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WELCOME

to the **2024 InsiderNJ Power List**

Ben Franklin once notoriously described New Jersey as a barrel tapped at both ends, referring to New York in the north and Philadelphia in the south, and consigning the Garden State to that depleted wasteland between the two. Whatever your view of that infamous dig, what is true is that every so often one of those cities donates a native son or daughter who makes a special contribution to our beloved New Jersey.

Such a person was political correspondent Michael Aron, a native of Philadelphia, who died in August, a professional who embodied excellence, precision

of intellect and news judgment, work ethic, leadership, integrity, and devotion to the truth. Chief political correspondent for New Jersey public television news for over four decades, Mr. Aron worked at NJ Spotlight News, the news division of NJ PBS, its predecessor NJTV News, and the former New Jersey Network (NJN). Semi-retiring in 2020, he continued to report on elections and other special coverage for NJ Spotlight News.

In an official joint statement of mourning, PBS and WNET noted that “throughout his career and tenure at NJ Spotlight News, [Mr.]

Aron interviewed every New Jersey governor, state Supreme Court chief justice and legislative leader, plus several presidential candidates. He covered national political conventions, trade missions abroad and all the major political issues of the state. He also contributed to such esteemed national and local outlets as *Harper's Magazine*, *Rolling Stone* and *New Jersey Monthly*. Adding to his distinguished career, [Mr.] Aron was awarded the Lifetime Achievement Award in New Jersey Journalism at the inaugural Byrne Kean Dinner in 2021 and the League of Municipalities' Distinguished Public Service Award in 2015, while also consistently ranking in the Top 10 on the PolitickerNJ and InsiderNJ Power Lists."

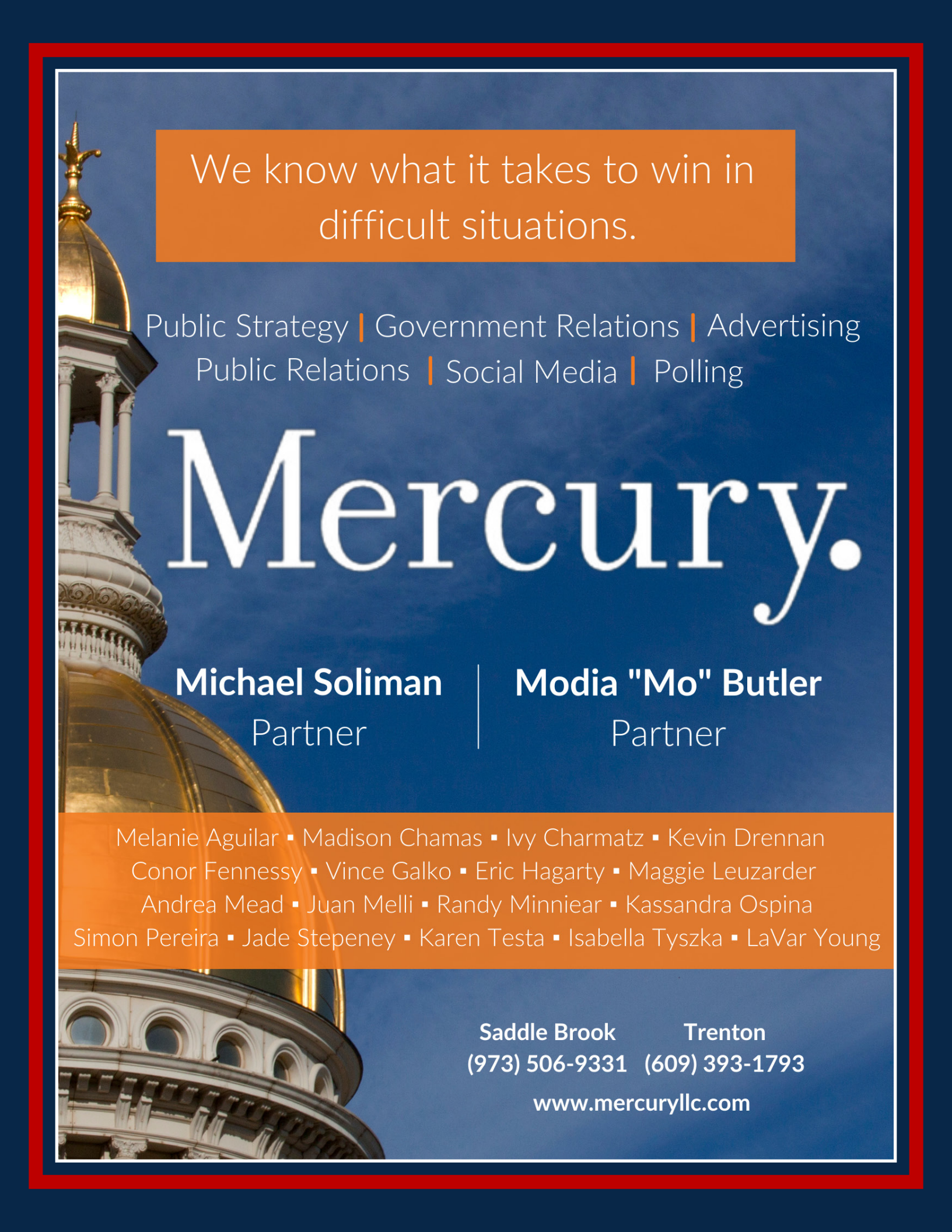
Not having him around anymore hurts. The reporters who came up in the era of the Mr. Aron-moderated *Reporters Roundtable* took special pride in knowing him and working with him. He was always the hardest working, the most impeccable, the most substantive, the most inquisitive, and the one who seemed most genuinely curious and humbly appreciative of his colleagues. He somehow did all of this while maintaining an aura of genuine nobility. It's difficult to describe now. This was a news reporter who would scramble around the halls of the Statehouse in his seventies with his sleeves rolled up to get a story, sit in his bureau cubicle with research notes and labor to get the voice-over just right, with specific, detailed information the public needed to know each night on a public television broadcast, who could also coolly and pointedly cross-exam gubernatorial candidates and, of course, occupy – with unique gravitas – the host's chair for his shows, *Reporters Roundtable* and *On the Record*.

He loved New Jersey politics, professing his affection for his frequently jammed-up and dysfunctional state with a knowing smile. "If you're a reporter," said Mr. Aron, "New Jersey never lets you down." As a reporter, Michael Aron never let down the people of New Jersey – the consumers of news. Here, with Mike Aron, we were intellectually richer and better informed. Those who knew and worked with him will always have a standard of excellence they must try to meet, that special obligation for having borne witness to an exemplary professional.



Max Pizarro

Editor-in-Chief



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1. Leroy Jones

Chairman, Democratic State Committee



Jones, who also chairs the Essex County Democratic Committee and the East Orange Democratic Committee, stands at the center of the developing contest for governor in 2025. His county this year gave the Democratic nominee for president her widest margin of victory, 71-27%, to help Harris win New Jersey.

2. Kevin McCabe

Chairman, Middlesex Democratic Committee



One of the state's savviest political operators, McCabe will likely put his fingerprints not only on the next governor but – in concert with Jones, above – the next senate president and speaker of the General Assembly. Middlesex held for Harris, 52-45%.

