

NJAC COUNTY BIZ

An Educational and Informative Newsletter for Counties and Businesses

New Jersey Association of Counties

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Modernizing Government Networks With Aruba EdgeConnect

by Joanne Goodstadt, Marketing Manager for PKA Technologies, Inc.



Government agencies across the country are facing unprecedented technology challenges. Decades-old IT infrastructure often hinders efforts to support growing numbers of remote workers while also meeting increasing constituent demand for expanded online services. In a 2021 Accenture study, 75 percent of public-sector leaders agreed that outdated technology was holding them back.

Software-defined wide area networking (SD-WAN) solutions create a path to IT modernization with flexible connectivity options, improved traffic optimization and increased automation. In several recent posts, we've described how Aruba's EdgeConnect SD-WAN solution increases network efficiency and supports IT modernization in the healthcare, retail

and legal industries. It is equally valuable for government IT operations.

EdgeConnect delivers all the connectivity and automation benefits of other SD-WAN solutions but also incorporates intelligent routing, WAN optimization, network segmentation and application visibility features in a centrally managed platform. Artificial intelligence and machine learning functions not only automate many tasks but contribute to a self-learning network that continuously adapts to network conditions and triggers immediate adjustments.

Here are five ways EdgeConnect helps government agencies address IT modernization efforts:

Application Optimization. EdgeConnect is application-aware, which means it can identify and classify apps based on a variety of characteristics and then apply optimization techniques to ensure optimum performance. The ability to choose transport mechanisms based on bandwidth requirements and other workload characteristics helps ensure reliable application performance.

Multicloud Connectivity. The use of multiple clouds helps agencies support employees and constituents across broad geographic areas, but there are challenges. Connecting on-premises applications with cloud resources from multiple providers with different configurations and standards can be quite difficult. EdgeConnect's multipath connectivity and intelligent routing capabilities simplify connections with applications hosted by AWS, Azure, Google Cloud and other cloud infrastructure providers.

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NJAC Celebration of County Government

May 3-5, 2023

Caesars, Atlantic City, NJ

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Modernizing Government Networks With Aruba EdgeConnect *(continued)*

Secure Remote Access. Remote work and multi-cloud computing expand an organization's attack surface. EdgeConnect boosts security with end-to-end encryption and integration with services such as Secure Access Service Edge (SASE) and Zero-Trust Network Access (ZTNA). With support for network segmentation and application-aware routing, SD-WAN helps reduce the attack surface for highly sensitive data and systems.

Edge Computing. Edge computing supports increasing numbers of network-connected devices by pushing data processing closer to data sources in order to minimize latency and preserve bandwidth. That's hard to do with traditional WAN routers, which require frequent configuration changes to prioritize and segment traffic. With EdgeConnect, agencies can centrally manage and automate edge router configurations with simple policy updates, eliminating the need to reconfigure individual devices.

Increased Automation. EdgeConnect's artificial intelligence features allow agencies to maintain the highest levels of application performance by automatically assigning application and security policies across hundreds or thousands of sites. Provisioning, orchestration and cloud security can also be automated.

PKA Technologies holds multiple government contracts and is an authorized reseller of HPE and Aruba networking. Additionally, our team of network architects has deep experience with designing and implementing Aruba and HPE networking products. Call us to learn if EdgeConnect is right for your agency.



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS



At **M&T Bank** the purpose is to understand the individuals and the businesses in our neighborhood, so we can create the right opportunities for the people we serve. We are a Commercial Bank-Financial Services.

For additional information regarding M&T Bank please contact Paul DiGrado, Senior Vice President Government Banking – Relationship Manager at pdigrado@mtb.com.



Rx 'n Go is an alternative pharmacy program to help self-funded counties and employer groups across the country provide better pharmacy benefits at a lower cost.

For additional information regarding Rx 'n Go please contact Claire Gilmore, Vice President, Account Manager at claire@rxngo.com.

