

# OUR TOWN

RAHWAY'S HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER

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## MLK CELEBRATION INCLUDES UNVEILING OF NEW MONUMENT

### City of Rahway

On Monday, January 16, Mayor Raymond Giacobbe, the Rahway City Council, and Rahway Social Justice Commission in partnership with the NAACP hosted the City of Rahway's annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration. The event began at MLK Park, located at Broad Street and Campbell Street, in Rahway. Newly elected New Jersey Congressman, Tom Kean, Jr., participated in the unveiling of a new monument dedicated to the late civil rights leader.

At this year's MLK Day Celebration, Mayor Giacobbe stated, "I take great pride in seeing how diverse our community is and it is gratifying to see Dr. King's words memorialized in a new monument. I'm grateful to the Rahway City Council, the Rahway Special Improvement District, Rahway Social Justice Commission, and our partners at the NAACP for making this event possible and honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as we work towards a brighter future," added Giacobbe.

Following the unveiling of the monument, the ceremony concluded at the Rahway Recreation Center with Master of Ceremony Pastor Marti Robinson leading the opening prayer followed by a salute to the flag and singing of the Star-Spangled Banner and Lift Every Voice and Sing. Speakers included NAACP Rahway Branch President Lori Caughman, ESQ., Councilman at Large and Co-Chair of the Rahway Social Justice Commission Councilman Jeffrey Brooks, and Union County Commissioner Chairman Sergio Granados. Mayor Giacobbe presided over the swearing in of the NAACP Executive Committee including, President Lori Caughman, ESQ., Vice President Cynthia Goodman, Secretary Michelle Price, Treasurer Kashinda Marche, and Executive Committee Members Reverend Doctor Marti Robinson, Dora James, Shakira Monet Johnson, Deborah N. Bridges, and Deborah Rather Grumps.

Commenting on the day's activities, Councilman Brooks said, "The annual MLK event serves as a great reminder of not only the



Courtesy photos

*President Lori Caughman, ESQ., Vice President Cynthia Goodman, Secretary Michelle Price, Treasurer Kashinda Marche, and Executive Committee Members Reverend Doctor Marti Robinson, Dora James, Shakira Monet Johnson, Deborah N. Bridges, and Deborah Rather Grumps of the Rahway NAACP and Mayor Giacobbe.*

incredible sacrifice of Dr. King but also the strides we've taken since the Civil Rights era to improve our society for all walks of life. It was encouraging to see so many members of our community come out to celebrate such an important day. There is still work to be done, but as Mayor Giacobbe said, we can accomplish anything as long as we work together."

The stainless-steel monument came together through the work of Councilwoman Danielle Newbury and the Rahway Special Improvement District (SID). "Art Consultant Rachael Faillace, and Project Manager Joseph Skalla's expertise and dedication to this project delivered a meaningful addition to the MLK Park. Rahway has always been a place where the arts thrive and it's exciting to see our first project of 2023 focus on the words of MLK Jr. that continue to inspire our work toward equality and justice," said Councilwoman Newbury.

In addition to Congressman Thomas Kean Jr., the following officials were also in attendance: former Mayor of Rahway and current Assemblyman James Kennedy, Assemblywoman Linda Carter, Union County Commissioner Chairman Sergio Granados, Vice Chairwoman Kimberly Palmieri-Mouded, Commissioner James Baker, and Commissioner Bette Jane Kowalski, Rahway City Council Members President Michael Cox, Vice President Vannie Deloris Parson, Councilman Al Parker, Councilman Jeremy Mojica, Councilman Joseph Gibilisco, Councilman David Brown, and Councilman Jeffrey Brooks, and Board of Education Superintendent Dr. Patricia Camp.

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# OUR TOWN *Rahway*

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# QUARTERLY PRINCIPAL'S CLUB CELEBRATION

## Rahway Public Schools

The Cleveland Super Stars came out on the evening of November 14 to celebrate and be recognized during the quarterly Principal's Club. The star-studded event recognized students in grades Pre-k through Sixth grade based on their teacher's recommendations. This distinction is based on several categories. Those categories are Academic Achievement/Enhancement, Classroom Assistance, Behavioral Improvement, Acts of Kindness, and Bullying Prevention.

Twenty-two students received the Principal's Club Award. This isn't your typical award ceremony. You truly have to experience it firsthand to appreciate the energy and effort Principal Giambrone and Dr. Holness put into

making the night special. We'll try our best to capture the essence of the night. Did someone say confetti? Imagine, as each student's name was called, there was a loud thunderous applause followed by confetti being thrown in the air. The two administrators upped the ante for the 2022-2023 school year by adding this new element to their presentation. It was indeed a hit amongst the crowd. With jokes, laughter, and smiles, attendees certainly enjoyed the dynamic duo's performance.

Congratulations to the first marking period Principal's Club recipients. We are proud of your hard work and dedication. We look forward to the second marking period celebration.

Photo by Dyan McMillen, Rahway Public Schools



(above) Principal's Club recipients for the first marking period were celebrated at Grover Cleveland Elementary School.

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## SUVCW INDUCTS NEW MEMBER

The General Phil Kearny Camp #20 swore in its newest member on December 22 at the Abraham Clark house in Roselle, NJ. Senior Airman Nathan Sands was home on leave from the Air Force and was sworn in by Camp Secretary Clark McCullough.

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War (SUVCW) is a fraternal organization preserving the history of those that fought in the Civil War, including hereditary membership from a Civil War Veteran or associate membership. To learn more visit [suvchw.org](http://suvchw.org).

General Phil Kearny Camp #20 meets five times a year at 1 p.m. at the Abraham Clark Memorial House, located at 101 W 9th Ave, Roselle, NJ. 2023. Dates are March 18, May 6, September 9, October 28, and November 11.

## C.A.R. PROVIDES YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Training tomorrow's leaders to serve our country and preserve our nation's history is the mission of the Children of the American Revolution (C.A.R.). Members honor those who came before and paved the way for what we have today.

The nation's oldest and largest patriotic youth organization, C.A.R. offers membership to girls and boys from birth to age 22 who can prove lineal descent from a man or woman who supported the cause of American independence.

Local C.A.R. groups, known as societies, are sponsored by chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) or Sons of the American Revolution. Here in central New Jersey, Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter DAR in Green Brook sponsors the Pis-Cat-A-Qua Society C.A.R. Members may participate in state and national activities that focus on patriotism, service, and education about our

American heritage.

