

INSIDER 50 **LABOR** POWER LIST 2025



THE NEW JERSEY STATE OF LABOR 2025

LET'S GET TO WORK!

INSIDERNJ.COM

The members of the

New Jersey Education Association

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



Pictured above:

Steve Beatty
Vice President

Petal Robertson
Secretary-Treasurer

Sean M. Spiller
President



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



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



Pete Oneglia
General Manager
Pete@InsiderNJ.com



John Van Vliet
Director of Operations
JohnVV@InsiderNJ.com

Michael Graham
CEO

John F.X. Graham
Publisher

Ryan Graham
Associate Publisher

2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST



Labor Day

Honoring the American Worker



WELCOME

TO THE 2024 INSIDERNJ LABOR LIST

A big, unruly and complex animal, New Jersey Labor threatens a fight around every corner and seldom presents the prospect of getting unified in the face of a common enemy. Typically, the old divide chopped public and private sector organizations in half, a fracture deepened when then-Senator Steve Sweeney – an ironworker by trade and lifelong Building Trades member – advocated an overhaul of the public worker pension system. That was near the beginning of the millennium, and

the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and others never forgot, even after Sweeney struck a deal with the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) to win gains for the organization.

Indeed, public sector workers largely greeted with glee and vindication Sweeney's dead-last finish in the Democratic Primary for Governor (59,811 votes, compared to 286,244 for winner Mikie Sherrill). If Sweeney's 2021 reelection loss to the

2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST

senate revealed significant South Jersey trendlines away from Democrats, 2025 in part demonstrated the continuing split at the heart of Labor. The results came with a catch, of course. They always do. For on election night, sprawled in that same pile of casualties with Sweeney was Sean Spiller, President – of all things – of the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA).



Public sector and private sector labor as embodied respectively by Spiller and Sweeney, the candidates of two old warhorses never entirely able to refrain from pawing each other's turf, snorting over past transgressions on both sides, had both expired. Spiller finished the primary season in second to last place, with 89,472 votes.

Now obviously one can't simply conflate the two critical arms of

the labor movement into Sweeney and Spiller in one election cycle and draw hard and fast conclusions about the movement. But the failure by both men to gain deeper traction revealed – or rather confirmed - alarming problems for labor in New Jersey during the Trump era. A movement defined finally by organization found itself challenged by its opposite, namely chaos perpetrated by the same president who fired the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) when the latest jobs report failed to confirm his lies about jobs.

But of course, many rank-and-file workers favored Trump over the Democrats, especially in the Building Trades and law enforcement. It didn't matter that President Joe Biden funded the Gateway Tunnel project, which all but guaranteed area trade worker employment for up to a decade, signed an executive order requiring federal agencies to put project labor agreements on projects worth \$35 million or more, or helped with the development of the area Navy yards and the Monroe Energy Plant. When Biden hobbled onto a national stage last year and failed to perform

in the country's first presidential debate, he dropped the equivalent of a saturation bomb in the arms of the labor movement, especially among the ranks of the Trades. Just look at the results in North Philadelphia, south of Biden's hometown of Scranton and a key Biden support system undergirding his 2020 victory in battleground Pennsylvania, where hard hats voted for Trump instead of Biden's successor Kamala Harris of California. Of course, it went deeper than just Biden's implosion, as the GOP won critical messaging battles in the areas of security and public safety, with many police officers – previously apolitical or willing to see both sides – driven to the GOP by liberal extremism. Among the ranks of public sector unions, progressive members decried Democrats' muddled policies on the Middle East and felt betrayed by a seemingly remote party unable to pivot from the confused-looking Biden.



2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST

A million members strong and already historically divided at the core, the labor movement in New Jersey appeared in danger of slipping into Trump's concocted chaos, as leaders – many of them past their prime – found it difficult to keep in step with the times, and looked – in some cases – more willing to protect a few rather than risk their own careers to save the many.



In short, the movement here seemed to suffer from a crisis of leadership, not from local to local, regional group to group, or even necessarily at the upper echelons of operations, but statewide, and in that vacuum existed the possibility of one of the two candidates stepping into the breach as a champion. It came down to Republican Jack Ciattarelli and Democrat Mikie Sherrill vying outside their comfort zones for not exactly the soul of labor – but for the labor vote. Neither had the conviction of labor (however divided) or Spiller or Sweeney. But they had enough galvanizing traction, each in his or her respective party, to begin a more concerted play

for labor organizations in the general election.

As disjointed as its ranks had become, Labor – to offset its own apparent identity problem – would put the candidates to work, mostly a consequence of polling showing a single digit race and the very real prospect of a turnout election. If the Labor movement knew how to mobilize bodies on Election Day, the candidates could augment their advantages with troops they knew could handle the streets. Labor was coy, an attitude perhaps best on display by the Building Trades, muscled up for Sweeney in the primary and now coquettish at best, but also expressed on the more progressive public sector side, where several key organizations backed the primary candidacy of Ras Baraka. When the Laborers backed Sherrill, and the Operating Engineers backed Ciattarelli, other Building Trades members quietly applauded the offsetting of the terrain as a way of hedging Labor's bets. Still others fumed.



It wasn't just that Trump as President threatened labor leaders who had grown complacent. Governor Phil Murphy left behind a strong labor record, which went far in uniting the classically fractured strands of private and public sector labor in New Jersey. The record included a minimum wage hike from \$8.60 in 2018 to \$15 in 2024, paid sick leave, equal pay, and strong support for Project Labor Agreements (PLAs). For all his accomplishments, however, Murphy, eight years in office and at 43% favorability in a July Rutgers-Eagleton Poll, presented a polling liability to Sherrill, repeatedly tagged by Ciattarelli as a Murphy third term. Early in the contest, Sherrill aggressively counter attacked by underscoring Ciattarelli's Assembly votes failing to support critical labor initiatives, including minimum wage, project labor agreements, and prevailing wage laws. Ciattarelli made his own early statement by backing Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAs), a key initiative prized by the New Jersey Fraternal Order of Police.

Both candidates recognized the need to make government run more effectively, as New Jersey voters remained skeptical about the true aims and ends of the political classes in the Garden State. Certainly, the Democrats welcomed Trump as a tyrannical albatross around Ciattarelli's neck, many of them convinced that the fear factor alone of the Republican MAGA brand would put the lights out on Jack's candidacy and propel Sherrill to victory. But a StimSight Research Poll for InsiderNJ identified factors more press-

2025 LABOR POWER LIST

ing for NJ voters. “Affordability (53%) and taxes (43%) are the themes of this election,” according to the poll’s director Patrick Murray, “rising to the top of a list of 13 different issues that voters say are most important to them in choosing a candidate for governor. Among voters who name affordability as one of their top issues, Sherrill (36%) and Ciattarelli (34%) run about evenly on who can better handle it, but the Republican has an overwhelming advantage among those concerned with lowering taxes (50% to 15% for Sherrill). The Democrat has a small edge on being able to provide economic opportunities for New Jersey families (54% to 49% for the Republican).”

Whoever could corner Labor – that big unruly animal, snarling in the corner, even with all the gains of the Murphy years, doubts stoked by message machines, and Trump’s infernal chaos (as economists kept watch over the election time impact of his tariffs) – and figure out how to make the system – the laws and the divided turf – work for the workers, stood to find a critical toehold and a big leg up statewide.



*Max
Pizarro*

Editor, InsiderNJ



CONGRATULATIONS **to Everyone Named to the** **2025 InsiderNJ Labor List!**



John F. Capo, Director
Leon E. Jones Jr., Secretary Treasurer

2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST

**This 2025 List Honors Tom Giblin,
former Assemblyman and
Business Manager of the
International Union of Operating
Engineers, AFL-CIO, Local 68.**



***“When you’re getting kicked
in the ass,
you’ve got to fight.”***

– Tom Giblin

1. **Robert Asaro-Angelo**

Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Labor



The Commissioner of Labor in the Murphy Administration previously served as Eastern Regional Representative for the U.S. Department of Labor for President Barack Obama, managing the department's regional activities and coordinating

federal initiatives on the regional, state, and local levels. Formerly of the Laborers International Union, the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees and the Service Employees International Union Local 1115.

“This is for all workers,” Asaro-Angelo told InsiderNJ, referring to the 4.4 million New Jersey workers served by the 3,000 employees at the Department of Labor, and reflecting on his own work over the course of the last nearly eight years. “I was excited to join this administration. To my knowledge, Phil Murphy was the only governor to ever have a campaign commercial highlighting his own wage theft, and that made an impact on me. It suggested that worker protections had been in the back of his mind – and they were, since day one.”

The people who follow on this list mostly forcefully acknowledge the Murphy Administration's strong Labor record. Other people see it, too. Standing alongside Murphy, Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro called New Jersey under the Democrat's leadership “the gold standard for addressing worker misclassification.”

