

Community Heroes

The Francis Sharp Lifetime Achievement Award Goes to Bruce Hankins
The Gary F. Simmerman Community Leadership Award Goes to Dr. Robin Weinstein



Heroes with
Hometown
Heart

In this challenging year for our communities, the Bridgeton Area Chamber of Commerce, which has recognized businesses and community leaders for 34 years with its Salute to Business and Industry Awards, will honor and thank "Community Heroes" when it holds its awards celebration on December 1, 2020. The Chamber and the community will honor individuals, organizations and businesses who have selflessly worked to sustain and strengthen people and other organizations by demonstrating their "Hometown Heart."

The Chamber's Chairperson Carol Musso and the Salute to Business Chairperson Laurie LaTorre are proud to announce the hero awards, the Francis Sharp Lifetime Achievement Award and the Gary F. Simmerman Community Leadership Award for 2020. "The award recipient's service, character, courage and achievements will be honored, not just to thank them, but to inspire others to support their efforts and to become

community heroes themselves," said Carol Musso.

More information about the awards celebration on Dec. 1, 2020 will be announced as plans are finalized. Information about the awards, sponsorship opportunities and ways to attend and participate will be announced, too. For updated information, see www.baccnj.com/hero or call 856-455-1312.

The Francis Sharp Lifetime Achievement Award Will be Presented to Bruce Hankins

He is completing 33 years on Hopewell Township Committee, 13 of which serving as Mayor. He is an owner of the long-time family-owned business in Bridgeton, H.H. Hankins & Bro. He and his brother Brent, a previous Francis Sharp Award winner, have led the business, NJ's oldest lumberyard, since 1972. He led many community projects such as the Hopewell Business Park and the Hopewell Park. He has a long record of service to Bridgeton Troop 1 of the Boy Scouts of America, includes serving as treasurer and service to many other community and business groups.

His lifetime of business and community leadership and his commitment to his family, have been guided by high ethical standards, strong faith and a sincere concern for his community.

Community Heroes continued on page 2



Hopewell Mayor Bruce Hankins



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Celebrating Heroes

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Gary F. Simmerman Community Leadership Award Goes to Dr. Robin Weinstein

Dr. Robin Weinstein is the founder and President of the M25 Initiative, a nonprofit that works to empower and mobilize individuals and organizations in Cumberland County to employ innovative and cooperative solutions to feed the hungry, end poverty, reduce crime, revitalize a spirit of community and transform lives.

He is co-founder of the Cumberland County Housing First Collaborative, founding Pastor of Bethany Grace Community Church in Bridgeton and is Associate Professor in the College of Business at Wilmington University.

During the current COVID-19 pandemic, his leadership has helped other local organizations with grants, bringing relief to many people in Bridgeton and Cumberland County.

This award's namesake, Gary Simmerman passed away earlier this year. Robin exemplifies the strong community leadership that Gary was known for throughout his life.



Dr. Robin Weinstein

A community hero is anyone who works hard and comes up with innovative and successful ways to improve the quality of life of a person, a group or of the community as a whole. Some community heroes work with or for an organization or initiative. Others start their own ways to help others. They are the definition of being a good citizen, a good person, and having "Hometown Heart."



Angelia Edwards & Martha Price

Angelia Edwards is the Founder/CEO of Manna from Heaven that provides food for the needy in Cumberland and surrounding counties. Angelia and Ms. Martha Price, 80 years old in August, provided home-cooked meals every Sunday to local seniors in the Bridgeton area who could not get out during Covid-19 to shop for food.

The first week she started to cook she delivered to a senior and it was the first home-cooked meal they had in weeks. Everything else they ate was canned goods. She started out with serving 8 families in the beginning and was up to 50 dinners in June.



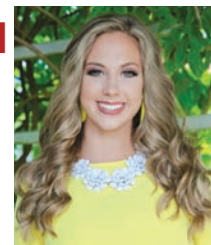
Angelia Edwards & Martha Price

Rylee Howerton and Madison Stiles Queens 4 a Cause

Rylee Howerton is a 14 year-old Vineland resident. She has always had a heart for the homeless and spends her Sunday mornings for a year making, packaging, and distributing pancakes, along with drinks, to the homeless throughout Cumberland County.

