

An aerial photograph of Newark, New Jersey, showing a dense urban landscape with various skyscrapers and buildings. The image has a blue tint and is used as a background for the report cover.

2023

REPORT TO THE FIELD

NEWARK PHILANTHROPIC LIAISON

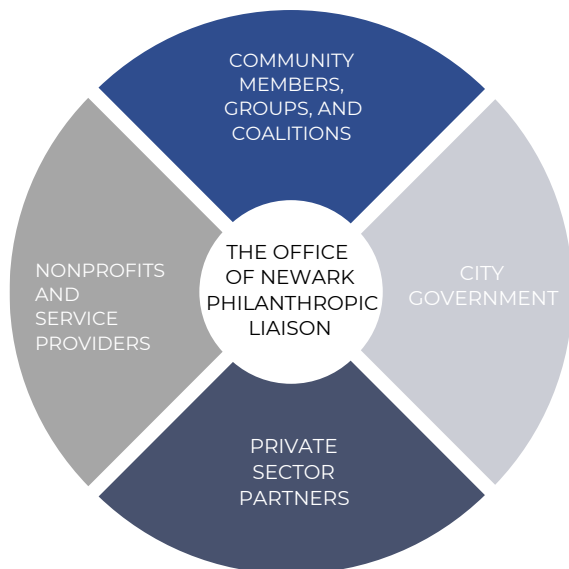
OVERVIEW

The Office of the Newark Philanthropic Liaison (NPL) – an innovative collaboration between the City of Newark and the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers (CNJG) – is tasked with harnessing interest, fostering greater effectiveness, and attracting resources toward policy and programmatic areas that affect and improve the lives of Newark’s residents. Supported by a dedicated cohort of funders through CNJG, the office is non-partisan and based in the Mayor’s Office in Newark City Hall. The Liaison represents one of the nation's first formal partnerships between a city and the philanthropic community and has become a national model for public-private alliances. At its core, the role has three main functions:



As a strategic initiative of the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers, the NPL role helps to fulfill the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers mission to support and elevate New Jersey’s philanthropic community through shared learning, collaborative and trusting relationships, network building, and leadership.

OUR MODEL



OUR TEAM



KEVIN CALLAGHAN
NEWARK PHILANTHROPIC LIAISON



JESSICA DEBRAH
NEWARK PHILANTHROPIC LIAISON FELLOW

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2023 REFLECTION

If 2022 was a “year of realization,” during which significant bodies of work led by the Newark Philanthropic Liaison for several years bore fruit, then 2023 was a “year of taking the show on the road.” The NPL had multiple opportunities to celebrate accomplishments and lead discussions on the role of philanthropy in the public sector. As a unique partnership between a city government and the philanthropic and nonprofit community, we hope that some of the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers’ work on this initiative can encourage others in New Jersey and around the country to consider cross-sector collaboration as an essential aspect of achieving big goals that build and nurture equitable communities.

We can do more together in full collaboration than we can accomplish in silos. There is not a single model to spark public-private collaboration, but rather a series of principles and best practices that can be adapted to the unique circumstances of each community. Our aspiration is that these principles and best practices can spark innovative collaboration models across New Jersey and the country so that we can achieve a process toward equity that centers diverse voices in every stage of the process.

NEWARK PHILANTHROPIC LIAISON SPEAKING OPPORTUNITIES

In the spirit of “taking the show on the road,” Kevin had the opportunity to share his work as Newark Philanthropic Liaison, and the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers’ leadership in creating the role, several times in 2023. He presented at the annual conference of the United Philanthropy Forum in a session entitled, “Newark Philanthropic Liaison: An Effective Model for Philanthropy and Local Government Collaboration.” He facilitated a panel discussion with early funders of the role, including Craig Drinkard of the Victoria Foundation, Sarah Keh of the Prudential Foundation, and Barbara Reisman of the Maher Charitable Foundation.

In October, Kevin joined a panel discussion at Philanthropy Delaware’s annual meeting to discuss public-private partnerships with staff from Senator Chris Coons’ office and Governor John Carney’s office. He also met one-on-one with organizations interested in creating a similar role to the NPL in California and Washington to discuss best practices learned by the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers over more than fifteen years of championing this position.

