Union's Hometown Newspaper

Issue 124 • March 2021

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UNION NATIVE NAMED SAILOR OF THE YEAR

Submitted by Ethan Carter, Navy Office of Community Outreach

Petty Officer 1st Class Jonathan Martinez, a native of Union, New Jersey, was named Sailor of the Year serving with Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station (NCTS) Naples, Italy.

The Sailor of the Year award is one of several yearly categories used to recognize high-performing sailors who stand out from others in similar pay grades.

Martinez is an information systems technician responsible for all matters of communication from administering Navy networks, configuring complex radio circuits, and securing communications with cryptography.

"We can be deployed worldwide on ships, ashore, or attached to expeditionary units," said Martinez.

Martinez, a 2010 Union High School graduate and 2018 University of Maryland graduate, joined the Navy 10 years ago to make a positive impact on himself and those close to him.

"I joined the Navy very shortly after I graduated high school," Martinez said. "My grandfather was a police officer and my father and brother were veterans."

NCTS Naples provides secure, reliable and timely voice, video and data services to several U.S. Navy commands including U.S. Sixth Fleet, U.S. Naval Forces Europe, joint, allied and coalition customers. It's comprised of approximately 20 officers, 325 enlisted personnel and 40 civilians.

"My favorite part of being a communicator is feeling the eureka moment, when the team figures out a problem that everyone has been stumped on," said Martinez.

According to Martinez, the values required to succeed in the Navy are similar to those found in Union.

"Putting in hard work has been a lesson I learned in my home town," Martinez said. "I've been in the workforce since I was 15. I worked at the Galloping Hill Inn Diner for a short while and I delivered food for Asia Gardens. Additionally, I worked at the Lehigh Car Wash before joining the Navy.,"

Though there are many ways for sailors to earn distinction in their command, community and career, Martinez's proudest accomplishment is receiving the opportunity to help his home state during the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy.

"My squadron sent myself and other sailors up to Lakehurst, New Jersey to help with the relief effort," Martinez said. "Since most cell phone towers and other communication lines were down, we were tasked to set up a mobile tactical network on the base. This facilitated a Joint Operation Center for operational commanders to coordinate relief efforts from ashore and afloat units."

As a member of the U.S. Navy, Martinez, as well as other sailors, know they are a part of a service tradition providing unforgettable experiences through leadership development, world affairs and humanitarian assistance. Their efforts will have a lasting effect around the globe and for generations of sailors who will follow.



(above) Petty Officer 1st Class Jonathan Martinez, a native of Union, New Jersey, was named Sailor of the Year serving with Naval Computer and Telecommunications Station (NCTS) Naples, Italy.

"The Navy gives me the ability to provide for my family and experience the world in a way I would have not been able to had I chosen a different route in life," said Martinez.

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. Sixth Fleet continue their missions of conducting maritime operations in Europe and Africa. Forces stand ready throughout the two theaters, and command leadership remains committed to taking every measure possible to protect the health of forces, as well as local residents. Warships, submarines, and aircraft continue their patrols to deter and defend against threats to U.S., NATO, and partner nations.

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SCHEDULE YOUR COVID VACCINATION

The County of Union opened an online registration system at ucnjvaccine.org for those eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccination.

Please note the registration system will only log those who are eligible to receive the vaccination. Those who are ineligible to receive vaccinations will not be allowed to pre-register, and must wait until they are eligible.

Those who are eligible to receive the vaccine include paid and unpaid persons serving in health care settings who have the potential for direct or indirect exposure to patients or infectious materials and long-term care residents and staff, and also sworn law enforcement personnel and vaccination visit ucnjvaccine.org.

fire professionals. Residents 65 and older are also eligible to receive the vaccinations, as are those between the ages of 16-64 with medical conditions, as defined by the CDC, that increase the risk of severe illness from the virus.

