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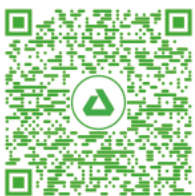
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A Sit Down With Steve Forbes





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UPCOMING



CIANJ's 97th Annual Meeting & Luncheon

October 24

11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Hilton Meadowlands Hotel
East Rutherford, NJ



Building Business Opportunities Ahead of the 2026 FIFA World Cup™ Matches

October 29

12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

The Chart House
Weehawken, NJ



The Perfect Brew: A Conversation with Keurig's Co-Founder & Insights Into the Business of Coffee

November 14

8:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

The Madison Hotel
Morristown, NJ



CIANJ's Holiday Networking Reception

December 3

6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

The Madison Hotel
Morristown, NJ

Register and stay up to date on all [CIANJ](https://web.cianj.org/events) and [COMMERCE](https://web.cianj.org/events) events at: <https://web.cianj.org/events>

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CIANJ Meets With NJ's Candidates for U.S. Senate

By Anthony Russo
President, CIANJ

With the November election approaching, the Commerce and Industry Association (CIANJ) invited New Jersey's candidates for U.S. Senate – Rep. Andy Kim and Curtis Bashaw – to

speak to CIANJ board members in September. The CIANJ hosted both Republican U.S. Senate nominee Curtis Bashaw and Democratic opponent Andy Kim at separate events. The candidates each presented their qualifications and stances on several New Jersey issues, as well as took questions from members.

Both candidates presented themselves as change agents.

Rep. Kim, a three-term congressman, noted that he's running because he enjoys the public service. "I am a policy person when it comes down to it, but I really have very little interest in just playing the game as it is. And that's what allows me to do

things. If I was a politician, there's no way I would've stepped up against the Governor or I would've stepped up against party leaders. I would've done things in a safer way looking out for my career."

He also noted he's willing to step out and do what he thinks is right, and risk things, because "if I lose this Senate race, I'll land on my feet. I'll be okay. I'll find another way to serve this country."

Bashaw, Founder and Managing Partner of Cape Resorts, said he entered the N.J. Senate race after feeling dissatisfied with politics.

"I was feeling frustrated with the acrimony in our politics, the fact that we weren't getting a lot done in D.C., the fact that New Jersey is 49th in what it gets back from the federal government but is third or fourth in what it contributes.

"As you get frustrated about these things, you get tired of talking about it, and it felt to me – after Menendez got indicted a second time and then the Governor's wife thought she could have the seat – that maybe this was an opportunity to just jump in."

To help COMMERCE readers and CIANJ members make an informed decision this November, COMMERCE Magazine is running edited transcripts of both September meetings.

To read the full transcript from Rep. Andy Kim [click here](#).

To read the full transcript from Curtis Bashaw [click here](#).

COMMERCE MAGAZINE

PUBLISHER/CEO
ANTHONY RUSSO
arusso@cianj.org

EDITOR
JAMIE GRILL-GOODMAN
jgoodman@cianj.org

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
JULIA PANGBURN
LARRY FELD

ADVERTISING SALES
RICH WALTMAN (646) 808-5114
rwaltman@cianj.org
TOM WORLEY (917)-733-5135
tworley@cianj.org

LAYOUT AND DESIGN
MARJORIE CAMPOLONGO
Art Director,
mjcampolongo@gmail.com



Rep. Andy Kim spoke with CIANJ board members September 5 at the CIANJ office in Rochelle Park, NJ.



Curtis Bashaw spoke to CIANJ board members on September 12 at the Glen Ridge Country Club.



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A Sit Down With Chairman and Editor-in-Chief Steve Forbes

By Jamie Grill-Goodman

Steve Forbes is as busy as ever. In addition to his work at Forbes Media, the Jersey-born media magnate tallies an upcoming keynote, a new book, and a new series of inspirational stories among the items on his plate.

On October 24, he will deliver the keynote for the [97th Annual Meeting & Luncheon of The Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey \(CIANJ\)](#). The event celebrates CIANJ's more than nine decades as the voice of New Jersey's business community, and Forbes – in addition to his decades as a publishing executive – boasts strong New Jersey ties. He was born in Morristown, NJ; graduated from Princeton University; and Forbes Media is currently located in Jersey City, NJ. After Forbes kicks off the event, the Annual Meeting serves as forum for NJ business leaders to network and share industry trends.

In addition to prepping for the upcoming keynote, the [Steve Forbes On Achievement](#) series ranks among Forbes's latest undertakings. The series – produced by [izzit.org](#)®, the educational affiliate of [Free To Choose Network](#)®, a global media nonprofit organization – presents inspirational stories from history's greatest innovators.

The author of several books also just released his latest: *Inflation: What It Is, Why It's Bad, and*

How to Fix It. Co-authored by Nathan Lewis and Elizabeth Ames, the book discusses “what’s behind the worst inflationary storm in more than forty years.”

Despite his many endeavors, COMMERCE Magazine was able sit down with Forbes to capture his latest views on financial literacy, NJ economics, and publishing businesses.

Jamie Grill-Goodman: Financial literacy for students is a passion project of yours. Why is teaching financial literacy so important for today's youth?

Steve Forbes: Understanding money helps develop critical thinking skills. Learning to save or adhere to a budget, for example, encourages clear thinking and establishing priorities. You have to ask yourself, “What is important today – and what will I need in the future?” This kind of discipline helps foster independence and self-reliance. Financial literacy also teaches how to handle credit. You learn about things like the dangers of compounding interest – which entrap so many young people who get ensnared in credit card or student loan debt.

Grill-Goodman: How is [izzit.org](#) supporting this mission?

Forbes: Not-for-profit organization [izzit.org](#) supports literacy by supplying educational

resources to educators and students on subjects ranging from student loans to entrepreneurship. The channel provides an array of superb videos as teaching tools, accompanied by teacher's guides and other educational material – all at no cost to subscribers. Over the past 18 years, [izzit.org](#) teaching tools have been used in classrooms nationwide, by more than 450,000 educators and millions of students.