Kevin served as a content lead and spokesperson for various initiatives NPL champions. He joined WBGO's "Ask the Mayor" program two times in 2023 to discuss his work on economic security for both Newark's guaranteed income pilot, the Newark Movement for Economic Equity, and a grant received from Cities for Financial Empowerment that assists Kevin in facilitating the co-creation of a financial empowerment blueprint for municipal government. He also facilitated a panel discussion with Mayor Ras J. Baraka, film director Marc Levin, and guaranteed income pilot participants at a screening for "It's Basic," a new documentary that debuted in 2023 at the Tribeca Film Festival. Finally, the GreenLight Fund asked Kevin to represent its Selection Advisory Council, on which he sits, in a panel discussion to introduce its first grantee to the Newark community.

LEADERSHIP THROUGH FUNDER AFFINITY GROUPS

The Office of Newark Philanthropic Liaison continued to ensure strong programming through opportunities for learning and collaboration with the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers' Funder Affinity Groups. We hosted a session on Newark's immigrant community, with a particular focus on the growing number of migrants making their way to Newark. We grappled with a national and state struggle with literacy that is pronounced in communities like Newark that felt a disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We discussed "A Path Home," the City of Newark's three-year strategic plan to end unsheltered homelessness, with the city's Homelessness Czar Luis Ulerio.

Throughout the year, Kevin kept members of the funding community apprised of both emerging challenges and new collaborations.



Newark Education Funder Meeting Speakers

EDUCATION

In 2023, we came together to grapple with several challenges facing our schools and students to map collective paths forward. Our philanthropic strategy in Newark mirrors Mayor Baraka's Newark Forward vision, and one of the goals of that vision is to ensure Newark's place as an "educated city." Kevin played a role in linking key partners, identifying thought leaders, and cultivating the philanthropic funds necessary to lead in three issue areas of great importance: our children, families, and schools.

TEN POINT LITERACY PLAN

COVID-19 had a significant impact on student academic achievement. As many have observed, students learned a great deal in the shortened and virtual pandemic years of education about resilience, public health, and virtual knowledge accumulation, but did not learn as much as is ordinarily the case in traditional academic subjects. This is particularly true in a city like Newark. Essential workers who did not have the option to spend time at home while their children attended school represents many of our families. A significant percentage of students did not have reliable access to internet. The prevalence of inter-generational houses made the equipment and space for at-home learning especially challenging.

Mayor Baraka, concerned with the data on literacy rates from 2022 state testing, brought together a group of cross-sector leaders including Newark Public Schools, the New Jersey Children's Foundation, the Newark Trust for Education, and the Newark Public Library to create a Ten Point Literacy Plan. The plan includes concrete steps that parents, schools, and communities should take to support their children's literacy. Kevin leveraged philanthropic resources earmarked for community engagement to fund a citywide public information campaign on the literacy plan in all neighborhoods of the city.

ENROLLMENT

During a long period of difficult school change efforts in the 2010s, ultimately leading to the return of local control to the Newark Board of Education, one of the equity pillars that stood the test of time until recently was a universal enrollment system. This system allowed students in Newark to complete a single application with noted school preferences and to be considered for nearly every school in Newark whether traditional district school or charter school. Unfortunately, this system broke down in 2022, and two applications now exist for Newark families, one for district schools and one for charter schools. At the request of the Mayor, Kevin spent time consulting local and national thought leaders on enrollment systems, facilitated meetings between district and charter officials, assembled an Enrollment Advisory Board of cross-sector partners, and identified a firm to assess Newark's enrollment system and paths forward. Philanthropic resources from the New Jersey Children's Foundation, The Prudential Foundation, and the Community Foundation of New Jersey made this work possible. The resulting report, "An Assessment of Public School Enrollment Systems in Newark, New Jersey," suggested a clear path forward. After supporting this cross-sector collaboration, Kevin turned the information over to the Mayor's Office of Comprehensive Community Education for its leadership and further action.

