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HELPING TO KEEP UNION BEAUTIFUL

Submitted by Maryann Friscia

The youngest and the oldest gardeners came together recently to plant the Municipal Gardens in front of the Township of Union's Town Hall.

The world of entomology piqued the curiosity of the young members of Pack 68 when they uncovered worms, bugs and centipedes living in the dirt they dug up. Mom, Dad and siblings provided energetic support of the project that transformed the tired garden into a colorful space.

Long standing members of the Township of Union Garden Club joined the Cub Scouts with trowels in hand to clear away remnants of last year's planting that made room for eight flats of Vincas.

Cub Scouts who helped were Benjamin R, Stella R, Jacob S, Neo A, Oliver R, Frank A, Daniel F, Mason P, Noah P, Arthur V., Alice V, Jackson B, Izak S, Ali R, Nadia R, Ava R, Olivia M, Bianca M, Nora S.

Parents... Vivian T, Meridith S, Phala A, Rosario R, Amanda A, Alexander F, Julie R, Ana B, Jeremiah B, Deepak S, Kate R, Muhammad R, Michael M, Tricia S.

We thank Veronica Doll, President of the Township of Union Garden Club, for her continued efforts to bring people together to "Keep Union Beautiful."



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MILITARY FAMILIES SACRIFICE TOO

Michael D Boll, NJVN President

For the last few years, the New Jersey Veterans Network (NJVN) has been helping veterans with resources and assistance with their mental health conditions. Over time we came to realize that the veteran's family was being affected by their struggles as well. Our team had to learn how to include their family members in our outreach efforts. We lose 22 veterans each day to suicide, and they leave behind grieving families. Recently, we decided to make sure all veteran family members can use the same resources that our team has available for veterans. Sometimes we forget about the sacrifices our veteran families have to make and this country should appreciate them for this.

One thing our team decided to do was to have Gold Star families meet disabled veterans at our events, so they can work together and form a bond. This effort was extremely affective and immediately brought joy to both the Gold Star families and to the disabled veterans. By adding veteran family members to the team, it allows us to work together on our peer support and recreational therapy programs. We are honored to have veteran family members to work alongside us and know they are just as committed with helping our veterans live a better way of life.

If you need assistance, or would like to join the team as a volunteer, please send us your name, email, and phone number to NJVN1775@gmail.com.

ABOUT NEW JERSEY VETERANS NETWORK

We are a group of veterans and volunteers dedicated to helping our veterans and their families live better lives. Our mission is to identify veterans and connect them with resources and programs designed to meet their unique set of needs. Help us save Vets! We are always looking for volunteers, with various skills, to join the team. If you are a veteran or family member that is in need of assistance; or are interested in volunteering, would like us to speak at your event, or contribute to our mission, call 973-332-1556 or email NJVN1775@gmail.com. To learn more visit njvn.org.



(above) Michael D Boll, NJVN President, with Dina and Tom Duffy who lost their son Tom Duffy, a Marine Corporal and Afghanistan War veteran. Courtesy photos

Spirit of UNION

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UNION MUNICIPAL BAND SUMMER SERIES

The Union Municipal Band will be performing 2 times in July. All shows are free. Audience members are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs or blankets to sit and watch the band. The schedule is as follows:

July 8 - Putnam Manor, Plymouth Rd & Benington Dr, Union

July 15 - Fairway Drive, BlackBerry Lane, Union

The band is conducted by Howard Toplansky and will feature Caryn Feder on drumset. This season marks Caryn's 25th year playing for the conductor in various concert bands and wind ensembles in the area. The concerts will feature many patriotic selections.





