An Educational and Informative Newsletter for Counties and Businesses

# **New Jersey Association of Counties**

# **ISSUE 158 - JANUARY 2025**

# Important Upgrades In Progress To Kings Highway In **Camden County**

by Tejal Patel, PE, CME, LEED AP, Client Manager for T&M Associates



Client

Each day, thousands of drivers move along a 2.4-mile stretch of Kings Highway (CR 551 S) in Camden County. The roadway sits within the boroughs of Mt. Ephraim, Haddon Heights, and Audubon and has long been a vital transportation route.

This area was the site of an important Revolutionary War battle that took place across what is now six towns in Camden County. Later, Haddon Lake Park was developed during the New Deal era by the Civilian Conservation Corps and Works Progress Administration. Today, Kings Highway is an essential traffic corridor that connects communities and supports regional development in South Jersey.

Since its inception, Kings Highway has been a vital link for car commuters as well as NJ Transit, with more than 22 bus stops. It is also traversed by pedestrians and bicyclists. The Highway has undergone some minor improvements during the past

century, with the last improvements made in

1964. It has also undergone underground Tejal Patel, PE, CME, LEED AP, numerous *T&M* utility installations Manager, Associates

emergency repairs, leading to patchwork surface. The roadway lacks ADA compliant curb ramps and sidewalk, all of which pose challenges for travelers whether on foot, on two wheels, or in a bus or vehicle.

Fortunately, a significant improvement project spearheaded by Camden County is now in progress. This landmark upgrade, the first of its kind in decades, will be a transformative achievement that meets both regulatory and community needs and ushers Kings Highway into a new era. The project is a collaborative effort between the Camden County Board Commissioners and the governing bodies of the municipalities traversed by the roadway. Other stakeholders include two elementary schools, two shade tree commissions, three utility companies, and the police departments of all three boroughs – united with the goal of enhancing safety and commuter satisfaction traversing the roadway.

Components of the Kings Highway project include pavement restoration and rehabilitation to restore and enhance the roadway surface and make it smoother for all travelers. Safety improvements will include high-visibility crosswalks at all intersections, flashing

## **INSIDE THIS EDITION:**

- *Pq.1* **Important Upgrades in Progress**
- Pg. 2 NJAC Save The Dates
- Pg.3The State of AI at Year's End
- *Pg.* 5 Welcome to our New Business Associates
- Pg. 6 **Monetizing Surplus Assets**
- Pg. 7MRA International Save the Date
- Pq. 8 **TESU** Webinar
- *Pg. 9* **Aruba User Experience Insight**
- Pa. 10 January is Stalking Awareness Month
- **NJCAHT** *Pq. 11*
- **Grant Opportunities** Pg. 12
- of **Pg. 13** Nationwide
  - Elevate Your Leadership Skills in 2025 *Pq. 14*
  - Message From The Executive Director Pg. 15
  - **Events & Holidavs** Pq. 16



beacons at critical intersections with high foot traffic, and traffic-calming features such as curb extensions.

and

# Important Upgrades In Progress To Kings Highway In Camden County (continued)

The improvements will also include infrastructure upgrades, with rehabilitation of sanitary and storm sewers.

The project, which began in August and is funded by Camden County Capital Improvement Funds and ARPA funds, will deliver long-term benefits to the involved communities by enhancing safety and accessibility while supporting ongoing regional growth in Camden County and beyond.

Tejal Patel, PE, CME, LEED AP is an Associate, Client Manager at T&M Associates, a leading national consulting, engineering, environmental, and technical services company headquartered in Middletown.



MAC Save the Dates!

NJAC Reorganization Sponsorships Available January 24, 2025 Trenton

NJAC Virtual Workshop February 19, 2025

NJAC Celebration of County Government Sponsorships & Exhibit Opportunities Available May 7-9, 2025 Atlantic City

# The State Of AI At Year's End

By PKA Technologies, Inc.



