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NEWSLETTER / MARCH 2024

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES



Scholarship Program for Academic Year 2024-2025

Application deadline April 25, 2024

NJ Human Services Opens College Scholarship Program for Blind, Deaf-Blind and Visually Impaired Students

Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced students can now [apply](#) to the 2024 Board of Trustees Scholarship program, which provides college scholarships to individuals who are blind, deaf-blind, and/or visually impaired.

The program, run by Human Services' [Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#) (CBVI), is open to high school seniors and college students, of any age, who are

registered to attend the 2024-2025 academic year. Students must be active or eligible CBVI clients. For full eligibility requirements please visit [here](#).

“These scholarships work to provide financial support so blind, deaf-blind and visually impaired scholars can reach their academic and professional goals,” Commissioner Adelman said. “The endless opportunities that come with pursuing higher education belong to all, including those who are blind, deaf-blind, or visually impaired. We urge those interested to learn more about this program and [apply](#) for the 2024-2025 school year.”

Four privately funded scholarships will be available, with awards ranging from \$1,000 to \$5,000. Each scholarship will be awarded to a student who best fits the qualifications.

“For well over 25 years, [CBVI](#)'s Board of Trustees has made it possible to award these scholarships to exemplary blind, deaf-blind, or visually impaired students who are pursuing higher education. We are delighted to offer these scholarships yet again and look forward to extending this valuable opportunity to the next generation of scholars,” CBVI Executive Director Dr. Bernice Davis said. “I urge CBVI consumers to check their eligibility and [apply](#).”

[READ MORE HERE](#)



DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Human Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities helps New Jersey adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities live more independently.

NJ Human Services Seeks Proposals for Crisis Prevention & Intervention Team Serving Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and Mental Health Needs

Commissioner Sarah Adelman announced Human Services is seeking proposals to develop evidence-based, community crisis prevention and intervention services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs. Human Services' Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) has issued a [request for proposals](#) to develop a new START Model program.

START – which stands for Systemic, Therapeutic, Assessment, Resources, and Treatment – provides community-based crisis prevention and intervention services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs. This model focuses on reducing emergency room visits, hospital admissions, caregiver burnout, and calls to police as well as building community capacity to successfully support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities and mental health needs.

“START is recognized for its person-centered, solutions-focused approach that employs positive psychology and other evidence-based practices to address mental health conditions that are too often misdiagnosed, under-diagnosed, or undiagnosed among individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” **Commissioner Adelman said.** “This will be another step in our statewide efforts to improve and expand crisis response, and to ensure the best services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. Their safety – and quality of life – is always a priority.”

“This innovative approach will help advance our goal to provide the most comprehensive services for all adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including individuals with complex behavioral challenges and mental health needs,” **Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire said.** “With START, we’re expanding the types of supports available to ensure the best crisis response prevention and intervention efforts based on evidence that works.”

“We look forward to implementing this program and working in collaboration with our partners to improve crisis response for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities,” [Division of Developmental Disabilities Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried](#) said. “We encourage qualified agencies to apply. They can be part of something innovative and groundbreaking here in New Jersey which, if successful, we’d be excited to seek to expand in the future.”

[READ MORE HERE](#)



Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire and Division of Developmental Disabilities Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried joined the [ArcMorris](#) to commemorate Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month.



Congratulations to [Division of Developmental Disabilities](#) Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried, who was honored by the [New Jersey Association of Community Providers](#).



**Sarah
Adelman
YMCA
Public
Policy
Champion**

NJ Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman was honored as a **YMCA Public Policy Champion** at the [New Jersey YMCA](#) State Alliance's annual reception. Participants from the Y's Youth And Government (YAG) program introduced the honorees and presented them with their awards, and were surprised by Commissioner Adelman revealing she participated in YAG as a student, too!



NJ Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman joined [Volunteers of America Delaware Valley](#) (VOADV) for a ribbon cutting event to launch their new Navigational Resource Center in Vineland. VOADV aids in navigating reentry services, housing assistance, employment services, substance use & mental health referrals, legal assistance & more.



