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A Message from our CEO

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

Dear Community Members,
 As we approach the end of another successful quarter, I wanted to take a moment to reflect on our accomplishments, express my gratitude for the staff's hard work and dedication, as well as share some exciting updates.

I am particularly proud of the ways in which we have come together as a team to support one another and our communities. Whether through volunteer initiatives, or community events, charitable donations, or sustainable efforts, we have shown our commitment to making a positive impact that extends beyond Middlesex County.

This quarter has been marked with significant achievements and events highlighted in the newsletter. From our "Give Kids a Smile Day" at the health center in Edison, to celebrating Dr. Seuss Day at the Perth Amboy Public Library, we are so proud to be able to hold large scale events that benefit the community members. Our agency celebrated Women during Women's History Month in March with various events at our School Based Youth Services Program and by highlighting our staff! Each JRF program highlighted in this newsletter has impacted the community in a positive manner and we are extremely proud of the work that we do and can't wait to share it with you!

Thank you for your hard work, dedication, and passion. Together, we will continue to innovate, inspire, and make a difference in the world.

**Warm regards,
 Ms. Jaime Rivello
 Chief Executive Officer**



Serving the City of Perth Amboy and surrounding communities in Middlesex County. We believe in changing lives by creating hope and self-sufficiency, and we succeed by providing individuals, children and families with essential health and human services, community development and youth programs. Our life-improving services extend across all cultures and faiths, regardless of economic status.

Come check us out to learn more about the following programs:

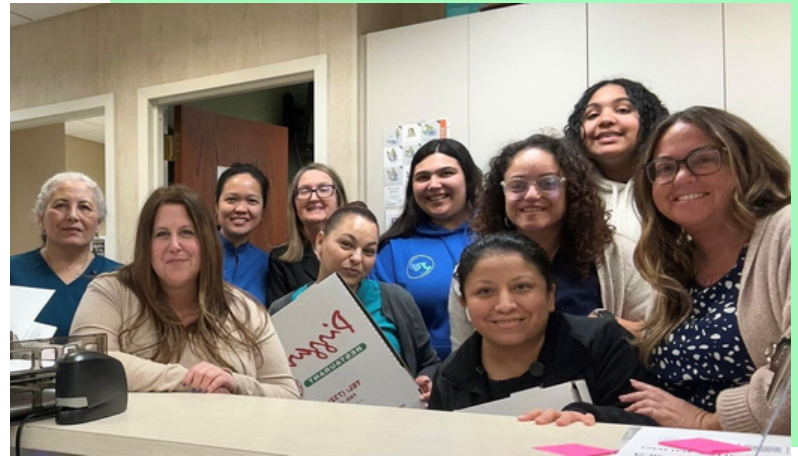
- Family Assistance Center (FAC) including "My Choice Store"
- Perth Amboy Alliance for Community (PAAC)
- Alternative Education Institute (AEI)
- JRF Training & Testing Center
- AmeriCorps



January 1st- March 31st

JRF Community Health Center provided medical, dental, pediatric, and behavioral services to **645** patients totaling **1,015 visits**.

Out of those 645 patients, 167 of them were new to our clinic!



Team
AWESOME

February 2nd,

We held our 3rd annual Give Kids a Smile Day! **19 children** received free oral health education, screenings, and preventative treatment. The children were rewarded Chick Fil A lunches, a little bag filled with books, and even got to take a picture with the tooth fairy!





JRF Community Health Center

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Our Community Outreach Coordinator and nursing staff have partnered with various community organizations, low-income, and senior housing to offer COVID-19 vaccine education, free health screenings, including blood pressure and glucose testing, as well as valuable resources.

In the first quarter of 2024 alone, they reached **135 individuals** through **18 off-site events**.





Bayside Family Success Center Engaging Father's a Pizza at a time!