Under Murphy's and Asaro-Angelo's leadership, the record includes building New Jersey's minimum wage to \$15.49, equal pay, earned sick leave, expanded family leave,

2025 LABOR POWER LIST

a temporary worker bill of rights, and healthy terminals act.

“We were told the sky was going to fall, that ma and pop businesses would leave the state, and it didn’t happen,” the Labor Commissioner told InsiderNJ. “We have expanded business opportunities and now we have in the state a record number of employers, including a 30% growth of ma and pop businesses, that is, businesses with five employees or fewer. We see the increased minimum wage leading to increased buying power, and the creation of an equal business playing field.”

While celebrating the Murphy record, Labor leaders point to the need for continued efficiencies in the maintenance of government and regulation of contractors.

“Department of Labor enforcement and compliance are two sides

of the same coin,” said Asaro-Angelo. “Employers mostly do the right thing. We’ve made it clear we want our businesses to do right by their workers in New Jersey. That’s the Jersey way. We’re a hardscrabble state and we want that same kind of grit out of our employers, who are greatly advantaged by our location to great cities, and a great workforce.”

New Jersey during the Murphy years experienced growth among all industries, including manufacturing for every quarter, after going in the other direction prior to Murphy.

“Our goal is to make sure every job is protected,” said the commissioner, “that every single worker enjoys rights and protections. We have seen 134 bills regarding the Department of Labor in our time here.”

While acknowledging the political

differences between himself and the Trump Administration on key issues, Asaro-Angelo celebrated the federal workers with whom he and his co-workers at the state level partner to serve the public.

“I am inspired by my coworkers every single day,” he said.

“They’re the ones who got me through the craziness,” he added, reflecting on the COVID period. “They’re the ones who kept me calm. We have great services in New Jersey and I love public service. I hope the next chapter, whatever it is, will be some kind of public service.”

As he looks ahead to the next 150 days of work, Asaro-Angelo can’t help but proudly think of the \$100 million invested in the Murphy years to Labor apprenticeship programs, a 149 percent increase.

32BJ SEIU Congratulates

2025 Insider NJ Labor Leaders





“32BJ SEIU proudly represents 15,000 property service workers in New Jersey. This includes residential workers, commercial cleaners, and security officers. These are the essential workers who keep our buildings, transit hubs, and venues – establishments integral to life in the Garden State – safe and secure.

Congratulations to this year’s Insider NJ Labor leaders across the state.”

— Ana Maria Hill, 32BJ SEIU Vice President and NJ State Director



32BJ SEIU is the largest property services union in the country

494 Kenneth A. Gibson Blvd. 3rd Floor, Newark, New Jersey
seiu32bj.org •  @32bjseiu •  @32bjNewJersey

2. **Charlie Wowkanech**

President, New Jersey State AFL-CIO



Leader of all the state's AFL-CIO-affiliated workers – public and private sector, Wowkanech came of age in the movement as a second-generation member of International Union of Operating Engineers Local 68. Wowkanech and his organization jumped into the governor's fray after the primary with an endorsement of Sherrill.

"Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill has always stood shoulder-

to-shoulder with New Jersey's working people," he said. "She understands the dignity of work, the importance of strong unions, and the role that labor plays in building a fair economy. As our next Governor, she'll fight for quality and accessible health care for every family, for great public schools for every kid, and to make New Jersey more affordable for everyone. With a 100% voting record with labor, Mikie has fought for us in Washington, and

we are proud to fight for her now. She's the leader New Jersey's labor movement trusts to champion workers' rights and deliver for all our families."

The endorsement was unanimous and made by 500 delegates representing every sector of the labor movement and over one million union members and their families across New Jersey.

A routine critic of the Trump Administration, in March, Wowkanech issued the following statement on President Trump's executive order that strips virtually all federal workers of their collective bargaining rights:

"By issuing this Executive Order, the Trump administration has openly engaged in a retaliatory attack on the fundamental rights of 700,000 workers across the federal government at more than 30 agencies. This is not just an attack on federal workers, but an attack on the entire labor movement. While this attack on union members is unprecedented, it is unsurprising that President Trump

2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST

has resorted to bullying unions for their refusal to stay silent as he continues to indiscriminately fire tens of thousands of their rank-and file members. His disdain for union members has been made clear from day one, and his intention to strip union members of their rights was plainly stated in his Project 2025 Agenda. This is a clear act of intimidation that we will refuse to accept. We cannot allow the rights that people have fought and died for be wiped away by the stroke of a pen. We will not tolerate attempts to prevent our

members from exercising their rights to hold their government accountable, seek redress in the courts, and to enforce contracts, without fear of retaliation. This recent attack provides us with a grim forecast for the future of the labor movement if President Trump is allowed to continue on his union-busting campaign. The rights of all union members could soon be jeopardized.

“The right to collectively bargain is a defining issue of basic human rights,” Wowkanech added.

“On behalf of all of our rank-and file-members, we call upon our legislators to uphold the commitments they have made to working families in preserving these fundamental freedoms and stand in support of all union members. It’s time to draw a line in the sand between those who will work to protect our democracy and those who have sided with the union-busting Trump administration. We can no longer support legislators who remain silent on these issues, or who have chosen to turn their backs on working families.”

3. William Mullen

President, New Jersey Building Trades

The Building Trades went all in with Steve Sweeney in the Democratic Primary for Governor. Why wouldn't they? Former State Senate President Sweeney built his public service career as an aggressive and effective promoter of trades causes. But when the sturdy South Jersey ironworker came in dead last, the Trades' leaders had to make a hard decision about the general election contest. It was no secret that rank-and-file members leaned Trump. Members reading the political landscape, including those bitter about Sweeney's less than impressive showing, hesitated before simply lining up behind Democratic nominee Mikie Sherrill. While the monolithic labor organization dickered as a whole, at least two Trades groups jumped out with their own dueling endorsements. The Laborers backed Sherrill in the Primary and made clear their general election conviction about her candidacy. The Operating Engineers, conversely, went with Republican nominee Jack Ciattarelli. Notwithstanding those two trades, longtime Building Trades President Mul-



len made clear the organization's overall decision to remain neutral – for now. At the Trades' annual conference this year in Atlantic City, Mullen told InsiderNJ, "We have a few socialists and we have conservative Republicans. Just look at who we had speaking here at this conference. We had the Republican leaders, Bucco and DiMaio, we had the [Democratic] Governor, Speaker Coughlin, and the nominees of both parties. I don't think anybody does that."

So, why doesn't the organization back a candidate? "We want to hear more," Mullen admitted. "They both said the right things. Listen, a lot of it came through Sweeney but I told Murphy that he probably signed more pro Building Trades legislation than anybody. They just need to do a better job of enforcing it." A better job enforcing it. That would become a theme for both candidates as the contest intensified heading into the fall.



**THE PAST AND
FUTURE IS SEEN
THROUGH
GLASS AND
METAL**

CONTRACTOR NETWORK

HOME TO THE MARKET'S
BEST GLASS AND
ARCHITECTURAL METAL
CONTRACTORS

DYNAMIC WORKFORCE

HUNDREDS OF GLAZING
TECHNICIANS PREPARED TO
BUILD OUR FUTURE

INDUSTRY LEADERS

MEMBERS HOLD THE MOST
CERTIFICATIONS IN THE
MARKET

ABOUT THE GLASS & METAL ALLIANCE

Our members are the design and construction community's preferred choice for installations of exterior and interior glass throughout Greater Philadelphia, Southern New Jersey, and Delaware. Offering consultative insight and flawless installation, Glass & Metal Alliance's specialized architectural glass and metal teams ensure projects meet the highest standards. When you specify or hire a Glass & Metal Alliance member, you get a teammate committed to continuing education and design partnership, ready to provide high-quality work, constructability resources, and creative collaboration.