The county is offering the Moderna vaccine. The vaccination clinic is located at Downs Hall at Kean University in Union, and is currently open five days a week from 3-7 p.m. Once more vaccines are available, the county is planning to offer the COVID-19 vaccine in different areas of the county.

To secure an appointment for the COVID

VOLUNTEERS WANTED FOR MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS

The New Jersey Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) – a network of community-based, locally organized units comprised of volunteers - is looking for reinforcements, particularly those with vaccination skills. MRC volunteers are especially vital during emergencies and disasters when paid public health and emergency response assets are overwhelmed. Healthcare professionals (including recently retired individuals) having vaccination skills are

especially needed now that COVID-19 vaccines are available.

In addition to skilled vaccinators, individuals with all types of skill sets (for example, security, language translation/interpretation, education and outreach, warehouse operations, clerical, counseling, and more) are needed. If you are interested in volunteering with the MRC, visit njlmn.njlincs.net and click on "Register as an Existing or New MRC Volunteer!"

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Edward Anthony Somma, MD Internal Medicine

Dr. Somma has special interests in various fields of Internal Medicine, including diabetes, obesity, cardiovascular diseases and arthritis/rheumatology. He has represented to major pharmaceutical companies, such as Schering-Plough and Pfizer, in a consulting and educational role for his peers. Dr. Somma has been a clinical educator for Seton Hall's Physician Assistant Program as an Associate Professor of Medicine for their Internal Medicine program.

After graduating from medical school, Dr Somma served his internship in Internal Medicine at Trinitas Regional Medical Center. He then completed his residency in Internal Medicine at Seton Hall Post Graduate School of Medicine, where he was

Dr. Somma has been in practice in Union and Middlesex counties for over 20 years, with an emphasis on excellence and compassion for his patients. He has served as the physician for the Elizabeth Fire Department, the Board of Health of Hillside and has served the Board of Education for Woodbridge NJ. He was granted the Humanitarian of the Year Award by Trinitas Health Foundation in May 2014, for his dedication to the

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COMMUNITY HOPE CONNECTS VETERANS HOUSING & SERVICES

CALL THE REFERRAL HOTLINE FOR ELIGIBILITY

Veterans and their families who are experiencing a housing crisis may be eligible for emergency assistance such as motel/hotel stays, security deposits, rent, rental arrears, groceries and utilities through Community Hope.

Community Hope's Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) program is currently Urgent assistance remotely. community-based services such as critical supplies and veteran wellness-checks are provided in person.

The increase in support services to veterans and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic is possible thanks to funding from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

To make a referral, please call the referral at 1-855-483-8466 or email SSVF@communityhope-nj.org, or email Gema Diaz at gdiaz@communityhope-nj.org.

Community Hope is a nonprofit that helps individuals, including veterans, and their families, overcome mental illness, addiction, homelessness and poverty. Learn more at communityhope-nj.org.

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ROGER, FOR NEW JERSEY VETERAN COMMUNITY TO FIND SUPPORT

ROGER, a search platform for New Jersey veterans, launched on November 9th, just ahead of Veterans Day 2020. The platform was created by Backpacks For Life founders Brett D'Alessandro and Alexa Modero. After serving the Veteran community for 6 years, they found many inefficiencies and convoluted systems that prevented veterans from getting the care they need in a quick and efficient way. From lengthy intake processes to outdated information on organizations' websites, the Backpacks For Life team knew there was a better way to get veterans the care they needed.

ROGER allows veterans and their family members to search for programs, resources and care by a variety of factors such as zip code, branch of service, discharge status and income. With these customizable search features, veterans will see only the programs that they qualify for. This helps mitigate time wasted for not only veterans searching for programs that fit their needs, but also the service providers to

ensure the veteran is a good fit for them.