3. Matt Platkin

Attorney General



Platkin had two big moments this year. First, he demonstrated his independence from Governor Phil Murphy when he announced that he would not defend the three state statutes that prescribe how New Jersey designs its primary ballots. Second, he dropped indictments on South Jersey Powerbroker George Norcross III and his political network.

4. Paul Juliano

Chairman, Bergen County Democratic Committee



Like his colleagues Jones and McCabe (see above), Juliano will play a critical role in the Democratic Party's 2025 selection of a statewide candidate. He supports U.S. Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-5). A steady handed leader, Juliano demonstrated his prowess when Bergen Democratic Committee members briefly staunched the bleeding of the Tammy Murphy Senate Campaign by handing her a win over Andy Kim. Alas, it wasn't enough in the grander scheme of events.



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5. Charlie Wowkanech

President, NJ AFL-CIO



One of the longest-standing state leaders, a second-generation member of International Union of Operating Engineers Local 68, Wowkanech oversees an organization with over one million members in New Jersey, which occupies a critical overarching position in the developing 2025 gubernatorial election.

6. Bill Mullen

President, New Jersey Building Trades



Don't forget the admonition of former Assemblyman Tom Giblin (D-34) to New Jersey Democrats regarding their reluctance to prioritize Building Trades Labor. With Steve Sweeney an announced 2025 candidate for governor, Mullen occupies a critical position in the developing race.

7. Fran Ehret

CWA State Director



Leader of one of the most powerful unions in the state, former toll collector Ehret leads an organization that represents more than 70,000 working families in the Garden State — including 40,000 state workers, 15,000 county and municipal workers, and thousands of workers in the telecommunications, airlines, health care and direct care industries.

8. Phil Sellinger

U.S. Attorney



Following the indictment of U.S. Senator Bob Menendez (D-NJ), New Jersey's top cop Sellinger received acknowledgement from Damian Williams, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York. Despite being badgered by Menendez to influence the Department of Justice's investigation, Sellinger wouldn't budge and took no steps to intervene, according to the indictment.

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9. Bill Castner

Attorney, Connell Foley, LLP



Former advisor to Governor Phil Murphy on firearms, formerly of the New Jersey Office of Legislative Services, executive director of the New Jersey General Assembly Majority Office, and chief counsel to then-Governor Jon Corzine. Castner remains a go-to policy and politics expert.

10. Dale Florio

Principal, Princeton Public Affairs Group



An old school basketball player and coach, Florio fosters the total team concept at his firm to secure the best results for Princeton Public Affairs Group clients. A quiet, stoic, and experienced leader, Florio served as a Somerville councilman and as chairman of the Somerset County GOP for 18 years. Areas of expertise include education, law enforcement, and healthcare. Look for him to be engaged in the development of a new school funding formula, especially as the 2025 gubernatorial season unfolds. Mostly, look for Florio wherever Princeton Public Affairs Group takes the court together to collectively execute behind the firm's motto: "Anticipate. Participate."

11. Angelo Genova

Genova Burns



Co-founder and chairman of the firm, the state's top veteran campaigns and elections lawyer. A master trial maneuverer, Genova "subscribes to the basic legal tenet that lawyers must know their case inside and out. In his mind, there is no substitute for preparation, attention to detail, and an uncompromising commitment to advancing the client's interests," according to Genova Burns. Many of New Jersey's top politicians continue to rely on the hyperactively legally punctilious Genova, whose presence in their courtroom corner keeps them not just alive, but viable.

12. The DeCotiises

DeCotiis Fitzpatrick Cole and Giblin LLP



Headquartered in Teaneck with over 75 attorneys, Decotiis FitzPatrick Cole and Giblin LLP built a profile as one of the top firms in the state of New Jersey, a leader in the state's government, legal, and business communities. The firm includes former Hunterdon County Democratic Committee Chair Arlene Quinones Perez, veteran expert in government affairs and municipal law.



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13. John Currie

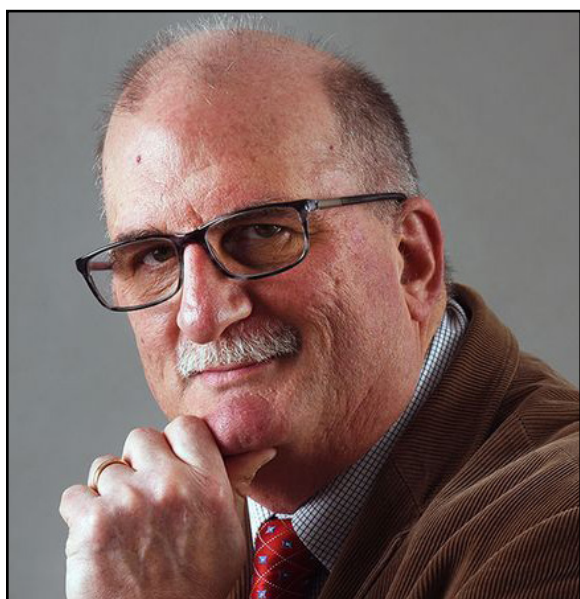
Chairman, Passaic County Democratic Committee



The former Democratic State Party Chairman had a good first half of the year, as he helped lead the party to a crushing primary victory over his longtime political foe, former Passaic County Sheriff Jerry Speziale, and negotiated a Passaic-based party nominee in Nellie Pou, to the late U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-9). But Donald Trump won Passaic County, 50-47% unofficially, in a horrific beatdown by the suburbs of Paterson, supposedly the heart of the Passaic County Democratic Party.

14. Charlie Stile

Columnist, Bergen Record



The shrewd political analyst (and consummate wordsmith) creates columns so meticulously formed in both thought and expression, he positively embodies the New Jersey version of the title character in the Marcello Mastroianni classic “The Organizer.”

15. Trish Zita

The Zita Group



Principal owner of The Zita Group, served as a Research Associate for the New Jersey General Assembly. Longtime veteran. One of the most distinguished and knowledgeable professionals in New Jersey.

16. Peg Schaffer

Chair, Somerset County Democratic Committee



Despite Sue Altman coming up short in her very respectable challenge of elusive U.S. Rep. Tom Kean, Jr., Schaffer had a good night on Nov. 5th, as her incumbent Democratic commissioners won reelection in Democratic Party-dominant Somerset.

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17. Jack Ciattarelli

2025 Republican Candidate for Governor



The former LD-16 Assemblyman remains a strong contender for the governorship but will have to get through a tough GOP Primary that includes Senator Jon Bramnick, radio personality Bill Spadea, and former state Senator Ed Durr.

18. Al Gaburo

Princeton Public Affairs Group



Florio's right-hand man at Princeton Public Affairs Group has a similar background, including ten years as chair of the Somerset GOP. Gaburo had a good year politically as he helped Tracy DiFrancesco oust Tim Howes as Republican chairman of his home county.

