



JOHN TAYLOR BABBITT FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER 2023

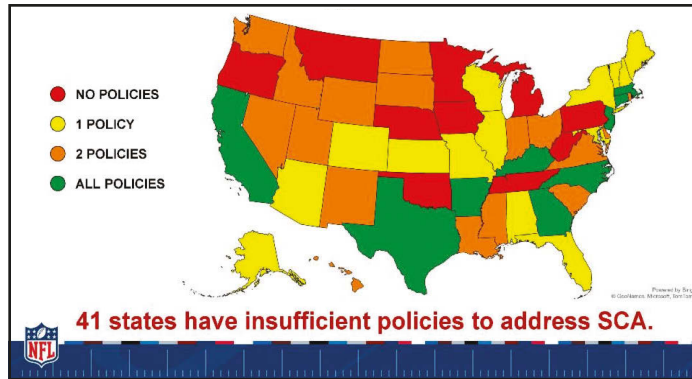
Dedicated to preventing sudden cardiac death

JTB is welcomed into nationally recognized Smart Hearts Sports Coalition

The JTB Foundation had some very good news recently. The Foundation has been invited to become a member of The Smart Hearts Sports Coalition. Founded in March by the National Football League (NFL) in response to the life-saving care provided to Damar Hamlin, the coalition comprises major professional sports leagues and leading medical and advocacy groups. Other coalition members include the National Basketball Association, National Hockey League, Major League Baseball, Women's National Basketball Association, Major League Soccer, American Heart Association, and the American Red Cross....just to name a few.

JoAnne Babbitt, vice president of the Foundation, said, "This is a major accomplishment for a regional foundation such as JTB and is directly attributed to our trail blazing work in the State of New Jersey."

The goal of the Smart Heart Sports Coalition is for all 50 states to adopt three lifesaving policies that prevent fatalities from sudden cardiac arrest. These policies include AEDs at each high school sports venue, CPR



education in schools, and emergency action plans that are venue specific. The inclusion of JTB and its recognition by the NFL represents a huge milestone in the development of the Foundation.

Funded by a \$1 million grant from the NFL, this multi-year initiative is focused on teaching school communities how to be ready to respond to a cardiac emergency. Coalition members are engaged with policymakers in numerous states to urge lawmakers to enact life-saving measures.

Since the coalition's outreach and advocacy efforts began, Nina Hamlin, Damar Hamlin's mother has agreed to serve as honorary Chairwoman of the coalition's Ambassadors Advisory Council. This new group comprises current and former professional athletes from all sports, as well as other notable figures who will serve as advocates and spokespeople for the coalition's state-level advocacy.

David Babbitt, president of the Foundation, said, "We are so excited that we have a seat at the table and will now work to get life-saving legislation passed in all fifty states."

U.S. Congresswoman Cherfilus-McCormick and Sen. Booker introduce Access To AEDs Act

Congresswoman Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick is on a mission to expand lifesaving health care.

"AEDs were created to save children's lives, and that's precisely what our bill aims to do when emergencies strike."



DAVID AND JOANNE BABBITT with Dr. Matthew W. Martinez (center), Director of Atlantic Health System Sports Cardiology at Morristown Medical Center, league cardiologist for Major League Soccer, and team cardiologist for the New York Jets, on Capitol Hill for the introduction of the Access to AEDs Act.

Cherfilus-McCormick and Booker have united to promote a bipartisan bill that directs the Secretary of Health and Human Services to partner with non-profit health care organizations to develop and implement a comprehensive program to promote defibrillation access.

JoAnne and David Babbitt were present for the introduction of the bill this past March in Washington DC. "We were honored and thrilled to support the launch of the Access to AEDs Act and to be invited to participate in this national event," said JoAnne Babbitt.

Also present were Damar Hamlin and his family, U.S. Sen. Chuck Schumer, and numerous nationally recognized sports and



U.S. SENATOR CHUCK SCHUMER warmly welcomes Damar Hamlin to the press conference for the introduction of the Access to AEDs Act.

heart organizations.