2024 has been an incredible year for artificial intelligence, marked by significant advancements, growing adoption across industries, and increasing debate surrounding its ethical implications. From groundbreaking multimodal models to the rise of open-source AI, we're here to recap the key developments that shaped the landscape for AI in 2024.

## 1. The Rise of Multimodal AI

This year saw AI break free from the constraints of single modalities like text and images. <u>Multimodal models</u>, capable of processing and generating information across various formats (text, images, audio, video), emerged as a major trend. These models are paving the way for more immersive and interactive AI experiences, with applications ranging from advanced virtual assistants to more realistic and engaging video games.

## 2. Smaller Language Models and Open Source

While large language models (LLMs) continued to dominate headlines, 2024 witnessed a growing interest in smaller, more efficient models. These models, often open source, offer greater accessibility and customization. This in turn empowers developers and businesses to build tailored AI solutions without the massive computational resources required for LLMs. This democratization of AI is fostering innovation and competition in the field.

## 3. AI and the GPU Shortage

The increasing demand for AI, particularly for training large models, exacerbated the ongoing global shortage of GPUs. This <u>shortage</u> highlighted the growing need for more efficient AI hardware and sparked innovation in alternative computing architectures.

## 4. Model Optimization Takes Center Stage

With the rising costs of training and deploying AI models, optimization techniques gained prominence in 2024. Techniques like <u>Low-Rank Adaptation</u> (LoRA) and quantization allowed developers to fine-tune and deploy models more efficiently, reducing computational costs and making AI more accessible.

## 5. Customized Local Models and Data Pipelines

Businesses increasingly sought to develop customized AI models trained on their own data. This trend led to a surge in the development of robust data pipelines and tools for managing and processing data for AI applications.

## 6. More Powerful Virtual Agents

AI-powered virtual agents became more sophisticated and capable, thanks to advancements in natural language processing and multimodal AI. These agents are transforming customer service, providing more personalized and efficient support across various channels

continued on page 4

# The State Of AI At Year's End (continued)

## 7. Ethical Concerns and Regulation

As AI becomes more pervasive, concerns surrounding its <u>ethical implications</u> grew louder in 2024. Issues like bias in AI, data privacy, and the potential for job displacement fueled debates and prompted calls for greater regulation. Governments and organizations worldwide began exploring frameworks for responsible AI development and deployment.

## 8. The Emergence of "Shadow AI"

The rapid adoption of AI in the workplace led to the rise of "shadow AI," where employees utilize AI tools without official approval or oversight. This phenomenon raised concerns about data security, compliance, and the need for clear corporate AI policies.

## Looking Ahead

2024 laid the groundwork for an even more exciting future for AI. As the technology continues to evolve, we can expect further breakthroughs in areas like multimodal AI, personalized AI experiences, and responsible AI development. The journey that AI took in 2024 is just the beginning. In the coming years, we can expect its promise to be filled with continued innovation and transformation. As you consider how AI can help you and your business, we can help. PKA is continually developing customized solutions that bring the promise and power of AI to your endeavor. Reach out today to see how we can help you get the most out of AI.





# WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

TELECOM CONSULTING

**ACE Telecom Consulting** ACE Telecom Consulting has extensive experience offloading labor related to telecom issues from your internal resources as well as generating significant additional revenue for the agencies, municipalities and counties we represent. A little about us below:

ACE Telecom Consulting is a NJ Certified WBE/SBE, providing telecom advisory, review, contract negotiation, and bid-writing services throughout the state of New Jersey. We work for the town! We do not represent any wireless carriers.

We provide:

- Macro Bid-writing and Bid Submission Review and Recommendations
- Tower attachment audits/back rent negotiations
- Construction Drawing Review Letters, Findings, and Recommendations
- Permit Application Review and Recommendation
- Ordinance review and recommendations

We look forward to any opportunity to be of assistance, and for additional information and to learn more about ACE Telecom Consulting please contact Matt Watkins via email at <u>acetelecomconsulting@gmail.com</u>.



