



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF STATE



2023 ANNUAL REPORT





STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

P.O. Box 300
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0300

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

LT. GOVERNOR TAHESHA L. WAY
Secretary of State

Dear Friend,

Welcome to the New Jersey Department of State's 2023 Fiscal Year Annual Report. We are delighted to share our remarkable accomplishments and ongoing efforts in serving the people of New Jersey. This report highlights our commitment to democracy, economic growth, preserving history, celebrating our state's arts and culture, and supporting diverse communities.

In my capacity as Secretary of State, I am proud to serve as New Jersey's chief election officer and share our achievements in expanding voter access, enhancing voter experience, and ensuring the integrity of our elections. Our ongoing partnerships at the local, state, and federal level support statewide New Jersey elections every year. We work with our peers in other states to implement best practices and learn from each other's experience. As we embrace full membership in the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) this year, we expect to improve our work in maintaining accurate voter rolls. Our commitment to election worker training and support remains steadfast, ensuring that both new and seasoned staff members in county election offices receive the necessary assistance and guidance.

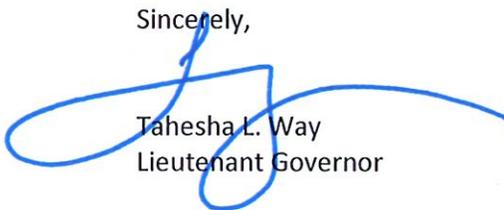
In addition to elections, we support work that makes New Jersey a wonderful place to live, work, and visit. Our Division of Travel and Tourism works closely with communities and businesses across the state to attract millions of visitors and billions of dollars to New Jersey each year. Our Business Action Center helps businesses navigate state government and is supporting the burgeoning cannabis industry through the launch of the New Jersey Cannabis Training Academy, providing technical assistance to aspiring entrepreneurs with a focus on social equity and inclusivity.

Our commitment to arts, culture, and history is evident through grant funding and projects. The State Council on the Arts continues to be the largest arts funder in New Jersey. The New Jersey Historical Commission is leading the effort to establish the Black Heritage Trail, and we are diligently preparing for the Semiquincentennial in 2026, celebrating our revolutionary heritage through educational programming and exhibits.

At the Department of State, inclusivity is at the core of our work. We support diverse initiatives and organizations through grant funding and partnerships, ensuring that all residents of New Jersey can thrive.

Thank you for joining us as we reflect on our accomplishments and work towards a prosperous and inclusive future for New Jersey.

Sincerely,


Tahesha L. Way
Lieutenant Governor





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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

P.O. Box 300
TRENTON, NJ 08625-0300

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

LT. GOVERNOR TAHESHA L. WAY
Secretary of State

Dear Residents,

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude for taking the time to review our annual report. It is a testament to your commitment to staying informed about the workings and accomplishments of the New Jersey Department of State.

Our Department takes immense pride in the diversity of our portfolios and our unwavering commitment to efficiency. None of this would be possible without the dedicated efforts of our exceptional division directors and the entire team. Their hard work and devotion form the backbone of our success.

Furthermore, I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to Governor Murphy and Lieutenant Governor Way for their outstanding service to our state. It is indeed a privilege to work alongside them in their administration.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and interest in the New Jersey Department of State. Your engagement and partnership are invaluable to us as we strive to serve our community better each day.

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JL Boone", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jasaun L. Boone
Chief of Staff





Greetings,

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to you for engaging with our annual report. Your interest in our work at the New Jersey Department of State means a great deal.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) lie at the core of our values. As the Chief Diversity Officer, my role involves driving DEI strategies that empower our dedicated staff. Embracing diversity and inclusivity is pivotal to fulfilling our mission effectively.

Our commitment to New Jersey's residents drives us to cultivate a workforce that mirrors our communities. We're dedicated to improving our services by embracing innovation and fostering an environment where every voice is valued. Your unique perspectives, talents, and experiences are essential to this vision.

Collaboration is key on this journey. By nurturing a diverse and inclusive culture, we equip ourselves to better serve and understand our residents. Together, we can weave a vibrant tapestry at the New Jersey Department of State.

Your input is invaluable. Please share your thoughts and ideas as we shape our DEI strategies. Your dedication fuels our success, and I am profoundly grateful.

Thank you once more for your time and interest in our annual report. Together, we will make remarkable strides in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within our organization and the broader community.

Warm regards,

Joe Forte
Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief Diversity Officer
New Jersey Department of State

Senior Leadership

Tahesha Way, Esq.

New Jersey Lieutenant Governor and Secretary of State

Jay Boone

Chief of Staff

Lauren Zyriek Enriquez, D.P.A

Assistant Secretary of State and Acting Director of the Division of Elections

Corey Wolkenberg

Deputy Chief of Staff and Director of Legislative Affairs

Joe Forte

Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief Diversity Officer

Allison Tratner,

Executive Director, New Jersey Council on the Arts

Andrew Gross,

Executive Director, New Jersey-Israel Commission

Dana M. Baldorossi,

Director, New Jersey Department of State Administration

Dr. Lauren Zyriek Enriquez,

Acting Director, Division of Elections

Edward LaPorte,

Director, Office of Faith Based Initiatives

Isabel Kasdin,

Director, New Jersey Cultural Trust

Jeffrey Vasser,

Executive Director, Division of Travel and Tourism

Joseph R. Klett,

Director, New Jersey State Archives

Marelyn Rivera,

Executive Director, Center for Hispanic Policy Research and Development

Margaret M. O'Reilly,

Executive Director, New Jersey State Museum

Melanie Willoughby,

Executive Director, New Jersey Business Action Center

Rowena Madden,

Director, Governor's Office on Volunteerism

Sara Cureton,

Director, New Jersey Historical Commission

We extend a special thank you to the Department of State Communications team- Alicia D'Alessandro, Kaity Assaf, and Thomas Fanelli- for assembling and editing this report.

We also thank Elizabeth Vouk and Wendy McVicker within the Office of the Secretary of State for their support.



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Administration

DIRECTOR:

DANA M. BALDOROSI, MBA

MISSION:

The Division of Administration team is the groundwork of support and resources required to keep the day to day operations running efficiently. The Division currently oversees the areas of Budget Operations, Grant Administration, Fiscal Management/Procurement, Information Technology, and Human Resources. Our goal is to support all Divisions within the Department of State with providing excellent customer service, assistance, and support. We ensure that the short and long term goals of the Department are being met and attained every day.

FY2023 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Supported a net increase of 18 staff during the fiscal year, including 25 full-time additions.
- Implemented new procedures to more effectively track and manage recruitment, IT support, and space planning.
- Put into practice defined procedures for the Recruitment Process and the Fiscal Action Requests.
- Rolled out the Paid Internship Program.
- Re-Implemented Quarterly Director Meetings.

GOALS FOR FY2024:

- Achieve full staffing for the Department, up to budgeted FTE and temporary staff as needed.
- Complete relocation of the Department to 225 W. State Street with minimal disruption to division operations.
- Support execution of grant agreements as needed to support over \$64 million in FY24 appropriations to grant-making departments.
- Support staffing and procurement activity to enable State Museum to use its \$1.7 million budget increase in FY24.
- Implement new fiscal reporting and analytical functions to enhance forecasting and support program planning.

Fiscal Planning & Analysis

The mission of Fiscal Planning & Analysis (FP&A) is to inform decision-making and optimize resources in support of Department goals and objectives. Activities include development and preparation of the annual State

Budget, ongoing assessment of program funding needs and budget reallocations, analysis of program operations and staffing levels, routine reporting of fiscal performance, and management of fiscal year closeout. Additionally, staff supports division programs as needed by coordinating the execution of interagency agreements, performing ad hoc fiscal analyses, and acting as liaison with the Governor’s Office to administer new funding sources, e.g., COVID-19 relief.

In FY23, the Department’s fiscal performance versus budget, excluding federal and other non-State funds, is summarized below and on Attachment A.

FY23 Expenses vs. Budget*
(\$000)

Division	Actual	Budget	Variance
Office of the Secretary	\$ 8,972	\$ 8,975	\$ 3
Programs	5,561	5,711	150
Business Action Center	6,984	7,488	504
Motion Picture Commission	680	680	-
Travel & Tourism	17,600	17,600	-
Elections**	16,038	48,504	32,466
Council on the Arts	40,779	40,780	1
State Museum	2,478	2,485	7
Historical Commission	8,578	10,061	1,483
Archives	1,022	1,157	135
Department Total	\$ 108,692	\$ 143,441	\$ 34,749

* Results are preliminary, pending completion of closeout transactions.

** Approx. \$20 million of unexpended balance will carry into FY24.

FY23 FP&A highlights included:

- Implementation of bi-weekly fiscal reporting available to all divisions, including expenses to-date and projected year-end balance
- Review and funding approval for 25 full-time staff additions
- Interagency agreement with NJ Historic Trust to enable \$6 million grant to Newark Symphony Hall
- Interagency agreement with NJ Historical Trust to enable \$2.7 million in COA grants
- Budget proposal advocating for new State Museum funding in FY24
- Over \$4.7 million of identified cost savings (Elections) to help offset proposed budget growth

For FY24, the Department's budget will increase to \$146.2 million, including \$1.7 million of new funding for State Museum and 17 new line items added by the Legislature. Changes versus the FY23 appropriation are summarized below:

FY23 Adjusted Appropriation		\$ 143,441
FY24 Approp Act Changes		vs. FY23
Additions:		
Museum	compensation for pandemic-related revenue loss	\$ 1,700
Cultural Trust	increased contribution to Cultural Trust Fund	1,469
Elections	increased SVRS maintenance	1,118
BAC	State Planning support	713
BAC	increase in SBDC support	500
Programs	NJ Puerto Rico Commission increase	150
Line item grants:		
Historical	Battleship NJ Dry Docking	5,000
COA	Newark Public Radio - Capital Constr	2,800
COA	Paterson Museum - Capital Impr	2,500
COA	NJ Symphony - Centennial Support	2,000
COA	State Theatre NJ - Capital Impr	1,000
COA	New Jersey Ballet	500
Historical	NJ Fallen Firefighters Memorial	400
various	various \$250k or less (10)	1,405
Reductions:		
Elections	reduced Early Voting need	\$ (5,000)
Elections	FY23 non-recurring funding for voter education	(5,000)
Elections	reduced need for county VBM reimbursement	(3,700)
COA	reduced grant to Newark Symphony Hall	(2,000)
Elections	reduced poll worker expenses vs. prior estimates	(1,030)
Historical	FY23 non-recurring grant for NJ Black Heritage Trail	(1,000)
various	various other \$250k or less	(755)
Total Changes		\$ 2,770
FY24 Appropriation		\$ 146,211

Grants

The mission of the Grants Unit is to be responsible for the oversight and management of grants-making activity for the Department of State. Each of its Divisions (Grantors) carry out various programs and activities to provide funding to organizations throughout the state in accordance with their mission and award process. The Grants Unit provides support and establishes policies and procedures to monitor grants through the award/contract phase of the grants making process. This includes official award action, contract preparation and execution, financial reporting, and payment processing while ensuring compliance with rules and regulations established by the State of NJ and the Federal Government.

FY23 Grant-in-Aid Appropriations as follows:

- Business Action Center \$8,500,000
- Center for Hispanic Programs, Research & Development \$3,192,500
- Israel Commission \$85,000
- MLK Commission \$25,000
- NJ Council on the Arts: \$31,250,000
- NJ Cultural Trust \$541,000
- NJ Historical Commission: \$7,185,740
- Office of Faith Based Initiatives \$1,211,500
- Travel & Tourism: \$4,985,220

FY23 Federal Grant Awards:

- AmeriCorps Formula/ Fixed \$4,486,000
- AmeriCorps Commission Administration \$575,730
- AmeriCorps Technical Assistance \$164,949
- Help America Vote Act Grant \$1,662,570
- Foster Grand Parent \$884,555
- National Endowment for the Arts \$1,052,400
- State Export Program \$500,000
- Volunteer Generation Fund \$420,000



Procurement

The mission of the Procurement Unit is to support Department operations and programs by performing all transactions necessary to obtain the goods, supplies, and services requested by divisions. Additionally, the Unit is responsible for developing and enforcing procedures to maintain compliance with State and federal procurement law and Treasury policy. Procurement transactions can include new actions or actions necessary to supplement or modify current encumbrances, including purchase orders, grant agreements, or other contracts obligating the State to pay for supplies or services.

In FY23, the Procurement Unit processed well over 5,000 transactions, including over 1,700 to encumber funds and over 3,600 to make payments and record expenses.

Note: FY23 results are preliminary, pending the completion of additional transactions for closeout.

Transactions by type are summarized below:

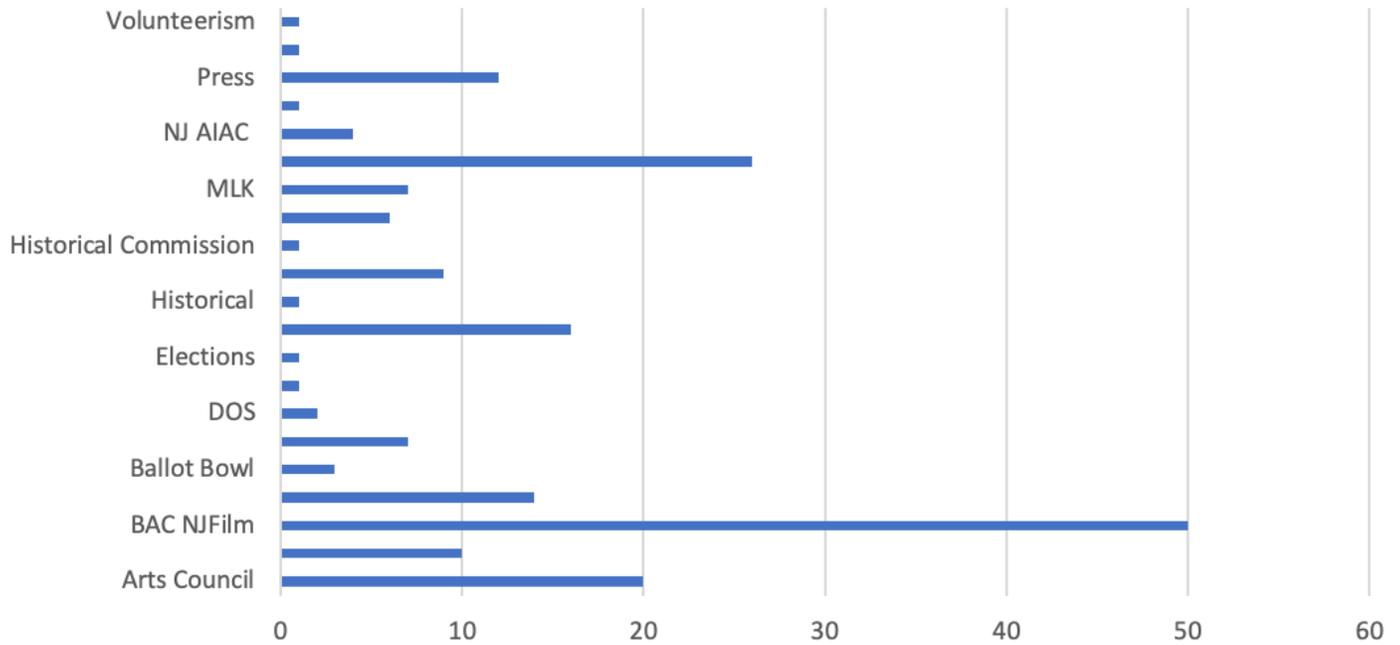
FY23 Transactions by Budget Org		SOS /						Department	
		Programs (Org 2505)	BAC* (Org 2510)	Elections (Org 2525)	COA (Org 2530)	Museum (Org 2535)	Historical (Org 2540)	Archives (Org 2545)	Total
Procurement (Encumbrance) Transactions:									
AO	Agency Contract Order	4	6	-	9	3	4	-	26
GO	Grant/Loan Order	235	224	-	302	-	137	-	898
PO	Purchase Bureau Order	183	226	36	57	131	42	122	797
Total		422	456	36	368	134	183	122	1,721
Payment (Expense) Transactions:									
AV	Accounting Bureau Payment Voucher	294	183	-	229	13	114	-	
EM	Expenditure Modification	20	3	1	12	5	3	1	45
PV	Purchase Bureau Payment Voucher	311	698	54	47	187	85	131	1,513
TV	Travel Voucher	96	219	11	84	49	26	6	491
UA	Using Agency Payment Vouchers	212	146	192	78	61	63	36	788
Total		933	1,249	258	450	315	291	174	3,670
All Transactions		1,355	1,705	294	818	449	474	296	5,391

* includes Travel & Tourism, MPC

Information Technology

The mission of the IT unit is to provide technical support to employees along with ensuring the information that is publicly displayed on the web is accurate at all times. Currently DOS has 186 FTE employees, in addition to TES, Temps, and Interns across all Divisions that the IT team supports on a daily basis.