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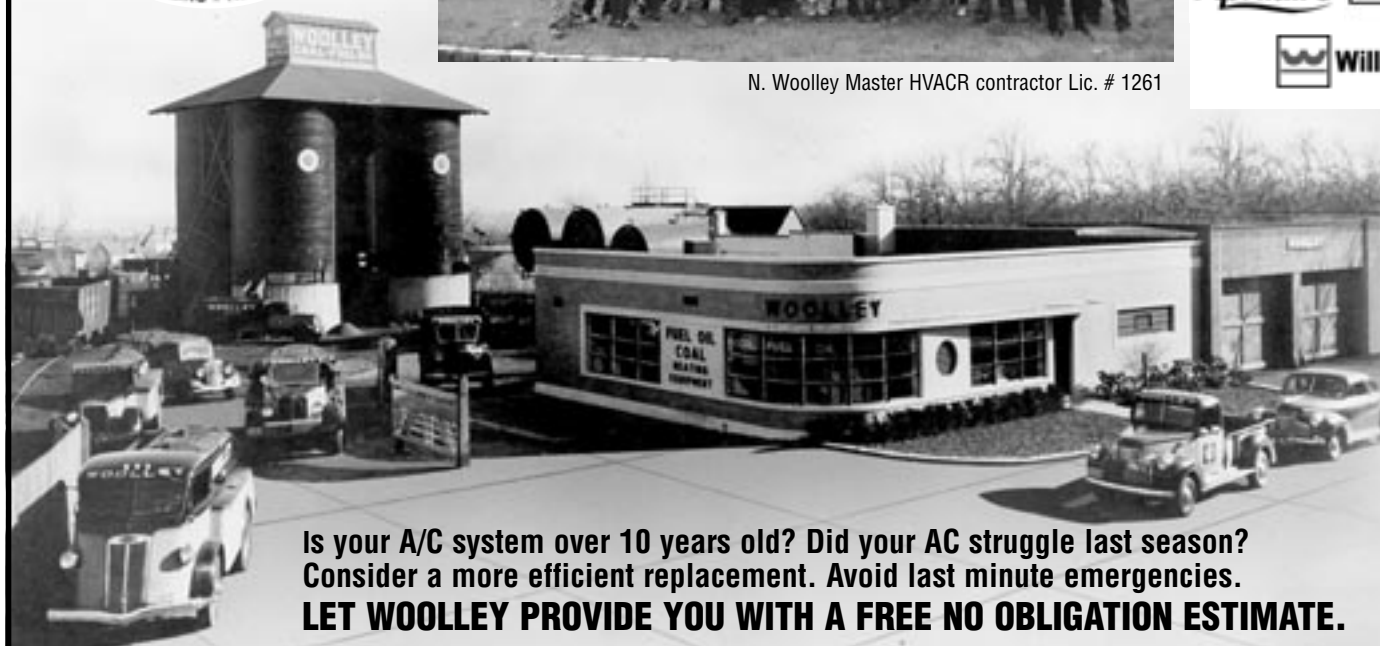
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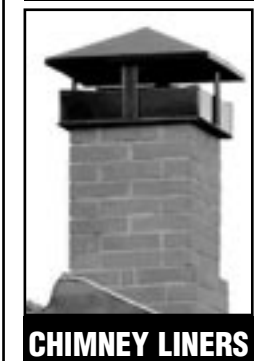
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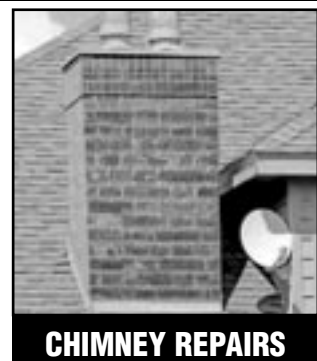
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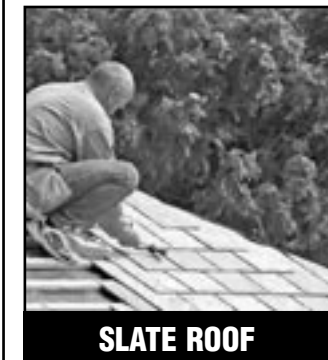
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URGENT NEED FOR ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH IN FOSTER CARE

Child Focus

The latest class of CASA volunteers were sworn in to advocate for youth in foster care on June 11, 2024.

Union County Superior Court Judge Rosalba Comas presided over the swearing-in of the newly trained volunteers, and each can now be assigned to work with children living in foster care through no fault of their own, advocating for their best interests and ensuring their needs are met while in the child welfare system.

The nonprofit organization Child Focus operates CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, and its goal is to provide a CASA volunteer for each of the more than 250 child-victims in Union County foster care. Currently, just 30 percent of these vulnerable infants, children, and teens have the continuity and support of a CASA volunteer serving as extra eyes and ears for judges hearing their cases. The need is critical for additional volunteers to step up and serve waiting children.