**Health Management Associates** Health Management Associates (HMA) is a leading independent national research and consulting firm in the healthcare industry. Founded in 1985, today we are more than 700 consultants strong and still growing. We have more than 30 locations across the country, with local expertise and intel in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico through HMA State Connect. We help clients stay ahead of the curve in publicly funded healthcare by providing technical assistance, resources, decision support and expertise.

Our team comes from all sides of the publicly funded healthcare arena. Formerly, they excelled as:

\*State Medicaid directors, mental health commissioners and budget officers \*CEO, COO, CFO and other hospital, health system and state-based health insurance marketplace leaders

\*Managed care executives

\*Physicians and other clinicians who have run health centers and integrated systems of care-many still practice medicine

\*Policy advisors to governors and other elected officials

\*Senior officials from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Office of Management & Budget (OMB)

\*Executives of community-based organizations, foundation program directors and civic leaders, university professors, researchers and statisticians, and LGBTQ and HIV community leaders

For additional information and to learn more about Health Management Associates please contact Christina Kadelski via email at <u>ckadelski@healthmanagement.com</u>.

# Monetizing Surplus Assets: Unlock Hidden Value

by Stacee Turner, Marketing Communications Specialist, GovDeals



## Are you overlooking a chance to generate extra income for your county?

GovDeals can provide your agency with the tools to increase your buyer base, ensure compliance, and receive higher returns. Since 2008, The New Jersey Association of Counties has partnered with GovDeals to provide an avenue for New Jersey's county agencies to offer their surplus online for a worldwide buying audience. The platform is dedicated to ensuring your success with expert advice supporting proven best practices and strategies.



**Take Control:** Sell used equipment securely, anytime, anywhere, on our global platform—no waiting required.



**Retain More Earnings:** No transport, storage, prep, listing fees, or high commissions. You keep more of your money!



**Expanding Reach:** Sell niche or general surplus with expert advice from our dedicated account managers, meeting all your goals.

## The GovDeals Platform

- User-friendly, compliant web-based software
- 250+ categories of items from heavy machinery to office supplies
- Large buyer base of internationally vetted bidders
- Over 90% of the auctions listed are sold

## **Discover the GovDeals Difference Today!**

To find out more contact Mike Baker, at 609-713-7888 or email him at <u>mbaker@govdeals.com</u>. Or visit <u>GovDeals.com/BecomeaSeller</u> to sign on as a seller.



# Save The Date And Join Us!

by Yvonne Ha, Marketing, MRA International

## January 29th – 31st 2025, TECHSPO at Harrah's Atlantic City, NJ

- Booth #'s 405, 407, & 409
- NJASA New Jersey Association of School Administrators
- New Jersey's premiere educational technology training and exhibition conference for school leaders

For over 20 years, MRA International has been at the forefront of technology solutions, proudly serving as a trusted HP Power Services and HPE Partner. We specialize in delivering unique IT solutions tailored for the public sector, ensuring you get the best support for your organization's needs.

As a comprehensive service center boasting the advantages of a locally owned family business, we deliver an exceptional standard of personalized service. Guided by our clients' best interests, we enhance their success by acting as a reliable partner who grasps their business objectives and remains ahead of the curve in new technologies, offering purchasing advice and optimal support for their continuous operations. Through MRA Warranty Services, our skilled technicians will either repair or replace your computing equipment. MRA's proficient configuration and deployment services provide swift, precise, and globally standardized IT solutions.

For more information, please contact the MRA Sales Team:

Email: <a href="mailto:sales@mrainternational.com">sales@mrainternational.com</a>

Phone: (732) 222-0997



# 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 <u>loren@njac.org</u>

Click here for an application

**ISSUE 158 - JANUARY 2025** 

Study With The Leader In Online Education Thomas Edison State University



LIVE WEBINAR Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

# **Registration:** Click <u>HERE</u>!

## This informative meeting will cover how to:

- Fund your education
- Find time to finish your degree
- Receive college credit for prior course work and professional experiences

# Come with your questions—we will have a live Q&A!

*Can't make the webinar?* Feel free to schedule a <u>15 minute appointment</u> for more information!