Only 23 states currently have AED school requirements, said Cherfilus-McCormick. She said the bill would provide funding to purchase and maintain AEDs, pay

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A LETTER FROM THE BABBITT FAMILY

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This was an incredibly busy year for the John Taylor Babbitt Foundation! Looking back, we all remember starting this year with the shocking collapse of Buffalo Bills safety Damar Hamlin on Monday night football. Damar's sudden cardiac arrest was played out in front of millions of TV viewers and sent shock waves throughout the country. The lesson to be learned and precisely demonstrated by the Buffalo Bills training team is the importance of being prepared to respond to sudden cardiac arrest. As you will read in our newsletter, the focus not only needs to be on professional sport stadiums but also local high schools, gyms, baseball diamonds, hockey rinks and youth athletic fields across the country.

This year the Foundation started putting the COVID pandemic and supply change issues behind us as availability of AEDs and AED components is starting to become a reality. We still have a way to go where supply is equal to demand, but we hope you enjoy reading about starting to see movement in AED availability.

As an organization, partnering with others has been and continues to be a key objective as we believe that alone we can do so little but together we can do so much! Our partnership



with Morristown Medical Center represents just one of our efforts to place even more AEDs in places of public gathering. We are also proud to announce our participation in the Smart Hearts Sports Coalition, an organization launched by the NFL whose membership is comprised of major league sports entities. It is an honor and a privilege to be asked to join this national movement and speaks volumes to the recognition of the work we do as a foundation.

As always, thank you for your support of our mission to prevent sudden cardiac death. We could not do it without you!

With much gratitude,
The Babbitts

John Taylor Babbitt Foundation goals and objectives

The John Taylor Babbitt Foundation is a not-for-profit 501(c)-3 organization founded in John's memory and dedicated to preventing sudden cardiac death.

Goals and Objectives:

- Install defibrillators (AEDs) in schools, athletic venues and public gathering places and facilitate training of individuals in the use of AEDs and CPR.
- Propose and sponsor legislative efforts to encourage widespread placement of AEDs.
- Raise awareness of sudden cardiac arrest and the key role of bystanders in saving lives.
- Fund research on genetic cardiac disorders that increase risk of sudden cardiac death.
- Promote and support screening for sudden cardiac arrest risk factors

Research:

- Support research on genetic cardiac disorders, including Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy and other diseases that increase the risk of sudden cardiac death

Screening:

- Promote screening programs to identify individuals at risk for sudden cardiac arrest and efforts aimed at improving the accuracy and cost effectiveness of screening programs

Defibrillators and Training:

- Provide assistance for the planning, purchase and deployment of defibrillators
- Deliver and sponsor training programs in CPR/AED

Legislation:

- Propose legislation and advocate for state-level and federal laws on defibrillators
- Work on municipal policies and procedures to support the purchase and maintenance of defibrillators

Awareness and Education:

- Raise awareness of cardiac arrest and how to save lives at high schools, universities and among young adults
- Team on educational campaigns and outreach with the American Heart Association, Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation, Parent Heart Watch and other organizations

Contact info: For more information go to www.jtbfoundation.org. Also on Facebook "The John Taylor Babbitt Foundation," Instagram "John Taylor Babbitt Foundation," and Twitter @thejtbtweet.

Address: PO Box 698 Chatham, NJ 07928
973-722-1212

Project Heartbeat

A new initiative is finally underway in Morris County.

Project Heartbeat was started in 2017 at Morristown Medical Center, home to the Gagnon Cardiovascular Institute. The donation program, made possible through the generosity and support of the John Taylor Babbitt Foundation, was delayed a few years due to the Covid pandemic and AED supply chain shortages. Through Project Heartbeat, AEDs are donated to nonprofit organizations which compliments the AED donation program currently done by JTB.

JoAnne Babbitt, vice-president of the JTB Foundation, said it is gratifying to "see things starting to happen in Morristown." She said other non-profits are waiting in the wings for AED donations to become scheduled.