Once Covid-19 came along, Rylee Howerton decided to switch to making bag lunches and distribute them around Cumberland county to anyone in need. Rylee has purchased over 300 pairs of gloves and was able to get Home Depot to donate over 300 sets of hand warmers and she distributed them to the homeless residents through the Spirit and Truth ministries. She currently is also donating personal hygiene items to "if not for grace" portable shower program to provide items for those in need.

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Rylee Howerton

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*No other discounts or insurances apply.

Rylee Howerton, Madison Stiles, Queens 4 a Cause

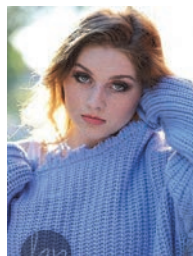
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Madison Stiles, a 16 year old sophomore and cosmetology student, was given an opportunity to collaborate with her best friend, Rylee Howerton to create an idea that became a non-profit called, Queens 4 a Cause. Madison reached out to other pageant winners and recruited many to work together with volunteers in local communities and matching those volunteers with area non-profits in need of help. Queens 4 a Cause has made and continues to make a real difference where it is needed most!

She created "Walls Have Ears - Understanding Mental Illness," after being crowned as Royal International Miss East Coast Junior Teen 2019/2020, to raise awareness about mental illness. Madison was able to pay it forward and help the same organizations her family turned to in their time of need.

Madison has been recognized for outstanding volunteer service. She received several Presidential Awards and recognition from the National Alliance of Mental Illness.

Community Heroes continued on page 4



Madison Stiles

Major Chamber of Commerce Events Coming in October

• **Cumberland County Expo on Oct. 7** • **Golf Tournament on Oct. 15**

Event is FREE to the Public!

**Cumberland County
Career Fair & Business**

EXPO

For Businesses & Consumers.

WED., Oct. 7, 2020, 3-6 PM

OUTDOORS, IN-PERSON & ONLINE

8000 Dividing Creek Rd.

Millville

RAIN DATE: OCT. 8

Getting Business Back on Track!

On October 7, 3-6 PM, the Bridgeton Area and the Greater Millville Chambers of Commerce are hosting the Cumberland County Business Expo and Job Fair for businesses and consumers, in a special, outdoors event on the grounds of the New Jersey Motorsports Park in Millville. Already, 60 businesses and organizations have registered to participate and more are expected. Spaces are \$200 for members of any Chamber. The public is welcomed to attend with free admission. The expo also includes a job fair. Businesses looking for employees will have signs at their exhibits. Cumberland's largest business expo will be held outdoors, with health & safety precautions. It includes the chance to participate in-person and online, a career & job fair, resource corner for entrepreneurs, special expo-only specials and discounts, free drawing for great prizes, and more. Get more information, register and pay online at www.CumberlandExpo.com.



Expo Census Day funding provided in part by New Jersey Complete Count Commission & Cumberland County Board of Freeholders.

NEW DATE & NOW STARTS AT 9 AM! ENJOY GOLF, FOOD & FUN!



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Tee Signs: \$150.00

* reserved for 2020

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This is the Chamber's major fundraiser.

Everyone deserves a day of fun with fellow business people from the area, maybe this year more than ever.

On Thursday, October 15, the Bridgeton Area Chamber of Commerce presents its 26th annual golf tournament with a 9 AM shot gun start at Running Deer Golf Club in Pittsgrove. Our thanks to Century Savings Bank for being the main sponsor.

We will follow the health and safety guidelines of NJ and still enjoy the fun and competition that the tournament provides, which has made it one of the region's best golf outings. It includes 18 holes of golf, greens fees, golf cart, gift bag, breakfast, lunch, beverages, skills contests, cash prizes & more! Sign-in and breakfast begin at 8 AM. Many golf and sponsor packages are available. Non-package golfers, \$150 each.