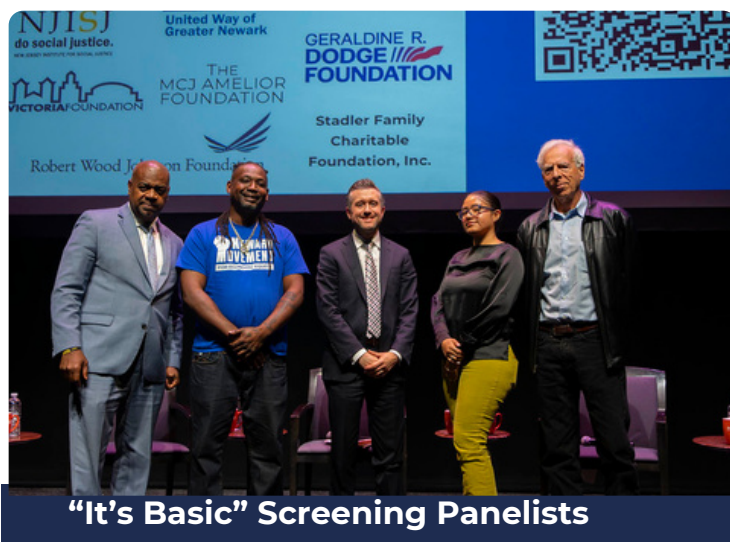
THE NEWARK MOVEMENT FOR ECONOMIC EQUITY

The Newark Movement for Economic Equity (NMEE), Newark's historic guaranteed income pilot that served 430 residents for two years, ended in the fall of 2023. Guaranteed income creates an income floor for vulnerable families, allowing them to spend the funds as they see fit to stabilize their economic situation. Mayor Baraka asked Kevin to first explore implementing a pilot in Newark in 2018. Kevin led a multi-year process to build consensus for the pilot and identify more than \$6 million in public and private funds to make the pilot a reality. NMEE would not be possible without the support of the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, the MCJ Amelior Foundation, The Prudential Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Stadler Family Foundation, and the Victoria Foundation.

We learned from the Newark pilot dashboard, housed by the Stanford Basic Income Lab in partnership with Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, how residents utilized their funds. Our [data](#) shows what we already know: too many are walking a financial tightrope. Among the leading spending categories, 41% of residents in the pilot spent their funds at retail stores buying much needed clothing, food, and necessities, 26% spend their funds at grocery stores, 10% spend their funds on housing and utilities, and 9% on transportation and car expenses.

Our urgent task is to continue to demonstrate the efficacy of policies that put the power back in people's hands.

In 2023, we moved from a focus on the pilot to a focus on policy. Kevin led the creation of a coalition including several foundations, New Jersey Citizen Action, the United Way of Greater Newark, the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice, and New Jersey Policy Perspective to advocate for unrestricted cash-based solutions for vulnerable families. We started this work by hosting the Guaranteed Income Works National Tour in Newark in October of 2023 for a screening of the new documentary: "It's Basic," which documents guaranteed income pilots in cities around the country, including Newark.



The NPL team led the planning and execution for the screening, and Kevin moderated a panel discussion with Mayor Baraka, the film's director, and pilot participants.

We also worked with New Jersey Policy Perspective and the coalition to create a report entitled, “New Jersey’s Path to Prosperity: Policy Lessons from Newark’s Guaranteed Income Pilot,” that outlines policy recommendations to take what we learned in Newark to a state and national level. The coalition agreed to focus on the expansion of the New Jersey Child Tax Credit as its top goal for 2024.

Many members of the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers are interested in continuing to explore how philanthropy can support organizations and coalitions around the state to push for policies that work for low-income families. Several foundations are working with their boards to examine how the implications of the principles behind guaranteed income – namely trust and unrestricted cash – apply to their own grant making. New Jersey’s philanthropic community is poised to lead on this fascinating body of work, and we are proud that it started in Newark.



“It’s Basic” Screening Discussion with Mayor Baraka and Kevin Callaghan

CFE CITYSTART

In 2023, Newark was one of eight communities to receive a CityStart grant from Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund). Kevin leveraged a long-time relationship with the Fund to author a successful application to participate in this cohort and assembled a team at City Hall to lead on implementation.

CFE Fund’s CityStart Initiative, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies, offers city government a structured approach to identify financial empowerment goals, engage the local community for success, develop actionable strategies, and ultimately design a “blueprint” that is rooted in local insight and opportunity.