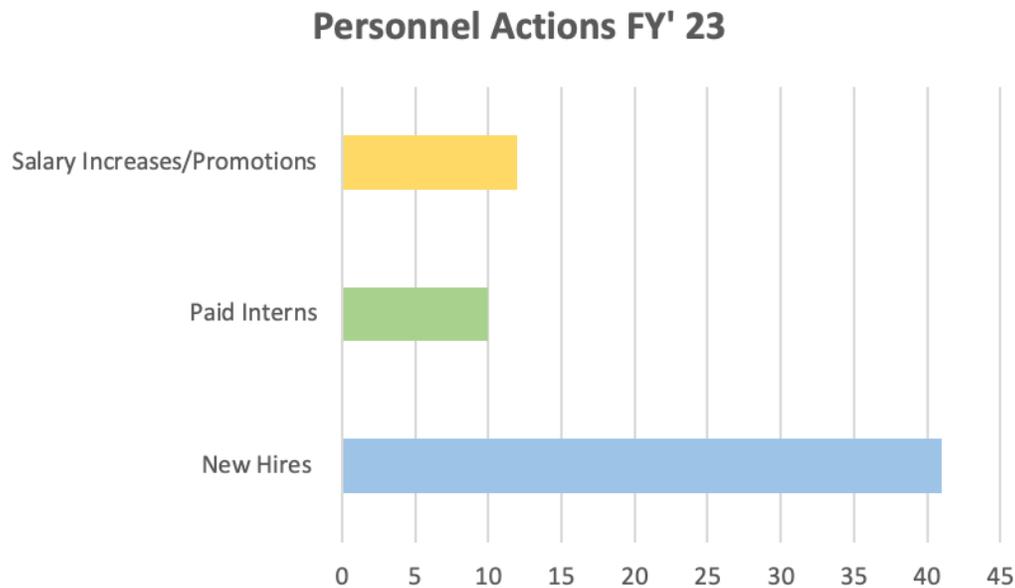
Web Pages Updates by Division



Total: 583 Website updates since May 1, 2023 Web Pages we support and update on an ongoing basis:

Human Resources

The mission of the HR Unit is to support the goals and challenges of Department of State by providing services that promote a work environment that is defined by fair treatment of staff, open communication with employees and the HR unit, personal accountability, trust and mutual respect. We seek and provide solutions to support and optimize the operating principles of this Department.



Note: Tracking began May 1, 2023.

In addition to the Personnel Actions that have been accomplished during FY' 23, the HR Unit has also provided support for payroll, onboarding, employee benefits, union liaisons and managing the employee job cycle.

- Throughout the fiscal year, the HR team has undergone multiple transitions and has been able to ensure timely staffing for all Divisions.
- Ensured all staff is trained and approved for the Telework Program.
- Revamped New Hire Orientation for a more seamless onboarding process.
- Implemented the CSC SAME Program requirements into recruitment process.
- As well as, supporting the HR needs of the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education



EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:

“Dee is the first person you see every morning when you get off the elevator at 33 West State Street. She greets everyone with a warm welcome and it makes for a great start of the day. Her positive attitude is infectious and it shows how much she loves her job. Dee has dedicated 33 years here at the Department of State. She has been instrumental within Administration to carry out the day to day responsibilities that includes supporting staff with all levels of the Department.”

Dee Durham, Administrative Assistant 2



CENTER FOR HISPANIC POLICY RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
MARELYN RIVERA

MISSION:

The Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development (CHPRD) was established in 1975 to address the needs of the Hispanic community, recognizing that it was imperative to pay particular attention to this segment of the population, which may have been historically neglected. The Office was mandated to provide funding for Hispanic initiatives in New Jersey. The CHPRD has a director and an advisory committee, all appointed with the Governor's approval. The Secretary of State serves as an ex-officio member of the advisory committee.

CHPRD administers an annual appropriation from the State of New Jersey. The CHPRD seeks to empower, provide financial support and technical assistance to primarily Hispanic community-based organizations throughout New Jersey and also ensures the executive and legislative branches are informed of legislative initiatives with potential impact on the Hispanic community. CHPRD seeks to aggressively promote a new model of community development that is focused on making REAL impacts in people's lives while helping community based organizations achieve greater self-sufficiency.

The CHPRD has served the needs of the Hispanic community for 48 years with four (4) main areas of focus for the Center:

1. Administering grant funding to Latino-based community organizations that provide social, education, and entrepreneurial services to low and moderate-income NJ residents. Grant categories

include: Hispanic Entrepreneurship, Citizenship and Integration, Workforce Development, Youth Services, Community Service, and Health and Wellness.

2. Provide employment and training opportunities to our youth through the Governor's Hispanic Fellows Program.
3. Program and technical assistance as well as referral services for our community based organizations to empower them so they may better serve the Latino communities.
4. Conduct and support research and policy for Latinos in New Jersey.

NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY2023:

Grant Opportunities: Thirty-one (31) Hispanic-based community organizations received grant funding for fiscal year 2022. Forty-seven (47) programs that directly impacted and helped communities throughout New Jersey received grant funding awards totaling \$3,175,000.

Governor's Hispanic Fellows Program: The CHPRD was excited to have seventeen (17) students as part of the Governor's Hispanic Fellow Program in 2022. The Graduation Ceremony took place on Friday, July 29th at Montclair University.

Grant Opportunities: Thirty-four (34) Hispanic-based community organizations received grant funding for fiscal year 2023. Sixty programs that directly impacted and helped communities throughout New Jersey received grant funding awards



totaling \$3,175,000.

Governor’s Hispanic Fellows Program: The CHPRD was excited to have twenty-six (26) students as part of the Governor’s Hispanic Fellow Program this year. For the past 36 years, many Fellows have been coached on skills such as written communication, negotiation, public speaking, organization and time management, professional etiquette, and more. HISPA (one of community organizations that the Center funds) leads this Program that combines practical, hands-on experience with traditional classroom instruction, guest presentations by leading professionals, as well as other unique skill-building opportunities. Overall, the Program leads to increased preparedness for a professional workplace and imparts the skills necessary for Latinos to flourish as professionals. In addition, the fellows have amazing opportunities to intern at Bristol Meyers Squibb, Office of Assemblywoman Yvonne Lopez, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, PSEG, and many more great organizations. The Graduation Ceremony will take place on Friday, July 29, 2023 at the NJ State Museum Auditorium.

GOALS FOR FY2024:

Increase staff from a total of three (3) persons to four (4) persons: an Executive Director, Program Development Specialist, Program Development Assistant, and Program Development Technical Specialist. In addition, brainstorm and develop a plan to focus on the Research and Policy aspect of the Center for FY24.

Host an event with the CHPRD Advisory Committee, GHPF Alumni, and grantees for networking during Hispanic Heritage Month to encourage future collaborations.

GENERAL 2023 HIGHLIGHTS:

There was a 10% increase in organizations that received grant funding and a 28% increase in program funding areas. For the Governor’s Hispanic Fellows Program, there was an increase of 53% in fellows.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT



Maria Miranda is a Program Development Specialist who has been with the Center for over 30 years. “I get to work and help my community by being in public service and help administer programs that provide much needed service throughout New Jersey.”



Governor's Office of Volunteerism

DIVISION DIRECTOR:
ROWENA MADDEN

MISSION OF DIVISION:

The mission of the New Jersey Office of Volunteerism is to encourage and recognize volunteerism and national service, promote an ethic of civic engagement, commemorate the cultural contributions of New Jersey's multi-faceted communities, respond to disasters and emergencies, and promote respect and understanding among people of all ages and backgrounds.

Mission of Subunits

Commission on National and Community Service

The Commission guides and oversees national service programs throughout the state; each year the Commission administers 20 programs that deploy over 500 AmeriCorps members to address issues related to education, social services, environmental protection, public health, and economic development.

Governor's Advisory Council on Volunteerism

The Advisory Council supports volunteer recruitment, training, and recognition for New Jersey's 1.4 million volunteers through the Volunteer Generation Fund (federally funding of 10 volunteer organizations statewide), the annual Governor's Volunteerism Awards, and Governor's Volunteerism Conference in partnership with NJ Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters. The Office works with the NJ Office of Emergency Management on preparation for and response to emergencies and disasters.

Foster Grandparent Program (FGP)

The FGP engages 80 to 100 low-income Senior Citizens to assist approximately 800 children with special needs in pre-school, elementary schools, and developmental centers.

New Jersey Commission on American Indian Affairs

The Commission develops programs and projects related to the cultural, educational, and social development of New Jersey's American Indian Tribal Nations and communities; promotes cooperation among all Native American communities in the State; serves as a Statewide reference and resource center to increase public knowledge of New Jersey's Native American heritage; and acts as a liaison among Native American communities, State and federal governments, and educational, social and cultural institutions.

New Jersey Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Commission

The Commission was established to recognize and keep vibrant the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement. The Commission is responsible for an annual Commemorative event in honor of Dr. King's national holiday; providing opportunities for young people through conferences and scholarship awards, and recognizing key events of Civil Rights History, including the 60th anniversary of the I HAVE A DREAM speech at the March on Washington in 1963.

New Jersey Hellenic American Heritage Commission

The Commission was established to recognize the cultural and democratic contributions of Hellenic

communities to our state and nation and the world; to commemorate important dates of Greek and Cypriot history and provide scholarships to young people of Hellenic background.

FY2023 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

AmeriCorps:

- Served 5,518 children and youth with classroom assistance, mentoring, tutoring, summer programs, and nutritional services;
- Provided opioid/drug intervention services to 338 individuals;
- Supported, cleared, and beautified 1,142,405 acres of public land.

Office of Volunteerism/Volunteer Generation Fund:

- Recruited 8,066 volunteers;
- Provided services to 5,567 at-risk youth;
- Served 4,139 Seniors;
- Conducted the Governor's Volunteerism Conference, presenting 30 workshops for 650 participants; and
- Led efforts during the COVID pandemic, including addressing food insecurity, and developing statewide policy on "Volunteering in a Time of Social Distancing." The Office received \$791,000 in COVID Relief Funding from the State of NJ to support the Volunteer Generation agencies that faced new challenges during the pandemic.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Commemorative Commission

Provided MLK Day of Service Grants to AmeriCorps and non-profit programs for special service events, including to the Montclair State University COVID Service Corps, St. Paul's Community Development Corporation, NORWESCAP, the Camden Recovery Corps, and Asbury Park Schools.

Provided MLK Scholarships to 10 outstanding high school seniors to attend colleges and universities, including Howard, NJIT, Notre Dame, Princeton, and Rutgers.

Students were chosen based on essays related to Dr. King's life and work; school transcripts, participation in community service, and letters of recommendation.

NJ Commission on American Indian Affairs

The Commission achieved its first public grant, from the NJ Department of Health to address COVID-19 in American Indian State-recognized tribes and Native American communities. This CDC grant for \$580,000, covering three years, enabled the American Indian Commission to hire a state-level Coordinator and Tribal Coordinators for the Ramapough Lenape Nation and Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape Tribe.

The Commission is working in partnership with the NJ Historical Commission on the development of Indigenous Curriculum Resources that can be utilized by educators at all levels to accurately portray the history and culture of New Jersey's American Indians.

Hellenic American Heritage Commission

The Commission commemorated OXI Day 2022, with a major event at Liberty State Park, highlighting the migration crisis that has directly affected Greece and Cyprus. Speakers addressed policy facing the United Nations as well as the Ukraine War. OXI Day represents the response to threats of invasion by the Axis Powers in World War 2; the Prime Minister responded with 'No.'

The Commission partnered with the NJ Israel Commission on an event focused on democracy and commerce in the Eastern Mediterranean countries of Greece, Israel and Cyprus. Secretary Way addressed the group.

FY2024 GOALS

AmeriCorps Recruitment. AmeriCorps recruitment is a national challenge and State Commissions have worked with national AmeriCorps to increase living allowances. States have also been mandated to bring on a part-time Recruitment Officer, which we have done.

Board Development for the various Commissions and Council. Will focus on revitalization of board appointments, identifying areas of interest and participation, and setting annual goals. This work has been undertaken with the NJ Commission on

National and Community Service and has led to new committees (grant review, adopt-a-program, and onboarding new members) and much higher levels of participation.

NJ Partnership for Student Success. Will continue work with the NJ Department of Education to develop volunteer resources to help school districts address the challenges of the pandemic, which have resulted in student academic losses and mental health issues. Our office has been asked to develop and maintain the online network of volunteer opportunities.

Public Health AmeriCorps. Our AmeriCorps program has received four national grant awards for New Jersey programs to develop outreach, community education, and pathways to careers in the health field. We will be working with Rutgers/Camden, Zufall Family Health Clinic, NJ Community Development Corporation, and Montclair State University.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility. The Office has created a DEIA Committee, open to each AmeriCorps program, to share information and resources on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Disaster Response/Homeland Security. The ongoing work of emergency and disaster preparedness and response continue in collaboration with the NJ Office of Emergency Management, Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, NJ Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters, NJ Volunteer Centers, and Faith-Based groups. Our Office is the lead agency for recruitment, training and deployment of “Spontaneous Volunteers,” that is, individuals who seek to serve during emergencies and disasters, who are not already affiliated with disaster organizations, such as the American Red Cross. Our Office is also part of the Donations Coordination Team that is led by NJ OEM.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“As a four-term alum, I love my role as an AmeriCorps Recruitment Officer; it allows me to continue serving an organization I’m proud of.”

– Torriah Egbeyemi, AmeriCorps NJ Recruitment Officer.



New Jersey Business Action Center

New Jersey Business Action Center

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
MELANIE WILLOUGHBY

DEPUTY DIRECTOR:
PENNI WILD

MISSION:

The mission of the New Jersey Business Action Center (NJBAC) is to provide exceptional technical assistance, customer service, resources and information as advocates and mentors for New Jersey businesses of all sizes, categories, and ethnicities. The vision for NJBAC is to be the go-to government agency for business in New Jersey among state, local and county governments, federal agencies as well as businesses, nonprofits and professional organizations where they can connect with the answers, resources, expertise and guidance they need to grow and thrive.

Agency Objectives: Connect/Collaborate/ Communicate

Connect with state agencies, business and professional organizations, universities and communities statewide to provide technical assistance, support and expertise.

Collaborate with identified partners on events (in-person and online) to participate as an added-value educator, advocate and resource (present, exhibit, etc.)

Communicate to various audiences that the NJBAC is ready to serve and able to share its expertise and resources. NJBAC is a recognized leader, advocate, mentor and connector for statewide businesses of all sizes.

All NJBAC consulting and assistance services are provided confidentially and free of charge. Each office provides helpful materials and educational resources in addition to responding to inquiries as they arise from thousands of New Jersey businesses each year.

The New Jersey Business Action Center (NJBAC) was efficient and productive in FY23. Major division highlights include:

- Provided service in FY23, via the efforts of approximately 35 dedicated staff, to the business community through the work of 6 different offices.
- Directly connected with 52,548 members of the business community across 197 in-person and virtual events.
- Implemented a public-facing education campaign regarding the statewide ban on single-use plastic carryout bags and polystyrene foam food services products, as assigned by a new law.
- Announced the Cannabis Training Academy, a pioneer state-funded educational program that will open its virtual doors in 2024 to provide technical assistance to entrepreneurs establishing cannabis businesses in New Jersey.
- Hosted a successful in-person post-pandemic Resources for Growth event, a signature NJBAC offering that brings business owners and entrepreneurs and relevant federal, state, and local agencies together to explore services and resources, welcoming nearly 150 participants.
- Received a record-high Small Business Administration NJ State Trade Expansion Program (NJSTEP) award of \$2.4 million, the highest state award on record ever.
- Launched the Film Ready certification program, a 5-step certification opportunity for municipalities interested in hosting television and film production.
- Issued Warehouse Citing Guidance, a first-time

policy statement, which was received by 11 different audiences (municipal officials, county planners, businesses, etc.) and resulted in the creation of five legislative bills.

- Featured in 105 pieces of media, resulting in an estimated 1.37 million views (reach of combined total of publication-wide audience was 818 million)

New Jersey Business Action Center Offices

Office of Business Advocacy

The Office of Business Advocacy (OBA) provides support and guidance for businesses of all sizes, at every stage of the process. From site selection to expansion, from resource referrals to procurement assistance, OBA staff are committed to helping entrepreneurs and business owners quickly access efficient and relevant solutions across all industries. The strength of this office is the OBA team's extensive, statewide network of relationships with state agencies and local government, which furthers each client case and project.

