



Newsletter for the JESPY Community

Spring 2022 Edition

MEET THE WINNERS!



Ari G. – APSE Award

JESPY House nominated client Ari G. for the NJAPSE (Association of Persons in Supported Employment) Supported Employee of the Year award. The organization presented the awards virtually during an event in March.

In March 2020, Ari accepted a position at Five Guys in Madison, NJ. He initially worked 20 hours per week, doing food prep, cleaning/sanitizing, and dishwashing. Ari loved the job but wanted to do more. After advocating with his supervisors to be trained on more tasks, Ari learned to cook hamburgers, grill, and work as a cashier. Ari is now working a minimum of 35 hours a week at Five Guys.

Alec R. – STARS Award

A client in JESPY House's Day Habilitation program since 2014, Alec has become widely known for his positive attitude, strides toward independence, determination, and willingness to help others. Those attributes are the reason Alec was nominated and was recently awarded an NJACP STARS Award.

"In working with JESPY's Work Readiness department, Alec has ambitious dreams of being a professional photographer," said Mike Depoy, Day Habilitation/Transition Program Supervisor. "He motivates other clients in following their dreams and interests as well." Alec is shown above (wearing a red mask) at the JESPY watch party for the awards.



JESPY PARTNERS WITH PAPER MILL PLAYHOUSE FOR CLIENT PERFORMANCE



With the musical talents of JESPY clients in the spotlight, JESPY has partnered with Millburn's Paper Mill Playhouse to present a showcase of Broadway songs to be performed by the clients on June 18 at 4pm.

The performance, which is open to the public, is tentatively titled "A New Beginning". Set to take place at JESPY, the theme explores 'starting over' since the pandemic.

Leading clients in rehearsals has been JESPY's theatre director Jason Gillis, and Mary Elizabeth Gismonde and Adam Ziering, Teaching Artists at Paper Mill Playhouse.

For additional information about the June 18 performance, email nrambone@jespy.org.

CLIENT CONNECTIONS!

JESPY clients have been engaged in fun and interactive activities and groups. Here's a look at some of what they've been up to!



For the love of reptiles, clients recently spent an afternoon with NJ Snake Man learning about and holding a snake, turtle, and other reptiles.



JESPY Men's Support Net Group (shown left), a support group for the male residents in Shared Housing, meets once each month at their respective group homes to discuss any issues or concerns, to socialize, enjoy a meal, and plan group outings. Photo right: Clients in JESPY's Day Habilitation program participate in a music appreciation activity.



On a recent rainy day, clients at The Michael Och House: A Center for Aging at JESPY, put their culinary skills to the test by baking some delicious chocolate chip cookies and decorating strawberries with chocolate. Yum!

JOIN US AT 'JAZZ FUNK SOUL' ON JUNE 4 TO SUPPORT JESPY & HEAR GREAT MUSIC!



nominee **Paul Jackson Jr.** (guitar).

On Saturday June 4, Smooth Jazz NJ and Maplewood Division of Arts & Culture bring **JAZZ FUNK SOUL** to **The Woodland in Maplewood**. **Jazz Funk Soul** includes 2018 Grammy winner **Jeff Lorber** (keyboardist), Grammy nominee **Everette Harp** (saxophone) with Grammy

The 2nd floor parlor in The Woodland will feature the **JESPY Wine Bar**. JESPY will receive 75% of the proceeds from the Wine Bar.

The producer has again offered a ticket discount to the JESPY community of \$10 off each ticket. Just type in **jespy** (all small letters) when asked for the promo code at checkout.

The Woodland is located at 60 Woodland Ave, Maplewood N.J. Doors open at 7pm and the show begins at 8pm. To purchase tickets, go to <https://smoothjazznj.com/jazz-funk-soul/>

JESPY BOARD PRESIDENT AHADI BUGG-LEVINE NAMED 'VILLAGER OF THE MONTH'

For the month of May, JESPY Board President Dr. Ahadi Bugg-Levine was recognized as South Orange Township's Villager of the Month. The award recognizes characteristics that have contributed to making South Orange a vibrant and inclusive community.

The longtime South Orange resident says she is proud of her work with JESPY clients and her part in JESPY's collaboration with the Village of South Orange and nonprofit developers to build South Orange Commons, an affordable housing building for families and for adults with Intellectual and Developmental disabilities.



