

Grantee News

Policy Victories:

- Administrative Law Judge Susan M. Scarola found that overcrowding in Freehold Borough schools has had an adverse effect on students' ability to access their education and that school facility improvements are necessary to provide children in the Borough with the "thorough and efficient education to which they are constitutionally entitled." Judge Scarola recommended that Commissioner David Hespe permit the Borough to issue bonds for almost \$33 million to improve school facilities. Latino Action Network and Education Law Center worked to support the school district's petition for funds after voters in Freehold Borough rejected the bond measure twice. Read the [decision](#) and [news coverage](#). Hespe has not yet issued a decision.
- Due to efforts by Wind of the Spirit, the NJ Alliance for Immigrant Justice, and community partners, Dover became the third municipality in the state to approve a municipal ID program. Dover will begin issuing municipal IDs in April 2016. Read more [here](#).
- The New Jersey Department of Community Affairs has committed to a new housing mobility program that will allow those living in areas of concentrated poverty to move to areas of high opportunity, starting with 100 vouchers this year. The program was developed as a result of efforts by Fair Share Housing Center, the Latino Action Network, and the NAACP NJ State Conference to make sure the Hurricane Sandy recovery plan was equitable. In a resolution negotiated with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the three organizations, the State committed to updating its Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice in its 2016 Consolidated Plan and created the program to help "voucher holders to locate affordable housing in communities that better reflect the racial and economic diversity of the State."
- The State Legislature approved a concurrent resolution to prevent against the weakening of NJ's Flood Hazard Area Control Act regulations by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) by arguing that the proposed rules violate the intent of the Clean Water Act and other environmental protections. The proposed rules would weaken stream buffer regulations, resulting in increased flooding in developed areas and a decline in water quality. NJDEP now has 30 days to revise or withdraw its proposal. If it fails to do so, the Legislature can vote again to invalidate the proposed rules. Read more [here](#).
- Assembly Speaker Prieto launched a new initiative to address increasing levels of poverty in New Jersey, with hearings planned in the Assembly Human Services Committee, Housing and Community Development Committee, Transportation and Independent Authorities Committee, and Women and Children Committee. Prieto intends to make this anti-poverty initiative a key priority during the current legislative session. Read more [here](#).
- NY/NJ Baykeeper won its challenge of the NJDEP's 2012 public access rules which limited public access to the shore, particularly in Northern NJ urban areas, and made it easier for businesses along the coast to receive public access exemptions. In order to address part of the ruling, the NJ Legislature and Governor Christie moved quickly to pass and sign legislation clarifying NJDEP's authority to require public access as a condition of its permits. NY/NJ Baykeeper, American Littoral Society, NJ Business and Industry Association, and NJ Chamber of Commerce

are also co-leading a new taskforce to develop comprehensive and equitable public access rules, and expect to release recommendations at the end of April 2016.

- President Obama signed the Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015, which effectively bans the manufacturing (by July 2017) and sale (by July 2018) of rinse-off cosmetic products containing microbeads. The bill's passage is preceded by the March 2015 passage of a similar New Jersey bill signed into law by Governor Christie due to advocacy by the NY/NJ Baykeeper and other environmental advocates. Read more [here](#).
- Middlesex County Superior Court Judge Douglas K. Wolfson ordered Monroe Township to release a housing report compiled by Rutgers University professor Robert Burchell for 270 NJ municipalities developing fair housing plans in response to the NJ Supreme Court's recent *Mt. Laurel* decision. Wolfson ruled that the Township could not claim that the report was privileged in order to keep from sharing it with housing advocates after it had been shared with officials, developers, and planners in municipalities across the state. Read more [here](#).

Policy Setbacks:

- Governor Christie pocket vetoed a number of bills at the close of the 2014-2015 legislative session, including bills to: appropriate \$10 million for the raided Lead Hazard Control Assistance Fund; implement the 2014 constitutional dedication of corporate business tax revenues for state open space, farmland, and historic preservation programs; remove restrictions that keep convicted drug offenders from receiving general assistance benefits through the Work First NJ program; cap exploitative phone rates in prisons, jails, immigration detention centers, and other correctional facilities and commissions to local and state government; and require firearm retailers to sell personalized handguns. Read [here](#) for a full list of Governor Christie's actions on pending legislation at the end of the 216th legislative session.
- In a major setback to efforts by the Coalition for Healthy Ports, Clean Water Fund, and the NJ Environmental Justice Alliance to improve air quality in communities adjacent to Port Newark-Elizabeth Marine Terminal, the Port of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ, which operates the port) has reneged on a 2010 commitment that called for a ban on all diesel trucks that do not meet 2007 emissions standards by 2017. While PANYNJ had promised to help truck drivers update their vehicles with cleaner technology (with the help of federal funding), it is now only committing \$1.2 million (of the \$120 million needed) to update trucks and allowing all registered trucks to enter the Port regardless of their diesel emission standards. Many areas near the port, including Newark's Ironbound community, have some of the worst air quality in the state, and the ban would have improved emissions by 90% at the port (one pre-2007 truck produces the same amount of emissions as 60 newer trucks). Read more [here](#).
- Despite efforts by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance and partners, the NJ Board of Public Utilities approved two pipelines through the Pinelands, the South Jersey Gas pipeline (22 miles) and the NJ Natural Gas pipeline (30 miles). Read more [here](#) (South Jersey Gas) and [here](#) (NJ Natural Gas).