Grill-Goodman: Tell me about how *Steve Forbes On Achievement* presents stories from history's innovators and what your goals for the videos are?

Forbes: *Steve Forbes On Achievement* introduces students to innovators whose achievements have shaped the modern world, yet are often taken for granted. Achievers profiled include people like George Eastman, who made photography affordable for everyone; Margaret Rudkin, whose health bread recipe led to the blockbuster success of Pepperidge Farm; and Annie Malone, developer of hair products who was very likely the first African American woman to become a millionaire. Each video is under four minutes and teaches the importance of creativity, persistence, hard work and why achievement flourishes in a free enterprise system.

Grill-Goodman: You also have a new book out, *Inflation: What It Is, Why It's Bad, and How to Fix It*. What are important takeaways for readers?

Forbes: The foremost cause of inflation is when the dollar – or any currency – loses value. What happens when the value of the dollar goes down? Prices go up. Our book is about the different ways this disaster takes place. The best way to fight inflation is to stabilize the value of the dollar.

Grill-Goodman: You were born in Morristown, New Jersey. What are your thoughts on how the upcoming election results may impact NJ businesses?

Forbes: New Jersey's economy was once the envy of the country. The state grew faster than the nation as a whole. It suffered less from an economic downturn and rebounded faster. Today the state is a national laggard. People and businesses are leaving thanks to high taxes and onerous regulations. That's why the coming 2024 elections are especially critical. Will government or free enterprise determine the direction of the economy? In so many ways New Jersey has been going in the wrong direction for a number of years.

Continued



American business magazine Forbes was founded in 1917 by Bertie Charles (B.C.) Forbes. His grandson, Steve Forbes, is Chairman and Editor-in-Chief of Forbes Media.

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Andrew Zalescik

SVP, Commercial Market Manager
azalescik@columbiabankonline.com

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Grill-Goodman: What economic trends or policies do you see impacting NJ businesses?

Forbes: New Jersey is one of the highest taxed states in the nation and already burdened with the highest business tax rate in the nation. New Jersey, along with Minnesota, Illinois, and Alaska, has the top marginal corporate tax rate in the country. Businesses have to shoulder the weight of draconian regulations. For instance, New Jersey's bars and restaurants are struggling to deal with such restrictions. Among other things, the state has limited happy hour and discounted drink promotions. This is ridiculous.

Grill-Goodman: One might say the tax code has grown more complicated since you ran for president. How would a simplified tax code benefit NJ business owners and the overall NJ economy?

Forbes: A simplified tax code would enable businesses to spend more time and resources in expanding rather than filling out tax forms. Paying higher taxes also means less money for expansion. A less punishing tax code would let businesses grow. It would spur job creation. Everyone benefits.

Grill-Goodman: How do you see publishing as a business model evolving?

Forbes: Traditional print publishing was devastated by the internet, causing a drastic shrinkage in the size and number of magazines

and newspapers. This kind of disruption often occurs when new technologies rise up and replace the old ways of doing things. That's one of the lessons of our series. Entrepreneurs and business leaders can survive an industry transformation – and prosper – if they have a clear understanding of what their purpose is and

what their customers' needs are. There's more than one way to serve them. Today print is a very small part of the business of Forbes Media. We successfully navigated the change to digital and are thriving based on the explosion of content offered online, in addition to expanding other products and services. 📈



Steve Forbes in the Forbes Media office, located in Jersey City, NJ.



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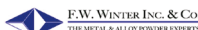
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Universities and Colleges Engage the Community

Compiled by Jamie Grill-Goodman

With students back in school, higher education institutions are an integral part of New Jersey and the communities they serve. How schools partner with their local communities and companies is important – not only to enrolled students, but to businesses and their employees.

Continuing education for working professionals, tackling the teacher shortage, meeting learners where they work and live, internships, and collaborating with industry leaders, are just a few topics that came up when *COMMERCE Magazine* talked to leaders in New Jersey's higher education community. We asked, "How are you fostering partnerships with local communities and industries to enhance educational and research opportunities in the new school year," and this is what we learned:



Berkeley College
Diane Recinos, EdD
President

Berkeley College believes education is the key to company growth and retention. The College specializes in continuing education for working professionals through its Corporate Learning Partnership program. Offered at no cost to members, Corporate Learning

Partnerships provide a one-stop solution for employee training and career development, helping businesses grow their internal pipelines.

Corporate Learning Partners benefit from an up-to 30% tuition reduction for employees and their immediate families, as well as gain access to exclusive programming such as masterclasses and free virtual certifications.

Berkeley College currently partners with more than 175 companies of various sizes and industries, offering customized courses and training to meet each organization's educational goals. A prime example is our partnership with Saint Michael's Medical Center, an acute care hospital in Newark, NJ, which has invested in the professional development of its employees, who can enroll in our School of Health Studies through the Corporate Learning Partnership.

In keeping with Berkeley College's mission to empower each student to achieve lifelong success, relationships with local companies also benefit our current students and graduates who can serve as interns or help fill open positions.

Separate from our Corporate Learning Partnership program, Berkeley College offers short-term Continuing Education certificates and courses that can meet the needs of professionals seeking to advance in their careers or looking to enter a new field. Current workforce trends reinforce that reskilling in areas such as leadership; diversity, equity and inclusion; and artificial intelligence are critical to keep employees engaged.



Fairleigh Dickinson University
Michael Avaltroni
President

We are seeking to return Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) to its roots as a premier provider of educational opportunities, including degrees, certifications, continuing education, professional development, pre-college and lifelong-learning programs throughout the communities of New Jersey.

We are focused on truly meeting learners where they are, providing opportunities to build learning communities that integrate the best of hybrid-flexible learning, utilizing online and in-person engagement immersed within the communities where learners live and work.

In particular, FDU is seeking to introduce flexible, low-residency programs delivered on location to students where they can achieve the desired balance of flexibility and community across their learning journey. The long-term goal is to build a comprehensive network of sites and offerings across the state that 'travel' from place to place to link to cohorts of students seeking those offerings. The sites will include two-year institutions (with bridge programs to FDU campuses, degree completion on site at the two-year college or a mix of both), corporate settings (such as those we have established at Merck and Novartis) and community hubs (such as the flagship we are creating at Bell Works in Holmdel).