# **SHARE THE NEWS!**

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

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

# **Aruba User Experience Insight**



## Aruba UXI Sensors: Streamlining IT for New Jersey Counties

New Jersey's county and municipal organizations rely on robust technology to deliver critical services. Aruba User Experience Insight (UXI) sensors provide a vendor-agnostic solution to monitor network performance from the end-user perspective, improving reliability and efficiency in any IT environment.

## **Key Benefits**

- Proactive Monitoring: Detect and resolve issues before they impact services.
- Faster Troubleshooting: Identify root causes quickly, minimizing downtime.
- Vendor-Agnostic Design: Works seamlessly with any network infrastructure.
- Cost Efficiency: Prevent outages and optimize IT investments.

## Applications

- Public Safety: Maintain reliable 911 and emergency services communication.
- Administrative Offices: Boost productivity by ensuring smooth application performance.
- Community Services: Deliver consistent online experiences for residents.
- Smart Initiatives: Support IoT devices for smarter infrastructure.

Aruba UXI sensors bridge the gap between IT teams and end-users, enabling government entities to address IT challenges and deliver superior services efficiently. Ready your county for a smarter, more reliable future with <u>Aruba</u> <u>UXI sensors</u>. To learn more, you can contact either <u>pat.rucker@hpe.com</u> or <u>joe.hickey@hpe.com</u>



January is Stalking Awareness Month. Stalking survivors often speak about a feeling of helplessness, but in New Jersey, help is available from a number of different sources and programs. For this month, and throughout the year, the New Jersey Department of Children and Families urges all citizens to remain vigilant and, when needed, reach out for help.

# SEEK EMOTIONAL/PROFESSIONAL SUPPORTS AND TREATMENT.

Stalking can have lasting emotional, physical, and social impacts on victims and their families. Victims often report traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, excessive fear and hypervigilance as well as frustration with systems when seeking help. Overcoming stalking is not easy, but there is help. In NJ, services and supports are available through the DCF Division on Women.

DCF Culturally Specific Resources nj.gov/dcf/women/culturally-specific

Women's Referral Central Hotline 1-800-322-8092

NJ Address Confidentiality Program 1-877-218-9133

NJ Coalition Against Sexual Assault 1-800-631-4450

NJ Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-572-7233



# NJ COLITION AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING LAW ENFORCEMENT CONFERENCE

APRIL 1st and 2nd 2025 8:00am-4:30pm Sheraton Eatontown Hotel 6 Industrial Way East Eatontown, NJ 07724

Join us for a 2-Day Survivor Informed Human Trafficking Prevention Training In Preparation for the 2026 World Cup

## PRESENTERS INCLUDE:

- Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden
- David Ryan LE Expert, Former Chief of Police
- Judge Robert Lung HT Expert
- Gina Cavallo Consultant & HT Expert
- Suleman Masood Esq. Attorney & HT Expert
- Ashleigh Grace Speaker, High Profile Trafficking Ring
- Theresa Flores Survivor & HT Expert
- Cristian Eduardo Survivor & HT Expert
- John-Michael Lander Survivor, Expert, Former Athlete
- Debra Jones IOFA
- CAP Erika Halayko Atlantic Co. Prosecutor's Office
- AP Joseph Remy Atlantic Co. Prosecutor's Office

#### LEARN FROM EXPERTS IN THE FIELD TO:

- Recognize the gravity of this exploitative, abusive criminal enterprise that discriminates against no one
- Develop and Maintain a Victim Centric, Trauma Informed Approach to Human Traffick Investigation and Prosecution
- Access a Toolbox of National, State, and Local Contacts and Resources of Service Providers and Investigative Resources
- Reinforce the Multifaceted Approach towards Human Trafficking by Understanding Trauma
- Use Education to Prevent and Mitigate Trafficking, especially in large scale events such as the Super Bowl and the World Cup