For information and to register and pay for golf and sponsorships, visit www.baccnj.com/golf.



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Community Heroes

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CompleteCare Health Network

CompleteCare Health Network has provided extraordinary community service throughout the Coronavirus emergency with CEO Curtis Edwards' leadership and with the dedication of his staff. Their hard work and professionalism have been integral in Cumberland County's and other area's efforts to mitigate the spread of the virus in the area.

CompleteCare acted quickly to ensure patients had access to vital healthcare services throughout the outbreak. Using innovative methods, they were able to keep patients connected to prescription refills, sick visits, COVID screenings, and other health services.

CompleteCare provided COVID-19 testing to patients in multiple areas. The remarkable COVID testing team, made up of doctors, dentists, nurse practitioners, nurses, and staff from across the organization, tested nearly 6,000 people at drive-thru and in-person testing sites in Cape May Court House, Bridgeton, Millville, Vineland and at farms and camps throughout South Jersey.

Together, they have created a safe and efficient process for offering testing to anyone in the community who needs it and will continue to do so for as long as there is a need.



CompleteCare provided safe, efficient and reliable Coronavirus testing at sites in multiple communities.

team members have been a source of inspiration and professional health care. The many people and organizations who volunteered and made donations demonstrated that this critically important service to the community can only be achieved by working together with communities; by bringing vital services to the towns and neighborhoods they serve; and partnering with like-minded organizations to foster good health for everyone. These community heroes from Inspira Health will join the celebration to accept the award and the community's thanks.

Cumberland County Government and Health Services

Under the leadership of the Director of the Board of County Commissioner's Joe Derella, County Administrator Kim Wood and Deputy County Administrator Jody Hirata, the County's response to the Coronavirus emergency has been excellent, a true partnership of leaders and experts across the County. They brought leaders of all municipalities together for communications and coordination, provided valuable information for the public, businesses, and government leaders. These heroes include Cumberland County administrative officials and employees, Cumberland Health officials and staff, Cumberland County EMS and others.



Left-right: Don Fauerbach, Executive Director of County Health, Kim Wood, County Administrator, Commission Director Joseph Derella, Commissioner Carol Musso, Megan Sheppard, County Health Officer, Jody Hirata, Deputy County Administrator

Inspira Health

Inspira Health played a key role in serving those affected by Coronavirus, providing caring and high-quality health care services, while keeping their employees and the public as safe as possible throughout the crisis. They served as the "family and friends" of those hospitalized, when loved

ones could not be with them due to quarantine. During the Covid-19 health crisis, Inspira's leadership team and all of its brave and caring



The Heroes Foundation and Pepi Dragotta

Pepi Dragotta survived sudden cardiac arrest while playing soccer with his son. After he made his recovery, he decided to start Heroes Foundation NJ. To date, he has provided youth teams with 100 units to save lives across our community.

The Foundation has provided scholarship money to high school students who are looking to continue their education going into the medical field.

Heroes continued on page 9



Heroes Foundation NJ Founder Pepi Dragotta with his son Hunter, with AED units that are donated to organizations throughout the area.

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309 Buck Street, Millville, NJ 08332
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CUMBERLAND COUNTY IMPROVEMENT AUTHORITY

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(Continued on page 6)

Susan Jones
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Chamber Members

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856-455-1008 www.dominiontitlebridgeton.com
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856-498-7122 www.drivenmediasolutions.com
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(Continued on page 7)

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Support Chamber Members continued from page 6

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(Continued on page 8)

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NCUA

Community Heroes *continued from page 4*

The Heroes Foundation, under the leadership of Pepi Dragotta, purchases and distributes AED's to sports organizations and non-profits throughout South Jersey. The Chamber is proud to recognize Pepi and Heroes Foundation for being a true community hero.

The Salvation Army Bridgeton Corps and Lt. Melissa Lowell

For Lt. Melissa Lowell, the Savation Armu Bridgeton Corps, was her first appointment in New Jersey. Her responsibilities in Bridgeton include overseeing the breakfast program, food pantry, infant supplies pantry, personal care pantry, utility/rental assistance, and regular church programming. COVID has created an astounding increase in the need for services in the region; The Salvation Army Bridgeton Corps continues to do its best to meet those needs.