849 North Providence Road
Media, PA 19063

Get in Touch



484-444-0129



info@glassandmetalalliance.org



<https://glassandmetalalliance.com>

4. **Wayne DeAngelo**

IBEW President/Assistant Business manager, Assemblyman



While the Trades overall hesitated to commit to a general election candidate for governor, Democrat DeAngelo made it understood that he would back the nominee of his own party. But he also made it clear that Democrats had a lot of work to do if they wanted to again appeal to hard hats. Joe Biden did in 2020, and composed an impressive pro-Building Trades record, which included securing funding for the long-delayed Gateway Tunnel project. But Scranton Joe failed to project strength in 2024, infamously melting down at a debate microphone before finding himself ushered off the stage in humiliating

fashion. DeAngelo told InsiderNJ, “Biden was a good president for labor. But as a blue-collar person and as a person who goes door to door and talks to people, I recognize that a lot of people - most, in fact, are exhausted and they don’t know the name of their local councilman or county or state lawmakers or what they do. They don’t know what the president is doing, in many cases. Unfortunately, within that environment, Biden, during the second half of his presidency, was not the same guy.” People saw that, at the very least. “There comes a time,” DeAngelo added, “when you have to pass the torch. You don’t want your grandfather or great grandfather standing in the doorframe protecting the family. You need the guy in his prime who’s going to punch you in the mouth if you threaten people with power, see? You need the guy, when confronted with a problem, who’s going to fix it. That’s the leader you want. You want the leader who says, ‘Wake up.’” Without that guy, Building Trades leaders had a tough time making the substantive case to the workers, he

noted. Now, as the Trades regroup and figure out a statewide strategy in the aftermath of Biden and Sweeney failing to galvanize voters, and as Governor Phil Murphy exists after eight years, DeAngelo needs a strong advocate in the executive branch. He needs someone ready to go to work with him for workers. “We have enough laws,” said the assemblyman. “We need the laws enforced. I want to hear the next governor say, ‘I believe in PLAs on all state-contracted projects.’ When developers come into our state, I need the governor to demand they use local labor. I want building trades to have a seat at the table. I need an advocate who tells big business, ‘This is how it is. If you don’t like it, leave. You’re not going to build on the backs of the workers here.’ I need someone who can work through the problems, who can sit down with us, together, someone who’s not going to let the casino industry or high-rise complexes or warehouses build here without employing us. I want the governor, with no excuses, to recognize that we have enough laws. I want them enforced.”

5. Michael E. Hellstrom

LIUNA VP and Eastern Regional Manager



Leader of more than 20,000 members in New Jersey, Hellstrom was the first labor leader to back Mikie Sherrill for governor and is now one of her closest campaign advisors. Hellstrom took on the billionaire high-rise developers (and Mayor Steve Fulop) in Jersey City and turned out thousands of members to prove his resolve. Successor to legendary labor leader Raymond M. Pocino – always a political player statewide. A Navy veteran like Sherrill, the LIUNA skipper at an August GOTV event for the Democratic nominee in Middlesex collegially rang a Navy bell as his pick for governor walked onstage, as if welcoming an officer on deck. Surrounded by veteran players on the political front (see Steven Gardner, below).

6. Donald Norcross

Congressman, 1st District



Former assistant business manager of the IBEW Local 351, and former president of the Southern New Jersey Building Trades Council, Norcross this year showed leadership in bucking Trump's so-called "big, beautiful bill," and making the pointed case for why New Jersey residents will suffer the bill's consequences. Specifically, the Congressman

identified how the President's cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) will affect South Jersey families and increase demand at local food banks. The new laws cuts SNAP by \$200 billion and puts 97,000 individuals in New Jersey's First Congressional District at risk of losing food benefits. "The American Dream starts with a meal on the table. That's why I voted against the Big Ugly Bill because South Jersey families deserve better. Trump and Congressional Republicans in Congress are yanking food right off our kids' plates just to hand billionaires a massive tax break. It's disgraceful and I won't stand for it," Norcross said. "In America, we're supposed to look out for each other, not kick people when they're down. This bill is a betrayal of our most fundamental values: freedom, compassion, and basic human decency. We stand in support of our local food banks as they work tirelessly so no one goes to bed hungry. You can count on me to never stop fighting because we can't build a country on empty stomachs." In

addition, Norcross joined colleagues to introduce the bipartisan, bicameral Warehouse Worker Protection Act, which would require companies with large warehouses to disclose quotas to workers and prohibiting quotas that interfere with health and safety. "In 2022, three New Jersey warehouse workers tragically died on the job within weeks of each other, bringing attention to working conditions and injury rates in warehouses. Businesses can keep workers safe and earn a profit, but that's only possible with more transparency and accountability," Norcross said. "As a former electrician, I know firsthand what it's like to lose a coworker on the job. The Warehouse Worker Protection Act takes necessary steps to ensure everyone can come home from work safely."



Associated Builders and Contractors

New Jersey

The Mission of ABC is to be the voice of free enterprise within the construction industry, encouraging open competition based solely on merit, regardless of labor affiliation."



ABC NEW JERSEY HELPS
MEMBERS DEVELOP PEOPLE,
WIN WORK, AND DELIVER THAT
WORK SAFELY, ETHICALLY, AND
PROFITABLY FOR THE BETTERMENT
OF THE COMMUNITIES IN WHICH
THEY LIVE AND WORK.

LEARN MORE TODAY

ABCNJ.C.ORG | (856) 437-4130



7. **Steve Beatty**

New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) President



Following the tenure of Sean Spiller, Steve Beatty, a high school social studies teacher in the Bridgewater-Raritan school district, takes over the state's biggest labor union as the new president. Beatty comes to the job with experience, having served as NJEA vice president since September 1, 2021. During his four-year term as NJEA Secretary-Treasurer, Beatty led in the fight to secure Chapter 78 relief, as well as ESP job justice legislation – now law. He also spearheaded NJEA's 200K project, a member-led effort that made more than 400,000 phone calls and helped connect thousands of NJEA members with the work of the union.

8. **Greg Lavee**

Business Manager, International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825



A crane operator by trade, Lavee became business manager of the 7K-strong men and women in 2010. While the Building Trades as a whole remained neutral in the developing governor's race, Lavee led his Local in support of Republican nominee Jack Ciattarelli. "New Jersey is at a crossroads," said the labor leader. "We face an energy crisis, an affordability crisis, and a crisis of common sense. The solutions are basic but may not be politically popular. We need a Governor that will tackle our challenges and not cave to the fringe political voices. Jack Ciattarelli understands New Jersey and what needs to be done to fix our great state. New Jersey needs a Governor, who like Operating Engineers, is ready for the job on day one. That is why we are proud to offer our full endorsement for Jack Ciattarelli."

9. **Eddie Donnelly**

President, New Jersey Firefighters Mutual Benevolent Association



Led by Donnelly, the Firefighters went in early behind the gubernatorial candidacy of Mikie Sherrill. In May, Donnelly said of Ciattarelli, "Jack has taken positions in the past in the assembly or running for governor that are

completely anti-labor. His views on pensions, healthcare interest arbitration caps, salary caps for firefighters and police officers - all of it. Not good. He's kind of backed away from it when he's speaking in circles with my folks.

But his moral compass can't be 180 like that." Of Sherrill's candidacy in August, the FMBA Prez said, "We're excited. The campaign is on a good trajectory and the union is completely energized." Walking. Knocking. Fundraising. "I'm really seeing other labor groups come together since the primary and I'm seeing everyone galvanized," said Donnelly, who cited buyers' remorse among rank-and-file firefighters for Trump. According to a Transportation for America report, the Trump Administration, for example, is obligating funds for safety grants at a fraction of the speed of the Biden Administration. As the gubernatorial campaign unfolds, insiders will watch the political alliance between Donnelly and Hellstrom of the Laborers, the two big labor organizations that backed the congresswoman early. "Mike Hellstrom and I forged a great working relationship," the FMBA President told InsiderNJ. "We believe in what she stands for and we are real excited about developing that bond between public safety unions and the trades working men."

10. **Anthony Verrelli**

Assemblyman, LD-15, Chair of the Assembly Labor Committee



Assemblyman Verrelli tells a story about the first time he walked into the State Capitol. He was wearing a toolbelt as a Carpenter on a union job under the Dome. Years later, he would return to Trenton as a lawmaker, where he worked his way up in the Democratic caucus to become chair of the Labor Committee. The 35 years he spent as a proud union Carpenter contributes to people sitting up and paying at-

tention when he discusses labor priorities, which happened this summer when he addressed the annual Building Convention. The following were his prepared remarks for the occasion:

2025 has been a significant year for me. As you all know, I worked as a proud union carpenter for 35 years. I worked in every facet of the labor movement, doing every job that I

could. I showed up on time and was willing to work the hardest, even if I was alone in that. Because of that hard work, today I stand before you humbled to carry on a legacy set forth by Assemblyman Joseph Egan. That legacy is ensuring that one of our own chairs the Assembly Labor Committee. I'll say it again, one of our own chairs the Assembly Labor Committee. Not just having union members sitting on the committee, but taking the role of leading. I intend to carry on that legacy, by being a guiding hand of labor policy here in New Jersey. I knew this was a significant moment, for myself, all of you, and every single working person in the state. But it wasn't until I assumed the role that I came to understand exactly how deeply important this moment is. It's a renewed opportunity for all of us in this room. We can see the times changing before us and I do not intend to squander our opportunity to write history. From the outset of this legislative session, the labor community (including many of the people on this stage and in this room) were ready to get to work and help me in my mission of taking this committee into a new

2025 LABOR POWER LIST

chapter. I'm not going to stand here and rattle off a bunch of bill numbers. But I will highlight a few important accomplishments that we should all be proud of. Because I owe everything to union labor—this suit, my home, my daughter's college education. When we pass policies that promote the building trades, we're doing two things.