New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT)
Teik C. Lim
President

The focus of NJIT's new strategic plan is to enhance our status as the greatest producer of technological talent and knowledge in New Jersey by enabling us to become a nexus of innovation – a physical and intellectual focal point for innovative ideas, actions, and people. One critical component of that is our development of a strong research, innovation, and technology entrepreneurship ecosystem with external partners that include industry, academia, community, and government entities.

NJIT's new Center for Translational Research (CTR) is currently funding 18 Technology Innovation Translation Acceleration (TITA) and Col-

Continued on page 14



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Uniting NJ through

The Nation – and State – unite in preparation of the signing of the Declaration of Independence

By Jamie Grill-Goodman

On July 4, 2026, the United States of America will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

New Jersey is readying itself for that moment.

The anniversary provides the chance to tell the story of the state's pivotal role in the struggle for American independence. Strategically located between New York and Philadelphia, New Jersey witnessed more conflict over a longer period than any other colony during the American Revolutionary War (1775-83), hence why it's often referred to as "the Crossroads of the American Revolution."

To prepare for the anniversary and encourage heritage tourism, RevolutionNJ (RevNJ) has been established as a partnership between the New Jersey Historical Commission (NJHC), a division of the New Jersey Department of State, and the nonprofit Crossroads of the American Revolution Association.

RevolutionNJ

The partnership is unique, says Sara Cureton, Executive Director of the NJHC. RevolutionNJ was created by legislation in 2018, which tasked the NJHC to pick a nonprofit to partner with and plan activities and initiatives for the 2026 anniversary, and through 2033 (the eight-year length of the war), as well as investigate the establishment of a state visitor center.

"Our arrangement is a little unusual, but it has had a huge benefit to New Jersey," says Cureton. "Because we started with two existing organizations, we were able to move much quicker to get started on planning for this. So that's really been a big advantage."

Cureton and Carrie Fellows, Executive Director of Crossroads of the American Revolution, attended a working session this July in Washington, DC, held for America250, led by the U.S. Semiquincentennial Commission. The session brought together core Semiquincentennial planning stakeholders to share milestones and planning developments.

"We can tell you," says Cureton, "state after state got up there to say, 'our commission was just formed, we just had our first meeting.'"

"And we've been doing this for a few years now," Fellows chimes in.

Through a series of initiatives that explore the history of the American Revolution, its context, and its legacy, RevNJ aims to spur diverse

audiences statewide into embracing the value and relevance of New Jersey's history.

"We just see this as a tremendous opportunity for the state of New Jersey, which really lags behind the rest of the country and the amount of revenue we produce annually from heritage tourism," says Fellows. "We are only bringing in about just under 7% of revenue from heritage tourism and the rest of the country is almost at 14%. So, we really want to raise up our heritage tourism sites and capture our own market share."



The 148-foot Trenton Battle Monument is crowned by a statue of a victorious George Washington.

Some of the preparation involved has included a visitor readiness and state assessment survey of about 150 historic sites around the state to rate their visitor readiness for 2026, which resulted in a list of recommendations to bring these sites up to snuff for 2026.

"A lot of those sites have used that data as leverage to go after grant funding and other sources of funding through their local county and state government as well as some



Proprietary House in Perth Amboy, NJ, is the last remaining

n Heritage Tourism

Preparations for the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

federal sources,” says Fellows. “Also, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy announced in 2022, \$25 million in capital investments in 10 key state-owned historic sites.”

“As we celebrate our nation’s 250th anniversary, it is important that our historic sites are prepared to welcome the hundreds of thousands of visitors that will undoubtedly travel from around the world to witness these sites in person on such a momentous occasion,” Governor

Murphy stated of the investment in the restoration of the Revolutionary War sites at the time.

The Six Goals of RevNJ

While promoting heritage tourism in NJ to increase its impact on economic and community development is a key goal, Cureton notes RevNJ has six goals.

Telling a diverse and inclusive story of the past in which all New Jerseys can see themselves

represented is another core goal, one which the organization embraces with enthusiasm, notes Cureton. “That’s another part of what we’re doing here, to really try to paint in a picture of our past that’s much more inclusive than maybe what I experienced in 1976 during the bicentennial.”

The remaining goals include:

- Encourage the growth of organizational capacity at New Jersey’s history organizations to attract, engage, and serve visitors.
- Elevate the value placed on history education in K–12 schools and universities.
- Demonstrate how understanding the complexity of history helps us to respond to the present and prepare for the future.
- Increase public and private funding for history in New Jersey.

How NJ Businesses Can Get Involved

For NJ businesses of all sizes, RevNJ aims to make it easy to get involved in the 250th anniversary through its Proud Partners initiative. And with the FIFA World Cup 26™ final in July 2026 coinciding with the Semiquincentennial, it’s really important for businesses to know is that this is going to be huge for New Jersey, says Cureton.

“There’s a spot on our website where businesses can go and fill out an application form,” she says, “and really what we’re asking businesses to do, and all of our Proud Partners, is to embrace those goals. Think of ways that they can support those, that mission, and vision.”

“So whether it’s helping to us to promote what we’re doing through their own communications, whether it’s planning events at their own businesses that tie it to the 250th, maybe it’s a promotion. There are lots of ways for businesses to get involved.”

“And there’s no cost,” adds Fellows. “There’s no cost for either businesses or communities to participate. We just want people to have a way that they can officially participate; they get to use the RevolutionNJ Proud Partner logo on their website and in their material.”

Whether small or large, the Proud Partner program presents businesses an opportunity to get creative with participation. For example, a ballet school could put on a performance about conflict. RevNJ itself has been piloting Tavern Talks – interactive programs where reenactors immerse participants in the past using questions to help them explore the past, as well as

Continued



Photo: RevNJ

aining royal governor’s house in the United States.

