New Credit Union at Ocean Inc.

Many organizations helped cut the ribbon for the Grand Opening of 1st Bergen Federal Credit Union at Ocean Inc. located at 40 Washington Street in downtown Toms River, NJ including Toms River Township Mayor Kelaher and Councilwoman Laurie Huryk, Ben Giovine, District Director for Congressman Andy Kim, Robin Florio, Ocean County Planning, Erika Stahl, PP/AICP/CPM Assistant Toms River Township Planner, Maria LaFace, Director of Ocean County Senior Services, Natisha McLaurin, Esq., South Jersey Legal Services, Inc., Stacey Farmer, Ocean County Board of Social Services, Mike McNeil of STEPS, Patty Cash, Ocean County Interfaith Neighbors, Ocean County Financial and Family Success Centers, Ocean Inc. Board of Trustee Members Anita Woolery, Chairperson, Fred Rush, Vice Chairperson, Board Member Glynis Wray, April Sirleaf, Credit Union Member Services Representative, Ocean Inc. and Greater Bergen staff and many others.Δ

Continued on Pages 4&5...
Cape Assist in Cape May County Receives Assistance from Sponsorship

Cape Assist in Cape May County and also a subrecipient of Ocean Inc. received holiday support from Tree of Hope and Ocean Inc.

The Tree of Hope children’s charity helps children and young people with a disability or illness by supporting families to raise the funds that they need to pay for specialist care that is not freely available.

O.C.E.A.N., Inc. supported the event and Forever Forest, donated 14 live trees. Forever Forest also generously donated tickets for their winter wonderland at their headquarters in Egg Harbor to be distributed among our families and a little craft for the kids after-school K.A.R.E. program. ♦

Photo: (l-r) Young child from a local family, Katie Falduta, Executive Director of Cape Assist and Cheryl Spaulding of Ocean Inc.

Ocean Inc. Awarded the 2020 Census Grant

Ocean Inc was recently awarded $30,000 in grant funding through the New Jersey Department of State DOS 2020 Complete Count Commission to assist in the Census count for hard to count areas/populations. Ocean Inc.’s goal under this initiative is to educate and encourage participation with the general public and those serviced throughout the region. ♦

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Beth Hudson        CFO
Adrienne Lawrence  Direct Services
Meg Saunders       Head Start
Lori Sigrist       Home Energy
United Way Warmest Wishes Coat Drive Helps Keep Ocean Inc. Head Start Students Warm This Holiday Season

For months, staff from the United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties collected children's winter coats to distribute to local pre-schools like Ocean Inc., elementary and middle school-aged students in need.

This year, through their "Warmest Wishes Drive" over 100 coats were donated to all agency Head Start Centers throughout Ocean County. Ocean Inc. sends a heartfelt thank you to all the staff at the UWMOC for their hard work over this holiday season. ♦

Photo: (L-r) Meg Saunders, Ocean Inc. Head Start Director and Sharon Hopson, Ocean Inc. Head Start Education Coordinator accepted the donated coats from UWMOC.
Grand Opening of the 1st Bergen Federal Credit Union at Ocean Inc.

New Partnership Between CAA’s Greater Bergen and Ocean Inc.

**Top Left Photo:** Mary Cudina, Greater Bergen Planning, Development and Communications Director provided Credit Union financial material to county seat pedestrians including area high school students during the day long outreach event. Students had an opportunity to spin the wheel to earn promotional items.

**Middle Right Photo:** Clockwise - Ocean County Human Services employee Marie Sodeikes, April Sirleaf, Credit Union Members Services Representative, Ester Sodeikes, Ocean County resident and Iman Bennett of 1st Bergen discuss the financial services—loans available at the 1st Bergen Federal Credit Union at Ocean Inc.

**Bottom Left Photo:** Cynthia Arone of Greater Bergen, Wanda Alfaro of Village Resources, the Ocean County Housing Navigation Agency and April Sirleaf, 1st Bergen Federal Credit Union at Ocean Inc. Service Representative discuss financial options for the homeless and other residents throughout Ocean County.
Grand Opening of the 1st Bergen Federal Credit Union at Ocean Inc.

A new partnership was created with two New Jersey Community Action Agencies, Greater Bergen and Ocean Inc. to form the 1st Bergen Federal Credit Union at Ocean Inc.

The member-owned, not-for-profit financial cooperative is dedicated to providing members with quality financial services and products with no fees to join and as little as $5 down to join.

This is an excellent example of CAA’s partnering to expand services that promote greater economic opportunities for individuals and families.