The Office of Business Advocacy helped businesses pursue opportunities that resulted in measureable operational growth. Over the course of FY23, OBA partnered with 20 companies on comprehensive development projects. Combined, these projects created over \$100 million of investment in NJ real estate and resulted in \$218,000,000 in capital expenditures. These projects created 510 new jobs and supported 939 existing jobs. Also, the 20 OBA business clients collectively expanded their operations by 1,800,000 square feet. In addition to supporting OBA clients through specific projects, the OBA aided 591 regulatory assistance cases. Whether by providing relevant compliance information or making key introductions to other state agencies, the OBA team connected business owners and entrepreneurs to resources and programs that furthered businesses in every county of the state.

Office of Export Promotion

The Office of Export Promotion (OEP) provides essential guidance and resources for businesses looking to start or expand their goods and services export offerings. Whether businesses are new to

export or looking to grow their existing international sales, OEP staff supply educational opportunities and resources for about export compliance and procedure as well as assistance with developing an export plan. This office is a Small Business Administration (SBA) partner, collaborating at the state level for the New Jersey State Trade Expansion Program (NJSTEP). The strength of this office is the OEP team's extensive knowledge of the export process and related best practices as well as a developed global network of contacts in the international marketplace.

The Office of Export Promotion (OEP) harnessed the New Jersey State Trade Expansion Program (NJSTEP) award funding from the Small Business Association (SBA) to support Garden State businesses expand export sales. Each multi-year NJSTEP award results in export sales and job creation; from the 2020-2022 award, export sales totaled \$34.5 million and created/maintained 148 jobs. From the 2021-2023 \$2.4 million award, which was an all-time high for STEP award in any state, 688 jobs have been created/maintained and \$21.9 million in export sales have occurred. Building on the NJSTEP momentum, OEP developed a growth initiative in 2022 around the 2023 Summer Fancy Food show, one of the largest international industry trade shows of its kind. OEP hosted 12 NJSTEP grant awards recipients in the State Pavilion to showcase underserved businesses poised for export growth. Projections from those Fancy Food NJSTEP businesses include \$5,835,000 in export sales and the creation of 44 jobs.

Office of Small Business Advocacy

The Office of Small Business Advocacy (OSBA) provides real time assistance for business owners seeking information about registration and document amendments, certifications, and other business operations. Support is provided through the helpline, 1-800-JERSEY-7, and a live chat housed on www.business.nj.gov. The strength of this office is just how accessible and responsive it is; the OSBA team responds to each inquiry quickly and efficiently, without exception.

The Office of Small Business Advocacy (OSBA) provides answers and solutions for thousands of business owners and entrepreneurs each year. After the COVID-19 pandemic hit the US in March 2020, OSBA widened its real-time availability by offering

a live chat in addition to a free and confidential helpline. In FY23, the OSBA team fielded 10,989 calls; the average call answer speed was 20.5 seconds. Regarding the live chat, the OSBA team managed 30,014 live chat conversations, which generated 90,553 agent responses. The median chat answer response time was 2 minutes and 42 seconds; 70.8% live chat inquirers rated service as “great” or “amazing” in post-call surveys.

The OSBA provided information and resources through two primary websites – [NJ DOS - NJ Business Action Center](#) and [Business.NJ.gov: Your first stop for doing business in NJ](#) – resulting in 1,226,462 unique sessions and 4,104,650 page views initiated by 850,328 users on business.nj.gov. Along with sharing business registration and certification information and identifying next steps for connecting with helpful agencies and programs in response to inquiries from businesses of all sizes and industries, the staff of the OSBA participated in 62 events (for 35,757 attendees) in every corner of the state. The events included partner-hosted events, like webinars hosted by Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) and professional development events like the annual Downtown New Jersey conference, as well as NJBAC-initiated events. The Resources for Growth event, a signature NJBAC convening for businesses, welcomed 150 participants as well as federal, state, and local agency partners, which was a welcome return to in-person offerings.

Office of Planning Advocacy

The Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA) provides planning opportunities and programs, certification, and regional planning best practices for municipalities and stakeholders connected to or affected by municipal planning. The coordination of statewide planning balances guiding future growth into compact, mixed-use development and redevelopment while taking into account environmental planning. The strength of this office is its ability to achieve comprehensive, long-term planning that integrates with programmatic and regulatory land-use decisions at all levels of government and the private sector.

The Office of Planning Advocacy (OPA), as of June 30, 2023, endorsed 21 communities, which helps to position communities to take steps forward in local and regional planning. There are 563 municipalities

in the state; OPA is continually guiding municipalities from the self-assessment to the final stages of the plan endorsement process. In FY23, the OPA issued Warehouse Citing Guidance, the first policy statement issuance from this office. This guidance resulted the creation of 5 legislative bills and provided an important springboard for ongoing statewide conversations about warehouse planning best practices. The OPA also assisted 10 municipalities navigate climate vulnerability assessments with community partners. All of these work areas are supporting the current State Development and Redevelopment Plan work, which will culminate in a finalized plan in 2024.

Cannabis Training Academy

The Cannabis Training Academy (CTA) will provide technical assistance and mentoring services for establishing a cannabis business. Course materials will align with the licensing process through step-by-step modules that correspond to each application area. The strength of this educational program will be its network of cannabis professionals, including instructors and mentors, which will help course participants navigate the cannabis industry and develop strategic plans for operational success.

NJ Motion Picture and Television Commission

The NJ Motion Picture and Television Commission (NJMPTC) provides expertise in financial incentives, permits, regulations, production services, site selection, and clearance for both filmmakers and location hosts. NJMPTC supports production work and promotes infrastructure growth for the statewide industry, especially in its efforts to ready municipalities for hosting production. The strength of this commission is the considerable experience of the collective NJMPTC team, as they are highly effective in meeting needs of production and host participants.

The NJ Motion Picture and Television Commission (NJMPTC) stimulated \$701.9 million in film and television production revenue in CY22. There were 1,172 shooting days that resulted in this record-high annual revenue. In 2022, there were 95 features (partial and whole), 21 telefilms and mini-series and 99 television series and specials, culminating in 619 total projects. Over 14,620 jobs were created by projects involving financial incentives in a variety of locations. Several major studios, including Netflix

and Lionsgate, kicked off multi-year planning projects. NJMPTC hosted several community-focused events, including two production assistance bootcamps and the new Film Ready program, a phased approach to supporting municipalities on best practices for working with production companies.

FY2023 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Office of Business Advocacy

- Partnered with 20 companies on comprehensive business development projects
 - Resulted in over \$100 million of investment in NJ real estate through agency assistance and support
 - Resulted in business operations expanding to 1.8 million square feet (SF)
 - Supported the creation of 510 new jobs and 939 existing jobs
 - Resulted in over \$218,000,000 in capital expenditures (CE)
 - Business highlights include:
 - Geoponica Greens, Hamilton (2,000 SF, \$200,000 CE)
 - Pro Logis, East Greenwich (574,000 SF, \$20 million CE)
 - Party City, Woodcliff Lake (250,000 SF, \$35 million CE)
 - Jetty Life, Stafford Township (20,000 SF, \$2.5 million CE)
 - D’Vora Pet Products, Pleasantville (5,000 SF, \$200,000 CE)
 - Edge Car Rental, Newark (152,460 SF, \$8 million CE)
 - Pure Indian Foods, Burlington (19,200 SF, \$300,000 CE)
 - Cen-Med Enterprises, New Brunswick (37,000 SF, \$400,000 CE)
 - Intravision Greens, Orange (13,555 SF, \$10 million CE)
 - P-nuff, Hackettstown (5,000 SF, \$1.5 million CE)
 - Odin Pharmaceuticals, Somerset (110,000 SF, \$33 million CE)

- Supported 591 regulatory assistance cases
 - Highlights include:
 - Bayonne Dry Dock, Bayonne - navigated DEP for permitting
 - Link Logistics, Kearny - obtained approvals from DEP
 - Jetty Life, Stafford - assisted in obtaining \$50,000 from NJEDA Small Business Improvement Grant (SBIG)
 - Craftline Cabinet, Clifton - connected company with SBA for PPP forgiveness
 - 269 Wyckoff LLC, West Windsor - negotiated with JCP&L to advance project
 - Schock Industries, Bordentown - facilitated necessary OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health) inspection
 - One Day Floors, Blackwood - assisted with site selection, resulting in lease
 - Salem County Improvement Authority, Salem - connected SCIA with USDA (US Department of Agriculture) for financing water treatment facility
 - Shoreline Freezers, Bridgeton - assisted with meeting NJDEP Historic Preservation Office requirements
 - Axtria, Berkeley Heights - supported advancements on compliance issues for company programs
 - DSM Nutritional Products Inc., Belvidere - connected company President to BPU’s Clean Energy Solar program
 - AquaPao, Princeton - secured grant from Commission on Science and Technology
 - InnCreReal/Papacks, Sparta - introduced options for consideration for innovative food packaging options

Office of Export Promotion

For the 2020-2022 \$1 million award (closed)

- Reported utilization of 100% of the NJ STEP funding award to SBA
- Export sales totaled \$34.5 million
- 148 actual jobs created/maintained

For the 2021-2023 \$2.4 million award (all funding has been awarded)

- Funding is record high for entire program and highest state award



- 140% increase over the previous program award
- Average award among 99 companies was \$18,579
- Export sales total \$21.9 million
- 688 actual jobs created/maintained

For the 2022-2024 \$500,000 award (in process)

- Funding focus benefits food and beverage manufacturing companies from underserved business communities
- Inaugural participation in international 2023 summer Fancy Food show as the State Pavilion host with 12 NJSTEP businesses new to export
- 12 NJSTEP Fancy Food participant projections:
 - \$5,835,000 in export sales
 - 44 jobs created

Office of Small Business Advocacy

- Participated in successful Resources for Growth event at Rowan College at Burlington County in September 2022
 - Welcomed nearly 150 participants, including entrepreneurs and business owners as well as representatives from federal, state, and local agencies
 - Created opportunity for start-ups, expanding businesses, and established companies to learn about relevant services and resources
- Participated in 62 live and virtual outreach events (35,757 attendees) and collaborated on programs with service provider partners and community partners
 - NJ Small Business Development Centers, including SCORE and the Procurement Technical Assistance Centers
 - NJ Thrives webinar series
 - Hudson County Latin American Chamber of Commerce Event in Spanish, September 2022
 - Downtown NJ Conference, December 2022
 - Governor's Conference on Tourism, December 2022
 - Hispanic and African American Chambers' Bond Readiness Program
 - Small Business Administration, which included highlighting lending product programs

- Business.nj.gov website metrics
 - 850,328 users
 - 1,226,462 sessions
 - 4,104,650 page views
- Call center metrics
 - 10,989 calls
 - 20.5 seconds average call answer speed
- Live chat metrics
 - 30,014 live chat conversations
 - 90,553 agent responses
 - 2 minutes, 42 seconds response time (median)
 - 70.8% customer satisfaction rating as 'great' or 'amazing' (out of 5 choices: terrible, poor, okay, great, amazing)

Office of State Planning

- For FY23, 21 communities have been endorsed
- Developed and distributed the Warehouse Citing Guidance
 - Presented Guidance to 11 different audiences
 - Resulting from Guidance, 3 Assembly and 2 Senate bills are under review
- Coordinated support with community partners like FEMA and the Rutgers Climate Resource Center to assist 10 municipalities with climate vulnerability assessments
- Represented the State Planning Commission and the Secretary of State via numerous interagency groups, including the Interagency Council on Climate Change, the Interagency Council on Environmental Justice, and the Human Services Age Friendly Council
- Participated in Rutgers Collaborative Stakeholder Advisory Panel and numerous other State, regional and local planning organizations and initiatives
- Kicked off preparation for the State Development and Redevelopment Plan update

Cannabis Training Academy

- Announced in 2022, CTA is the nation's first publicly-funded cannabis education initiative for entrepreneurs interested in pursuing cannabis operating license
- Founded on an equity-first approach, intentional and strategic action to help repair damage to people and neighborhoods that were marginalized and subjected to mass criminalization during the State's cannabis prohibition

NJ Motion Picture and Television Commission

- In 2022, film and television production revenue generated \$701.9 million, an annual revenue record
- Production highlights for 2022 included:
 - 619 projects filmed in NJ
 - 95 features (partial and whole)
 - 21 telefilms and mini-series
 - 99 television series and specials
 - 1,172 shooting days
 - 14,620 jobs created by projects receiving financial incentives
- Studio highlights included:
 - Sustainable Studios in Moonachie and 10 Basin Studios in Kearny began operations
 - Netflix Studios in Fort Monmouth, Lionsgate Studios in Newark, and 1888 Studios in Bayonne all began multi-year site planning projects
 - Phippen Studios, a woman-owned post-production facility, began operations in Englewood Cliffs
- Community engagement highlights included:
 - Launched Film Ready program, a phased approach to supporting municipalities on best practices for working with production companies
 - Hosted inaugural series of NBC Launch Talks to spotlight industry career information
 - Hosted 2 Production Assistant bootcamps at Rutgers University in Piscataway (co-sponsored by Sony Pictures Entertainment) and at Mercer Community College (co-sponsored by NBCUniversal)
 - Hosted Black History Month student-oriented presentation highlighting the work of the film industry's first major African-American movie director, Oscar Micheaux
- Film projects included:
 - “Bucky F*cking Dent” (Yale Productions) starring, written and directed by David Duchovny – Bridgewater, Franklin Twp, Dunellen
 - “Daddio” (Endeavor Content) starring Dakota Johnson and Sean Penn – Kearny
 - “Daughter of the Bride” (Choice Films/MarVista Entertainment) starring Marcia Gay Harden, Aidan Quinn and Andrew Richardson – Cranford, Clark
 - “Day of the Fight” starring Joe Pesci, Miles Teller and Jack Huston – Kearny
 - “Dumb Money” starring Paul Dano, Seth Rogan, Vincent D’Onofio, directed by Craig Gillespie – Jersey City
 - “Tripped Up” (Lunch Hour Productions) starring Leah Lewis, Peyton List and Vanessa Williams, directed by Shruti Ganguli – Pilesgrove, Glassboro, Haddonfield, Burlington
 - “Inappropriate Behavior” (Closer Media) starring Bobby Cannavale and Robert De Niro, directed by Tony Goldwyn – Newark
 - “Insidious: The Red Door” (Blumhouse Pictures/Universal) starring Patrick Wilson, Ty Simpkins and Lin Shaye – Moonachie, Chatham, Florham Park, Madison, Morristown, Old Bridge
 - “Miranda’s Victim” (All In Films) starring Abigail Breslin, Donald Sutherland, Luke Wilson, Andy Garcia, Kyle MacLachlan, Taryn Manning, Ryan Phillippe and Emily Van Camp, directed by Michelle Danner – Monmouth County, Red Bank
 - “Our Man From Jersey” aka “The Union” (Netflix) starring Mark Wahlberg and Halle Berry – Jersey City, Morristown
 - “Our Son” (Our Son Film, Inc.) starring Luke Evans and Billy Porter, directed by Bill Oliver – Newark, Jersey City
 - “Rob Peace” (Hill District Media) starring Chiwetel Ejiofor, Mary J. Blige and Stephan James, directed by Chiwetel Ejiofor – East Orange, Orange
 - “Which Brings Me To You” (WBMTY Entertainment, Inc./Anonymous Content) starring Lucy Hale, Genevieve Angelson and Nat Wolff directed by Peter Hutchings – Asbury Park, Highlands, Holmdel, Keansburg, Keyport, Long Branch, Middletown, Newark, Red Bank, Rumson, West Long Branch
 - “The Zombie Wedding” (Weekly World News Studios) starring Seth Gilliam, Heather Matarazzo and Cheri Oteri, directed by Tonya Pinkins – Bridgeton, Vineland
 - “Echo Valley” (Apple TV+) starring

