NEW COMMUNITY OF SERVING THE PEOPLE OF THE NEW COMMUNITY NETWORK SINCE 1968

NCC NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER GETS NEW READING SPACE AS PART OF THE CHILDREN'S PLACE INITIATIVE



Children from New Community's summer camp enjoy books in the new reading space at the NCC Neighborhood Center. The renovated room was made possible by a back-to-school campaign from The Children's Place. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.

Children served by the NCC Neighborhood Center, New Community's recreation center located on Hayes Street in Newark, now have a newly renovated space filled with books to enjoy, thanks to an initiative from The Children's Place.

New Community and The Children's Place unveiled the learning center on Aug. 4 with a ribbon cutting. New Community's center is the second of 10 locations nationwide that The Children's Place is opening as part of a back-to-school campaign to empower children through reading and continued education.

New Community Chief Financial Officer/Interim Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth Mbakaya said it was an honor to be chosen as part of the campaign.

"Instilling a love of reading at a young age will serve these children well as they progress through school and look toward their future careers," she said. "Having this newly renovated and dedicated library area will get them even more excited about reading."

New Community Chief Operating Officer Fred Hunter said in a world where electronic devices are so widely utilized, it's nice to have a space with physical books and an area to sit and enjoy them without the distraction of screens.

"It is great to see a program that is encouraging children to read." he said.

New Community Youth Services Director Edward Morris was excited to unveil the room and have the children start to use the space.

"We encourage the youth to read every day. We tell them reading not only stretches your mind, but it takes you places, faraway places that you can explore without leaving your home. So I can only imagine what they're going to do in that room, where they're going to visit, where they're going to explore," he said. "My dad used to always tell me young readers become leaders. So we try to instill that in our children."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Newark West Ward Councilman Dupré Kelly, New Community Chief Operating Officer Fred Hunter, Chief Education Officer for the Office of Comprehensive Community Education for the City of Newark Dr. Sharnee Brown, New Community Chief Financial Officer/Interim Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth Mbakaya, The Children's Place Vice President of Marketing Melissa Linde and New Community Youth Services Director Edward Morris participate in the ribbon cutting on Aug. 4 opening up a new reading space at the NCC Neighborhood Center on Hayes Street in Newark. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.

NEW COMMUNITY CAREER & TECHNICAL INSTITUTE GRADUATE EXCELLING IN HEALTH CARE FIELD

Christina Thornton has always wanted to pursue a career in the medical field. When she saw an acquaintance posting about her experience at New Community Career & Technical Institute (NCCTI) on Instagram, she decided to learn more. After contacting school staff and receiving additional information, she enrolled in the Patient Care Technician (PCT) program.

Thornton was impressed with the employer connections NCCTI offered to its students and liked that it was a shortterm program.

"It was definitely something that I was able to do at the time," she said.



Christina Thornton completed the Patient Care Technician program at New Community Career & Technical Institute in 2020. Since then, she has worked as a patient care technician at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center and recently picked up a second job at University Hospital. Photo courtesy of Christina Thornton.

Thornton graduated from

the PCT program in 2020 and started working at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center (formerly Saint Barnabas Medical Center) in Livingston shortly after as a patient care technician. In December, she will celebrate two years in that position.

She works in a surgical step-down unit, which means she

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

AROUND THE NETWORK

NEW COMMUNITY RESIDENTS RECEIVE CLOTHING

ew Community's Resident Services Department held a clothing drive on July 29 where NCC residents were able to get a variety of \blacksquare clothes, including shirts, sweatshirts and coats. Photos courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.







THE NEW COMMUNITY CLARION

The New Community Clarion is published as a community service. The editor reserves the right to withhold articles and photographs once they are submitted. Opinions expressed in columns are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of New Community Corporation.

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You can make a difference in the lives of inner city residents by making an online donation. Visit newcommunity. org and click "Donate" to give today! We appreciate all support.

GETTING HEALTH INFORMATION

InitedHealthcare visited Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, for an outdoor presentation on July 26. Residents received health information and had fun playing a giant game of Jenga. Photos courtesy of Guadalupe





ENJOYING A JULY BARBECUE

esidents of Commons Senior, 140 South Orange Ave., Newark, enjoyed Notice for the company of neighbors at a barbecue on July 7.