Salvation Army Bridgeton Corps Lt. Melissa Lowell

In June alone they served over one thousand breakfasts providing food to over 200 local households. They also provided masks, clothes, diapers and other needed items to households who had no other place to turn. Melissa, and a very small group of volunteers, quickly adapted to the pandemic to provide services in a safe manner to a growing number of struggling families. Stop by the Corps building to learn more about their work in Bridgeton and how you can become part of this meaningful service.

Golden Pigeon Restaurant

The owner of Golden Pigeon Restaurnt, Mr. Ozkan Akilli, and his employees provided extraordinary service delivering take-outs to Upper Deerfield Estates tenants ever since the virus started and is still providing this much appreciated service to the people who live in the nearby complex. The Golden Pigeon, like other restaurants, suffered loss of business during the pandemic, but continued to provide take-outs and stayed open 24 hours, a day, providing extraordinary service to the people of the Bridgeton area.



Ozkan Akilli (right), owner of the Golden Pigeon Restaurant with his son Gasim.

Innovation Foods

Despite the troubling times, it had been business as usual at Innovation Foods. Nick Catalana and his cousin Andrew Catalana, with a passion to help others, developed a plan to produce, package and distribute hand sanitizer that was be donated to various hospitals and organizations in the area. They thank GoodBelly for donating the bottles and packaging.

They quickly repurposed manufacturing lines to bottle hand sanitizer for the pandemic, while Innovation Foods continued producing cases of juice and plant-based products. The family-owned company produced an alcohol-based hand sanitizer made at its Bridgeton facility. The 12.7-ounce bottles are labeled "Formula71," evoking the factory address of 71 Bridgeton Avenue and family roots to the city.

Community heroes are Individuals like these and their company, taking action and doing their part to help others.



Chris Hannah & Cole, the Deaf Dog, The Team Cole Project



Passed up by countless families at the South Jersey Regional Animal Shelter because he was "broken", Cole quickly began his journey to show that a disability is not an inability. Cole works every school day, alongside his music teacher father, Chris Hannah, at Dr. William Mennies Elementary School in Vineland, developing school togetherness, confidence, and perseverance.

In April of 2019, Cole was named the Official Mascot of the NJ Veterans Memorial Home for his work with aging veterans. In the first year as a therapy dog, The Team Cole Project volunteered over 300 hours, receiving the Presidential Silver Service Award. Recently, Chris and Cole began another step in Cole's journey, this time as a hospice therapy dog with Angelic Health Services. As hospice volunteers they provide pet therapy to those on their final journey, giving the patients great joy and comfort.

Best friends, Chris and Cole, are true community heroes.

Community Heroes continued on page 11

Ultra Clean Technologies Corp. is a proud supporter of the Bridgeton Area Chamber of Commerce

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From the Chamber Chairperson



Carol Musso,
Chamber
Chairperson

Helping Business

The focus of our Chamber for several months has been to provide our members and the business community with information about resources to help struggling businesses and information on a safe and successful re-opening and recovery of our economy. We continue to ask everyone to follow health and

safety guidelines so we can avoid another major shutdown of businesses and keep people healthy.

Recognizing Community Heroes

On December 1, the Chamber will honor community heroes. I congratulate the honorees and thank them for their extraordinary service to the community. It is so uplifting to know that there are so many people like them who care about others and take actions to help.

Dennis Palmer Urges Business to Make Their Ideas Heard by Lawmakers

Written by Suzette Maldonado, Chamber Member Services Coordinator

On August 18, 2020, the Bridgeton Area Chamber of Commerce held a luncheon meeting outdoors at The Bridgeton Family Diner. Some guests attended in person, using safety and health precautions and others joined the meeting virtually online via Zoom. Dennis Palmer, Executive Director of Landis Sewage Authority, was the speaker.