LEFT TO RIGHT: Tim Lockwood, President, Board of the Interfaith Food Pantry; Kevin McGovern, Executive Director, Cardiovascular Services at Morristown; Dr. Linda Gillam, Medical Director, Cardiovascular Service Line for Atlantic Health System; Dave Babbitt, President, John Taylor Babbitt Foundation; and Carolyn Lake, Executive Director, Interfaith Food Pantry

The five organizations in New Jersey that received the AEDs and training are:

- Warren County Habitat for Humanity, Washington
- Morris County Organization for Hispanic Affairs, Dover
- Morris County Interfaith Food Pantry, Morris Plains
- The Academy of our Lady of Peace, New Providence
- Temple Beth Tikvah, Wayne

All participants in the program will also receive CPR and AED training courtesy of Atlantic Ambulance. "We are all elated as we seem to have gotten this program off the ground," said Susan Johns of the Foundation for Morristown Medical Center.

Happy Re-birthday to you

We all know the song “Happy Birthday to you.” It is the world’s most well-known and popular song. It has been sung hundreds of millions of times each year for over three-quarters of a century. It has been heard in outer space, at baseball stadiums, and in movies. And it is the only song in the English language guaranteed to make people of all ages smile and sing along.

Today, there’s a new song out, and it’s called “Happy Re-birthday to you.”

What is a re-birthday?

A re-birthday is when someone has a sudden cardiac arrest and are resuscitated by cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and/or the use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). From a biological perspective, cardiac arrest is synonymous with death by cardiorespiratory criteria, which is declared based on the absence of heartbeat and respiration and the loss of brain function. When CPR and use of an AED result in return of a normal heartbeat, the victim gets a second chance at life.

“We are seeing a lot more of these re-birthdays, such as the 10th or the 15th,” noted JoAnne Babbitt, vice-president of the JTB Foundation. One of the Foundation’s board members just celebrated his 10th year since being resuscitated after his sudden cardiac arrest with well-wishers donating \$7,000 to the JTB Foundation in tribute.

So, the next time you hear “Happy Birthday” being sung, think of the joy many survivors feel from having a lot more birthdays. 🌱



DAMAR HAMLIN addresses the *Access to AEDs Act* sponsors, endorsers, and the media. JTB is one of the many nationally recognized organizations endorsing the Act.

Research moves forward at Duke with support from JTB

Generous support this year from the John Taylor Babbitt Foundation has catalyzed research exploring ways in which mutations in DSP can cause life-threatening ventricular arrhythmias, leading to development of tools to test new therapies. The DSP gene provides instructions for making a protein called desmoplakin, which plays an essential role in providing strength and stability to cardiac tissue. New evidence has found that patients with mutations in DSP can develop both inflammation of the heart (myocarditis) and arrhythmic cardiomyopathy (ACM). This can result in sudden cardiac arrest which impacts adolescents and adults alike. Unfortunately, there are no therapies to prevent the disease from progressing or to reverse the disease.

The JTB Foundation has brought together a diverse team of experts in the field, led by Dr. Andrew Landstrom (Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Cell Biology at Duke University) and including Dr. Anwar Chahal (Director of Cardiovascular Genetics and WellSpan Health) and Dr. Devyani Chowdhury (Director of Cardiology Care for Children Lancaster), to study how this

disease develops with an overall goal of identifying new targets that might be used to develop new therapies. Over the past year, this team identified a family with a new DSP mutation that led to both myocarditis and life-threatening ACM in multiple family members. A cutting-edge molecular tool, CRISPR/Cas9, was used to create the mutation which the family carried into a line of stem cells that were previously created from the blood of a healthy volunteer. These induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs) can be used to make and study any tissue in the body, including



DR. LANDSTROM and his research team at Duke

tissues that are challenging to obtain such as a patient’s heart cells.

While studies are still on-going, Dr. Landstrom’s team found evidence suggesting that the DSP mutation impairs proper contraction of the heart.

This work is among the first to be done in human heart cells to determine how DSP mutations result in ACM development from a family with both ACM and recurrent myocarditis. Dr. Landstrom believes that additional exploration may lead to new targets for medication development, or potentially gene therapy. 🌱

U.S. Congresswoman Cherfilus-McCormick and Sen. Booker introduce Access To AEDs Act

Continued from page 1 for CPR and AED training, and assist schools in developing heart screening programs. Also included is the establishment of a clearinghouse database to gather information on pediatric sudden cardiac arrest.