Read Across America Day



On **Read Across America Day** and Dr. Seuss' Birthday, NJ Human Services Commissioner Sarah Adelman took part in this special reading "*Oh, the Places You'll Go!*" by Dr. Seuss to elementary students at the Community Charter School of Paterson.



It may not be “summer nights” quite yet, but the [New Lisbon Developmental Center](#) hosted a Sock Hop for residents. NJ Human Services Deputy Commissioner Kaylee Mcguire and Assistant Commissioner Jonathan Seifried were among those on hand to help promote a fun time for residents.



NJ Human Services' [Division of Aging Services](#) along with [Assemblyman Joe Daniels](#) presented today at the Franklin Township Senior Center in Somerset. To learn about all of the services DoAS offers visit [HERE](#).



Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services Kaylee McGuire and [Division of Aging Services](#) Assistant Commissioner Louise Rush spoke with stakeholders about the State Plan on Aging, highlighting Murphy Administration investments in programs serving older adults.



Dignitary Remarks PRESENTED BY

Kaylee McGuire

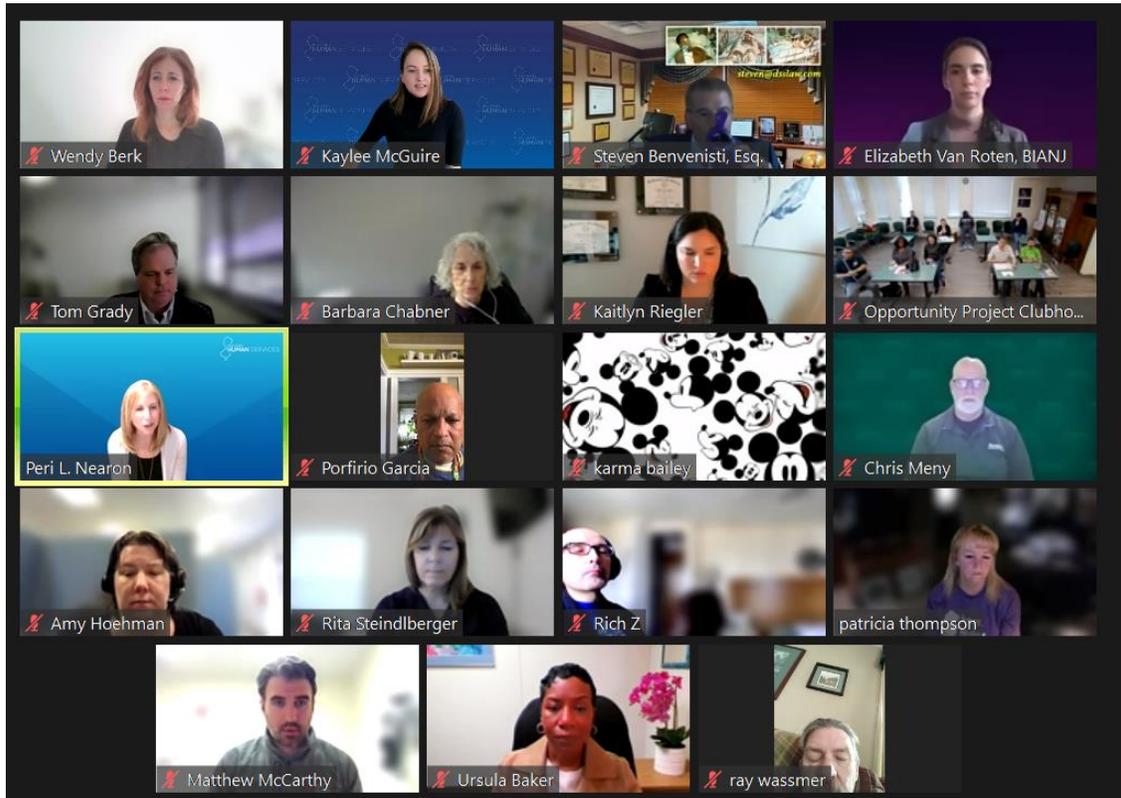
Deputy Commissioner
for Aging and Disability
Services
New Jersey Department of
Human Services