Live Cloud Security Education With AWS, Tanium and Presidio Thought Leaders

by Amanda Spence, Account Manager NY/NJ/PA Mid-Market State and Local Government & K-12 for Amazon Web Services (AWS)

Come join us for a 3 part educational series on how AWS, Tanium and Presidio can partner to provide you secure cloud solutions hearing from Public Sector thought leaders.

Register by emailing Amanda Spence AWS Account Manager for NJ at amspen@amazon.com.

Proposed Event Dates:

AWS - *Thinking Infrastructure and services to elevate your security in the cloud* - March 10 at 11 am.

Tanium – *Why NJ State and Local Government Needs a Whole-of-State Strategy for Mature Cyber Hygiene*- March 17 at 11 am.

Presidio – *Secure Cloud Transformation* - March 24 at 11 am.

Amazon Web Services (AWS) is the world's most comprehensive and broadly adopted cloud platform, offering over 200 fully featured services from data centers globally. Millions of customers—including the fastest-growing startups, largest enterprises, and leading government agencies—are using AWS to lower costs, become more agile, and innovate faster.

Tanium has been named to the Forbes Cloud 100 list for seven consecutive years and ranks on Fortune's list of the Best Large Workplaces in Technology. In fact, more than half of the Fortune 100 and the U.S. armed forces trust Tanium to protect people; defend data; secure systems; and see and control every endpoint, team, and workflow everywhere. Visit www.tanium.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#) to learn more.

Presidio - Accelerate your journey to the cloud with Presidio. We're not just moving things from Point A to Point B. Cloud Migration is about realizing strategies and outcomes more quickly and efficiently by driving business agility through data center consolidation and Cloud Transformation.

Amanda Spence

Account Manager, Amazon Web Services (AWS)
NY/NJ/PA Mid-Market State and Local Government & K-12
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Work hard. Have fun. Make history. | [AWS Worldwide Public Sector](#)



2023

NJAC CELEBRATION OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

*May 3rd through 5th
Caesars Hotel
Atlantic City, New Jersey*

REGISTRATION OPEN

Sponsorship Opportunities Include: Corporate Sponsor; President's Luncheon & County Awards; County Vocational Technical School Cook-Off Challenge; Exhibitors Reception with Entertainment; Buffet Breakfast Sponsor; Meet & Greet Reception with DJ Entertainment; Dueling Pianos Entertainment; Coffee Stations; Time to Laugh Entertainment; 21 Meeting Club Area; Shoeshine Booth; and, Journal Advertisements.

Exhibit Opportunities are Available and All Booths Include: (1) carpeted 8' across x 10' deep booth; (2) full registrations; (1) 6' skirted table; (2) chairs; (1) 110v electrical outlet; (1) wastebasket; WiFi access in the exhibit hall and seminar rooms.

Please view the Conference Schedule of Events [here](#). A list of educational workshops and credits will be forthcoming. Look for this in April.

*To learn more about **Sponsorship Packages** or if you should have questions regarding **Exhibit Opportunities** please contact Loren Wizman, Director of Business Development at loren@njac.org or call our office at (609) 394-3467*

Please Visit Our [Online Digital Registration Today!](#)

Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey (PCA-NJ)

by Gina Hernandez, MA, LPC, CCTP, Executive Director for Prevent Child Abuse-New Jersey and Child Wellness Institute (ChildWIN®)

April is Child Abuse Prevention month and Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey (PCA-NJ) is hoping every county will issue a proclamation demonstrating their commitment to protecting and nurturing our state's children.

If you are interested in participating in a county proclamation or hosting a pinwheel garden, please use the template below or visit [Pinwheels for Prevention - Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey \(preventchildabusenj.org\)](https://www.preventchildabusenj.org). Each county that does a proclamation will be featured on PCA-NJ's social media as a committed partner in prevention!

For more information, contact pstalcup@preventchildabusenj.org.