19. Steve Adubato, Jr

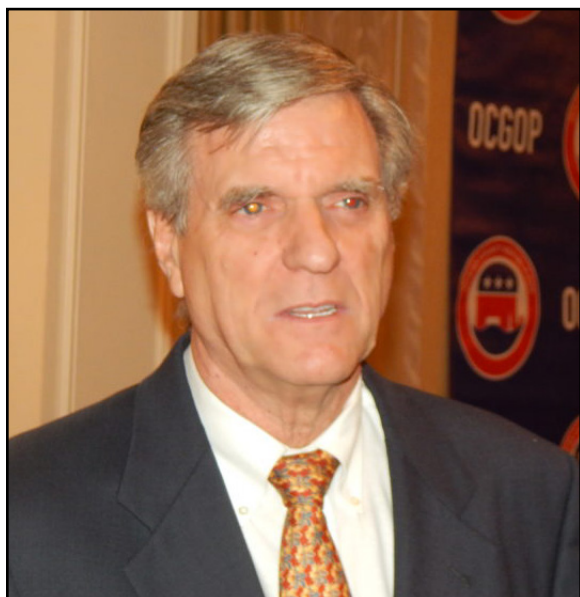
Host, State of Affairs



Son of the late Steve Adubato, Sr., the television host possesses that rarest of rarified qualities in New Jersey politics: an intellect. If you truly crave policy, you need to tune into Adubato's show, preferably often. While the media world has gone for loud, garish and dumb, Adubato has quietly but insistently carved out a substantive space for himself. That's leadership.

20. George Gilmore

Ocean County GOP Chairman



Trump ally Gilmore commands a strong position heading into a contentious Republican Primary for Governor. Obviously, Ocean went big for Trump, and the former president's occupancy of the White House means a powerful ally for Gilmore. Remember, Trump once pardoned Gilmore.



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21. Joseph Tobin

Cardinal, Newark Archdiocese



Based in Newark, appointed by Pope Francis as a member of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Synod of Bishops, Congregation for Catholic Education, Pontifical Council for Culture, Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Council for the Economy, and Congregation for Bishops.

22. Leila Sadeghi

Scorpion Consulting, LLC



The savvy North Jersey-based operative with strong ties to organized labor has considerable political and financial reach, and this year carried her dynamic fundraising prowess into battleground Pennsylvania.

23. Greg Lavee

Business Manager, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825



Started working as a crane operator in 1984, elected business manager of the 7K-strong men and women in 2010. Maintains strong political ties around the state of New Jersey; prevailed on Governor Murphy to include roads and bridges in PLA agreements totaling over \$5 million, a boon to his union. Like Mullen, ever alert to the off-the-reservation messaging by both parties, Lavee retains the right to go with whichever party most immediately or consistently serves his members' needs.

24. Michele Siekerka

President and CEO of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association



A routine critic of Governor Phil Murphy, Siekerka champions what she calls an economic plan seen through the lens of regional competitiveness and affordability. Through the COVID crisis, Siekerka—like Tom Bracken—served as that voice of clarity on the economic engine front, pressuring Murphy not to lose sight of suffering New Jersey businesses. In an election year, with the interests of pained businesses on the ballot, Siekerka proved to have had not only her ear to the ground—but her voice leading a choir of resistance.



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25. Bill Spadea

Radio Host



Running for governor in 2025, MAGA Republican Spadea will try to capitalize on voter outrage over inflation and immigration in a Republican Primary – and Trump’s new coalition of Republican backers.

26. Mike Hellstrom

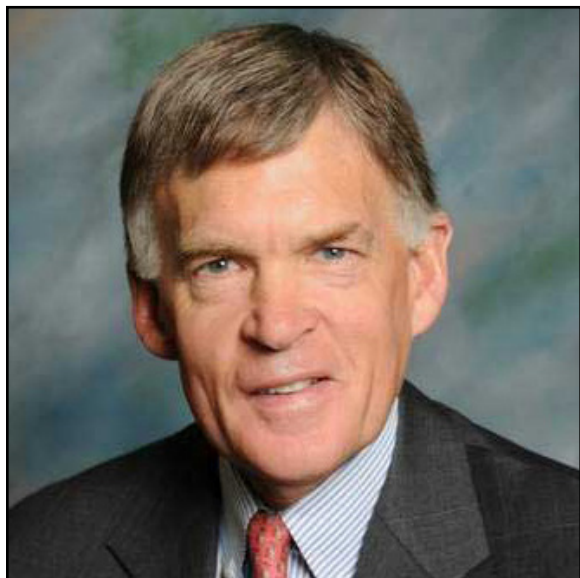
LIUNA Vice President and Eastern Regional Manager



The organization’s former business manager, Hellstrom last year replaced veteran presence Ray Pocino. Hellstrom oversees activities impacting 40,000 laborers in New Jersey, Delaware, New York City, and Long Island.

27. Tom Bracken

President of the NJ Chamber of Commerce



Bracken (along with Siekerka) remains the state's leading business advocate, and proponent of a stronger state economy through implementation of the Chamber's Plan for an Affordable New Jersey. As politics devolves into pitched tribal camps of general wretchedness, Bracken offers that Tom Kean Sr.-era school gravitas that most people are starved for, without even knowing what they lack.

28. Peter Murphy

Chairman, Passaic Republican Committee



No election is entirely predictable in Passaic as long as the Totowa-based Murphy remains in the place he most savors: a negotiating position. A strong ally of respected state Senator Kristin Corrado (R-40), Murphy helped Trump win Passaic County in this year's general election.



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29. Damian Williams

U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York

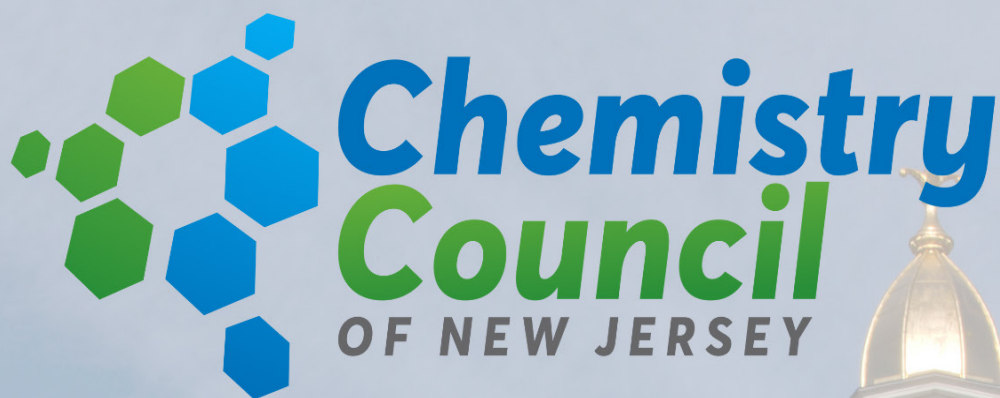


Williams took on the Menendez corruption case with the materials shared by New Jersey contacts, and – unlike at the last Menendez corruption trial – this time sealed a guilty verdict.

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Dennis Hart

Executive Director, CCNJ

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30. Yael Bromberg

Lawyer



A constitutional rights attorney with over twenty years of experience in community organizing, advocacy, and campaigns. Counsels and represents individuals, organizations, and unions in state and federal courts across the country. Her docket includes election law, voting rights, free speech, ethics, civil rights, and labor cases and projects, including U.S. Senator-elect Andy Kim's successful challenge to elections bracketing.