“We are proud to welcome this new group of volunteers to the CASA family,” said Erica Fischer-Kaslander, Executive Director of Child Focus. “These individuals have taken concrete action to make a difference in the lives of children who have experienced immense trauma, having been removed from home through no fault of their own, often due to abuse or neglect. We look forward to working with our new advocates as they serve these vulnerable youth and urge more community members to follow their example by volunteering to support children in need.”

Judge Comas expressed her gratitude for the CASA program and the volunteers’ commitment to the children they serve. “If I really want to know what’s happening with a child I listen to the CASA worker, because they are 100% in tune with everything that the child needs, and everything that’s happening in the child’s life,” she shared. “Their job is to look out for the kids, represent the children’s interest, and make sure that all of their needs are being addressed. It’s not just whether they need clothes or whether they need toys, it’s the bond. It’s what they need emotionally, it’s someone they can count on.”

Since caseworkers, attorneys, and foster homes

are ever-changing, the CASA volunteer – or advocate – is a much-needed constant in a child’s life, committing to work with the child until they reach permanency in a stable home and the case closes. Children assigned a CASA volunteer are more likely to receive services, spend less time in the foster system, and experience significantly better outcomes than those without an advocate.

BECOMING A CASA - TRAINING SCHEDULED IN JULY

Becoming a CASA requires no special skills or background in child welfare. Child Focus provides thorough training on the ins and outs of advocating for abused and neglected children, and volunteers are fully supported by CASA program staff. Volunteers visit the children at least monthly and get to know the people in the child’s life, such as foster parents, biological parents, teachers, therapists, and attorneys in order to make unbiased recommendations to the family court judge that support the child’s best interests.

The first step to becoming an advocate is to attend an information session. Upcoming sessions will be held Monday, July 8 at 5:30 p.m.

at the Elizabeth Public Library (Elmora Branch), 740 W Grand St, Elizabeth, NJ 07202; Thursday, July 11 at 5:30 p.m. at the Rahway Public Library, 2 City Hall Plaza in Rahway; Thursday July 25 at 5:30 p.m. at the Union County Colleen Fraser Building, 300 North Avenue E. in Westfield; or Monday July 1 at 10 a.m., Monday July 15 at 5:30 p.m., Wednesday July 24 at 12 p.m., and Wednesday July 31 at 5:30 p.m. at the Wayne Child Focus office, 415 Hamburg Turnpike, Suite D2. Register: casapassaicunion.org/info-session.

ABOUT CHILD FOCUS:

Child Focus prioritizes the needs and well-being of infants, children and teens impacted by, or at risk of, abuse or neglect by amplifying their voices and working toward lasting, permanent solutions that address their unique situations and provide support needed to thrive. This critical work is accomplished through three distinct but complementary programs: CASA of Passaic and Union Counties, NJ Safe Babies Court Team, and the Open Door Store. For more information about Child Focus, visit childfocusnj.org.



(above) The latest class of CASA volunteers were sworn in to advocate for youth in foster care on June 11, 2024. To learn more about becoming an advocate, info sessions are scheduled for July.

For more information visit: casapassaicunion.org/info-session

Courtesy photo

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CONCERT SERIES

The Township of Union is pleased to announce the return of the annual Summer Concert Series. Located at Biertuempfel Park, the series will take place every Thursday in July from 7:30 p.m. – 9 p.m.

Beginning July 4, each Thursday will feature high energy performances, food vendors and fun. This year's series will include:

- Mission Dance | July 4 | High-energy party band
- Four Sticks | July 11 | The music of Led Zeppelin
- 80's Revolution | July 18 | Best of the decade
- Xtreme Queen | July 25 | The legacy of Freddie Mercury

Concerts are open to the public and are free of charge to attend. Blankets and chairs are welcome. Food and refreshments will be available for purchase.

In case of rain, the concerts will be moved to Hannah Caldwell School Auditorium, located at 1120 Commerce Avenue.

For details the Township of Union Summer Concert Series, visit uniontownship.com or follow @TWPUNIONNJ on social media for regular updates.