In honor of Valentines Day the Bayside FSC showed fathers and father figures love! On February 23rd the Bayside FSC hosted a virtual Pizza Making event with them. The idea of this event came about to engage the dads in our community. For some time now, Bayside FSC team members have noticed a lack of participation of fathers/father figures. Most moms shared with the team that dads were usually working and or resting for a later workday.

In recognizing this, the Bayside FSC decided on an activity that placed the ball on their court. The Bayside FSC partnered with a local pizzeria called Pizzarelli to create pizza kits for families. In doing so the FSC team delivered the pizza kits to the father and father figures that registered for this activity. This allowed them the opportunity to make pizza in the comfort of their homes and on their own time.



DID YOU KNOW?



"Children who feel close to their fathers are twice as likely to enter college or find stable employment after high school compared to those who are not close to their fathers. They are also 75% less likely to have a teen birth, 80% less likely to spend time in jail, and half as likely to experience multiple depression symptoms."

<https://www.all4kids.org/news/blog/a-fathers-impact-on-child-development/>

Fathers and father figures play a pivotal role in the development of children. Due to stats like the one listed to the left, it was important that The Bayside FSC add incentives to capture useful information for future Father/Father figure programming. For this reason, prior to hosting this activity, a survey capturing father's programming interests, workshop topics and logistics around hosting programming was created. The QR code to access the survey was listed among the list directions on how to participate in a Daddy and Me Day giveaway of a Dave and Busters \$100.00 gift card.

Overall, this was a very successful event! There was a participation of **25 families**, a total of **72 individuals**. As you can depict in the pictures, many tasty pizzas were made as well as lasting memories. Pictures and survey responses that will help us plan programming tailored to the interest of the father/ father figures in our community were shared by families. So far we learned that Dads/father figures are interested in topics around cooking classes, outdoor activities, sports and even baking with dad!



Celebrating Dr. Seuss' B-Day at the Perth Amboy Children's Public Library

On March 9th, the Bayside FSC partnered with the Perth Amboy Children's Public Library to celebrate Dr. Seuss' B-Day. Dr. Seuss is known for his great literary work in children's fictional books. Titles like "Green Eggs and Ham", "How the Grinch Stole Christmas", "Cat in the Hat" and more, are staples in schools, libraries, and in the lives of many. His ability to illustrate and play with words has allowed his books to survive the test of time and honor of his birthday month, March is now National Reading Month.

This awareness is to encourage readers to read every day and foster a love for books. In doing so, The Bayside FSC sought out a partnership with the Perth Amboy Children's Public Library to provide a workshop for parents/caregivers and children on the importance of promoting the love of reading in children. A Dr. Seuss story was incorporated as well as a fun arts and craft activity that both children and their parents/ caregivers enjoyed. There was great turnout! **Over 15 individuals** participated and the days events and workshop.





Bayside Family Success Center Hosts “Advocating for Babies and Families”

The Bayside Family Success Center hosted a press conference with Congressman Pallone!

On January 9th, 2024, The Bayside FSC hosted a press conference with Congressman Frank Pallone Jr. to highlight the “Improving Newborns Food and Nutrition Safety Act” bill of 2023. The office of Congressman Pallone sought out the FSC intentionally due to all the advocacy and direct services provided to the community of Perth Amboy around access to Baby formula and food.

For some time now, the Bayside FSC has been at the forefront of addressing the issues around access to baby formula. The recent recall and production issues of baby formula within the last few years has exacerbated an already vulnerable population. In response, Families with infants have been visiting the Bayside FSC regularly to pick up formula or be connected to other organizations that supply formula.

This bill will require suppliers to conduct routine testing to ensure safety of baby food.

The Bayside FSC and The JRF was grateful to be part of this initiative as it stands close to our hearts. We are hopeful that this bill gets passed and that the nutrition and food safety of babies is more secure in this country.

Special thanks to DCF – Office of Family Support services as they have been a contributing partner in ensuring that Family Success Centers have the stocks of needed formula for their communities.