31. Josh Hodes

Partner, Public Strategies Impact



A 15-year veteran of the lobbying trade, Hodes is responsible for a broad range of issues, including education, energy, healthcare, and redevelopment work.

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32. Phil Alagia

Chief-of-Staff, Essex County Executive
Joe DiVincenzo



As all roads converge on Essex County in the 2025 Democratic Primary for Governor, look for Alagia to play a vital role as the politically agile ally of Chairman LeRoy Jones.

33. Ray Greaves

Amalgamated Transit Union, International
Vice President



Former Chairman of the New Jersey State Council of the Amalgamated Transit Union, Greaves joined ATU Local 819-Newark, NJ in 1985 after he was hired on to the NJ Transit Newark Shops Maintenance Department. Serving as Shop Steward from 1989 to 1994, he later served as Recording Secretary, Legislative Representative, and an Executive Board member. In 2011, he was elected Chair of the ATU New Jersey State Council and served until 2019, when he became International Vice President. Former Bayonne Councilman. Represents over 7500 New Jersey Transit workers, and over 30,000 between New York and New Jersey.

34. Alex Ball

Chief-of-Staff for U.S. Rep. Mikie Sherrill



As Democrats jockey to succeed sitting Governor Phil Murphy, Sherrill right now looks like the favorite on the strength of her strong position in Essex, Middlesex, and Passaic counties.

35. George Norcross

South Jersey Powerbroker



Under indictment on 13 counts of racketeering, Norcross and his allies, according to AG Matt Platkin, discussed leveraging the Camden Redevelopment Agency to challenge a view easement held by a developer limiting building heights in adjacent lots and obtain the easement rights through eminent domain. Fearing financial harm, according to the indictment, the developer sold the easement.



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36. Sean Spiller

President, New Jersey Education Association (NJEA)



A 2025 Democratic candidate for governor, Spiller showed his acute financial willingness to get involved in key contests, including CD-7, where Sue Altman tried to oust Tom Kean, Jr., and his organizing prowess, overseeing the delivery of GOTV bodies into neighboring battleground Pennsylvania in a losing – but noble – effort.

37. Mike Soliman

Principal, Mercury



The veteran power player – former state director for Bob Menendez – now represents the political interests of U.S. Rep. Josh Gottheimer, a candidate for governor in the 2025 Democratic Primary.

38. Adam Malamut

Firm Managing Partner, Malamut and Associates



The intelligent, Burlington-based operator has strong connective ties countywide and throughout the bloodstream of New Jersey Democratic Party establishment politics and government affairs. Known for his ability to communicate and collaborate with an understanding of the intersection of law and public policy, he has strong ties on both sides of the aisle statewide.

39. Hanna Mori

State Director, U.S. Senator Cory Booker



Booker's go-to person, Mori is a relationship-builder who has developed trust statewide and routinely speaks for New Jersey's senior U.S. Senator.



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40. Middy Baraka

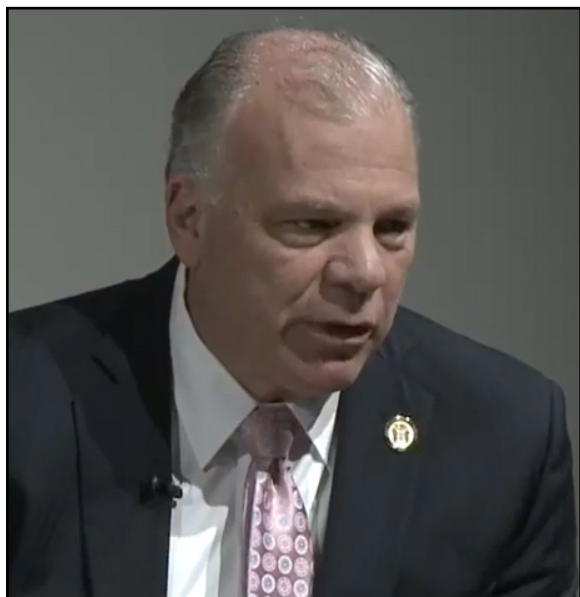
Chief-of-Staff, City of Newark



The brother of Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, the younger Baraka serves as a critical adviser and counselor to the man trying to be the next governor of New Jersey.

41. Steve Sweeney

Democratic candidate for Governor



A former state senate president, the lifelong ironworker maintains a deep and vital political connection to his brothers and sisters in the Building Trades as he seeks to generate statewide 2025 support. Sweeney presumably offers a chance to shellshocked, beleaguered Democrats to actually catch a glimpse of a blue-collar male within their own party.

42. David Pascrell

Gibbons PC



The firm's chair for government and regulatory affairs. Also a lobbyist with considerable experience in Trenton and Washington, D.C.

43. Tammy Murphy

First Lady



Weathered a tough Democratic Primary battle for the United States Senate seat occupied by the disgraced Bob Menendez only to come up short in a loss to eventual party nominee Andy Kim.

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44. Allison Murphy

Chief-of-Staff to U.S. Rep. Jeff Van Drew



State Director of Trump's New Jersey Campaign, South Jersey's Van Drew had a good night, winning reelection to Congress and getting Trump close in blue New Jersey. No one among New Jersey elected officials is closer to the President-elect than Van Drew.

45. Laura Ali

Morris County Republican Chair



Ali has done a good job staving off several insurrections and presiding over a difficult organization in a county with pockets of dedicated anti-establishment Republicans. After having a good general election night this year with wins in her county by Trump and U.S. Rep. Tom Kean, Jr. (R-7), a big test for her will come in 2025 with the Republican Primary for Governor.

46. Briana Vannozzi

News Anchor, NJ Spotlight News



Vannozzi shares the qualities of integrity and intellectual curiosity prized by one of her mentors, the late great Michael Aron of NJPBS and NJ Spotlight News.

