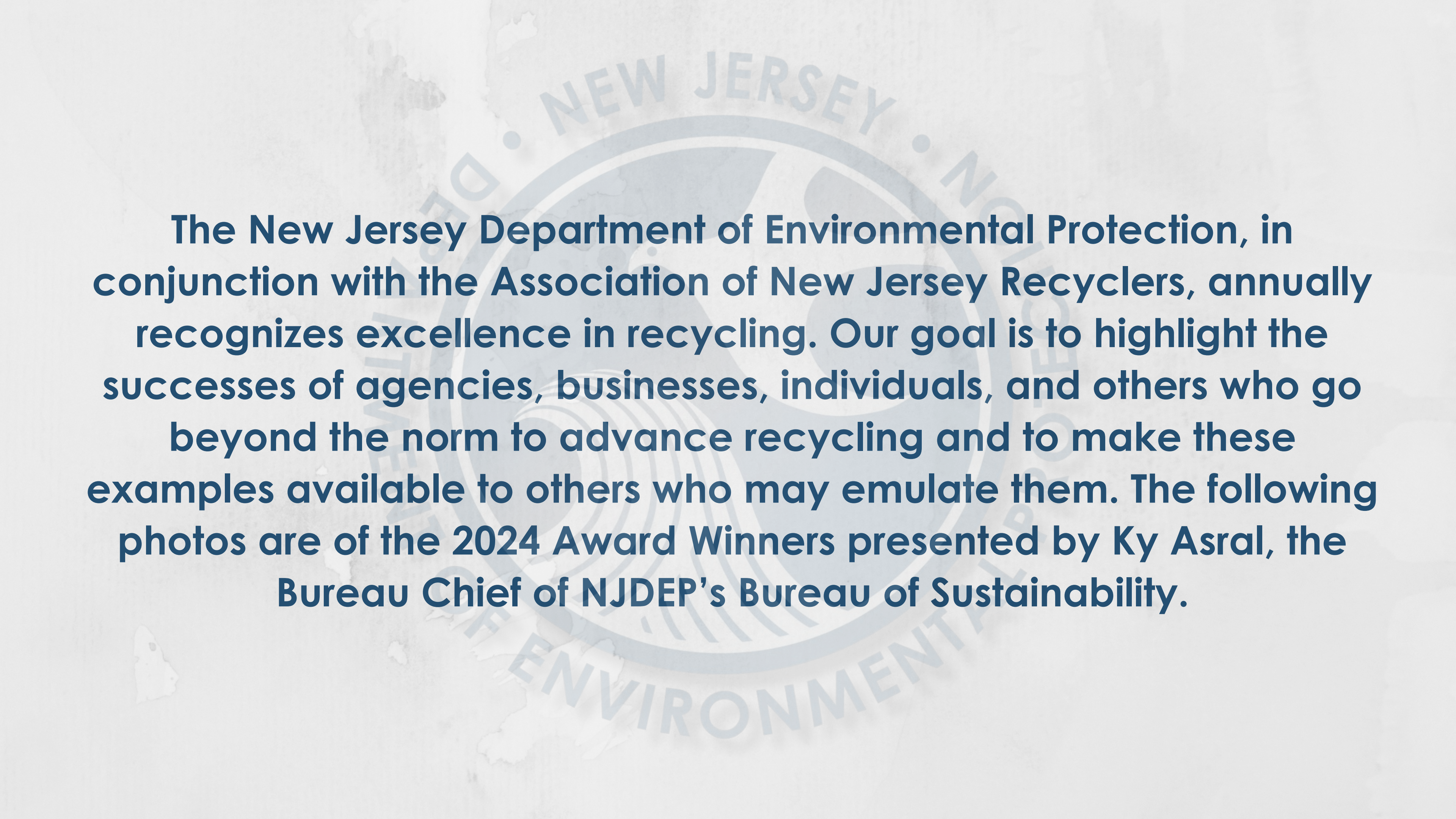




**NJDEP RECYCLING
AWARD WINNERS 2024**



The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, in conjunction with the Association of New Jersey Recyclers, annually recognizes excellence in recycling. Our goal is to highlight the successes of agencies, businesses, individuals, and others who go beyond the norm to advance recycling and to make these examples available to others who may emulate them. The following photos are of the 2024 Award Winners presented by Ky Asral, the Bureau Chief of NJDEP's Bureau of Sustainability.

Business Award

Public Service Electric & Gas

Public Service Electric & Gas (PSE&G) is dedicated to recycling or reusing nearly all the waste it generates. In 2023, PSE&G reused over 2,500 tons of timber wetland mats, which historically would have been sent to a landfill. In addition, the company has kept tons of reusable items out of the trash through donations and provides recycling buckets to its mobile workforce trucks to assist in sorting recyclables in the field.