Sample Proclamation

April 1, 2023

WHEREAS, our children are our most valuable resources and will shape the future of [State or Jurisdiction]; and

WHEREAS, childhood trauma, including abuse and neglect, is a serious problem affecting every segment of our community, and finding solutions requires input and action from everyone; and

WHEREAS, childhood trauma can have long-term psychological, emotional, and physical effects that have lasting consequences for victims of abuse; and

WHEREAS, protective factors are conditions that reduce or eliminate risk and promote the social, emotional, and developmental well-being of children; and

WHEREAS, effective child abuse prevention activities succeed because of the partnerships created between child welfare professionals, education, health, community- and faith-based organizations, businesses, law enforcement agencies, and families; and

WHEREAS, communities must make every effort to promote programs and activities that build strong children and families; and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that we must work together as a community in partnership to build awareness about child abuse and contribute to promote the social and emotional well-being of children and families in a safe, stable, and nurturing environment; and

WHEREAS, prevention remains the best defense for our children and families.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, _____, [Title and Jurisdiction], do hereby proclaim April as NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH in [Location] and urge all citizens to recognize this month by dedicating ourselves to the task of improving the quality of life for all children and families.

Atlantic City Electric Requests Recovery For Efforts That Resulted In Record Service Reliability And Further Advance A Smarter, Stronger and Cleaner Energy Grid For South Jersey

The company's request also seeks recovery for enhancements made to support sustainable energy through electric vehicle offerings, smart meter upgrades and grid strengthening against severe storms with a focus on customer affordability.

by Candice Womer, Senior Communication Specialist for Atlantic City Electric

Atlantic City Electric is requesting the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities' (NJBPU) approval to update electric delivery rates to reflect the company's efforts to further strengthen the local energy grid against more frequent and severe storms, meet evolving customer expectations for service reliability and execute projects that enhance service and deliver safe, reliable and sustainable energy for customers. The company works every day to further modernize the local energy grid and deliver the safe and reliable service that customers expect, meeting the evolving needs of the hybrid work environment, the expanding transition to electric vehicles and the growing energy needs of local communities.

The company's investments in the local energy grid, deployment of new technologies and support from energy efficiency programs have helped Atlantic City Electric customers reduce their energy usage and better manage their energy costs. Because of sustained efforts to modernize the energy grid, Atlantic City Electric customers experienced the most reliable energy service ever in 2022, with the lowest frequency of electric outages on record. Ongoing investments in the local energy grid have reduced the frequency of electric outages by more than 75 percent since 2012.

"Customers are relying on us to deliver a world-class customer experience with safe, affordable and reliable energy while balancing the need for continued modernization of the local energy grid," said Doug Mokoid, Atlantic City Electric region president. "It is important for us to continue delivering the quality service our customers count on while advancing new and cleaner energy experiences, like our EVsmart program and the benefits our customers will see with their new smart meters."

As part of this request, Atlantic City Electric is seeking to recover \$104.8 million for money spent making the local energy grid smarter, stronger and cleaner, enhancing service and delivering safe, reliable and sustainable energy for customers through key programs, including the company's Smart Energy Network and EVsmart electric vehicle programs.

With climate change causing increasingly damaging storms, this request also includes recovery of the money spent on storm restoration after those storms impacted the electric grid and our customers. If approved, the typical residential customer using 669 kilowatt hours per month would see a monthly bill increase of 8.80 percent or about \$12.22.

Atlantic City Electric understands customers are still facing economic challenges while recovering from the pandemic and are dealing with the very real negative impacts of high costs for many family necessities. The company remains committed to working with customers to keep them connected with payment arrangements and helping them secure important energy assistance. The company also continues to encourage customers to take advantage of the tens of millions of dollars that remain available through programs such as the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Customers can visit atlanticcityelectric.com/EnergyAssistance or call 1-800-642-3780 to learn about additional energy assistance programs.

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Atlantic City Electric *(continued)*

Atlantic City Electric's EVsmart program is supporting customers' transition to cleaner, more efficient transportation with nearly 600 customer applications and rebates for charging infrastructure at homes and businesses across South Jersey. These EVsmart programs include; public charging, residential EV charging programs, multifamily building EV charger, workplace and fleet EV charger rebates and EV fast charging station rates. Customers can learn more at atlanticcityelectric.com/EVsmart.