47. Charles Boyer

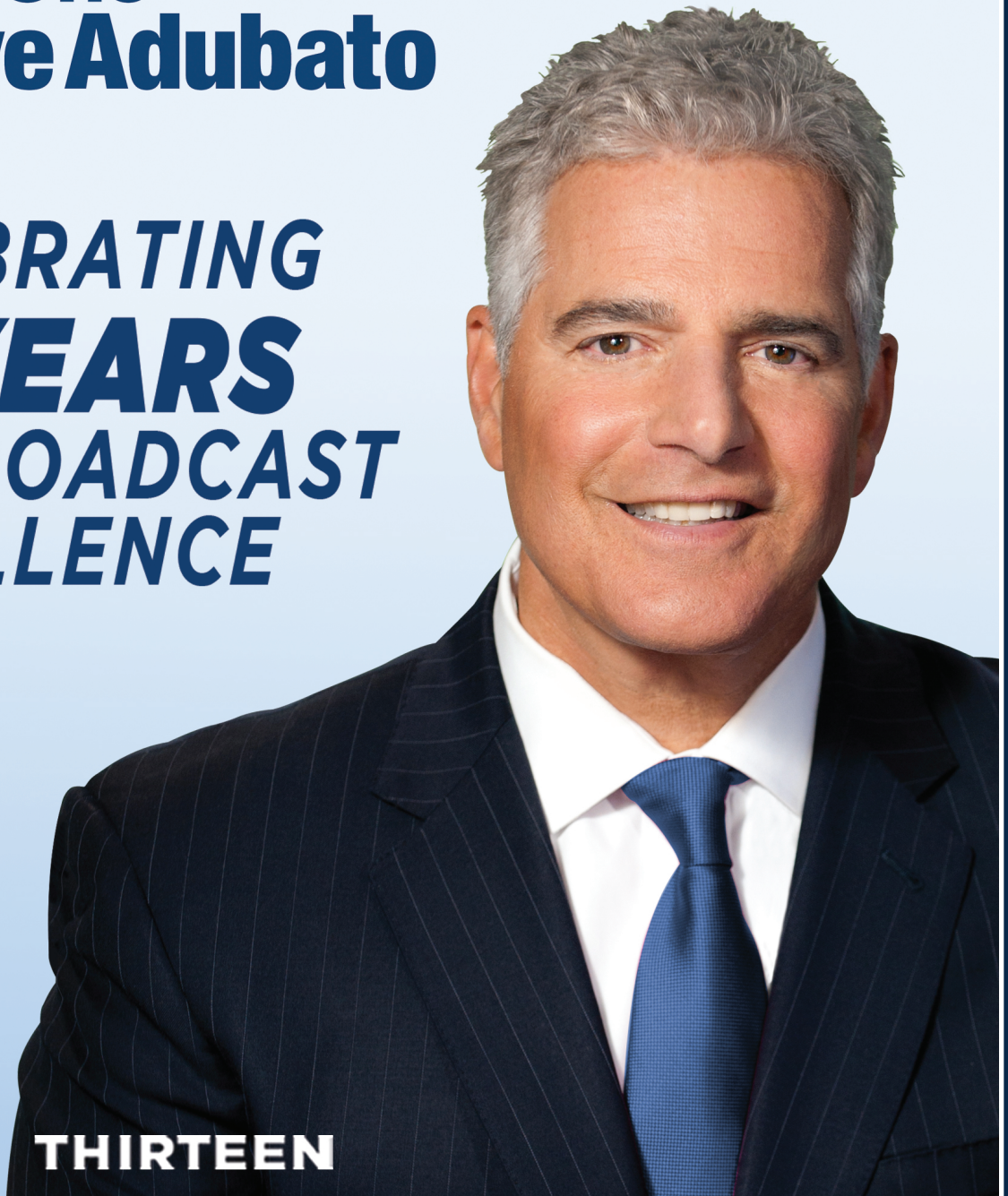
Founding Director of the Salvation and Social Justice



Boyer also serves as the pastor of Greater Mount Zion AME Church in Trenton and has the ears of some of the most powerful politicians in the state, including Governor Phil Murphy.

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48. Harry Hurley

Host of the Harry Hurley Show, WPG Talk Radio



No other radio host show in New Jersey covers politics as hyperactively as Hurley, who has earned the trust of key players in both parties while amplifying the concerns and troubles of regular voters. An asset to the state.

49. Esther Suarez

Hudson County Prosecutor



Suarez fought off her detractors to command a critical law enforcement position in the State of New Jersey.

50. Bob Hugin

Chair, New Jersey Republican Committee



Although his U.S. Senate candidate tanked, Hugin – who has a complicated history with Trump (but then who doesn't) - backed a critical GOP win in CD-7 and helped make cynical, tuned-out Dems break into a panic-stricken sweat in the closing hours of Election Night as Trump came pretty close to humiliating Dem nominee Kamala Harris in blue New Jersey.

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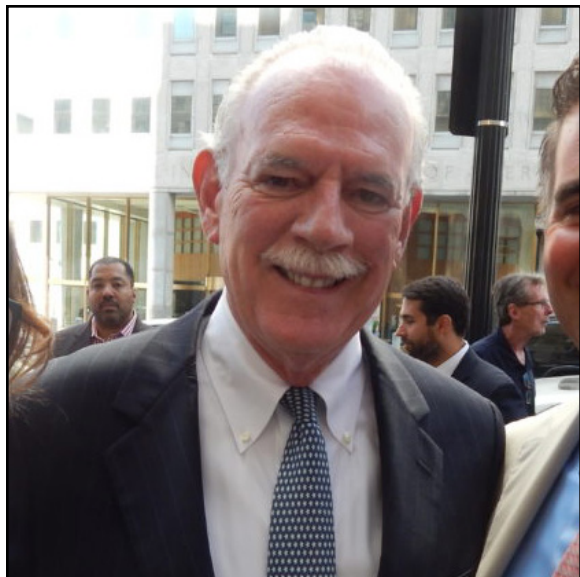
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51. Tom Barrett

Democratic State Committeeman from
Essex County



The Eugene O'Neill lookalike has one of the most politically nimble minds in the state. Educated on the football fields, streets, sawdust-covered floors of the taverns of Essex and Hudson counties, and in the municipal buildings of North Jersey and the Collected Works of W.B. Yeats.

52. Tom Giblin

Former Assemblyman, LD-34



The Montclair-based former assemblyman from the 34th District is a union officer with Local 68 Operating Engineers, and former Essex County Democratic Chairman, who on his way out the door in Trenton warned his fellow Democrats about the consequences of disrespecting Building Trades Labor. Is it too late to pay attention? While the Biden Administration delivered almost unprecedented resources to the Building Trades for ten years' worth of infrastructure jobs, inflation, interest rates, and identity politics wobbled many blue-collar trades guys off the Democratic Party reservation.

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53. Rahaman Muhammad

Deputy Mayor for the City of Newark



An organizer out of the South Ward for SEIU, Muhammad operated with a central principle when it came to Newark: “You need five votes on the city council, and who’s the mayor.” His union work led him to forge a close relationship with fellow South Warder Ras Baraka, and when Baraka became mayor in 2014, Muhammad went to the cabinet to head workforce development. He’s been there ever since. Muhammad will prove a critical political presence for Baraka as the mayor runs for governor in 2025.

54. Laurel Brennan

Secretary-Treasurer of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO



Secretary-Treasurer of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO since 1997, Brennan is the first woman to serve in this office in New Jersey and is one of only seven to do so across the nation.

55. Victor Herlinsky

Sills Cummis and Gross



Veteran attorney specializes in commercial litigation, land use, redevelopment law, and government relations.

56. Mo Butler

Principal, Mercury



Former state director of U.S. Senator Cory Booker, with strong ties in Newark and Essex County, including the North Ward. Also, Chairman of the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority (CRDA).