Tourism

today's community issues. The program is a partnership with New Jersey's microbrewery industry, Cureton notes. "We capitalize on the fact that taverns 250 years ago were where people went to debate the issues of the day. We bring in some very skilled interpreters in period costume to come into these microbreweries and really engage the patrons there in talking about some of those great issues – issues of taxation, of self-determination – all of these things that were hot topics in the American Revolutionary period and still resonate with us today."

Another reason why RevNJ hopes businesses will join and support the celebrations, says Cureton: "we hear a lot about how our nation is so divided." But what she found really inspiring, returning from the America250 gathering the federal commission hosted with almost all 50 states in a room together for two and a half days, was there was "such a spirit of collegiality and unity in that group of people from all around the nation, excited about this anniversary as a great opportunity to reconnect our communities, reconnect as fellow Americans, and reconnect with those founding ideals of the American Revolution of liberty, of justice, that pursuit of happiness."

"We think businesses have a great opportunity to not only be involved in something that's going to promote New Jersey and it's unbelievably rich history, but also an initiative that brings people together – that brings our residents and visitors together," she adds. 🇺🇸



Photo: RevNJ

RevNJ's participation at the America250 Convening of States in July. Left to right: Sara Cureton of NJHC and RevNJ; Rosie Rios, former United States Treasurer and current Chair of America250; and Carrie Fellows of Crossroads of the American Revolution and RevNJ.

Higher Education

Continued From Page 10

laborative Early Research Translation (CERT) seed grants that support ongoing collaborations with industry or community partners. Both the CTR and TITA external advisory boards have members from industry leaders as well as successful startups.

In addition, CTR has started an undergraduate translational research internship program this summer for NJIT students to work with industry partners on applied research projects. These projects provide students exceptional experiential learning and research experience.



William Paterson University
Richard J. Helldobler
President

William Paterson has a long and proud tradition of partnering with local communities to benefit their diverse populations and advance the education and professional development of our students. One new and far-reaching example comes from our College of Education, which is implementing an innovative approach to preparing certified teachers through a U.S. Department of Labor Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (T-RAP) in Bloomfield, Clifton, Manchester Regional H.S., Haledon, Passaic, and Paterson, all high-need school districts.

William Paterson's T-RAP is designed to provide teacher certification opportunities

to school district employees who don't currently hold a license. The program also places WP teacher candidates in partner districts for their clinical practice, allowing them to 'earn while they learn,' while also serving districts in much-needed employment positions.

The program is supported by the DOL's inaugural Augustus F. Hawkins award, which supports minority-serving institutions that are well positioned to increase diversity among our nation's teacher workforce. While in the program, participants will receive coordinated, personalized services and support with a focus on

reducing barriers in teacher candidate recruitment and preparation toward the attainment of teacher licensure, all while placing teacher candidates in high-need school districts and hard-to-staff schools in underserved communities. Also, many potential program participants will be adult learners, furthering the State's goal of credentialing more New Jersey residents. The design of William Paterson's T-RAP, unique in New Jersey, will add to the institution's long tradition of connecting first-generation and low-income college students to educational programs that place them on a path to social mobility. 🇺🇸



NJIT's new Center for Translational Research (CTR) has started an undergraduate translational research internship program for students to work with industry partners on applied research projects.

STEVE ADUBATO'S

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NJ Medical Leaders Talk Breast Cancer Treatment Innovations

Compiled by Jamie Grill-Goodman

This October marks Breast Cancer Awareness Month, an event that began in 1985 as a week-long awareness campaign and has since witnessed nearly four decades of medical progress.

Yet a cure is still needed. According to [American Cancer Society](#) estimates, about 310,720 new cases of invasive breast cancer will be diagnosed in women in the United States in 2024 and around 42,250 women will die from breast cancer. Overall, the average risk of a woman in the U.S. developing breast cancer sometime in her life is about 1 in 8 (13%).

While this devastating disease continues to claim lives, breast cancer detection and treatment is an ever-changing field of medicine, bringing new hope with every advancement. Recent innovations include developments in preventive mammogram technology, trials helping the medical community study new treatment approaches, new medications and approvals, and solutions mitigating side effects to treatments.

To learn more about these and other recent innovations in breast cancer treatment, *COMMERCE* magazine asked New Jersey's healthcare leaders for an update. Here is what they shared:



Hackensack University Medical Center

Christopher M. McGreevy,
MD FACS
Associate Chief, Breast Surgery

Hackensack Meridian Health (HMH) is a leading provider of comprehensive [breast cancer care](#), starting with next-generation sequencing (NGS) that analyzes the genetic makeup of a patient's tumor to identify specific mutations that can be targeted with personalized therapies.

Liquid biopsies are minimally invasive tests that can detect circulating tumor DNA in the bloodstream, allowing for earlier detection of recurrence and monitoring of treatment response.

HMH also offers a number of advanced surgical techniques that include minimally invasive surgery such as wireless localization techniques for breast conservation and targeted axillary surgery reducing lymphedema risk postoperatively. Nipple sparing mastectomy is also an option that offers the best natural cosmetic outcomes for patients choosing or requiring mastectomy. Oncoplastic surgery combines cancer removal with reconstructive

techniques to preserve the breast's natural appearance and function.

Radiation therapy remains a crucial tool for treating cancer. Stereotactic radiosurgery (SRS) is a precise form of radiation therapy delivering high doses to the tumor while minimizing damage to surrounding healthy tissue. Intensity-modulated radiation therapy (IMRT) uses computer-controlled beams to deliver radiation with greater precision, reducing side effects.

HMH is also actively involved in numerous clinical trials not available elsewhere and patients always receive a wide range of supportive care services.



Holy Name Medical Center

Dr. Yadyra Rivera
*Program Director,
Breast Oncology*

Breast cancer treatment is a rapidly changing field. New medications and approvals constantly change the way that we approach and treat our breast cancer patients.

CD4 K inhibitors are drugs that improve the outcome of patients with ER positive metastatic breast cancer. Recent studies have shown that these medications (Abemaciclib and Ribociclib) in conjunction with endocrine therapy improve the outcome of early-stage/high risk hormone receptor positive as well.