"Navigating through resources is hard...we get it. As a veteran myself, I was often running around in circles trying to find programs that I was eligible for and that fit my needs. When we're working with veterans, every minute matters and with ROGER we can work more quickly to get veterans what they need. We're excited to bring ROGER to the NJ veteran community." - Sgt. Brett D'Alessandro, Retired US Marine & President of Backpacks For Life

To explore ROGER, visit roger.vet or contact the ROGER team at:

roger@backpacksforlife.org

Backpacks For Life is a 501(C)3 nonprofit organization that serves the homeless and at-risk veteran community. By regularly distributing backpacks filled with essentials to veterans on the streets and providing mentorship to at-risk veterans and their families, Backpacks For Life aims to bridge the gap between veterans and the resources available to them.



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One moment everything may seem fine, when suddenly you're involved in a serious collision. Most people have one thing on their mind after a car accident--their car! However, it's important to remember that you and your injuries come first. A visit to a chiropractor should always follow an auto injury, as chiropractors are specialists in damage to soft and hard tissue.









BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF UNION COUNTY OFFERS VIRTUAL LEARNING WITH SUPPORT FROM THE SUMMIT FOUNDATION

Submitted by Lisa Sepetjian

Boys and Girls Clubs of Union County is pleased to announce the award of \$20,000 from The Summit Foundation to support our Virtual Learning Program. As parents/guardians return to work, students need a safe place for guided learning instruction. Most of the school districts in Union County are virtual since September and will likely continue throughout the entire school year. Students from districts in Union County are welcome to attend.

Our Virtual Learning Program provides guided virtual classroom instruction to those youth in Union County in need of a safe place during school time, Monday - Friday. In the current COVID-19 environment, youth need a space for virtual classes that meets CDC guidelines for sanitizing and social distancing. Most of the



school districts we serve have moved to a virtual available at our Union Club. Teen Leadership classroom. Many families find themselves in need of a safe place for children to learn during the school day with high speed internet. Our Clubs in Union, Plainfield and Elizabeth have been completely reimagined and transformed to provide socially distant, individual learning modules for youth in need and to support working families. Professional Staff provides education enhancement and guidance during class sessions. Support from The Summit Foundation has made this transformation and program possible. Space is available for students. Please contact your local site for information. Union: 908-687-2697; Plainfield: 908-822-8672; Elizabeth: 908-351-3344.

"We are excited to meet the current needs of the communities we serve and offer this new Virtual Learning Program", said Russell Triolo, CEO of Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County. "COVID-19 has changed how students learn and attend school; we are grateful to The Summit Foundation for their support, which allows us to provide programming to benefit our Clubs and youth in Union County".

"Virtual School" and After- School programs are now open for our Union, Elizabeth, and Plainfield Clubs. Contact us at 908-687-2697 for information and registration. Aquatics, stroke development, and water safety instruction is Club programs are available in Plainfield, Elizabeth, and Union. Teen members participate in character, leadership, career preparation and community service activities throughout the year.

THE SUMMIT FOUNDATION

The Summit Foundation fosters philanthropy by identifying local needs and offering donors flexible ways to make a difference in the lives of their neighbors. Since 2010, it has awarded \$6 million through more than 430 competitive grants to tax-exempt organizations that serve the area.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF UNION COUNTY

Boys & Girls Clubs of Union County seek to inspire and enable young people, who need them most, to realize their full potential and have provided opportunity for youth since 1955. They are part of a national network of some 4,000 neighborhood-based facilities, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, which serves more than 4.6 million young people annually, in all 50 states and on U.S. military bases worldwide. Clubs provide guidance-oriented character development programs on a daily basis for children 6-18 years old, conducted by a full-time professional staff. Key Boys & Girls Club programs emphasize leadership development, education and career exploration, financial literacy, health and life skills, the arts, sports, fitness and recreation, and family outreach.

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NJ CAREER NETWORK – JOB SEEKER COMMUNITY

Are you a New Jersey resident and looking for work? Do you want to be part of a community of job seekers and volunteer coaches who want to support and encourage each other along the way? If so, consider joining the NJ Career Network Job Seeker Community today!