Ocean Inc. employee Ziomara Serrano, OCC Family Partner tests the new ATM located in the lobby allowing for 24/7 Banking Services.

Channell Wilkins, Ocean Inc President/CEO of Ocean Inc provided introductions, an overview of the partnership between both CAA’s and the goals and objectives of the new Credit Union.

For all Credit Union related questions, please contact April Sirleaf, Member Services Representative at (201) 968-0202 or via email at asirleaf@1stbergen.com. The 1st Bergen Credit Union at Ocean, Inc. will be opened every Thursday and Friday at the 40 Washington Street location.
The Atlantic City Jazz Fest presented by O.C.E.A.N., Inc., the Majestic Group & RM Productions at the Hard Rock in September featured Boney James, Najee, Summer Storm, Norman Brown, Lindsey Webster, Pieces of a Dream, Joe Bataan and other featured artists. ♦

-Life is so much better with Boney James and all that Jazz………
Brick Head Start Fatherhood Initiative Program at Head Start

The Ocean Inc Brick Head Start fathers participated in the activity of making homemade gratitude jars. The project showed both the parent and child that the more grateful you are and the more present you become, results in bringing more joy into your life and that of your child.

The jars were about capturing the spirit of living, life events, memories and words of love. Life is short, words go unsaid, and values not lived. They must be captured, remembered and shared as they were at a recent Fatherhood Initiative at the Brick Head Start Center.

Letter of Appreciation

Dear Mr. Wilkins

I had the pleasure of speaking with Debbie from your Toms River Home Energy Office and cannot express enough how helpful she was. I have throughout the year dealt with Debbie regarding my brothers Home Energy Assistance and have always received excellent customer service.

My brother had passed away last August and when I contacted your office to advise of his passing, Debbie could not have been more caring, compassionate and helpful. I recently reached out to Debbie with a question regarding someone who is seeking help. I left a message and Debbie returned my call promptly and had provided me with a lot of great information which was very informative and helpful.

I cannot thank her enough for all that she does and it is so very evident that she loves what she does each and every day, helping and providing excellent customer services to her clients.

Very Truly Yours,

Debbie Appello
Clockwise: The following employees received the 2019 Ocean Tides Performance Based Awards including Brittany Solorzano, Pleasantville Home Energy presented by Maria Pagan, Galloway Home Energy Supervisor, Mayra Gallegos, LEAP Head Start, Patricia Ford, LEAP Head Start, Laura Coccio, LEAP Early/Head Start and Pasquale Haman (PJ) presented by Chris Rosario, Maintenance Supervisor.

Ocean Inc. and LEAP Board presenters included Colleen M. Dolce, Fred Rush, Esther Halpern, Glynis Jean Wray and Ocean Inc. President/CEO Channell Wilkins.
Clockwise: The following employees received the 2019 Ocean Tides Performance Based Awards including William Wade, Ocean Inc Weatherization, Kathy Schreck, Human Resources, Nadine Kuster-Farrell, Intensive Case Management presented by her Supervisor Adrienne Lawrence, Debra Lynn Keefer, Toms River Home Energy Supervisor and Dinez Pritchett, Toms River Home Energy.

Ocean Inc. Board presenters included Anita Woolery, Tracey Lynn Trinwell, Yvonne Doval von Scheidt, Mark Rushwald and President/CEO Channell Wilkins.

Missing from the photos but receiving awards included: Dora Flores, LEAP Head Start, Rachel Cohen, LEAP Head Start and Tina Ruzzo, Ocean Inc. Head Start.
Construction at the Ocean Inc. Pine Beach site is progressing nicely.

Within one building, six (6) affordable housing units are being built to support income eligible disabled veterans.

Eligible veterans will receive Project-Based Vouchers through NJDCA. All applicants must first go through Vetwork to determine eligibility since they are providing the social services plan for the veterans.

The six (6) project based vouchers for Pine Beach have mobility. Once the tenant is in the unit for one year, they can request to move with that voucher. At that time the voucher is converted to a tenant-based voucher. As that occurs, Ocean Inc. will request and NJDCA will replace the voucher for a new tenant at Pine Beach.
The 2019 Atlantic City Latino Festival returned to Bader Field in Atlantic City after a long hiatus and was made possible through partnerships with the City of Atlantic City, Casino Reinvestment Development Authority, New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, Atlantic City Initiatives Project Office, Hispanic Alliance of Atlantic County and Organization Azteca.

Ocean, Inc., NJDCA and other Community Action agencies, including Gateway and CATA provided outreach during the first portion of the festival. In total, there were approximately 3,000 in attendance.