The use of immunotherapy has been approved for the management of many solid malignancies. In breast cancer patients with triple negative disease also benefit from this approach. Patients with triple negative breast cancer benefit from the use of immunotherapy in conjunction with chemotherapy prior to surgery. Immunotherapy is also approved for a subset of patients with metastatic triple negative breast cancer.

About 15-20% of patients with breast cancer are considered HER2/neu positive. Anti-HER2/neu therapy is a very effective medication and significantly improves the outcome of these patients that were once considered to have a worse prognosis. In the metastatic setting we are offering out this medication to patients that were once considered HER2/neu negative now called

Continued



Dr. Yadyra Rivera of Holy Name Medical Center meets with a patient.

Photo: Holy Name Medical Center



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Memorial Sloan Kettering (MSK) Bergen

Anita Mamtani, MD, FACS
Breast Surgeon

Many cancer therapies available today were developed over the past decade by physician-scientists at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSK). Together, we've been recognized internationally as leaders in pioneering new and effective treatments, which have resulted in optimal outcomes for thousands of people who entrust us with their care every year.

Our deep expertise in treating rare cancers means our patients continue to have access to the latest treatments, including innovative clinical trials. This year, MSK launched a new program for people diagnosed with invasive lobular cancer, or ILC, a rare cancer that affects between 10 and 15 people (out of 100 diagnoses). Unlike other breast cancers, ILC tends to grow in a straight line and invades in a sheet-like manner, rather than form a lump, which can make it difficult to self-palpate and detect on a mammogram. Therefore, it's often diagnosed at later stages and does not always respond well to chemotherapy. We created this program because we're experts in diagnosing and treating ILC. As physician-scientists, we're also deeply engaged in clinical research to better understand how ILC behaves, and we're developing clinical trials to study new treatment approaches which we hope will lead to tomorrow's cures.



RWJBarnabas Health

M. Michele Blackwood, MD, FACS
Director of Breast Surgery,
RWJBarnabas Health
Director of Women's Oncologic
Health, RWJBarnabas Health
and Rutgers Cancer Institute

Head of Breast Surgery, Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center

Women are finding out at a younger age – well below the recommended mammogram age of 40 in some cases – that they have breast cancer.

At RWJBarnabas Health and Rutgers Cancer Institute, New Jersey's only National Cancer Institute (NCI)-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center, nipple-sparing mastectomies are becoming more common to treat breast cancer. Granted, women who have tumors too close to their areolas or nipples would not be good candidates.

Mastectomies are just one kind of surgery women with breast cancer receive, however. Oncoplastic surgery is also performed, which involves a breast surgeon and plastic surgeon working together to remove the tumor via a

lumpectomy and perform a breast lift or mastopexy to maintain the breasts' shape and appearance. After these surgeries, women emerge cancer-free with their breasts intact.

Every woman's breast cancer journey is unique – from their age to when a mammogram first detects their cancer to the treatment plan recommended by their oncologist. This isn't your grandmother's mammogram or mastectomy anymore. Mammograms are 3D instead of 2D now, which can detect abnormalities even in dense breasts, which 50% of New Jersey women have. According to state law, women must be informed about this so additional screenings can be performed.



Saint Peter's University Hospital

Henry K. Tsai, MD
Board certified radiation
oncologist with Astera Cancer
Care, who treats patients at
Saint Peter's University Hospital

Saint Peter's University Hospital offers effective radiation therapy to breast cancer patients, while safeguarding their overall health. While radiation therapy is a powerful tool in the fight against breast cancer, it carries risks, particularly when healthy tissue and organs such as the heart and lungs are inadvertently exposed to unnecessary radiation. These risks can lead to possible side effects, including long-term damage to vital organs and an increased risk of secondary cancers.

Prone breast positioning is an innovative approach that has been developed to mitigate these risks. In this technique, patients lie face down on a specially designed treatment table, allowing the breast to hang away from the body. This positioning naturally increases the distance between the breast and critical organs, such as the heart and lungs, thereby reducing their exposure to radiation. By minimizing radiation exposure

to these healthy tissues, prone breast positioning significantly lowers the risk of side effects such as cardiac complications or lung damage. Under the guidance of a radiation oncologist, prone breast positioning is an effective way to treat breast cancer while prioritizing patient safety.



Valley-Mount Sinai Comprehensive Cancer Care

Laura Klein, MD
Director, Breast Center

As part of our commitment to improving patient satisfaction and clinical outcomes, the Breast

Center team at Valley-Mount Sinai Comprehensive Cancer Care strives to introduce new treatment technologies and clinical offerings.

Our team adopted the SmartCurve™ Breast Stabilization System, which has been clinically proven to deliver a more comfortable mammogram. The System features a curved surface that mirrors the shape of a woman's breast to reduce pinching and better distribute force over the breast.


Chemotherapy may be recommended as part of treatment. Our team understands that for some chemotherapy patients, hair loss can be a traumatic side effect. That is why we offer the Paxman Scalp Cooling System, designed to help prevent hair loss, to a subset of patients. Scalp cooling is a simple, noninvasive process to reduce the temperature of the scalp to minimize the chemotherapeutic agents' effect on hair follicles.

Once active treatment is complete, patients will receive ongoing surveillance and survivorship support. Our team launched the Survivorship and Health Interventions in Nutrition and Exercise (SHINE) Program. Focusing on nutrition, exercise, and community, the program provides education and referrals to related subspecialists to improve health outcomes and decrease cancer risk. 📌



Women are finding breast cancer at a younger age, says M. Michele Blackwood, MD, FACS.

Photo: Getty Images/Stockphoto/Andy



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*2022 NJ Cardiac Data Registries.

Leket Israel Redirects Wasted Food to Those in Need

By Jamie Grill-Goodman

Leket Israel has grown to employ over 150 workers and span nationwide since its humble beginnings in 2003, but the nonprofit's primary goal remains the same, says Lauren Yokèd, Executive Director, American Friends of Leket Israel.

"I love the mission and the concept, which is really so simple – moving excess food from those who have too much to those who do not have enough."

Today Leket Israel collects surplus produce and cooked meat meals – that would otherwise needlessly end up in landfills – from over 1,000 food suppliers and delivers the food free of charge to 300 nonprofit partners serving 330,000 vulnerable Israelis of all backgrounds each week.

