

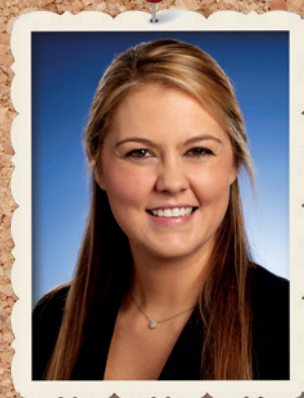
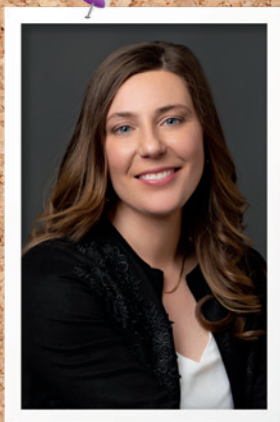
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(top, L-R): Aiyana A. Goldberg, Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi P.C.; Amanda Sexton, Focus WorksMarketing; Mindy Sayres, GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.; Robyn Casabona, New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP); (center L-R) Jacqueline Luciano, ZAGO Manufacturing Co.; Patricia Costello, Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi P.C.; Linda Ziemba, AeroDefense; Kate Janukowicz, Gibbons P.C.; (bottom L-R) Olga Varga, New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP); Deborah Visconi, Bergen New Bridge Medical Center; June M. Inderwies, Gibbons P.C.; Karen Garrera, Lakeland Bank.

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# ENTERPRISING Women IN Commerce AWARD

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# *Congratulations!*



# CIANJ Salutes Women Leaders of Roundtables

Volunteers are the difference

By Anthony Russo  
*President, CIANJ*

**S**avvy businesswomen with uncanny entrepreneurial spirits are the focus of this month's issue. They are the outstanding executives, business partners, owners, associates and consultants who inspire us. We can learn from

their determination and persistence.

The women showcased here were nominated by our members and other business leaders. And we invite you to thumb through our special feature on these extraordinary women and read the backgrounds on each award recipient, especially those who were honored with our platinum winners and ones-to-watch.

At Commerce and Industry Association of NJ we would be remiss, however, if we did not turn the spotlight on the women within our organization whose volunteer efforts are key to our success. These women work hard on our roundtables to make certain the latest issues and trends are discussed and the best speakers are selected for the presentations. These women leaders include:

**Helen Archontou**, a valued member of our Non-profit Roundtable. Helen is CEO of the YWCA of Northern New Jersey, serving Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Morris and Passaic counties. She brought 25 years of management experience to her position. Under Helen's leadership, the organization broadened its programs, offering a continuum of service to support women.

**Teri Duda**, an active member of the Higher Education Roundtable. Teri is senior vice president of government relations at Berkeley College, a career-focused brand of higher education with campuses in New York and New Jersey. She is well respected in Trenton and Washington, D.C. as a hard-working advocate for education.

**Sally Glick**, an integral member of the Marketing Roundtable. Sally guides the branding and marketing communications strategies at SobelCo, a Livingston-based accounting firm, where she is now serving as an "Ambassador." A consummate marketing professional, Sally developed a vast network of leading women executives throughout her career.

**Brett Harris**, a hard-working member of the Technology Roundtable. She is an attorney and



Geri Kelly, Columbia Bank

shareholder at Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer, P.A., where her practice centers on business, technology and non-profits. A graduate of New York University School of Law, Brett is the director of the business law section of the New Jersey State Bar Association.

**Geri Kelly**, an integral part of the Human Resources Roundtable. Geri is executive vice president and human resources officer at Columbia Bank. She joined the bank in 1979 and held various post until her promotion to executive vice president in 2012. Geri has a master's degree in business from Rutgers University. She plans to retire in September and will be greatly missed!

**Cristina (Tina) Lado**, a key member of the Transportation Roundtable. She is director of government and community relations at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Tina joined the PA during the administration of Gov. Jon Corzine in 2007. She has been instrumental in providing expert speakers on all modes of transportation at the port.

**Heidi Minuskin**, is co-chair of the Real Property Roundtable which brings together all the players in the commercial real estate industry. She is a partner and co-chair of the Environmental Practice Group at Schenck Price Smith & King LLP. Heidi concentrates her practice on environmental law, commercial and real estate transactions. She received her law degree at New York Law School.

**Audrey Murphy** has a vital role in the workings of the Healthcare Roundtable. She is an




Sally Glick, SobelCo

executive vice president and chief legal officer for Hackensack Meridian Health, one of the state's largest health providers, owning and operating 18 hospitals from Bergen to Ocean counties. Audrey began her career as a nurse and later earned her law degree at Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University. In October she will become the second woman in CIANJ's history to serve as chair of the organization.

**Cynthia (Cindy) Myer**, an influential member of the Family-owned Business Roundtable. She is the owner and operator of Ridgewood Moving Services. Cindy started her career in the fashion industry. But she took the helm of the family business after her husband's sudden death. She has also been a leader in the New Jersey Warehousemen and Movers Association.

**Gail Friedberg Rottenstrich** is an important member of the Manufacturing Roundtable. She is the CEO and co-founder of ZAGO Manufacturing Co, based in Newark. Gail also serves on the board of trustees of the NJMEP (NJ Manufacturing Extension Program) which works to help all manufacturers perform better. A council member in her hometown of Fair Lawn, Gail also holds a law degree from the National Law Center at George Washington University.

**Tracy Straka** is the chair and founder of the Environmental Business Council, one of the largest and most active roundtables within CIANJ. She is an executive vice president at Creamer Environmental Inc., one of the nation's top 200 environmental firms. She was also the first woman to serve as president of the CIANJ. 



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# Best Advice as Fall Season Begins: "Don't Forget Your Annual Physical"

**Routine exams keep you fit**

Compiled by Diane C. Walsh  
Contributing Editor

**H**ealthcare workers became our heroes during the pandemic. Their courage and compassion touched us deeply. As we struggled through each wave of the pandemic, we sought their good counsel. Now as we go back to work from vacation or back to school, we are turning to trusted healthcare providers again.

*Commerce Magazine* talked to officials from leading hospitals and healthcare system in New Jersey to hear their recommendations as we start the fall with a new Covid variant spreading across the state and threats of the highly infectious monkeypox also. We also asked what are the most important issues they are facing and how they are coping.

**Deborah Visconi,  
President and CEO  
Bergen New Bridge Medical Center**

The president of the state's largest hospital with 1,070 beds said it appears the public has learned to protect itself against the Covid virus. "We know an infectious disease is in the community and that it is dangerous and should be avoided. And we know how to deal with it," she said, stressing that vaccines, booster shots and therapies have enabled society to cope.

"Now it (Covid) is just a part of life. We know it's with us and it's probably never going to go away forever," Visconi said. Since the Food and Drug Administration gave emergency authorization in June to administer Covid vaccines to children ages six months to 5 years old, Bergen New Bridge has been vaccinating youngsters. Visconi said she was surprised by the turnout but soon learned many pediatricians did not have access to the vaccines and parents were turning to facilities like hers.

The hospital executive expects there will be another spike in cases this fall, but she remains encouraged by the vaccines' and therapies' effectiveness in reducing hospitalizations and fatalities. Visconi emphasized that more 76 percent of the state's populations has been vaccinated. "It's a great place to be that people are trusting the science," she said.

While the spread of monkeypox is being watched carefully in New Jersey, Visconi stressed the best protection is to be vigilante about your own health. Continue to see your primary



Deborah Visconi, President and CEO, Bergen New Bridge Medical Center

doctor and don't delay an annual physical examination, she said. "The more protected you are and the healthier you are, the more you can fight off a viral disease."

This fall Bergen New Bridge will be expanding its behavioral health and addiction services. Additional programs will also be available at the Hope and Resiliency Center for Youth.

**Audrey Murphy,  
Executive Vice President,  
Co-Chief Legal Officer,  
Chief Officer Team Member Health and Safety, Hackensack Meridian Health**

Staffing shortages was identified by Murphy as a critical issue facing healthcare providers across the nation. Before the pandemic hit, hospitals were already struggling to fill openings. "Now, it's gotten worse and it's not just nurses. It's pharmacists, doctors, transporters, dietitians, everyone," she said.

An aging worker population and retirements affects every industry. But Murphy

said the pandemic scared many from entering healthcare. To turn the tide, she said Hackensack Meridian is actively recruiting from many schools and offering excellent internship programs. Hackensack Meridian's network includes 18 hospitals from Bergen to Ocean counties, and more than 500 patients care locations, which includes ambulatory care centers, surgery centers, and home health services with more than 36,000 workers and 7,000 physicians.

"We're doing better than others at hiring and creating a great place to work because we have the bandwidth," she added. For instance, Hackensack Meridian collaborates with several universities in nursing and other allied health programs. Students do their clinical work at Hackensack Meridian facilities and Murphy



Audrey Murphy, Executive Vice President, Co-Chief Legal Officer, Chief Officer Team Member Health and Safety, Hackensack Meridian Health

*Continued On Page 10*



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Congratulations to our friend and colleague, Elizabeth Harper, for receiving an Enterprising Women in Commerce Award in the Accounting category. Congratulations to all the other 2022 recipients.