Harriett Lothrop, a 19th century children's author from Concord, Mass., presented the idea for a children's organization to the DAR in 1895. Organized "for the training of young people in true patriotism and love of country," C.A.R. has promoted this vision to hundreds of thousands of members over the years. These boys and girls are the leaders of yesterday, today and tomorrow.

New members are welcome. Contact Elizabeth Snyder-Continental Chapter DAR at [ESCchapterDAR@gmail.com](mailto:ESCchapterDAR@gmail.com), or learn more online at [NSCAR.org](http://NSCAR.org).



(above) Camp Secretary Clark McCullough swears in Nathan Sands. Courtesy photo

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AND NEW HOMES

Let's get to the heart of things, prices are really not coming down at any noticeable rate although interest rates can give many a slight heart burn, homes are continuing to sell, buyers are still buying. People are still looking.

It's time you put your heart and soul into preparing your home for sale. Then allow us to take over researching possible home purchases. We're sure you will, even in "these strange times," find that home with heart.

You will find your "realtor cupid" by shooting your arrow into the phone number below and call. I'm sure we can find some sweet deals in Rahway or the metro area. We can even find you a great rental in time for St. Val's day. Such as a sweet 1 bedroom in Westfield or a 3 bedroom in Linden. We can help in getting the best interest rates.

Now while you contemplate your next move, remember Valentine's day is the 14th. Russel Stover is great chocolate for the price. But if you have not yet, it's time to make your reservations at "Il Forno", "Cuba Nu" or "Nancy's" just 3 of the best romantic dining and fab food to be found in downtown Rahway.

Wishing you and yours a happy and memorable Valentine's day. Creating memories that day is like creating them in your new home, apartment, or new business location.

Here's hoping your hearts, flowers, and chocolates are fabulous.  
Love & lollipops

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# GRANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESSES

*City of Rahway*

Have you ever thought about opening a business? Are you looking for a new market and new customers? This is your sign to get started and choose Rahway! Mayor Raymond Giacobbe and the Rahway City Council encourage new and existing businesses to apply for the Rahway Special Improvement District's Business Improvement Grant Program. Those that qualify will be eligible to receive a \$2,000 grant to update equipment, trade fixtures and business technology, create a new sign, or freshen up their look and marketing. The City of Rahway believes it is important to foster a diverse business community, therefore any business that is registered as a Minority, Women, Veteran or LGBTQ Business Enterprise will be eligible to receive an additional \$1,000 grant.

Current Rahway businesses will be receiving information by email and mail.

New businesses or businesses looking to relocate to Rahway should contact [economicdevelopment@cityofrahway.com](mailto:economicdevelopment@cityofrahway.com) for details and information on how to bring your business to the City of Rahway. Applications open in March 2023.

Visit [rahwayishappening.com](http://rahwayishappening.com) for more information and to apply!

## ANCHOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF

The State of New Jersey has extended the deadline for filing your ANCHOR benefit application to February 28, 2023. The Affordable New Jersey Communities for Homeowners and Renters (ANCHOR) program will provide up to \$1,500 to homeowners with 2019 gross incomes up to \$150,000, and up to \$1,000 for those with gross incomes of between \$150,000 and \$250,000 in that year. ANCHOR is also an important program for the tenants, who can receive \$450 if their gross income was \$150,000 or less in 2019.

To apply, visit the Division of Taxation's website: [nj.gov/treasury/taxation/anchor](http://nj.gov/treasury/taxation/anchor) The state has also established an ANCHOR hotline at 1-888-238-1233.

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CITY OF RAHWAY | MAYOR RAYMOND A. GIACOBBE

## RAHWAY SPECIAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM 2023

**Applications Open from March 1 – April 30, 2023**






**Grant Opportunities for new and existing qualified businesses that meet the following criteria:**

- Businesses must be registered with the State of NJ (NJBRG)
- Approved use in the City of Rahway
- More than 50% of business occurs within a brick and mortar location in the City of Rahway
- No chains or franchises

A business must remain in operation for one year after issuance of Grant to qualify for 50% forgiveness, and two years for 100% forgiveness.

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**BUSINESSES THAT QUALIFY WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR A LIMITED NUMBER OF GRANTS. A \$2,000 GRANT IS AVAILABLE IN EACH OF THESE THREE FOLLOWING AREAS:**

- **Fit Out - Interior**  
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- **Signage - Exterior**  
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- **Brand Marketing and Design Services**  
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**Receive an additional \$1,000 grant for MBE/WBE Certification\*!**  
\*Must be registered as Minority, Women, Veteran, LGBTQ-Owned Business Enterprises

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#### If Knee Surgery Sounds Scary, It Should

Have you have been told you are facing knee replacement surgery? Have you been told about all the downsides you could be facing? First and foremost, there are NO guarantees that knee replacement surgery will be the answer to your pain, but let's look further:

- Surgery is costly, regardless of the percentage of services covered by insurance.
- Surgery requires lost time from work and typically requires a regimen of rehabilitation and medications.
- With surgery, there is always a risk for unwelcomed complications. And you could be back to where you started, or worse.
- Medications will be required for relief from surgery and you have been down that road before. Addictions to these pain medications can cause potential side effects, something you do not want to experience.
- Rehabilitation can take years.

#### Consider This Alternative To Surgery

**Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** offers you a real opportunity and a painless way to say goodbye to your knee pain without any surgery. Here are just a few of the important benefits you should consider?

- Diagnostic fluoroscopy accurately targets the pain, unlike blind injections.
- Guided fluoroscopic injections are virtually pain free, unlike blind injections.
- No lost time from work or family.
- No expensive or time consuming rehabilitation.
- No potentially addictive prescription medications.
- Recovery time is almost instant, not months or years.