The organization was founded by New Jersey native Joseph Gitler in 2003, under the name Table2Table, shortly after he immigrated to Israel. Recognizing that more than a third of all food in Israel is wasted (on par with the rest of the western world) while at the same time, a quarter of the population lives below the poverty line, he felt compelled to act.

"He began rescuing fresh, excess meals late at night from event halls in his own vehicle and dropping them off at local soup kitchens," Yokèd tells *COMMERCE*. "In 2010, the organization merged with Israel's food bank becoming Leket Israel, Israel's National Food Bank and largest food rescue organization. Today, Leket Israel works with hundreds of farmers and other food producers."

In 2006, American Friends of Leket Israel was established in Teaneck, NJ. Yokèd has been with the nonprofit for more than 13 years.

"I grew up on a farm myself, in Monmouth County, founded by my grandfather in the 40s," she notes. "We would regularly set aside some of the crops to donate to local food banks in central NJ and when I learned many years later that there was an organization doing something similar in Israel, albeit on a much grander scale, I was hooked."

The New Jersey office actively promotes Leket Israel's food rescue activities, awareness about food rescue and food insecurity, and the organization's emergency humanitarian relief programs.

"We provide speakers for presentations and can set up personalized fundraising pages for individuals, synagogues, churches and schools to raise funds to feed those in need. Naming opportunities are available. We also regularly work

with kids to create projects to fundraise for their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs."

In central Israel, individuals and groups can volunteer in either the fields (harvesting fresh produce) or in the Logistics Center, sorting and packing produce to go out to those in need. The organization is apolitical and nondenominational, and serves all Israelis in need regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.

A Country in Need

In response to the current crisis, Leket Israel is now feeding 330,000 Israelis each week – a substantial 22% increase from before Oct. 7.

Leket Israel quickly developed several major emergency relief programs to address the crisis after October 7, with an emphasis on additional food provision and special assistance to the devastated farming community.

"I love the mission and the concept, which is really so simple – moving excess food from those who have too much to those who do not have enough."

"Israeli farmers have been devastated by inaccessibility to arable land in firing zones on the northern and southern borders, direct damage to farms and equipment, and the absence of farm laborers," shares Yokèd. "Thirty-five percent of farms in the Gaza envelope have permanently closed. In the north, rising production costs – up 40% for day workers due to labor shortages – and constant rocket bombardments make it nearly impossible for farmers to operate day to day and stay in business."

"Due to the drastic reduction in fresh fruit and vegetables available for rescue from farmers (normally the largest food donors to the organization, by far) the organization is temporarily supplementing this by purchasing 22 million lbs. of produce in 2024. Leket Israel has also sent 80,000 volunteers to assist farmers with produce harvest due to labor shortages caused by the war."

The amount of help Leket Israel is providing and food waste it's preventing is staggering. In 2024, Leket Israel will source and rescue an



Lauren Yokèd, Executive Director, American Friends of Leket Israel

estimated 75,000,000 lbs. of fresh produce and 2.4 million prepared meals.

"Recognizing the toll of conflict on Israeli border farmers – both physical damage to land, equipment, infrastructure, and crops, as well as the emotional toll of personal loss – Leket Israel continues to provide financial support crucial for the recovery and resilience of border farmers," she says. "In collaboration with the Koret Israel Economic Development Fund (KIEDF), Leket has established a loan fund to provide critical financial assistance to devastated farmers, initially focusing on southern farms before expanding to other areas, with 26 loans approved and 21 distributed to date. Additionally, the organization has partnered with Strauss (a major food manufacturing company) to establish a \$4 million grant fund for farmers in the Gaza envelope, providing immediate relief for infrastructure, land rehabilitation, and labor support. Leket Israel has also provided direct financial support to about 900 farmers and their families, via pre-paid debit cards."

Amid the crisis in Israel, some businesses have curtailed their activities or have shut down completely due to security measures, as well as losing employees who have been called up for military duty. Farmers have seen their fields destroyed. Some have witnessed their workforce disappear overnight, says Yokèd.

"All of this has resulted in massive and unprecedented demand on Leket Israel to provide fresh food and other support to those in need," says Yokèd.

Continued



In central Israel, individuals can volunteer in the Logistics Center, sorting and packing produce to go out to those in need.

Despite the increased demand for services, Leket Israel has been able to adapt its activities, expand emergency support projects, and mobilize a massive volunteer force. And it continues to do so. 🇮🇱

Help American Friends of Leket Israel Now

COMMERCE Magazine and the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey (CIANJ) invite our members and readers to join American Friends of Leket Israel in supporting farmers and vulnerable families in Israel through the collection and redistribution of food to those in need. Help us meet our goal by donating online here: <https://my.israelgives.org/en/fundme/CommerceMagazine>.

With an average increase of 131% in expenses per month in 2024 compared with the same period in 2023, Leket Israel has been challenged to raise additional funds for emergency initiatives and food purchase. Each \$180 donated rescues and distributes meals to 145 individuals in need.

American Friends of Leket Israel is a registered 501c3 organization. For more information email info@leket.us

Photo: Lauren Yokel

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Pilot Program Aims to Curb Opioid Abuse

By Jamie Grill-Goodman

New Jersey residents struggling with opioid dependency will soon have one barrier removed in their recoveries, thanks to a new pilot program funded as part of New Jersey's Fiscal Year 2025 state budget.

The passed budget includes a \$250,000 appropriation for a pilot, administered by [Sonara Health](#), that simplifies methadone treatment by offering a web-based application that enables patients to document their medication intake remotely.

Referred to as "New Jersey's Remote Observation of Take-Home Methadone Pilot Program," the first patients may have access to opioid treatment at home as early as fall 2024. The critical funding marks a significant advancement for Sonara Health and its mission.

"At a time when fewer than 10% can access treatment and a New Jersey resident dies every two hours and 35 minutes, it's crucial to support innovative treatment options that reduce barriers to treatment," says Sheeba Ibdunni, VP, Sonara Health.