In May 2023, the NPL team facilitated a multi-day site visit to Newark from the CFE Fund and created structured community roundtable discussions. We also conducted a landscape analysis of homeownership assistance programs in New Jersey, wrote and promoted a comprehensive financial security survey that received nearly 400 responses, and created a thorough analysis of all available research – quantitative and qualitative – on Newark’s financial realities. In 2024, we look forward to releasing our blueprint, which will build upon and complement the policy and advocacy work stemming from the Newark Movement for Economic Equity.

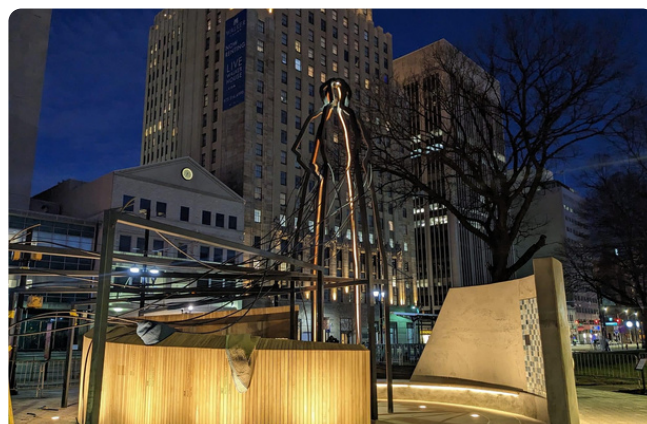
ENVISIONING NEWARK'S COMMEMORATIVE LANDSCAPE

Newark led the nation in re-envisioning its commemorative landscape as we all grappled with a racial reckoning in 2020. The Mellon Foundation's Monuments Project recognized our commitment through a \$350,000 grant to erect a new monument of Harriet Tubman in a newly re-named Harriet Tubman Square in Newark's downtown. Kevin worked with the funding community and administration to leverage these funds with a \$400,000 grant from Audible and an additional \$300,000 in public resources to support the monument project. Over \$1 million in additional funds from the city government and Audible seeded landscape and beautification costs around the monument, along with site preparation. The NPL team participated in regular coordinating sessions with multiple partners – the Newark Museum of Art, Audible, Bloomberg Associates, the Newark Public Library, Rutgers University – Newark, and with the monument design team – for over a year to help make our vision a reality.

On March 9, 2023, we celebrated the completion of the monument, *Shadow of a Face*, in a moving event at Audible's headquarters with multiple dignitaries and partners in attendance. Later in the year, our Buy a Brick campaign at the Tubman Monument culminated with the installation of pavers commemorating more than 300 Newark residents, families, and local businesses and organizations.

Jessica Debrah, NPL Fellow, led this successful campaign, which raised over \$40,000 for educational and cultural programming at the monument.

The Harriet Tubman Monument is indicative of what is possible through public-private collaboration. A section of the monument includes tiles made by Newark residents in a series of community workshops. The Newark Museum of Art wrote a curriculum to accompany the monument for visitors and school trips. Audible leveraged its expertise by curating and producing an audio experience that emanates from speakers in the monument and is accessible on the Audible app. Rutgers University – Newark professors supported the monument text's historical accuracy and the Newark Public Library housed exhibits chronicling the project. We are proud of this Harriet Tubman monument in Newark, and the collaborative process that brought this vision to life is as celebrated as the finished product itself.



Harriet Tubman Monument Profile at Night

A CONTINUED FOCUS ON THE SUMMER: KEEPING OUR COMMUNITY SAFE AND ENGAGED

New Jersey State Police Data shows that homicides increase statewide in the months of May to September. Further, New Jersey is experiencing a statewide literacy crisis, of which Newark and cities like it are bearing the brunt. Just 19% of Newark third graders read proficiently in last year's state exams. Therefore, the summer is a main point of emphasis for the Mayoral administration. The NPL team focuses significant private resources to supplement the City's strategy and budget. One way we focus on the summer is through the Summer Fun initiative, which provides near daily opportunities for youth and families to participate in cultural and enrichment activities, while incorporating fun, play, and opportunities to foster a culture of reading. Funding for Summer Fun comes in part from Council of New Jersey Grantmakers members including the Turrell Fund, the Devils Youth Foundation, and the PSE&G Foundation.