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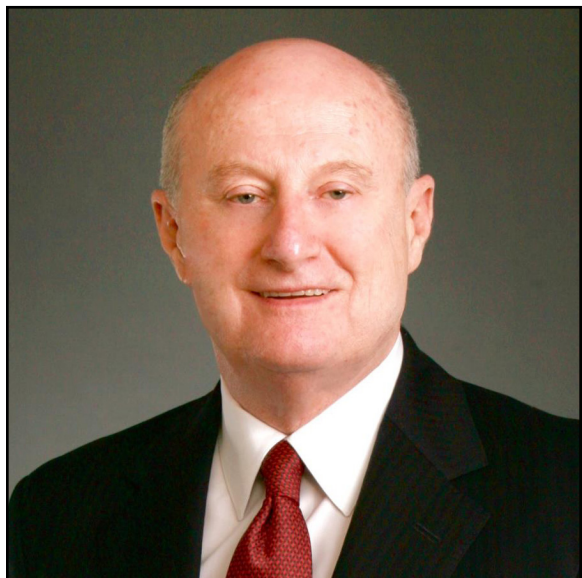
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Executive Vice President, National Director
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500 Route 17 South, Hasbrouck Heights, NJ 07604
- **RICH LEVESQUE**
Senior Vice President, General Manager
609.477.0053
222 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608

57. Mike Critchley

Attorney, Critchley, Kinum and DeNoia LLC



The consummate insider defense attorney who coined the term “registered opportunists,” Critchley has the political trial of the century on his plate as he defends South Jersey Democratic Party Powerbroker George Norcross III against public corruption charges.

58. Tim Sullivan

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



Pragmatic, low drama, and results-driven, Sullivan oversees New Jersey’s principal agency for driving economic growth and making New Jersey a national model for inclusive and sustainable economic development.



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ACCOMPLISHMENTS THIS
YEAR...**

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THE 2024 POWER LIST!**

**DAVID PARANO
PARANO & ASSOCIATES**

59. Chelsea Brossard

Campaign Manager, US Rep. Gottheimer



2025 gubernatorial contender Gottheimer will rely heavily on his go-to office boss as he attempts to take their pragmatic suburban problem solvers' brand statewide in a Democratic Primary on the heels of a moribund national election for Democrats.

60. Matt Caliente

President of the Professional Firefighters of New Jersey



Notched a critical win this year when Gov. Phil Murphy signed legislation that mandates access to periodic cancer screening examinations for firefighters who are not enrolled in the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP), but who are eligible for enrollment in the SHBP by public employment.



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*A description of the selection methodology can be found at www.event.law.com/njlawjournal-njlegalawards/methodology
No aspect of this advertisement has been approved by the Supreme Court of New Jersey.

61. Idida Rodriguez

Partner, 1868 Public Affairs



Professional partner of Democratic State Party Chairman LeRoy Jones, veteran operative Rodriguez – a native of Paterson – has ties everywhere to political nerve centers, among them LD35 and U.S. Rep.-elect Nellie Pou.

62. Tracy DiFrancesco

Somerset County GOP Chair



Coming out of a mangled couple of years under the leadership of the former chairman, DiFrancesco looks to avidly influence next year's gubernatorial contest, presumably as an ally of the homegrown Ciattarelli.

63. Patricia Bramnick

Artist



A distinguished painter in her own right, Bramnick is married to state Senator Jon Bramnick (R-21), who's already in gear as a 2025 Republican candidate for governor.

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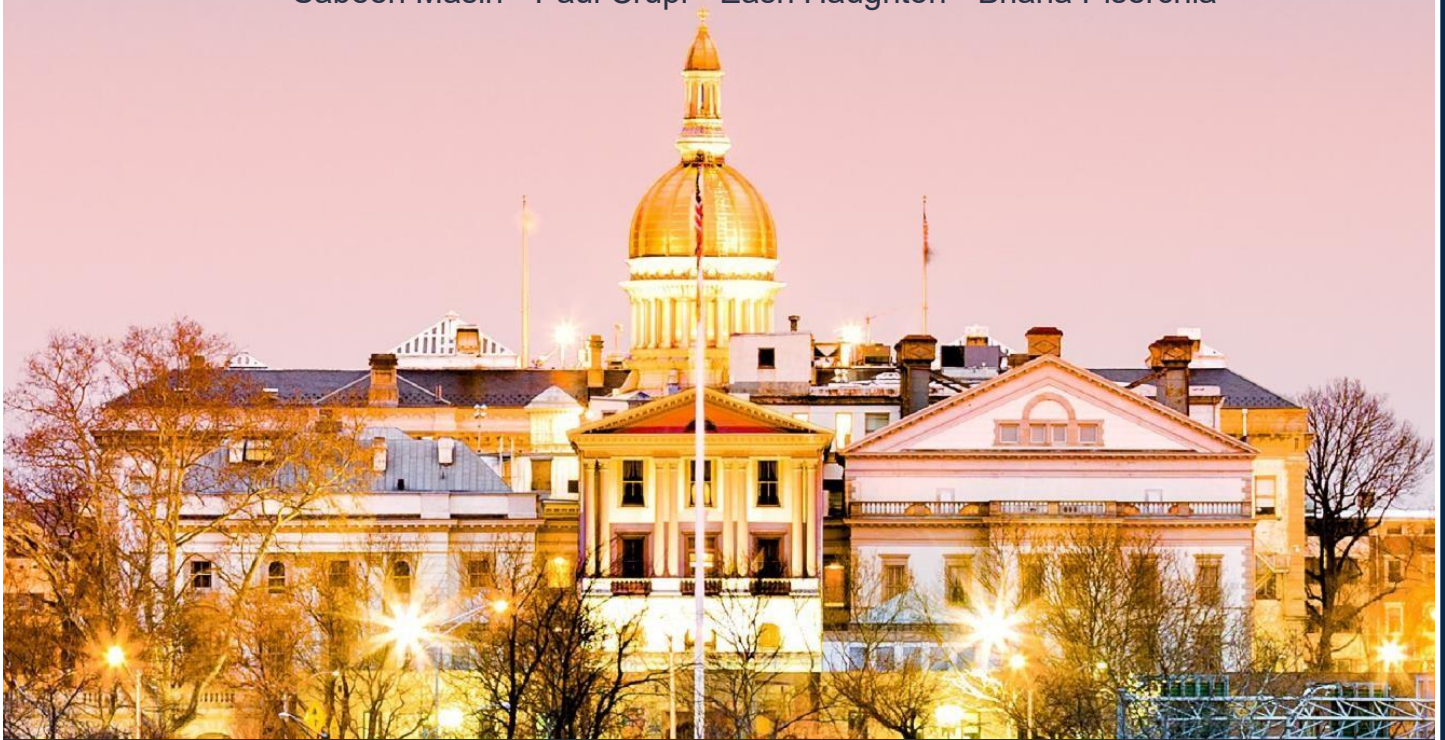
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Sabeen Masih * Paul Crupi * Eash Haughton * Briana Piserchia



64. Carol Cuadrado

Chief-of-Staff, state Senator Nellie Pou



As Pou prepares to transition from her state senate office to the United States Congress, longtime ally Cuadrado – the consummate political professional – will be at her side.

65. Marcia Marley

President, BlueWaveNJ



Also a member of the Board of Directors of the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, progressive champion Marley undertook a strong GOTV effort into neighboring battleground Pennsylvania this year on behalf of Democratic nominee Harris. It was not enough, as Donald Trump connected with blue collar male voters everywhere and Latinos in critical Dem stronghold Philadelphia and won the Keystone State's 19 electoral votes.



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Secure Choice legislation mandates employers with 25 or more employees must offer a retirement savings plan. Those that do not, will be enrolled in the New Jersey Secure Choice plan or face substantial financial penalties.