Below, *COMMERCE* Magazine caught up with Ibdunni to learn more about Sonara Health's mission and the new pilot.

Jamie Grill-Goodman: How big is NJ's opioid use problem and the drug epidemic?

Sheeba Ibdunni: New Jersey ranks in the top half of the nation when it comes to drug overdoses. Per the [CDC](#), in 2022, New Jersey experienced a fatal drug overdose rate of 31.6 per 100,000 New Jerseyans. Of the [3,064](#) overdose deaths, 90.7% involved at least one opioid and individuals who are male, 45–54, and identified as Black, non-Hispanic had the highest overdose death rates. Which tracks with the national data, which shows [widening disparities](#) between different population groups, with overdose death rates increasing 44% for Black people and 39% for American Indian and Alaska Native people.

Grill-Goodman: In total, how much money in the State's FY2025 budget is going toward addressing NJ's drug epidemic?

Ibdunni: While we do not have a concrete number, we know that hundreds of millions of dollars will be deployed from the FY25 budget towards the opioid epidemic. The State of NJ has shown a commitment in the past to assisting those impacted by the opioid epidemic and that commitment is shown tenfold by the Governor and Legislature funding a remote methadone pilot program under Sonara.

Grill-Goodman: What went into securing the \$250,000 appropriation for the pilot program administered by Sonara?

Ibdunni: Within healthcare, it is not uncommon that care delivery innovation is hindered by lack of payment and reimbursement reform. In an effort to support low-barrier care models like increased access to take-home methadone, Sonara has a government affairs strategy that supports advocacy and lobbying efforts. Policymakers in New Jersey care deeply about increasing access to life-saving medication like methadone, as evidenced by the introduction of A5500 by Assemblyman Moen, a bill that would establish a "Remote Methadone Dosing Pilot Program" within the Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and appropriate \$225,000 to the agency, in the 2023 legislative session. In the 2024 New Jersey legislative session, NJ Senator Nellie Pou introduced S1324, which sought to fund a three-year remote methadone dosing pilot program. Both bills have not yet had a hearing.

Policymakers in New Jersey care deeply about increasing access to life-saving medication like methadone

However, to build momentum, Assemblyman William F. Moen Jr., was one of the lawmakers who sponsored the line item in the FY25 state budget for the pilot program.

Grill-Goodman: How was Sonara chosen to administer the program and why is the company qualified to run it?

Ibdunni: Sonara Health was founded in 2020 on the premise that facilitating humanized, compassionate and trustworthy interactions between patients and Opioid Treatment Programs (OTPs) will improve retention in care, enhance recovery, and reduce disparities. We know OTPs do not feel comfortable maximizing take-home allowances for reasons such as lack of trust and patient safety and diversion concerns. A successful mechanism to address provider apprehension towards take-home methadone is remote observation of take-home methadone. This added layer of supervision to take-homes gives OTPs the confidence to prescribe take-home methadone because they can better trust patients will



Sheeba Ibdunni, VP, Sonara Health

take their medication as prescribed – promoting increased prescribing of take-home methadone.

Since 2022, Sonara has partnered with national OTPs, regional not for profit OTPs, and research institutions to demonstrate remote observation is feasible, can improve access to treatment, and enhance treatment retention. Remote observation of take-home methadone helps eliminate barriers to treatment access while addressing the safety concerns that make many OTPs hesitant to approve patients for take-homes. Validated in a peer-reviewed [NIH-funded research study published in the Journal of Substance Use and Addiction Treatment](#), Sonara Health's virtual dosing solution makes dosing easier for patients by supporting fewer clinic visits, while also addressing safety concerns commonly associated with take-home methadone.

Sonara now operates in 9 states across 40-plus locations, including AtlantiCare in New Jersey, and has onboarded 2,500-plus methadone patients with 150,000-plus take-home dose recordings. Sonara is compliant with applicable state and federal regulations (e.g. HIPAA, 42 CFR Part 2, DEA, 42 CFR Part 8), and is listed as a Class I medical device.

Continued

Grill-Goodman: How does Remote Observation of Take-Home Methadone work?

Ibidunni: Remote observation is simple. Patients log into their Sonara account and scan a QR code on a Sonara tamper aware label. The Sonara label is placed on the patient's take-home methadone vial by the OTP. Once the label is scanned, the patient is prompted to record themselves taking their medication. The asynchronous video is then available for their care team to review.

Grill-Goodman: While the specifics of how funds will be distributed and which clinics will participate are still being finalized, can you give some background on the goals of the program?

Ibidunni: The purpose of the pilot program is to increase equitable access to take-home methadone, and to demonstrate clinical effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and improved patient satisfaction, with the ultimate goal of New Jersey Medicaid reimbursing OTPs for remote observation of take-home methadone. A third-party evaluation will be completed to validate the results of the pilot program. Depending on a few factors, we hope to work with the NJ Association for the Treatment of Opioid Dependence to identify and partner with 4-8 OTPs, of the 66 OTPs that operate in New Jersey. Stay up to date and sign up for pilot program updates [here](#).

Grill-Goodman: How does this \$250,000 funding highlight a shift towards innovative treatment options for opioid users?

Ibidunni: Many barriers such as stigma, lack of convenience, and burdensome treatment requirements contribute to dropout rates or reluctance to start treatment. Remote observation is a mechanism to increase access to take-home methadone, thereby reducing barriers to methadone treatment. Additionally, it also supports clinical evidence that indicates supervision – up to a point – is beneficial for treatment retention.

From COVID19 pandemic data, we know increasing access to take home methadone did not result in adverse events, but did increase treatment retention and engagement. So much so that SAMHSA – the federal agency that oversees the behavioral health of the nation – made permanent the take-home flexibilities of the COVID19 pandemic in a final rule issued on February 2, 2024. Despite this, we also know treatment centers are reluctant to give more take-home, which means fewer people than are eligible will receive take-home methadone.

Grill-Goodman: How is this funding set to transform the landscape of addiction treatment amid this unprecedented crisis?