#### How Does This New Treatment Work?

Relief begins almost as fast as it takes to pronounce the treatment. It's called Viscosupplementation Therapy. To begin with, it starts with **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** investing in the use of diagnostic fluoroscopy. This enables them to target the exact location of your knee pain with pinpoint accuracy. What follows is a simple injection that causes little to no pain, especially when compared to what you may be living with daily. That explains what you will see on the surface of this revolutionary treatment. What's taking place below the surface is how and where the natural healing process takes place. The injection of a Hyaluronic acid called Hyalgan. This gel-like substance was approved by the FDA in 1996. Hyalgan is a natural substance that mimics the synovial fluid that is already produced by your body in your joints. Osteoarthritis sufferers in particular see a reduction in this much needed synovial fluid in their knee joints. Without that cushioning layer of protection, the cartilage in your knee can begin to wear away leading to the rubbing of bone on bone. Through Viscosupplementation Therapy, this natural substance immediately goes to work reducing the swelling and inflammation in the joint and adding a coating layer of protection. Think about Dorothy taking the oil can to The Tin Man. You'll begin to feel that same kind of relief and quite possibly feel like you're ready for a dance down the yellow brick road to recovery yourself. And with a success rate of over 85% in alleviating pain associated with osteoarthritis, it's easy to see why this treatment is so readily covered by Medicare and by most major insurance providers. Diagnostic fluoroscopy to target the pain, Viscosupplementation Therapy to relieve the pain. Simple, fast and no surgery!

#### Do you Suffer from any of these Symptoms?

There are a number of reasons why you developed Osteoarthritis pain. It can develop with age or because of heredity. It could be from repetitive stress from a job or some glory days in athletics. Of course your concern is with the symptoms you face daily and how to make them end, hopefully without surgery or the use of potentially addictive medications. **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** understands the symptoms you have been living with and can help. If you have any of the symptoms below, please call us today. Relief is a phone call away.

- **Pain** - Whether it's a sharp aching or maybe a burning sensation, the pain can range from irritating to debilitating.
- **Swelling** - This can cause tenderness and soreness to the entire knee area, making walking or going up and down stairs painful, getting in and out of bed or bathtubs difficult and dangerous just name a few activities affected by swelling.
- **Stiffness** - Getting up out of bed or after sitting for a period of time gets more and more difficult. This loss of mobility can be more than a hindrance. It can be dangerous if you need to move quickly.
- **Loss of muscle strength** - This can lead to balance issues and the strong possibility of falling.
- **Joint deformity** - Not just unsightly, but painful as well.
- **Creaking Joints** - Can be painful and a sign of more discomfort to come.
- **Sleepless nights** - Losing sleep over your suffering is not just irritating, but potentially dangerous because of so many other health concerns that can be affected by loss of sound sleep.

#### Let Me Show You Targeted Relief From Your Knee Pain

Every day, I see patients suffering from knee pain due to arthritis, osteoarthritis, sports injuries or other conditions. Many have been told that they are in need of knee replacement surgery. Other patients say they have been prescribed various prescription medications to deal with the pain.

Something else I see almost every day, are patients that have tried viscosupplementation knee injections elsewhere and found it to be a painful and ineffective experience because the injections were not administered using fluoroscopic guidance. Instead of using the incredibly accurate diagnostic fluoroscopy we use at **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** these patients experienced a blind injection technique, which can be as inaccurate as playing pin the tail on the donkey.

Once I am able to explain to my patients about the pin point accuracy of using diagnostic fluoroscopy and the amazing results viscosupplementation can provide, they are thrilled to get started. They are even more thrilled when they feel the relief. Please contact **Northeast Spine & Wellness Center** today to schedule your RISK FREE consultation.

Call 732-827-0800

Scot Paris MD, FACS



#### Here's what our patients have to say

"I'm dancing without pain. I can move with no problem whatsoever. I can go up and down steps with no pain."  
- Patricia G.

"Over 85% relief for the first time in 15 years, suffering with knee pain. My life is getting back to normal."  
- Perry O.

"After only four visits, I have absolutely no pain! The staff is "top-notch."  
- Queenon L.

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## FAMILY PAINT & SLIME NIGHT

The Parent-Teacher Association at Franklin Elementary School in Rahway recently hosted a "Family Paint and Slime Night" fundraiser. The event was a huge success with an amazing turnout. About 120 families came out to support this fundraiser. Families gathered in the school's cafeteria and participants had a choice to paint or create slime. Everyone really enjoyed themselves and had a great time. The special memories that were made are priceless! The proceeds from this event will go directly back to the students for their Fun Day, which takes place at the end of the year.

Photos by Rahway Public Schools



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## EXHIBIT CELEBRATES AFRICAN AMERICAN ARTISTS



(above) *The Gallery Space, 1670 Irving Street, Rahway, NJ. Gallery Hours are Mon-Fri. 1:00-4:00 p.m.*

### SMANKO CERTIFIED MASTER TREE STEWARD

Lifelong Rahway resident Michael Smanko was certified in December as a Master Tree Steward by Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Union County. Master Tree Stewards are volunteers trained about how trees grow, how to identify them and about their importance to our environment.

Each applicant receives instruction one day each week over a three-month period in both classroom and field training. All Master Tree Stewards have agreed to provide lessons on trees and the environment this spring to 4th graders throughout Union County grammar schools.

Smanko, a retired NYC Broadway Prop and Stage manager is also a Rutgers Certified Master Gardener. “ I’ve always loved any form of gardening and the environment ever since I was a child and with my newfound tree knowledge, I am hoping that I can also help strengthen our town’s urban forest.” noted Smanko.

More info on the Master Tree Steward program can be obtained by contacting Associate County Extension Dept. Head Jim Nichnadowicz Phone: 908-654-9854, Email: nichnadowicz@njaes.rutgers.edu



(above) *Michael Smanko*

The City of Rahway presents ‘Cultural Connection’: The Fifth Annual Celebration of African American Artists. The Exhibit will be held at The Gallery Space, 1670 Irving Street, Rahway, NJ (at the corner of Irving St. & Seminary Avenue). The exhibit runs from February 12 - March 10, 2023. The Opening Reception is Sunday February 12, 2023 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. Admission is Free; light refreshments will be served.

This exhibit features a wide variety of Artworks by: Mikel Elam, Aaron Fisher, Donchellee Fulwood, Yazmine Graham, Jamarr Neyland, Oscar Peterson, Martryce Roach, Amira Rogers

Art connects people and different cultures. In a world where there are so many divisions, it becomes imperative to find ways that we can all come to a greater understanding of the people around us. Art provides insights into the experiences of the artist and the tone and tenor of their life.