What is the NJ Career Network Job Seeker Community? A free online community to help you in your job search and to connect you with other people who are looking for jobs and with our volunteer coaches. This community offers a supportive network so you know where to turn with your questions and concerns. Volunteer experts and your peers will be here to help you navigate your job search and cope with all aspects of searching for work.

Why should you join? The job seeker community will share resources, facilitate conversations, and welcome questions about looking for a job. You will gain access to exclusive community member-only events when you join. We also understand that your job search will not be successful unless you are okay, both physically and mentally. That's why the community will be a place for you to share challenges that get in the way of or discourage your job search.

WHAT THIS COMMUNITY IS:

- A safe space to ask questions and share your concerns.
- A chance to connect with your peers.
- A place to participate in conversations and events.
- A place to share and contribute your knowledge and expertise to your fellow community members.
- A place to figure out solutions to problems.
- A network to offer support for your overall well-being.
- An opportunity to help yourself and others looking for employment.

What this community is not: A job board or other impersonal networking. Networking that ignores the rest of your life. A place to just get information without participating.

Please visit nj-career-network-jobseekercommunity.mn.co and join us! One of our coaches or moderators will reach out to answer any questions you may have and to help you get started! We are using the Mighty Networks online platform to host the NJ Career Network Job Seeker Community. When you join the online community, any references to Mighty Networks are in regard to the community's hosting platform service.

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COURSE ON DEALING WITH MENTAL ILLNESS

The NAMI Family-to-Family Education Course will be offered by the Union County Chapter of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness). The course will be online via Zoom starting on Thursday evening, March 4 at 7 p.m., and meet each Thursday over a consecutive 8week period. We ask that you be able to commit to the full series of dates through April 29, and be able to attend from a computer, tablet, or smartphone and attend with some sense of privacy.

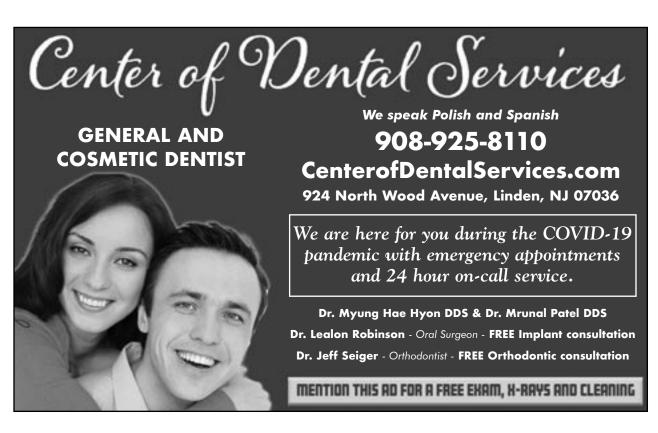
The course is offered specifically to the parents, siblings, spouses, teenage and adult children, and significant others of individuals with severe and persistent mental illness. The program is not appropriate for individuals who, themselves, suffer from one of the major mental disorders. The course is taught by NAMI members who have completed intensive training.

Curriculum topics include: schizophrenia, bipolar disorder (manic depression), clinical depression, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder etc., the clinical treatment of these illnesses and how caregivers can learn to cope more effectively. Attendees will learn about new research, medications, skills needed to successfully communicate with a relative and how to deal with critical periods.

Capacity is limited. To register, or if you have questions, contact Pat Roman at 732-382-0762 or email patroman2@aol.com.

Please include in the subject line: "F2F Course". A F2F teacher will contact you with the details.







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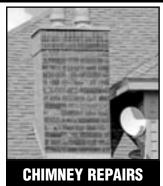
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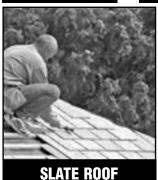




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MARCH EVENTS AT THE UNION PUBLIC LIBRARY

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If you are a Union resident without a library card, we can provide access to our digital resources by emailing us at unionpl@uplnj.org

Please register for all programs by going to https://uplnj.org/events/list/. To participate by phone call UPL Reference at 908-851-5450 x3.