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Feature	NJBIA	State-Run Plans
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True 401(k)?	✓ YES	✗ NO (IT'S AN IRA)
Higher Contributions Allowed?	✓ YES	✗ NO



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66. Christian Fuscarino

Executive Director, Garden State Equality



Head of the state's largest LGBTQ-plus organization, with a membership of over 150,000, Fuscarino leads an extremely politically influential operation founded by marriage equality activist Steven Goldstein.

67. Patricia Campos-Medina

Labor and Immigration Policy Expert



Dr. Campos-Medina is a nationally recognized labor and immigration policy leader with a proven record of experience in union organizing, government affairs, U.S. trade relations, and higher education. A credible candidate for U.S. Senate in the 2024 Democratic primary, the only Latina candidate, she captured 18% of the vote, a strong second place. No critical Latino or labor issue moves in the state without her input. She currently serves as the executive director of the Worker Institute at the School of Industrial and Labor Relations at Cornell University where she leads research, policy innovation, and training to advance worker justice, collective bargaining rights, and the interest of workers in today's economy and society.

68. Jeannine LaRue

Lobbyist



Part of the one-two punch combination at the Zita Group, LaRue joins Zita as two of the most policy-grounded people in the state of New Jersey. Count on LaRue to routinely speak out on social justice issues, while maintaining strong backroom institutional ties. LaRue is also a new addition to the team at Moxie.

69. Deb Cornavaca

Director of Government Relation-Policy and Politics at New Jersey Education Association



Policy and politics expert Cornavaca played a substantial role along with NJEA President Spiller facilitating volunteer outreach into Pennsylvania for Kamala Harris and financial resources for CD-7 challenger Sue Altman. They came up short, but demonstrated the power of an operation to make the other side sweat – a useful instrument at the very least as New Jersey heads into a gubernatorial election year.

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70. Millie Silva

Secretary Treasurer at 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East



The courageous labor leader who ran on the 2013 ticket against incumbent Chris Christie when a lot of Democrats turned tail, proved an accessible and energized presence in Chicago at this year's Democratic National Convention (DNC) in support of prez nominee Kamala Harris.

71. Gene Mulroy and Gerry Gibbs

Capitol Impact Group



The pair of public affairs specialists go back-to-back in the halls of Trenton, offering a touch of class to the proceedings.

72. Dave Parano

CEO of Parano and Associates



The vote-by-mail operations guru cut his teeth with former state Senator Loretta Weinberg, and remains the chief Democratic Party operative most institutionally grounded in Bergen County.

73. Rudy Garcia

President, MBI



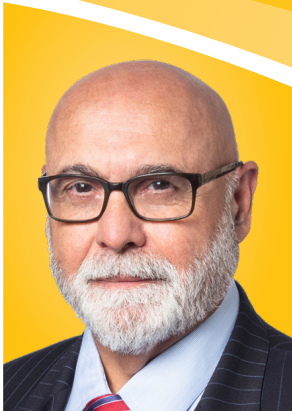
Garcia – the former mayor of Union City and a former Assemblyman – oversees a team of both veteran and young professionals at veteran lobbying firm MBI, and has a strong presence at the Statehouse and around New Jersey.



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74. Adam Steinberger

Partner at Avoq



Steinberger is a nearly 20-year veteran of New Jersey politics and one of the shrewdest public affairs campaign managers in the state. He got his start during the Governor Codey days, served in the Corzine Administration and has worked on several major campaigns in New Jersey since 2006 including as Senator Bob Menendez's 2012 Reelection Campaign Statewide Field Director, a consultant to Steve Fulop's 2013 campaign for Jersey City Mayor and Bonnie Watson Coleman's 2014 Congressional Primary Campaign Manager.

75. Chris Donnelly

General Manager at Avoq



Donnelly serves as General Manager of Avoq's New Jersey office, overseeing the day-to-day operations of their Asbury Park location. Donnelly has nearly 20 years of experience in public and media relations. He has assisted numerous clients over the years, including New Jersey Resources, UTCA, the New Jersey Utilities Association, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, AAUP-BHSNJ, New Jersey CannaBusiness Association, the successful 2016 and 2024 efforts to replenish the Transportation Trust Fund and served as an advisor to the 2020 cannabis legalization campaign. An excellent writer, Donnelly is the author of four baseball-related books, with another about the 2000 Subway Series coming out in the spring.

76. Joe DeMarco

Vice Chairman, Somerset County
Democratic Committee



The successor to Zenon Christodoulou, DeMarco – maybe more than anyone else on this list – embodies New Jersey politics: equally adept urban guerilla (check out his record of against-the-grain wins in West New York and Bayonne), and golf course badger disrupter (witness his string of wins in Somerset County). A real pro, who could pop up anywhere at any time he had a good year in a battleground county that Dems swept and that Kamala Harris won.

77. Colleen O'Dea

Senior Writer and Projects Editor,
NJ Spotlight News



The award-winning journalist adds gravitas and credibility to every political story that bears her byline.

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78. Tai Cooper

Chief Community Development Officer
at the New Jersey Economic Development
Authority (NJEDA)



Cooper in the aftermath of the COVID tsunami finds herself focused on small business recovery and the equitable dispersal of EDA opportunity zone resources. As always, she maintains close ties to the political culture and goings-on of her hometown, Newark.

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79. Michele Jaker

MBI




Former Director of Government Affairs at Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, Jaker possesses a strong background in health care, insurance, human services and women's issues.

80. Sammy Gonzalez

North Ward Democratic Committee Chairman



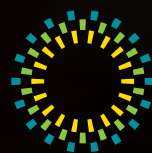
Gonzalez holds on his shoulders the local political organizing tradition of the late Steve Adubato, Sr. Married to powerhouse state Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz (D-29), and politically close to DiVincenzo COS Alagia, North Ward Councilman Anibal Ramos and Essex County Executive Joe DiVincenzo, Gonzalez has a reputation as one of the guys you call when you actually want results.



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81. Sean Darcy and Laura Matos

Power Couple



A shoreline power couple. Matos serves as Vice President at MAD Global while Darcy, the consummate operative's operative, runs Round World Consulting, which has a history of key wins, including campaigns Darcy worked on for U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell and U.S. Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman. Key allies of fellow Monmouth County powerhouse state Senator Vin Gopal (D-11).

82. Michael Testa, Sr.

Testa Heck Testa and White



Distinguished senior firm partner based in Vineland with connections around the state. Veteran GOP leader. Father of state Senator Mike Testa, Jr. (R-1).

83. Larry Hamm

Founder, the People's Organization for Progress (POP)



Hamm isn't so much a permanently public unreconstructed rebel as he is a defender of the republic for – of all things – the actual public. Having learned his trade on the streets of his native Newark during the 1967 troubles, Hamm shows no signs of slowing down. If anything, he's more active now than ever. An unsuccessful candidate for the U.S. Senate in 2021, Hamm ran again this year, coming up short in a Democratic Primary bid to succeed U.S. Senator Bob Menendez.