Julianne Moore, Sydney Sweeney and Domhnall Gleeson – Delaware Twp., West Amwell

- “Eugene The Marine” (Concourse Media) starring Nick Nolte and Barbara Hershey – Flemington
- “Guns Up” (Guns Up The Film LLC) starring Kevin James and Christina Ricci – Bayonne, Jersey City, Kearny, West Orange
- “It Ends With Us” (Wayfarer Studios/Sony Pictures) starring Blake Lively and Justin Baldoni, directed by Justin Baldoni – Plainfield
- “Joker: Folie a Deux” (DC Entertainment/Village Roadshow/Warner Bros.) starring Joaquin Phoenix, Zazie Beetz, Brendan Gleeson and Jacob Lofland – Belleville
- “Mean Girls The Musical” (Paramount Pictures) starring Tina Fey, Angourie Rice and Renee Rap – Middletown, Florham Park, Morristown, North Arlington and Woodbridge
- “Nonnas” (Nonnas Productions) starring Vince Vaughn, Drea de Matteo, Lorraine Bracco and Susan Sarandon – Jersey City, Elizabeth, Bayonne, Rahway, Edison
- “Relay” (Thunder Road Pictures) starring Riz Ahmed and Lily James – Jersey City, Newark, Union
- “So Fly Christmas” (So Fly Christmas Movie/BET+) starring Tichina Arnold and Jackee Harry – Atlantic City, South Jersey
- “Y2K” (A24) starring Rachel Zegler, Alicia Silverstone and Jaeden Martell, directed by Kyle Mooney – Clark, Clifton
- “Your Monster” (Bimbo Sports and Entertainment) starring Scott Michael Foster, Kimiko Glenn and Tommy Dewey, directed by Caroline Lindy – Newark, Elizabeth
- Television series and specials included:
 - “Fallout” aka “Hondo” (Big Indie Pictures/Amazon) starring Walter Goggins, Ella Purnell and Kyle MacLachlan – Atco
 - FBI: Most Wanted (CBS/Universal Television) starring Julian McMahon, Keisha Castle-Hughes and Roxy Sternberg – Paterson, Bloomingdale, Linden, Newark
 - “Harlan Coben’s Shelter” (MGM Television/Netflix) starring Jaden Michael, Constance Zimmer, Geoffrey Cantor and Vivian Lamolli – Kearny, Alpine, Bayonne, Bloomfield, East Orange, Hanover, Hoboken, Jersey City, Kearny, Kinnelon, Little Falls, Livingston, Middletown, Millburn, Montclair, Morris Twp., Paterson, Sea Bright, Totowa, Wayne
 - “Impractical Jokers” (TruTV) – Jersey City, Bogota, Hoboken, Holmdel, North Bergen, Paterson
 - “Retreat” (FX) mini-series starring Brit Marling and Emma Corrin – Jersey City
 - “Succession S4” (HBO) – Englewood Cliffs, Jersey City
 - “Wu Tang: An American Saga” Season 3 (Hulu) – Kearny, Secaucus
 - “The Walking Dead: Dead City” (AMC) starring Jeffrey Dean Morgan and Lauren Cohan – East Rutherford, Holmdel, Newark, Jersey City, Allamuchy, Bayonne, Bernards Twp., Cedar Grove, Franklin Lakes, Harding, Hoboken, Plainfield, Warren, Weehaken, West Orange
 - “Food That Built America” (History Channel) – Newark
 - Severance (Endeavor Content/Apple TV+) – Holmdel, December
 - “Diarra From Detroit” (BET) – Moonachie, Cedar Grove, East Orange
 - “The Last Drive-In with Joe Bob Briggs” (AMC) – East Hanover
 - “Severance” (Apple TV+) starring Adam Scott, Zach Cherry, Britt Lower, John Turturro and Christopher Walken – Holmdel
 - “Winston” a.k.a. “Before” (Paramount Pictures/Apple TV+) starring Billy Crystal, directed by Barry Levinson – Moonachie, Jersey City, Paterson

FY24 GOALS

Public service priorities:

1. Launch of the NJBAC Cannabis Training Academy
2. Creation of Film Trails program, in partnership with the NJ Division of Travel & Tourism
3. Widen reach of Film Ready program
4. Quarterly Resources for Growth programs around the state
5. Create business “business-friendly” district/ municipality toolkits
6. Launch of print and digital business manual, as assigned by law

Operations priorities:

1. Implementation of the new NJBAC customer service metrics/survey law
2. Technology upgrades (helpdesk, website, municipal contact) to streamline processes, including hardware, software, and digital systems
3. Update of State Plan
4. Upgrade award process for NJSTEP program

Project priorities:

1. NJ Pavilion at the Fancy Food Show in NYC in 2024
2. Administer municipal and business district census to gain insight about business needs

Outreach priorities:

1. Implementation of NJBAC communications plan
2. Creation of NJBAC Annual Report
3. Nurture digital messaging, via website and social media, to strengthen NJBAC mission awareness

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



Lilah Velez, Administrative Assistant

Note: After 38 years in public service, Lilah is retiring later in 2023.

What do you love about your job?

“Since I first started my career in June of 1985, what I have loved most about my job is helping my co-workers and helping NJ businesses.”

New Jersey Cultural Trust

DIVISION DIRECTOR:
ISABEL (IZZY) KASDIN

MISSION:

The mission of the Cultural Trust as a public/private partnership is to ensure a stable and healthy cultural industry in New Jersey that is sustainable under fluctuating economic conditions through the establishment of permanent, interest-generating funds to be an additional source of revenue to nonprofit arts, history and humanities organizations. The Trust provides grants that support the building of endowments, the improvement of institutional and financial stability, and the capital improvement of cultural facilities. The grants also address critical needs not eligible for funding from other state agencies.

FY2023 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Hired Dedicated Staff

- The Department of State allocated resources permitting the Trust to hire its own dedicated staff for the first time in over a decade. These hires included the Executive Director and the Grants and Operations Coordinator.
- **Impact of Staff:** Focused staff time has enabled the Trust to broaden the usual pool of applicants for grants, ameliorate pain points in grant workflows, develop new forms of fruitful collaboration with partner agencies, and proactively engage with and support the needs of the sector.

Internal and Procedural Improvements at the Agency

With increased staff capacity, the Trust has already made a number of procedural improvements. The Trust worked to establish its own operational infrastructure as a stand-alone agency.

- **Standard Operating Procedures:** The Trust reviewed and codified all internal operating practices, improving and recording standard operating procedures for key Cultural Trust functions.
- **Technological and Operational Infrastructure:** The Trust secured its own access to crucial digital tools and formed its own procurement relationships.

Expanding Outreach

- **Establishing Communications:** In 2022, the Trust initiated its own digital communications channels, enabling the Trust to send email blasts to promote its grant programs. Over the course of FY23, the Trust grew its email list by 79%, from 360 contacts to 644 contacts.
- **Developing Relationships:** The Trust engaged with professional organizations, including Grantmakers in the Arts, the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers, and Americans for the Arts.
- **Speaking Opportunities:** The Trust established relationships with county cultural and heritage agencies. The Trust's Executive Director was invited to speak about the Trust's programs and services at the September meeting of the Association of NJ Cultural and Historic Agencies.

- **Community Events:** The Trust was represented at a variety of statewide events. Examples include: ArtPride New Jersey, the NJ Theatre Alliance, the NJ Association of Museums, the Council of NJ Grantmakers, and the Friends of NJ Heritage. Trust staff also attended the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s virtual annual conference.

Enhancing Qualification

The Cultural Trust Board reviews applications from nonprofit cultural organizations to become designated “qualified,” a process established by the Cultural Trust Act. The “qualified” designation means the organization is eligible to participate in Cultural Trust funding opportunities.

- **Broadening the Trust’s Reach by Growing the Number of Qualified Organizations:**
 - As a result of increased technical assistance and outreach, 303 organizations were designated as qualified by the Cultural Trust as of the end of FY23, one of the largest groups of actively qualified organizations in the Trust’s lifetime. Of this number, 26% are based in Southern New Jersey.
 - In 2022 alone, the Cultural Trust successfully qualified close to four times the number of organizations it had qualified in recent years. This included 40 organizations that had never before been qualified by the Cultural Trust, a 200% increase over recent years in the number of new organizations coming to the Trust.
- **Improving the Qualification Application:** The Trust restructured and clarified its application for qualification. This reduced the number of incomplete application submissions by at least 50%.
- **Enhanced Tracking of Qualified Organizations:** The Trust created a cloud-based database of qualified organizations. The database allows the Trust to better track organizations’ key characteristics and history with the Trust. The database also simplifies information-sharing with the Trust’s recommending agencies. Automations

in the database make it easier to identify and communicate with organizations whose status has lapsed.

- **Making Qualification More Transparent:** The Trust updated the standard format of the publicly-posted lists of qualified organizations. The public lists now include qualification expiration dates, increasing transparency about the qualification process and re-application requirements.

Making Grant Awards

- **Lifetime Grants:** Since its inception, the Cultural Trust has awarded \$9,648,735 in Institutional and Financial Stabilization and Capital Historic Preservation grants to 219 different cultural organizations in all 21 counties. Of these total awards, 34% went to organizations in Southern New Jersey.
- **FY23 Grant Awards:** In FY23, the Cultural Trust Board authorized \$541,427 in Institutional and Financial Stabilization grant awards to 16 diverse arts organizations across the state, with 37% of funding going to Southern New Jersey. The grant awards represent critical investments in the capacity and long-term sustainability of New Jersey’s cherished cultural organizations.
 - The NJ State Council on the Arts made the recommendations for the FY23 awards.
 - FY23 grant awards addressed needs such as establishing working capital funds and cash reserves, strategic planning, increasing staff capacity, technology upgrades, major equipment purchases, and DEAI planning.
 - 121 applications requesting a total of nearly \$4 million in support were submitted. This was an almost 70% increase in applications from the most recent arts grant round.
 - Rising interest rates allowed the Cultural Trust to try and meet the great need.

- The FY23 awards represented the largest amount of grant funding authorized in a single year since 2011.
- The average single award amount of \$33,839 was the largest since FY13, moving the Trust closer to the industry standard for capital and infrastructure grants.

- **Certified Donation Matching Payments:** Out of the Cultural Trust's FY23 appropriation of \$720,000, \$144,000 was designated to pay down commitments to qualified organizations with certified donations. The NJ Performing Arts Center received \$144,000 in matching payments.

Ongoing Technical Assistance

- Qualification
 - **Qualification Workshop and Video:** Trust staff developed its first ever live qualification technical assistance workshop, which provided a detailed overview of the qualification application and addressed common misunderstandings in the qualification process. There were 20 live attendees, and the recording has garnered 95 views online.
- Grants
 - **Individual Technical Assistance:** Trust staff provided over 190 individual technical assistance sessions about Cultural Trust qualification and the FY23 grant program.
 - **Virtual Office Hours:** Trust staff provided technical assistance to 73 applicants in four different virtual office hours sessions.
 - **Pre-Recorded Webinar:** Trust staff participated in a pre-recorded webinar about the FY23 grant program, which garnered 255 views.
 - **Grants Management Support:** The Trust created a new system of grants management technical assistance for grantees, including contract and final report workshops. These

ensure the successful completion of projects, and have already resulted in more effective grant reporting.

Responsible Fund Management

At the November 16, 2022 Annual Meeting, the total fund balance for the Cultural Trust Fund was reported as \$25,127,971. Throughout FY23, the Cultural Trust Board, with the Division of Investment, actively stewarded the Trust Fund, regularly monitoring its performance and considering investments.

- **Investment Activity:** Over the course of FY23, the Cultural Trust and the Division of Investment purchased 12 different Treasury Bills and Notes with laddered maturities in order to maximize interest income available for grantmaking.

GOALS FOR FY2024

Grow the Cultural Trust Fund

The Trust continues to work toward its original goal of reaching \$200 million invested in the Cultural Trust Fund and in the endowments of qualified organizations. Demand for the Cultural Trust's unique type of financial stabilization support remains very high. Increased Trust Fund principal, and therefore increased interest income, would enable the Trust to grow its annual grant program to better meet demand and successfully protect the long-term viability of the state's cultural sector.

- The Trust will seek to secure the outstanding balance of \$8.7 million from the public sector to match private donations that have already been certified.
- The Trust will work strategically with the Division of Investment to implement an investment strategy that generates maximum revenue from the Trust Fund within prudent parameters.

Continue to Rebuild the Trust's Operations as an Agency

With renewed investment in the Trust's staff and operational budget, the Trust will focus on enhancing

its operations and strategically utilizing its increased capacity. The Trust will seek to:

- Implement agency and fiscal management standards consistent with State regulations.
- Digitize and streamline the Cultural Trust’s application and reporting processes.
- Standardize and increase notifications to grantees and qualified organizations, particularly regarding their standing with the Cultural Trust.
- Establish a committee structure on the Board to boost Board engagement and to provide further advisory counsel on Cultural Trust programs and operations.
- Ensure ongoing professional development for Board and staff.

Enhance Outreach and Communications

Increasing awareness of and access to Cultural Trust grant programs requires a comprehensive outreach strategy. The Trust will develop a communications strategy that will encourage the Trust to:

- Launch social media channels.
- Enhance website content.
- Create outreach materials for general and targeted distribution.
- Increase in-person outreach to cultural organizations.
- Monitor and analyze results of grants to reveal the public benefits of stable cultural organizations.

Develop New Ways of Supporting the Institutional/ Financial Sustainability of the Cultural Sector

Leveraging new staff capacity to further deliver upon its mission, the Trust will seek to:

- Develop more regular technical assistance programming for cultural organizations on topics

that will help them enhance their institutional and financial stability.

- Work with recommending agencies to focus the Trust’s grantmaking on the sector’s most urgent stabilization needs, while also standardizing and clarifying the grant programs across rounds.
- Develop and cultivate relationships with professional service organizations, associations, and bodies aligned with the goals and work of the Trust.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“My background in public history and journalism, along with a summer internship at the National Endowment for the Humanities, sparked my interest in grant making. The role allowed me to engage with applicants, delve into data analysis, and explore the arts and humanities funding process. Now at the Cultural Trust, I cherish the chance to learn about diverse organizations in New Jersey’s cultural sector, contribute to the community, and witness the positive impact of our grants on arts, history, and humanities organizations across the state.”

Avery Wehrs, Grants and Operations Coordinator



New Jersey Division of Elections

DIVISION DIRECTOR:
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE
DR. LAUREN ZYRIEK ENRIQUEZ, ACTING
DIRECTOR OF THE DIVISION
OF ELECTIONS

OVERVIEW:

The Division of Elections coordinates the safe and secure conduct of elections in all 21 of New Jersey's counties and helps build a robust and enduring culture of civic engagement in our communities. Under the leadership of Assistant Secretary of State Dr. Lauren Zyriek Enriquez, the Division has continued to oversee and support free, fair, and secure elections in New Jersey.

MISSION OF THE DIVISION:

The Division of Elections is committed to ensuring free and fair elections across New Jersey's 21 counties. The division strives to provide accessible and transparent processes for all eligible voters while maintaining the highest standards of integrity and accuracy.

Elections

In FY23, the Division of Elections oversaw the 2022 General Election and the 2023 Primary Election.

2022 General Election

The 2022 General Election was held on November 8, 2022. County early voting sites were open for

in-person early voting between October 29 and November 6. County Clerks began sending mail-in ballots to voters in September. New Jersey had 6,444,613 registered voters and 2,658,149 votes were cast.

2023 Primary Election

The 2023 Primary Election was held on June 6, 2023. County early voting sites were open for in-person early voting between June 2 and 4, 2023. County Clerks began sending mail-in ballots to voters in April. There were 2,536,474 registered Democrats and 1,540,270 registered Republicans eligible to participate in their respective political party Primary Election. For this primary election, a total of 604,540 New Jersey voters cast ballots, with 381,787 voting in the Democratic Party primary and 222,753 voting in the Republican Party primary.

Projects:

Joining ERIC

The State of New Jersey, led by the Division of Elections, has joined the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC). ERIC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization created by and comprised of state election officials from around the United States. ERIC membership helps election officials maintain more accurate voter rolls and detect possible illegal voting. Using data matching technology and a secure data sharing program, ERIC assists states in identifying voters who have moved, died, or created duplicate voter records, allowing states to remove individuals from the rolls who are no longer eligible to vote in a given state. ERIC also uses data to identify citizens who are eligible to vote



but unregistered, which will allow the Division of Elections to efficiently target these individuals in voter registration and civic engagement efforts. ERIC membership onboarding is currently ongoing. The Division of Elections expects to be an active member of ERIC in FY24.

Training

The Division of Elections, in collaboration with the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness, has been able to concentrate on statewide emergency and security preparedness. The training, targeted towards counties and municipal clerks, is delivered through Continuity of Operation Planning (COOP) workshops and mini Table-top Exercises, focusing on a range of emergency scenarios that may occur before, during, or after an election. Both types of training emphasize the importance of being prepared for the unexpected. This readiness applies to all eventualities, whether they involve natural disasters, man-made disasters, or cyberattacks.

The Division of Elections, in collaboration with Rutgers University, will launch a NJ Elections Refresher training program for county election officials. This course will discuss the basics of the election process in New Jersey. Including, the roles and responsibilities of Federal, County and Local agencies and officials, the various types of elections, and key dates. Election officials who complete the course will receive a certificate from Rutgers University's Center for Government Services.

Voter Education

Voter education remains a top priority with ongoing concerns about misinformation reaching voters and impacting their understanding of how our elections work. Voters who are well informed about election administration and their roles as voters are less likely to fall prey to false or malicious information intended to undermine their trust in democracy.

On October 30, 2022, Secretary Way and the Division of Elections were made aware that an issue advocacy organization sent incorrect information about polling locations to some New Jersey voters. Secretary of State

Tahesha Way, New Jersey's Chief Election Official, issued a warning to the public regarding this incorrect information and reminding voters of the importance of relying on trusted and verified sources for accurate election information, specifically state and county election officials.