**Elizabeth Harper**  
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Continued From Page 8

said often they accept jobs within their network. For a long-term solution, Murphy said the situation calls for working with students in lower grades to impress upon them the excellent career opportunities available in healthcare.

The health network is also listening carefully to the staff's concerns of workplace violence and implementing programs and policies to safeguard the well-being of everyone in their facilities.

Hackensack Meridian's commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion is one of their network's seven strategic priorities. "We believe diversity alone is not effective. We must also have an equitable and inclusive environment to ensure our success," added Murphy. Hackensack Meridian also launched a groundbreaking social determinants of health program. Murphy commented that one year after its launch the network provided one million referrals to community partner organizations for its patients.

While reverberations from the pandemic continue, Murphy pointed to the expansion of telehealth service as one positive result of the public health crisis. Initially, it focused on mental health care, but it quickly grew as patients enjoyed receiving care from their homes, she explained. Many people are averse to crowded waiting rooms and a virtual appointment with a nurse or doctor removes that obstacle. Murphy said personalized medicine, technology and innovations

with artificial intelligence are exploding in the healthcare industry and promise to reshape it.

## Lori Herndon, President and CEO AtlantiCare Chair, New Jersey Hospital Association Board of Trustee

AtlantiCare is committed to serving our diverse communities through the innovative solutions and partnerships we have developed and implemented. "This fall we will continue addressing social determinants of health, which include lack of nutritional food, secure housing and reliable transportation. We'll also focus on increasing access and will be investing in our teams, technology, facilities and services," Herndon said.

Furthermore, the president said: "Our new Medical Arts Pavilion will open in Atlantic City and will expand our Safe Beginnings, Maternal Fetal Medicine, Family Planning, and Centering Pregnancy programs aimed at preventing maternal and infant mortality. In addition, we will expand our Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) Family Medicine Teaching Clinic and Medical Education Program in the Pavilion. These programs are key to addressing the national shortage of primary care providers and to caring for our community. Our 40-station Chronic Dialysis Unit in partnership with Fresenius Kidney Care will open at this site. At our hospital's Mainland Campus in Pomona, an expansion includes 50 new private medical surgical rooms, and new



Lori Herndon, President and CEO AtlantiCare  
Chair, New Jersey Hospital Association  
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## LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

# Navigating the Great Resignation

By Steve Adubato, PhD,  
Freelance Contributor

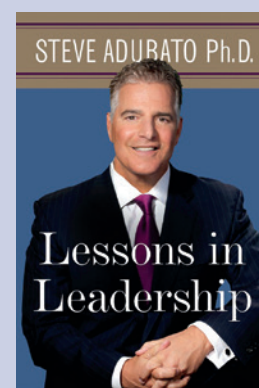


**T**he pandemic-era trend known as the "Great Resignation," where workers are quitting their jobs in search of opportunities amid strong labor demand, is a reality for so many leaders. Consider the following "best practices" that can increase the odds that your best people will want to stay on board:

- Stay connected. Consistent communication with every team member must become part of your leadership DNA. It is not a check off the box kind of thing. It is keeping it top of mind and staying engaged.
- Acknowledge your people. Great leaders are vigilant in recognizing when team

members succeed. Send an e-mail about someone doing a great job, not just to them but to the entire team.

- Show me the money. Given how many options people have in the marketplace, you've got to invest the dollars, if you can afford it. No, it is not a guarantee that people will stay, but it doesn't hurt.
- Lead on a two-way street. It's one thing to communicate goals that YOU would like a team member to accomplish, but it is also important that a team member is given the opportunity to tell you what he or she thinks is important.
- Variety motivates. If you do the same thing every day, you are going to feel unmotivated. Smart leaders are constantly looking at a team member's responsibilities and looking for ways to challenge them to get outside their comfort zone.
- Be consistent in your expectations. Communicate to employees exactly what you expect. Changing expectations on a whim and can be frustrating to a team member. 📌



Steve Adubato, PhD, is the author of five books, with his newest, "Lessons in Leadership 2.0: The Tough Stuff", to be published later this year. He is an Emmy® Award-winning anchor with programs airing on Thirteen/WNET (PBS) and NJ PBS who has appeared on CNN, Today Show and NPR. Steve Adubato's "Lessons in Leadership" video podcast with co-host Mary Gamba airs Sundays at 10 a.m. on News 12+. For more information visit [www.Stand-Deliver.com](http://www.Stand-Deliver.com)



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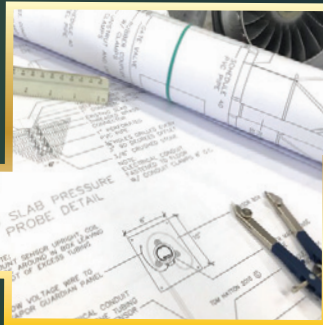
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Michele Acito,  
Executive Vice President/Chief Nursing Officer  
Holy Name Medical Center

intensive care and observation units. AtlantiCare has embraced virtual care options to ensure individuals can receive timely primary, urgent and specialty care across the five counties we serve.”

“Our 2022 Community Health Needs Assessment will be completed in the fall. We’ll use this information — along with other input we seek from our community — to gauge current and future needs for 2023,” Herndon added.

“We continue to care for our community as we remain steadfast in creating a work environment where we treat each other with respect, courtesy

***“It’s a great place to be that people are trusting the science”***

and professionalism and help each other grow personally and professionally. Healthcare providers – and all members of our community – have endured so much over the last three years. Through it all, the AtlantiCare team has led—and continues to lead—with kindness.”

**Michele Acito,  
Executive Vice President/  
Chief Nursing Officer  
Holy Name Medical Center**

The Fall is a time to come back to routines after much needed vacations and family fun. It

is time to make routine physician/provider visits for wellness checks and screenings. In this season it is also an important time to schedule your flu vaccine and COVID-19 booster vaccine if you are eligible and it has been 5 months since your last booster. “Monkeypox is something we are keeping a close eye on, and fortunately we are not seeing significant outbreaks,” said Acito, who was promoted to her new position in July, 2020. She oversees all aspects of nursing and patient care, including critical care and surgical care, among others. . This is a great time to have a discussion with your primary care physician and review the vaccines you have received to date and if there are any you need to consider.

Holy Name is New Jersey’s last independent Catholic health system, comprising a comprehensive 361-bed acute medical center, a cancer center, medical fitness center, residential hospice, nursing school and physician network. Acito said the institution is focused on wellness and self-help. This Fall programs will be available to help members of the community set and reach personal health goals. At Holy Name Medical Center, we continue to enforce mask-wearing and we take CDC-approved infection control measures to keep our facilities clean and safe. We also continue to offer programs to help our community reduce stress and enhance well-being. Our in -person and virtual programs are all available at [holyname.org/events](https://holyname.org/events). 📺

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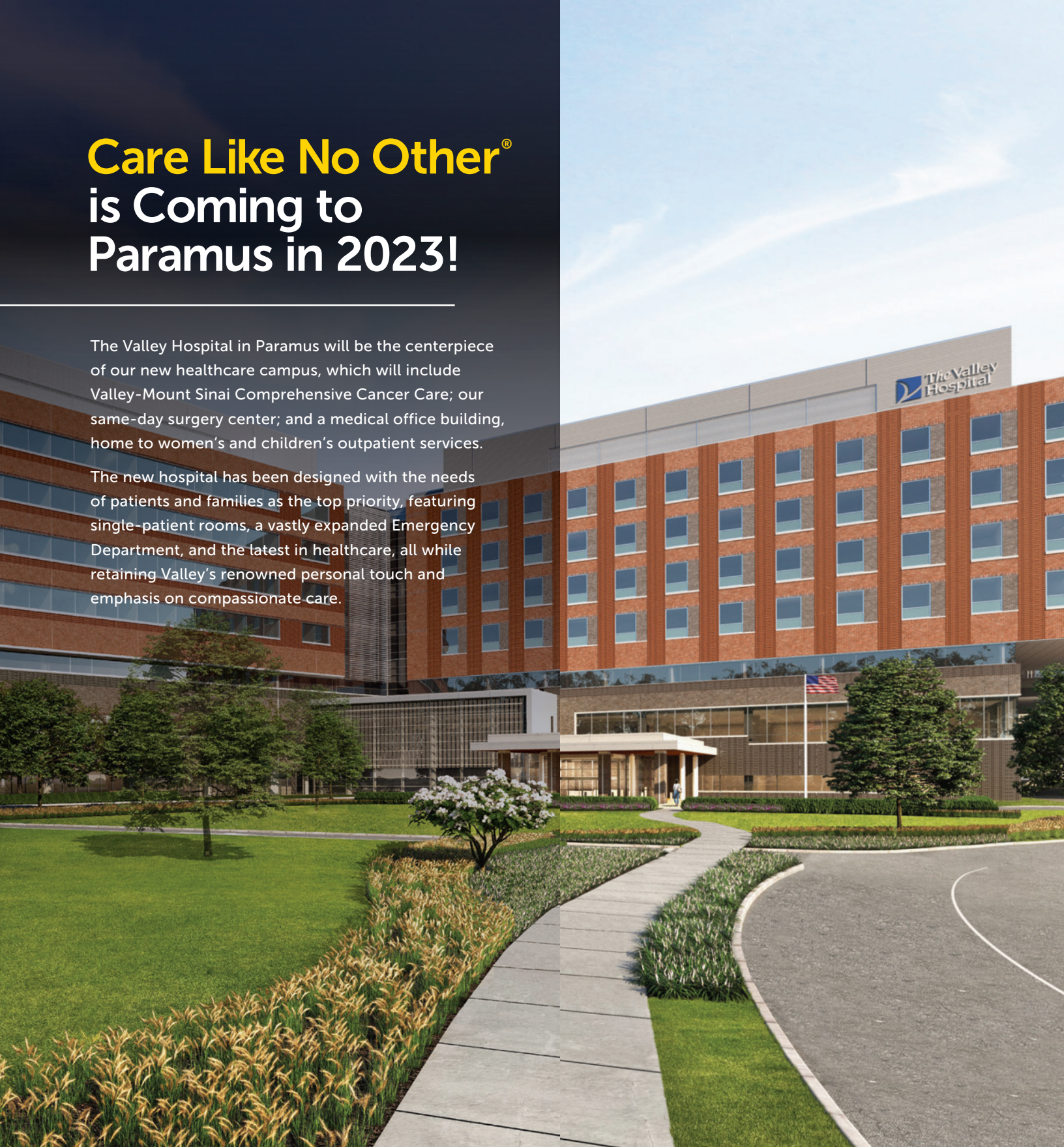