The Smart Energy Network program is driving the installation of approximately 568,000 smart meters across South Jersey and is a critical step in advancing a clean energy future. Upgraded smart meters will provide numerous benefits for customers such as faster and more efficient power restoration efforts, more detailed outage information when outages occur, and new tools that can help customers use energy more efficiently and save money. The initiative is also helping drive the South Jersey economy by supporting local and diverse companies with more than \$27 million going to South Jersey area businesses who are supporting the smart meter installation. Learn more at atlanticcityelectric.com/SEN.

Reliability projects are also important to the local economy and play a key role in Atlantic City Electric's efforts to be a partner in South Jersey's sustained economic development. Investments in energy infrastructure improve service for customers while also driving economic development and job creation in the local economy. Atlantic City Electric's broader economic and community impact is felt across southern New Jersey and includes:

- Atlantic City Electric is investing \$6.5 million into South Jersey Workforce Development Programs, which has resulted in nearly 200 graduates receiving job opportunities in the energy field, including 26 individuals who recently graduated from the Atlantic City Infrastructure Program and will receive job opportunities with Atlantic City Electric or one of the company's contractors of choice.
- Atlantic City Electric purchased \$111 million in goods and services from diversity-certified suppliers.
- The company provides approximately \$1.1 million annually to area nonprofits, while employees volunteered nearly 10,300 hours supporting hundreds of non-profit organizations in 2022.

To learn more about Atlantic City Electric, visit [The Source](http://TheSource), Atlantic City Electric's online newsroom. Find additional information by visiting atlanticcityelectric.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/AtlanticCityElectric, and on Twitter at twitter.com/AcEleCconnect. Atlantic City Electric's mobile app is available at www.atlanticcityelectric.com/mobileapp.

Atlantic City Electric is a unit of Exelon (Nasdaq: EXC), a Fortune 200 company and the nation's largest utility company, serving more than 10 million customers. Atlantic City Electric provides clean, safe, reliable and affordable energy service to approximately 565,000 customers in southern New Jersey.



**atlantic city
electric**SM

AN EXELON COMPANY

Save the Dates!

NJAC Virtual Workshop, April 19, 2023
NJAC Celebration of County Government, May 3-5, 2023
NJAC Virtual Workshop, July 12, 2023
NJAC Virtual Workshop, September 13, 2023
NJAC Virtual Workshop, November 1, 2023
NJAC Year-End Summit, December 15, 2023

J.P.Morgan Government Banking Team



You Are Invited

Zoom Webinar: Maximizing the Value of Liquidity in Today's Economic Environment

With today's economic environment we often have more questions about what to do with revenues than a clear plan. It can be difficult to understand the choices given regulatory constraints and what peers are doing to achieve the best value while maintaining prudent fiscal practices. This webinar will help reveal the "playing field" and answer some questions you may have been thinking about. We look to achieve:

1. Economic overview from J.P. Morgan Commercial Bank Chief Economic Officer Jim Glassman
2. How to maximize the value of your operating funds
3. What options exist outside of core banking products and within your investment policy

*Webinar is eligible for 1 CPE, QPA, or CEU credit

Thursday, March 2nd, 2023 - 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Zoom Details

Webinar ID: 915 9764 9000

Link to join Webinar: <https://jpmchase.zoom.us/j/91597649000>

RSVP TODAY

Speakers

Jim Glassman, Chief Economic Officer

Cory Richmond, Executive Director, Liquidity Solutions Specialist

Jordan Mayer, Managing Director, Financial Advisor

Andrew Girard, Vice President, Investment Associate

Event Host

Bailey Mallon, Vice President – NJ Government Banker

Event Contact

Bailey Mallon, Vice President – NJ Government Banker

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bailey.mallon@jpmorgan.com

J.P.Morgan

Eric C. Betz Joins French & Parrello Associates As Vice President

by French & Parrello Associates



French & Parrello Associates (FPA) is excited to welcome Eric C. Betz, PE, BCEE, CME, to the firm as a Vice President and Senior Project Consultant. Mr. Betz has more than 30 years in engineering, management, and business development experience within the water, transportation, building, and energy sectors.