All That Jazz

Tuesday, March 2 at 7:00 p.m.

Enjoy the music, learn about the legends and enjoy the sounds of modern-day jazz. Check out Charlie Parker's Grafton saxophone, a sequined gown worn by Ella Fitzgerald, and more.

Meditation

Thursday, March 4, 11, 18, 25 at 11:30 a.m.

Join Bindu Bhatt for a virtual meditation session. No experience necessary. Bindu has practiced meditation for over 30 years.

NJ Suffrage: Reclaiming Our Voice Thursday, March 4 at 2:00 p.m.

Did you know that New Jersey played a key role in the fight for women's right to vote? Carol Simon Levin portrays Lillian Feickert, president of the New Jersey Woman Suffrage Association from 1912-1920, to tell how New Jersey women succeeded in gaining the vote. This program is supported by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities through the "NJ Women Vote: The 19th Amendment at 100" initiative.

Beginners Flow Yoga

Thursday., Mar. 4, 11, 18, 25 at 6:00 - 6:30 p.m.

This class will lead you through the foundations of yoga postures, body awareness and alignment, relaxation of the mind and a connection with the breath. Learn how to improve muscle strength, promote flexibility, and build your own yoga program specific for your mind and body.

Q&A with Union County's American Job Center Thursday, March 11 at 2:00 p.m.

Looking for a job? Find out about free resources for job searchers including access to recruitment events, training, and one-on-one coaching for an in-depth review of your work skills and help develop your employment plan.

Bird is the Word

Thursday, March 18 at 2:00 p.m. Bird migration begins earlier than you think! Learn about what birds are traveling back to New Jersey in early spring and how you can help fuel their journey as well as learn what native wildflowers you can plant to offer food all season long. Bonus: Make A Bird Feeder. Reserve your kit by calling 908-851-5450 x3.

Limited to 20 participants.

Off the Shelf Book Club

Thursday, March 18 at 7:00p.m. This month the group reads Three Rival Sisters by Marie Louise Gagneur available to UPL cardholders on Hoopla. New members are always welcome.

Hilton Readers Book Discussion Group

Monday, March 22 at 6:00 p.m. Members will discuss some of their favorite books and authors! New members are always welcome. March's title is Dutch House by Ann Patchett.

Social Media Marketing for Small Businesses

Wednesday, March 24 at 11:00 a.m.

Tech expert David Schuchman will show you how to increase your business and your brand through social media marketing. Co-Sponsored by the Union Township Chamber of Commerce

The Immigrant Experience

Tuesday, March 30 at 6:30 p.m.

Find out what it was like for your family to come to the US between 1892-1954 when Ellis Island was the gateway to so many immigrants.

Learn how to trace your family roots and experience what it's like to be an immigrant today. Presented by The Statue of Liberty— Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.

SHOUT: Poetry for Suffrage

Wednesday, March 31 at 3:00 p.m.

Singer/Songwriter and Emmy Awardee Susanna Rich reads and reenacts poetry from her work Shout! Poetry for Suffrage, and NOW, Poetry for Equal Rights to celebrate both Women's History Month and National Poetry Month. This program is supported by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities through the "NJ Women Vote: The 19th Amendment at 100" initiative.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Virtual Volunteering for Teens: UPL now offers virtual volunteering opportunities for teens! Email teens@uplnj.org if you're interested.

WEEKLY PROGRAMS

Take-Home Craft Kits: We offer different takehome projects each week. Pick up a project kit at the library and follow along with our instructional video to create a cool craft from home! Instructional videos available to view on Facebook and Instagram. Call 908-851-5450 ext. 4 to schedule a pickup appointment. Project kits available while supplies last.

Virtual Biographical Storytime Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

| All ages | No registration necessary Learn all about important figures from the past and present, broadcast on Facebook Live and subsequently available on Instagram!