Curator, Lawrence Cappiello relates, “In

searching for artworks for the Cultural Connection exhibit, I was particularly on the lookout for a variety of artworks and styles that address differing aspects of the experience of African American Artists. Some of the featured artworks focus on Community: home, family, neighborhood. Some works deal with the Culture particular to African Americans. Other art addresses historic significance of events and people who propelled the evolution of African Americans in society or toward freedom or toward Civil rights. The issues presented are the collective aspects of life for these African American artists and have been transformed through their art into often powerful statements about our society and the lives of a significant percentage of the population. The artworks highlight daily life, social and at times political issues facing the African American community.”

Made possible by funds from the Union County Office of Cultural and Heritage Affairs, a partner of the New Jersey State Council on the Arts.


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Produced by David J. Wagner, L.L.C., David J. Wagner, Ph.D., Curator/Tour Director



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# LINDEN SEEKS RECREATION PROGRAM PROPOSALS

The City of Linden Department of Parks and Recreation is requesting proposals from the community of Linden and the surrounding areas to provide classroom-based services and programming to our community at one or more of our community centers.

The City of Linden Department of Parks and Recreation continues to provide various seasonal and non-seasonal sports and non-sport-related programs. We are interested in traditional, non-traditional, diverse programming activities to offer to our toddlers, youth, teens, adults and seniors population.

The City of Linden Department of Parks and Recreation does not always have the wherewithal or staffing to present the widened interest of the community as it pertains to many activities. Currently, there are many independent professionals and entities (Independent Service

or Sports Group) that provide these desired services. The City of Linden Department of Parks and Recreation seeks to work with individuals and organizations on a standard agreed term outlined in a complete proposal, inclusive of program objective, goals, outline, cost, and space required.

The John T Gregorio Center and the Linden Multi-Purpose Center have available and full access to the gymnasium, classrooms, arts and crafts room, ceramic shop, wood shop, commercial kitchens, dance studio, and more.

Some examples of service or sport would be but are not limited to Dance Classes (Tap, Step, Latin, Hip Hop), Financial Literacy, Gaming, Cooking, Wood Crafts, Art & Crafts, Ceramic Making, Chess, Computer Basics, Tai Chi, Gymnastics, Workout Training, Martial Arts, and the likes.

The independent service or sports group can be a for-profit or a nonprofit organization or an individual made up of experienced professionals within their area of services offered. The City will seek their services when it is identified they can offer a service we do not currently offer and their fees are not cost-prohibitive for our residents to participate. The anticipated success and program model of the organization can be duplicated to assist and serve the community on more than one occasion.

Please email all proposals to [lindenrec@linden-nj.gov](mailto:lindenrec@linden-nj.gov). In the subject line please state your activity followed by the word "Proposal". We are looking to curate an updated menu of offerings to the residents of Linden.

All vendors will be required to provide a Certificate of Insurance indemnifying The City of Linden as an additional insured.



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Our expanding store features clothes, shoes, jewelry, kitchen and household items, decorations for the home, toys, CD's, DVD's, seasonal and holiday items. There is new inventory for each sale. Hundreds of items... great prices!

The Gift & Thrift Boutique is found in The Episcopal Church of St. John The Baptist, 2018 Dewitt Terrace in Linden, NJ. Customers enter the main doors on Dewitt Terrace and follow the stairs to the store. The space is not handicap accessible. For more information, friend the Gift and Thrift Boutique on Facebook, email [giftandthriftboutique@yahoo.com](mailto:giftandthriftboutique@yahoo.com) or call the church at 908-925-1535.



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# TEEN HELPS RAISE MONEY FOR FAMILIES FACING PEDIATRIC CANCER



(above) Nick Swandrak, a Cranford, NJ, teen who has been tackling pediatric cancer for more than four years, joined former NY Giants head coach Tom Coughlin and the Tom Coughlin Jay Fund to help raise funds for other NY/NJ children and their families facing childhood cancer.

Nick Swandrak, 18, of Cranford, NJ, teamed up with retired NFL Coach Tom Coughlin to raise money for local families facing pediatric cancer on October 21 at Cipriani 42nd Street, New York. In a speech to a crowd of nearly 500 professional athletes, celebrities and supporters at the Tom Coughlin Jay Fund's annual Champions for Children Gala, Swandrak shared his own journey of being diagnosed and treated for acute lymphoblastic leukemia and his subsequent relapse earlier this year. The Jay Fund, the nonprofit founded by the two-time Super Bowl winning coach of the New York Giants, marked its 17th year of providing financial, emotional and practical support for families tackling pediatric cancer in the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan area.

Swandrak knows all too well the challenges families face when a child is diagnosed with cancer, and he is passionate about raising awareness and funds to support them. He has spent much of the last four years enduring grueling cancer treatments and being isolated from his friends due to his immunocompromised condition. His family, like all families who have a child with cancer, has faced expensive medical bills coupled with rising inflation and record-high food costs.

Swandrak and his family have been supported by the Jay Fund throughout his treatment.

"The Jay Fund covered our mortgage payments when our bills became overwhelming and has given me experiences that I will never, ever forget," Swandrak told the crowd of current and former New York Giants, business leaders and Jay Fund families and supporters.

Swandrak's emotional words captivated the audience, and his speech was one of the highlights of a night that raised \$1.25 million for the Jay Fund and the families it serves in the New York/New Jersey Metropolitan area.

"Nick is a remarkable young man and a current Jay Fund scholarship recipient," said Mary Jane Pulzello, Managing Director of the Tom Coughlin Jay Fund. "He received a standing ovation from the audience, as many were deeply moved by this young man's courage and tenacity in fighting cancer for more than four years."

Swandrak thanked his medical team as well as his friends and family who have lifted him up from day one. He saved his most heartfelt appreciation for his parents.

"As of today, I've had 126 chemo shots, 28 spinal taps, and over 200 days sleeping on scratchy hospital sheets," Swandrak told the crowd. "Fighting cancer is tough. You're in bed, and sick a lot of the time. There are days that are a real struggle. But I'm looking forward to ringing that bell for the second time this December and being back in remission."