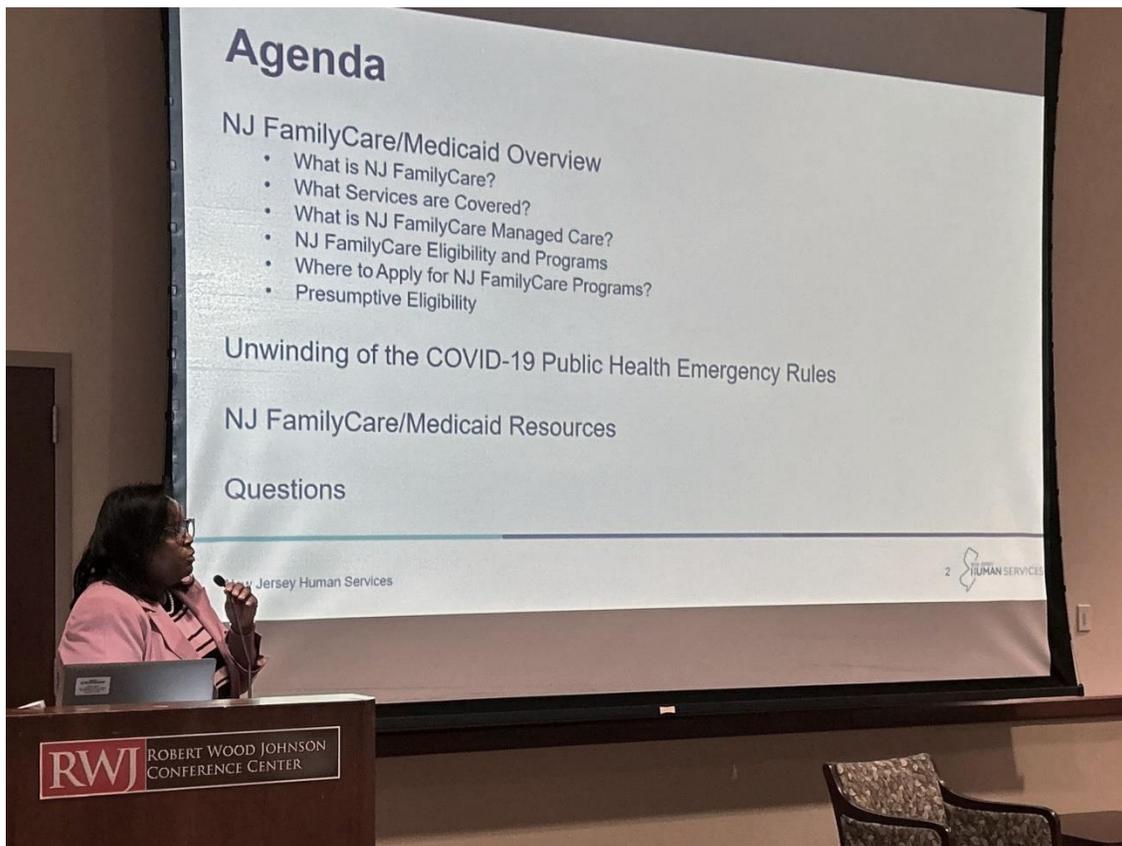
Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services, Kaylee McGuire gave the dignitary remarks at the **InnovAGINGNJ 2024 Virtual Event**.

This event showcases innovative programs and partnerships that are improving the lives of older adults and changing norms for aging in New Jersey.

For more information on this event, visit [HERE](#).



[Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey](#) held its virtual day of awareness in honor of **Brain Injury Awareness Day**. BIANJ staff & partners, advocates & legislators discussed topics in the brain injury community. NJ Human Services Deputy Commissioner Kaylee McGuire spoke and [Division of Disability Services](#) Executive Director Peri Nearon presented the proclamation.