Policy Reports:

- NJ Policy Perspective released its *Lost Opportunities for New Jersey's Children* report that highlights how declining Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funding, harsh family caps that deny much-needed assistance to the children of mothers receiving TANF, and rising

cost-of-living has deepened child poverty in New Jersey. In 2014, 316,000 children (34% more than prior to the Great Recession) lived below the federal poverty line in New Jersey. Read the full report [here](#).

- NY/NJ Baykeeper released *its NY-NJ Harbor Estuary Plastic Collection Report* that indicated that approximately 165 million pieces of plastic float at any given time in the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary, which encompasses waters from the Tappan Zee Bridge to Sandy Hook. Of the 165 million pieces of plastic, at least 85% of were microplastics (smaller than 5mm). Read the full report [here](#).
- Advocates for Children of New Jersey released *Showing Up Matters: Newark Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Year*, a report on the state of chronic absenteeism (more than 18 absences, or 10% of the school year) within the Newark Public Schools in grades K-3. Data show that 24% of Newark students in grades K-3 are chronically absent, compared with 9% statewide. Read the full report [here](#).
- Environment New Jersey Research and Policy Center released *Turning to the Wind: American Wind Power is Cutting Carbon Pollution Today and Paving the Way for a Clean Energy Future*. The report indicates that though New Jersey lags behind other states in the production of wind power, it leads the nation in off-shore wind potential. Carbon pollution equal to 1.1 million cars could be eliminated by 2020 with a rapid expansion in wind power off the Jersey Shore. Read the full report [here](#).

Honors and Recognition:

- Maya Van Rossum, member of the Delaware River Keeper Network, was listed as one of ten of the most prominent individuals who have significantly affected the North American energy sector. The list of individuals was released by SNL Energy, and included public figures such as Gina McCarthy from the Environmental Protection Agency and Pope Francis. Read more [here](#).
- Rutgers John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development Professor Carl Van Horn was elected to the National Academy of Public Administration. Read more [here](#).

Events

- February 19th--[NJ Spotlight Roundtable: NJ's Transportation Future](#)
- February 24th—[NJ Institute for Social Justice: Bridging the Two Americas: A Community Conversation About Jobs and Economic Opportunity in Newark](#)
- March 30th—[APN General Meeting](#)

Job Announcements

- ACLU-NJ—[Policy Counsel](#)
- ACLU-NJ—[Criminal Justice Transparency Fellow](#)
- American Friends Service Committee—[Project Coordinator](#)
- Association of NJ Environmental Commissions—[Membership and Development Director](#)
- Clean Water Fund—[Climate Organizer \(Newark\)](#)
- Drug Policy Alliance—[Policy Coordinator](#)
- Faith in NJ—[Community Organizer](#)

- Hyacinth AIDS Foundation—[MSM Educator/PrEP Counselor](#)
- Hyacinth AIDS Foundation—[African-American Women Health Educator](#)
- Hyacinth AIDS Foundation—[CDC Linkage to Care Navigator](#)
- Hyacinth AIDS Foundation—[Mpowerment Coordinator](#)
- Hyacinth AIDS Foundation—[Project Recruitment Specialist](#)
- Ironbound Community Corporation—[Environmental Justice Organizer](#)
- Ironbound Community Corporation—[Junior Accountant](#)
- Ironbound Community Corporation—[Accounting Manager](#)
- Isles, Inc.—[Community Liaison – Eastern Trenton Collaborative](#)
- Isles, Inc.—[Job Developer](#)
- Isles, Inc.—[Case Manager/Social Worker](#)
- Isles, Inc.—[Isles Youth Institute Academic Instructor](#)
- NJ Citizen Action—[Bilingual Loan Counselors](#)
- NJ Citizen Action—[Bilingual Tax Preparers](#)
- NJ Conservation Foundation—[Development Associate](#)
- NJ for Transit—[Campaign Manager](#)
- NJ Institute for Social Justice—[Director of Philanthropy](#)
- Regional Plan Association—[Director, Public Engagement](#)

The Fund for New Jersey's news updates will be distributed monthly. Please send policy news and updates and job announcements to Ami Kachalia at akachalia@fundfornj.org.