 'never give up or give in' attitude, the Hawthorne resident, not yet 30, continues to move the needle in his electoral favor.





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# 82 NATASHA ALGARASAN AND ETHAN ANDERSEN

Armed with a journalism background, Algarasan is a former NJ Department of Health communications director who currently handles communications for Princeton Communications Strategies; Andersen has a political organizing and communications background and serves as a Partner at the firm.



## 83 JULIETTA

The Hudson County political operative managed Craig Guy's victorious county executive campaign this year, bringing – in Guy's words – 'the perspective that we need to move our county and the Democratic party forward'.



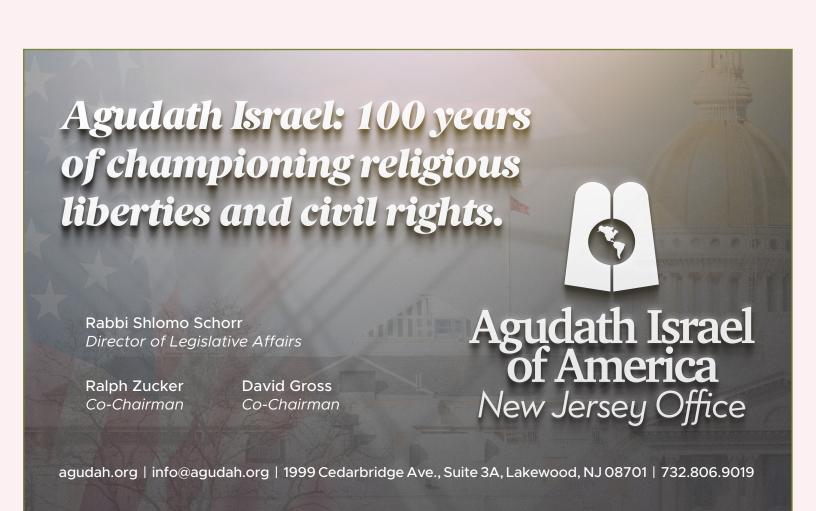
#### 84 RAJ BATH

The aide to Governor Murphy serves as a critical link between state government and the state's growing Asian-American Pacific Islander community.





A high school valedictorian and Princeton University student, Elweshay was appointed to the Linden Zoning Board at age 18, becoming the youngest member in the city's history and one of the youngest in the entire state.



# 85 DAN HARRIS

Having served on the Woodbridge Board of Education, the Middlesex County resident wields tremendous influence in the Statehouse as the Deputy Executive Director of the Assembly Majority Office under Speaker Craig Coughlin.



## 87 ALEXIS

The NJBIA's Vice President of Government Affairs is at the forefront of business advocacy at the Statehouse, frequently testifying on issues of important to the state's business community.



# 8 SALVATORE GIORDANO

The Old Bridge Board of Education President, age 23, took a shot at challenging the incumbent Republican Assemblymembers in the 13th Legislative District in the June primary.



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No aspect of this advertisement has been approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

# 89 OSNER CHARLES

The MBI Associate has political experience from his work in Paterson and East Orange, and was instrumental in the local implementation of former President Obama's national mentoring opportunities program.



#### 90 MORGANNE DUDZINSKI

With a background in non-profit and education communications, Dudzinski served as a staffer to former Senator Jennifer Beck, and currently serves as the Executive Director of the NJ Association of State Colleges and Universities.



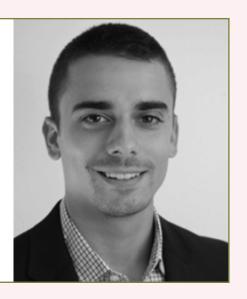
#### **91** AMEERAH MCCOY

The former staffer to Assemblyman Gary Schaer will serve as Chief of Staff to incoming 34th Legislative District Assemblywoman Carmen Morales.



# 92 VINIELLO

Having handled over \$40M in paid media campaigns across 15 states in the past several years, Ciniello is a public affairs and advertising expert across an array of sectors at SubjectMatter+Kivvit.



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#### 93 AVI KELIN

A partner at Genova Burns LLC, Kelin focuses on campaign finance and ethics for candidates at all levels, and authors an insightful Insider NJ column on navigating compliance requirements.



## 34 MOOD ABNINICK

An attorney, Wood serves as the Director of Criminal Justice Reform at the NJ Institute of Social Justice, focusing on efforts to reform the state's youth incarceration system.



# 95 ALLISON MCLEOD

The Aberdeen resident sits on the town's zoning board, and serves as the New Jersey League of Conservation Voters' Director of Public Policy.



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# 96 JOSEPH DECOTIIS III

The third-generation attorney at the politically powerful law firm of DeCotiis, Fitzpatrick, Cole and Giblin LLC represents the new generation leading the way, for both the family and the firm.



# 97 ADRIAN ZERKA

The young President of The Alban Group, Zerka represents the 4th generation of the construction and development firm, which has operated for decades.



#### 98 MARK NATALE

A labor and political election law attorney, Natale ran twice for Assembly in the 8th Legislative District and served as Chair of the Evesham Democrats.



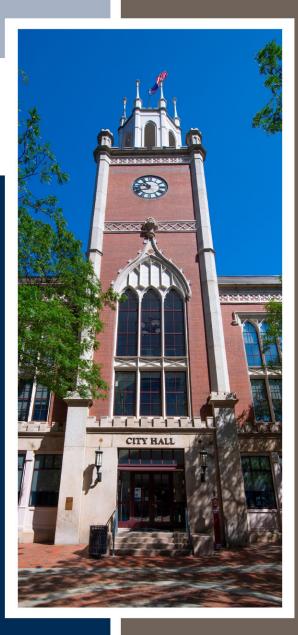


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# 99 KASON

The Elizabeth activist, in his early 20s, has run for office in his city and is an outspoken advocate for social justice and criminal justice reform.



#### 100 TOM JONES

Beginning his career in Parsippany, Jones is known for his laser-focus and dedication, with his company North Jersey Research making a mark for targeted digital campaign work.