NJ Human Services Community Outreach Team was out at the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership 2024 Resource Fair in Hamilton. Information about Human Services programs and services along with NJ Familycare updates were presented to the public.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2024



Sarah Adelman
Commissioner



Lisa Asare
Deputy Commissioner of Health Services



Kaylee McGuire
Deputy Commissioner for Aging and Disability Services



Johanna Calle
Director Office of New Americans



Dr. Bernice Davis
Executive Director Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired



Elizabeth Hill
Executive Director Division of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



Jennifer Langer Jacobs
Assistant Commissioner Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services



Natasha Johnson
Assistant Commissioner Division of Family Development



Denise Meckel
Assistant Commissioner Human Resources



Valerie Mielke
Assistant Commissioner Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services



Peri Nearon
Executive Director Division of Disability Services



Deborah Robinson
Director Office of Program Integrity and Accountability



Louise Rush
Assistant Commissioner Division of Aging Services

International Women's Day 2024 was March 8th!

NJ Human Services recognizes its

women leaders committed to providing supports such as child & health care, food assistance and more.

 k-9 Logan



K-9
Appreciation Day



k-9 Hunter



k-9 Jupiter



k-9 Spike



K-9 Appreciation Day was March 13th!

NJ Human Services is happy to highlight our amazing [Human Services Police](#) K-9 Unit dogs who help our officers protect and serve the state's most vulnerable citizens.

Many thanks to Logan, Spike, Hunter and Jupiter for their dedicated service!



The [Human Services Police](#) welcomes Officer Holly Whitmore who recently graduated from the Passaic County Police Academy!

Welcome to NJ HSP!

L-R Lieutenant Duane Brown, Sergeant Marcial Martinez,
Officer Holly Whitmore and Chief Brian Lee.

International Wheelchair Day



International Wheelchair Day!

NJ Human Services' [Division of Disability Services](#) marked March 1's International Wheelchair Day by highlighting how its Inclusive Healthy Communities (IHC) Grant program helps communities across the state support the health & well-being of

individuals with

disabilities where they live, work, learn, & play.

To learn more, visit [HERE](#).

ADD A CUP TODAY

MOTHER
NATURE
MEASURED
FOR YOU



➔ EatMoreFruitsAndVeggies.com

March is National Nutrition Month!

Learn more about all the ways you
can make food choices that are both healthy
and budget-friendly, and
stay active all year long, [HERE](#).



Governor's Proclamations

Developmental Disabilities Awareness Month

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Proclamation

WHEREAS, developmental disabilities encompass during the developmental years of life, before the age of 22, and are lifelong in duration, resulting in the continuing need for a variety of services designed to support full inclusion in community life; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that approximately two percent of the United States population have an intellectual or developmental disability, which translates to approximately 17,000 children and adults in New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Departments of Human Services, Health, Education, and Children and Families work with hundreds of partner organizations, agencies and individuals throughout the state to provide services to New Jersey residents with developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than 30,000 state residents work to direct support professionally for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are living independently with their family, or in group homes, supervised apartments or developmental centers, as well as providing support to individuals in employment and advocacy programs; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Human Services, through its Division of Developmental Disabilities, offers services for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities, who are family members, and the community service providers that deliver the direct support services for our state's citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's system of services and supports has grown and evolved through its partnership with individuals who have intellectual and developmental disabilities, their family members, and the community service providers that deliver the direct support services for our state's citizens with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and

WHEREAS, our Administration will advance initiatives to promote quality services and supports, and increase community living and employment opportunities for adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MARCH 2024
AS
DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AWARENESS MONTH

in New Jersey,

GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twentieth day of February in the year two thousand twenty-four, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

 Lt. GOVERNOR
 GOVERNOR

Down Syndrome Day

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Proclamation

WHEREAS, Down syndrome occurs when an individual has additional genetic material, such as a full or partial extra copy of chromosome 21; and

WHEREAS, approximately 400,000 Americans have Down syndrome and about 6,000 babies are born with Down syndrome each year, meaning that Down syndrome occurs in about one in every 700 babies; and

WHEREAS, Down syndrome remains the most common chromosomal condition diagnosed in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Down syndrome is a genetic condition that alters the course of development and causes characteristic physical traits, and each person with Down syndrome is a unique individual and may possess characteristics that differ from others; and

WHEREAS, it is important to enhance public education and awareness about Down syndrome; and

WHEREAS, individuals living with Down syndrome are independent, independent and active members of our communities;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MARCH 21, 2024
AS
DOWN SYNDROME DAY

in New Jersey,

GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twenty-first day of February in the year two thousand twenty-four, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