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Men's Fragrances 101 (Virtual on Zoom)

Wed. 7/3 @ 6:00 pm

Are you interested in buying a loved one cologne? Perhaps you want to upgrade your scent? Join us for this informative presentation where we discuss the basics of men's fragrances like the terminology, how to wear it, where to buy, favorite scents and more.

Monday Night Trivia: Black Cinema (Vauxhall)

Mon. 7/8 @ 6:00 pm

Are you a fan of Denzel Washington or Viola Davis? Maybe you still watch Friday or Poetic Justice whenever it airs on television? Come join us as we test your movie knowledge for fun and prizes.

Chair Yoga (Main)

Thurs. 7/11 @ 10:00 am

Take a deep breath with friends and stretch! For beginners to professionals. Presented by the Gateway Family YMCA.

Kalustyan - World of Spices (Main)

Thurs. 7/11 @ 5:30 pm

Partnering with Kalustyan, Kerri Goad will be presenting on new and interesting trends in the world of spices, providing information on spices, ways to use them, as well as Kalustyan's commitment to our community in Union and their own line of products.

Practice Your English (Vauxhall)

Mon. 7/15 @ 12:00 pm &

Mon. 7/29 @ 12:00 pm

Do you know anyone who would like to practice their English skills? Now's their chance with us. Join in at a drop-in group that's more like a party than a formal class.

Practice Your English (Main)

Mon. 7/15 @ 6:00 pm &

Mon. 7/29 @ 6:00 pm

Do you know anyone who would like to practice their English skills? Now's their chance with us. Join in at a drop-in group that's more like a party than a formal class.

Boogie Woogie Adult Dance Fitness (Vauxhall)

Mon. 7/15 @ 6:00 pm

Get your exercise in with a fun cardio workout featuring hip-hop inspired dance moves, presented by Tiffany Taylor!

Unwine & Paint (Vauxhall)

Wed. 7/17 @ 6:30 pm

Please join us for an evening at the Vauxhall Library as Newark resident, Ms. Lelia Stevenson, leads attendees for a fun and relaxing evening of painting!

Off the Shelf Book Club (Main)

Thurs. 7/18 @ 6:30 pm

July's reading will be The Invincible Miss Cust. Pick up your copy at the Main Library. Great way to make new friends!

Adult Summer Watercolor Workshop (Main)

Mon. 7/22 @ 6:00 pm

Learn the basics of watercolor painting with Joy Ann Cabanos. She will lead you through painting a summer scene. All materials will be provided and seats are limited. Registration will open at the beginning of July.

Union County's Department of Children & Families (Main)

Thurs. 7/25 @ 5:00 - 7:00 pm

Join us for this outreach event from NJ's Department of Children & Families. Ask questions, get informed, find great resources, and more with officers from the Union County Branch of the NJ DCF.

Adult Watercolor Galaxies (Main)

Thurs. 7/25 @ 6:00 pm

Welcome back Swetha Shenoy (@thepaisleycorner) from The Paisley Corner (<https://thepaisleycorner.com>) where she will teach you basic watercolor techniques and paint vibrant watercolor galaxies.

Animal Crossing Open Hours (Virtual on Nintendo Switch)

Fri. 7/26 @ 3:00 - 5:00 pm

Come explore UPL Island! Check out our inclusive virtual library building that serves

children, teens, and adults. Discover our Mario-themed maze, shake fruit/money trees, shop at Nooks & Abels, help craft DIYs, and leave a message on the bulletin board. As a thank you for visiting, there will be freebies! You must add us as a friend before entering the island. Our UPL Nintendo friend code is SW-4027-1837-6212. All ages are welcome. No registration is necessary. If you have any questions, please get in touch with jcarvajal@uplnj.org.

Adult Crochet for Beginners (Vauxhall)

Wed. 7/31 @ 6:00 pm

Please join us as Ms. Lisa Roberts teaches attendees the basics of learning how to crochet. Attendees can bring their own crochet hooks and yarn, but supplies will be provided!

Walk-in Wednesdays: One-on-One Library Technology Assistance (Vauxhall)

Weds. @ 12:30 - 2:00 pm

on 7/3, 7/10, 7/17, 7/24, 7/31

Get help with library resources, including downloading e-books from Libby and Hoopla, using the library catalog and resources, using mobile print, and using the photocopier and scanner. Reservations are not required.