Vote.NJ.GOV is the state's voter information hub, serving as the one-stop shop for information about how to participate in our elections as a New Jersey voter. The Division of Elections works with county election officials to ensure that the site always has the latest information voters need for the next election. The site serves as a reliable resource for voters to check their registration status, find their designated polling locations, and access other election-related information. To combat misinformation and assist voters, local, county, and state election officials remain readily available to address any concerns or provide necessary guidance. Voters are encouraged to contact their respective County Clerk, County Board of Elections, County Superintendent of Elections, or reach out to the state's voter information/protection hotline at 1-877-NJVOTER (1-877-658-6837). For comprehensive voting information, individuals can visit Vote.NJ.Gov.

In the spring of 2023, Secretary of State Tahesha Way and the Division of Elections released a video series aimed at educating New Jersey citizens about the voting and election process. The videos provide clear explanations on topics such as voter registration, voting methods, tabulation of votes, and election certification. The series serves as a valuable resource for answering voters' questions and demystifying the electoral system to improve accessibility and participation.

Jersey Civic Engage

Jersey Civic Engage is an initiative to promote and support civic and voter engagement across our state's diverse communities. Jersey Civic Engage seeks to educate and empower New Jersey residents to engage in the civic and public life of their communities and understand the importance of voting, in every election for which they are eligible. Jersey Civic Engage encompasses multiple outreach programs within the Department of State, including the NJ Alliance for Civic Engagement (NJACE), The NJ Ballot Bowl,

NJ High School Voter Registration Week, and a new partnership with Vet the Votes.

NJACE is a non-partisan statewide collaborative coalition, supporting individuals, organizations, and teams who are working on civic and voter engagement and serving as a platform to share ideas, best practices and resources. NJACE is leading an effort to build grassroots The Local Civic Engagement Teams we are building, and has created an LCET organizing toolkit to help these groups develop outreach plans that suit their communities' unique needs.

Since 2018, Secretary of State Tahesha Way has led the New Jersey Ballot Bowl, a friendly non-partisan competition among NJ's college campuses to engage young voters across our state. The Ballot Bowl is conducted in conjunction with our national partner, the ALL IN Campus Democracy Challenge. In 2022, 29 New Jersey college campuses participated in the Ballot Bowl, accounting for 2,000 new voter registrations and more than 8,000 pledges to vote.

This past April 2023, Jersey Civic Engage hosted the second annual New Jersey High School Voter Registration Week. The program is aimed at registering New Jersey 17 and 18 year olds to vote while providing them with non-partisan information about how our elections work and their role as a voter. Together with lead partner Energizing Young Voters, with major promotion by the NJ Department of Education, the Governor's Youth Forum, and the NJ Center for Civic Education, the 2023 New Jersey High School Voter Registration Week added nearly 6,000 voter registrations to our state's voter rolls, double the impact of last year's inaugural event.

Implementing Updated and New State Election Laws

The following pieces of election-related legislation were implemented in New Jersey during FY 2023:

- **A1969, A3823** additional tools to lessen the impact of post-pandemic poll worker shortages
- **A3822** additional time to process and canvass mail-in ballots
- **A3822** ability to use pickup schedules for drop box ballot collections
- **A3823** utilize available technologies for more efficient poll worker training
- **A3817** enhanced privacy protections to keep their votes secret at polling locations
- **A3817** easy electronic ways for voters to make changes to their voter registration due to changes of their name or residence
- **A3929** Military and Overseas voters will be provided additional choices on their ballots for state offices
- **A3820** requiring Unaffiliated voters to declare a party prior to being issued a Mail-In ballot
- **A3823** enhanced reporting of death records before Primary and General Elections
- **A3819** provisions to redirect Mail-In ballots to a voter's residence address when ballots are returned as undeliverable
- **A3819** remove voters from the Mail-In ballot list when no ballots are returned after four years

The Division of Elections worked hand-in hand with election officials to ensure that the FY 2023 series of election bills could be implemented effectively to the benefit of voters, and other stakeholders in the administration of elections. Election officials were provided additional tools to lessen the impact of post-pandemic poll worker shortages, additional time to process and canvass mail-in ballots and the ability to use pickup schedules for drop box ballot collections, and utilize available technologies for more efficient poll worker training. Voters will see enhanced privacy protections to keep their votes secret at polling locations, and easy electronic ways to make changes to their voter registration due to changes of their name or residence. Many Military and Overseas voters will be provided additional choices on their ballots for state offices. Election integrity has been strengthened by requiring Unaffiliated voters to declare a party

prior to being issued a Mail-In ballot, enhanced reporting of death records before Primary and General Elections and the provisions to redirect Mail-In ballots to a voter's residence address when ballots are returned as undeliverable, and ultimately remove voters from the Mail-In ballot list when no ballots are returned after four years.

The Division of Elections had to make a number of enhancements to the Statewide Voter Registration System to meet legislative requirements for expanded ballot options for UOCAVA voters, allowing early preparation and canvassing of mail-in ballots and requiring unaffiliated voters to declare a party affiliation prior to being issued a mail-in ballot. Guidance documents for The Conduct of Early Voting, Signature Verification of Mail-In and Provisional Ballots and Cure of Discrepant Signatures, Mail-In Ballot Review, Early Voting Provisional Ballots, and Early Voting Emergency Ballots were all updated to reflect new or revised statutory requirements. The Division also created a new guidance document for New Jersey District Level Reporting.

Grants and Awards:

The Division of Elections received a grant award from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) in the sum of \$410,000. This grant will help enhance voters' experience with mail in ballots. New Jersey's Online Mail in Ballot Application is a web based application which will allow eligible New Jersey voters, including UOCAVA to apply for a mail in ballot or update an existing ballot request.

The Division of Elections received from the U.S. Elections Assistance Commission a national Clearinghouse Award for Outstanding Use of Help America Vote Act (HAVA) Grants in Elections Modernization. This award serves to recognize the Division's exemplary use of HAVA funds in maintaining a dedicated election security team during the 2022 midterms. Most importantly, this recognition spotlights the Division's efforts to ensure the security and integrity of current and future elections by partnering with the New Jersey Cybersecurity Communications and Integration Cell (NJCCIC).

Community Events and Speaking Engagement Events:

- National Association of State Elections Directors Summer Conference 2022 (Madison, WI)
- National Association of State Elections Directors Winter Conference 2023 (Washington, DC)
- National Association of Secretaries of State Summer 2022 and Winter 2023 Conferences (Washington, DC)
- New Jersey Association of Election Officials Conference 2022 (Spring Lake, NJ)
- New Jersey Association of Election Officials Conference 2022 (Atlantic City, NJ)
- Constitutional Officers Association of New Jersey Conference 2023 (Atlantic City, NJ)
- Constitutional Officers Association of New Jersey Conference 2023 (Atlantic City, NJ)
- Division-led monthly meetings, educational webinars, and trainings with county election officials and community groups.

Important Dates for 2023

- September 23, 2023: County Clerks Commence Mailing Ballots
- October 17, 2023: Deadline to Register to Vote for the 2023 General Election
- October 25, 2023: Sample Ballots Mailed to Voters
- October 28- November 5, 2023: Early Voting Period for the 2023 General Election
- November 7, 2023: Election Day
- December 7, 2023: State Board of Canvassers Meets to Certify 2023 General Election results

Key Dates and Deadlines for the 2024 Primary and General Elections will be available after January 1, 2024.



GOALS FOR 2024 FISCAL YEAR:

- Host statewide Election Security Tabletop Training Exercise with county election officials, IT staff, law enforcement, and federal partners to work through election impacting scenarios and update county continuity of operations plans for election administration
- Complete the transition to full membership in ERIC
- Support successful in-person early voting for the Presidential Primary and General Election (the first time New Jersey voters will have the option for a presidential election)

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“I really appreciate being a member of this team. The team fosters a culture that allows us to grow and learn, while treating everyone with mutual respect. Together, we help New Jersey’s democracy run and I’m proud to be part of this work.”

- Meshach Walker, Election Security Coordinator



New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
JEFFREY VASSER

MISSION:

New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism (NJTT) creates awareness of all that New Jersey has to offer as a destination to enhance the quality of life for New Jersey residents and their communities. NJTT is the only organization in New Jersey providing marketing strategy and industry leadership for the tourism industry stakeholders through:

- Domestic and international marketing programs
- Grant programs
- Cooperative marketing programs
- Comprehensive economic research
- Tradeshow collaboration
- Public relations training and education
- Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) and stakeholder outreach and consultation services

NJTT aims to provide diverse and memorable experiences for our visitors and engender pride among New Jersey residents about where they live, work, and play. As such, our organizational values focus on collaborative and proactive processes where we function as state ambassadors with a commitment to serve.

FY2023 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Key achievements

- +18.6% growth in visitor volume in calendar year '22 (114 million visits)
- +21.7% growth in visitor spending in calendar year '22 (\$45.4 billion)
- Expanded marketing to include markets from Boston to Washington, DC, Western PA, and Ohio
- Expanded international marketing program to include Canada, Ireland, UK, and Germany
- Visitnj.org website garnered 10.2 million visits in calendar year '22 (132% increase vs. '21)
- Awarded \$13.9 million in grant funding to tourism organizations and attractions throughout the state
- Digital metrics signaling consumer intent to travel rose 32% versus the prior year

Tourism Grants

The New Jersey Tourism grant program is a competitive program designed to empower regional marketing organizations to drive visitation to New Jersey while also promoting the state's regions and destinations.

In FY22, the Division awarded \$4,370,490 in grant funding. A total of 14 New Jersey DMOs received \$3,558,950, while 48 cooperative marketing grant applicants received \$811,540. For FY23, grant funding increased to \$4,995,570, allowing for \$4,122,000 in awards to 17 DMOs with an impressive 58 cooperative marketing grant recipients receiving \$873,570. Additionally, FY23 included another \$4,571,000 in awards to 16 DMOs from the American Rescue Plan for COVID-19 relief.



The expansion of NJTT's cooperative marketing program allows for the inclusion of state attractions and associations, such as wine growers, breweries, restaurants and campgrounds.

Geographic Marketing Coverage

Primary markets included: New York and Philadelphia DMA's.

Multimedia programs were also implemented in secondary markets, which included: Boston, Baltimore, DC, Pittsburgh, Utica, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Albany, Harrisburg, and Wilkes-Barre. This increase in secondary programs represents a significant expansion of our historical market coverage of core markets: NY, PA, NJ.

Media Campaigns

Digital and traditional advertising (TV, Radio, Outdoor, etc.) campaigns ran throughout the year, and highlighted New Jersey's diverse tourism assets with tailored campaigns, spotlighting the best of New Jersey for every season.

Website, Digital & Publication Efforts

With a refreshed look, feel, and style for the VisitNJ.org website, we continued to update with new contemporary visuals, including photography and videos. These were strategically featured to optimize marketing content and strengthen NJTT's branding and digital presence.

As of December 2022, VisitNJ.org visits rose 130% compared to 2021, with a new all-time monthly high visitation rate in July 2021, equaling more than 1.5 million views.

Social media remained an important component of reaching NJTT's target audience, as Instagram was the leading platform with 54K followers, which increased by 17% in 2022-23.

VisitNJ.org's monthly email newsletter was a trusted source of information in the tourism market, as it remained consistent, with a high open rate of over 25.18% each month.

The Official New Jersey Travel Guide is an easy-access, full-color publication that includes features on state destinations and attractions for readers to bookmark

and later explore in person. It serves as a key visitation planning tool. Print distribution expanded in FY23 to target outdoor and automotive clubs, biking and hiking tours, bird-watching groups, and real estate agencies. As a result, the distribution increased from 246,258 guides in 2021 to 305,019 in 2022. The Travel Guide's highest signal of viewer's intent to travel was in February 2022 with over 5,103 online orders, online views and downloads.

Travel Tradeshow Activity

NJTT sponsored the American Bus Association's 2023 Travel Trade Show. The Division held meetings with domestic bus tour operators interested in developing group tours throughout New Jersey. Industry partners and hoteliers throughout the state participated and held one-on-one meetings.

NJTT promoted New Jersey at USTA's International Travel Trade Show (IPW) in 2022. IPW is the largest international travel show in the U.S. In partnership with DMO partners, NJTT met with over 250 international tour operators interested in learning about New Jersey's offerings for foreign travelers. In addition, NJTT Public Information Department attended IPW and met with over 30 journalists who were interested in writing national and international articles on New Jersey.

Consumer Travel Show Activity

NJTT partnered with NJTIA to promote New Jersey in multiple cities, including: Columbus, OH, Montreal, CA, New York City, NY, Chicago, IL, Pittsburgh, PA, Boston, MA, Washington, DC, and Philadelphia, PA. The collaborative effort reached in reaching hundreds of thousands of consumers and distributed over 40,000 pieces of tourism marketing collateral at these events.

International Marketing

Utilizing the gateway airports of Newark and Philadelphia, we market to countries with frequent service to New Jersey and increase our number of visitors, and the amount of money they spend. The international visitor provides significantly more economic impact than a domestic one. Key markets include: Canada, Ireland, United Kingdom (UK), and Germany

- International consumer and travel trade outreach in Canada, Germany, UK, and Ireland

- Established relationships with consultants in each market
- Created dedicated web landing pages to support tourism from each market, allowing for better result tracking and the ability to speak in native visitor languages.
- Created media plans specific to each market to run through 2024

Marketing Awards Earned

2022 HSMAI Adrian Awards for the “Boost Your Mood” Marketing Campaign

2022 Travel Weekly Magellan Award for the “Boost Your Mood” NYC Experience

FAM Media Tours

NJTT has organized, planned and executed multiple familiarization media tours (FAMs) for domestic and international journalists, with the key assistance of state DMO partners in FY23. These invited journalists come to New Jersey, with some stays ranging up to a week or more, to travel throughout the state and visit selected historical and cultural sites, as well as state attractions. Additionally, FAMs are planned specifically for the traveling press corps to experience NJ’s diverse culinary and wine offerings, musical and arts programming, and numerous outdoor adventures that traverse all geographic regions. As a result of FAMs, placement of print features has appeared in mainstream travel outlets.

PR Awards Earned in FY23

In an ongoing effort to obtain accolades for New Jersey, NJTT ensured that NJ DMO partners appeared on relevant tourism and travel ballots in the mainstream media. Award winning lists included: Conde Nast Traveler’s Readers’ Choice Awards, Travel + Leisure’s World’s Best Award and USA Today’s 10Best Awards.

FY2024 GOALS

As the state and the Division continue to recalibrate, following two years of pandemic losses in both visitation numbers and revenue, NJTT is focused on branding New Jersey as a premier vacation and business travel destination in 2023 and 2024. To this end, NJTT will expand existing local and secondary tourism markets, while cultivating new markets among consumer and business travelers.

In an effort to reestablish pre-pandemic visitation levels to the state by Q4 of 2023, our marketing footprint will comprise of several key international markets, including the U.K., Canada and Germany. Additionally, the Division will utilize innovative, trackable and effective digital marketing strategies in all of its promotional efforts to measure its impact in a meaningful way. Likewise, we will be employing improved social media strategies to include music, video and graphics to produce even stronger levels of engagement among Garden State fans.

The Division is enthusiastic to further develop group, bus, student and sports travel/tours, as well as further incorporate LGBTIQ+, Black, Hispanic and Asian audiences into its marketing campaign outreach and efforts. On [VisitNJ.org](https://www.visitnj.org), NJTT will establish an ADA compliant website, as well as provide updated content and travel itineraries for those that are differently abled. Our partnerships with MAAC, Penn State and HBCU also provide NJTT with a unique opportunity to target multigenerational sports fans with deep ties and connections to New Jersey.

In January, NJTT released the [2023 Official Travel Guide of New Jersey](#), encouraging all friends and visitors of New Jersey “to play, toast, shop, explore, dig in, be inspired and relive history”—all right here in the Garden state this year.

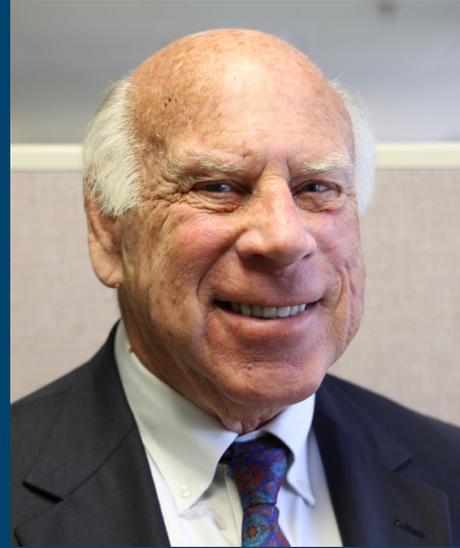
Leveraging its key partnerships with NJTIA and New Jersey DMOs, NJTT will continue to create an even stronger presence at consumer travel shows this year. As the Division expands its marketing coverage beyond the immediate tristate area, focus has also shifted to growing consumer show market support. In the fall of 2022, NJTT attended the AAA Great Vacations Travel Expo in Ohio, as well the International Tourism & Travel Show in both

Montreal and New York. Our team's foot print for 2023-24 includes a further reach into untapped cities such as Chicago, Pittsburgh and Boston.