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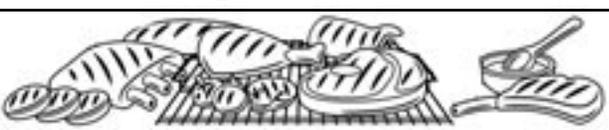
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# DONATION TO POP WARNER CHIEFS 13U SUPER BOWL APPEARANCE

Rahway Elks Lodge #1075 presented the Rahway Pop Warner Chiefs 13U team with a donation of \$1,500 towards the cost of their recent trip to Orlando, Florida to participate in the Pop Warner Super Bowl. The donation was made possible by the members of the Rahway Elks Lodge in addition to a grant from the Elks National Foundation.

The Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the United States of America spends more than \$80,000,000 every year for programs that serve the people in their local communities - including

youth sports activities. For more information about The Elks or to join, please visit the Rahway Elks Lodge or online at Elks.org.

Pop Warner Little Scholars, Inc. promotes youth football, cheer, and dance programs for participants across the United States and in several countries around the world. As the only national youth sports organization that requires scholastic aptitude to participate, Pop Warner is committed to developing America's young people on the field and off. For more information, please visit online at Popwarner.com.



(above) Rahway Elks National Foundation Committee Chairperson Paul Kozakiewicz, Rahway Elks Lodge President Jonathan Joshua, Pop Warner Chiefs youth team members, and Pop Warner Chiefs Coach Troy Eastman.

Courtesy photo

## CAP OFFERING SCHOLARSHIPS

### Bayway Complex Community Advisory Panel

For the year 2023, the Bayway Complex Community Advisory Panel (CAP) has elected to offer High School Seniors who are residents of Linden, Rahway, Elizabeth, and Staten Island the opportunity to be awarded a CAP scholarship. Several one-year scholarships will be awarded in the amount of \$1,000 each, to students in these four municipalities represented by the CAP.

The winners will be selected by the CAP Scholarship Committee, who will be taking the following areas into consideration when reviewing the applications: The Applications must be Computer-Generated and All Sections Completed; Academics (transcript/SAT/ACT scores); Financial Need; Essay; Science/Math Teacher Recommendation Letter(s). This scholarship is open to candidates who will be pursuing a college, university, career or vocational school education in the Industrial, Process Technology, or Engineering (Chemical, Civil, Mechanical, Environmental, Computer) fields. Please contact your high school guidance counselor for more information and the application forms. The deadline to submit applications is March 28, 2023.

The Bayway CAP is a committee of community representatives from Linden, Rahway, Elizabeth, and Staten Island including neighbors, educators, retirees, public officials, emergency responders, and environmental organization representatives who attend quarterly meetings that serve as a forum for dialogue between the community and company representatives from Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery, Infineum USA L.P., Linden Cogeneration Plant, Veolia North America, Solutia, Linden VFT LLC, and Parkway Generation.

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## GROVER CLEVELAND HOSTS FALL FEAST

*Submitted by Dr. Holness,  
Rahway Public Schools*

Just in time for the start of the holiday season, Grover Cleveland's Pre-K & D.A.I.S.Y. program held its annual Fabulous Fall Feast right before Thanksgiving Day. The Annual Feast is a long-standing event that has been around for several decades. It is the perfect opportunity for Grover Families to "Connect" with the school.

The festivities kicked off with a warm welcome by Principal Giambrone. Cleveland school teacher, Mrs. Niotis, extended greetings to the families noting how extremely proud she is of the work that students in each of the pre-k programs have accomplished and the growth that students have attained. Students who enter school through the D.A.I.S.Y. program are exceptional students who face different challenges. This event created the perfect opportunity for Cleveland families to watch their rising stars shine bright.

Excitement filled the air as the big red auditorium curtains rolled back, revealing the cutest and most adorable preschoolers eyes had ever seen. Dressed in colorful custom-made costumes that went along with the theme, these precious little ones sang their little hearts out. With cameras snapping and video rolling, it was the most amazing performance ever! Following the standing ovation, the pre-k students, their families, and staff were escorted to the cafeteria for a delicious turkey meal with dessert.

Picture one of those home makeover shows where a team of people come in and completely transform a space. Well, that's what happened to the Cleveland cafeteria, a complete transformation reflective of a Thanksgiving Fest. The walls were adorned with student artwork, handmade centerpieces, and other decorations that looked like it was straight out of Pinterest.

The beauty of this event appeared to come together easily. It's like a masterfully played symphony as the preschool staff's vision comes to life, with groups of staff hurriedly running around, carefully placing each note to create a beautiful melody. All this effort and wonder is for the enjoyment of our students and their families.

Principal Giambrone and I can't say thank you enough to the pre-k staff and all of the staff members who volunteered their time to help make the Feast a memorable event.



## FRANKLIN SCHOOL HAS A DREAM

During the week of January 16, 2023 students at Franklin Elementary School in Rahway learned about Martin Luther King and how he made the world a better place. Second graders wrote statements about what they would like for their future. With the help of the school's

Technology Facilitator, Dr. Linda Lampert, they used their Chromebook to take their picture, add a speech bubble, and then type the sentences that they wrote. They finished up the project with the classroom teacher and were super excited to display their work for everyone to see.



*(above) Some of Mrs. Alicia Scipioni's second grade students with their finished project: Ashton, Jae, Isabella, Arabella and Arielle.*

Photos by Rahway Public Schools

## GUNG HAY FAT CHOY!

Franklin Elementary School in Rahway recently celebrated Chinese New Year. The school's Vice Principal, Dr. Juan Miao went around to some classrooms and taught students about her heritage and the holiday. Students

enjoyed learning about the customs, dressing in authentic attire and playing with special musical instruments. To end the discussion, the students were able to dance around to music to ring in the new Year! Gung Hay Fat Choy!



*(above) Mrs. Alicia Scipioni and her second grade class, along with Mrs. Raffaella Nicoll and Vice-Principal, Dr. Juan Miao.*

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## BENJAMIN FRANKLIN'S BIRTHDAY

On January 17, 2023, Franklin Elementary School in Rahway celebrated the school's namesake, Mr. Benjamin Franklin's birthday. Students learned all about the Founding Father of the United States through various activities in their classroom. Pictured here are examples of

some of the learning that took place in Mrs. Alicia Scipioni's second grade class. The students' kites came out adorable. At the end of the day, students were surprised to get a visit from Mr. Benjamin Franklin himself. It was a wonderful day of learning and fun.