BINGO!

epresentatives from Xfinity Visited Hudson Senior, 21-27 Orchard St., Jersey City, on Aug. 17 and provided games of bingo in the Community Room. Photos courtesy of Vivian Le.



FAMILY SERVICE BUREAU PROMOTES EMPLOYEE TO DIRECTOR ROLE



Christina Ward took on the role of Family Service Bureau of Newark Director on July 16. She has worked at FSB since February 2021.

amily Service Bureau of Newark (FSB) has promoted its new leader from within. Christina Ward, who previously served as the Director of Clinical Services, became FSB Director on July 16.

Ward first joined FSB in February 2021 as Director of Clinical Services for both the Newark and Kearny locations. She initially wanted to work at FSB to have a supervisory role. When the opportunity arose to lead the agency, she decided to apply for that position.

"I am really excited to promote Christina Ward to FSB Director. She previously served as the Director of Clinical Services and now will have the overall responsibility for FSB," said New Community Chief

Operating Officer Fred Hunter. "Christina has a lot of mental health and substance abuse experience and I am looking forward to FSB's continued community impact under her leadership."

As FSB Director, Ward oversees both the Newark and Kearny offices. Her responsibilities include running staff meetings, correspondence with state agencies, grant reporting, grant research and signing progress notes.

Ward previously worked as a corrections officer where she was introduced to social work. An injury forced her to leave that position. She then worked at a halfway house and decided to pursue a master's degree in social work.

"I ended up just really enjoying it and being very good at it," she said. "So then I got an internship at Integrity House, and that's where I got basically all of my training."

Ward interned at Integrity House while in school and was then hired as a counselor, which helped propel her career forward. After Integrity House, she worked at New Jersey Reentry Corporation due to her unique experience with law enforcement and social work. She then moved on to Turning Point Alcohol and Drug Treatment Center as a Team Lead, which provided her with more on-the-job training and prepared her for the move to FSB. She had worked in managerial roles in previous industries, like retail, before entering the Health

and Human Services field and decided to combine the two skills.

Ward finds her work rewarding.

"My favorite part of the field is watching people grow," she said. "Having them come to you with an issue and then actually seeing them work through the issue and then leaving with hope for their future."

Ward grew up in Newark and only recently moved out of the city. That has helped her in her roles at FSB.

"I relate to a lot of the people from this area," she said.

After graduating high school in Newark, Ward earned her bachelor's degree in Technical Management from DeVry University and is a member of the Sigma Beta Delta honor society. She earned her master's degree in Social Work at Rutgers University and is a member of the Phi Alpha honor society.

Ward got married in April and moved to Lyndhurst with her wife.

She is an artist and creates work with spray paint. When she was young, she attended Arts High School in Newark for its summer arts program and attended high school there for communications. She initially was an art major in college but decided to keep it as a hobby instead of a career. In her spare time, she also enjoys playing video games.

CHILDREN ENJOY NEW COMMUNITY SUMMER CAMP

New Community's Youth Services Department provided an eight-week summer camp this year, which included a variety of activities and trips. The camp serves children from 5 to 13 years old. They enjoyed swimming, sports, STEAM activities, theme days and field trips to a variety of locations, including Wild West City, America's Grow a Row, iPlay America, Rock 'N Air and Dorney Park. Photos courtesy of Youth Services. Visit newcommunity.org to see more photos.





















NCC NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER GETS NEW READING SPACE AS PART OF THE CHILDREN'S PLACE INITIATIVE

FROM PAGE 1



Children enjoy reading books on beanbag chairs in the newly renovated reading space of the NCC Neighborhood Center made possible by The Children's Place. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.



New Community Chief Financial Officer/Interim Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth Mbakaya and Chief Operating Officer Fred Hunter enjoy seeing the children utilizing the new space. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.



In addition to renovating the room and arranging for book donations from ThriftBooks, The Children's Place also partnered with BIC to provide school supplies and brought backpacks for the children. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.



Chief Education Officer for the Office of Comprehensive Community Education for the City of Newark Dr. Sharnee Brown started off the ribbon cutting to unveil the new learning center. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.

Chief Education Officer for the Office of Comprehensive Community Education for the City of Newark Dr. Sharnee Brown attended the event on behalf of Newark Mayor Ras Baraka. She talked about the importance of reading and coming back together in community spaces as conditions from COVID-19 improve.