NJTT looks forward to a productive and dynamic 2023-24, which includes reorganization of the existing team, as well as new hires in staffing. We hope to soon welcome a new Division deputy director, research director, international marketing manager and social media manager.



EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“Why do I love my job?”

“I spend the largest proportion of my job speaking to the public who seek to visit New Jersey, many for the very first time in their lives. I very much enjoy interacting with individuals on a daily basis who use our information services at NJTT,”

- Steven Leonard, NJTT Publications, Distribution & Requests

New Jersey Historical Commission

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
SARA CURETON

MISSION:

The New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC) is a state agency dedicated to the advancement of public knowledge and preservation of New Jersey history. Established by law in 1967, its work is founded on the fundamental belief that an understanding of our shared heritage is essential to sustaining a cohesive and robust democracy.

The NJHC receives its funding primarily by legislative appropriation. It fulfills its mission through various initiatives, as well as an active grant program. The goal of the grant program is to engage diverse audiences and practitioners in the active exploration, enjoyment, interpretation, understanding, and preservation of New Jersey history. In addition to other awards and prizes, the NJHC offers a free archival evaluation service called Caucus Archival Projects Evaluation Service (CAPES).

FY2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

NJHC Grants

The NJHC's grant programs this year were impactful and robust. In addition to ongoing General Operating Support (\$2.8 million awarded to 44 history organizations and programs), Project (\$800,000 awarded to 40 projects), and County History Partnership programs (\$1,269,777 awarded to all 21 counties supporting hundreds of local history organizations and projects), the Commission offered three new programs. A second round of COVID

relief grants provided \$140,000 in critical relief to 28 organizations; a new DEAI opportunity supported training and the development of Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion plans at fourteen history organizations; and the Inclusive History Grant Program offered (in two rounds) \$494,340 in funding for the exploration of under-represented narratives in New Jersey history with a goal of expanding inclusive, community-centered interpretation and resources offered by historic sites and history organizations. Together, these grant programs provided unique and unprecedented resources for expanding research, teaching, preservation, and enjoyment of state and local history resources.

NJHC Programs

The Commission's program offerings in 2022 were robust and engaging. The African American History Program, led by Noelle Lorraine Williams, produced the 2022 New Jersey Historical Commission Annual Conference, titled *Freedom Seeker, Colonizer and Enslaved: Immigration and Migration in New Jersey*. This one-day virtual conference attracted 192 registrants.

Following the passage of new legislation in the fall of 2022, the African American History Program began coordinating the creation of the **New Jersey Black Heritage Trail**. Initial activities focused on community outreach, recruitment of temporary and permanent staff, research into models of relevant programs in other states, and development of guidelines for the new program. In 2023 this work continued with three community meetings in North and Central New Jersey and one virtual meeting. The publication of program guidelines, the development of a program logo, and a start to the designation of sites are anticipated for 2023.

Established in 2018, **RevolutionNJ is New Jersey's official statewide commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States.** As a public-private partnership under the Department of State, the New Jersey Historical Commission and its non-profit partner, Crossroads of the Revolution, have undertaken several initiatives to help the state prepare for this once-in-a-generation opportunity. Guiding these efforts, are a mission statement and six strategic goals developed in consultation with diverse stakeholders and communities around the state.

Below you will see a brief summary of the six strategic goals and some of the larger initiatives undertaken to meet them.

Goal #1: Tell a diverse and inclusive story about America's past that invites participation from all New Jerseyans.

Of particular note are the many new programs and resources available to those interested in learning more about the interpretive themes for the anniversary and how to use them in developing programs. Dr. Marc Lorenc is to be commended for shepherding the development of these, notably the Bundle of Silences series of webinars featuring a leading scholar addressing each of the seven interpretive themes.

James Amemasor and Noelle Lorraine Williams completed primary research on African American, Indigenous, and People of Color during the American Revolution. They are currently working on a resource pamphlet.

Offered Inclusive History Grants to support new research and interpretive planning for history organizations and projects. 25 grants were awarded totaling \$494,340.

Goal #2: Encourage the growth of organizational capacity at New Jersey's history organizations so that they are better able to attract, engage, and serve visitors, both during and after Revolution NJ.

Created a Volunteer Program to assist sites with capacity needs statewide.

Hosted several county planning meetings for the 250th to increase collaboration and engagement between historic sites and organizations (discussions with representatives from Mercer, Bergen, Union, Passaic, Monmouth, Sussex, and Atlantic Counties with more scheduled)

Goal #3: Promote heritage tourism in and to New Jersey to increase its positive impact on economic and community development.

Developed a History and Placemaking Workshop Series for Spring 2023 whose goal was to strengthen the history community's ability to take part in placemaking initiatives around the state.

Goal #4: Elevate the value placed on history education in our K-12 schools and universities.

Launched several initiatives and resources including:

Perfect Partners Webinar Series that builds bridges between educators and history organizations.

Created lesson plans for teaching the interpretive themes through the *A Bundles of Silences* video series.

Launched development of "History Happened Here," a statewide, grade 5-12 hands-on history research program.

Worked with Education Northwest, an Indigenous education firm, to conduct research on and create a plan for enhancing Indigenous History education for New Jersey's K-12 classrooms.

Goal #5: Demonstrate how understanding the complexity of our history helps us to respond to the present and prepare for the future.

A Traveling Exhibit (in partnership with Morven Museum and Gardens) is in development. After an RFQ was requested, Meg Sharp Walton of Sharp Consulting was just selected as the guest exhibit curator. The Exhibition design will take place in FY24.

A proposal for a \$1.8 million public art initiative was submitted by Monument Lab. To commemorate the Semiquincentennial anniversary of the American Revolution, Monument Lab proposed working in collaboration with the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC) and partners on a statewide exhibition in which 22 locally-based NJ artists will create installations at historic sites that highlight the lesser-known stories of the American Revolution and spark contemporary connections across New Jersey. This proposal is now under consideration for implementation.

Goal #6: Increase public and private funding for history in New Jersey

The State of New Jersey allocated \$25 million to address critical capital needs at ten of the state's Revolutionary War historic sites in anticipation of the nation's Semiquincentennial. The goal is to make these sites truly visitor ready in time for the anticipated interest generated by the upcoming anniversary.

Crossroads of the American Revolution hired a development director and is planning the launch of a private fundraising campaign in 2023.

Marketing and Communication Key Moments:

- Consultants Princeton Partners created an official website for the RevolutionNJ initiative: <https://www.revny.org/>. The website houses information, resources, and updates surrounding the initiative. And is continuing to develop new features.
- Started sending bi-weekly email blasts with updates, blogs, and other information related to the initiative.

Partnership and Branding Key Moments:

- Created RevolutionNJ Communities Initiative with 17 municipalities already passing a resolution.
- Launched RevolutionNJ Proud Partner Program with 21 partners already designated.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“I love my job because I get to promote the powerful stories of New Jersey in the past and present!”

- Noelle Lorraine Williams, Director, African American History Program

New Jersey State Archives

DIRECTOR:

JOSEPH R. KLETT

MISSION:

New Jersey State Archives (NJSA) has statutory responsibility for the management and preservation of public records of enduring historical value. This includes materials in all formats (paper, microfilm, other physical media, and electronic), either designated as permanent by law/regulation or deemed historically significant through appraisal. The Archives' mission is tied, historically, to the records-filing functions of the Secretary of State's Office.

Organizationally, the agency is the successor to the former New Jersey Public Records Office (created in 1920) and the State Library's Bureau of Archives and History (or BAH, created in 1945). The services and holdings of the BAH were vested in the Division of Archives and Records Management (DARM), created in the Department of State in 1983 by an executive reorganization plan. Under a memorandum of understanding between the departments of State and Treasury, DARM's records management, records storage, and micrographics functions have been overseen by the Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services (DORES) in the Department of the Treasury since 1 July 2012.

Sub-Units:

Administration – This unit consists of three full-time employees (the Executive Director, the Supervising Archivist, and a Technical Assistant 1). It is responsible for the management of the division's

policies and statutory mission as a whole, and the day-to-day operation of NJSA as a records repository and research facility.

Collection Management – This unit consists of two full-time employees (an Archivist 1 a.k.a. Collection Manager, and an Archivist 2) and two part-time employees (Processing Assistants). Its responsibilities include: the appraisal (“archival review”) of potential acquisitions from other government agencies and private donors; orchestrating and documenting accessions/records transfers; arranging, describing, sorting, and weeding materials at the time of appraisal or after accession; archival housing of collections and maintenance/monitoring of storage and vault environments; production of collection guides, inventories, and database records for public research use; collaboration with Records Management Services (in DORES) and the State Records Committee on the records retention policy.

Reference and Outreach Services – This unit consists of four full-time staff (an Archivist 1 a.k.a. Head of Reference Services, a Senior Library Assistant, a Library Assistant, and a Confidential Clerk) and four part-time staff (Reference Assistants). It is responsible for: the delivery of public reference services in-person and by mail/email; public reception; certification of records; development of research aides and resource guides; and presentations on NJSA's historical/genealogical holdings and services.

Data and Digitization Services – This unit consists of three full-time staff (an Archivist 1, an Archivist 2, and a Technical Assistant 1), one part-time staff (a Publications Assistant), and two data-entry contractors (public-private partnership project). It is responsible for: database development/management

and oversight of data-entry projects contributed to by the other units; digitization of documents, maps, and photos; photo-reproduction services; and the development of website pages and online resources.

Electronic Archives Program – This unit, established in FY 2023, consists of two full-time staff (an Archivist 1 and an Archivist 2). It is responsible for the development of procedures/workflows, standards, and policies relative to historical/permanent public records in electronic form (including born-digital and digitized documents); surveying state agencies’ holdings of permanent records in electronic form; working with the Collection Management unit to appraise and transfer electronic files to the State Archives; maintenance and preservation of NJSA’s holdings of electronic records (currently utilizing the Preservica platform).

FY2023 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Inauguration of Electronic Archives Program – In 2022, NJSA hired two archivists to develop and implement an Electronic Archives Program for the State of New Jersey. Our agency had been lobbying for resources and staffing for this for many years. In December 2022, Tara Maharjan was recruited from Rutgers University Libraries Special Collections and University Archives Department to become our senior electronic records archivist. She joined Danielle Marchetti, recruited earlier in the year in the junior electronic records archivist role. Both have excellent training in electronic document management and special training in the Preservica platform.

The importance of this development for state government recordkeeping and public history cannot be understated. By the end of FY 2023, the program staff had:

- Completed additional training and tested workflows in the platform;
- Developed policies and protocols for the Program;
- Participated in, and significantly contributed to, various regional and national resource groups and conferences relative to electronic records preservation;

- Identified, procured, and installed specialized software applications needed to enable and supplement NJSA’s use of the Preservica platform;
- Researched specifications for, and ordered, specialized hardware needed for file transfer protocols and local backup of Cloud-based electronic records storage;
- Developed an online electronic records survey for state agencies; and
- Presented to the State Records Committee and the County Archives and Records Management Association of New Jersey (CARMA-NJ) on our Program’s objectives and plans.

Public Reference Services – During the fiscal year, NJSA continued to expand in-person public reference services (which we were required to limit during 2020 and 2021). While NJSA is not yet open to walk-in researchers five days per week, in late spring 2023 we expanded research-by-appointment opportunities to 60 three-hour slots: 54 in our Microfilm Reading Room on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday mornings and afternoons; and six in our Manuscript Reading Room on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons. We also effectively eliminated a considerable backlog in mail-reference services caused by the shutdown of State offices during the pandemic, fulfilling 17,452 documents requests during the course of FY 2023. Of these, nearly 2,000 documents required raised-seal certification.

Additionally, the following were among the many research and publication projects supported by the Archives’ staff and collections during the course of the fiscal year:

- A PBS documentary on “Keeping the Pinelands” (image of Governor Brendan Byrne signing the Pinelands Protection Act in 1978 provided to Susan Wallner);
- *The Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia* to be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press (image of “The High Hat Club” from our WPA/ New Jersey Writers Project collection, provided to Hillary Kativa);
- ESPN and the New York Times relative to Hinchcliffe Stadium and the Negro League (circa-1930s image of the construction of the baseball stadium provided to freelance photographer Jessi Dodge);

- African-American history online exhibit sponsored by Harvard and Radcliffe universities featuring the Bordentown Manual Training School for Colored Youth (images of student groups and facilities provided to Alexandria Russell);
- Documentary on “crimes that made history” by Doclights of Hamburg, Germany (images relating to the Lindbergh Kidnapping provided to Barbara Heyman);
- Teen fiction author Diane Green for her book *Becky’s Choice: A Ghost Story* (information about the history of the State Archives).

U.S. Semiquincentennial Planning – During the year, NJSA took major steps in planning an exhibition of the State’s charter documents and Revolutionary War treasures for the U.S. Semiquincentennial, and in support of the efforts of other agencies relative to the upcoming commemoration. This has included:

- Developing and issuing a Request for Quotes (RFQ) for guest curation of our own exhibition, which will be located at the State Museum from April 2026 into January 2027 (working with the Museum’s director and curators and the Division of Administration);
- Supporting the Crossroads of the Revolution’s and Department of the Treasury’s efforts to explore the feasibility of, and promote interest in, a Revolutionary War experience center in Trenton (largely through tours of the Archives’ vault for legislators and other interested parties);
- Featuring various Revolutionary War documentary treasures held by NJSA in an extensive New York Times article in November 2022;
- Outlining a Rutgers Press book on “Revolutionary New Jersey” to feature NJSA’s war-period and civil rights-related documents, to be co-edited by professors Maxine Lurie and Richard Veit, and NJSA Executive Director Joseph Klett.
- Research assistance to Morven House & Garden, Princeton, N.J., in connection with their planned 2026 exhibition focusing on New Jersey’s Signers of the Declaration of Independence.

Development of Research Tools and Online Resources

– During the fiscal year, major online resources were developed and posted to NJSA’s website through the work of our Data and Digitization

Services Unit and the New Jersey Early Land Records Project. These included:

- **Marriage Index, 1848-1900:** This online database was expanded to include marriage information from the 1878-1900 period, and now contains index data for about 492,000 marriages. The resource is the result of data-entry work done by a number of staff members during the work-from-home period of 2020 brought on by the pandemic.
- **Early Land Records Database, ca. 1650s-early 1900s:** This online resource now indexes over 80,000 land records primarily from the pre-1785 period. The work was funded, in large part, through federal and state-level grants as well as corporate donations from New Jersey’s land-title and professional-land-surveying sectors. The Genealogical Society of New Jersey was our oversight and fiscal partner in this endeavor. To date, about 10,000 documents have also been digitized, with the images linked to the free database.

Recovery of Alienated Public Records – Director Klett (working with the Attorney General’s Office and the New Jersey State Police) exerted claims to, and successfully recovered, several alienated public records on behalf of the State during FY 2023. These were all enrolled laws bearing governors’ signatures stolen from the basement of the State House, likely in the 1950s. Recoveries during the fiscal year included the following (listed in chronological order):

- “An Act to Prevent Unseasonable Burning of the Woods,” 1716;
- “An Act Directing the Treasurers of the Colony to pay the Commander in Chief of All his Majesty’s Forces in North America the sum of One thousand Six hundred and Two Pounds ...,” 1762;
- “An Act for the Preservation of Deer, and other Game, and to prevent trespassing with Guns,” 1771;
- “An Act for the better Preservation of Deer in the Township of Morris,” 1772;
- “An Act to Exempt Ten Men to be Employed at the Union Saltworks ... from Service in the Militia,” 1777;
- “A supplement to An Act to incorporate the Contributors to the Society for establishing useful Manufacturers,” 1792;

- “An Act to Incorporate the Franklin Company” [to publish books and manufacture paper in Jersey City], 1811; and
- “An act to incorporate a company to erect a Rail Road from ... Trenton, to ... New Brunswick,” 1815 [the first charter of a railroad company in America].

Other Notable Acquisitions – NJSA also accessioned (acquired) historical records from multiple state and local government agencies, as well as several private donors. This amounted to 326.5 cubic feet of paper records and microfilm during FY 2023. Acquisitions of special note include:

- **The early records of Trenton Psychiatric Hospital.** This acquisition includes early photographs of the institution and correspondence of its founder, pioneer mental healthcare advocate Dorothea Dix.
- **Marriage and death records for the 1931-1940 and birth records for 1922.** This acquisition signifies the resumption of a phased transfer of such records from the Office of Vital Statistics and Registry in the Department of Health, commenced prior to the pandemic. The multi-year endeavor will result in a major expansion of NJSA’s genealogical holdings and research services.
- **The Civil War photography collection of historian John Kuhl.** This is the pre-eminent collection of “cartes-de-visite” and other photographic portraiture of New Jersey’s soldiers in the war. The donation includes roughly 1,400 images—quadrupling NJSA’s holdings of photography of Civil War soldiers.
- **Early newspapers of East Orange (Essex County) and Red Bank (Monmouth County).** These microfilm collections date back into the 1800s and include a rare African-American newspaper from Red Bank.