In his new role, Mr. Betz will be an integral part of the management team with responsibility for developing business strategy that align with the firm's growth objectives. Mr. Betz's diverse experience will also lend to FPA's commitment to provide clients with quality service and reinforces the firm's mission to "improve our world by providing innovative engineering and environmental consulting solutions with a focus on sustainability."

"We are excited to welcome someone as talented as Eric to the FPA team," said Steven A. Tardy, President & CEO. "His reputation and capabilities are well known in our industry, and we're confident that Eric's breadth and depth of experience will be an asset to our clients and the many critical infrastructure projects we're responsible for in the region."

Mr. Betz, who formerly served as a Senior VP and Development Manager for the US Northeast Region at Mott McDonald, has extensive experience serving county, state, and federal entities, as well as public agencies, utility authorities, and transportation organizations.

Additionally, Mr. Betz has successfully assisted private and public clients with identifying and receiving funding through various local, state, and federal programs to deliver their capital projects. He has been responsible for advising, planning, permitting, designing, and providing construction phase engineering services for numerous critical infrastructure improvement projects throughout the Mid-Atlantic Region that are in use today, benefitting the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

Mr. Betz earned a Bachelor's Degree and a Master's Degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Rutgers University, and is a licensed Professional Engineer, Board Certified Environmental Engineer, and Certified Municipal Engineer, and he is active in numerous professional organizations. He is a Past President and Executive Board Member for the NJ Society of Municipal Engineers, serves on the Board of the Jersey Shore Partnership, Rutgers University's School of Engineering CEE Industry Advisory Board, and Columbia University's School of Engineering's CBIPS. Mr. Betz is also a member of the American Council of Engineering Companies in New Jersey and New York, serving on the Port Authority of NY & NJ Business Practices Committee.

For 49 years, French & Parrello Associates (FPA) has provided value-added engineering, design, and construction services with a client-focused approach. With eight strategically located offices, FPA provides full-service solutions for transportation, site/civil, geotechnical, environmental, building design, construction engineering, landscape architecture, telecommunications, and other consulting services to public and private clients in a variety of markets. For more information, visit www.fpaengineers.com



Live Cloud Security Education For New Jersey Government With AWS, Tanium, and Presidio Thought Leaders

by Joel McManus, Director of Strategic Accounts-NJ and NYC Government for Tanium

Join us for an exclusive 3-part educational series on secure cloud solutions with AWS, Tanium, and Presidio. This series will be hosted by experts from each company and will provide New Jersey government leaders an in-depth understanding of how to protect your organization in the cloud. The series will cover the following topics:

[Amazon Web Services \(AWS\)](#) - State and Local Cybersecurity and Risk Management **March 10, 11am EST**

Join to hear [Maria Thompson](#), AWS Security Executive Government Advisor, speak about cybersecurity and risk management in government. She will review the challenges state and local government face with ransomware attacks, the current cyber insurance market, and how AWS can help you modernize your IT.

[Tanium](#) - Converged Endpoint Management **March 17, 11am EST**

[Jennifer Pittman-Leeper](#), Tanium's cybersecurity whole-of-state strategist, will help you understand how Tanium can help organizations converge tools and workflows across IT operations, risk/compliance, and security functions to bring teams together on a single platform that provides visibility, control, and remediation in IT decision-making.

[Presidio](#) - Secure Cloud Transformation **March 24, 11am EST**

Learn about Presidio's unique approach to cloud security and how it can benefit your organization through secure cloud transformation.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn from the experts and protect your organization in the cloud.