Virtual Storytime

Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

| All ages | No registration necessary Spend this special time listening to a story and singing songs & rhymes, broadcast on Facebook Live and subsequently available on Instagram! NOTE: The March10 storytime will be a virtual music and movement class, presented by Boogie Woogie Babies. This program will be broadcast on Facebook Live and subsequently available on-demand for one month.

Virtual Storytime

Fridays at 10:30 a.m.

| All ages | No registration necessary Spend this special time listening to a story and singing songs & rhymes, broadcast on Facebook Live and subsequently available on Instagram!

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS **Club Teen Virtual Check-In**

Wednesday, March 3 at 6:00 p.m.

| Ages 14 - 18 | Registration required Catch up with your pals at Club Teen without leaving the house! This program will take place on Zoom.

Virtual Cooking Class for Tweens Friday, March 5 at 4:00 p.m.

| Ages 8 - 13 | Registration required Learn to make homemade pasta and a delicious dessert in this virtual cooking class, presented by Chef It Up! Ingredient kits will be available for pickup prior to the program -- more information to come. Limited to 15 participants This program will take place on Zoom.

Construction Zone Virtual Challenge

Monday, March 8 at 4:00 p.m.

| All ages | Registration required Challenge yourself to design new creations with your own Legos and blocks! We'll set the challenge and a timer, and you'll put your building skills to the test! This program will take place on Zoom.

Kids' Paint-Along

Wednesday, March 10 at 4:00 p.m. | Ages 5 - 13 | Registration required Grab some art supplies and join us for this month's virtual paint-along! This program will take place on Zoom.

After School Gaming: Among Us Friday, March 12 at 4:00 p.m.

| Ages 8 - 18 | Registration required

Who is the imposter? Can you stop them before they destroy the spaceship and all your crewmates?! Join us to play the popular online co-op game, Among Us! The game is free to download from the app store on your smartphone or tablet -- please download it before joining the event. Be sure to open Zoom on a computer and play on your phone in order to avoid technical difficulties. *NOTE: Register with your personal email address (not school email address) to ensure you receive the Zoom link!*

Club Teen Virtual Check-In

Wednesday, March 17 at 6:00 p.m.

| Ages 14 - 18 | Registration required Catch up with your pals at Club Teen without leaving the house! This program will take place on Zoom.

Virtual Bedtime Storytime

Thursday, March 18 at 7:00 p.m.

| All ages | No registration necessary Get ready for bedtime with a great story, broadcast on \Facebook Live and subsequently available on Instagram! Don't forget to wear your coziest PJs!

After School Gaming: Among Us

Friday, March 26 at 4:00 p.m.

| Ages 8 - 18 | Registration required Who is the imposter? Can you stop them before they destroy the spaceship and all your crewmates?! Join us to play the popular online co-op game, Among Us! The game is free to download from the app store on your smartphone or tablet -- please download it before joining the event. Be sure to open Zoom on a computer and play on your phone in order to avoid technical difficulties. *NOTE: Register with your personal email address (not school email address) to ensure you receive the Zoom link!*

Spring Break Boredom Busters Week of March 29:

Tuesday, March 30 is Virtual Vacation Day, but we're celebrating all week long! From Monday through Thursday, we'll be offering a different take-home activity each day, exploring a variety of habitats on Earth! Reserve an activity kit by calling 908-851-5450 ext. 4. Available while supplies last!

Family Fort Night

Wednesday, March 31 at 7:00 p.m.

| All ages | Registration required Join us on Zoom for a virtual indoor campout! Bring your own blankets and towels to create forts for camping in, read some stories, talk about the stars, and sing campfire songs!

DOCUMENTING HISTORY

Union Public Library, in partnership with the Union Township Historical Society, and the Vauxhall Historical Society, Inc. have formed a coalition to document for historical purposes, the impact of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on the Township of Union.

The Documenting History Coalition is collecting your words, photographs, drawings or videos to document the impact of COVID-19 on the people of Union circa 2020. The collection will be made available to the public in the near future.