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# Delta Dental of New Jersey is Proud to Support the Enterprising Women in Commerce Awards!

Congratulations to this year's honorees, who inspire us all through their achievements—and encourage others to reach higher in their lives and chosen professions.

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A Special Congratulations to our very own Carin Hep, Small Group & Individual Program Sales Director, who is being recognized in the Health Care category.

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this year's group of distinguished enterprising women for their achievements, determination and dedication to their respective industries, including our dear friends and colleagues, Patricia K. Costello and Aiyana A. Goldberg.

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# Women Entrepreneurs Er

By Diane C. Walsh  
Contributing Editor

**J**ill Cohen knew she wanted in from the first puff.

In her youth, Cohen, whose taken on the moniker, “The Canna Boss Lady,” suffered from anxiety, panic-attacks and debilitating stomach aches. At a party when she was 18, all her maladies faded away, however, after she took her first drag on a joint. “They were just gone,” she remembered.

The “magical benefits” of marijuana, or cannabis as it is referred in the industry, cured her, she said. And Cohen was convinced the medicinal qualities of the drug, which is derived from the hemp plant, could help others too. Her innate business instincts also told her there would be opportunities as it was legalized across the nation.

“I knew I wanted to get into this industry in some shape or form,” she said. When she moved to the South Orange-Maplewood area, she found a welcoming community.

Like many others, Cohen is fascinated by the burgeoning cannabis business in New Jersey. Early studies predicted it could generate \$300 million in annual sales tax revenues for the state. Last April on the first day recreational use cannabis went on sale, there were 12,438 customers resulting in a total gross sale of nearly \$2 million.

Women entrepreneurs are very attracted to the possibilities. Brooke M. Westlake, founder and owner of Women in Cannabis Expo, picked New Jersey as the venue for her first event once the Covid pandemic restrictions on conferences were lifted. “We knew it would be a good benefit for people there to see how it’s going and getting started.”

The one-day event in Atlantic City drew huge crowds to see the more than 30 exhibitors and hear a long list of speakers. Attendees learned about everything from banking and branding to telehealth.

“People were saying how energized they felt,” Westlake said. Before the end of the year, she plans to have expos in Denver, Las Vegas and San Francisco.

Westlake said women face many challenges in the industry, however. The primary issue is capital. But even if they can amass enough funds, she said the layers of bureaucracy and red tape that mire the approval process is an “utter nightmare.”

She estimated 12 to 15 percent of women entrepreneurs have already abandoned dreams of succeeding in the new sector. “Unless we get an organized strategy the numbers of women will stay low,” Westlake said,

adding “We have a lot of work to do to make sure everyone feels included.”

The New Jersey Cannabis Regulatory Commission (CRC) established a Minority, Disabled Veteran and Women Cannabis Development Business Office to make certain there is diversity and inclusion in the nascent industry. License applications submitted by women entrepreneurs are given priority review.

Cohen is waiting for news on the application she filed in March. Without a retail license she is limited to selling CBD products, not cannabis. Her shop’s website shows she has an extensive line of luxury CBD products for beauty, health and wellness. “I love working directly with consumers,” Cohen said. Her customers tell her their stories and together they determine what products and dosages are best.

CBD and cannabis are both derived from the hemp plant. But CBD is an oil used for medicinal or therapeutic purposes. It does not have the psychoactive qualities of cannabis that produce the “high” feeling.

By the fall Cohen hopes to secure a state license. Her next hurdle will be obtaining local approval to build out her property. The CRC will then conduct an audit to make certain there are sufficient supplies to serve the medical dispensaries and retail outlets.

## Regulatory concerns

Cannabis is a very complex and highly regulated industry. It began in 2010 when former Gov. Jon Corzine signed legislation allowing the sale of marijuana for medical reasons to treat a limited list of ailments. But Corzine’s action was taken as he was leaving office, and his successor, Chris Christie derided the medical program as a “front for legalization” of marijuana.

New Jersey was slow to implement the law and gained a reputation for the strictest regulations in the nation. Advocates were energized by Phil Murphy, however, because his gubernatorial campaign carried the promise to legalize marijuana. In 2019 Gov. Murphy signed a bill expanding the state’s medical marijuana program and created the CRC. Voters got a chance to voice their opinion too. They overwhelmingly approved a special referendum on the November 2020 ballots legalizing marijuana. Lawmakers followed their lead by passing legislation to establish the recreational marketplace later that same year.

Controversy over social justice issues stemming from the legalization of marijuana continued to create roadblocks for the new industry, however. It was not until this year that most of the issues were resolved. This month the New



Cultivating quality cannabis is both an art and a science



# entering Cannabis Industry



Jersey Register is finally publishing the CRC's permanent rules for the cultivation, manufacture, wholesale, distribution, sale and delivery of recreational cannabis.

CRC Chair Diana Houenou called it an historic step and said: "The regulations approved for formal proposal will create new opportunities for entrepreneurs to join this nascent industry."

"The rules will help create a market that is competitive, diverse and that puts our core values of equity and safety first," said Sam Delgado, the CRC vice chair, who had been a member of the board of directors of the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey when he was an executive at Verizon. Delgado went on to say that the new rules "will ensure that entrepreneurs have access to the market, especially those who have been negatively impacted by cannabis prohibition; and ensure that consumers and stakeholders can have confidence in safe, well-regulated legal cannabis sales."

## Legal advice needed

Since the spring the CRC has also approved 102 conditional use licenses for cannabis businesses. Suzan Nickelson, the owner of Holistic Solutions, was the first black female cannabis entrepreneur to receive a license for her dispensary in Camden County.

Jennifer Roselle, co-chair of the cannabis law practice at Genova Burns, where she is also a partner, expects many women entrepreneurs will enter the marketplace. "We know it's hard to find a place at the table. But this community is very welcoming," she said.

Roselle was drawn to the practice because it is an emerging market and presents new and challenging legal questions. She is helping her clients navigate through the regulatory issues.

For instance, she said a company's concerns over an employee's use of medical marijuana has already been examined by the courts and guidance has been well established on the issues. But this same question has not been tested regarding recreational cannabis use. The situation raises issues about privacy, individual rights, and workplace safety, to name a few. "We're dealing with these questions in real-time," Roselle said, also adding "It means being creative and thinking outside the box. But for us lawyers geeks it's a lot of fun."

New Jersey is well positioned in the industry because it can evaluate other states' regulations and implement the best policies, she added.


The attorney expects women entrepreneurs will have a large role in the Garden State's new industry. "As entrepreneurs we bring who we are to the table and fight for success." 

Photo: Getty Images/stockphotochris\_rs



# Enterprising Women in Commerce 2022 Award Winners

Compiled by Diane C. Walsh  
Contributing Editor

**C**ommerce and Industry Association of New Jersey prides itself on its diversity. Our members represent every industry sector. As we work to help business succeed, we often tap their skills and expertise. We so appreciate their knowledge and experience. It's become our custom to thank and applaud our outstanding women entrepreneurs in our August issue.

In this special feature we are highlighting extraordinary women, whose excellence is admired by their peers. Their brief stories give a glimpse of their accomplishments. Our "One to Watch," category is brimming with professionals destined to lead their industries, while the "Platinum" selections are women whose careers are models for others. Fascinating stories, fascinating women.