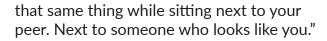
"We're addressing issues that are so profound like books and literacy. Those are the things that we're charged to do every day and today is really a celebration to do that in a way that makes us all happy," she said.

Newark West Ward Councilman Dupré Kelly said that while technology provides many positive opportunities, books are still vitally important and a shared space offers additional benefits for the community.

"It's different when you open that book and you read page to page and you get an opportunity to explore your creativity," he said. "But you get that opportunity to do



Newark West Ward Councilman Dupré Kelly, center, walks into the newly renovated reading space with members of the community after the ribbon cutting on Aug. 4. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.



The Children's Place Vice President of Marketing Melissa Linde explained that the company had chosen 10 sites throughout the United States to place learning centers. Because The Children's Place is based in Secaucus, leadership knew a New Jersey location would be included.

"We had to start in our backyard," she said. "And that's why the decision of building this learning center here in Newark was a nobrainer."

After holding a ribbon cutting in front of the NCC Neighborhood Center, guests moved inside where children who are part of New Community's summer camp were reading books in the new space.

New Community received a donation of 2,000 books as part of the campaign. There were 1,000 in the reading room at the unveiling and the additional books will be delivered at a later date in order to refresh



New Community Director of Youth Services Edward Morris talks about the importance of reading and how the new space will benefit the children and get them excited about reading. *Photo by JohnnyFoto*.

the inventory.

The children were very excited to use the new room. They enjoyed exploring the space, choosing books to read and playing a giant game of Connect 4 that The Children's Place provided. They also received backpacks, school supplies and gift cards from The Children's Place and BIC, a partner in the initiative. ThriftBooks donated the reading material.

Among the guests in attendance were Newark Central Ward Councilwoman LaMonica McIver, Newark Council Member at Large Louise Scott-Rountree and Newark Council Member at Large C. Lawrence Crump.

New Community thanks The Children's Place, ThriftBooks and BIC for their work and donations and to everyone who came out for the unveiling. The organization looks forward to serving many children in the space for years to come.

Visit newcommunity.org for more photos.

COMING TOGETHER FOR A COOKOUT

Gardens Senior, 265 Morris Ave., Newark, held a cookout for residents on July 8. Those in attendance enjoyed time outside, food and drinks.









EXTENDED CARE HELPS PATIENT RESUME SELF-SUFFICIENT LIFESTYLE



Karen Sewell underwent physical therapy and care at New Community Extended Care Facility after experiencing two heart attacks, a brain aneurysm and a stroke. She went from not being able to care for herself to being discharged to an independent apartment.

In the form of the **V** New Community Extended Care Facility, she was in poor health. She had experienced two massive heart attacks, a brain aneurysm and a stroke. She had been at University Hospital for one year and spent three months in a coma.

She also underwent surgery that required rehabilitation.

"They cut out part of my skull to get to my bleeding brain," she said. "I knew I would

need therapy after that."

When she left University Hospital, Sewell spent some time at a couple of other facilities before transferring to Extended Care in March. The New Community facility is closer to her family members.

Upon arrival at Extended Care, Sewell was unable to care for herself because of weakness. But through physical therapy and care, she regained her self-sufficiency and is being discharged in September to an independent apartment at New Community Manor Senior.

Extended Care Administrator Veronica Onwunaka said Sewell's outlook and belief in herself and the facility was a big part of her recovery.

"She has a very positive attitude and believed in and trusted our care. And together with family support, we were all able to achieve this positive outcome. We believe she will be well in the community," Onwunaka said. "It has been a pleasure to have her as a patient."

Sewell is grateful for the care she has received and specifically highlighted her nurse, Maria Cruz.

"I can go to talk to her about anything. She'll keep me on the straight and narrow," Sewell said. "She just wants me to do better."

The road hasn't always been easy for Sewell. She said there were times, particularly at the start of her recovery, when she wanted to give up. Talking to her four sons kept her going and when she started feeling better, that motivated her to continue with her treatment.

Staff members at Extended Care were also instrumental in her recovery.

"This is the best facility I've been to," Sewell said.

Sewell is a lifelong Newark resident. Three of her sons live in Newark and one is in South Jersey. Her sister and aunt also live in Manor Senior so she has family support nearby to help her as she transitions back to independent living.