“Sudden cardiac arrests can be experienced by anyone, including children,” added Booker. In fact, he stated, student-athletes are more than three and a half times more likely to experience sudden cardiac arrest than nonathletes.

Damar Hamlin said he is “very appreciative” of the work that has been done to support the Access to AEDs Act. “The care I received saved my life. This legislation can help ensure that schools are just as prepared and trained to respond in a time of crisis as those on the sidelines of an NFL game.”

As of October 2023, the bill has 9 senators and 92 house representatives signed on as co-sponsors of this important piece of national legislation. 🌱

Rain could not dampen

Yes, it was a wet one when walkers from all over gathered Sunday, April 30 at The Pingry School campus in Bernards Township for the 17th Walk With Heart to benefit the John Taylor Babbitt Foundation.

The torrents did not put a damper on the excitement for the walk, as in-person participants joined virtual walkers from as far away as Dubai, Spain, Florida, Michigan, and California.

More than 175 joined in person for the festivities which were moved inside the school due to the inclement weather. Guests

were treated to refreshments, speeches and a CPR competition. New this year were games and activities for our young supporters in addition to a raffle.

David Babbitt, president of the JTB Foundation, remarked, "Even though we held all the festivities inside the school, many of our guests still wanted to brave the elements and walk outside. We made it around the school track a few laps before the skies once again opened up! It really was the perfect contingency plan as our guests could WALK in the rain if they wanted to or they could stay inside and keep dry."



DETERMINED JTB Foundation supporters walking in spite of the rainy day



OUR WALK WITH HEART student hosts - Mary Claire Morgan, Charley Bush (both Pingry) and Olivier Neumann-Loreck (Chatham High School)

JTB Heart Club News

The Pingry School Heart Club

When The Pingry School moved the Walk With Heart from the third weekend in May to April 30, the seniors who usually host and staff the event were still involved in classes.

"Despite the timing, the seniors kept up their interest," reported JoAnne Babbitt, vice-president of JTB. The seniors still played an active role in marketing and planning the WALK, including recruiting underclassman to volunteer for the event.

During the month of May, our senior WALK hosts Mary Claire Morgan and Charley Bush did an internship with the JTB Foundation. In addition to post-WALK follow up activities, the students reworked databases, prepared board presentations, calculated event revenue and expense streams, and catalogued legislation both at the state and federal level. "Mary Claire and Charley's work helped the JTB board make decisions about both tactical

and strategic foundation activities," said JoAnne Babbitt.

Additional Pingry Heart Club activities included a community service day dedicated to prepping our 2022 newsletter in addition to promoting sudden cardiac arrest statistics during Sudden Cardiac Arrest Awareness Month (October) and American Heart Month (February).

Chatham High School Heart Club

Chatham High School junior Oliver Neumann-Loreck, head of the JTB Club at Chatham High School, and his team worked with the Chatham Emergency Squad to offer CPR and AED certification to interested citizens.

Anyone from the Chathams can sign up for the training for free. Instructors also volunteer their time. "It's a great program which provides life saving skills to Chatham community members," said JoAnne Babbitt, vice-president of the Foundation.



PINGRY JTB HEART CLUB members prepping the foundations 2022 newsletter at the Chatham Library

Oliver is also a junior cadet with the Chatham Emergency Squad. It is a rigorous program which requires hours of training in addition to volunteering by responding to EMS calls at least once a week.

The JTB Heart Club at Chatham High also worked to promote National Heart Month. 🌱

WALK WITH HEART 2023

Dr. Linda Gillam, an interventional cardiologist at Morristown Medical Center, spoke to the crowd. Dr. Gillam is the Dorothy and Lloyd Huck Chair of Cardiovascular Medicine, Medical Director of the Cardiovascular Service Line for Atlantic Health System, and Professor of Medicine at the Sidney Kimmel Medical College at Thomas Jefferson University.

Under Dr. Gillam's leadership, Atlantic Health System and Morristown Medical Center have become nationally recognized as leaders in the cardiology space, attracting best-in-class talent, state-of-the-art technology, and clinical trials.

Dr. Gillam talked about the community partnership Morristown Medical Center is fortunate to have with the JTB Foundation and vice versa.