## 15 ACCOUNTING



### SobelCo

Elizabeth (Liz) Harper, CPA  
Member of the Firm, Director  
of the Employee Benefits Plan  
Audit Practice, and Director of  
Quality Control

Elizabeth (Liz) Harper brought to SobelCo years of experience at diverse firms ranging from the Big Four to local practices. As such, she shared a wide variety of perspectives



Diversity and Inclusion has become a priority for today's corporations.

and insights on the professional and technical aspects of CPA firms. In addition, she leveraged her experience as a woman partner to serve as a role model and mentor to others. From day one she had a transformative impact on SobelCo, addressing the firm's quality control challenges and raising the bar on standards. At the same time, she took on responsibility for growing the fledgling Employee Benefits Audit Practice. Today, employee benefit plan audits represent a significant part of the SobelCo client base due to her involvement as the niche champion and her dedication to building a team of benefit plan auditors. In a profession that has been typically male-dominated at the leadership level, Harper is a strong reminder of all that can be accomplished.



## ENGINEERING & ARCHITECTURE



### T&M Associates

Lynn Spence, SPHR, SHRM-SCP  
Senior VP and  
Chief People Officer

Lynn Spence is an exceptional example of an enterprising woman in commerce. As SVP and Chief People Officer at T&M Associates, she oversees the company's human resources strategy and also heads its award-winning marketing group. Since Spence joined T&M more than 12 years ago, the company's revenue has increased by more than 50 percent, headcount has increased by 40 percent, and T&M has opened several new offices throughout the nation. Spence was the first female and among the youngest-ever employees named to the T&M Board of Directors in the company's 55-year history. She leads the company's Diversity and Inclusion committee and helped establish the T&M Associates Foundation, for which she serves as a trustee. Spence was named by NJBIZ among its "Best 50 Women in Business" and was a South Jersey Biz "Executive of the Year" honoree.



### Matrix New World Engineering

Jayne Warne, P.E.  
President

Jayne Warne has piloted Matrix to new heights with her leadership on climate change

resiliency, alternative energy (offshore wind in particular), infrastructure, water resources in the western part of the United States and the origination of a company-wide plan—an Environmental, Social and Governance initiative—ESG). Under Warne's watchful eye, the company has won numerous local, regional, industry and national awards. Warne is a champion of bringing young women into STEM fields, and always credits her employees for the company's success. Most recently, Matrix was selected one of NJ's 'Best Places to Work', demonstrating Warne's belief in a company culture of a healthy work experience coupled with unparalleled technical expertise in some of the most critical issues facing the region and the country, is a winning combination. Warne personifies a female leader who inspires and encourages daily, while having a huge impact and advancing the environmental engineering industry.



## ENVIRONMENTAL



### Creamer Environmental

Tracy Straka  
Executive Vice President

Tracy Straka is known as a hard-working, brilliant, driven person, who is a great mentor and friend. With more than 30 years of experience in the environmental industry, her skills include leadership, corporate strategy, risk management, regulatory compliance, marketing, governance, mentoring and volunteer service. Straka is active with many business organizations and has served as chair on several boards, including a term as the first and only female chair of CIANJ. She has been instrumental in pushing environmental issues, especially in her work with the Environmental Business Council. Straka is also a strong advocate on women's initiatives. Straka has been a trailblazer in the environmental and construction industries, where she was often the only woman on the job. She has extensive experience dealing with regulators and has been at the forefront of creative and practical solutions that benefited business operations and the environment. An animal lover, Straka works with animal welfare groups and has devoted her life to rehabilitating abused animals.

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# ■ Enterprising Women Awards

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## **Clean Vapor LLC**

Kristin Hatton

*Partner/Business Administrator*

Kristin Hatton has been and continues to be a stalwart partner in establishing and maintaining New Jersey-based Clean Vapor LLC as the vapor intrusion mitigation leader world-wide. Hatton has been instrumental in forging consistent and significant year-over-year growth and developing industry-leading performance and reputation the company enjoys. In growing Clean Vapor from a two-person, home-based operation to a recognized environmental industry authority, Hatton has directly executed or supported all facets of the business. Her responsibilities include business development and marketing, single-handedly managing human resources and payroll functions, the full spectrum of accounting duties, and the integration of enterprise software systems. She fulfills all her work duties while also caring for her family as a loving wife and mother. The personal and professional growth she has demonstrated with respect to leadership and business operations execution has been inspirational to both her family and to the Clean Vapor team.



## **Pure Soil, A Division of Earle Companies**

Michele Zolezi

*General Manager, Pure Soil, A Division of Earle Companies, Earle Environmental Affairs*

Executive Michele Zolezi has been an environmental professional in New Jersey for over 25 years. She has comprehensive regulatory compliance experience and has used her expertise for the betterment of our communities through site remediation cleanups, brownfield redevelopment, land development, and environ-

mental project management. Presently, Zolezi is the general manager of the environmental division and corporate environmental affairs executive for the Earle Companies. She is responsible for overseeing all aspects of management and operations of New Jersey's leading recycling and full-service material management group and is a key corporate representative for all environmental compliance, management, and provides oversight of our large-scale, complex turnkey projects. Zolezi is successful in using her experience to foster collaboration amongst her company, business partners, regulatory agencies, and the community. Zolezi represents her firm on several statewide business organizations, associations, as well as regulatory and legislative stakeholder groups and industry affiliations with the goal of keeping Earle at the forefront of emergent technologies, legislation, and regulations.



## **FINANCIAL INDUSTRIES**



## **Investors Bank**

Kathleen Regan

*Senior Vice President*

Kathleen (Kathy) Regan is one of those professionals who continuously puts her clients' needs front and center. Whether she is finalizing loan documents, opening an account, extending a line of credit, or helping with international transactions, Regan looks at the big picture to determine the best course of action. With her proactive perspective, Regan approaches clients with strategic suggestions rather than waiting for the client to approach her. Many professionals react quickly to their clients, but Regan is one of the few who chooses to preempt the client and pose the questions

first. She doesn't "cross-sell" services, she serves clients by investigating smart solutions that make sense for them. As a result, Regan is well regarded for her client-centric philosophy. And that same attitude drives Regan's community service decisions as well. She is an active volunteer in many New Jersey nonprofit organizations and appreciated for her generosity.



## **ConnectOne Bank**

Carrie LaSpina

*Vice President, Client*

*Connections Center Director*

Since day one, Carrie LaSpina has been a hard-working professional, continuously impacting the organization. Within each role, Carrie consistently strives to master her job, challenging herself to do more. She's successfully developed her skills from frontline team member to manager, and most recently assumed the leadership role of ConnectOne Bank's Client Connections Center. Enthusiastically accepting the challenge, LaSpina's taken on a department of less than five years, with a team hungry for strong leadership. Without prior call center experience, she's researched, learned, reorganized, recruited, and built a powerful, energized team. Her leadership has transformed the roles within the call center from high-stress and unrewarding to highly-skilled career opportunities. LaSpina dove in and learned the technical parts of the job, improving and exploring all the technology available to provide the clients with the best possible experience. LaSpina is an integral part of the ConnectOne team and highly valued by the bank.



## **HEALTHCARE**



## **AmeriHealth New Jersey**

Veronica Diaz

*Director, Consumer Market and Sales Support*

Veronica Diaz joined AmeriHealth New Jersey in 2011 in an entry-level sales role, quickly advancing her career, most recently being promoted to Director, Consumer Market and Sales Support. She was instrumental in ensuring the company was well-positioned on New Jersey's Individual Marketplace at the onset of the Affordable Care Act. Previously as Senior Health Care Reform Specialist, she was the company's expert on ever-changing regulations, specifically for consumer business. She managed sales strategy and product development including overseeing tele-sales, led the company's community outreach campaign and provides support to Hispanic residents enrolling in health insurance plans, given she is bilingual. Additionally,

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Brownfield redevelopment brings opportunities to Environmental Business.

Photo: Getty Images/Stockphoto/Pawel Kisiolk



# ■ Enterprising Women Awards

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she prioritizes and is highly involved in internal mentorship. Diaz earned both her master's degree in health care management and bachelor's degree in economics from Rutgers University. She has been recognized as a 20 Under 40 recipient from South Jersey Biz and a Forty Under 40 recipient from NJBiz.



## **Delta Dental of New Jersey**

**Carin Hep**  
*Small Group and Individual Programs Sales Director*

Carin Hep is dedicated to helping countless small businesses navigate Delta Dental of New Jersey's 2-99 plan offerings and select the dental benefits package that uniquely fits their needs. Since joining DDNJ five years ago, Hep has been a major contributor to the success of DDNJ's small business program, including developing and cultivating relationships with brokers, consultants and general agents and arming DDNJ's sales teams with the resources to reach target geographic markets in both states. Carin has spoken with NJBIZ and renowned Emmy award-winning broadcaster Steve Adubato on how COVID-19 has impacted small businesses and the most significant challenges small businesses are facing today, including the importance of financial support from the state and federal governments and the need to attract new employees to businesses.