In addition to the Village of the Month recognition, Bugg-Levine was honored in March for Women's History Month with an Assembly Resolution at the State House in Trenton, NJ.

Assemblywoman Mila Jasey nominated and presented Bugg-Levine with the Resolution, heralding her efforts during the COVID pandemic, which included securing unemployment benefits for JESPY clients and arranging the Essex County mobile vaccination program to ensure their vaccinations.

Congratulations Ahadi! We're proud of all that you do.

GETTING HEALTHY!



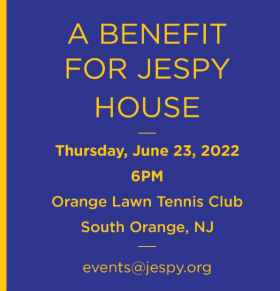
On **June 5, 2022 at 1pm**, JESPY will host a **Healthy Lifestyle Event** for JESPY families – to be held at JESPY and presented by the JESPY Family Outreach Committee. Attendees will meet and hear from JESPY clients about their healthy lifestyle experiences, learn about healthy living at JESPY, participate in a Zumba activity and a question & answer session with JESPY staff.

Family and client **RSVPs are required by June 3** to tmatharu@jespy.org or to parent and JESPY Board Member Sophia Gershman at Sophia.gershman@gmail.com. Click the image at left for

event location and additional information.

JOIN US FOR JESPY'S BATTLE OF THE CHEFS!

Bring your appetite to the ultimate cook-off. The event, **Battle of the Chefs: A Benefit for JESPY**, is JESPY's



2022 fundraising event that will take place on **Thursday, June 23, at 6:00pm**. Held at the historic Orange Lawn Tennis Club in South Orange, NJ, the benefit will honor **The Oppenheimer Family, The Cottingham Family, and The Plotnick Family**.

This interactive event will raise funds for JESPY's whole-life programs and services while entertaining guests with a chef battle between two local premier chefs, **Chef Ivan** of Orange Lawn Tennis Club and **Chef Tony** of Edgewood Country Club.

Please join us on June 23 to learn how JESPY has made a powerful difference in the lives of our honorees. Sponsorships and tickets are now available [HERE](#).

P.S. Make your commitment by **June 9** to ensure your gift is recognized at the event. If you have any questions, please send an email to events@jespy.org.

CLIENTS PRESENT PROCEEDS FROM KNITTED FLAG PINS TO UKRAINIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

In a show of solidarity and support, several JESPY clients recently dedicated themselves to knitting Ukrainian Flag Pins, which were sold for \$5.00 at the General Store Cooperative in Maplewood and at Rocket Ship & Print in South Orange.

During a recent event held at Judi House, one of JESPY's program buildings, clients presented the proceeds of their efforts, a \$1,000 check, to Pastor Sviatoslav Hot of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Holy Ascension in Maplewood.



For additional information, email troberts@jespy.org. Flag pins will also be for sale at the *Village to Village: A Maplewood Village Fair Supporting Ukraine* at St. Joseph's Church in Maplewood on June 5 (3pm-7pm).

In photo, top right, the JESPY knitting team are shown with Pastor Hot, Pastor Jim Worth of St. Joseph's Church, members of Ukrainian Orthodox Church, JESPY Community Relations Supervisor Tara Roberts and JESPY Executive Director Audrey Winkler.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS JOIN JESPY

Bringing valuable work and life experience to their roles, JESPY is excited to announce the addition of several new members to our Board of Trustees.

Dr. Sandra Sicular, an emergency medical physician with more than 10 years of expertise, currently practices medicine at RWJ Barnabas Rahway Hospital as a nocturnist.

“During the pandemic, I was able to assist JESPY clients and staff with confusing questions about Covid,” she says. “I enjoyed that I was able to make a difference in keeping their community healthier and at ease.”



Palisa Kelley is a partner at Selverne Kelley Bradford, where she works as a transactional attorney in the fields of music and media. Her career spans 25 years as a practicing attorney.

“I look forward to working with JESPY's wonderful clients,” Kelley shares, “helping them grow an already vibrant community, and expanding the resources available to them.”

Entrepreneur **Carol Barash**, PhD, brings a breadth of knowledge to JESPY House. The founder and CEO of Story2, Barash has built a large community of storytellers around the globe and is dedicated to improving writing and speaking skills for others.



“I share JESPY’s commitment to support independent work and living for people with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities,” says Barash, “and that’s very important to me.”