REGISTER TODAY - [Cloud Security Education Webinar Registration Page](#)

Joel McManus
Director of Strategic Accounts – NJ & NYC Government
Tanium
m: (781) 929-9715 | e: joel.mcmanus@tanium.com



Attorney Job Posting - Essex County Counsel's Office



Assistant County Counsel position available in our Mental Health & Governmental Affairs Section. The Essex County Counsel's Office is located in the Hall of Records, Newark, New Jersey. Seeking lawyer with at least 1 year of experience or judicial clerkship. The position requires the independent representation of the County regarding County Lands, Zoning & Planning, Foreclosures, Sheriff's Sale, Election Matters, Preparation of Contracts, Leases and Licenses, Construction Board of Appeal, Bail Forfeitures, Overpayment and Collection Cases, Mental Health Hearings and Guardianships and general mental health and governmental affairs matters.

A resume with cover letter should be forwarded to Jerome M. St. John, County Counsel, Office of County Counsel, Hall of Records, Rm. 535, Newark, New Jersey 07102 **or** email to keritchley@counsel.essexcountynj.org.



Save The Dates And Come Join Us!

March 13th, ASSET, at Hilton Long Island Huntington, Melville, NY

Time: 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

Come visit us at table #22 to help enhance teaching learning in Long Island and New York school districts with computers and other educational technologies

April 20th, NJ GMIS, The Palace at Somerset Park, Somerset, NJ

Time: 7:30 am – 5:00 pm

Come join us in exchanging ideas, information, and experiences that foster members' knowledge of technology developments to better serve their organizations.

MRA International is a leading technology expert and a value-added HP and HPE Partner with over 20 years of experience providing unique IT solutions and turn-key results to the public sector.

For more information, please contact the MRA Sales Team:

Email: sales@mrainternational.com

Phone: (732) 222-0997





March is Women's History Month

New Jersey currently ranks fourth overall among the most diverse states in the nation. According to a study conducted by "WalletHub", we are 6th in racial diversity and 2nd in linguistic diversity. This data tells us that in addition to offering our residents relevant programs and services, we need to do so in a way that is as diverse as our communities, and inclusive.

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families, through its Division on Women, provides *culturally specific services to marginalized communities*. These services include domestic and sexual violence prevention and supports as well as economic self-sufficiency and financial empowerment.

The Division on Women's mission is to create, promote and expand the rights and opportunities for all women in the State of New Jersey. This month, and every month, please be sure to raise awareness within your county of the resources available to your constituents: <https://www.nj.gov/dcf/women/>. You can also scan the QR code for a list of culturally specific service providers.



BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NEW JERSEY ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Learn about the benefits of being a part of NJAC and how you can join.

Contact Loren Wizman, Business Development Director at (609) 394-3467 or loren@njac.org

[Click here for an application.](#)

Notice Of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Announcements

by SAMHSA Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

SAMHSA announced a new funding opportunity for [Grants Addressing Substance Misuse, Substance Use Disorder Treatment on Multiple Fronts](#).

The five grant programs are:

1. [Grants to Expand Substance Use Disorder Treatment Capacity in Adult and Family Treatment Drug Courts \(SAMHSA Treatment Drug Courts\)](#) – \$32.4 million. Application Due Date: Monday, March 06, 2023
2. [Adult Reentry Program](#) – \$13 million. Application Due Date: Monday, March 06, 2023
3. [Medication-Assisted Treatment – Prescription Drug and Opioid Addiction Grant Program \(MAT-PDOA\)](#) – \$18.2 million. Application Due Date: Tuesday, March 07, 2023
4. [Emergency Department Alternatives to Opioids Program \(ED-ALT\)](#) – \$6.8 million. Application Due Date: Monday, March 06, 2023
5. [Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act \(STOP Act\) Grants](#) – \$3 million. Modified announcement. Application Due Date: Friday, March 03, 2023

Choose a Funding Opportunity: Search SAMHSA's NOFOs on the [Grants Dashboard](#) or on [Grants.gov](#).



SHARE THE NEWS!