Ibidunni: This funding allows for the spread and adoption of remote observation of take-home methadone and supports the opportunity to change the narrative of methadone as

liquid handcuffs. We believe that as people learn about Sonara, more would be willing to engage or re-engage in methadone treatment. This is supported by the patients who contact us and ask if we're operational in their state, and from the 71.1% of current Sonara participants who indicated they would have thought about recovery differently, if they knew Sonara existed.

Grill-Goodman: When will NJ residents start to see the pilot accessible?

Ibidunni: We're currently working with New Jersey DMHAS (Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services) to finalize the details and hope to have the pilot program operational by Fall/Winter 2024. New Jersey residents who receive care from an OTP participating in the pilot program will be eligible to participate in Sonara.

Grill-Goodman: Is there anything COMMERCE readers and CIANJ members can do to address NJ's drug epidemic?

Ibidunni: Support your local organizations advocating for increased access to treatment and harm reduction strategies. Keep an open mind, and consider, a continuum of services is more likely to save lives than one school of thought. Challenge your fears or personal biases that oppose the construction of new OTPs – services need to exist where people can easily access them, and that includes your neighborhood too. 🍷

LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP

The Interview Equation



By Steve Adubato, PhD

Freelance Contributor

Whether you are looking for a career change or you have lost your job due to downsizing or restructuring, consider the following tips and

tools when it comes to mastering the interview equation:

Don't talk in generalities. Instead of saying, "I'm a team player," or, "I'm a problem solver," be more intentional. For example, when you say you are a team player, immediately follow up with a concrete example or anecdote that describes how you did this in a previous job and the benefits the organization gained.

Research the employer. Connect the information you gain on the company and its activities to your interview. If you say that you are a "strategic thinker" who has experienced "leading change," talk about how those attributes

can help the company in their recently announced expansion.

Don't repeat what is in your resume. Too often, we recite back the key roles and responsibilities that are clearly laid out in our resume. Instead, the interview is an opportunity to bring to life the words on your resume and how your experience has prepared you to contribute to the new position you are applying for.



The interview is an opportunity to bring to life how your experience has prepared you.

Be concise. Given that employers interview so many people, you have a narrow window to get their attention. The key is to be as specific and customized in your interview communication as possible, preferably 60 seconds or less.

Prepare your main messages. Write down some bullets that succinctly lay out who you are and why you would be valuable to a particular organization. These points can be used to answer a variety of commonly asked interview questions that often stump people such as, "tell me about yourself" or "why do you think we should hire you?" 🍷

Steve Adubato, PhD, is the author of five books including, "Lessons in Leadership." His sixth book, "Lessons in Leadership 2.0: The Tough Stuff," will be released in summer 2023. He is an Emmy® Award-winning anchor with programs airing on Thirteen/WNET (PBS) and NJ PBS. He has also appeared on CNN, NPR and NBC's Today Show. Steve Adubato's "Lessons in Leadership" video podcast with co-host Mary Gamba airs Sundays at 10:00 a.m. on News 12+. For more information visit www.Stand-Deliver.com

MATRADE Links NJ Businesses to Malaysian Suppliers

International trade is a major driver of the economy of New Jersey. In 2023, New Jersey was the 13th largest exporter and 6th largest importer in the United States with over US\$200 billion in total trade, according to OEC data.

For New Jersey companies, maintaining a strong and reliable global supply chain is essential to their business's success. Over the years, rising costs, global logistics disruptions and change of sourcing has become an increasing challenge, forcing global sourcing and purchasing personnel on a constant search to diversify and strengthen their network of overseas suppliers.

For many U.S. companies, Malaysia has been a reliable trade source to address such challenges. Malaysia has a long track record as an excellent trading nation, the 24th largest trading nation in the world according to the latest WTO rankings (2022). U.S. companies rely on Malaysia's business friendly environment, compliance to international standards and diverse range of high-quality suppliers. In 2023, Malaysia was the 16th largest source of imports for the U.S. with US\$46.1 billion in value and its 19th largest trading partner with US\$65.5 billion in total trade.*

U.S. companies rely on Malaysia as a major supplier for various products such as:

- Electrical and Electronic Products – Malaysia is a leading global exporter of

E&E products, especially in semiconductors and chip production. It is the USA's fifth largest source of E&E imports (US\$25.9 billion in 2023*) and its biggest source of integrated circuits and micro assemblies. 6 out of 10 of the largest Electronic Manufacturing Services (EMS) companies have operations in Malaysia.* Malaysian EMS companies are able to produce high-mix & low-volume items and have strength in complex manufacturing.

- Wooden Furniture – Malaysian furniture is well-known for its high quality and durability, making it a top ten global supplier of wooden furniture.* Malaysia exported US\$1.1 billion in furniture to the U.S. in 2023*, making it the 7th largest source of imports.
- Disposable Medical Supplies – Malaysia is dominant in medical gloves and other disposable medical products. It is the main source of rubber gloves for the U.S., with US\$710 million exported in 2023.*
- Halal Industry Ecosystem – Malaysia is the leading global halal hub to supply a burgeoning market. Its halal standard is widely used by several renowned global multinational companies including



Nyae Ayup, Trade Commissioner, MATRADE New York

Nestlé, Colgate Palmolive and Unilever. Malaysia's halal portfolio has also expanded beyond food and beverage, venturing into various other sectors such as cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

- Malaysia is also becoming a new source of imports for other sectors such as electric vehicle components, ICT services (creative contents) and ingredients for cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.


The Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (MATRADE) is the national trade promotion agency responsible for developing and promoting Malaysia's exports to the world. MATRADE's New York office serves as the link to capable manufacturers in Malaysia for any product or service that a New Jersey business is looking for. MATRADE has been hosting buyers from New Jersey at many events in Malaysia, including The Malaysia International Halal Showcase (MIHAS), the world's largest Halal trade show.

"Malaysia takes pride in its reputation as a reliable trading source for companies throughout the United States and the world," said Ms. Nyae Ayup, Trade Commissioner of MATRADE New York. "MATRADE welcomes New Jersey importers looking to do business with Malaysia to reach out to our New York office for information and assistance. We are happy to help in any way we can."

*Data according to MATRADE New York, sourced from a database program linked to the Department of Commerce



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