 Lt. GOVERNOR
 GOVERNOR

Social Work Month

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Proclamation

WHEREAS, the profession of social work was founded and formalized in the late 19th century to address economic and social justice issues; and

WHEREAS, social work is a career calling that focuses on the wellbeing and structural changes of individuals, families, groups and communities; and

WHEREAS, social workers are dedicated to enhancing the lives of people in every age group, race, culture, gender orientation, every day through advocacy and empowerment; and

WHEREAS, the 2024 Social Work Month theme, "Empowering Social Workers", is about recognizing and valuing their contributions; and

WHEREAS, social workers provide a mix of the direct practice across the United States that provides unique education and training, to support individual, families and communities through complex issues; and

WHEREAS, social workers work in many settings of varying including government, schools, universities, non-profit and faith-based agencies, the military, and mental health and health care facilities to address the unique needs of individuals, families and communities; and

WHEREAS, social workers are on the frontlines of the nation's social justice crisis, social promotion crisis, youth mental health crisis and more, helping people get the treatment and services they need to thrive; and

WHEREAS, social workers have helped people cope with death and grief, and support communities' recovery from natural disasters including hurricanes, drought and flooding; and

WHEREAS, social workers are the largest group of providers in the United States, working daily to help people achieve excellent health and well-being;

WHEREAS, social workers believe that each person has dignity and worth and that there is no limit to human potential; and

WHEREAS, social workers have helped this nation live up to its values by promoting, affirming the civil rights for all, including individuals who are Black, indigenous, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQIA+, people with disabilities, mental illness and anyone who is marginalized or oppressed;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MARCH 2024
AS
SOCIAL WORK MONTH

in New Jersey,

GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twentieth day of February in the year two thousand twenty-four, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

 Lt. GOVERNOR
 GOVERNOR

Brain Injury Awareness Month

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Proclamation

WHEREAS, 2.8 million Americans estimate a traumatic brain injury (TBI) each year, and an estimated 1.2 million Americans are living with disabilities caused by brain injury; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 200,000 hospitalizations related to traumatic brain injuries each year, and nearly 70,000 Americans die annually as a result of traumatic brain injury; and

WHEREAS, in New Jersey, approximately 11,000 - 13,000 individuals sustain brain injuries from traumatic events annually, of which 2,000 are fatal; and

WHEREAS, there are an estimated 175,000 New Jersey citizens who have disabilities resulting from a traumatic brain injury; and

WHEREAS, the highest rates of traumatic brain injury occur among individuals under 35 years of age and non-elderly of any age; and

WHEREAS, people with a brain injury often have perceptual, physical, emotional and/or psychiatric problems as a combination of cognitive impairment, impaired interpersonal skills, memory loss, impaired problem solving skills, vision or thought processing speed, attention, physical deficits and epilepsy; and

WHEREAS, the only cure for a brain injury is prevention, and public awareness is critical to achieve that goal, as well as to enhance the recovery process of all persons affected by a brain injury; and

WHEREAS, the Brain Injury Alliance of New Jersey provides education, outreach, prevention, advocacy and support services to all persons affected by a brain injury and to the general public; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Human Services, Division of Disability Services administers the Traumatic Brain Injury Fund, offering supports and services to eligible New Jersey residents living with a TBI;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MARCH 2024
AS
BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH

in New Jersey,

GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twentieth day of February in the year two thousand twenty-four, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

 Lt. GOVERNOR
 GOVERNOR

Senior Nutrition Month

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Proclamation

WHEREAS, since 1977, the National Senior Nutrition Program, a program created by and funded through the Older Americans Act, has funded local agencies and organizations to serve vulnerable and at-risk meals that help to ensure older adults have opportunities to stay healthy, independent, and connected; and

WHEREAS, the New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services is responsible for administering Older Americans Act funding for nutrition services, with the purpose of enhancing hunger relief awareness and nutrition program participation and helping the most vulnerable citizens; and

WHEREAS, through the efforts of nearly 400 local agencies on Aging and Disability Resource Centers and their contracted meal providers, approximately 12,000 New Jersey older adults receive 3,600,000 meals delivered each week, over 1,000 times 12,000 meals each in a meal setting or a special meal; and