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Pictured above:

Sean M. Spiller, President (center)

Steve Beatty, Vice President (left)

Petal Robertson, Secretary-Treasurer (right)

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84. Al Komjathy and Eileen Kean

Partners, Komjathy and Kean



A popular and avuncular Statehouse veteran, lobbyist Komjathy has a client roster consisting of Fortune 500 companies and various statewide associations, and also sits on the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission. Kean, a member of the Monmouth Board of Elections, serves as the State Director of NFIB. Alongside the NJ Chamber and NJBIA, they form a powerful political trio of advocates for pro-business policies.

85. Grace Strom Powers

Solar Landscape



Powers, a sharp insider and the former chief of staff for the late Joe Fiordaliso at the Board of Public Utilities, served as a Partner at McCarter and English, and is now with Solar Landscape. She serves as a key fundraiser for Planned Parenthood.

86. Joe Jacobs

Attorney



Veteran Atlantic City operator Jacobs fulfills a key kitchen cabinet role for Atlantic City Mayor Marty Small, who has put together a string of back-to-back election victories, including a 2022 squashing of the Craig Callaway-engineered government referendum question.

87. Calvin Souder

Souder Shabazz Woolridge



Firm principal. The powerful attorney from Newark is the go-to legal contact for the City of Newark. Close to the administration of Mayor (and statewide progressive power player and 2025 gubernatorial candidate) Ras Baraka.

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88. Andre Speight

Chairman, Newark Central Ward



Like Gonzlez, see above, Speight is an ally of Chairman Jones and will prove critical in a gubernatorial election year in which Newark Mayor Ras Baraka is an announced candidate already running against the party organization.

89. Ed Oatman and Nick Fixmer

Union County Diehards



Respectively the county manager and political consultant present one-two punch negotiating and organizing capacity on behalf of sitting Senate President Nick Scutari, who presumably will be up against the juggernaut of neighboring Middlesex in the 2025 fight for statewide power.

90. Bob and Gail Gordon

Power Couple



Respectively the retired Democratic state senator from Bergen County, a dedicated public policy expert; and Commissioner with the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority and Republican fundraiser.

91. Amol Sinha

American Civil Liberties Union of New Jersey



Director of the ACLU of New Jersey (ACLU-NJ). Out-front advocate and civil rights leader. He'll have his hands full with President-elect Donald J. Trump, who wants to oversee mass deportations of undocumented workers.

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92. Iris Delgado

Executive Director of the Middlesex County Democratic Organization and the NJ Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee



Delgado of Metuchen this year served as the New Jersey State Director of the Harris-Walz campaign, focusing most of her energies on battleground Pennsylvania. From an organizing standpoint alone, and in addition to her other considerable political strengths, she will prove critical going forward as the establishment Democratic Party attempts to connect with Hispanic voters.

93. Eddie Donnelly

President, New Jersey Firefighters Mutual Benevolent Association



A firefighter for the Union Fire Department for 21 years, Donnelly heads NJ's largest Firefighter/EMS/Dispatcher union. With over 6,000 members and relationships statewide, he provides his members with a loud and clear voice on the issues that matter most. Chairman of the PFRSNJ board of trustees. Possesses a strong understanding of public sector pensions systems.



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94. Debbie White

President, Health Professional Allied Employees (HPAE)



A registered nurse at Virtua Memorial Hospital for 27 years and a long-term Med-Surg nurse, White took over from HPAE founder Ann Twomey.

95. Samantha DeAlmeida

President, Associated Builders and Contractors



A credible Statehouse and labor force, DeAlmeida made a mark on the 2021 election cycle in her endorsement of Ciattarelli over Murphy in the closest contest for governor since 2009. Remember that, in the lead-up to the gubernatorial race in 2025.

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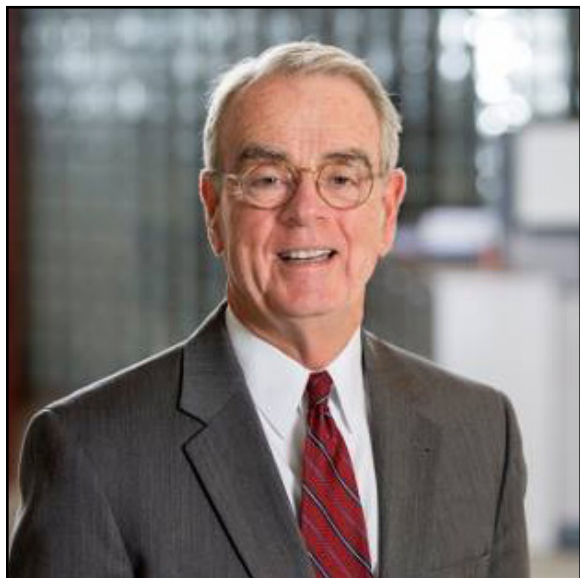


Eastern Atlantic States

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96. Joe Hayden

Attorney, Pashman Stein Walder Hayden PC



Top notch defense lawyer Hayden once stood in Bill Musto's courtroom corner and cross-examined Bob Menendez. A veteran of the Civil Rights movement, he drove as a young man from Newark to Selma, Alabama, to offer his support to embattled civil rights workers. And you won't find a more active and agile legal political mind in the state.

97. Patrick & Amy Kennedy

Power Couple



Maybe the Kennedys can talk some sense to the new Department of Health and Human Services Secretary about his Dr. Strangelove analysis of the fluoridation problem.

98. Zenon Christodoulou

Board of Public Utilities Commissioner



The former long-serving chairman of the Somerset Democratic Committee has a PhD in economics and offers the experience of something rare – almost unheard of, in fact - in his party: family business ownership.

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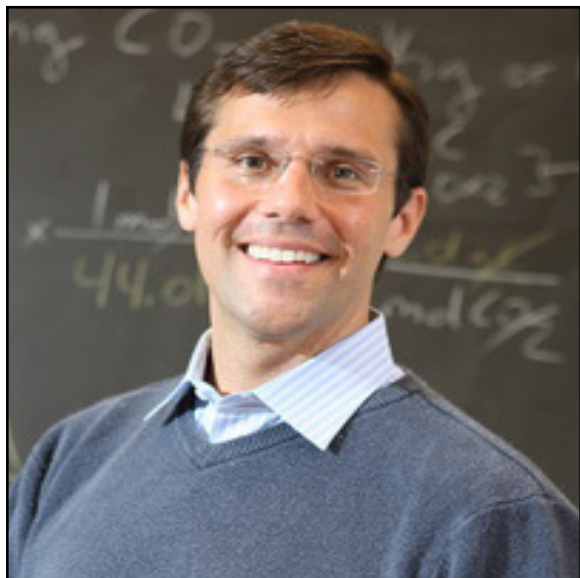
CWA DISTRICT 1 VICE PRESIDENT

FRAN EHRET

CWA NJ AREA DIRECTOR

99. Ed Potosnak

Executive Director, League of Conservation Voters



Very hands-on – and politically savvy, Potosnak, a former chemistry teacher, has a clear priority of preserving clean air and water and safeguarding New Jersey’s open space.

100. Chigozie Onyema

Attorney



Newark West Ward Democratic Committee Chairman. Effective grassroots leader. Where will he go and whom will he endorse with Newark upside down in a gubernatorial election year in which Mayor Ras Baraka is a candidate for governor?