Hula Hooping for Adults (Vauxhall)

Weds. @ 6:00 pm on

7/3, 7/10, 7/17, 7/24, 7/31

Hoopling conditions your core, works on proper body alignment, boosts flexibility and stability and lowers stress with an exhilarating aerobic total body weight loss workout. Please join us outside the Vauxhall Branch Library for this unique and fun adult exercise program. Please bring your own Infinity Hula Hoop as supplies are very limited.

Meditation (Virtual on Zoom)

Thurs. @ 11:30 am on 7/11, 7/19, 7/25

Join Bindu Bhatt for virtual meditation sessions. No prior experience is necessary. Bindu has practiced meditation for over 30 years and wants to share her insight.

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SOCIAL IMPACT FUND SUPPORTS SWIM PROGRAMS

The Phillips 66 Social Impact Fund, on behalf of the Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery, is providing a \$46,000 grant to The Gateway Family YMCA to offer swim safety programming through Summer and Fall Swimming Lessons to 209 low and moderate-income youth.

Melynda Disla, President/CEO of The Gateway Family YMCA, has expressed a pressing need for financial assistance. She states, "We can't provide additional swim lesson scholarships without the help of donors like Phillips 66. Low-moderate-income families can only afford these lessons with financial assistance despite how much they are needed."

Bayway Refinery Manager, Don Susanen, said, "We are proud to partner with The Gateway

Family YMCA. The programs offer more than swim lessons. It provides a safe and healthy outdoor activity for youth, preventing them from being stuck indoors all summer. And remember, every life saved from receiving swimming lessons makes the investment well worth it."

Our support of this program demonstrates how Phillips 66 continues to strive to be a trusted community partner. At Phillips 66, we understand that we share our communities and take responsibility for our neighbors' safety and well-being.

At Phillips 66, we believe actions speak louder than words. Together, we are #GivingGoodEnergy!



(above) A \$46,000 grant from Phillips 66 Bayway Refinery provides swim safety for local youth just in time for summer.

Courtesy photo

POOL SAFETY TIPS CAN HELP SAVE A LIFE

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death in children ages 1 through 4, and data released by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) shows that more than 375 children drown in pools and spas each year. Children younger than 5 years old account for 75 percent of these drownings, 56 percent of which are attributed to a gap in adult supervision. Most child drownings (71 percent) happen at home.

In response to these numbers, CPSC's Pool Safely campaign is sharing simple water safety steps that families can take to prevent drownings, especially while many families are spending more time around backyard and portable pools this season.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's Pool Safely campaign urges parents and caregivers to follow the Pool Safely simple safety steps to prevent more drownings:

- Never leave a child unattended in or near water, and always designate an adult Water Watcher. This person should not be reading, texting, using a smartphone or be otherwise distracted. In addition to pools and spas, this warning includes bathtubs, buckets, decorative ponds, and fountains.
- If you own a pool or spa, be sure to install layers of protection, including a four-sided fence with a self-closing, self-latching gate.
- Learn how to perform CPR on children and adults. Many communities offer online CPR training.
- Learn how to swim and teach your child how to swim.
- Keep children away from pool drains, pipes and other openings to avoid entrapments.
- Ensure any pool and spa you use has drain covers that comply with federal safety standards and if you do not know, ask your pool service provider about safer drain covers.

Families can visit poolsafely.gov for additional water safety tips to prepare for a summer that is safer and more fun.