Let us know what educational or informational articles you would like published in the NJAC COUNTY BIZ

Contact

Loren Wizman, Director of Business Development
(609) 394-3467
or
loren@njac.org

New Initiative Brings Together County Leaders To Drive Action On Nation's Mental Health Crisis

by Nicole Weissman, Director of Strategic Communications for NACo

The National Association of Counties (NACo) today announced a new Commission on Mental Health and Wellbeing, bringing together 14 county leaders from across the country. The group, unveiled at NACo's Legislative Conference, is tasked with leading the development of policy and programmatic recommendations at the federal, state, and local levels to address systemic issues contributing to the ever-growing mental health crisis.

"America's county leaders demand a rethinking – a reimagination – of how we advance the mental health and well-being of our families and neighbors, especially those without adequate access to care and treatment," said NACo President Denise Winfrey. "This commission will drive collaboration and innovation across all sectors, from our intergovernmental partners to the private sector, from think tanks to practitioners."

Counties are well-positioned to lead action on the mental health crisis because counties play an integral role in local health, justice and human services systems. Direct mental health service delivery responsibilities are falling increasingly to America's counties, who serve as the nation's safety net for residents in need, act as first responders, operate crisis lines, and manage public hospitals and detention centers.

"To effect lasting change in our behavioral health system, we need legislative fixes at the federal level," said Kathryn Barger, Commission Co-Chair and County Supervisor, Los Angeles County, Calif. "Lifting the federal bed limit on our mental health treatment facilities and securing additional behavioral health resources has been one of my top priorities since taking office, and I'm grateful for NACo's partnership and leadership in this effort."

By advancing county policy priorities around mental health, showcasing effective community strategies, and elevating county voices, the commission will:

- Stimulate a national sense of urgency through an intergovernmental partnership framework connecting the local, state, and federal levels;
- Elevate national awareness around the challenges and the innovations associated with mental health through the county lens;
- Pursue federal policy action, including full implementation of the Mental Health Parity standard, reforms to the IMD prohibition, repealing the Medicaid Inmate Exclusion Policy for pre-trial detainees, and building the mental health workforce and continuum of care for the future; and
- Lead a cohesive, intergovernmental strategy to enhanced the mental health and wellbeing of all Americans, with a special focus on the most vulnerable populations.

"From small rural counties to large metro regions, mental health is a critical issue in every community across our nation. It's also an intersectional issue – if you care about homelessness, if you care about public safety, if you care about the well-being of families and the future of our children – you must invest in mental health," said Commission Co-Chair Dow Constantine, County Executive for King County, Wash. "From the unique perspective of counties, providing core services to every family and community in this nation, the commission will share what's working and collaborate with those who are striving to develop a robust and nation-wide response to this crisis."

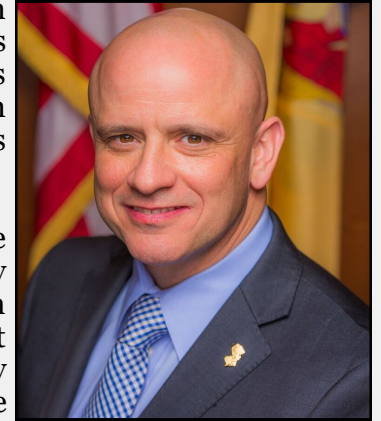
For more information about NACo's Commission on Mental Health and Wellbeing, click [here](#).



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In light of the fact that the Administration and State Legislature have yet to agree on providing any immediate financial relief or long-term structural reforms to address the 24% increase in health benefit expenses imposed by the State Health Benefits Program (SHBP), NJAC is exploring the possibility of establishing county health insurance funds in the northern, central, and southern regions of the State as permitted under current law.

According to information shared by PERMA Risk Management Services, the advantages of health insurance funds include: the ownership and governance by members as opposed to SHBP where local governments have no voice in the decision-making process; stable and renewable premium rates unlike what occurred this past year; and, early renewals to assist with budgeting timeframes instead of having to pay for certain data as is the current practice. Moreover, health insurance funds provide for lower operating expenses and annual profits; the flexibility to maintain or alter plan designs; the potential for dividend distributions; premium rates determined in the best interest of members by the fund's actuary; and, all professionals selected and appointed by fund commissioners subject to public bidding requirements. PERMA further submits that health insurance funds have a documented track record of stability and strong financial performance that offer an effective long-term solution for managing and delivering employee health benefits.