At 54 years old, Sewell has had a difficult journey and she's anxious about the transition, but she is happy to be starting the next chapter of her life.

"I've been through a whole lot, but I feel pretty good," she said.

ADULT LEARNING CENTER RESUMES IN-PERSON LEARNING

tudents at the New Community Adult Learning Center, 563 Orange St., Newark, returned to the classroom on July 5 for the first time since the COVID-19 pandemic began. In March 2020, classes moved to Google Meet so instruction could continue in a safer environment for students and teachers. Classes remained virtual until this year because of class size and classroom space available. All who enter the Adult Learning Center are required to wear face masks to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

HELP WANTED: NCC IS HIRING

here are a number of open positions available with New Community Corporation in a variety of departments. To see all job listings, along with descriptions and requirements of each position, visit newcommunity.org and click "Careers." Click "Apply" next to the position of interest to see the full description and then "Apply Now" to complete the application process.

NCC requires job seekers to fill out an online application for consideration. If you have difficulty with the online application process, you can chat with a representative for technical support or check out the Frequently Asked Questions page. For additional information, job seekers can call New Community's main phone number at 973-623-2800.

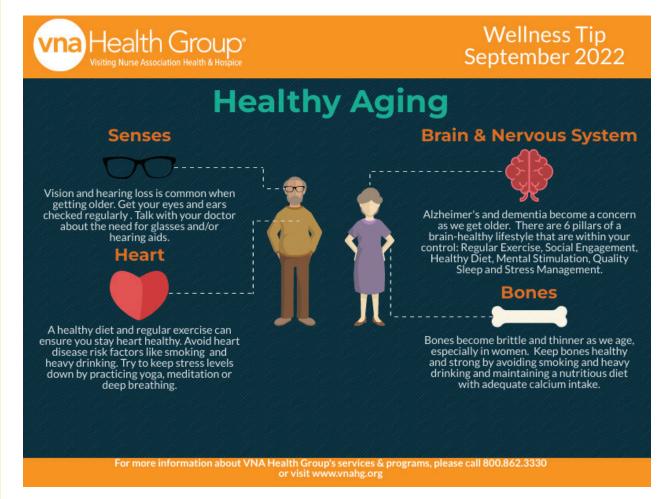
The site is continually updated, so check back often to see if there is a job of interest.



The NCC Adult Learning Center serves students 16 and older and out of the school system with a comprehensive array of day, evening and Saturday educational programs in order to prepare them for a vocational or



college education. Those interested in enrolling can call 973-558-5536. The Adult Learning Center is located at 563 Orange St., Newark. Office hours are Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: LEONARD DOEMAN



Leonard Doeman has worked in the Finance Department at New Community since 2017.

eonard Doeman first came to New Community in 2017 from an agency as a temporary employee to assist the Finance Department with its payroll needs. He was hired permanently within a year and now serves as Payroll Coordinator for New Community Extended Care Facility.

In that role, Doeman is responsible for ensuring that recorded hours and paid time off are accurate for Extended Care employees so they receive the correct pay. He also assists with New Community's corporate payroll when needed.

"We try to make sure that every payroll process is done in an efficient manner," he said.

New Community Chief Financial Officer/ Interim Chief Executive Officer Elizabeth Mbakaya said Doeman is a pleasure to work with.

"He's hardworking and goes above and beyond the call of duty," she said. "He's loved by the department and he's friendly to everybody. He's a team player."

Doeman's work isn't limited to the Finance Department. He also spends part of his schedule performing human resources tasks. Human Resources Director Benjamin Galvez said Doeman's positive and supportive attitude has been beneficial to New Community.

"Leonard is very dedicated to what he does. His enthusiasm never falters," Galvez said. "Although his area of expertise is in payroll, he's always willing to help other departments. That has led to him assisting the Human Resources Department in HR matters. He's considered part of the HR family."

Doeman came to New Community with experience in both payroll and human resources. He previously worked in payroll positions at Waldorf Astoria and Sunrise Senior Living. He started in an HR role at Sunrise Senior Living and later took on a dual payroll/HR position there when he graduated with a business management degree. He liked the field of payroll and decided to stick with it. Now he's able to use both skill sets again.

In addition to his duties in Finance and HR, Doeman is also a member of the New Community Federal Credit Union committee team, which is involved with loans.