Research for the Attorney General’s Office – In January 2023, Director Klett was contacted by the Attorney General’s Office to conduct historical research on New Jersey colonial and statehood-period laws relative to trespassing with a gun. This was in connection to the State’s defense in two U.S. District Court Cases stemming from Governor Murphy’s 2022 gun-control law. On February 8, Mr. Klett signed a certification and 21 exhibits tying together and

interpreting 300 years of gun/trespass legislation from 1722 to the present.

FY 2023 Statistics:

- **Reference Inquiries Responded To** 76,553 (these range from telephone calls and emails seeking historical facts and information on NJSA’s holdings, to requests for specific genealogical records, and complex searches for court cases, military service documentation, land titles, etc.)
- **New Database Records Created:** 136,343

FY 2024 GOALS:

Development of Semiquincentennial Exhibition Content – The contract for guest curation of NJSA’s planned exhibition at the State Museum in 2026-27 will be awarded in the summer of 2023. The exhibition will focus on our unique holdings of Revolutionary War and civil rights-related material, and how revolutionary ideals have played out through New Jersey history. The exhibition has a tentative main title “Revolutionary New Jersey,” intended to connect it to an upcoming Rutgers University Press publication (noted above). Planned for a 3,000-SF gallery space on the Museum’s street level, the content will tie into RevolutionNJ’s “Interpretive Framework” developed, in part, by the New Jersey Historical Commission. It will tell stories of: 1) the experiences of New Jersey citizens in the Revolutionary Period and during the war itself; 2) how the ideals of the Revolution and early statehood years had evolved during the colonial period and have continued to evolve; and 3) how they are relevant today.

Electronic Archives Program – Early in FY2024, NJSA will implement the electronic records survey (mentioned above) within the Department of State and in conjunction with presentations to the division directors and key agency staff. We plan to start with several of the other cultural agencies (State Museum, Historical Commission, Council on the Arts, and Cultural Trust) and the Division of Administration. The survey/presentations will then be extended to the rest of the Department and, ultimately, all other executive branch agencies, the Legislature, and the Judiciary.

We also anticipate the following for FY2024:

- Formalizing an agreement with the New Jersey Public Broadcasting Authority relative to the phased transfer and ingestion of digital assets of the former New Jersey Network;
- Appraising other agencies' permanent (or potentially permanent) electronic records for acquisition by NJSA;
- Transferring/ingesting agency records into NJSA's Preservica platform; and
- Working with DORES to develop statewide policies for electronic records management and preservation.

Gallery Space Planning – As of June 2023, a feasibility study is underway by Gannett Fleming architects, under the auspices of the Division of Property Management and Construction (DPMC, in the Department of the Treasury), to determine the needs and costs to outfit gallery space for NJSA on the street level of 225 West State Street. This was envisioned at the time of the State Archives' and Department of State's relocation to the building in 2000. Unfortunately, environmental controls and lighting issues were not resolved at that time; nor was an exhibitions program staffed. We look forward to working with the offices of the Secretary of State and the State Treasurer to plan budgetary resources, construction, and staffing in support of this function and space use.

Public Reference Services – Now that staff vacancies which arose during and after the pandemic have been filled, we will expand NJSA's open public hours during FY 2024. We will start by opening on Fridays.

New Online Resources – Among the online resources now in production, we anticipate that the following will become free public resources during FY 2024:

- **New Jersey Tax Ratables.** This multi-year digitization and indexing effort will result in a major new resource at NJSA's website (i.e., searchable database and linked images). The project was begun by Archives staff in 2020, during the pandemic-related work-from-home period. The collection consists of 1,431 booklets listing New Jersey property tax payers (including owners and lessees), municipality by municipality, during the 1770s-1820s period. The information

is extremely important for local history and genealogy due to the federal government's loss (by fire) of all New Jersey census records from 1790, 1800, 1810, and 1820. The scanning and indexing of these materials captures vital information about landholding, slavery, militia exemptions, etc. The resultant online resource will enable new scholarship on New Jersey during the Revolutionary War and in the early statehood period, as the 250th anniversary of the United States approaches.

- **NJSA Map Website.** This new online resource will digitally display maps, plans, and drawings from NJSA's vast and varied holdings. Based on meetings with the Canal Society of New Jersey (CSNJ) in spring 2023, we anticipate that our initial offering will consist of maps and engineering drawings of the Morris Canal. A major feature of northern New Jersey's landscape, the canal was constructed in the 1830s and dismantled in the late 1920s. It traversed the state from Phillipsburg to Jersey City, utilizing a complex system of locks and inclined planes that brought canal boats over the hilly countryside and connected the Delaware and Hudson rivers. NJSA owns the corporate records of the canal company, which was ultimately absorbed by the State. CSNJ has budgeted funds to enable the Archives to begin digitizing this rich cartographic and engineering collection.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“As a young person, working at the State Archives has helped me realize that I want to pursue a lifelong career as an archivist. I am passionate about preserving New Jersey history as well as uplifting the stories of ordinary people.”

- Emily Borowski, Reference Assistant



New Jersey State Council on the Arts

DIRECTOR:
ALLISON TRATNER

MISSION:

The New Jersey State Council on the Arts, created in 1966, is a division of the NJ Department of State and a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts. The Council was established to encourage and foster public interest in the arts; enlarge public and private resources devoted to the arts; promote freedom of expression in the arts; and facilitate the inclusion of art in every public building in New Jersey.

The Council believes the arts are central to every element we value most in a modern society including: human understanding; cultural and civic pride; strong communities; excellent schools; lifelong learning; creative expression; and economic opportunity.

Agency Units

- Grants and Strategies
- Community Partnerships and Artist Services
- Operations and Technical Assistance
- Communications

FY2023 NOTABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Responsive Grantmaking

- State Arts Council dollars made possible more than 900 grants - totaling \$31,487,856 - to NJ artists and organizations of all sizes, in all artistic disciplines, that impacted communities, families, and individuals in all 21 counties.
- Over 50% of the Council's FY23 grants were for operating support, which is historically the most difficult type of support for nonprofit organizations to obtain. These operating dollars are of the utmost importance for arts nonprofits, especially after the financial hardships brought on by the pandemic.
- The Council granted nearly \$1.8 million to 147 New Jersey artists to support their artmaking. These awards ranged from \$4,000 - \$32,000.
- In an effort to better support lifelong learning in the arts, the Council launched the Creative Aging Initiative Grant in fall 2022, engaging both arts and community-based organizations in providing free arts learning opportunities to adults aged 55 and older. At the Council's December 2022 public meeting, the Council announced it was funding \$220,000 in Creative Aging Initiative Grant awards.

Building Community and Leveraging Partnerships

- The Council's arts service organization Community of Practice identified a gap in statewide pay equity and compensation data, and collaborated to develop a statewide, cross-discipline survey to assist and inform the field in this topic area. In February 2023, the Council announced it would support a statewide Data Compensation Survey through a \$10,000 grant increase to ArtPride New Jersey Foundation, one of the lead partners of the survey. Data from this survey will help both employers and job seekers understand and address issues of access and equity. (The Communities of Practice are a series of Council-led convenings of arts organizations with similar traits or missions that provide a space for participants to share best practices, concerns, and tools, in order to build opportunities and strengthen the field as a whole.)
- COA Staff served as the lead on the artwork selection process for the new Terminal A at the Newark Liberty Airport, in partnership with the Port Authority of NY/NJ. Successfully selected 26 artists to be featured in the terminal, which opened in November 2022 and has received national media coverage.
- Regularly recognized as a model nationally, the Council was invited to present at the Creative Aging Institute, a national conference focused on trends in creative aging and public service in the arts. In late 2022 and early 2023, the Council received national coverage from two partners: Americans for the Arts included the Council's work with the NJ DEP to support public climate art projects in their winter 2022 Arts Link magazine. The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies featured the Council's partnership with NJ TRANSIT for a national brief about best practices in public art and transit partnerships.

Diversity, Equity, Access, and Inclusion

- The Arts Professional Learning Institute (APLI), managed in partnership with Young Audiences NJ, provided a successful year of training in FY22 and kicked off another in fall 2022. APLI's unique design pairs teaching artists and school educators around the state to collaboratively learn through workshops including: English Language Learners and the Arts Classroom; Creating Safe Spaces for LGBTQ+ Voices; Arts Equity for Disabled Students; and Social Emotional Learning and the Arts: Exploring Connections and Implications.
- Council staff continue to increase equity in the Council's panel process through the addition of anti-bias orientation for panelists, and strategic efforts to engage grant review specialists from diverse racial, gender, educational, and geographic backgrounds.
- The Council's Artist Services team continued focus on increasing participation from and engagement with artists with backgrounds traditionally underserved and underrepresented in public art, as well as for all services and programs for artists.
- The Families First Discovery Pass was relaunched with the reopening of in person arts events. Over 100 organizations from 19 NJ counties are offering free and discounted tickets to performances, exhibitions, workshops, and more to those who receive state Families First and WIC benefits.

FY2024 PRIORITIES

The priorities listed below are the result of ongoing self-assessment and field communication, and are aligned with the [Council's 2018 – 2023 Strategic Plan](#)

- Sustain and advance effective programs and services; identify and deliver changes and improvements that align with sector needs.
- Address issues of equity and access in agency operations, policies, communications, grantmaking and service provision.
- Sustain increased investment in the 21 County Arts Agencies to improve effectiveness in serving neighborhoods, communities, and populations traditionally under-resourced.
- Sustain increased investment in the statewide Folk and Traditional Arts program to foster the preservation, celebration, and inclusion of diverse New Jersey artists, cultures, and communities.
- Improve Council communications to increase public access to opportunities and information.
- Broaden, deepen, and diversify the reach of Council supported arts education and lifelong learning initiatives and partnerships.
- Foster meaningful support and opportunities for individual artists and sector workers.
- Improve internal operations to increase efficiencies for staff and access for the public.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“My interest in public service was sparked through my internship experience with the Center for Hispanic Policy and Research Development’s (CHPRD) Governor’s Hispanic Fellows Program. It was a very fulfilling experience knowing that my individual actions, combined with those of my colleagues in state government, were making a significant impact on individuals across the state.”

Rachelle Rivera (she/her), Operations and Technical Assistance Associate

New Jersey State Museum

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
MARGARET M. O'REILLY

CORE ORGANIZATIONAL STATEMENTS

The New Jersey State Museum mission answers the question, “why do we exist?” The mission inspires and guides staff. The vision describes the impact it strives to make on the diverse communities it serves. The values are the core principles that guide our work on a daily basis. Together, these form the State Museum’s core organizational statements. Each statement is a result of the recent strategic planning process.

MISSION

The New Jersey State Museum is a center for the exploration of science, history, and the arts. We preserve and share stories that inspire curiosity and creativity for the enrichment of our communities.

VISION

The New Jersey State Museum is a trusted resource for shared cultural and natural heritage. Through engaging, authentic, and inclusive experiences, we celebrate individuality and broaden awareness of the world.

CORE VALUES

At the New Jersey State Museum, we value...

- Respect for people, cultures, and the natural world
- Integrity, accountability, and the highest ethical standards of stewardship
- Pursuit of knowledge through collecting, scholarship and interpretation
- Accessibility for all
- Diversity, inclusivity, collaboration and kindness
- Flexibility and responsiveness to meet challenges and opportunities
- Supportive, trusting and positive workplace environment

HIGHLIGHTS



Established by the State Legislature and Governor George T. Werts in 1895, the NJ State Museum was the first state museum in the country to place education at the core of its mission. Today, the Museum’s collections have grown to approximately 2.4 million objects – the largest collection in the state by far, and education remains the core mission.

The State Museum offers collections, exhibitions, programs and research in Archaeology & Ethnography, particularly focused on the lifeways of the original people of this land; Cultural History, telling stories of New Jerseyans through material culture; Fine Art, exploring the broad range of American art and artists, highlighting the contribution of New Jerseyans within that story; and Natural History, discovering the flora and fauna of the natural world, the delicate balance between humans and the environment, and researching the past to inform the present and future. All of this brought to life through relevant, meaningful Education programs for visitors of all ages to promote lifelong learning and civic pride within our increasingly global perspective.

The **War Memorial** has been administered by the State Museum since 2011. This historic venue, the site of inaugurations, concerts, performances, and more, continues to serve NJ's communities as an important regional venue, providing a grand rental facility with modern amenities for graduations, recitals, weddings, meetings, press events and a variety of performances.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS FY23

- All areas of the State Museum fully reopened and offering exhibitions, educational programs, and supporting world-class research by Museum experts and visiting researchers.
- Museum's Education staff doubled direct program service from FY22 and are on track to recover pre-pandemic service in FY24.
 - Total Program service (education programs for schools, community groups, families and individuals) in FY23 was 71% of FY19; Planetarium show service was 84% of FY19.
- Continuing virtual programming to meet visitor – including school group – needs, while also presenting onsite programming.
 - Virtual Field Trip Kits for schools, developed during the COVID-19 shutdown, continue to make up approximately 5 - 8% of total program service.
- Installed and launched new 8K resolution state of the art full dome system to provide enhanced planetarium services.
- Participated in the largest repatriation of Native American ancestral remains, as required by the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 on the east coast.
- Presented 7 artists talks in conjunction with the 2022-23 New Jersey Arts Annual: Reemergence exhibition which includes 127 works by 95 artists from 14 counties.
- Held two Civil War Flag Unveiling programs for the public, which included lectures on the flags or companies that carried them. Each unveiling revealed 5 flags which are on view for 6 months.
- Updated the Cultural History collection gallery with 7 new artifacts and didactic panels. This included the research, conservation and exhibition of an African American Great Migration quilt from South Jersey.
- Advanced initiatives for new or enhanced Planetarium programming including Spanish-language shows, and additional public astronomy related presentations for adults and families.
 - Public Planetarium Show attendance in FY23 exceeded pre-pandemic levels.
 - Public Planetarium shows are scheduled weekends year- round. They also run during school breaks (winter, spring and summer). Starting in September 2023, public shows will also be available Tuesday through Friday at 2 pm.
 - 12 monthly Sky Talk videos, begun during pandemic shutdown, continued via Museum's social media platforms with interest remaining high.
- Installed new audio-visual equipment in the public Paleontology preparation laboratory. This equipment will aid the Museum's scientists and volunteer research associates with science communication, and will also support the visual and hearing impaired.
- Continued long-standing, popular and well-regarded special program for early learners (age 6 months to 5 years), and their caregivers, to promote literacy.
 - The Small Explorers program, now in its fifth year, served 446 young learners and caregivers, up from 213 in FY22.
- Planned for and moved selected collections to newly built off-site warehouse which replaced warehouse which did not provide needed environmental controls and security, and which the Museum had long outgrown. This space allows the Museum to again begin actively collecting

artifacts in science, history and art which will be held in trust, and inform research, exhibitions and educational programs, and define our age, for future generations of New Jerseyans.

- Answered 201 research inquiries for the public and scholars.
- Identified 273 scientific specimens and archaeological artifacts for the public.
- Facilitated 201 inquiries related to 917 Archaeological Site Files.
- Planned and executed the reinstallation of the portraits of NJ's Governors in the renovated Executive State House.

ARCHAEOLOGY & ETHNOGRAPHY



The **Archaeology and Ethnography** collections encompass over 2 million specimens acquired by nearly 100 years of excavation, as well as more than 4,000 ethnographic objects acquired primarily by gift. Scholars recognize the archaeological specimens as the definitive systematic research collection for the study of the prehistory of New Jersey.

The ethnographic collection consists of items brought back to New Jersey by residents who traveled as diplomats, military officers, missionaries and enthusiastic tourists in the 19th and 20th centuries. A majority of the artifacts represent the Delaware people, with additional artifacts from other North American Indigenous groups. As an institution that holds collections related to Indigenous peoples, the New Jersey State Museum strives to treat these objects with dignity and respect. Additionally, the State Museum is committed to meet the intent and spirit of the 1990 federal Native American Graves Protection

and Repatriation Act. To that end, the Museum identifies and, where appropriate, repatriates cultural items from its collections to federally-recognized Indian Tribes.