1. We're building our country, our state, and our towns back to prosperity.
2. We're promoting a dignified, well compensated, skilled career that makes the **American Dream** possible.

It's why the Assembly and Senate passed my bill closing the C-PACE loophole, requiring all projects paid for through the NJEDA to pay the prevailing wage. Everybody out there wants to cut costs, I understand that. But they're not going to do it on the backs of anyone in this room or anyone else in the building trades. It's also why another bill I passed allows union dues to be deducted from your income taxes. That's REAL money back into the pockets of union households that will get spent at local businesses and benefit everyone in their community. Real money. Helping real people. It's why being Labor Chair is about economic

development, but especially economic development for working people and their families. It's about making sure that projects that require skilled labor do it with the well-trained people in this room and that you're fairly compensated for it in the process. Good jobs and good pay benefit everyone. It's why I'm here to say we're going to protect those jobs and make sure more people understand that an organized workforce means a prosperous community. And I know I'm not alone. Because it's not just about having a seat at the table or being at the head of the table. Everyone in this room knows... Union labor built the table.



Spotlight News

**YOUR NJ
NEWS SOURCE**

Watch:

**NJ Spotlight News
with Briana Vannozzi**
(M-F) 6:30pm, 7:30pm & 11pm

Log On:

NJSpotlightNews.org

Subscribe:

**[NJSpotlightnews.org/
newsletters](http://NJSpotlightnews.org/newsletters)**



Major funding for *NJ Spotlight News* and the *NJ Spotlight News with Briana Vannozzi* newscast is provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the New Jersey Civic Info Consortium, the William Penn Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, PSEG Foundation, the Fund for New Jersey, RWJBarnabas Health, NJM Insurance Group, New Jersey Education Association, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ, the Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey, New Jersey Realtors, the Schumann Fund for New Jersey and Wyncote Foundation.

11. Julie Diaz

Deputy Commissioner of Labor



The Perth Amboy native possesses one of the deepest political resumes in New Jersey, going back to her early organizing for Barack Obama in 2008. She subsequently worked for then-Governor Jon Corzine, and did the field work for one of the most exciting legislative contests in the state, helping Democratic incumbents Lesniak, Cryan, and Quijano hold off their well-organized challengers. Later, Diaz served as political organizer for SEIU 32BJ, on the front end of what would become the union's successful fight to increase airport worker wages above minimum wage. Substantive and highly regarded within all Labor circles as a member of Asaro-Angelo's inner sanctum, "No Drama Diaz" for eight years provided critical experience to an administration with a superlative labor record, which included scoring a \$15.49 worker minimum wage, paid sick leave, equal pay for women, and laying the groundwork for drivers' licenses for undocumented workers.

12. William Sproule

Executive Secretary Treasurer of the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC)



Once an apprentice carpenter, Sproule of Mays Landing served as Organizing Director, New Jersey Regional Manager, and President and Regional Manager of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters prior to landing

the top dog spot. EASRCC represents more than 41,000 members in Delaware, District of Columbia, Maryland, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and the Territory of Puerto Rico. Member of both the Penn-

sylvania and New Jersey Gaming Commissions, Sproule also serves on the Casino Reinvestment Development Authority. Under his leadership, the organization backed Sherrill in July, calling the Democratic nominee for governor “a proven champion for working families and union labor.” Said Sproule: “From defending prevailing wage laws to backing the PRO Act and expanding union apprenticeship programs, Mikie has consistently delivered for the men and women who build this state. Mikie has shown she will fight for good-paying jobs, safe workplaces, and policies that strengthen the middle class. The EAS Carpenters are proud to stand with her in this campaign. He cited as pluses her co-sponsorship of the PRO Act, which would make it easier for workers to form and join unions, and her support for increased workplace protections and enforce labor standards that prevent wage theft, worker misclassification, and construction industry tax fraud—issues, Sproule said, critical to New Jersey’s workforce and the EAS Carpenters.”

13. **Matt Caliente**

President, Professional Firefighters of New Jersey



In the last year, firefighters could celebrate significant legislative accomplishments, including access to periodic cancer screenings for full-time paid firefighters not enrolled in the State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP) and firefighters employed by an SHBP-covered entity, but have waived SHBP coverage cancer screening. This was big, considering cancer, cardiovascular and suicide constitute the three main killers of firefighters.

“First state in the nation cancer screening for members – even after they left the job,” said Caliente, a retired North Hudson firefighter

who started as treasurer in the Professional Firefighters, before working his way up to the presidency.

The union now wants the Legislature to move on Assemblyman William F. Moen, Jr.’s legislation – already passed in the Senate – which would secure a firefighter’s job while he or she undergoes PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) treatment.

Caliente doesn’t sympathize with local municipalities worried about costs. “What I find fascinating about this state is all the waste, fraud and abuse that goes on here, and they want to put their foot down on firefighters and police. What are, they kidding me?”

Representing 3,200 active and thousands of retirees statewide, the Professional Firefighters of New Jersey to date have not backed a candidate for governor.

“We’re meeting as an executive board in the next couple of weeks – it’s really tough because they’re two great candidates,” Caliente

said, in reference to Democrat Mikie Sherril and Republican Jack Ciattarelli. “Mikie has done great things for us. Jack Ciattarelli, in a lot of conversations we’ve had with him, on most of the firefighting issues, he’s onboard. In a tight race, who knows? They seem very truthful.”

They’re watching closely.

They’ve got to be careful.

Membership is not what it used to not be.

A lot of the leaders are Democrats. The rank-and-file lean Republican. So, the executive board wants to tread carefully.

Finally, the next Governor will have to make cuts, and recognizing that, Caliente just wants to make sure whoever it is doesn’t make any cuts to firefighter health-care and pension funding. “We’re throwing all our eggs into that one basket – lowering healthcare,” said the President.



CLB PARTNERS

The Bridge Between
Business & Government

*CLB Partners is proud to celebrate
Labor Day by honoring the hard work and dedication
that keep our communities moving forward.*



Jon Bombardieri
Managing Partner



Jonathan Boguchwal
Partner



Karen Kominsky
Partner



David Glass
Partner



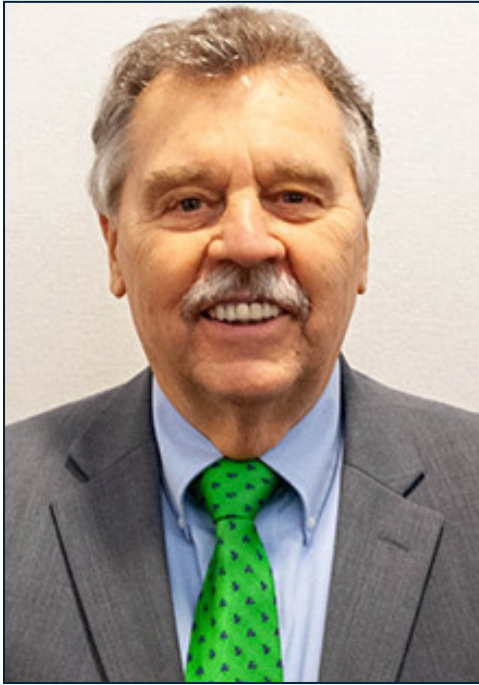
Nicole Howarth
Director



130 West State Street, Trenton, NJ 08608 | (609) 392-2332 | CLBNJ.com

14. **Dennis G. Trainor**

CWA District 1 Vice President



Originally a splicer's helper for the New York Telephone Company, sitting regional Vice President of the Communications Workers of America Trainor leads 140,000 workers in telecommunications, public sector, media and broadcast, health care, airlines and manufacturing across New York, New Jersey and New England (75,000 in New Jersey). The powerful organization with plenty of skin in the New Jersey political game, backs Sherrill for governor. Said Trainor in a statement of the union's choice: "New Jersey's

working families need a fighter – and Mikie Sherrill is exactly the kind of leader we need right now. Mikie has built her career on service, leadership, and delivering results—from her time as a federal prosecutor to her work as a U.S. Representative. In Congress, Rep. Sherrill has been a steadfast advocate for labor rights, affordable healthcare, and strong public infrastructure. With a 100% lifetime voting record, we know that she stands with us on our issues, from fighting for union rights to supporting critical investments in public services. Never one to back down from a fight, we know that Mikie will continue to stand up for workers as Governor. In times like these, we need a Governor who won't just talk about supporting workers, but who will stand up and fight alongside us. We need someone who understands that strong unions, fair contracts, affordable healthcare and public investment are key to rebuilding an economy that works for everyone. CWA members across New Jersey will be working around the clock to talk to their friends, neighbors

and co-workers about what's at stake in the election and the importance of electing a Governor who supports CWA's mission to build power for working people.

