



2024

REPORT TO THE FIELD

NEWARK PHILANTHROPIC LIAISON

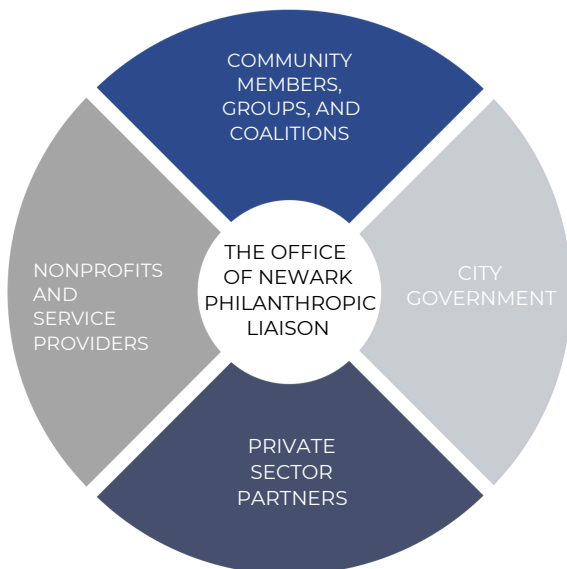
OVERVIEW

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

2024 REFLECTION

Mayor Ras J. Baraka often emphasizes that Newark's successes over the last decade resulted from partnerships between the city government and other organizations. He notes that in areas without collaboration, the city has struggled. Leadership that promotes public-private partnerships for residents' health, safety, and financial security is essential to the work of the Newark Philanthropic Liaison (NPL). In addition, a well-coordinated local and state funding community is crucial. The NPL team is fortunate to work in an environment of collaboration and alignment, enabling us to support high-impact initiatives ranging from education to economic development.

With nearly 20 years of insights from the NPL model at the Council of New Jersey Grantmakers (CNJG), we continue to inspire philanthropic organizations and city governments across the nation. This year, Kevin shared these insights with colleagues from Boston, Baltimore, and Oregon regarding the conditions needed for such a role to thrive. These discussions reminded him of Newark's unique advantage: we have the right people in the right positions to achieve our goals. The NPL team thanks Mayor Baraka, his administration, our funders, and CNJG for their continuous support and leadership.

LEADERSHIP THROUGH FUNDER LEARNING COLLABORATION AND CO-INVESTMENT

FUNDER AFFINITY GROUPS

The NPL continued to foster learning and collaboration among the Newark funding community through Newark Funder Affinity Group meetings throughout 2024. We gathered to learn about the new ordinance in Newark allowing for 16 and 17 year olds to vote in school board elections. The New Jersey Institute for Social Justice led the statewide effort to enfranchise youth, and Newark became the first municipality to adopt the measure.

In June, we gathered for a briefing on a new Measure of America report entitled "A Portrait of Newark." The Opportunity Youth Network produced the Portrait of Newark report in partnership with Measure of America, which convened an advisory panel of local public servants, advocates, and non-profit leaders to contribute their expertise to the research. The report provides an analysis of the current state of residents, identifies areas of opportunity, and addresses the persistent inequities that Newark residents still experience in health, education, and overall well-being.

Our two-part fall series focused on the funding community's continuation of a true collaboration with Newark's nonprofits.

The sessions allowed foundations to plan to pool their time and resources toward strengthening Newark's nonprofits in response to sector feedback while centering trust-based philanthropy and equity. These meetings led directly to a starting pledge of nearly \$500,000 for capacity building, with more funding partners expected in 2025.

Finally, in December, our community gathered to discuss the federal policy implications of a new administration on Newark residents and organizations. An actionable plan to create an immigrant resource hub garnered support, and the effort raised \$250,000, potentially serving as a model for New Jersey.



Measure of America Meeting

SUPPORTING GRASSROOTS GROUPS

The NPL participated with a smaller group of foundation staff, led by the M&T Weiner Foundation and the Victoria Foundation, as they built a coalition to explore how best to support the needs of grassroots organizations in Newark: those with limited or no staff, a budget of under \$400,000, and in some cases no 501c3 designation. The effort comes from the commitment of many of our funders to embrace trust-based philanthropy and identify more

hyperlocal organizations that are making a difference in their local communities but fall under the radar of large foundations. The planning phase will continue through the first half of 2025, and Kevin looks forward to serving on the Steering Committee for this critical effort.