Another way we heavily invest in the summer is through the Newark Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). Consistently recognized as a model public-private partnership, we combined public commitment and grant funding of just under \$3 million to double the number of youths engaged in this structured and often life-changing program. The program now boasts nearly twenty funders, and partners with a variety of nonprofit

organizations and youth development experts offering soft skills and financial literacy training, mentoring, and exposure experiences. Through the years, Cities for Financial Empowerment, JP Morgan Chase, and former President Barack Obama's White House have acknowledged Newark SYEP as a national model.



SYEP Press Conference 2023

None of this would be possible without the commitment of Council of New Jersey Grantmakers' members and it is a great point of pride for the Newark funding community and Office of Newark Philanthropic Liaison. Members who committed resources to SYEP over a number of years include Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, the Maher Charitable Foundation, the MCJ Amelior Foundation, The Prudential Foundation, Santander, TD Bank, the Victoria Foundation, and Wells Fargo, among many others.

CRADLE PROJECT

One point of the Ten Point Literacy Plan, previously mentioned, focused on supporting pregnant mothers through healthy pregnancies and births, and helping them to create literacy-rich environments in their homes. To bring the community together on these points, Kevin earmarked funds from the Newark Community Impact Fund to support the Office of Comprehensive Community Education's Cradle Project Conference. The conference illuminated the urgency of quality maternal health systems to promote positive health outcomes for expectant mothers. The conference featured a series of keynote addresses, seminars, and workshops, including a visit by New Jersey First Lady Tammy Murphy, who has led on maternal health equity as a key pillar of her work in New Jersey.

COMMUNITY IMPACT FUND

Throughout the year, there is often a mismatch between foundation application and planning cycles and emerging opportunities, programs, events, or initiatives stemming from the Mayor's Office. To resolve this, Kevin collaborated with several foundations to create the Community Impact Fund in 2018. The Community Impact Fund is designed to serve as a critical vehicle to support emerging programs and opportunities in Newark, while providing flexible funding for important projects that the city

government cannot resource quickly. This allows the Philanthropic Liaison to be nimbler and more responsive to administration requests and priorities, while providing the foundation community with the opportunity to seed new priorities in a quick and efficient way.

Since its inception, the Fund has collected nearly \$1 million in grant funds, providing a resource for multiple donors to support their own work in the city and a way for the Office of Newark Philanthropic Liaison to accept grants, sponsorships, and donations from one-time donors or donors who are new to the city. We were able to provide resources for a number of initiatives with the Community Impact Fund in 2023, including some of the work referenced above.

The Newark Community Impact Fund is yet another way that the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers and the Office of Newark Philanthropic Liaison are leading the way in identifying sustainable and innovative solutions to serve philanthropic entities' goals to make a measurable and lasting impact in communities. The Fund would not be possible without the foresight of its original three benefactors – The Prudential Foundation, the Schumann Fund for New Jersey, and the Victoria Foundation – and additional grants from the Burke Foundation, New Jersey Community Capital, the PSE&G Foundation, the New Jersey Children's Foundation, the Fund for New Jersey, and the Chad School Foundation.

UPCOMING

In 2024, the Office of Newark Philanthropic Liaison looks forward to collaborating with the Baraka Administration and Council of New Jersey Grantmakers' members on moving lessons learned from the guaranteed income pilot to policy and practice. We also look forward to delivering an economic empowerment blueprint for the city with many partners.

We will continue to identify new interventions to support building an equitable Newark with thriving communities and a dynamic workforce. Most importantly, we will lead with collaboration. We are excited for the partnerships that will start or continue in 2024, and we are humbled to play a role in moving Newark forward.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Newark Philanthropic Liaison project is supported by Bank of America, the Burke Foundation, the Community Foundation of New Jersey, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Maher Charitable Foundation, the MCJ Amelior Foundation, The Prudential Foundation, Schumann Fund for New Jersey, Turrell Fund, and the Victoria Foundation.

While the Nicholson Foundation sunset in late 2021, we acknowledge and thank the foundation for its long-term support of the initiative.

We also acknowledge the City of Newark for its commitment to collaborating with the position and elevating the voice of philanthropy.

A special thank you to the Community Foundation of New Jersey, which facilitates and manages grant funds for many of our partnerships.