ARCHAEOLOGY & ETHNOGRAPHY EXHIBITIONS

Long-Term

- New Jersey's Original People: Interpreting the Archaeological Collection
- Cultures in Competition: Indians and Europeans in Colonial New Jersey
- A Much Moved People: Preserving Traditions of the Delaware People
- Science History Art: Experience Your State Museum

Changing

- History Beneath Our Feet: Archaeology in a Capital City (3 June – 31 Dec 2023)

CULTURAL HISTORY

The Bureau of **Cultural History** preserves and interprets historical objects that document the lives of people who have lived in New Jersey from the 17th century to the present. The collection includes over 13,000 artifacts documenting New Jersey's cultural, economic, military, political and social history, as well as aspects of its decorative arts.

CULTURAL HISTORY EXHIBITIONS

Long-Term

- Pretty Big Things: Stories of New Jersey History from the Cultural History Collection
- The Civil War Flag Collection of New Jersey
- Our Story: New Jersey's 9/11 Collection
- Science History Art: Experience Your State Museum

FINE ART

The **Fine Art** collection includes more than 12,000 paintings, drawings, sculpture, prints and photographs

from the 18th century to the present. The Museum emphasizes important works by significant New Jersey artists within the context of American art, as well as works that depict historic events or places in New Jersey's history.

FINE ART EXHIBITIONS



Long-Term

- American Perspectives: The Fine Art Collection
- Science History Art: Experience Your State Museum

Changing

- 2022 New Jersey Arts Annual: Reemergence (18 June 2022 – 30 April 2023)
- Beyond the Tangible: Non-Objective Abstraction from the Collection (11 Feb – 27 Aug 2023)

NATURAL HISTORY

The **Natural History** collection is a diverse assemblage of over 250,000 scientifically important specimens that also have historic and cultural significance.

The basis of these collections originated from the holdings of the New Jersey Geological Survey that began systematic surveys of industrial mineralogy and paleontology in 1836. The natural history collections are diverse, with large holdings in paleontology, minerals and ores, comparative osteology, malacology and ornithology.

NATURAL HISTORY EXHIBITIONS

Long-Term

- Written in the Rocks: Fossil Tales of New Jersey
- Science History Art: Experience Your State Museum

Changing

- Jaw Dropping World of Sharks (9 Apr 2022 – 8 Jan 2023)

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“My job is to bring people together to explore stories about New Jersey. I love creating a space for communities to learn, reflect and connect. I enjoy watching visitors get that spark of excitement and really become engaged. I love the creativity of making programs and exhibits; the problem solving, testing and evaluating. I am constantly learning new things and as a lifelong learner myself it is a joy to be able to do that every day.”

- Beth Cooper, Curator of Education



New Jersey-Israel Commission

DIVISION DIRECTOR:
ANDREW H. GROSS

MISSION:

Since it was established by the legislature in 1989, the mission of the New Jersey-Israel Commission has been to foster economic, scientific, educational, and cultural ties with the State of Israel, one of New Jersey's most important trading partners. The Commission, under Department of State, seeks to better the state through this special relationship.

The New Jersey-Israel Commission, consisting of eight Legislators and 77 Public Members appointed by Governor Murphy, has undergone significant improvements and is now fully operational, with regular meetings, an Executive Director, and established day-to-day operations.

Governor Murphy's diverse appointments have further strengthened the Commission's composition, enabling close collaboration with state agencies to leverage insights, innovation, and partnership opportunities from Israel for the benefit of New Jersey. The strategic partnership between New Jersey and Israel, built on shared values, has been supported by secured funding for the Commission which facilitated staff expansion, grants, programs, and activities.

The bilateral trade between New Jersey and Israel has seen consistent growth, reaching an annual value of \$1.72 billion. Israel's significant foreign direct investment, particularly in the technology sector,

amounted to \$108 million in 2022. The Commission has played a vital role in fostering academic and scientific collaborations, aligning with the Governor's economic goals. Additionally, cultural relations between New Jersey and Israel have remained a priority, as evidenced by ongoing programs, events, including a major concert, and the hosting of an Israeli soccer club.

The New Jersey-Israel Commission's enhanced capabilities, increased productivity, diverse appointments, close cooperation with state agencies, strong economic, academic, scientific, and cultural relations with Israel, and improved funding have all contributed to the flourishing partnership between New Jersey and Israel.

Commission Work

1. **Economic Focus:** The Commission's top priority is business and trade, aligned with Governor Murphy's vision of a stronger and fairer economy in New Jersey. By promoting economic opportunity, jobs, and innovation through partnership with Israel, the Commission supports economic growth and benefits New Jerseyans across the state.
2. **Academic and Scientific Collaborations:** The Commission leverages Israeli innovation and academia to further the state's innovation economy. Strong partnerships have been formed with leading Israeli universities, focusing on STEM disciplines, which connect academic discoveries with economic opportunities.

3. Strong Bilateral Trade: Trade volume between New Jersey and Israel has shown strong and sustained growth, increasing by 11% from 2021 to 2022, reaching \$1.72 billion. This underscores the robust economic ties between the two regions.
4. Record Foreign Direct Investment (FDI): Under the Murphy Administration, New Jersey has experienced record levels of FDI from Israel. Investment from Israel to New Jersey has multiplied five times to \$454 million since the beginning of the administration, creating 1,425 jobs. New Jersey attracts 25% of Israeli FDI in the Northeast, reflecting substantial growth.
5. Thriving Israeli Business Presence: Israeli technology companies, including well-known names such as OwnBackup, Kornit Digital, and eToro, have established a strong presence in New Jersey, contributing to the state's rapid advancement in the technology and innovation sectors. New Jersey has outperformed other U.S. states in capitalizing on Israel relations, with increased business attraction meetings and being the only state with a fully operational Israel-focused office.

FY2023 COMPLETED MAJOR PROJECTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

<i>Major Projects</i>	<i>Description</i>
Choose New Jersey Business Delegation	Coordinated a business delegation to Israel with Choose New Jersey to meet business leaders interested in New Jersey, including from the Palestinian Authority, in addition to supporting academic and other partnerships.
Israel Business Development Grant and Choose New Jersey Israel Center	Launched the first-ever Commission grant to promote Israeli business attraction in New Jersey, leading to the opening of a new Choose New Jersey office in Israel.
EL AL Airlines Promotional Video	Produced and launched a New Jersey promotional video, featuring Secretary of State Tahesha Way, available on all EL AL 787 aircraft.
Visiting Tournament of Maccabi F.C.	Organized and facilitated a visiting tournament of the youth division of a major Israeli soccer team with public friendly matches against Major League Soccer development teams.
ARC Sheba at Liberty Science Center	Assisted in initial connections and will support the opening of a futuristic medical research facility that will be part of the new Liberty Science Center campus in Jersey City.
Increased Economic Relations	The Commission noted an increase in 2022 bilateral trade to \$1.72B with record amounts of investment from Israel, totaling \$450M during the Murphy Administration.
Governor's Appointments	Coordinated with Governor's Office during processing of 10 direct appointments.
Eastern Mediterranean Forum II	Hosted a major gathering of Jewish, Israeli, and Hellenic leaders and diplomats to promote NJ-Israel-Greece-Cyprus relations.
Symphony of Brotherhood Concert	Produced the first ever Black History Month event in Commission history as a major concert in Newark in partnership with the Church of God in Christ.

Major Programs and Bilateral Engagements

Description

Rutgers Jewish Film Festival	Sponsored a film on the story of the Ethiopian Jews evacuated to Israel.
ARC Sheba Medical Center Meeting	Supported a high level meeting with state hospital leadership, Choose New Jersey, NJEDA, and NJDOH Commissioner Persichilli to discuss the future of an incoming Israeli medical technology facility in Jersey City.
Sister City Agreements	Assisted with the implementation of two sister city agreements: Jersey City-Beit Shemesh and East Brunswick-Yavne.
Israel Defense Forces Attaché Visit	In honor of Israel's 75th anniversary, a visit took place of the IDF Military Attaché to the US with the NJ National Guard and NJDMAVA to showcase NJ aerospace industry, cooperation military capabilities, and shared challenges.
Visit of Israeli Minister of Tourism to Newark	Supported an official visit to Newark by the Israeli Minister of Tourism, Yoel Razvozov, to discuss bilateral tourism relations with Secretary of State Way.
Celebrate Israel Parade Float	Participated in the largest Israel related parade in the world with New Jersey branding.
Newark – Ashdod Sister Port Agreement	Facilitated this sister port agreement with the Port Authority after connecting New Jersey City University and the Port of Ashdod, to establish a joint agreement bringing Israeli startups and logistics companies to NJ.
Visit of BIRD Foundation Director General	Supported a visit by the head of the BIRD Foundation, a US-Israeli federal program to support bilateral research partnerships – a vehicle to support local businesses.
Donation of Humanitarian Aid to Türkiye	Commission Members donated over three tons of food aid to support Turkish relief following a major earthquake.
Opening of the NJIT-Ben Gurion University Institute of Future Technologies	Participated in the opening of the new joint center between these two major universities which establishes a cyber-security and environmental engineering program.
Corporate Roundtable with Israeli Business Leaders	Organized a roundtable with nearly two dozen Israeli business leaders in New Jersey with the Governor's Office, NJEDA and Choose New Jersey.
Office Openings and Corporate Visits	Organized corporate and site visits, including new office openings for major Israeli companies expanding in NJ.
Visit of Israeli Mayors	Supported the visits of Israeli Mayors of Nahariyya and Beit Shemesh during trips to New Jersey to meet local officials.

FY2024 GOALS

1. Increase marketing and brand awareness in Israel to attract Israeli FDI and promote New Jersey as a top choice for Israeli-Americans.
2. Coordinate with NJEDA to establish and support Israeli technology companies in New Jersey.
3. Expand tourism relations between New Jersey and Israel, encouraging travel and cultural exchange.
4. Recruit Israeli companies to New Jersey, with a focus on technology and innovation, through cooperation with Choose New Jersey and NJEDA.
5. Enhance partnerships and collaborations in academia, civil society, diplomacy, and emergency response, while promoting Israeli insights and innovation across agencies.

These goals aim to strengthen economic, cultural, educational, and diplomatic ties between New Jersey and Israel, foster innovation and growth, and facilitate mutually beneficial exchanges and partnerships.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



Patricia Arnold joined the New Jersey-Israel Commission and New Jersey Department of State in 2023 as Special Assistant and comes with a background in media, municipal government and Jewish community outreach. She has been a strong addition working to successfully reform the internal fiscal management and administrative matters of the Commission and bonding with the diverse set of Commission Members.



— NEW JERSEY —
OFFICE OF FAITH BASED INITIATIVES

Office of Faith Based Initiatives

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
EDWARD LAPORTE

MISSION:

The Office of Faith Based Initiatives, created in 2000, is a division of the NJ Department of State. The Office of Faith Based Initiatives' grant opportunities are designed to support faith and Community Based Organizations (FBCOs) to develop, design, create, innovative solutions that address conditions that negatively impact those that are socially and economically disenfranchised. It also provides innovative capacity building, training and technical assistance opportunities designed to improve the day-to-day implementation of programs and enhance organizational efficiency. The goal of the office is to nurture an environment that allows for the development of revenue generating models designed to address social issues and position FBCO's to gain access to private capital for scale.

The Office of Faith Based Initiatives provides funding to various Not for profit faith-based organizations across the State of New Jersey. The OFBI approved a total of \$1.16 Million in Grants to support over 80 non-profit organizations spread over 18 counties in the North, Central, and Southern regions of the state. This investment helps eliminate barriers, create greater access to partnerships, and enhance the capacity of faith and community-based organizations. OFBI's ability to provide these resources is critical for the

survival and success of these non-profit organizations that provide essential support and services to the socially and economically disenfranchised.

Funds granted supported the general operations for grantee organizations. Our programs are varied across all platforms such as Project ATLAS, SE2D Growth, College Readiness, S.T.E.M, STEAM, Youth Entrepreneurship, Food Security, Services to Seniors, Tutoring and Homework Assistance, Civic and Community Engagement and Capacity Building. Grant awards ranged from \$5000 to \$25,000. OFBI staff makes a concerted effort throughout the year to engage and attend various events and programs run by the grantees and other faith-based community organizations. Ongoing engagement helps OFBI understand and meet the evolving needs of the organizations in this space and the people they serve.

Total Number of Organizations Funded by Grant Category and by County:

Grant Category	Number of Organizations Funded
Project Atlas	9
SE2D Growth	3
SE2D Start Up	2
College Readiness	13
S.T.E.M.	7
Youth Entrepreneurship	6
Civic and Community Engagement	12
Food Security	13
Service to Seniors	9
Tutoring and Homework Assistance	7
Microbusiness Development	3
Legal Capacity Building	1
Capacity Building	1

County	Number of Organizations Funded
Atlantic County	2
Bergen County	1
Burlington County	2
Camden County	11
Cumberland County	2
Essex County	13
Gloucester County	1
Hudson County	4
Mercer County	10
Middlesex County	14
Monmouth County	1
Morris County	3
Ocean County	2
Passaic	4
Salem	3
Somerset	1
Union	8
Warren	2
West Chester	1
Los Angeles	1

Funding Amount Range & Total Amount Funded by Grant Category:

Grant Category	Funding Amount	Total Amount Funded
Project Atlas	\$5000-\$10,000	\$100,000
SE2D Growth	\$15,000-\$25,000	\$60,000
SE2D Start Up	\$10,000-\$15,000	\$25,000
College Readiness	\$10,000-\$30,000	\$190,000
S.T.E.M.	\$10,000-\$15,000	\$95,000
Youth Entrepreneurship	\$10,000-\$15,000	\$91,701
Civic and Community Engagement	\$10,000-\$20,000	\$150,000
Food Security	\$10,000-\$20,000	\$190,000
Service to Seniors	\$10,000-\$35,000	\$125,000
Tutoring and Homework Assistance	\$10,000-\$30,000	\$120,000
Microbusiness Development	\$20,000	\$60,000
Legal Capacity Building	\$30,000	\$30,000
Capacity Building	\$80,000	\$80,000
Total Award Amount:		\$1,316,701

OFBI at partner events:

A priority for FY2023 has been in-person attendance at events hosted by grantees and other non-profit partners. With the COVID pandemic severely limiting this type of outreach in recent years, it was important for the agency to re-establish a presence across New Jersey faith-based and community organizations. The OFBI partnered with Rutgers University for their New Jersey Social Entrepreneurship Summit in November 2022, hosted at the Ruth Bader Ginsburg Auditorium at Rutgers Newark. We volunteered with NJ-Rise for their free Turkey Distribution. We also attended various interfaith events such as Interfaith Friendship Event, NJOHSP Interfaith Meeting, Essex County Interfaith Symposium, Interfaith Suicide Awareness Seminar and Interfaith Iftars and Union County Interfaith Day of prayer. We were also in attendance at the Women in Leadership Summit in March.

OFBI Events:

During the pandemic, the Office of Faith Based Initiatives' commitment to the community continued as we pivoted with the rest of the state, bringing resourceful events virtually to the non-profit community. As we started FY2023, we continued to gauge the needs of the community and brought to them various virtual events packed with helpful funding opportunities and other resources from other Federal and State agencies.

On November 4, 2022, OFBI conducted our first **Project ATLAS** grantee in-person meeting with all our incoming grantees for fiscal year 2023. OFBI's **Project ATLAS** grant is a capacity building program designed to build sustainability of faith and community-based organizations (FBCOs). The purpose of **Project ATLAS** is to provide capacity building grants, technical assistance, and customized coaching, identified by the OFBI that will strengthen the viability and capacity of participating FBCOs to provide quality social services to the community as specified in this announcement. The **Project ATLAS** grantee meeting was held at the Rutgers Business School and was fully attended.

On January 30, 2023, we facilitated the Disaster

Preparedness, Grants & Resources Workshop for Faith Based Non-Profit Organizations. The panel was represented by FEMA, Region 2 Faith-Based Capacity Building Specialist, Race Hodges; Ehtasham Z. Chaudhry, Detective, Operations Bureau from the Office of Homeland Security & Preparedness and Kea McCoy, Manager of Non-Profit Engagement from Catchafire, an organization providing skills-based volunteers to other non-profit organizations.

OFBI welcomed spring 2023 with a great start, with OFBI hosting its first in-person event in 3 years. On May 24, 2023, OFBI partnered with Rutgers University Business School to host Funders Panel- Roadway to Success, a full-day, mandatory event for all grantees, aimed at connecting Nonprofit and Faith based organizations with various State, Federal and private funding resources to help develop their projects and applications for funding. Speakers and facilitators from various agencies were invited that brought a wealth of information.

On June 21, 2023, OFBI hosted a virtual event to share information with non-profit partners about Freedom Schools, programs that instill a lifelong love of learning in children while closing learning loss and achievement gaps in among underprivileged scholars.

EMPLOYEE HIGHLIGHT:



“I enjoy supporting the efforts of faith and community based organizations whose mission is to uplift individuals and families to manifest their true destiny. It’s a daily passion of love to design approaches that direct resources to organizations that serve the vulnerable and assure that they’re valued as full human beings.”

- Eddie LaPorte Executive Director