## MAKING WISHES COME TRUE

*Rahway Public Schools*

Franklin Elementary School in Rahway participated in the Macy's BELIEVE campaign to support the Make A Wish Foundation. Since 2008, Macy's and Make-A-Wish have teamed up to bring hope and joy with this letter-writing campaign. Now more than ever, as COVID-19 impacts our communities, hope is essential for waiting wish kids who are isolated and vulnerable. For every letter Macy's receives, they will donate \$1 to the Make-A-Wish®, up to \$1 million! Students in the Blue and Gold Club wrote over 60 cards and dropped them off at Macy's. The students were thrilled to be able to help make some kids' wishes come true.



(above) Valentino Arias, Ava Darrow, Fabyana Gil, and Kayden Clermont.



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# MEMORIAL BUST OF DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. UNVEILED IN 1992

*Submitted by Al Shipley, City Historian and Rahway Library Research Consultant*

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the main leaders of the American civil rights movement and one of the great orators in American history. His "I Have a Dream" speech delivered during the 1963 March on Washington, was pivotal in raising the nation's consciousness concerning the issues of civil rights. In 1964, Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to end segregation and racial discrimination through civil disobedience and other non-violent means. Tragically, he was assassinated on April 4, 1968 while in Memphis, Tennessee.

After his death, cities across the country honored Dr. King's memory by naming streets, parks, schools and other civic buildings after the slain leader. Many towns, including Rahway, chose to erect a monument to serve as a lasting tribute. The Rahway monument for Dr. King was unveiled as part of a three day observance in January, 1992. Under the direction of John J.

Robertson, Chairman of the Memorial Park Committee, a campaign was developed to celebrate and memorialize Dr. King's legacy.

The three day series of events, all held in the Union County Arts Center, began on Saturday evening, January 18, with a road company presentation of the award winning musical "Ain't Misbehavin'." On Saturday afternoon, a documentary film based on the life and contributions of Dr. King was shown. The Memorial Dedication Ceremony, the highlight of the three day observance, was held on Monday, January 20. From nine A.M. to 11:30, a program of speakers and musical selections was presented

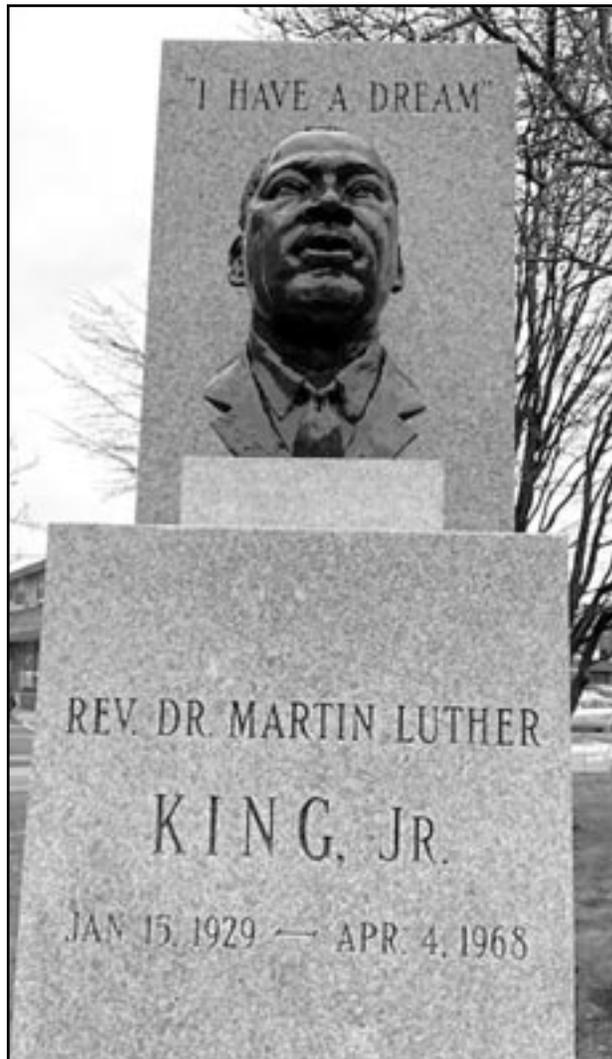
in the theater. Senator Bill Bradley and Congressman Donald Payne were among the dignitaries who addressed the audience. The keynote speaker was the Reverend Dr. W. P. Collier Jr., administrative assistant to the Presiding Bishop of the First Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Church, Philadelphia, Pa. At the conclusion of the program, the assembly organized in front of the Arts Center for a march to the memorial site and the unveiling of the monument.

The morning was bitter cold, but a crowd of more than two hundred walked down Irving Street to the triangle of land formed at Broad, Cherry, and Campbell Streets behind the train station. This triangle would officially become Martin Luther King Park in 1996. Once at the site, Elder Robert L. Bragg led the ceremony which included the laying of wreaths. When the cover was removed, a handsome bronze bust of Dr. King atop a granite pillar was revealed. The sculpture was the creation of artisan Stanley Sawyer. The prayer of dedication was led by the Reverend Gerry M. Guess, Director of Communications, NAACP.

At the conclusion of the ceremonies, Chairman Robertson said, "It is a fitting tribute to Dr. King. It is a job well done and we owe it all to the committee and citizens of Rahway. This park will serve as a focal point for conversation."

On the morning of January 16, 2023, a second monument was unveiled to honor the memory of Dr. King. The attractive stainless-steel column stands a short distance from the original monument and features inspirational quotes made by Dr. King. Mayor Raymond Giacobbe and the Rahway City Council, the Rahway Special Improvement District, the Rahway Social Justice Commission, and NAACP partners conceived and developed the program.

Now, 31 years later, Rahway's tribute to the important legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has been reaffirmed as a second memorial has been added to the park.



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## STARLINGS (EUROPEAN STARLINGS)

When I decided to write about the Starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*) this month, I thought it was going to be an easy topic. A common visitor to our gardens and back yard bird feeders how hard could it be? But these invasive birds are much more complex than I imagined.

A visit from starlings quickly brings a lot of activity to your yard. Usually descending in flocks, starlings seem to appear out of nowhere, scurrying from one feeder to the other and chasing smaller birds away. They even stand their ground against squirrels.

Starlings are gregarious black birds about seven to eight inches long. In winter they are speckled with a brown beak but in the spring their mating colors are iridescent, shining with blue and green highlights and a yellow beak.