NEWARK ASSET FUNDER NETWORK

As the NPL continues to lead on several economic security initiatives, including a collaboration toward a financial security framework for the city, Kevin engaged several times with the newly formed Newark Asset Funder Network. The network is an affiliate of the national Asset Funder Network, a philanthropy-serving organization focused on advancing wealth-building and economic mobility. Kevin presented to the local coalition twice in 2024 to brief them on citywide efforts toward financial empowerment and renter wealth creation. We are thrilled to have this group forming in Newark and look forward to our collaboration in 2025.



NPL & Newark Leaders, Policy Link Conference

ECONOMIC SECURITY COALITION – FROM NEWARK TO STATEWIDE IMPACT

UNRESTRICTED CASH ADVOCACY

Newark's leadership on guaranteed income policy continued in 2024 with our program, the Newark Movement for Economic Equity, serving as the state's largest pilot. The NPL started the guaranteed income conversation in Newark at the Mayor's request in 2019, which resulted in a Guaranteed Income Task Force final report issued in 2020 and a two-year guaranteed income pilot from 2021-2023. In all, more than \$6 million in both public and private funds underwrote the initiative. In 2024, Kevin continued to coordinate with several policy and advocacy organizations to further the recommendations of a report that we co-authored with New Jersey Policy Perspective at the end of 2023 entitled "New Jersey's Path to Prosperity: Lessons from Newark's Guaranteed Income Experiment."

Kevin showed leadership in laying the groundwork for a statewide push for guaranteed income and other unrestricted cash policies by using grant funds to create a new web presence – www.newjerseyequity.org – that memorializes both the guaranteed income pilot and our recommendations for the state, including expanding the Child Tax Credit and exploring baby bonds. He also worked with a videographer to create a video series documenting the lives of two participants of the Newark pilot.

Creation of this repository of resources and materials sets the stage for 2025,

when we will release the formal research on Newark's guaranteed income pilot, convene a statewide meeting to collaborate with guaranteed income efforts in other cities in New Jersey, and begin to formalize a policy "table" advancing this innovative and essential policy intervention.

FIRST THOUSAND DAYS

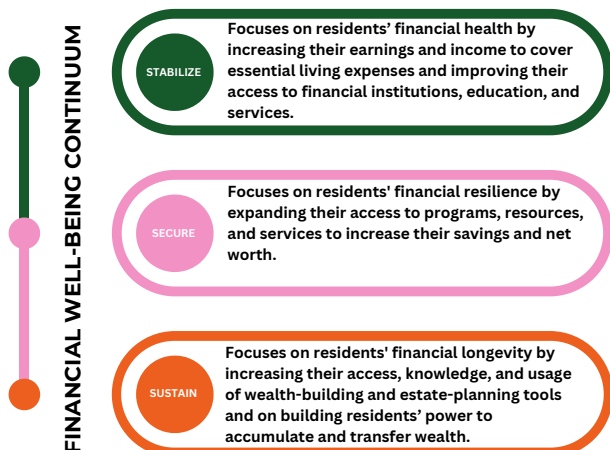
The NPL also continued coordination with the First Thousand Days initiative, a dynamic funder collaborative of the Burke Foundation, the Turrell Fund, the Schumann Fund for New Jersey, the Maher Charitable Foundation, and the Henry and Marilyn Taub Foundation. One of the pillars of this initiative focuses on economic security for young families. We will continue to bring foundations from across the state together to grapple with policy solutions that make New Jersey a better place for a family with young children to live, work, and play.

BUILDING A FINANCIAL EMPOWERMENT BLUEPRINT

As we discussed in last year's report, the City of Newark received a Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund) grant to participate in the organization's CityStart initiative. The initiative is a structured approach to helping local governments develop a municipal financial empowerment blueprint, which outlines a strategic plan for financial empowerment

programs and policies based on insights gained from stakeholder and community engagement.