He added: "This election comes at a pivotal time. Right now, unions are facing unprecedented attacks; corporations and politicians are working overtime to weaken union rights, strip away bargaining power, and silence unions' voices. At the same time, working families are being crushed by an affordability crisis—rising healthcare costs, housing prices, and everyday expenses are outpacing wages and pushing people to the brink. Right now, CWA is campaigning tirelessly to address the crushing rise in healthcare costs working families in New Jersey are facing. The issue of uncontrolled healthcare costs in the public sector and the devastating impact it's having on working New Jerseyans is urgent and requires action. Mikie Sherrill has committed to addressing the healthcare affordability crisis once she's elected as New Jersey's next Governor in November."

15. **Robert “Bob” W. Fox**

President, New Jersey Fraternal Order of Police



Elected to head the NJFOP in 2014, President Fox – a retired police patrolman from Cherry Hill – will finish his statewide term next year and will not run for reelection to represent an organization representing 13,000 active and retired officers.

The police will choose his successor at a convention in August of 2026.

“Except for a two-year period [for health reasons], I have been on the executive board for 35 years in different positions and now it’s just time to move on,” Fox told InsiderNJ. “I think I’ve done the best I could do.”

Fox said he is proudest of being able to pull his organization out of the state-run pension system to

depoliticize the program. He also was happy to stand up for the Camden Police Department before it became Camden Metro by working to remove incorrect information about the department from the National Law Enforcement Museum in Washington, D.C.

“I started out in the Cherry Hill Police Department and was there for 25 years before I retired, said Fox. “I retired as a patrolman. My mayor told me one thing early: I will never promote you.”

That was alright with Fox. He prioritized union organizing over promotion.

“I graduated from Cherry Hill High School East and was one of the first police officers in the state under the age of 21 - I was one of the first ten hired under the age of 21,” he said.

Now, presiding over his last gubernatorial election as leader of the FOP, Fox – who made an early point in his career to never prioritize pleasing politicians –

seeks real conviction about where a future governor stands on police pension issues.

The FOP sent out its questionnaire to both Republican Jack Ciattarelli and Democrat Mikie Sherrill.

“The process is still playing out and we are still reviewing the questionnaire,” the President told InsiderNJ. “For us the top issue restoring COLAs [cost of living adjustments, removed by then-Governor Chris Christie and now absent for 14 years]. That’s the number one issue.”

Fox said his organization also seeks candidate support for a bill in the legislature (meeting resistance from local municipalities over fears of costs) that would provide job protection for police suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, otherwise known as the anti-suicide bill.

“That is a very important issue,” Fox explained. “Police officers – sometimes we don’t want to admit when we have problems. What the bill does is to say if a guy or gal comes forward and says, ‘I have a problem [related to PTSD]’, it saves their job while they’re getting treatment. This PTSD bill – as long as the officer comes forward – he or she stays on the payroll.”

In addition, the FOP wants increased benefits for widows or widowers of officers killed by a weapon, another bill in the Legislature.

For the record, Ciattarelli has already come out in favor of restoring COLAs.

Fox just wants to be able to trust him (or her), and also wants the COLAs restored without damage done to police pensions or to the long-term continuity of benefits coverage.

He still feels burned by Christie.

“We had a written form with Christie, that he wasn’t going to touch it, and then he did,” said Fox.

He is encouraged at this time by the command he says Ciattarelli shows on the issue and other issues critical for law enforcement. Police routinely admit contemporary Democrats’ inability oftentimes to break through what Fox calls “the white noise” out there damaging to police officers and their reputations.

“We know, deep down, the people in the communities want to fund us,” the President said.

New Jersey is a gender-affirming care safe haven.*

*By executive order, meaning
the **next governor could revoke
protections upon taking office.**

Let's fix that.



Learn more and get involved at:
jerseytrans.care



GARDEN STATE
EQUALITY
ACTION FUND

16. **Rahaman Muhammad**

Deputy Mayor for Employment, City of Newark



Newark Mayor Ras Baraka's impressive second place finish in the Democratic Primary for governor demonstrated energy in New Jersey's progressive movement, and

hunger for vigorous and impassioned leadership. "People want economic change," summed up Muhammad, former SEIU leader based in Newark's South Ward

and longtime Baraka ally.

Democratic Party and key labor outfits now want Sherrill to win.

But deeper than that, New Jerseyans want real opportunity to meet the crisis of affordability in their home state and many of them continue to be skeptical.

"This is a defining time for labor and what you see is a lot of leaders being complacent," said the deputy mayor. "You see [President Donald] Trump out there acting like a friend to labor. 'I will take care of you, auto workers and teamsters,' while seeking to destroy public sector workers. The problem is the lack of a clear unified front from labor. The attitude is more along the lines of 'whoever can make a deal to survive' will survive, rather than, the priorities of union-affiliated workers. Labor, to win, to fight back against Trump, has to find a unified message. Let's get real. Trump's not even saving the ones he pretends to make deals with, as his tariffs hurt auto workers and the cost of living remains ex-

pensive. People are buying less. Teamsters jump to him. Truck drivers are down. But there is no clear unified message in the labor movement. I don't know where the labor movement stands.

As an SEIU labor organizer, Rahman used to have his members wear shirts that said, "Keep my neighbor working," to underscore his local's commitment to not just their own members and their needs, but other workers in their midst. He would like to see all members of the labor movement exhibiting that kind of solidarity. "If I was still in labor and a young guy, I would be out there on the front lines," he added wistfully.

Over the summer, the Sherrill Campaign stepped up efforts to include Baraka, some of the priorities of his primary campaign, and, certainly, some of his key allies in the Democrats' general election salvo. Diehard Baraka backers on the left are probably

unlikely to find the same emotional connection with Sherrill's message that they felt with the candidacy of the Newark Mayor. But Building Trades remain unwilling as an organization to commit, leading more than a few insiders to grumble about an overall lack of labor conviction for the Democratic nominee.

It's deeper than Sherrill, though. Far deeper.

It goes to the heart of a labor movement too withdrawn, too self-interested and ghettoized – and too divided – to make an aggressive, agile, and effective counterattack to Trump, in Muhammad's opinion.

"In the past, public sector workers and the trades, for example, had their differences, but they were not as public as they are now," the Deputy Mayor said. "In our times now, it seems like 'who cares? It benefits me to show sepa-

ration.' Even when Sweeney took his stand on public pensions, he did so within the context of the movement, respectfully, really, and with the argument about why hard decisions were necessary collectively. Now it really seems like there is open warfare."

Advantage: Trump.

Muhammad said he would like to see more activist, unifying action coming from the AFL-CIO, which needs new energy and insights from young leaders and organizers. "A complacent mentality has crept into the labor movement and it's killing the Democratic Party," he said.



17. Wayne Richardson

*Manager Strategic Partnerships for the Laborers, Essex Commissioner,
Business Development Director NJ LECET*



The Essex County Commissioner is known for his ability to bring people together, break down barriers, and get deals made and projects started. The Newark resident served as president of Laborers Local 55 before coming onboard at NJLECET as business development director.



OUR STRENGTH IS TEAMWORK.



WSW

Winning Strategies Washington



PPAG

Princeton Public Affairs Group



PSC

Princeton Strategic Communications

Federal & State Public Affairs
Marketing & Crisis Communications | Association Management

PPAG.com | WSWDC.com | PrincetonSC.com

18. Anthony Abrantes

Assistant Executive Secretary-Treasurer for the Eastern Atlantic State Regional Council of Carpenters



The Carpenters leader provides invaluable leadership and oversight for the council, which backs Sherrill for governor. More than new labor laws, Abrantes stresses the importance of labor law enforcement in New Jersey and the fostering of a robust and lawful

labor and business culture.

In the last two years, 16,000 people tried to get into the Carpenters Union, and the organization could only take 1,500, as it desperately tries to get government to furnish more jobs to meet the

labor demand. Not just any jobs, of course, which is the rub. Union jobs.

“Our council endorsed Mikie Sherrill, because she has a good record when it comes to labor – but at the end of the day, they

both bring something to the industry,” Abrantes said of Sherrill and her rival, Republican Jack Ciattarelli, who understands, the labor leader said – economic development, job creation and the delicate procedures of bringing business to the state.

Bringing business here is critical to Abrantes. “Capitalism,” he says, “with a conscience.”

But, again, it’s got to be the right kind of pro-labor business undertaken by reputable employers.

That’s the catch.