Most back yard birders know that Starlings are not native to North America. Instead, they were intentionally introduced to North America.

As the story goes..... On March 6, 1890, a wealthy socialite named Eugene Schieffelin released one hundred common starlings into Central Park in New York City. The release was part of Schieffelin's decidedly eccentric effort to introduce to the United States all the birds mentioned in Shakespeare's works. Although most of his imports died out, the starlings flourished only to become one of the most destructive invasive species in North America. They can now be found across the continent, outcompeting native birds and doing hundreds of millions of dollars worth of annual damage to American agriculture.\*\*

That, in any case, is the story told by scientists and nature lovers today. The legend has become such a classic in the annals of environmentalism that it is considered "part of birding folklore." It has been adopted by the American Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian, and it regularly graces the pages of news outlets such as the Washington Post. Science writers include it as a showpiece in books on environmental destruction, while literary scholars use it to theorize the ecological impact of Shakespeare's work. In all cases it appears as a cautionary tale about the dangers of ecological ignorance and of invasive species in particular. "A warning," as one nature writer puts it, "of the lack of wisdom when introducing foreign species of wildlife without careful consideration."

Yet the real moral is more complicated, because the Schieffelin story is more fiction than fact. Only a few elements of the narrative are verifiable. It is true that a man named Eugene Schieffelin helped introduce foreign birds including House Sparrows to North America. The evidence suggests, however, that his role in the starling's success has been overstated and his obsession with Shakespeare is entirely fabricated. The ravages of the starling have been inflated in a similar fashion. So far, empirical studies of the bird's impact indicate starlings are at worst a

negligible nuisance to traditional agriculture and native birds; for farmers, they may even be beneficial.

Another interesting feature of European starlings is their jaw muscle. Instead of working to keep the jaw shut the muscle works backward to spring the beak open. This enables the bird to pry apart grasses when hunting for prey. As the bill springs open the eyes move forward towards each other, permitting binocular vision. This foraging technique enables the bird to detect not only moving prey but dormant prey during the winter as well increasing the starling's chances for survival.\*

Enjoying a large variety of food, starlings can quickly empty your feeders. Whereas bird enthusiasts want to attract birds, starlings are one critter we prefer to repel. Suet, peanut hearts, oats, chicken feed, cracked corn and baked goods are a few of the items they love. They avoid whole peanuts in the shell and sunflower seeds.

Starlings cannot use birdhouses with entrances less than two inches wide.

Starlings are considered very clean birds that change nesting materials often and remove fecal sacs from their nest cutting down on lice and disease. They are also colonial breeders. There are reports of bachelor males helping to feed the young and protecting the nest of mating pairs. Parents can make up to two hundred and sixty trips a day to feed their nestlings.

Starlings take baths often, even in winter. If you invest in a bird bath heater, they will be frequent visitors. When most birds are said to visit a birdbath, starling are known to 'invade' them, flapping wildly and scaring other birds away.

One of the most interesting things about starling is their incredible flight displays. Unlike most birds, starlings fly straight forward, not up and down like many other birds. This pattern helps them perform one of the most spectacular flying displays in nature, 'Murmuration'.

Around dusk starlings will leave their roost in trees, along telephone wires or wherever they might be and gather together in the sky for what seems like a winged dance. In some cases, it is estimated that one million starlings can join in this display. Some scientists think this is an invitation for other starling to join them for the night. There is safety in numbers from predators that hunt after dark. It is worth your time to go on 'YouTube' and watch a video of this phenomenon in action.

Enjoy your garden all year long,

*James*

\*The Birder's Handbook: Paul Ehrlich, David Dobkin & Darryl Wheye

\*\*Shakespeare's Starling: Environmental Humanities

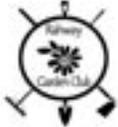


(above) Past President of The Rahway Garden Club, James Keane, has been researching and answering garden questions since 1995.

Visit 'Keane Gardener' blog at: [keanegardener.blogspot.com](http://keanegardener.blogspot.com)



(above) This photograph, by Rahway resident Audra Loccisano, shows the strong bill muscles that help Starlings survive in the winter.



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## IMAGINE WELCOMES NEW FACILITATORS

Recently, Imagine, A Center for Coping with Loss staff members Sonia Nunez, Newark Program Manager and Ashley S. Allen, Newark Training and Education Manager trained a wonderful new team of facilitators who will join our rapidly growing Newark Night of Support. Many of the new facilitators will be facilitating Imagine's groups that meet at the Boys and Girls Club in Newark. Our new volunteers spent three full days training in the Teach for America (TFA) headquarters in Newark and we're so grateful to TFA for sharing their beautiful space with us! During the training, our new volunteers had an opportunity to share their grief experiences and receive support from one another while learning facilitation and companionship skills. We're so happy to welcome this amazing group to our team of volunteer facilitators!

If you're interested in joining the Imagine community as a volunteer facilitator at either our Newark or Mountainside location, the best way to start is with a tour. Please visit our website at

### FREE COURSE ON 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 start on Thursday evening, March 9, 2023 and meet each Thursday over a consecutive 9-week period. It is free-of-charge, with materials furnished at no cost.

The course is offered specifically to the parents, siblings, spouses, teen-age 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. This course is taught by NAMI members who have completed intensive training.

Capacity is limited. To register, or if you have any questions, please contact Pat Roman at (732) 397-8123, or via email at: patroman2@aol.com. Please include F2F Course in the subject line. A F2F instructor will contact you with the details.

imaginenj.org to sign up for an upcoming tour and join our wonderful volunteer team!

Imagine is a 501c3 nonprofit that offers free year-round grief support groups for children ages 3-18 and young adults 19-30 who are coping with a loss due to death. Concurrently, support groups

are available for the parents and guardians of the children in the groups and are offered in English and Spanish. Imagine also offers grief and loss education and training to the community. For more information please contact Imagine at 908-264-3100 or info@imaginenj.org.



(above, l-r) Back row: Ashley S. Allen, Imagine's Newark Training and Education Manager; Sonia Nunez, Imagine's Newark Program Manager; Cynthia White Shabazz, Irvington; Christina Macauley, Union; Idalmi Acosta, East Orange; and Afina Roberts, Millburn. Front row: Marco Antonio Nunez, Newark; Cari Libysen, Sparta; and Tiffany Newton, Newark. Also attending but not pictured, Jean Marie Morgan, Westfield. Courtesy photo

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## SHAKESPEARE'S COMEDY TWELFTH NIGHT COMING TO CDC THEATRE

“Better a witty fool, than a foolish wit.”, “If music be the food of love, play on.” and “Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon ‘em.” are just a few of the familiar lines from William Shakespeare’s Twelfth Night.