The Documenting History Coalition thanks you in advance for your support, cooperation and participation. For further information please email the Union Public Library COVID19NOTES@uplnj.org

- What will you remember most about this
- What has surprised you most as this pandemic has unfolded?
- What is an unexpected, positive impact of the pandemic on you or your family?
- What is the most difficult part of this experience?
- What are your hopes for the future when this is all over?

All submissions* must be accompanied by your first and last name, age and any other information you would like to include such as occupation, school/grade, etc.

Responses may be submitted in one of 3 ways: Website Form: https://bit.ly/COVID19NOTES Email: COVID19NOTES@uplnj.org

Mail: Union Public Library,

Attention: COVID19 Notes, 1980 Morris Ave., Union, NJ 07083.

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6	Units 6.5° x 6.25°	or 10°	x 4	5240	\$600	\$900	\$1200	\$1400	\$1600	\$1800	\$2000
9	HALF PAGE 65'x9"	or 10°	x 7	5320	\$800	\$1000	\$1300	\$1600	\$1900	\$2200	\$2400
12	Units	10°	x 8	8360	\$900	\$1200	\$1500	\$1800	\$2100	\$2400	\$2700
18	FULL PAGE	10°	x 14	\$400	\$1000	\$1400	\$1800	\$2200	\$2500	\$2800	\$3000
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MAKING MAGICAL MEMORIES AT CAMP FATIMA

Submitted by Sue Baldani

Like most nonprofit organizations, Camp Fatima of New Jersey is experiencing major challenges due to COVID-19. Founded in 1968 by four Seton Hall seminary students, the camp offers free sleep-away programs for disabled children and adults. And it's determined to continue doing so. Seeing the smiles on the faces of those it serves, and providing a respite to their families, is not something that can be sacrificed due to a pandemic.

And smile they do. It's not called FATIMAGIC for nothing. The campers, regardless of their disabilities, get to do things that most able-bodied children and adults take for granted. They splash around in pools, sing songs, eat s'mores, dance,

and take part in arts and crafts. Every child has his or her own dedicated counselor to ensure the utmost care, so each activity can be individually tailored according to the camper's ability.

Its mission statement, "Camp Fatima provides free, life enriching camp experiences for children and adults with developmental disabilities," says it all. Some of the campers are in wheelchairs, while others have neurological, sensory or other serious issues. Camp Fatima and its volunteers open their hearts to all who come. It truly is a magical place.

The volunteers come from diverse ethnic and socio-economic backgrounds. Most have experience working directly with the disabled, and include teachers, nurses, police officers,

firefighters, college students and other professionals. For these selfless individuals, the sounds of laughter and the looks of pure joy on the campers' faces are all the payment they need.

Many of these volunteers live locally. Billy Malone, a Scotch Plains firefighter and Fanwood resident, became a volunteer in 1994 and has been the chairperson for the past 13 years. Scotch Plains resident and former Scotch Plains police officer, Jamie Denman, has been a volunteer since 1979, and is the current director.

Even though no one at the camp is paid, all this magic requires funding. It costs several hundred thousand dollars to operate the two children's summer sessions and the four adult weekends each year. Funding to support and host the more than 200 campers and over 450 on site-volunteers comes from generous benefactors, corporate matching gifts, private giving, and fundraising. Because of COVID-19, many of the usual fundraisers are not able to take place. So this year, Camp Fatima is looking for individuals to sponsor a camper. The cost to feed, house, and supply materials to each camper is more than \$1,000.

To find out more about Camp Fatima, or to volunteer, make a donation, or sponsor a camper, please go to campfatimanj.org/. Since the camp is a designated 501(c) (3) organization, all donations may be tax-deductible.

Camp Fatima of New Jersey: Changing Lives, Enriching Hearts - One Camper, One Volunteer at a Time.

*Some expiration dates apply so don't delay

Photos by Camp Fatima





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