SERVPRO of Cape May & Cumberland Counties was the meeting sponsor, providing our guests with sanitizing supplies and one lucky winner with a door prize. Colleen Ayala said, "SERVPRO of Cape May & Cumberland Counties believes in creating a safe, clean & comfortable living and working environment for residents and businesses."



Colleen Ayala
of SERVPRO



Dennis Palmer talks about advocacy for businesses as Chamber Chairperson Carol Musso listens.

Dennis Palmer explained the importance of the business community making the voice of businesses heard in Trenton and Washington. The presentation explained the process in which bills become laws and he emphasized that legislators want to hear from you. He said you may contact legislators via phone, mail, email, fax, or through the NJ Legislature Website.

"If you do not express your ideas and do not contact legislators about what bills are good or bad, there will be no progress. Your real-world knowledge, experience and input helps make better bills and laws," said Palmer.

Investing in the Future of Cumberland County



\$1.2 Million
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\$2.4 Million
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www.ccia-net.com
856-825-3700

Cumberland
County
IMPROVEMENT
AUTHORITY



DEADLINE TO BE COUNTED IS SEPT. 30
COMPLETE THE CENSUS ONLINE
TODAY AT 2020CENSUS.GOV

Community Heroes continued from page 9

Marco Cruz

Marco is from Cumberland County and his mother owns Milly's in Vineland. He's been active in Bridgeton before helping with soccer and PAL. With the COVID pandemic, Marco voluntarily started working to ensure farm workers and other immigrant families had access to food, providing information and deliveries to ensure their needs were met. He organized a drive-by cara-

van to encourage the workers for being essential to feeding the community. In July, Marco organized a unity rally to educate area residents and also to raise awareness as to how immigrants contribute to our communities. He's been a key volunteer and activist in making a difference for the immigrant community and has been a driving and leading force in helping more than 100 families meet their basic needs.



Marco Cruz

Betty Shrouder

Betty has selflessly assisted hundreds of seniors. While teaching school remotely, which was challenging enough, during the evening and weekends, she made cloth masks to help stop the spread of Covid-19. She also made hero gifts for the nurses and that work in the retirement community. She made ear savers and now she is giving away produce that she has grown in her garden. She has spent her own money for many of the supplies. She has not accepted money for making these items. She felt she needed to help and do her part.



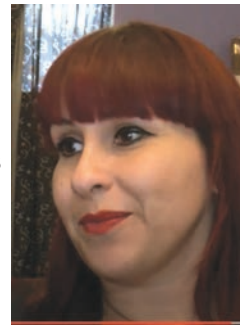
Betty Shrouder

Betty made a video helping others understand how to make a cloth mask. Betty is a true community hero.

Millie Irizarry Sanchez

Millie Irizarry Sanchez is a natural born humanitarian who previously worked for the Vineland and Cumberland County Health Departments. She currently works for the Community Food Bank of NJ as an essential worker and supervisor of the mobile food distributions and has worked throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

She advocates for our community by hosting several food drives when others were afraid to do so. She is responsible for hosting the farmworkers food drive. Millie was recognized as one of the Cumberland Hometown Heroes in 2019 but since then she has gone into overdrive and has been a true blessing and hero to our community.



Congratulations to all the 2020 award recipients: Dr. Robin Weinstein (Gary Simmerman Award), Bruce Hankins (Francis Sharp Award), and community heroes Angelia Edwards, Martha Price, Manna From Heaven, Rylee Howerton, Madison Stiles and Queens 4 Cause, Chris Hannah & Cole, the Deaf Dog, Marco Cruz, Betty Shrouder, Millie Irizarry Sanchez, CompleteCare Health Network, Inspira Health, Cumberland County Government and Health Department, The Heroes Foundation and Pepi Dragotta, The Salvation Army Bridgeton Corps and Lt. Melissa Lowell, Golden Pigeon Restaurant and Innovation Foods. **For more information: www.baccnj.com/hero.**