A talented cast is preparing to present one of the Bard’s finest comedies at CDC Theatre in Cranford for seven shows running from February 10th to the 25th and is being directed by Susan Speidel. Ms., Speidel currently serves on the faculty of the Kean University Theatre Conservatory and is a lecturer for the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Rutgers University. Holding a range of academic degrees, she has studied acting and directing at HB Studios in New York City and at the Globe Theater in London. She served for 20 years as Director of Education for the Tony-Award winning Paper Mill Playhouse and has directed more than 50 plays and musicals.

“A woman, disguised as a man, falls in love with her boss, only to be pursued by the woman her boss is determined to marry. Confused?“, asked Ms. Speidel recently, “You’re not alone, but Twelfth Night, Shakespeare’s witty look at

gender confusion, invites us to put convention aside, stretch the boundaries of “acceptable” attraction, and that, in the end, love is love is love. The play is filled with relatable characters contending with mistaken identities, unrelenting desire, hilarious pranks, and unrequited love – not to mention cross-dressing, duels, and deception – all offered up with a generous dash of merriment!”

Twelfth Night combines love, confusion, mistaken identities and joyful discovery all while telling a story of fickle fortune, mourning, love and reunion. Set in the free-wheeling, mirror-ball world of the 1970s, the celebratory nature of Shakespeare’s play is heightened with a series of Top-Ten hits that enhance the production and move the action forward with a disco beat. Shipwrecked twins, gender-bending romance and a bumper crop of fools, from the wise to the ridiculous, guarantee a full-blown evening’s entertainment.

CDC Theatre is celebrating its 104th season in Cranford, NJ at 78 Winans Ave. For best ticket selection and prices, visit [cdctheatre.org](http://cdctheatre.org) for additional information.



## STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN NAACP KWANZAA CELEBRATION

*Submitted by Rahway Public Schools*

The NAACP Rahway Branch celebrated Kwanzaa at the Rahway Recreation Center in December. A few students from Rahway's Franklin Elementary School's Gifted & Talented Program were honored to participate in the program. The students' role in the celebration was to present the eight Kwanzaa symbols and dress the table. After the program, the students explored all that was offered during the day. These activities included face painting, visiting

vendors, reusable tote decorating, and photo opportunities.

To thank the Franklin students, NAACP Rahway Branch President, Ms. Quanae Chambliss, the NAACP board, and its program partners gave “Kuumba” Bags. Each participant received a bag full of STEM-related items to help them continue their discovery and critical thinking journey in anticipation that they too will excel in the sciences to correct the damage we have done to the planet and heal the land.



(above, l-r) Pictures are Ms. Susan Farrar, Franklin G&T Teacher, Lincoln Ferreira, Brielle Gilliard, Addison Suchocka, Justin Rosario, Jocelyn Ferrer, Isley Brison, Juliette PointduJour, Alisha Cardoza Espinal, and Rahway NAACP President, Ms. Quanae Chambliss.

Photo by Rahway Public Schools

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# YMCA DISTRIBUTES FREE COMPUTERS TO STUDENTS

## The Gateway Family YMCA

On January 16, 2023, the Loyalty Foundation distributed 100 Chromebook laptops to School Age Child Care (SACC) participants in need at The Gateway Family YMCA in Elizabeth, Rahway and Union, NJ. The distribution event at the Elizabeth Branch was attended by David Neeman, Founder, Loyalty Foundation, Rahmean Pops, 211 Community Impact, and the entertainer Redman.

“It was a beautiful Martin Luther King Jr. Day and we were so pleased to collaborate with all the wonderful folks from The Gateway YMCA in Elizabeth, NJ to distribute the computers. The community and atmosphere was electric, and we can't thank the incomparable Redman and Rahmean Pops of 211 Community Impact enough for supporting our equity empowerment mission. Seeing all the smiles on the families faces and knowing how much these computers will help them, means the world to us,” stated David Neeman, Founder, the Loyalty Foundation

“We are very appreciative of The Loyalty

Foundation, a strong partner to The Gateway Family YMCA and the families we serve. Access to technology is imperative to provide academic success and recovery from the learning loss experienced over these past few years. This donation opens a world of possibilities for our children,” Melynda A. Disla, President/Chief Executive Officer, The Gateway Family YMCA. “It was a heartwarming event and a great collaboration. We are truly thankful to Redman for taking the time to visit with families at our YMCA and brighten the smiles of all who attended. We are thankful to Rahmean Pops of 211 Community Impact for joining the Loyalty Foundation in sharing the gift of technology with our students.”

The computer donation was made possible by The Loyalty Foundation, a New York City-based 501(c)(3) Public Charity providing computers technology-based education programs to underserved K-12 youth populations across the U.S.

The Chromebooks were distributed to SACC

families on a first-come-first-serve basis at the 3 different locations of The Gateway Family YMCA: Elizabeth Branch, Five Points Branch, and Rahway Branch.

For more information about The Loyalty Foundation visit [www.loyaltyfoundation.org](http://www.loyaltyfoundation.org)

For more information about The Gateway Family YMCA visit [www.tgfymca.org](http://www.tgfymca.org).



(above) Naldy Velarde, School Age Child Care & Camp Director, The Gateway Family YMCA, Jasmine Shaw, Housing Coordinator, Redman, Earnestine Brookins, Housing Coordinator, David Neeman, Founder, The Loyalty Foundation, Colleen Clayton, Chief Membership & Development Officer, Rahmean Pops, 211 Community Impact sharing a moment with the last Elizabeth YMCA family to pick up their laptop on Monday.



(above) Elizabeth Branch family Shawnnah, Rashon, Jayceon and Jalani receive their laptop from the Loyalty Foundation.



(above) Chloe, Five Points Branch student smiles with her laptop, with mom and sister, Amber and Graisy. (Union)

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Ruffino Chianti	1.5L	\$13.97
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Santa Margerita Pinot Grigio	750ml	\$22.09
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