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| Florham Park Press NJ Qty: 5,500 Zip: 07932 | Garwood Times NJ Qty: 2,500 Zip: 07027 | Green Brook Gazette NJ Qty: 3,000 Zip: 08812 | BUSINESS • LIFE KENILWORTH NJ Qty: 3,500 Zip: 07033 | NJ LIFE in LINDEN Qty: 17,900 Zip: 07036 | Long Hill LEADER NJ Qty: 3,500 Zips: 07933, 07946, 07980 |
| MADISON MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,300 Zip: 07940 | MOUNTAINSIDE VIEW NJ Qty: 2,900 Zip: 07092 | New Providence NEWS NJ Qty: 5,100 Zip: 07974 | OUR TOWN Rahway, NJ Qty: 13,000 Zip: 07065 | ROSELLE PARK MONTHLY Qty: 5,600 Zip: 07204 | Scotch Plains NJ WHAT'S HAPPENING MONTHLY Qty: 9,400 Zip: 07076 |
| Short Hills MILLBURN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 8,200 Zips: 07041, 07078 | Summit & Times NJ Qty: 9,600 Zip: 07901 | Spirit of UNION Qty: 6,800 Zip: 07083 (partial) | WARREN MONTHLY NJ Qty: 6,200 Zip: 07059 | Watchung Post NJ Qty: 2,700 Zip: 07069 | Westfield MONTHLY NJ Qty: 11,800 Zip: 07090 |

NEWSPAPER AD RATES

| Units | Size | 1 TOWN | 3 TOWNS | 6 TOWNS | 9 TOWNS | 12 TOWNS | 15 TOWNS | 18 TOWNS | 21 TOWNS | 24 TOWNS |
|------------------------|--------------------------|--------|---------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1 Unit (Business card) | 3.25" x 2" | \$60 | \$150 | \$250 | \$350 | \$400 | \$450 | \$500 | \$550 | \$600 |
| 2 Units | 6.5" x 2" or 3.25" x 4" | \$100 | \$250 | \$400 | \$500 | \$600 | \$700 | \$800 | \$900 | \$1000 |
| 4 Units | 3.25" x 8" or 6.5" x 4" | \$180 | \$450 | \$700 | \$900 | \$1100 | \$1300 | \$1500 | \$1700 | \$1900 |
| 6 Units | 6.5" x 6.25" or 10" x 4" | \$240 | \$600 | \$900 | \$1200 | \$1400 | \$1600 | \$1800 | \$2000 | \$2200 |
| 9 HALF PAGE | 6.5" x 9" or 10" x 7" | \$320 | \$800 | \$1000 | \$1300 | \$1600 | \$1900 | \$2200 | \$2400 | \$2700 |
| 12 Units | 10" x 8" | \$360 | \$900 | \$1200 | \$1500 | \$1800 | \$2100 | \$2400 | \$2700 | \$3000 |
| 18 FULL PAGE | 10" x 14" | \$400 | \$1000 | \$1400 | \$1800 | \$2200 | \$2500 | \$2800 | \$3000 | \$3400 |
| 2-PAGE SPREAD | 21" x 14" | \$700 | | | | | | | | |
| BACK PAGE | 10" x 14" | \$500 | | | | | | | | |
| FRONT PAGE BANNER | 8.25" x 2" | \$320 | | | | | | | | |
| FRONT PAGE BOX | 1.5" x 4.5" | \$240 | | | | | | | | |

Rates are per month. Artwork included in price. Newspapers are black on white.

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BUSINESSES SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

Union Township Chamber of Commerce

Donors to the Greater Union Township Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Fund gathered recently to meet the two Union High School graduates who received scholarships for 2024.

Named the "Union Township Chamber of Commerce Businesses Scholarship," the award was created to allow all Chamber member businesses to collectively contribute to the fund and thereby allow for bigger awards. This year, two scholarships of \$3,000 each were presented to Deep Patel and Gurkirat Singh, both will be attending Rutgers Newark.

The scholarship is dedicated to the memory of Anthony Giordano, a longtime Chamber member who served on its Board of Directors for more than a decade. Affectionately known as "Uncle

Tony" by his friends and colleagues, he was a major force in the Chamber in the 1980's and 1990's and chaired the organization's Golf Outing for many years.


"We are so very grateful to the many Chamber businesses who stepped up and contributed to this year's fund, which promotes our future business leaders," said James Masterson, Chamber CEO. "Our Chamber is an important and active part of the community –and this is one way in which we demonstrate our commitment to the Township of Union. I encourage our community to show their gratitude by patronizing these businesses."

Information concerning the Scholarship and how to contribute to the fund may be had by calling the Chamber at 908-688-2777 or emailing Masterson at executivedirector@unionchamber.com.



(above) Union High School scholarship recipients Deep Patel and Gurkirat Singh (Center) join with some of the donors to the Greater Union Chamber's Annual Scholarships.

Courtesy photo



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