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# **Grant Opportunities**

- The <u>NOAA Center for Collaborative Heat Monitoring</u> opened applications for communities to monitor and evaluate factors influencing local heat risk. Funded through the Inflation Reduction Act, selected communities will receive \$10,000 and technical support to collect heat distribution data through community-led campaigns. <u>APPLICATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 17, 2025.</u>
- Up to \$75 million in funding is available through the NOAA <u>Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier</u> <u>Removal</u> grant. These funds will be used to remove dams and other in-stream barriers, reopen migratory pathways, and restore access to healthy habitat for fish around the country. NOAA will accept proposals between \$750,000 and \$8 million for the entire award, with typical funding anticipated to range from \$3 million to \$5 million. <u>APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEBURARY 10, 2025.</u>
- Up to \$20 million is available for fish passage and tribal capacity building under the NOAA <u>Restoring</u> <u>Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal</u> funding opportunity. This funding will support U.S. federally recognized tribes, Alaska Native Corporations, and tribal organizations in building tribal organizational capacity and implementing projects that reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for tribally-important species. NOAA will accept proposals between \$300,000 and \$6 million for the entire award, with typical funding anticipated to range from \$500,000 to \$4 million. <u>APPLICATION DEADLINE: FEBURARY 27, 2025.</u>



# Nationwide<sup>®</sup> FastPay makes submitting payroll and census data faster and easier





# Introducing FastPay, our fully digital payroll submission system.

It's designed to:								
G	$\bigcirc$	Ø	Eliminate manual entry					
Secure participant information	Save time	Improve accuracy						
	FastPay gives yo	ou the option to:						
• Add or edit <b>employment</b> of	<b>lates</b> to update	View and manage saved payrolls						
participant records • Submit a <b>debit ACH paym</b> a few steps	ent with just	<ul> <li>Choose from four sub to fit your needs</li> </ul>	mission methods					
Import payroll tool		Copy payroll tool						
<ul> <li>Start with contributions in your payroll software</li> </ul>	an exported file from	<ul> <li>Select from previously submitted details to carry over contribution amounts</li> </ul>						
<ul> <li>Create a reusable configue your own file format to in manual entry</li> </ul>		<ul> <li>Sort participants and edit details for ease of balancing</li> </ul>						
Payroll invoice tool		Manually key payro	ll tool					
<ul> <li>Begin a payroll with a set payroll calendar</li> </ul>	bay date based on your	<ul> <li>Create a payroll detail by manually keying participants and contribution amounts</li> </ul>						
<ul> <li>Generate expected contril current pay date</li> </ul>	oution amounts for the							
Get	ting set up with Fa	stPay is fast and ea	sy.					
	JTR@nationwide.com	_	-					

Nationwide Retirement Solutions and Nationwide Life Insurance Company (collectively "Nationwide") have endorsement relationships with the National Association of Counties (NACo). More information about the endorsement relationships can be found online at nrsforu.com.

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NRM-19313AO-NX (09/23)



# **Elevate Your Leadership Skills In 2025**

Professional Development Academy + NACo

As we reflect on the past year and align goals for the year ahead, we're excited to focus on a key area of growth: **leadership development**. Investing in our leaders is essential to driving innovation, fostering positive workplace culture, and achieving long-term goals.

The **NACo Leadership** Academy includes three virtual leadership development programs designed to equip county government officials and staff with practical skills to better serve their teams and communities. Program cohorts are offered throughout the year, and all activities are **100% online** as a combination self-paced learning, small group discussion, and guided mentorship from a team of leadership coaches.

#### More than 100 county leaders across New Jersey have already participated!

#### **High Performance Leadership Academy**

**12 Week Program:** Starting in January, April, August, or September **Request Info:** <u>https://www.naco.org/page/high-performance-leadership-academy</u>

Provides best practices in leadership, organizational development, change management, negotiation and collaboration, effective communication, and delivering value within high performance management. Intentionally broad to support any current or emerging leader.