## **HIGHER EDUCATION**



## **New Jersey City University**

**Jodi Bailey, Ph.D.**  
*Vice President for Student Affairs*

Jodi Bailey, the Vice President for Student Affairs at NJCU, is a rising star in higher education. This winter, she led an NJCU division which was recognized with CIANJ's Companies that Care Awards. Her leadership was critical to the response to the pandemic on campus. She helped orchestrate vaccinations on campus. As NJCU returned to in-person instruction during the Fall 2021 semester, an emphasis on student welfare put a spotlight on the efforts of the Division of Student Affairs, led by The Center for Community Engagement (CCE) and the NJCU Community Center. Meanwhile, she worked closely with the athletics department in Spring 2021 to allow the Gothic Knights to safely compete when other intercollegiate athletic departments were shuttered – resulting in NJCU winning five conference championships. Additionally, after the 2020 commencement was cancelled due to the pandemic, she spearheaded a double grad-

uation ceremony for the NJCU Classes of 2020 and 2021 in June 2021.



## **HUMAN RESOURCES**



## **Bergen Community College**

**Meredith Gatzke**  
*Vice President of Human Resources and Organizational Development*

Meredith joined Bergen Community College after working for several years in the K-12 education sector. Within a brief period of time, she has established herself as a future-planner, an organizer, a supporter, and a strategic thinker. She has already begun to revolutionize the technology the college uses for human resources and is working with division heads to re-imagine their organizational chart structures. She inspires her team, takes on thorny challenges with aplomb, and collaborates wonderfully with the larger leadership team at the college.



## **Crothers Consulting**

**Laura Crothers Osborn**  
*CEO and Founder*

Laura Crothers Osborn exhibits an exceptional combination of technical and soft skills, including those essential for her roles as a business leader, mentor/coach, human resource expert, and good person. As a human resources consultant, Osborn works with corporate businesses and nonprofits to help them leverage their people most effectively while intentionally creating a nurturing and diverse culture. As a coach, she is the chair of two chapters of the New Jersey Women President's Organization (WPO), guiding high performing women to be their best while connecting them to each other. As a businesswoman, she has developed a collaborative approach, adding to her team many other women to broaden her core capabilities and add value for her clients. As such, she is frequently recognized for her positive impact. Best of all, Osborn is a truly good person. Whether caring for elderly family members or helping friends, and colleagues, she is always supportive, providing meaningful advice and thoughtful solutions.



## **Earle Companies**

**Corinne Collina**  
*Human Resources Manager*

Corinne Collina has over 20 years of experience as a dedicated professional in human resources. She is an integral part of operations as the Human Resource Manager of Earle,

a premiere N.J. construction company with over 400 employees. Collina oversees all employee needs as it pertains to healthcare benefits management, operations and health insurances. She exceeds the firms' expectations for hard work, dedication, innovation, and efficiency. During Covid-19 health crisis, Collina worked around the clock to ensure corporate operations remained functioning with employee health and safety at the forefront. She improved efficiency by implementing a corporate employee portal to provide 24/7 access. Collina is a true leader, taking on additional roles outside of her core responsibilities, such as activities with the firm's Veteran and Second Chance hiring programs, and duties pertaining to the philanthropic arm of the Earle Companies. Earle is proud to have Collina part of its senior management.



## **INFRASTRUCTURE**



## **Main Street Movers**

**Karen Mantzouranis**  
*President*

Karen Mantzouranis spent 30 years in diverse management roles in prominent New York City advertising agencies. After that, she started working for her husband Tom at Main Street Movers in account management, client relations, strategic planning, and staff supervision. In 2015 Mantzouranis was awarded the National Association of Professional Women of the Year Award, recognizing her outstanding dedication to her profession. She also won the New Jersey Warehousemen & Movers Association Board Member of the Year Award in 2017 and the Mover of the Year in 2019. What stands out most about Mantzouranis is her heart; she commits so much time to her community by donating to local schools, and she also continuously supports many charities, including Kidney Cancer, Research Alliance, Wreaths Across America, Move for Hunger, Closing for a Cause, Girls on the Run and Associated Human Societies.



## **Atlantic InfraRed, Inc.**

**Marilyn Grabowski**  
*President*

As the founder of four vastly successful companies over the past 20 years, Grabowski has made great strides to improve New Jersey's infrastructure, displaying unparalleled perseverance and determination. Grabowski is consistently the only woman in the room, often having to work harder than her male peers to not only be heard, but respected. Grabowski has been so impactful that she has been able to secure

*Continued On Page 21*





# CONGRATULATIONS

To Our President and CEO  
**Deborah Visconi**

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# ■ Enterprising Women Awards

*Continued From Page 20*

relationships with prominent utilities such as PSEG, Elizabethtown Gas, NJ American Water, and Veolia. With great passion for giving back to the community Grabowski's excitement is contagious every year as several interns spanning multiple disciplines join the company through programs such as the CIAP (Construction Industry Advancement Program) and WBFA (Wall Business and Finance Academy) both of which Grabowski sponsored this year. These interns gain experience that fosters not only professional, but personal growth, giving her people the tools and support needed to succeed.



## LEGAL



### **Gibbons P.C.**

**Christine A. Amalfe**  
*Chair, Employment & Labor Law Group*

Christine Amalfe chairs the firm's Employment & Labor Law Group, overseeing lawyers across four Gibbons offices. She represents public entities, educational institutions, and corporate clients across numerous industries in some of the state's most high-profile litigations and investigations. She also counsels on wide-ranging employment-related matters. Amalfe co-founded the internationally recognized Gibbons Women's Initiative, established in 1997, and serves as Treasurer of the New Jersey State Bar Association, for which she is on track to become President in 2025. She was an inaugural New Jersey Law Journal "Lifetime Achievement" honoree and is included among the region's leading employment lawyers by Chambers USA Guide to America's Leading Lawyers for Business, Best Lawyers®, and New Jersey Super Lawyers, which lists her among the state's Top 10 attorneys and Top 50 female attorneys.



### **Connell Foley**

**Agnes Antonian**  
*Chair, Environmental Practice*

Agnes Antonian is a true immigrant success story having come to the United States with her family after escaping a communist regime. Her parents instilled her with a tremendous work ethic which helped her to become a leader in her field. She initially earned a degree in Chemical Engineering and worked for Keyspan Energy as an environmental engineer. While working full-time at Keyspan, she attended law school at night. After completing a judicial clerkship for the Honorable Katharine S. Hayden in the U.S. District Court in Newark she began her law career at Connell Foley. Antonian is a dynamic and respected attorney and goes out of her way to help support, teach and encourage young professionals as they embark on their own legal careers. She is a frequent lecturer on environmental and legal issues, and serves on the board of Wynona's House Child Advocacy Center in Newark.



### **Nachman, Phulwani, Zimovcak (NPZ) Law Group, P.C.**

**Snehal Batra, Esq.**  
*Managing Attorney*

Snehal Batra is an Indian-American attorney with a passion for immigration law which derives from being an immigrant herself. Having been born in India and raised in New Jersey, Batra understands the challenges immigrants face. As such, she is eager to help families, businesses, and individual immigrants to realize the American dream. Her passion of sharing the knowledge and experience have helped many families to meet their loved ones in the United States and students to make their dreams come true. Batra has been part of many professional organizations like Minority Business Leaders Roundtable of the

Somerset County Business Partnership, Asian Indian Chamber of Commerce, and Branchburg Rotary. Batra also belongs to the "Women and Rehabilitation Group" in India to promote the importance of education. In addition, Batra's philanthropic work includes involvement in the Gabriel project which assists individuals who live in the slums in Thane north of Mumbai with getting clean drinking water and food.



### **Nachman, Phulwani, Zimovcak (NPZ) Law Group, P.C.**

**Ludka Zimovcak, Esq.**  
*Managing Attorney*

Ludka Zimovcak has been a frequent lecturer on Immigration law to the New Jersey Bar and numerous educational institutions. She provides free informative sessions to the students and academic staff in the tri-state area to help students understand the complex immigration landscape and assist them in navigating through it. Zimovcak has also assisted various human resources professionals during this pandemic to understand and comply with federal rules and regulations. Zimovcak is highly knowledgeable, responsive and ready to help the community understand the complexities of the immigration laws. Zimovcak's philanthropic work includes involvement in the Gabriel project which assists individuals who live in the slums in Thane north of Mumbai with getting clean drinking water and food.



## MANUFACTURING



### **Radwell International**

**Julie Basello-Holt**  
*Marketing Multimedia Specialist, Radwell International*

Julie Basello-Holt has revolutionized how her manufacturing organization engages with the entire manufacturing industry, including her clients. She is a critical driver of the #USAMfgHour Twitter community and continues to develop innovative ways to increase her company's brand awareness while also giving the entire manufacturing industry a platform to collaborate, share ideas, and learn from one another. Without Basello-Holt, there would be a massive void in manufacturers' ability to be seen on public platforms like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn. Her effective use of social platforms like TikTok and YouTube creates a template for other manufacturers to learn from and this has elevated the industry as a whole. Manufacturing professionals like Basello-Holt are overlooked far too often. Her colleagues believe recognition is overdue.

