

# NEWS

## VOLUNTEER CENTER OF BERGEN COUNTY, INC.

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### **LOCAL RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSPEOPLE JOIN NEW CLASS OF BERGEN LEADS**

North Jersey: Bergen LEADS, the County's first and only civic leadership program, began its seminar year September 8. The program, sponsored by the Volunteer Center of Bergen County, prepares leaders to tackle the tough challenges facing Bergen County today and in the future.

The class, which was chosen through a competitive process in early 2014, will meet monthly to dissect issues, debate viewpoints and develop approaches to community problems. Under the guidance of former Bergen County Executive William "Pat" Schuber, Bergen LEADS Seminar Director, participants are immersed in a stimulating curriculum that not only introduces them to topical issues of local importance, but also enables them to explore their leadership styles, enhance their leadership capacity and become meaningfully engaged in helping to solve some of the challenges facing Bergen County.

"We are thrilled with the level of commitment and energy that this new class demonstrates. A critical component of Bergen LEADS is developing in participants a sense of responsibility for the community," says Lynne Algrant, Bergen LEADS Director. "We're eager to see what this class will accomplish. Will they champion a cause? Run for office? Launch a social enterprise venture? Lead a community organization? The sky's the limit."

Funding for Bergen LEADS is provided by participant tuition plus generous contributions from individuals and area corporations and foundations, including BD, Palisades Educational Foundation, PSE&G, United Water Foundation, Wells Fargo, Inserra, Northern New Jersey Community Foundation, Meadowlands Regional Chamber of Commerce, Bergen Community College and the Russell Berrie Foundation.

The members of the 2014-2015 Bergen LEADS class are:

Glen Rock resident Cindy Andrade, Lyndhurst resident Marisa Santiago and Linden resident Eric Hugo, all from the Volunteer Center of Bergen County; Passaic residents Conor Browne of the American Red Cross and Mark McKoy of United Water; Boiling Springs Savings Bank's Tonice Bunting of East Rutherford; Blake Levine, resident of Hoboken and with CCI Direct Mail in East Rutherford; Tenafly resident Connie Choi of Family Touch; Maria Deptula, resident of Haskell, employed by Berkeley College in Paramus; Teaneck residents Rhona Feimster-Vega of Whittier, Working Parents' Association, and James O'Leary of PSEG; Woodcliff Lake residents Beth Figman of the Jewish Federation of Northern New Jersey, and James Narin of Right Now Life Coaching; Rutherford residents Shonya Jordan of United Water and Eric Tomaszewski of Golub Isabel & Cervino, P.C.; Kimberly Lewis-Banks of Lodi, from the COPE Program, CUNY; BD & Co.'s Erika Monell of River Vale; Hillsdale resident William Mullaney of Bergen Community College; Ringwood's Kristen Pakonis of Flat Rock Brook Nature Center in Englewood, and Englewood resident Scott Reddin, of Project Literacy of Greater Bergen County; Isabel Perez from Fairview, employed by IP Consulting, LLC; KPMG's Tenia Peterson of Clifton; New Milford resident Kristine Scheufele of SCORE Bergen; JoAnne Seibel of Ramsey, Orange and Rockland Utilities, Inc.; Paterson resident Charisse Taylor of the Girl Scouts of Northern NJ in Paramus; Allendale's Paul Thomasset of Morgan Stanley Wealth Management; and David Van Schak of Mahwah, Ameriprise Financial.

Bergen LEADS seeks individuals from all ethnic, racial and socio-economic backgrounds who espouse different political, religious and social views for future classes. Visit [www.bergenleads.org](http://www.bergenleads.org) for more information. Applications for the next Bergen LEADS class will be accepted January 1 to April 10, 2015.

The Volunteer Center of Bergen County strengthens the community by connecting people through service and developing civic leaders.

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