JESPY VACCINE CLINIC



In a continued effort to keep clients, families, staff, and those in the local community safe from COVID-19, JESPY recently collaborated with **Partnership for Maternal & Child Health of Northern New Jersey** to hold a **COVID-19 Vaccine Clinic**.

The three-hour clinic (conducted at JESPY) offered free vaccines and boosters (Moderna, Pfizer, and J&J). Programs such as this one are supported by the Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. A total of 65 individuals attended the clinic.

GOOD SPORTS!

JESPY athletes have been very busy these days, competing in a variety of sports. Their medal wins at recent Special Olympics games are the icing on the cake and reflect their hard work.



Participants on the JESPY Thunder Track & Field team took home lots of medals from the Area 9 Special Olympics Games held at Brookdale Park in Essex county.



Photo left: Lots of medal wins at Special Olympics Tennis State Sectionals, held at Passaic County Technical Institute in Wayne. Lots of team spirit and a Bronze Medal win for the JESPY basketball team (shown right) at the Special Olympics Basketball Championship in Wildwood.

AWESOME ANNIVERSARY



Congratulations to JESPY clients Jeffrey and Kirbee S. on their 30th wedding anniversary. The two were wed on April 26, 1992. In the spirit of longevity, Kirbee has participated in JESPY programming for 30 years and Jeffrey has been a client for 35 years. We're wishing them many more years of wedded bliss!

IN BALANCE

Dr. Charles Curtis, a physical therapist and Director of Outpatient Rehabilitation

Services at **Saint Barnabas Medical Center** recently visited several JESPY shared houses to give a Balance and Falls presentation. His interactive discussion included Ways to Make Your Home Safer, Having Your Eyes and Feet Check, Things You Can Do To Prevent Falls, and Exercises to Improve Balance and Strength.



INCLUSIVE HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PLANNING GRANT - 18 MONTHS OF STEADY PROGRESS

JESPY is now completing an 18-month Inclusive Healthy Communities planning grant, along with NJ Association of Community Partners and SRS Strategic Associates, LLC (the Project Team). The grant was funded by the NJ Department of Human Services' Division of Disability Services to support the health and well-being of individuals with disabilities where they live, work, learn and play.

The Project Team formed a comprehensive community coalition (which includes clients) to garner input, share findings and collaborate in order to elicit changes that could impact the health and safety of individuals with disabilities and advance inclusion at the municipal level.

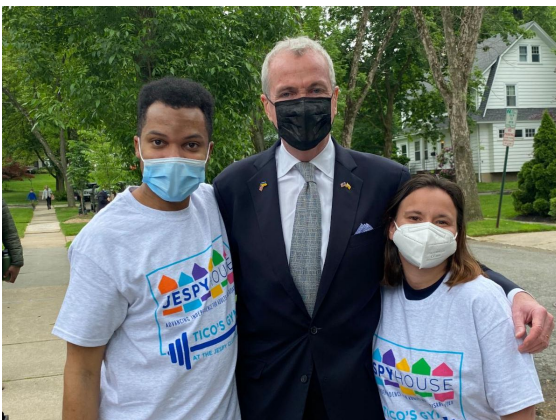


JESPY clients also undertook observational assessments regarding shopping, mobility, and community accessibility for people with disabilities. A report on these findings with recommendations will soon be disseminated.

For more information about the Inclusive Healthy Communities NJACP-JESPY Model, please email troberts@jespy.org.

JESPY clients worked alongside members of the Academy Heights Neighborhood Association in planting a pollinator garden outside of the South Orange Stop & Shop.

OUT & ABOUT



Governor Phil Murphy recently came to South Orange to film a commercial in support of policies that will make New Jersey more affordable to its residents. Clients Elijah E. and Katerina P. got the opportunity to meet the governor and you may just see their faces in the Governor's new commercial!



JESPY clients who participate in the South Orange Lions Club (and who've named themselves the Omega Lions) recently attended The New Jersey Lions Club 101st State Convention at the Tropicana in Atlantic City, NJ. The Omega Lions have also recently participated in a toiletries drive for a local nursing home, a food drive for a food bank at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in South Orange, a pet drive for a local animal shelter, raised donations for Ukraine, and collected reusable eyeglasses that will be refurbished and sent to people in need in other countries.

Sincerely,

Audrey Winkler
Executive Director

Please visit us at www.jespy.org
for more information about JESPY House services.

SUPPORT US