Another speaker (*see sidebar story*), was Kiersten Rock-Torcivia, a dynamic 17-year-old high school senior from Morris Knolls who started her own charity to fund Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) for youth in underserved communities.

The Walk this year raised more than \$50,000 for JTB. ♡



DAVE BABBITT, Susan Johns (Major Gifts Officer for Morristown Medical Center), Dr. Linda Gillam (Guest Speaker, Medical Director of the Cardiovascular Service Line for Atlantic Health System), and JoAnne Babbitt



GUEST SPEAKER KIERSTEN Rock-Torcivia sharing her "heartfelt" medical journey with Walk participants



TAKING ON the rainy weather are walkers Erin and Joe Nedick

John's Story

John was 16 years old when he collapsed and died from an undetected heart condition while playing basketball with his friends. He was a 2003 graduate of St. Patrick's School in Chatham N.J. and a junior at The Pingry School in Basking Ridge. An avid sports fan, John played football, basketball, soccer and baseball. His knowledge of sports was legendary, and he loved nothing more than sharing that knowledge with his friends and family.

Virtuous, decent, kind and caring, John was a great friend, brother, son and grandson. He always listened when people wanted to talk and had the ability to bring a smile to the faces of those he touched. ♡

Cardiac Arrest Survivors get new organization for recovery

When a scared young 25-year-old who had just had a Sudden Cardiac Arrest not too long ago was grasping for answers about his heart and his health, a new, dynamic online community across the United States and the globe was there to message him that everything was going to be all right.

The online community is called CASA, which stands for the Cardiac Arrest Survivor Alliance™, and it is a virtual home for patients, families, caregivers, medical personnel, and advocates that helps community members recover and re-engage following heart trauma.

Since going live earlier this year, CASA now has more than 1,000 members. It is active in places like the Sudan and New Zealand as well as in New Jersey, according to Mary Newman, president of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation, a national organization.

"CASA is a place for survivors to share their stories," said Newman. Actually, plans for CASA were laid in 2005, but the technology became outmoded, Newman said, and a new technical platform had to be created. When health is threatened, patients are often left confused and wondering how

to cope. But now there is an online community that offers a lot of the answers.

CASA, which stands for the Cardiac Arrest Survivor Alliance, is an outgrowth of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation. It offers peer

support, information, monthly webinars, and access to experts. The Foundation just received a two-year grant of \$50,000 from the American Heart Association to get CASA going.

"A lot of attention is now being paid to survivors," noted JoAnne Babbitt, vice president of the JTB Foundation. "Feedback has been very positive."

Babbitt's colleague, Mary Newman, president of the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation, said until recently the psychological and cognitive effects of sudden cardiac arrest on survivors and their families were not fully realized. "As more people survive SCA than ever before, it has become increasingly clear that survivors and co-survivors need emotional support and resources to manage survivorship," Newman said.

Part of that support involves finding peers who have been through similar medical experiences and want to talk about them.

"CASA is a home for hope and healing," Newman continued. "Our vision for CASA is to become an indispensable destination for anyone affected by cardiac arrest."

Participants can sign up for CASA at casahearts.org.



DAVE BABBITT, JoAnne Babbitt, Mary Newman (Executive Director Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation), Mike Papale and Joan Papale ("In A Heartbeat Foundation") at the annual Parent Heart Watch Meeting in January.

AED Donations starting to move again, CPR training on the rise

Even though problems in the post-COVID supply chain for Automated External Defibrillators continue to exist, more and more requests for AEDs are starting to get filled.



THE CLARIDGE - A Montclair Film Non-Profit Theater

"Things were slow, but we are starting to see movement once again," said David Babbitt, president of the JTB Foundation.

Within the past few months, both supply and demand of AEDs have increased significantly. "AED and component supply varies depending on the type of AED and the manufacturer, but we do see an end in sight to the supply chain issues we experienced over the past three years. We are also seeing an increase in CPR training as people are not as apprehensive about gathering in person to learn these lifesaving skills," said JoAnne Babbitt. Over the past year, the JTB Foundation has donated over 35 AEDs and trained over 400 people in CPR.