To truly meet the demands of the state’s labor workforce, the next governor of New Jersey probably won’t write any laws but will have to set the moral leadership tone – and strike the balance between business and labor, he argues. As it stands, New Jersey gives sanctu-

ary to too many contractors that face no consequences for cutting corners, for doing things like cheating workers on overtime, committing insurance fraud, underreporting or misreporting, and tax fraud. In some towns, the leaders talk a good game, bragging about backing organized labor, but they don’t back organized labor.

“Statewide, we’re a union friendly and quasi business friendly state, but as you really refine it, down to the county and local levels, you get good versus lax leadership policies and actions,” Abrantes explained. “Places like Woodbridge, New Brunswick, and Carteret are doing it properly and transparently.” The government structures of those places strike that balance the labor leader craves.

A morally competent, direct and wise leader at the top can contrib-

ute significantly to creating the necessary balanced labor/business culture here, bringing the right, reputable business to the state on the front end and enforcing the laws on the backend.

A first generation Portuguese American, Abrantes went to college on a baseball scholarship and ended up working in New York City for a nonunion window company employed by every big building in the Big Apple. His third year on the job, the Carpenters unionized his company and by 2008 he became active in New Jersey as a Hudson County political organizer. He rose through the labor ranks, to now lead approximately 43,000 Union Carpenters across New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., Virginia, and West Virginia.

19. Ray Greaves

International Vice President ATU



Bayonne bred, Greaves – whose labor organization backed Steven Fulop in the Democratic Primary – pivoted with no difficulty to Mikie Sherrill for Governor in the general. “We are for workers in New Jersey, and, frankly, there’s no better candidate,” Greaves said. “She has a 100% voting record for worker issues, and she’s a defender of public transportation. She has the full support of the AFL-CIO. We’ll be hitting the streets for her.

When you look at Ciattarelli and the Republicans, now it’s just a Trump agenda, let’s face it. It’s all about Donald Trump, and that’s not good for workers. We’re going to reject those policies. We’ll be with the person protecting workers and human rights night and day. That’s Mikie Sherrill.”

That said, Greaves admitted that Democrats have too often found themselves lying on Trump’s train tracks.

“What’s going on across our country is case of divide and conquer,” said the ATU leader. “Republicans are creating issues we shouldn’t be worried about, like what bathroom we’re using. We should be concerned about workers trying to survive, retirement at the end of that job. So many people are losing sight of that stuff – table issues. Democrats should start focusing more on workers.

“They need to talk more about workers and the attack on the poor and the middle class,” Greaves added. “It’s the economy, stupid.

I’m hearing Trumpsters brag. And I say, ‘Show me where the prices have gone down.’ They haven’t. And we’re still talking about the same issues that really don’t matter to workers, whether they’re union or nonunion. Democrats have got to talk about the issues that matter.”

So, when it comes to governor 2025, what does Greaves want to hear from Sherrill?

“We need to prioritize dedicated funding for public transit not just a five-year corporate business tax,” he said. “We need a constitutional amendment so we don’t have to worry every year if we’re going to have public transit in the tri-state region. Five years of funding is great because it’s more investment and cars off the road.”

But we need more certainty, he argues, especially as corporations continue to post record profits.

NEW JERSEY'S NEXT GOVERNOR

Steve Adubato in
conversation with the
candidates for governor
on the issues that matter



with **STEVE ADUBATO**
SteveAdubato.org



U.S. Representative
Mikie Sherrill (D)

State of Affairs anchor
Steve Adubato, PhD

Former Assemblyman
Jack Ciattarelli (R)



THIRTEEN

news12+



20. **Laurel Brennan**

Secretary Treasurer, NJ 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.

21. **Judy Danella**

President, USW Local 4-200



Registered nurse by trade. Warrior-leader in the fight for underpaid and overworked nurses at New Brunswick's Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital. Said Danella in 2023: "We are in the midst of a genuine crisis in the nursing profession. An estimate from the National Council of State Boards of Nursing suggested that roughly 100,000 nurses have left the profession since 2020. And New Jersey is estimated to be one of the top three states in the nation with a nursing shortage. Worse yet, this crisis was not limited to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rather, we are still in dire straits: the National Council of State Boards of Nursing also found that about 20% of current nurses were considering quitting their jobs. As frontline caregivers and nurses, we know that safe staffing is crucial to the health and well-being of our patients and our ability to provide quality, professional care. It is crucial to our patients' satisfaction rates, nursing retention, safety, and the future of nursing."

22. Rich Maroko

President of the Hotel and Gaming Trades Council, AFL-CIO



Politically active leader of a relatively new union transformed out a failing local, Maroko took his organization from representing four hotels in 2013 to 101 at present. Endorsed Steve Fulop. Backing Mikie Sherrill in the general. The union represents 40,000 workers in the hotel and gaming industries in New York and New Jersey. Maroko also serves as Business Manager for UNITE HERE Local 6, and as the Recording Secretary of UNITE HERE International Union, which represents 300,000 workers across the United States and Canada. One to watch.

23. Vin Gopal

State Senator, LD-11



Chair of the Education Committee in the senate and a member of IBEW Local 400, Gopal brings considerable political experience to his role as Campaign Chair of the Mikie Sherrill Campaign. Gopal heads the Democratic nominee's fundraising efforts and operates as a key surrogate on the campaign trail. Labor friendly and savvy.

24. Sean Spiller

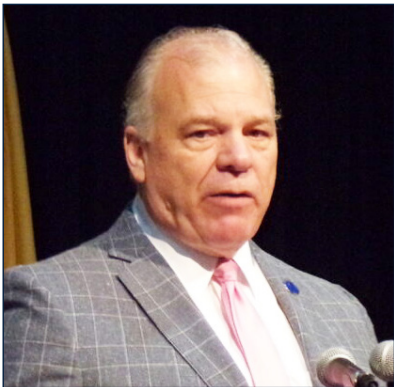
Former President, New Jersey Education Association (NJEA)



What's next for Spiller – former Mayor of Montclair and statewide Labor leader? His \$40 million plus soft-side infused gubernatorial candidacy won him a fifth-place finish in a six-person Democratic Primary, a little ahead of Steve Sweeney (see below).

25. Steve Sweeney

Former State Senate President



His last place finish in the Democratic Primary for Governor irritated insiders who respected Sweeney's governmental skills. Certainly, Sweeney's public sector-grounded detractors could delight in watching their former tormentor stagger to the finish line, soundly whipped by Sherrill-Baraka-Fulop. But Sweeney's record of accomplishment for Labor goes beyond the more strident critics' voices. Big strides by the Murphy Administration, which partnered with the former Senate President on many key initiatives (see the Rob Asaro-Angelo writeup, above), tell a more complex story.

26. Eric Richard

Legislative Affairs Coordinator, NJ AFL-CIO



With nearly 25 years of experience, Richard serves as the mammoth organization's veteran point person on legislation impacting working people. Known as a standup guy.

Local news is more important **than ever**



TAPINTO PROVIDES ORIGINAL LOCAL NEWS COVERAGE EVERY DAY IN MORE THAN 125 NJ TOWNS

Objective Local News Coverage

No Editorial Page

No Comments/
Anonymous Comments

No Paywall

To Advertise:
TAPintoMarketing.net

Franchising
Information:
StartTAP.net

Sign Up for Our
Free Newsletter:



27. Andy Cassagnol

Executive Vice President of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East



players had plugged their own allies into their corresponding posts, Andy Cassagnol emerged as Executive Vice President of 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, and SEIU 1199's New Jersey leadership face.

Representing caregivers in hospitals, nursing homes, homecare, clinics, pharmacies and all other areas of the healthcare industry, he issued an organization endorsement of Mikie Sherrill in July.

2025 marked a significant year in the history of 1199SEIU, an organization long associated with Milly Silva, who in 2013 stepped up to run for lieutenant governor on a brave but doomed ticket with then-Democratic nominee Barbara Buono. May 3rd proved déjà vu all over again for the always game Silva, running for secretary-treasurer of 1199 on a ticket with George Gresham. They got shel-lacked by Veronica Turner Biggs (secretary treasurer) and Yvonne Armstrong (president).

Armstrong received 26623 votes

to Gresham's 11,722, while Biggs polished off Silva, 26,267 to 11,435 in a clear New Dawn election for the union, which represents 450,000 health care workers across five East Coast states and was once a powerhouse in New York politics.

Gresham, for the record, backed the NYC mayoral candidacy of Andrew Cuomo, who would lose in June to Democratic nominee Zohran Mamdani, 44-36%.

When the dust cleared on the 1199SEIU election and the new

"Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill shares our values and our vision for ensuring all New Jerseyans have access to quality healthcare, affordable housing, and a living wage," Cassagnol said in a statement. "She is a proven leader who has stood with 1199SEIU members fighting for fair contracts who will stand up to the Trump administration as they attack Medicare and Medicaid—programs that are vital in ensuring New Jerseyans can access the care they need. 1199SEIU caregivers are proud to support Congresswoman Mikie Sherrill."