During an intensive, yearlong process, the team created an actionable, comprehensive, and responsive blueprint that seeks to create a common framework as partners across Newark address resident's financial well-being journey. The blueprint framework, Newark Financial Well-being Continuum, calls on all of us to help our residents to stabilize their financial health, secure savings and assets, and sustain their gains by taking an inter-generational approach to financial health. With report recommendations finalized in 2024, Jessica Debrah, NPL Fellow, and Kevin Callaghan began to present to critical partners about our plans in order to build early support and funding. CFE Fund also continually recognized our work in Newark as a national model, leading to Kevin attending a meeting of a new CityStart cohort in New York City to discuss Newark's work, best practices, and lessons learned. Successful early fundraising efforts support a number of components from the plan. We will release the full blueprint in quarter two of 2025.



PARTNERSHIPS TO CONNECT NEWARK RESIDENTS TO HOUSING

HOUSING NAVIGATION SERVICES

One of the recommendations that came to light in our financial empowerment blueprint process is the need for housing navigation services in Newark. There is growing evidence of the efficacy of housing navigator programs. For instance, the City of Boston Housing Authority started a housing navigation program for people in receipt of Section 8 vouchers that helped 88% of families in the program find a home. This success rate is more than 30 percentage points higher than the national average.

Due to our ongoing dialogue with the foundation community and the Newark Asset Funders Network, we secured a grant from the Prudential Foundation in late 2024 to hire a housing navigator to embed in Newark's Office of Affordability. This position will provide a proof point for the utility of the role and help to build the capacity of community development corporations throughout the city to incorporate more housing navigation services into their operations.

THE PATH HOME: COLLABORATING ACROSS OUR COMMUNITY

The City of Newark has embarked on an ambitious goal to end chronic homelessness in Newark in three years. This comprehensive data-driven initiative, called The Path Home, seeks to improve

the delivery of services to homeless residents with the goal of permanent housing, a main driver of positive health outcomes. In year one of implementation of The Path Home, Newark achieved a 57.6% reduction in its unsheltered population, leading to national recognition from the National League of Cities, international recognition by the Economist magazine, and Newark's inclusion in an international homelessness conference in Paris, France. Hosts of innovative programs are underway in Newark from container villages, new transitional housing, to the creation of a new full-service drop-in center by Newark Penn Station.

The Office of Newark Philanthropic Liaison works closely with the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services and the City's chief business roundtable, the Newark Alliance, to build public-private partnerships to address homelessness. Below are examples of our efforts in 2024 to build support, resources, and collaborations to address homelessness.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In early 2024, Kevin helped Luis Ulerio, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services, identify a grant from The Healthcare Foundation of New Jersey to pilot a first of its kind professional development series. The City collaborated with Rutgers University Behavioral Healthcare to train 40 front-line staff to better engage and support residents' mental health, physical health, and immediate stabilization needs.

DOWNTOWN OUTREACH

The NPL worked with the Newark Alliance, the Mayor's Office of Homeless Services, and a number of philanthropic partners to develop funding for enhanced homeless outreach in downtown Newark that brings a first-of-its-kind holistic intervention model to street outreach. This new Clinical Downtown Metro Outreach Team, in partnership with the Newark Alliance, with support from RWJ Barnabas Health, the Maher Charitable Foundation, and the Prudential Foundation, provides stabilizing psychiatric street treatment to unhoused residents in Newark's downtown to connect them directly to housing supports.



Mobile Medical Team for Homeless Residents

GROUNDBREAKING TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

The City, in partnership with the Newark Housing Authority (NHA), designated 200 public housing units as transitional housing for the City's chronically homeless. At the request of the Mayor and his senior leadership, The NPL identified early funding to ensure the furnishing of fifteen newly renovated units. As a result, fifteen families and individuals were housed before the 2024 holidays. Kevin will continue to work closely with the team on this project throughout 2025.

A CONTINUED FOCUS ON THE SUMMER: STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

One of our longest lasting public-private partnerships in Newark is our commitment to the Summer Youth Employment Program. In 2014, it employed about 1,000 youth in the summer. In 2024, it employed just under 2,300 youth and remains at the forefront of workforce development, empowering Newark's youth with career exploration, workplace skills, and crucial financial education. Private and State of New Jersey grant funding for \$2,889,519 helped us to expand this vital resource to youth from low to moderate-income households, offering paid summer opportunities and, for many, a first job experience. This dynamic partnership adjusts each year to the needs of our youth and city. In 2024, the program targeted employment barriers for opportunity youth and collaborated with the Office of Violence Prevention and Trauma Recovery to develop a new program, Safe Summer Program, which provides targeted support for at-risk youth in Newark who experienced violence, were previously incarcerated, or have a family member affected by incarceration.