John G. Donnadio, Esq.

As you may recall, late last year, NJAC, the New Jersey State League of Municipalities (NJLM), the New Jersey Conference of Mayors (NJCM), the AFL-CIO, the CWA, the PBA, and many more, joined forces in an unprecedented coalition of management and labor to make fair and equitable recommendations that would have mitigated the \$350.0 million in health benefit rate increases approved by the State Health Benefits Commission (SHBC) in September of 2022. In addition to providing immediate financial relief to property taxpayers, local governments, and public employees already struggling to make ends meet, the reasonable and attainable solutions included much needed structural reforms that would have resulted in substantial long-term costs savings. As noted above, the Administration and State Legislature have yet to agree on a solution.

**NJAC CELEBRATION OF
COUNTY GOVERNMENT
MAY 3-5, 2023
CAESARS ATLANTIC CITY**

EVENTS & HOLIDAYS

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT
		<p>Evergreen Park Run 3/4 Register here Free 5K Evergreen Park <i>Andover</i> Sussex County</p>	<p>1 Heart Oneness Holistic Expo 3/3-3/5 Register here NJ Conv. & Expo Ctr. <i>Edison</i> Middlesex County</p>	<p>2 NJ State High School Wrestling Championship 3/2-3/4 Register here Boardwalk Hall <i>Atlantic City</i> Atlantic County</p>	<p>3 Roller Skating 4:00 pm - 8:30 pm  Conventional Hall <i>Cape May</i> Cape May County</p>	<p>4 St. Patrick's Day Parade 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm High Street <i>Mount Holly</i> Burlington County</p>
<p>5 Pompeii Now Open View here Liberty Science Center <i>Jersey City</i> Hudson County</p>	<p>6 St. Patrick's Day Parade 3/5 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm <i>Gloucester City</i> Gloucester County</p>		<p>8 St. Patrick's Day Celebration 3/12 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm Warren Habitat for Humanity <i>Washington</i> Warren County</p>	<p>9 CATS 8:00 pm Morris MPAC <i>Morristown</i> Morris County</p>	<p>10 Comedy Night Joey Callahan 7:00 pm Millville Elks 580 <i>Millville</i> Cumberland County</p>	<p>11 Turtle Back Zoo Job Fair 10:00 am - 2:00 pm The Zoo <i>W. Orange</i> Essex County</p>
<p>12 Veterans Suicide Awareness Resource Fair & Panel 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm View here Camden County College <i>Blackwood</i> Camden County</p>	<p>13 The Kingdom Choir 3/12 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm County Basie Center for the Arts <i>Red Bank</i> Monmouth County</p>		<p>15 Oliver 3/17 8:00 pm Music Mountain Theatre <i>Lambertville</i> Hunterdon County</p>	<p> 3/16-3/19 7:00 pm Register here CURE Ins. Arena <i>Trenton</i> Mercer County</p>	<p>17  St. Patrick's DAY</p>	<p>18  Blippi THE WONDERFUL WORLD TOUR 1:00 pm & 5:00 pm Register here bergenPAC <i>Englewood</i> Bergen County</p>
<p>19 Movie: The Quiet Man 6:00 pm - 8:15 pm Free Register here Hawthorne Theatre <i>Hawthorne</i> Passaic County</p>	<p>20 Start of Spring & International Day of Happiness</p>	<p>21 Anniv. of the Hancock Massacre 10:00 am - 7:00 pm Free Hancock House Historical Site <i>Hancock's Bridge</i> Salem County</p>			<p>24 Yesterday and Today: The Interactive Beatles Experience 10:00 am - 7:00 pm Free Nash Theatre <i>Branchburg</i> Somerset County</p>	<p>25 Ireland With Michael 8:00 pm Grunin Ctr. For the Arts <i>Toms River</i> Ocean County</p>
<p>26 Funny Women of a Certain Age 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm Register here UnionPAC <i>Rahway</i> Union County</p>						