Doeman enjoys working at New Community, particularly because of the staff.

"I love the people and the atmosphere here," he said. "Working with Elizabeth [Mbakaya] is a pleasure. I also like working with the HR team."

Doeman lives in Essex County. In his free time, he enjoys reading, playing basketball, participating in fantasy football and rooting on his favorite teams, the Buffalo Bills and New York Mets. He also likes to cook Jamaican dishes.

SENIOR SPOTLIGHT: BERNADINE FILLMORE

Pernadine Fillmore, who grew up in Newark, has lived at Gardens Senior for 15 years. She moved there from the Ironbound section of the city.

She is involved in the community, having served on advisory boards for New Community, Newark Emergency Services for Families and University Hospital. She is also a dedicated volunteer for nonprofits. She received the New Community Corporation Leadership Award, the Ironbound Community Corporation Neighborhood Heroes Award and recognition from the board members of Newark Emergency Services for Families.

Fillmore enjoys writing poetry and has had several of her works published over the years. Her published works include The Plowman Journal, The Forgotten Christian, Can You Bear Your Cross, Omnific Journal, Struggle Magazine and Innocent Was My Child.

"Ms. Fillmore is an eclectic woman who is always bringing me information for resources," said Gardens Senior Resident Services Coordinator Desiree Crespo. "She is very opinionated and insightful with a poetic mind and style. I enjoy her visits to my office."

Fillmore enjoys helping others. She previously volunteered at food pantries and currently helps make and distribute calendars to her neighbors.

At age 67, Fillmore spends her free time writing poetry and sending it to publishers.



Bernadine Fillmore has lived at Gardens Senior for 15 years. Photo courtesy of Desiree Crespo.

SOCIAL SECURITY NEWS: SOCIAL SECURITY SERVES PEOPLE LIKE YOU - VETERANS, WOMEN, LGBTQ+ AND MORE

BY AMMY PLUMMER, SOCIAL SECURITY DISTRICT MANAGER, SPRINGFIELD AVENUE, NEWARK, NJ

We have provided vital benefits and services to hard-working Americans for nearly 90 years. America has an increasingly diverse population with a variety of needs. To meet those diverse needs, we've created web pages that speak directly to groups of people who may need information about our programs and services.

 Veterans (www.ssa.gov/veterans) - We proudly serve wounded warriors and veterans who sacrificed to preserve our treasured American freedoms. Many veterans do not know they might be eligible for disability benefits from Social Security.

• Women (www.ssa.gov/women) - Social Security plays an important role in providing economic security for women. A woman who is 65 years old today can expect to live, on average, another two decades. Since women have longer life expectancies than men, they typically live more years in retirement and have a greater risk of exhausting their sources of income. Women also tend to have lower lifetime earnings than men, which usually means they'll receive lower benefits. These are just a few reasons why women need to plan early and

wisely for retirement. We're here to make sure women have the information they need to plan for those golden years.

 LGBTQ+ (www.ssa.gov/people/lgbtq/)

 Our agency touches the life of every American, both directly and indirectly.
 Our commitment extends to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people covered by Social Security's many programs and services.

Check out even more of our People Like Me webpages at www.ssa.gov/people. Please share them on social media and with friends and family!



LESLEY LESLIE: BACK TO ... NOT SO NORMAL



t's the most wonderful time of the year, according to millions of parents around the country. No, it's not the beginning of the countdown

to Christmas and the overall holiday season. It's back-to-school time and parents are eagerly shopping to purchase school supplies, uniforms, laptop computers and dormitory room items for college-bound students that plan to live on campus. It's all about preparation for the new school year and inflation, rising tuition costs and gasoline prices are not the only things on our minds.

The return to school this year is what many hope will be a "return to a normal life", post-COVID. Normally, this time of year is when we might start our seasonal activities that include draining the pool in the backyard and covering it up until Memorial Day, the start of the new summer season. Perhaps we start the process of planting those tulip bulbs, unpacking the cozy sweaters that we put away for the summer and secretly initiating our holiday purchases for the family.

Seasonal change, particularly from summer to fall, can bring about changes in a person's mood, particularly when you factor in the transition to fewer daylight hours. Some people who experience depression or anxiety around the holiday season are more likely to be uncomfortable adjusting to this change. They may begin to withdraw from people or activities and eventually escape into a state of hibernation.