Seen above from left to right.

Scott Faber, Senior VP of Governmental Affairs for the Environmental Working Group, Sherri Goldberg, Director of Community & Family Services, Congressman Frank Pallone Jr, Dr. Pavan Bang, Pediatrician, Jaime Rivello, CEO, Jenny Alvarez, Family Support Services Manager, and Hannah Korn-Heilner, Outreach Coordinator at Advocates for Children of New Jersey



- The PAAC Team provided Virtual Training to Step- Up students on how to correctly fill the HESAA Application in Month of January in English and Spanish.
- PAAC collaborated with Step Up to host “FAFSA and HESAA Workshop”, PAAC team and Step Up invited the students of the High School and the AUL School to come and receive help in filling out the FAFSA and HESAA Applications.





FEBRUARY 2024 PAAC Events

- The PAAC Team and FSC partnered to bring “**Planning 4 Tomorrow Scholarship For Teens**” on February 01, 2024. From the HESAA administration, Angela Tavarez came as the representative and presented for students and parents in high school on the available grants and scholarships for everyone. Valuable information was shared to the community from resources for those looking for certifications to undocumented students and their options available to pay for a higher education. In total, **8 teens & 8 adults** participated in this event on February 01, 2024.



- PAAC assisted My Choice Store; by picking up food, organizing the store, and helping participants pick their food items for their families in the month of February.



STEP UP

JOB APPLICATION
RESUME

FECHA: MIÉRCOLES, 21 FEBRERO A LAS 3PM
UBICACIÓN: 533 NEW BRUNSWICK AVE., PERTH AMBOY, NJ 08861

TALLER DE RESUME

APRENDE

- Habilidades básicas para redactar un currículum
- Cómo escribir un currículum específico
- Trucos de formato
- Cómo reestructurar tu currículum
- Lo que buscan los empleadores
- Cómo utilizar la etiqueta básica del currículum

RECÍSTRASE!

- PAAC collaborated with Step-Up to host “**Resume Writing**” on February 21, 2024. PAAC team and Step-Up hosted a resume writing workshop for AUL students. Students practiced creating their own resume and going over different templates. Details needed to highlight their strengths for future jobs, internships and college applications were reviewed. A total of **11 Students** came to the event and were able to have their first resume draft. This workshop would follow up with part 2; The Interview.



- PAAC Team hosted a **PAAC Pop-Up** at Antillana Superfoods Market on February 21, 2024. A total of **14 Residents** from the PAAC Neighborhood filled out The PAAC Neighborhood Survey to share their thoughts and needs for the neighborhood plus other residents taking the chance to learn more about PAAC. In addition, the residents who participated received a chance to spin the wheel for the opportunity to win \$10 dollars off Antillana and PAAC reusable bags. Participants were happy to meet the team and to share their opinion.



Events at PAAC

CHECK IT OUT!



March 28th marked a pivotal moment as PAAC hosted the eagerly awaited PNA Meeting for **Quarter 1** of the PAAC Year 2024, coinciding with our Garden Prep Season meeting. This in-person gathering was attended by **17 neighbors, students, and parents**, fostering collaborative discussions and strategic planning for the year ahead.



The diverse range of activities and engagements undertaken by PAAC in March underscores our unwavering commitment to the holistic development and empowerment of our community.

Upcoming Activities:

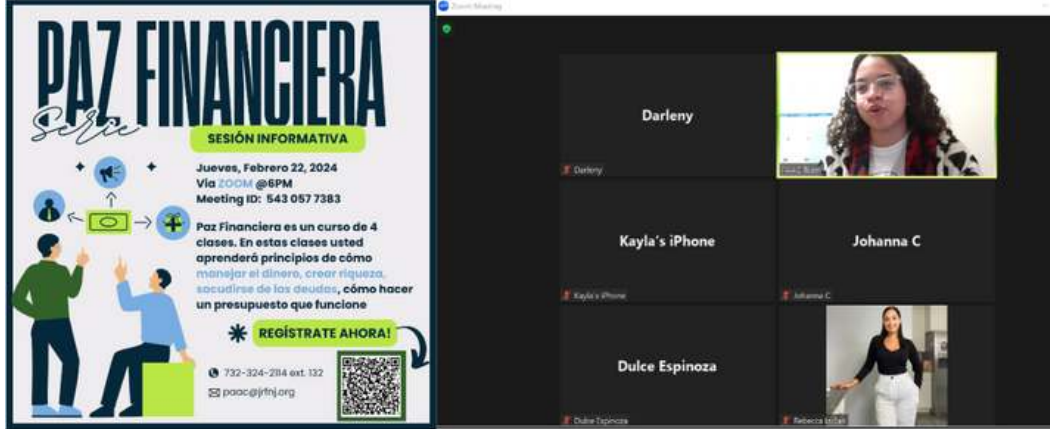
- PAAC Team Meetings @533 NB Office – 4/4, 4/10, 4/18
- PAAC + FSC Event: Slime Night & Rock Painting – 4/9, 4/16
- PAAC + Step Up @AUL- 4/23
- PAAC Event: Financial Peace Classes @533 NB Office- 4/3, 4/10
- PAAC Event: Earth Day & Opening of The Garden @PAAC Garden- 4/19
- PAAC Garden: Garden Orientation @PAAC Garden- 4/26





Zoom by the community

Financial Peace Info Session:



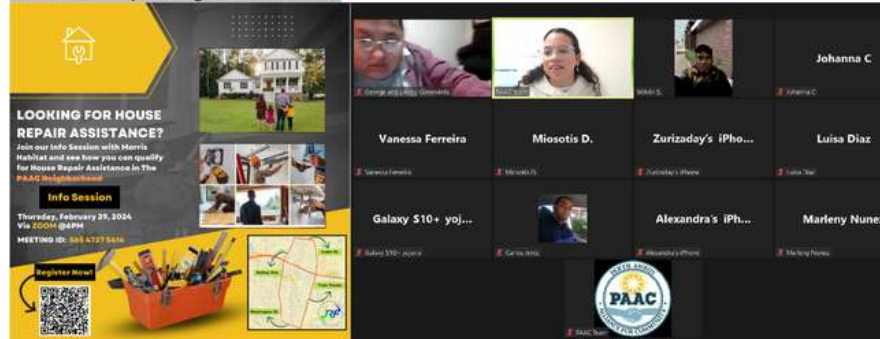
• PAAC hosted the **Spanish Financial Peace Info Session** on February 22, 2024. A total of **5 participants** joined in the info session via zoom to learn more about the class and the benefits of being in control of our money, the way we spent money, and how we can effectively get out of debt. At the moment, the class now has **10 registered participants** ready to start in March.

• PAAC hosted **Committee and Volunteer Meeting** on February 28, 2024. **14 members** of the PAAC community came together to discuss the upcoming event for the opening of the PAAC Garden, volunteer activities, scholarships, and needed events for the 2024 PAAC year. From students, homeowners, garden's families and professionals of the PAAC neighborhood shared their thoughts on events for the 2024.



• PAAC Team in Partnership with Morris Habitat & FSC hosted a **“PAAC Home Repair Info Session”** on February 29, 2024. Thanks to this partnership, the homeowners and residents of the PAAC Neighborhood near PAAC joined the Zoom to learn about the free opportunity to repair their home, all expenses covered by PAAC. Homeowners from PAAC were happy to hear that they had access to this aid to help them improve their home health.

PAAC Home Repair Program Info Session:





GAME NIGHT

January 17th, 2024



The Base hosted a game night for students to have a good time and release stress.

21 students joined the event in which they played a variety of games such as dominos, monopoly, cards, etc. This event allowed students to form bonds with their peers and also with staff.



AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY



The Base partnered with the City of Perth Amboy and took **29 students** (**16** from the Base, and **14** from the Teen Center) to the American Museum of Natural History. Students had the opportunity to expand their knowledge on American History. Students were amazed with all the different collections of dinosaurs and fossil vertebrates.





EMPOWERED WOMEN EMPOWER WOMEN

March 8th, 2024

To honor Women’s International Day, the School Based staff gave female staff a succulent with a message saying, “empowered women empower women.” This was a way to show them that they are appreciated for their hard work and dedication.



SBYSP ADVISORY BOARD

January 30th

On January 30th, The Base hosted its first advisory board meeting over Zoom. Students applied and five were selected to be part of this group. Also, two parents were present at this meeting. This board will allow students and parents to share their voice about the different services and opportunities we can implement. Students and parents received an overview of the program and its services.

WOMEN APPRECIATION COMMUNITY SERVICE

Wednesdays 13th, 20th, and 27th

The Base hosted a community service opportunity every Wednesday during lunch periods for students to create silk flowers for a female figure that has made a positive impact in their lives.





Student Training & Enrichment Program for Urban Progress

Grateful Cards

January 4th, 2024



Students wrote letters to thank the police officers who serve us, showing their appreciation.

Bookmarks

Activity

January 23rd, 2024

We hosted an event for all the students who love to read, making butterfly bookmarks.

Social Dilema

(Documentary)

January 25th, 2024

To raise awareness about social media among students, they watched a documentary featuring CEOs of Facebook, Google, Twitter, etc., discussing the impact and dangers of using social networks and applications.

College Workshop

with PAAC

January 31st, 2024

Assisting seniors in completing their FAFSA, HESAA, and college applications.

“Queens” - International Women’s Day

March 8th, 2024

To commemorate **International Women’s Day**, our students watched the documentary "Queens." They learned about the female presence in nature through various animals and how they maintain balance and ensure environmental safety for their families, showcasing strength and unity across different species.

World Teen Mental Health: Bookmarks

March 5th, 2024

Students were able to learn during lunch about activities that can help maintain our mental health daily. They received a bookmark with all the tips as a reminder of what they learned and for quick reference in case they need a moment to de-stress.



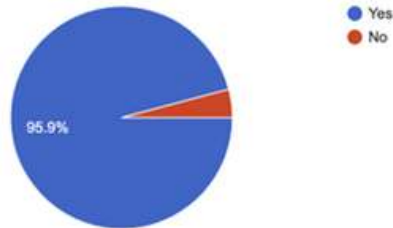


In January,

Emerging Leaders collectively created a story based on their screensavers, building on each other's sentences. This served as their team building activity. They also brainstormed ideas for a summer initiative using a logic model and photovoice, as well as discussed social determinants of health for planning and goal setting. The January meeting focused on goal setting, data collection introduction, and brainstorming survey questions about youth vaping for the summer initiative.

Do you think vape culture in our community and schools is an issue?

73 responses



In March,

Emerging Leaders hosted Kenny Ortiz, the Superintendent of Recreation, for insights on our summer initiative. Kenny stressed networking and city partnerships, especially for our field day with Perth Amboy. He also discussed adolescent mental health and substance use impacts. The group reviewed health rankings in Middlesex County versus other NJ counties. This deepened understanding of local disparities and sparked talks on areas for improvement.





Youth Entrepreneurship Program (YEP)



In January,

Students learned about business marketing, identifying ways to communicate value and advantages to customers. They explored 'Channels' and 'Key Metrics' for effective messaging.

They also studied target markets, focusing on marketing strategies and analyzing real-world examples from magazines and social media.

In March,

Youth entrepreneurs were busy refining their presentations and rehearsing with peers. They also met with NFTE coaches to perfect their slides and delivery for the April 11th pitch competition, diligently preparing to showcase their entrepreneurial endeavors.