28. Thomas J. Sullivan Jr.

President IBEW Local 164, Bergen County Commissioner



A member of the Bergen County Board of County Commissioners since January of 2015, Sullivan started his professional career as an apprentice electrician, working his way up to become a journeyman electrician, before getting elected Vice President of Local 164 in 2010, and President in 2013.

29. Virgil Maldonado

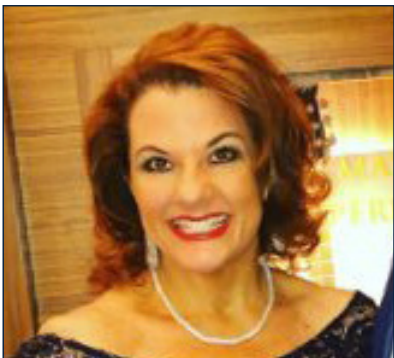
President, ILA Local 1588



Powerful, Hudson-based labor leader, with strong political ties. Seldom shirks an opportunity to get involved in elections. Close to Bayonne Mayor Jimmy Davis, who won this year's countywide primary for sheriff over incumbent Frank Schillari. Also close to Assemblyman William Sampson (D-31).

30. Donna DiCaprio

President of UNITE-HERE Local 54



DiCaprio succeeded long-time Unite-Here leader Bob McDevitt, who retired from his Local-54 presidency to run the organization's national pension fund. The labor organization's veteran Secretary/Treasurer prior to assuming the presidency, DiCaprio oversees 10,000 members who depend on her negotiating skills as they labor within the casino industry.

31. **Shaun Sullivan**

President, New Jersey Pipe Trades



Elected to the position on June 28, 2024, Sullivan is a 40-year member of Steamfitters Local 475. Elected to their Executive Board in 1994, he became Business Agent in 2000 before becoming Business Manager/Financial Secretary Treasurer.

Sullivan backs Sherrill.

“The New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades is honored to announce our formal endorsement for Mikie Sherrill for Governor,” he said, speaking on behalf of the Pipe Trades. “Mikie is a proven fighter who consistently stands up for the working men and women of New Jersey. Her dedication to service and unwavering commitment to our constituents make her the ideal choice to lead our state.

“Mikie has never turned her back on us, and as a union leader, I will not turn my back on her,” he added. “She has earned our support, and the New Jersey State Association of Pipe Trades is 100% united behind the endorsement of Mikie Sherrill for Governor.”

32. **Debbie Parks**

Vice President, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)



A member since 1982, former field coordinator Parks became an International Vice President in January 2018. Formerly vice president of AFSCME Council 73, Parks represents over 20,000 workers.



**GENOVA
BURNS_{LLC}**

Operating as Genova Burns LLP in New York

ATTORNEYS AT LAW



ANGELO J. GENOVA, ESQ.



2025 LABOR POWER LIST

NOW YOU KNOW

At the intersection
of Law, Business
and **Government**

NEWARK • NEW YORK • JERSEY CITY
MEDIA • BASKING RIDGE

GENOVA BURNS LLC • WWW.GENOVABURNS.COM

33. **Wayne Blanchard**

President, State Troopers Fraternal Association



Highly respected representative of all 1,900 state troopers, responsible for collective bargaining and handling grievances, Blanchard in May told InsiderNJ content partner Steve Adubato, host of State of Affairs, that he testified on pension legislation, which

would allow his members to buy back time for academy service time and military service academy time. A 25-year veteran of law enforcement, Blanchard this year was re-elected first vice chairman of the National Troopers Coalition. “There’s still an anti-police

sentiment out there,” Blanchard told Adubato. “It’s causing issues with recruiting. Recruiting numbers are down. Anti-police sentiment plays a large part to blame for that.”

34. Marie Blistan

Cape May Democratic Committee Chair



What's it like going from state-wide leader of the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) to county party chair? We caught up with Blistan, who as NJEA

president in 2020 secured relief from Ch. 78 – a Chris Christie era health insurance law – while also lowering costs for local education employers and the state.

She now serves as chair of the Cape May Democratic Committee.

“It’s not as big a transition as you might think,” the county party leader told InsiderNJ. “In the NJEA I served those people I represented and that’s what we do here. We serve those whom we represent, intent on listening to what they need.”

For Blistan, the challenges posed by President Donald J. Trump go beyond the world of labor. “The challenges we see are unprecedented and dangerous,” she said. “We are on a path to the destruction of democracy in this country. We are confronted by a breach to everything that is moral, ethical and humane. Labor is about bread and butter issues and having enough to provide for our families. This goes beyond that.”

Blistan has a history with Jack Ciattarelli, the Republican nominee for governor. When she served as vice president of the NJEA, she led a rally outside his Somerville office on the eve of a

court decision on a legal battle between Gov. Chris Christie and public sector labor, Representing 200,000 public sector employees statewide, Blistan told then-Assemblyman Ciattarelli, “We have accepted less salary to get a pension.” Her union wanted the full payment.

“My plan is to move more and more teachers onto the local school budget so they are less dependent on a vulnerable revenue stream,” Ciattarelli told Blistan, who sought the full promise of state funding.

While they had their differences then, Blistan sees Ciattarelli’s attachment to Trump as gravely troubling – and a nonstarter. “He’s constantly aligning himself with

Trump and candidly, I’m not sure how we should be giving anyone a chance who backs a President who is inhumane. My belief is [the Trump association] it will eventually stop Ciattarelli.”

As for Sherrill, Blistan said she recognizes that the Democratic nominee for Governor comes from a different base than the labor-molded Sweeney and Spiller. “She’s got to listen to Labor,” said the Cape May Chair. “And I see her doing that. She has the AFL-CIO endorsement, which is not an easy endorsement. She has the backing of the ATF. Labor is at the table.

“I give Sherrill credit in these times, for stepping up and running,” she added. “Many are ret-

icent about getting involved and Mikie Sherrill is expressing her views and putting her platform out there. There is no question about where she stands, unlike the other candidate, who relies on what Trump is doing. Mikie is a stand-up person in the face of adversity, and she will stay connected to the people. People just want to get along every day, send their kids to post high school education, get homes in the communities where they grew up. They want to know the air they are breathing is healthful along with the medicines they take.” Sherrill, said Blistan, is the candidate in the contest who can lead New Jersey past the chaos, uncertainty, and inhumanity of Trump.

35. **Maria Refinski**

President, NJ Nurses Union



The labor leader has grounded cred as a veteran of the Saint Barnabas Medical Center's Post Anesthesia Care Unit. Representative of a professional group on the frontlines- not only of the pandemic – but of labor-employer relations.

36. **Troy Singleton**

State Senator, LD-7



Like his colleague Gopal, Singleton earlier this year circulated as a possible lieutenant governor pick for Mikie Sherrill. Formerly of the Carpenter's Union, the Burlington-based Singleton possesses one of the most respected labor-public policy minds in the State of New Jersey.

37. **Debbie White**

President, Health Professional Allied Employee (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.

PROVIDING SUPPORTIVE SERVICES TO FAMILIES LIVING WITH DEMENTIA

CAREGIVER SUPPORT
CRISIS MANAGEMENT
LONG-TERM CARE PLANNING
COGNITIVE ASSESSMENTS
DISEASE EDUCATION
CARE COORDINATION



201-721-6721



**Give Back to the
Fight Against Dementia:
SCAN TO DONATE**



400 38TH ST, STE 402
UNION CITY, NJ 07087

ACTNOWFOUNDATION.ORG
@ACTNOWFOUNDATION



ACT NOW
FOUNDATION
Dementia Resource Center

38. Steven Gardner

Director, NJ LECET



The former executive director of the Assembly Democrats has close ties to both Craig Coughlin and Lou Greenwald, with solid political relationships up and down the state. Largely credited with renewal of the Transportation Trust fund last year, Gardner has boosted the staff at LIUNA's labor-management fund adding former Assembly Dems Deputy Executive Director for Policy Francisco Maldonado-Ramierz, county commissioners Wayne Richardson and Randy Brolo, Collingswood Commissioner Rob Lewandowski and healthcare exec Jennifer Mancuso.

39. Ana Maria Hill

SEIU 32BJ New Jersey State Director



The daughter of Mexican and Colombian immigrants, Hill was the first in her family to graduate from high school and the first in her family to go to college. A Barnard College of Columbia University grad, she cut her organizing teeth at Make the Road NY before immersing herself in the considerable labor wars of 32BJ way back in 2009.