#### **Cybersecurity Leadership Academy**

12 Week Program: Starting in January, April, or August

**Request Info:** <u>https://www.naco.org/page/naco-enterprise-cybersecurity-leadership-academy</u>

Collaborative readiness program led by Fortune 500 CISOs and peers who deliver their proven frameworks and insights on how to lead and secure a network and an organization. This program coaches participants on what it means to think and act as a cybersecurity leader.

#### Artificial Intelligence (AI) Leadership Academy – NEW!

6 Week Program: Starting in January, April, August, or November

**Request Info:** <u>https://www.naco.org/page/naco-artificial-intelligence-ai-leadership-academy</u>

Demystify AI with practical, relevant, and immediately actionable use case examples and tools. The program explores strategies for mitigating risks, addressing ethical challenges, and maximizing the positive impact of AI on governments and the communities they serve.

Find out more about NACo Leadership Academy programs by contacting Director of Enrollment, Sarah Bruck, at <u>sarahb@pdaleadership.com</u> or 503-558-2535.



# FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



John G. Donnadio, Esq.



ISSUE 158 - JANUARY 2025

<b>Events &amp; Holidays</b>								
SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT		
			ани ием кеми	2 Deck The Hall: Festival of Trees 9:00 a.m 4:00 p.m. Jim Whelan Boardwalk Hall Atlantic City Atlantic County	3 Tuckerton Seaport Fireworks & Fun 1/1 12:00 p.m. –6:00 p.m. Seaport <i>Tuckerton</i> <i>Ocean County</i>	4		
5	6	7	8	9	10 The Greatest Piano Men 8:00 p.m. MAYO PAC Morristown Morris County	11 The Best of Winter Birding 12/11 - 12/12 8:30 a.m5:00 p.m. Cape May Bird Observatory <i>Middle Township</i> <i>Cape May County</i>		
12 Disney's Encanto Sing Along 1:00 p.m. & 4:00 p.m. bergenPAC Englewood Bergen County	13 Three Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Acts 12/12 6:00 p.m8:00 p.m. Levoy Theatre <i>Millville</i> <i>Cumberland County</i>	14 Women's Basketball Game 5:00 p.m. PCCC Main Campus Gym Paterson Passaic County	15	16 All That Jazz 12/17 8:00 p.m. Hamilton Stage UC PAC <i>Rahway</i> <i>Union County</i>	17 1964: The Tribute 7:00 p.m 11:00 p.m. Scottish Rite Auditorium Collingswood Camden County	18 Jersey Shore Spring Home Show 1/18 & 1/19 10:00 a.m5:00 p.m. Brookdale Community College <i>Lincroft</i> Monmouth County		
19 Winter Thaw Music Festival 2:00 p.m. Centenary Stage Company <i>Hackettstown</i> <i>Warren County</i>	20 Martin Luther King Day	21 Rabies Vaccination Clinic - FREE 1/25 10:00 a.m 1:00 p.m. 1004 Centerton Road <i>Pittsgrove</i> <i>Salem County</i>	22 Garden State Comic Winter Fest 1/25 & 1/26 10:00 a.m. Sussex County Fairgrounds Augusta Sussex County	23 Hot Wheels Monster Trucks Live Glow-N-Free 1/26 12:00 p.m. CURE Insurance Arena <i>Trenton</i> <i>Mercer County</i>	24 Iconic Broadway, A Concert 8:00 p.m 10:00 p.m. Music Mountain Theatre Lambertville Hunterdon County	25 All White Classic VI: The Renaissance 4:00 p.m 8:00 p.m. Howard Johnson by Wyndham Blackwood Gloucester County		
26 New Jersey Home Show 12/25 & 12/26 10:00 a.m 5:00 p.m. Meadowland Expo Center Secaucus Hudson County	27	28 Dancing with the Stars: Live 7:30 p.m. State Theatre NJ New Brunswick Middlesex County	29 Devils VS. Flyers 7:00 p.m. Prudential Center Newark Essex County	30 Rabies Vaccine Clinic FREE 1/29 3:00 p.m 4:00 p.m. Animal Shelter Westampton Towship Burlington County	31			
www.njac.o	org					page 16		