In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Andrew Arnold (Public Service Electric and Gas) and Jim Sullivan (Public Service Electric and Gas)



Government Award

Old Bridge Township

In addition to curbside recyclables, Old Bridge Township collects many non-traditional recyclable materials such as mattresses, box springs, concrete, appliances, propane tanks, and more. The township also holds two paper shredding events each year and promotes its recycling programs in numerous ways – at public events, via [Recycle Coach](#), the township website, a recycling calendar and more.



In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Anna Feltz (Old Bridge Township), Mayor Debbie Walker (Old Bridge Township), Barbara Grippe (Old Bridge Township), Kasey Lenning (Old Bridge Township)



Leadership Award

Sustainable Maple Shade

Sustainable Maple Shade runs several unique recycling and reuse programs that go beyond traditional recycling and set an example for others to follow. These programs include a Halloween Costume Swap, a Trash to Treasure Halloween Candy wrapper collection, and broken holiday lights collection. Sustainable Maple Shade also participates in the NexTrex Recycling Challenge to recycle plastic film and promotes its recycling and reuse programs at numerous public events.



In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Peg Webber (Sustainable Maple Shade)



Leadership Award

Gary Sondermeyer

Gary Sondermeyer has played a prominent role in shaping New Jersey's recycling and sustainability policies, having taken on leadership roles in numerous initiatives and organizations that work to advance recycling in the state. Sondermeyer served the public during a career at DEP that spanned three decades. In addition to serving as DEP's chief of staff for 10 years, he also served as assistant commissioner for the department's core permitting programs and spent most of his time within the Solid Waste and Recycling Program, where he served as director.



In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Gary Sondermeyer



Outstanding Educator/ Educational Program Award

Riverside Middle School

Riverside Middle School participated in the NexTrex Recycling Challenge to recycle 2,375 pounds of plastic film and, as a result of its comprehensive educational campaign, achieved third place among all challenge participants and first place in the Mid-Atlantic region. In addition, the school expanded its program into the business community and now helps other schools get started with their own programs.



In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Laura Zebley (Riverside Middle School), Elizabeth Follis (Riverside Middle School)



Recycling Industry Award

Helpsy

Helpsy is a textile reuse and recycling company that accepts old clothing, shoes and other materials. In 2023, Helpsy collected over 12.3 million pounds of old clothing and textiles, which represented an 18 percent increase over the previous year. Helpsy is actively involved in educating the public on this issue.



In photo from left to right: Lisa Sciannella (Helpsy), Ky Asral (NJDEP), Nicole Pellagrino (Helpsy), Karen Bretas (Helpsy)





Rising Star

Share My Meals

Share My Meals is a non-profit organization that fights food insecurity and the environmental impacts of food waste by recovering and delivering healthy meals in local communities. Surplus, complete meals are recovered from corporate cafeterias and other food service providers and distributed to local families in need. In 2023, Share My Meals recovered 62,000 meals that would otherwise have been disposed as trash.

In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Hélène Lanctuit (Share My Meals)





Source Reduction, Resource Management/Sustainability Award

BookSmiles

BookSmiles is a non-profit organization dedicated to keeping used books out of the waste stream and getting them into the hands of teachers, as well as students in need. BookSmiles now recovers 94 tons of used books per month. The organization provides the recovered books for free to all and even sends books overseas to impoverished countries.

In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Carter Fichter (BookSmiles)



Source Reduction, Resource Management/Sustainability Award

Morris and Sussex Counties' Boat Shrink Wrap Recycling Program

Morris and Sussex Counties' Boat Shrink Wrap Recycling programs diverted many tons of contaminant-free, recyclable plastic material from being landfilled. The program was well received by the local boating community and continues to grow. The Lake Hopatcong Foundation, Roxbury Clean Communities, and the recycler UltraPoly Corporation are other key partners in the program. A dedicated educational campaign was developed to promote the program.



In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Kyle Richter (Lake Hopatcong Foundation), Kellie Ann Keyes (Roxbury Township), Cheryl Birmingham (Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority), Dawn Latincsics (Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority), Anthony Marrone (Morris County Municipal Utilities Authority)





Volunteer Citizen

Linda Weih

In 2023, Linda Weih participated in the NexTrex Recycling Challenge to collect plastic bags and film for recycling in her hometown of Delanco. Weih volunteers for multiple community groups in town and registered each of them with the program. Weih collected the plastics from each group and made over 50 trips to deliver more than 2,600 pounds of material to the recycling center.

In photo from left to right: Ky Asral (NJDEP), Linda Weih