AmeriCorps Service Week

Below are the AmeriCorps week activities. Each day there were **5-6 members** involved, with Friday having **9 members** who participated.

Monday - March 11, 2024

- Replenish, 28 Kennedy Boulevard, Suite 850 East Brunswick.

Tuesday - March 12, 2024

- Habitat for Humanity, 361 Inslee Street and 362 Garretson Avenue, Perth Amboy

Wednesday - March 13, 2024

- Delaware & Raritan State Park (Canal Greenway), 227 North Hermitage Ave, Trenton NJ.

Thursday - March 14, 2024

- Branch Brooke Park Alliance, 15 Clifton Ave Newark NJ

Friday - March 15, 2024

- Dave and Buster's Team Building Event



From January 2024 to April 11, 2024, we had **122 participants** who came to our JRF Testing GED Facility to take their GED Exams.

In addition, we are excited to welcome **45 new participants** who are eager to earn their GED Diploma by going through our Alternative Education Institute Program. Our GED Spanish Course will begin on May 25, 2024, and the English GED course will begin this upcoming April 16, 2024. Our GED program is **FREE** with a 6-month educational process. During the 6-months, participants will study Math, Science, History, Reading and Writing. At the end of the cohort, participants register to take in each subject. **Upon passing all four tests, students earn their GED Diploma, which is equivalent to a high school diploma.**

We are thrilled to announce that those who are currently enrolled in our AEI GED program will soon start their GED exams. Furthermore, the graduation ceremony is scheduled to commence in June 2024.



Eligibility Requirements:

- Minimum age of 16 with parental consent
- Not enrolled in any other educational program/school
- Resident of Middlesex County, New Jersey
- Provide valid NJ state identification, income, and address verification
- Commit to our 6-month educational program
- **English:** Weekly Tuesday evening meetings (virtually) from 5-6pm
- **Spanish:** Weekly Saturday morning meetings, in person or virtually from 9:00am-12:00pm (Must speak, read, and write in Spanish)



Jewish Renaissance Foundation AMERICORPS Program



Are you worried about paying your own and/or your child's/grandchild's student loans? Do you want to Make a Difference for your community? Are you motivated to Get Things Done in your community?

Become a JRF AmeriCorps Member

Benefits of being a JRF AmeriCorps Member?

- Modest Living Allowance
- Educational Award *(can be used toward current or future school tuition, and/or student loans)*
- Loan Forbearance during time of service *(for qualifying student loans)*
- Leadership Experience & Community Service
- Competitive Resume
- Exceptional Opportunities

What is the JRF AmeriCorps Program?

- ⇒ It is a community-based, service learning program hosted by the Jewish Renaissance Foundation
- ⇒ Through this program, AmeriCorps Members are placed in host agencies throughout Middlesex County, improving the quality of health education and community assistance programs.
- ⇒ Requires a commitment of one term. Commitment opportunities range from 3 months to one year.

What are some of things I would be doing as a JRF AmeriCorps Member?

- ⇒ Educating your community about nutrition, health services and maintaining overall well-being.
- ⇒ Facilitating youth and family programs that build self-confidence and character
- ⇒ Increasing access to information and skills training to disadvantaged populations
- ⇒ Gaining on-the-job skills training critical to your professional development

What do I need to know to join the JRF AmeriCorps Program?

- ⇒ Must be a U.S. Citizen, national or legal permanent resident.
- ⇒ Weekly commitment of service hours required. Flexible opportunities available.
- ⇒ Must be at least 17 years old with parental consent, or 18 and older and have received a High School Diploma, GED, or will receive one within six months of joining AmeriCorps.

Apply Now!!!!

For more information about the program, contact:

Tawayna Bailey
tawayna.bailey@jrfnj.org



Recruiting Now
Info Sessions in Progress.



WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION? VISIT US AT:



@jrfwantsyoutoknow



Jewish Renaissance Foundation

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