WHEREAS, in addition to providing older adults access to healthy foods, local senior nutrition programs provide nutrition counseling, education, and counseling about engagement, volunteering opportunities and other supports that encourage well-being; and

WHEREAS, the National Senior Nutrition Program is having a positive impact on our communities and its success is due to:

- Improving nutrition - Participants receive a significantly higher percentage of dietary volume relative to USDA meal program requirements;
- Promoting socialization - Socializing at meals has been shown to increase health and cognitive ability that increases the likelihood of being disease-free and dementia;
- Improving health - Fewer nutrition and food-related issues have led to high instances of diabetes and stroke because the meals the body is able to digest better that contribute to high blood pressure, heart disease, stroke and type 2 diabetes; and

WHEREAS, this month the National Senior Nutrition Program's 50th anniversary, and the month of March is recognized annually by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics as National Nutrition Month; and

WHEREAS, the State of New Jersey recognizes older adults and the people who support them through nutrition services as essential contributors to the strength of our community;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

MARCH 2024
AS
SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM MONTH

in New Jersey,

GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twentieth day of February in the year two thousand twenty-four, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

 Lt. GOVERNOR
 GOVERNOR

Problem Gambling Awareness Month

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
Proclamation

WHEREAS, problem gambling is a significant public health issue affecting New Jersey residents of all ages and social and ethnic backgrounds in communities throughout the state and is a significant societal and economic cost; and

WHEREAS, New Jersey's rate of problem gambling is approximately three times the national average; and

WHEREAS, most individuals with a gambling disorder also have a mental health and/or substance use disorder; New Jersey has funded treatment providers to serve individuals with these co-occurring disorders, in addition to funding training on gambling disorder and its treatment; and

WHEREAS, problem gambling is a treatable disorder and proper management is instrumental in minimizing the harm to individuals, their families and society as a whole; and

WHEREAS, promoting an awareness month provides individuals in the problem gambling prevention and treatment community with an opportunity to educate the public and participation about the social and financial effectiveness of services available for problem gambling; and

WHEREAS, healthcare providers are encouraged to screen individuals for problem gambling and to assist with access to treatment; and

WHEREAS, numerous individuals, professionals and organizations have dedicated themselves to educating the public about problem gambling and the availability and access of treatment; and

WHEREAS, individuals can call the 1-800-GAMBLER helpline, operated by the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey, at 1-877-HELP for those struggling with problem gambling, or visit www.njccg.org to learn about the Council's support and resources; and

WHEREAS, the Council on Compulsive Gambling of New Jersey's theme for the observance of Problem Gambling Awareness Month is "Setting in Change. Conquering the Odds in Problem Gambling";

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Philip D. Murphy, Governor of the State of New Jersey, do hereby proclaim:

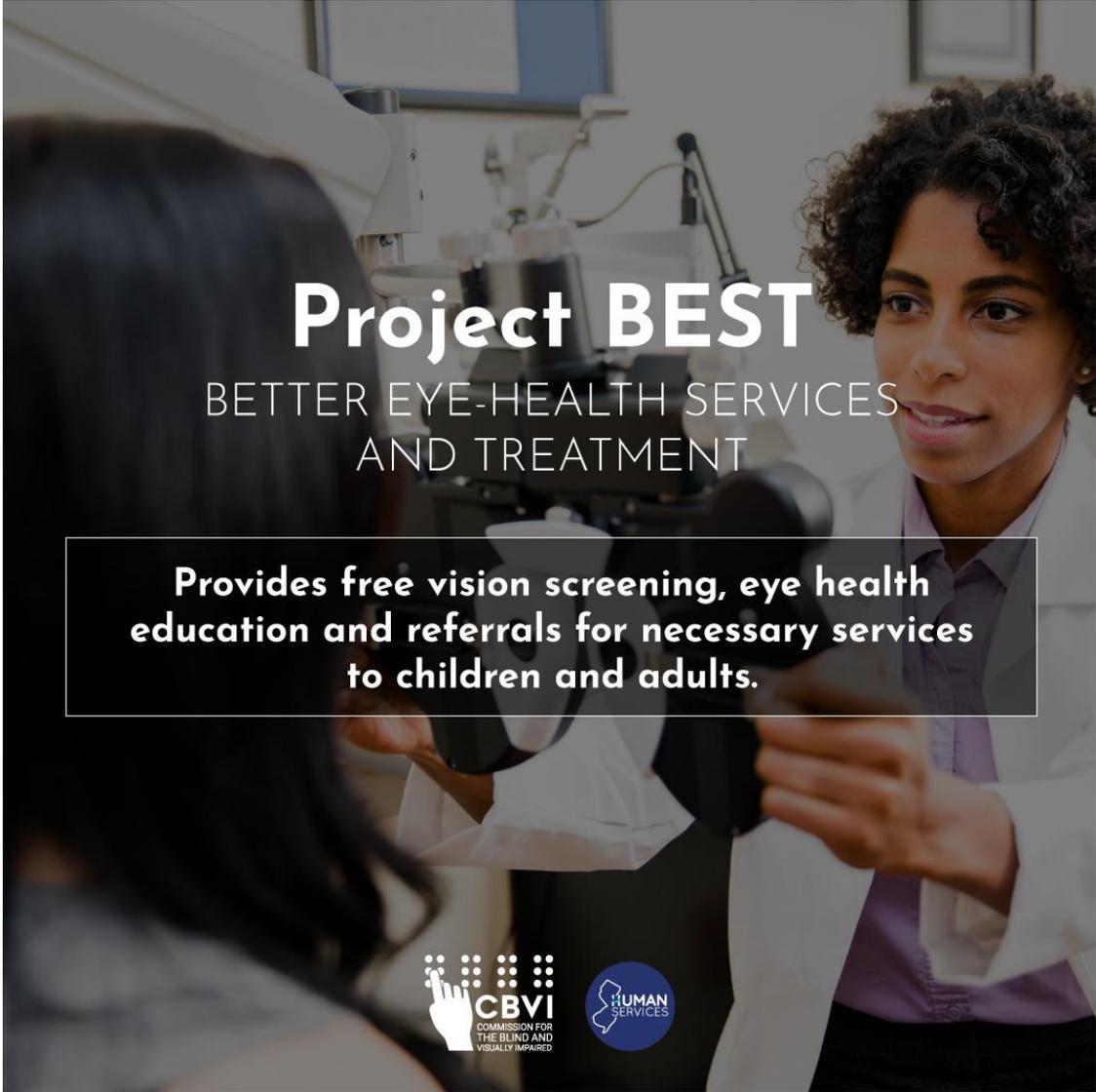
MARCH 2024
AS
PROBLEM GAMBLING AWARENESS MONTH

in New Jersey,

GIVEN, under my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Jersey, this twentieth day of February in the year two thousand twenty-four, the two hundred forty-eighth year of the Independence of the United States.

 Lt. GOVERNOR
 GOVERNOR

Brain Injury Awareness Month



Project BEST

BETTER EYE-HEALTH SERVICES
AND TREATMENT

Provides free vision screening, eye health education and referrals for necessary services to children and adults.



March is Save Your Vision Month and World Glaucoma Day March 12th!

The [Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired](#)'s ProjectBEST works to save sight & restore vision whenever it is medically possible. Free eye screenings have continued across NJ at schools, medical centers, & other fixed sites.

Visit [HERE](#) for more info & screening locations.

SPOTLIGHTS ON NJ HUMAN SERVICES PROGRAMS

NJABLE
A member of The National ABLE Alliance



“NJ Able allows
me to save for
my future”



NJ ABLE, a tax-advantaged savings account for NJ residents with disabilities. Use it for expenses like housing and transportation and for long-term savings. NJ ABLE won't affect SSI or Medicaid eligibility. Learn more at [NJ.SaveWithABLE.com](https://www.nj.gov/human-services/able)



LEARN MORE AT [CBVI.NJ.GOV](https://cbvi.nj.gov)



Get up to 70 percent tuition reimbursement and enrich lives. Find out how to become a certified TVI today! Learn more at cbvi.nj.gov.

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