*Continued On Page 24*



Photo: Getty Images/Stockphoto/Globalmoments

Experienced attorneys are necessary to help immigrants navigate the legal system.



# Congratulations, **Veronica Diaz!**



We're so proud of you for being named one of *Commerce Magazine's* enterprising women in healthcare.

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Connell Foley LLP proudly congratulates  
**Agnes Antonian**  
recipient of CIANJ's  
***Enterprising Women in Commerce Award***



**Agnes Antonian**  
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# ■ Enterprising Women Awards

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## Groezinger Provisions

Alexandra Groezinger  
President

Alexandra Groezinger recently took the seat as President of one of the premier specialty food manufacturers in the nation. She has worked in manufacturing her entire professional career. Her skills played a vital role in elevating her company and brand to its current level. Her passion, innovativeness, and engagement must be rewarded. At the latest statewide manufacturing conference, she stood in front of hundreds of manufacturing professionals to highlight why the industry needs to work together. Groezinger isn't sitting back waiting for her business to accelerate or for the industry to progress. Instead, she is taking both goals into her own hands and pushing forward. There are a select few leaders who have the foresight and courage to take on such a task.



## ZAGO Manufacturing Co.

Gail Friedberg Rottenstrich  
CEO & Co-Founder

Gail Friedberg Rottenstrich, co-founded ZAGO Manufacturing Co. over 30 years ago in Newark. Under her leadership, ZAGO is an award-winning, woman-owned company, which manufactures sustainable, high-tech sealing solutions and components. ZAGO successfully serves multitudes of male dominated industries including military, aerospace, automotive, and more. Today, ZAGO operates from a 100-year-old, refurbished factory in Newark, has a 95 percent retention rate among its employees, most of whom live in Newark, and employs seven women in leadership positions. The company also launched ZAGO's Sustainability 360—a social impact initiative which invests in education and career success within ZAGO employees and the community through internships, scholarships, and career development. Rottenstrich is also a mentor, a proud wife and mother of three. She is a Councilmember in her hometown of Fair Lawn. She also serves on the Board of Trustees of the New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program.



## MARKETING



## Marketshare Communications

Ilene Greene  
President

Ilene Greene is the consummate woman business owner. As the president and founder of Mar-

ketshare Communications, she has invested decades in her commitment to helping others by using the right marketing tools for the right situation. She combines her strong, smart marketing, branding and public relations expertise with an empathetic and strategic approach that enables and empowers her clients and colleagues. Rather than advocate for the latest trend or the newest social media platform, Greene does things differently. She is an excellent listener who delivers the right solutions based on the client's needs and unique situation. She has built a reputation for suggesting appropriate tactics that make the strongest impact for her clients. It is this sincerity and genuine giving philosophy that makes her a standout professional. As a result, her business has continued to grow—even through all challenges she has faced over the years and most recently while navigating the bumps in the road brought by Covid.



## YWCA Northern New Jersey

Lori Murray  
Director of Communications  
and Marketing

In the five years that Lori Murray has been with the YWCA Northern New Jersey, she has transformed its marketing and communications. Her efforts have helped capture the organization's stories and use them to engage the community for outreach and support. She updated the existing communications platforms, including the website, social media and direct mail, to optimize community engagement and user interface. Her efforts have elevated the YWCA's community profile and increased client access. She makes a point to keep current in her field and embrace JEDI principles in her work. Murray leads her staff by creating an inclusive environment for growth and collaboration. In addition to the leadership that she provides her team, she is known within the organization and the non-profit community as someone who is always open to providing support, resources and mentorship. Her colleagues are grateful to have her as part of the YW Family.



## NON-PROFIT



## Nourish.NJ

Teresa (Terry) Connolly  
CEO

Teresa Connolly is a CEO with deep experience in the nonprofit community. But it's her strategic thinking that is most noteworthy. As the leader of the what had been known as the "Community Soup Kitchen of Morristown," Connolly realized that the term "soup kitchen" brought grim images to mind of the Great Depression and was no longer appropriate for her organization. Under her guidance the organization has greatly expanded and evolved into a combination of soup kitchen, food bank, food pantry, hunger relief center, anti-poverty center, family services unit, career guidance program, outreach agency, housing case management, and much more. Influenced by her energy and passion, the board and other leaders took on the tough task of re-branding CSK to become more aligned and compatible with its expanded mission. From those efforts, "nourish.NJ" emerged, a name that represents all that nourish.NJ is about. Change is always difficult, but Connolly's leadership drove the process as she overcame challenges and navigated through the upheaval, thus ensuring a strong future for the organization.



## PHARMACEUTICALS/ LIFE SCIENCES



## Modern Meadow

Ann Lee-Jeffs  
Senior Director of  
Corporate Sustainability

Ann Lee-Jeffs is an outstanding professional with that rare

Continued On Page 26



Pharmaceutical Manufacturing is a thriving industry in New Jersey.

Photo: Getty Images/Stockphoto/MikeWarren





2022 ENTERPRISING WOMEN IN COMMERCE

**Bergen Community College**  
Congratulates Vice President of Human Resources  
and Organizational Development

**Meredith Gatzke**

Since arriving at the state's No. 1 college for associate degree graduates last year, Meredith Gatzke has brought energy, enthusiasm and innovation to the role of vice president of human resources and organizational development. Her humanistic approach to HR has created a compassionate environment for faculty and staff, proving she leads with an ethic of care. We recognize Meredith's service to the College community and celebrate her success!



*Congratulations!*

**LORI MURRAY**

**COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR OF  
YWCA NORTHERN NEW JERSEY**

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Northern New Jersey

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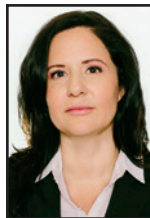


# ■ Enterprising Women Awards

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combination of technical expertise (chemical engineer) and exceptional leadership skills. She excels at taking on challenging initiatives and bringing them to fruition. Lee-Jeffs has spent the past 20 years transforming multinational pharmaceutical/life science companies, including Teva and Johnson & Johnson, into leaders in sustainability. Lee-Jeffs recently joined Modern Meadow, a purpose-driven material science company with the mission to be a catalyst for real-world impact on people and the planet. Lee-Jeffs' responsibilities at Modern Meadow include promoting and advancing the renewable and circular economy within their technology platforms, Bio-Alloy™ and Bio-F@arm™. While at Johnson & Johnson, Lee-Jeffs led and supported environment, health, safety and sustainability work across 220+ companies within the company. During her career, Lee-Jeffs launched the biochemical technology leadership roundtable for the American Chemical Society's Green Chemistry Institute and founded the Sustainability Collaborative with the support of Johnson & Johnson and Rutgers University.

## REAL ESTATE



**Denholtz Properties**  
Christina Jordan  
*Director of Marketing & Leasing*

As the firm's Director of Marketing & Leasing, Christina Jordan is an invaluable member of Denholtz's senior leadership team. She fully revamped the 70-year-old company's technology infrastructure, adopting and implementing data-driven tools and platforms that have supported the firm's expansion throughout the

Southeast, enhanced workflow and efficiency, and significantly increased profitability. She is responsible for all communication strategies and implementation overseeing marketing, public relations, digital and traditional advertising, and social media in support of the firm's aggressive growth goals and its multi-million-square-foot portfolio. Jordan also plays a key role in investor relations and support. Understanding the need for increased transparency with both new and existing investors, Jordan developed an interactive investor hub that seamlessly integrates with Denholtz Properties' enterprise system. It provides investors with access to granular, real-time data unique to their investments in the Denholtz portfolio. This high level of transparency and accessibility are crucial in achieving the firm's aggressive equity-raising goals over the next several months.



**NAI James E. Hanson**  
Anne Remley  
*Vice President of Marketing*

NAI James E. Hanson has a reputation as a leading service provider to northern New Jersey's competitive commercial real estate industry. Driving that market leadership position is one woman—Anne Remley. Since joining the firm in 2006, Remley has quickly risen through the ranks and today serves as vice president of marketing. She ensures the firm's brand identity remains true to its mission of delivering extraordinary work and remarkable client service. A true "Jill-of-all-trades," Remley is responsible for developing and executing all marketing strategies to support the firm's business growth goals. Her work has ensured that the company is an invaluable resource to its clients in a hyper-competitive market. Additionally, Remley plays a key role in the company's culture and dedicates her time to mentoring other women in the industry.