40. **Nedia Morsy**

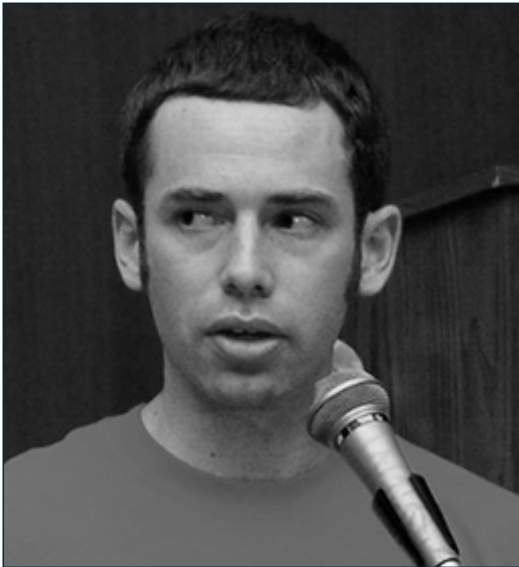
Make the Road New Jersey Executive Director



Consummate advocate for immigrant rights and undocumented worker rights, the lifelong New Jerseyan came up the organizing way with Make the Road. A ten-year veteran. Fought for warehouse workers. Fought for a Temporary Workers Bill of Rights. Vital part of the successful fight for undocumented worker drivers' licenses. Eager to see the State of New Jersey step up enforcement efforts of some of its laws on the books. A warehouse shut down for violating worker protection laws, for example, may open under another name, in another place, and continue abusing workers without penalty. That has to end, says Morsy. Busy over the summer seeking worker protections from heat-related deaths, especially with the Trump era implosion of the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

41. **Lou Kimmel**

Executive Director, New Labor



Kimmell and his group – with a base of about 4,000 members – have made an impact on the progressive front organizing for reform causes to respect and benefit working immigrant families.

The voice for real estate in New Jersey.



 NEW JERSEY
REALTORS®
njrealtor.com

42. David Bander

Staff Attorney NJEA



Former Department of Labor lawyer. Former SEIU lawyer. Grew up politically in the office of Senator Linda Greenstein (D-14). Settled in at the New Jersey Education Association, where he handles legal issues for labor members, overseeing South Jersey, including Monmouth and Ocean counties.

43. Lino Santiago

Business Representative at International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825



Influential Essex-based labor leader. Particularly over the course of the last ten years, Santiago has managed to straddle the political terrain between the City of Newark and Essex County, not always the easiest turf during the reign of Newark Mayor Ras Baraka.

44. Chris Barranco

Assemblyman, LD-25; IBEW Project Manager



Paterson born, bred, Barranco – an electrician by trade - has been a member of the IBEW (Local 102) since 2003. Worked as a project manager on multiple industrial and energy infrastructure projects for McPhee Electric in South Plainfield and Beach Electric Company in Paterson. Formerly a Pompton Lakes Borough Councilman. Serving in the Assembly since 2024. A key Republican legislative contact from within the family of Labor.

45. Kurt Krueger, Jr.

International Rep., United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry



Former business manager and secretary treasurer of the Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 322, based in South Jersey. Deep family ties to labor.

46. Brian Jackson

President of the Passaic County Building and Construction Trades Council



Born and raised in Paterson. Little League coach. Business Manager and Financial Secretary for the Roofers Local 10.

47. Dana Britton

Professor and Chair, Labor Studies and Employment Relations, Rutgers University



Widely cited authority on gendered organizations. Author of *At Work in the Iron Cage* (NYU Press, 2003), focused on how gender shapes work in men's and women's prisons. Author of numerous other scholarly works also on gender and prisons (*Gender and Prison*, Ashgate Publishing, 2005) and gender and crime (*The Gender of Crime*, Rowman & Littlefield, 2011, 2nd ed., 2017). Founding director of the KSU Office for the Advancement of Women in Science and Engineering (KAWSE) at Kansas State University.

Read What Both NJ Gubernatorial Candidates Are Reading!

- 28 Pages
- 65 Actionable Solutions for New Jersey



NJ Gubernatorial Candidates Mikie Sherrill (left) and Jack Ciattarelli (right) with NJBIA President & CEO Michele Siekerka at the Blueprint unveiling at NJBIA's ELC Reception.

NJBIA's Blueprint for a Competitive New Jersey

What is it? NJBIA's *Blueprint for a Competitive New Jersey* sets the vision for the next administration ensuring that NJ businesses are at the center of the discussion and the policies that follow. The Blueprint provides a framework to lead our next Governor in an operational and policy direction that will grow jobs and our economy with recommendations for the first 100 days, first year and first term.

WANT TO ECHO OUR VOICE AND ADD YOURS?
BECOME A SPONSOR OR HOST A BRIEFING.



[NJBIA.ORG/BLEUPRINT](https://njbia.org/blueprint) »

48. Dan Cosner

Business Manager and Financial Secretary of Electrical Workers Local Union 351



Representing a Local Union with over 2,600 members, Cosner has been a member of Local 351 since he began his apprenticeship in 1987. He started serving the local union on the Executive Board in 1997. Appointed Business Agent in 2001. Trustee to the Pension, Surety and Health and Welfare Funds of Local 351, as well as Chairman of the IBEW Local 351 Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee.

49. Robert Lewandowski

Communications Director, LIUNA Eastern Region



The longtime comms directors at the Laborers Union is a go-to source for many a political journalist seeking to understand union issues, economic development, the construction industry, or needing a quick quote or statement under tight deadlines.

50. Charles ‘Chuddy’ Whalen

Executive Director, the New Jersey Mechanical Allied Crafts Council (NJMACC)



Retired Assistant Business Manager of Plumbers & Pipefitters Local 9. Township Council member for Hamilton Township in Mercer County. The NJMACC represents six trades and more than 30 local unions across New Jersey, providing a statewide presence to spearhead workforce training, safety compliance, and continuing education programs. They maintain federal and state-registered Junior Apprentice Training Centers and assist in recruitment efforts.



NJAA is Home to New Jersey!

The New Jersey Apartment Association is the premier statewide organization representing all facets of the multifamily rental housing industry, advancing the success and professionalism of its membership through government affairs advocacy, education, training, and industry events.

Interested? Join the NJAA by visiting

www.njaa.com

Honorable Mentions



1. Patrick Kelleher

President of the Passaic County Building and Construction Trades Council



2. Mark Longo

Director, Engineers Labor-Employer Cooperative (ELEC)



3. Maria Foster

Director of Government and Community Affairs, Painters and Allied Trades District 711



4. Roshan Roc White

Business Manager/Financial Secretary Treasurer, UA Plumbers Local Union 24



5. Patrick Delle Cava

Business Manager, IBEW Local 102



ROUND WORLD
CONSULTING

is proud to support

INSIDERNJ

&

CONGRATULATES
OUR COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS

named to the

INSIDER NJ'S
LABOR POWER LIST

Sean M. Darcy, President

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

2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST



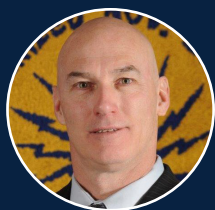
6. Richie Malcolm

Vice President, Ironworkers Local 11



7. Paul Roldan

Business Manager, LIUNA Local 3



8. Bob Speer

President, Business Manager, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 827



9. Ed Yates

Plainsboro Mayor, Local Electrician



10. John Duthie

PAC Director, NJ State Laborers



11. Larry Hamm

Director, People's Organization for Progress




Congratulations

2025 InsiderNJ Labor List Honorees!

moxie
strategies

is proud to work
with organized labor!



Unique depth. Bold impact.

moxiestrategies.com

2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST



12. Patrica Campos-Medina

Labor Educator, Academic Researcher, Campaign Vice Chair of Mikie Sherrill for Governor, United States Senate Candidate (2024)



13. Antoinette Miles

Head of New Jersey Working Families



14. Roy M. Foster

President, Atlantic and Cape May Counties Central Labor Council



15. Orlando Riley

Chair, Amalgamated Transit Union NJ State Council



16. Randy Brolo

Business Development Director, NJ LECET



17. Manny Amador & Tony Cappaccio

Business Managers of Laborers Local 472 and 172

2025 **LABOR** POWER LIST



18. Reverend Carl Styles

Business Manager of Laborers Local 77



19. Anthony Mitchell

CWA 1037



20. Samantha Almedia Roman

President, Associated Builders and Contractors of New Jersey



21. Arlene Quinones Perez

Labor Lawyer, Decotiis Fitzpatrick Cole & Giblin LLP

EDITOR'S NOTE

Many people who should be on a list like this are not, of course, partly the consequence of the imperfect nature at its core of such a compilation. It's too bad we can't recognize everyone. But I encourage those who are not listed here, to please look for – and celebrate – those who represent a broad range of labor disciplines, and, finally, speak for the collective, in this case, the working men and women of New Jersey.

Thank you for reading.

Happy Labor Day. – Laborare est Orare.



*Max
Pizarro*