SUMMER FUN

Kevin also continued to raise resources for the City of Newark's Summer Fun programming, which is a citywide strategy to provide family-friendly cultural enrichment activities throughout the city in the summer months. An example is Reading Under the Stars. This powerful evening provides thousands of free books to families, assembles local nonprofit and cultural organizations to provide resources, and features multiple authors who read and/or perform their works for students. This effort is consistent with the Citywide Prenatal to Third Grade 10-Point Literacy Plan, and was sponsored by a grant from the Panasonic Foundation.

SPOTLIGHTING NEWARK AS A CITY OF ART AND CULTURE

We are proud to say that the 2024 Arts Vibrancy Index ranked Newark as the eighth most arts-vibrant community in the US. The data, compiled each year by SMU DataArts, the National Center for Arts Research, just proves what we already know: Newark is for artists. Over the years, the NPL supported a number of arts and culture initiatives, the biggest being the construction of a brand new Harriet Tubman Monument in the newly renamed Harriett Tubman Square.



SYEP Press Conference, 2024



HARRIET TUBMAN SQUARE

Last year, we wrote about the Harriet Tubman partnership among the City, Audible, Inc., Rutgers University – Newark, the Newark Public Library, and the Mellon Foundation, and the unveiling of the monument. In 2024, we formally unveiled another signature effort from the Office of Newark Philanthropic Liaison in the form of a “Buy a Brick” campaign. The goal of campaign was twofold. First, we sought to raise funds for ongoing maintenance costs of the monument. Second, we wanted to ensure that community members had an opportunity to memorialize their family names at the monument in a way that was relatively affordable. We are proud of our effort, which led to 209 bricks placed around the monument.



Harriet Tubman Square Bricks

BUILDING AN EQUITABLE, EDUCATIONAL ECOSYSTEM

TEN POINT LITERACY PLAN

In 2023, Mayor Baraka launched the Newark Citywide Prenatal to Third Grade 10-Point Literacy Plan in response to concerning data in Newark, New Jersey, and the country on literacy rates coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic. The plan discusses the role of parents, schools, and communities in fostering a love of literacy from the earliest ages.

The NPL continued to collaborate with the Mayor’s Office to support this plan in 2024 in a number of ways. One example is garnering foundation support for a film screening of the documentary, *Aftershock*, which blends our focus on literacy with our commitment to improving maternal health outcomes for Black women in Newark.

EDUCATION INITIATIVES

We also continued to support a number of other initiatives from the Mayor’s Office of Comprehensive Community Education. From school enrollment and literacy to maternal health, the education office is a crucial tool at City Hall that requires philanthropic resources to operate. Kevin identified resources for college exposure trips for Newark high school students, for support for Newark youth to persist in college, for increased access to books for all Newark youth, and to continue the dialogue and encourage better collaboration between the charter and district school sectors.

SEEDING COMMUNITY IMPACT

Kevin continues to maintain the Newark Community Impact Fund, a vital tool to deploy funder resources nimbly to respond to emerging needs and/or opportunities in the community. Some of the partnerships described above, such as Reading Under the Stars, happened due to resources from this fund. The fund has leveraged nearly \$1 million in foundation resources and serves as an incubator of programs, ideas, and initiatives.

UPCOMING

The year 2025 will no doubt bring a number of challenges, but we have learned through this work in Newark that it is sometimes our biggest challenges that bring our greatest opportunities for breakthrough collaborations with like-minded individuals and organizations. We believe that the seismic shift in our policy climate in 2025 and beyond will spur the kind of innovation and partnership that the moment demands. Whether it is economic security, strengthening our nonprofit sector, or continuing to drive high-impact investments in building an equitable city, we pledge to double down on collaboration in 2025 to come together in new ways to increase our impact and serve those most affected by ongoing changes in our political climate.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The position of Newark Philanthropic Liaison would not be possible without the leadership, guidance, and support of the following organizations and foundations:

Bank of America

Burke Foundation

Community Foundation of New Jersey

Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation

Maher Charitable Foundation

MCJ Amelior Foundation

Prudential Foundation

Schumann Fund for New Jersey

Turrell Fund

Victoria Foundation

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.