MEMBERS FOCUS

WELCOME OUR NEWEST MEMBER

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Stanley L. Bagan, MD, Fiore J. Copare, MD,
Jeanette Jimenez-Silva, MD,
Ekram L. Hanna, MD, F.A.C.P., John E. Hatzantonis, MD,
Bertha Kimble, ANP-BC, and Halyna Yurchak, FNP-BC
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CCIA's Leading Role in Economic Growth & Other Services for the County

On July 21, the Chamber of Commerce held a meeting online and in-person at Green Olive Restaurant outdoor dining area. Upper Deerfield Preschool sponsored the meeting. Gerard Velazquez, III, President & CEO of Cumberland County Improvement Authority (CCIA) was the main speaker, talking about the way the agency benefits the County. He pointed to these areas that have helped improve the county:



Jerry Velazquez, III,
President of CCIA

- Landfill operations • Shared services
- Economic development including business recruitment & expansion, assistance and opportunity zones

"We are proud to do our part to make Cumberland County better, including thinking outside of the box, planning for the future and encouraging working together as partners across the county," commented Velazquez.

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Queens 4 A Cause

is a non-profit organization started by Rylee Howerton & Madison Stiles to connect Pageant Titleholders (past, present, & future) with local community service events and volunteer opportunities! For more info, please email: queens4acause2019@gmail.com



@QUEENS4ACAUSE

Shelby Watts
Miss Collegiate 2020
Madison Stiles
Miss East Coast Jr. Teen
Rylee Howerton
Miss Cumberland County Jr. Teen



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Calendar of Events

www.baccnj.com/chamber-events-home

THURS., SEPT. 17, 2020, 1:30 PM
Chamber Meeting - Special time
 Bridgeton Family Diner or Online
 Joint meeting with Rotary Club
 \$17.00 in person. Free online
 Registration in advance.
 856-455-1312
 Cumberland Sheriff Dept/ Canine
 Unit presenta-
 tion.

Sponsor:
 Cumberland
 County
 Board of
 Commissioners



WED., OCT. 7, 2020, 3-6 PM
**Cumberland County Expo for
 Businesses & Consumers**



Outdoors at NJ Motorsports Park
 Exhibitors: \$200
 Public admitted for free.
www.CumberlandExpo.com
 Presented by Bridgeton Area Cham-
 ber and Greater Millville Chamber

THURS., OCT. 15, 2020, 9AM
Chamber Golf Tournament
 Running Deer Golf Club
 Main sponsor: Century
 Savings Bank
 Sponsors and players wel-
 come. Register in advance.
 856-455-1312 www.baccnj.com/golf



TUES., DEC. 1, 2020, 5:30 PM
**Chamber of Commerce 34th Annual
 Salute to Business and Industry
 Honoring Community Heroes**
 Location and details to follow. Pre-
 senting sponsors: Inspira Health &
 Century Savings Bank. Other spon-
 sors welcome. Registration in ad-
 vance. 856-455-1312
www.baccnj.com/hero

THURS., DEC. 17, 2020, 12:10 PM
Chamber & Rotary Holiday Meeting
 Bridgeton High School Media Center
 \$17.00 in person. Registration in
 advance. 856-455-1312
 Bridgeton High School student
 singers
 and
 musicians
 perform.



76 Magnolia Ave.,
 P.O. Box 1063
 Bridgeton, NJ 08302
856-455-1312
www.CumberlandGrows.com
bacc@baccnj.com

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 Tony Stanzione

Member Services Coordinator:
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 Barry Seay, 1st Vice Chairman
 Bruce Riley, 2nd Vice Chairman
 Barbara Sanza, Treasurer
 Laurie LaTorre, Secretary
Newsletter Design:

Darlene A. Davis • 856-935-4942

BACKPACKS FOR STUDENTS

Our Chamber participated in the back-to-school backpack collection led by Bridge the Gap Compassionate Ministries. Hundred of backpacks filled with school supplies, whether for in school or at home use, were provided to Bridgeton area students in need. Chamber Chairperson Carol Musso and others donated backpacks at the Chamber office.