**Larken Associates**  
Melissa Nascimento  
*Creative/Marketing Director*

With a diversified portfolio of more than 3 million-square-foot of commercial space and a multi-family property portfolio of 23 communities, Larken Associates is a leader in New Jersey and Pennsylvania's crowded commercial and residential real estate markets. At the core of Larken's success is the firm's Creative/Marketing Director, Melissa Nascimento. Since joining the firm in 2002, Nascimento's innovative marketing strategies and strong leadership have bolstered Larken's market position. Nascimento developed a new data-driven marketing model that leverages her creativity, vision and understanding of the marketplace to consistently drive superior results across its portfolio. Through her work, Larken's multifamily portfolio consistently achieves 95 percent occupancy, and its commercial portfolio continues to attract hundreds of high-quality tenants across its footprint. Beyond her role as Creative/Marketing Director, Nascimento serves as a powerful advocate and mentor to other women in the company providing them with a range of opportunities to grow their careers.



## ONE TO WATCH



**Chiesa Shahanian & Giantomasi PC**  
Aiyana A. Goldberg  
*Associate*

Aiyana A. Goldberg distinguishes herself by her creativity, unflappability, and an uncanny  
*Continued On Page 28*



Photo: Getty Images/Stockphoto/Buzbuzer



Photo: Getty Images/Stockphoto/LOUOATES

New Jersey Real Estate companies must have expertise in both commercial and residential properties.



# CONGRATULATIONS

Lakeland Bank is proud to congratulate  
**Karen Garrera** on being recognized  
with the **CIANJ Enterprising Women  
in Commerce Platinum Award**.

Since joining Lakeland Bank  
in 1988, Karen has made  
tremendous contributions to the  
success of our organization and  
the communities we serve.

We are inspired by her  
commitment to mentoring and  
encouraging others as well as  
her passion for continuous  
learning and growth.

***Congratulations, Karen, and  
thank you for your leadership!***



**Karen Garrera**  
*Executive Vice President,  
Chief Retail Officer,  
Lakeland Bank*



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# ■ Enterprising Women Awards

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ability to overcome any obstacles in her way. Goldberg focuses her practice on real estate, land use and related transactional matters. She has been instrumental in many sophisticated transactions including but not limited to the recent sale of a residential complex in Houston, Texas for \$68 million for a private equity real estate fund. In that transaction, several last-minute curveballs popped up that could have derailed the entire transaction, but creative problem solving, and a focused strategy, ultimately yielded a successful resolution for the client. Goldberg earned her law degree from Seton Hall University School of Law, where she received the West Academic Publishing Company Commercial Law Award. She received her undergraduate degree from Rutgers University. Her colleagues nominated her for this honor, describing her as highly motivated and driven in her efforts.



## **Gibbons PC**

**Kate E. Janukowicz**  
*Director, Commercial & Criminal Litigation Group, Director of Professional, Development, Retention, and Associate Recruitment*

Kate Janukowicz joined Gibbons as an associate in 2013 and soon made herself an indispensable member of every matter team to which she has been assigned. She handles a broad array of complex criminal and commercial matters in both federal and state courts, and her litigation experience is wide-ranging. She also has established herself as a trusted and loyal teammate who fosters a collegial and supportive atmosphere at the firm. In 2020, in tandem with her promotion to Director, Janukowicz was elevated to Director of Professional Development, Retention, and Associate Recruitment, becoming the youngest attorney named to this position. In this role, she is the first person that prospective associates meet when they interview at the firm and makes critical decisions concerning the firm's next generation, among many other responsibilities. She received her bachelor's degree from New York University, graduating cum laude. Janukowicz went on to earn her juris doctorate at Seton Hall University School of Law.



## **Habitat for Humanity of Bergen County**

**Teri Capparelli**  
*Executive Director and ReStore Director*

Teri Capparelli started her career as a buyer in the NYC Garment District. She later opened her own small business in catering, became a licensed realtor and a personal shopper at Lord & Taylor before working with Habitat for Humanity's ReStore

locations. Capparelli continues to reinvent herself successfully and her high energy and optimism is contagious! Capparelli's passion for helping others and building relationships drove her from working at the ReStore locations to becoming the Executive Director and ReStore Director of Habitat for Humanity of Bergen County. She has been the Executive Director for over a year and the ReStore Director for three years. Under her leadership she has already increased the number of volunteers and donations at Habitat for Humanity and continues to push forward toward building as many affordable homes in Bergen County as possible. Capparelli's efforts have changed the lives of so many hard-working families.



## **New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP)**

**Olga Vargas**  
*Marketing Project Manager*

Olga Vargas has played an essential role in coordinating and developing NJMEP's events and online training throughout the past 12 months. She developed the structure that allowed the State-of-the-State of Manufacturing event to have as large of an impact as it had. Without Vargas, the New Jersey manufacturing industry would not have access to collaborative opportunities which are rare in the manufacturing space. These events help bridge a critical divide between the public and private sectors. Using her manufacturing background, she is able to connect and engage with manufacturers on a level most marketing professionals in a consulting organization cannot.



## **FocusWorks Marketing**

**Amanda Sexton**  
*Founder and Principal*

When Amanda Sexton launched FocusWorks in 2018 she had no idea a pandemic would soon be racing her way. But even if she had been forewarned, she wouldn't have changed course. Recognizing that only 1 percent of creative agency founders are women, Sexton was eager to serve her clients and become a role model for the industry. Offering the corporate and nonprofit communities a unique marketing approach designed to help them distinguish their message, Sexton focuses on creating essential narratives that differentiate them. Encouraging business leaders to identify a niche specialty, she offers original content that enables them to attract and retain clients across all vertical markets. Along the way she has built her own scalable and sustainable company while trademarking the term "content that converts." With a growing company that serves clients in the United States and Canada, Sexton has clearly demonstrated that she is a woman to watch.



**PLATINUM**



## **New Jersey Manufacturing Extension Program (NJMEP)**

**Robyn Casabona**  
*Senior Director of Finance, NJMEP*

Robyn Casabona came from the finance world and found herself at NJMEP, playing a critical role in the C-Suite. She is responsible for bringing New Jersey's MEP finance procedures into the 21st Century, which allowed the organization to have a more effective and efficient way to engage with the 10,000+ manufacturers here in the Garden State. She has taken her experience in the financial world and shared that knowledge with the most impactful MEP in the nation to further develop and improve the organization as a whole. Without Casabona, NJMEP would be limited in the quality of service it can provide to the manufacturing industry here in New Jersey.



## **Chiesa Shahanian & Giantomasi PC**

**Patricia K. Costello**  
*Managing Member*

Earlier this year, Patricia Costello was named CSG Law's Managing Member, becoming the first woman to serve as the leading executive at the firm since its founding 50 years ago. She oversees the operations of the firm which today enjoys more than \$96 million in revenues, 175 attorneys and more than 300 employees overall, with offices in New Jersey and New York. Before joining CSG Law, Costello served for more than 25 years as a New Jersey Superior Court Judge, including 10 years as the Assignment Judge in Essex County. During her tenure as Assignment Judge, she supervised all the county's trial and municipal courts, including more than 100,000 filings per year, 1,000 employees and a \$55 million annual budget.



## **Gibbons P.C.**

**June M. Inderwies**  
*Executive Director & Chief Operating Officer*

June Inderwies holds the firm's highest non-attorney position and is responsible for both facilities operation and personnel management for nearly 300 employees in eight offices. Upon being named Executive Director, she had worked for Gibbons for 20+ years, rising through the ranks from paralegal. Most notably, she has guided the firm through times of tremendous growth and development, as well as challenges like the COVID

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crisis. Earlier this year, for the first time in almost two decades, Gibbons underwent a change in leadership. Inderwies was a critical member of the Transition Committee tasked with vetting candidates for the Managing Director position. She now works closely with both the firm's Managing Director and Executive Chairperson to ensure the firm's continued success. In recognition of her achievements, she has been featured on Profiles in Diversity Journal and NJBiz.



**Bergen New Bridge Medical Center**  
Deborah Visconi  
*President and CEO*

Deborah Visconi continues to transform BNBM leading it to higher levels of healthcare equity, quality, and financial stability including a tremendous financial turnaround. Visconi increased services by 53 percent, opened three satellite locations, increased the medical staff by 32 percent and enhanced provider relations yielding improvement in quality, safety, and the patient and resident experience. Under her leadership, New Bridge was recognized as a 'Top Hospital' and earned the highest 'Grade A' safety rating from the Leapfrog Group, an industry assessment group. As a Latinx hospital CEO, Visconi understands the needs of traditionally underserved communities and prioritizes them in ongoing outreach efforts. She pioneered the COVID-19 Vaccine Equity Program providing greater access to preventive care for LGBTQ+, The Lenape Ramapough Nation, Black and Brown communities, veterans, the elderly, those with autism and the differently-abled. She is a mentor, a proponent of diversity, equity and inclusion and true servant leader.



**ZAGO Manufacturing Co.**  
Jackie Luciano  
*Vice President*

Newark native and mother of two, Jackie Luciano has been with ZAGO Manufacturing Co. since 2007. Luciano's journey with ZAGO began as a part-time bookkeeper, balancing a new job and being new mom. Within the time of starting as a part-time employee to a full-time senior executive role as a Vice President, Luciano developed a passion for business and manufacturing. Luciano earned an Executive MBA in Finance from Rutgers University so that she could help the company and develop her skillset. Luciano was asked to perform multiple tasks improving the company. Luciano impressively negotiated the sale of an adjacent business, helped ZAGO avert layoffs, oversaw floor automation, and ensured timely and safe production of ZAGO sealing screws used in medical ventilators during the peak of the pandemic. Luciano also mentors ZAGO employees, company interns and Newark students,

who regard her as a role model they can emulate for success.