The COVID-19 pandemic pushed us all into hibernation because of having to self-isolate and quarantine, and it's safe to say that those dealing with anxiety and depression suffered a great deal. The pandemic revealed record levels of individuals that were suffering and mental health, especially in young people, finally became the topic of national conversations.

As we look to return to some semblance of normal, hopefully we can incorporate "checking in" on one another regularly, as we now understand how important it is to do so. Young or old, we really are our brother's keeper and we should love our neighbor. Maybe those sentiments could be part of the new normal that everyone is talking about.

ENJOYING JAZZ

esidents of Roseville Senior, 1 South Eighth St., Newark, got to enjoy jazz music in Tthe building's Community Room this summer. Three musicians played in the building on July 22 and Aug. 19.





GATHERING FOR A MEAL

Residents of Orange Senior, 132 William St., Orange, gathered in the building's Community Room on July 28 to enjoy a meal together. The hot weather prevented them from holding the cookout outside, but they still had a good time together.







NEW COMMUNITY CAREER & TECHNICAL INSTITUTE GRADUATE EXCELLING IN HEALTH CARE FIELD

FROM PAGE 1

provides a level of care between the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) and the general medical-surgical ward. She draws blood, performs EKGs, helps nurses with wound care, helps patients walk and perform physical therapy and washes patients.

Thornton has excelled in her role. She was even named Employee of the Month before her probationary period concluded.

Even though she was working full-time at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center, Thornton decided to take on another fulltime role as a patient care technician at University Hospital in Newark. She started that job in July. She works 5 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Cooperman Barnabas Medical Center and a night shift at University Hospital.

Thornton doesn't plan to work two fulltime jobs for an extended period, but has some financial goals to accomplish. She also wants to continue her education and eventually become a physician's assistant. She is currently at Essex County College working toward becoming a registered nurse.

"We at NCCTI are very proud of the accomplishments made by Christina Thornton. We wish her continued success," said NCCTI Director Dr. Sylvia McCray.

Thornton enjoys her work as a patient care technician because it involves service to others. Before enrolling at NCCTI, she had jobs in group homes and homeless shelters.

"I just like helping people and making a

difference in people's lives," she said.

Despite starting the PCT program virtually during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Thornton and her classmates were able to get hands-on instruction when conditions improved. Upon completion of the program, she felt prepared to begin her career.

NCCTI helped connect Thornton and her classmates to potential employers. Students were encouraged to fill out applications while on site. She recalls one classmate even received a job offer before she had passed the certification exam. Her own job offer came quickly after her interview.

Thornton is thankful for her experience at NCCTI.

"The staff was really good. It's a good school," she said. "They definitely do live up to their promise."

NCCTI is an accredited post-secondary career and technical institution that offers the following programs: Automotive Technician, Diesel Technician, Building Trades Specialist, Clinical Medical Assistant, Patient Care Technician, Community Healthcare Worker, Culinary Arts Specialist and Business & Computer Technologies. NCCTI also operates a comprehensive Financial Opportunity Center and Bridges to Career Opportunities Program sponsored by the local and national Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) offices. For more information, call 973-824-6484, log onto newcommunitytech.edu or visit 274 South Orange Ave., Newark.

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NEW COMMUNITY •• •









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EXTENDED CARE HOSTS COMMUNITY HEALTH FAIR

New Community Extended Care Facility, 266 South Orange Ave., Newark, hosted a Community Health Fair on July 29 in the rear parking lot of the building. Members of the surrounding community were invited to obtain information about area resources, get health screenings and get a COVID-19 vaccine. The event also offered free food, music and a variety of vendors. Newark West Ward Councilman Dupré Kelly was also in attendance. Extended Care thanks everyone who came out for the event. Visit newcommunity.org for more photos.









New Community Chief Operating Officer Fred Hunter, Newark West Ward Councilman Dupré Kelly and **New Community Extended Care Ad**ministrator Veronica Onwunaka.



New Community Career & Technical Institute (NCCTI) Admissions Representative Aziza Johnson hands out information.



Above Left: A pair receives items at the New Community Harmony House table.

Above Middle: Extended Care residents enjoyed eating outside at the event.

Above Right: Visitors wait to be seen at the Essex County Mobile Health Clinic.

Left: Greater Essex Counseling Services shares information with visitors.