Some of the AED donations made recently by JTB include those for New Jersey Civic Youth Ballet in Hackettstown, which also includes CPR training; Montclair Film Academy; Ogden Junior Preschool in Chatham; West Caldwell Public Library; Twin County Soccer Association of Brick Township; and East Brunswick Recreation and Parks plus Trinitas



WEST CALDWELL LIBRARY - JoAnne Babbitt, Alexis Prussack-Martin (Adult Program Director), Amy Moran (Assistant Director), Valli Cushman (ESL Instructor)

Hospitals in Elizabeth.

"We are so excited to be donating AEDs once again and look forward to donating many more in 2024," said JoAnne Babbitt.

A rare heart condition inspires a new mission for New Jersey Teen

When most teens are solely focused on college admission and enjoying time with family and friends, Kiersten Rock-Torcivia is raising funds to place automated external defibrillators (AEDs) in disadvantaged socio-economic areas.

Kiersten knows from personal experience how important access to medical care and life-saving therapies (i.e., AEDs) are. Diagnosed with ARVD/C at age 15, Kiersten traded her lifelong passion of competitive figure skating for helping to save lives from sudden cardiac death.

Rock-Torcivia founded Heartfelt Harmonies, a nonprofit dedicated to promoting awareness of hidden heart disease among the youth. Heartfelt Harmonies donates AEDs to under-served communities and has donated 10 AEDs with more planned for the future. "I hope that these devices never have to be used, but they will be there to save a life if ever needed, maybe yours or someone you love," said Kiersten.

But that's not all Kiersten does. Knowing the stress and trauma brought on during her long hospital stays and the therapeutic relief offered through music, she has provided over 1,000 "music kits" to over 20 hospitals nationwide. "For my first surgery, I wish I knew the soothing impact of music. I hope Heartfelt Harmonies and these kits can help as many children and families as possible during a stressful time."

Kiersten Rock-Torcivia was a featured speaker at the Walk With Heart in April. "The Walk With Heart was an amazing opportunity for me to share my story and raise awareness," said Kiersten. JoAnne Taylor Babbitt, vice president of the JTB Foundation, said Rock-Torcivia's testimonial was inspirational and resonated loud and clear with all the attendees, especially the many high school students who were in attendance. "She is an amazing young lady who will accomplish great things in the future."



KIERSTEN ROCK-TORCIVIA of Morris Knolls is presented with the Youth Advocacy Champion Award at the Parent Heart Watch Conference in Houston Tx earlier this year. She was also a featured speaker at the Pingry School Walk With Heart on April 30.

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Donors Over \$1000

We would like to thank all our donors for their generous support and recognize the following major contributors, all of whom gave the JTB Foundation \$1,000 or more.

Without generous donations from individuals, families, foundations, and corporations, our organization would not be able to continue making a difference in the health advocacy field.

John and Sue Abely
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Gifts through Charitable Events:

Fundraiser In Honor of Chuck Pomerantz -
10th re-birthday anniversary.
The Spring Lake 5 - Tom Healy
The Spring Lake 5 - Stephen Auth
Donations In Memory of Ray Peloquin
The Bennett Family - Facebook Birthday
Fundraisers - Ken and Tanya

Inventive ways to give

Corporate matching, pre-tax payroll deduction, or designating JTB for your United Way Donation are great ways to support the mission and activities of the JTB Foundation.

Most corporate programs allow you to direct your donation to any registered tax-exempt nonprofit organization in the U.S., including the JTB Foundation.

If your company has a United Way program, a corporate matching or pre-tax payroll deduction program, please consider leveraging them to help us save lives from sudden cardiac arrest. Contact the John Taylor Babbitt Foundation at 973 722-1212 or email info@jtbfoundation.org. 🌿



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Spring Lake Five Mile Run Raises \$7K for JTB



The skies were blue and the weather was perfect for the 2023 Spring Lake Five Run. The event, held every Memorial Day Weekend, is a Jersey Shore favorite and kicks off the start of the summer season. For the fifth consecutive year, JTB Foundation was selected as a charity partner by the Race Committee. Our team set a record this year by raising over \$7,000 for the foundation which will be used to place AEDs on fields and recreational complexes in the State of NJ. 🌿