**AeroDefense**  
Linda Ziemba  
*Founder and CEO*

Linda Ziemba is an experienced technology Founder/CEO. She built and lead the team at AeroDefense that developed the first and only drone detection system to receive a Department of Homeland Security SAFETY Act designation. The AeroDefense AirWarden™ system protects MetLife Stadium and other U.S. facilities and events. Ziemba secured a U.S. Air Force Research Laboratories Small Business Innovation Research grant to collaborate with Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst on a ruggedized, mobile version of AirWarden which the N.J. Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness included in its drone defense program. N.J. State Police use AirWarden mobile sensors in a collaborative drone detection network utilizing a revolutionary approach to airspace security. Ziemba previously served as a key executive for LiveLOOK, an innovative real-time visual collaboration software company which was acquired by Oracle in 2014 in a multi-million dollar transaction. In 2022 she was recognized by Security Industry Association as a Power 100 honoree.



**GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.**  
Mindy Sayres, PG, LSRP,  
*Principal and Senior Vice President*

Mindy Sayres was recently promoted to Senior Vice President/Principal of GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc. In a firm of nearly 700 environmental scientists and geotechnical engineers, only 8 percent have risen to the level of Principal or Senior Principal. Sayres'

achievement in this historically male-dominated profession is noteworthy, but it is equaled by her technical acumen, professional integrity, leadership, and warm nature. These attributes have contributed to her success within the firm and with clients. She was integral to the establishment of GZA's New Jersey office, currently leads environmental projects for two of the firm's top 20 clients, directs complex environmental investigations and remediations, and is involved in several key corporate GZA initiatives including its Compensation Committee and its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee. Sayres embodies the high standards and qualities demanded by her profession.



**Lakeland Bank**  
Karen Garrera  
*Executive Vice President, Chief Retail Officer*

Karen Garrera joined Lakeland Bank in 1988 and her career has advanced commensurate with the bank's growth. She received the Sales Culture Award in 2018 and joined the Executive Team in 2020. Recognized for her open communication style, she encourages feedback and cultivates a constructive, collaborative environment—a valued approach in an increasingly digital world. Garrera believes mentorship is critical, especially for women, and has mentored several female bankers throughout her career. In addition to her personal accomplishments, she is active within the community and spearheads several philanthropic initiatives. She is a long-time member of the Lakeland Bank Scholarship Committee and has played a vital role in the Bank's Annual Scholarship Golf Outing, which has awarded over \$2.7 million in scholarships to deserving students across New Jersey and New York. Garrera has also supported the Morristown St. Patrick's Day Parade and the Girl Scout Council of Northern New Jersey. 🍀



Woman mentoring women

Photo: Getty Images/Stockphoto/filkes



# Garden State's Summer Bounty Makes it Easy to Eat Healthy

By Diane C. Walsh  
Contributing Editor

**E**very summer New Jersey shows off why it's called the Garden State. The peaches are plump and mouthwatering. Blueberries are bursting with juice. Corn is sweet from the fields and of course, there nothing like a Jersey Tomato.

If you're headed down the shore for the day or driving to the mountains, you can't resist stopping at a roadside stand for some fresh fruit. On the weekends, downtowns are abuzz with farmers markets. And every day the fruit and vegetable aisles of the supermarkets are overflowing with such variety that healthy meal planning and preparation is easy.

The N.J. Department of Agriculture proudly reports there are more than 140 community farmers markets through the state. "Farmers markets are a great place for consumers to meet with local growers and learn more about the farm products grown or raised here in the Garden State," N.J. Department of Agriculture Secretary Douglas Fisher said. "Each market has its own unique way of bringing people together for food and fun."

There has been a huge uptick in the number of farmers markets since 2000 when a few dozen opened. Consumers have become more diligent about wanting to know where their food is coming from, how it is grown and who is growing it. The ability to interact with local farmers certainly contributes to the popularity of these markets.

Wakefern the largest retailers' cooperative of supermarkets is continually working to elevate the produce experience for customers in its six banner stores across the Northeast, including ShopRite, Price Rite Marketplace, The Fresh Grocer, Dearborn Market, Gourmet Garage and Fairway Market.

"One of the key ways we continue to improve our offerings is by partnering with local farmers in our trading areas," said Ross Farnsworth, vice president of produce at Wakefern Food Corp.

"We are also laser-focused on using best-in-class technology solutions to enable us to source the right amount of product and properly package and deliver produce to stores to ensure that our produce is fresh, available, affordable and provides maximum shelf life for customers while minimizing waste," he said.

New Jersey farmers grow more than 100 varieties of fruits and vegetables. Some of the more popular items in August and September include peaches, tomatoes, sweet corn, apples, plums, carrots, cabbage, cucumbers, eggplants, peppers, potatoes and many others.

Delicious healthy meals are easily made from the Garden State's bounty. Tracee Yablon Brenner, a registered dietician nutritionist on staff at Holy Name Medical Center, gives her clients suggestions on how to take advantage of the season's harvest. "Farmers markets are a great way to shop and eat local produce. And the Garden State has delicious local produce to choose from."

Brenner is also a graduate of the prestigious culinary program at Johnson & Wales University. Her clients benefit from her unique background as a nutritionist and trained culinary professional.

She encourages clients to freeze the fruits and vegetables that are now available so they can readily enjoy them in the fall. "Spread them out on a large sheet pan and put them in the freezer for a few hours," Brenner suggested. Once the produce is frozen, she said it should be put into freezer bags and carefully labeled and dated.

Gazpacho a flavorful soup made with tomatoes and other vegetables in a blender is

***"Farmers markets are a great place for consumers to meet with local growers and learn more about the farm products grown or raised here in the Garden State..."***

great for summertime, she said. Brenner said there is no better time for the 3Ps plan, purchase and prepare. "It's so hot you don't want to put the oven on." Instead, she recommends grilled chicken, salmon or even tuna, over a bowl of rice, farro, Sorghum, or quinoa, or other ancient grain for a tasty and nutritional meal.

Many health insurance plans cover nutritional counseling, especially for people afflicted with digestive disorders, heart disease or diabetes. Brenner said the guidance can be very helpful.

Brenner said she is a "big fan of grilling your vegetables when you get home from the market." If grilling is not possible, roasting is the next best thing. Once done, the veggies are easy to add to a salad or a meal in the bowl. They are beautifully paired with fish an easy summer protein, the nutritionist said.

While no summer barbecue is complete without a burger, Brenner recommends going beyond the basic chopped meat variety. Consider adding mushrooms to the patty, she said. It adds vitamins and minerals, plus that umami flavor.

Grate in some zucchini, carrots or yellow squash to your burger or meatball mix for a new kick too. Brenner said the summer season is great to experiment with veggie burgers also. Consider using kale, lentils, or beets. "Make a few and freeze for a later date," she said.

For the Jersey tomato, Brenner has countless possibilities. Toss some into a salad. Add tomatoes to a salsa with mangoes and pineapples. Consider making a salad dressing with tomatoes, oil and vinegar. And roasted or grilled tomatoes, plus some feta cheese pairs easily with pasta for a quick hot-weather meal.

Access to so many delicious fruits and vegetables make is easier for healthy eating choices.

The NJ Agriculture Department promotes eating healthy Jersey Fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the growing season. This includes digital billboards along the state's busy highways, radio advertisements, online placements, distribution of free blueberries, grape tomatoes and peaches on three boardwalks and banners flying along the Jersey Shore during the summer.

Wakefern was one of the first retailers to fully lean into the idea of having a dietitian-led Health & Wellness team to both interact with customers in-store, as well as online via the free chat service available at ShopRite.com.

Farnsworth also explained at the on the corporate side that Wakefern's produce division partners with the dietitian team to identify emerging health and wellness trends and discover new foods and products to introduce to shoppers. "We also look to our dietitian team to help us promote our products via recipes and promotions on our website and circular.

"We believe that combining the expertise of our dietitians with the knowledge base of our produce and procurement managers, we can offer customers a truly differentiated and extraordinary shopping experience," the vice president said.

For decades the retailers in the Wakefern cooperative have been building and cultivating relationships with local family-owned farmers across its trading area. Farnsworth said: "We also rely on our produce category managers and buyers who spend a lot of time in the fields, talking to our farmers and suppliers.

"For us, it's all about relationships, in fact, due to our long-time ties and relationships with growers cross the globe, despite recent tight supplies chains, we're proud to say that we've been able to keep our aisles and continuously stocks and service our customers with everything they need for their families." 🍅





Wakefern farms, and other farmers' markets offer access to the freshest, farm-to-table produce.



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