



Veterans Newsletter

A message from James J. Tedesco III, Bergen County Executive



One of my proudest days of my first term as County Executive was August 3, 2016, when we announced that Bergen County had successfully eliminated homelessness among our veteran population.

On December 7, 2018, I was invited to speak to the Assembly Military and Veterans' Affairs Committee about the issue of veterans homelessness and our experience successfully housing our vets. I was joined by Freeholder Chairman Tom Sullivan, Julia Orlando (Director of the Bergen County Housing, Health, and Human Services Center), and AJ Luna (Director of the Bergen County Division of Veterans Services) in Trenton, where we spoke about the moral obligation to make sure our veterans have what they need, especially a safe, stable, affordable place to call home.

You risked everything for us, and I promise we will never stop fighting for you. I am honored to continue to serve as your County Executive and grateful for your service.

From the desk of the Director of Veteran Services ~A.J. Luna

On behalf of the Division of Veteran Services, I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year! It has been my honor to serve as your Director of Veteran Services and I am so grateful for your support and friendship. Our Division has assisted many veterans in obtaining housing and employment opportunities. We work with veterans of every age group to help them live fulfilling civilian lives here in Bergen County. We could not do this without the teamwork of our non-profit and private sector partners, as well as the dedication of countless veterans and supporters. We look forward to serving you and our fellow veterans throughout 2019 and beyond. If you or a veteran you know needs our assistance, do not hesitate to reach out to Bergen County Veterans Services at 201-336-6325 or veterans@co,bergen.nj.us.



Thank you for your service to our nation and our fellow Americans!

James J. Tedesco III
County Executive



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ADOPT A VETERAN PROGRAM, BERGEN VOLUNTEER CENTER, AND OUR LADY OF GRACE CHURCH IN FAIRVIEW BRINGS HOLIDAY CHEER TO OVER 175 VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN THE BERGEN COUNTY AREA!



This year, the Division of Veteran Services collaborated with the Adopt A Vet program, Our Lady of Grace Church of Fairview, and the Bergen County Volunteer Center Heart to Heart program to distribute holiday gifts to 175 veterans and their families. We named the event “Operation Holiday Cheer” and the Division ensured those veterans who are less fortunate had a Wonderful Holiday! If you would like to find out how you can take part for the upcoming Holiday season, please feel free to reach out to us to see how to get involved. Gifts were delivered to Teaneck, North Vale, Emerson, Paramus, Wood-Ridge, and Garfield.



BERGEN NEW JERSEY *County*



Bergen County Executive
James J. Tedesco III
and the
Board of Chosen Freeholders
With
Department of Human Services
Division of Veterans Services

MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH CEREMONY 2019



**Friday May 17, 2019
12:30 pm**

**Bergen County Administration Building
One Bergen County Plaza, Piazza
Hackensack, New Jersey**

RSVP Required

*Please call (201) 336-6325 or email veterans@co.bergen.nj.us
For more information or to request special accommodations.*

James J. Tedesco III
Bergen County Executive

Board of Chosen Freeholders

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Did you know that there is VA pension benefit known as “Aid & Attendance?”

This program helps qualifying veterans or their surviving spouses receive personal care services to help them retain their quality of life and stay in their homes.

Veterans Home Care is an organization dedicated to ensuring that veterans and their spouses have the freedom to stay in their homes and live with dignity.



Its “Vet Assist” Program supports access to Aid & Attendance benefits by:

- helping you determine if you qualify for the VA Aid & Attendance Pension Benefit
- assisting you to identify and obtain documents needed for the application
- helping you complete and submit the application to the VA
- providing your home care right away
- furnishing an interest-free loan so you can pay for your home care while the VA processes your application
- monitoring your application’s progress, and assisting with responses to VA requests for additional information until your pension is approved

**For more information about eligibility for this program,
contact Evan Kaltman at 201-780-8940.**



THE AMERICAN LEGION

The American Legion offers a number of college scholarships to members of the graduating class of 2019. These include:

- Two for \$4,000 (\$1,000 for four years)
- Four for \$2,000 (\$1,000 for two years)
- Two for \$1,000 (\$1,000 for one year)
- One \$1,500 John Casey Scholarship (\$1,500 for one year).

Applicants must be a natural or adopted descendant of a current member of the American Legion, Department of NJ (son, daughter, grandson, granddaughter), or, if deceased, a member at the time of death. For the *John Casey Scholarship* the veteran must have been combat wounded. Applications must also include a copy of the veteran's Honorable Discharge paperwork (DD-214).

Application deadline is Feb 15, 2019.

The scholarships will be judged based on the following:

- Character (20 percent)
- Americanism/ Community Service (20 percent)
- Leadership (20 percent)
- Scholarship (20 percent)
- Basis of Need (20 percent)

For an application, contact your local American Legion Commander.

The National American Legion also offers Legacy Scholarships to the children of parents who died while on Active Duty serving in the Armed Forces. For more information on the Legacy Scholarships, go to the American Legion website: www.legion.org/scholarships. The application deadline is April 15, 2019 for the 2019 American Legion Legacy Scholarship.



Happy 100th Birthday American Legion!

The American Legion was chartered and incorporated by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic veterans organization devoted to mutual helpfulness. Today, there are more than 2 million members belonging to more than 13,000 posts worldwide.

Legionnaires are committed to the organization's founding purposes:

- To uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America;
- To maintain law and order;
- To foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism;
- To preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars;
- To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation;
- To combat the autocracy of both the classes and the masses;
- To make right the master of might;
- To promote peace and goodwill on earth;
- To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy;
- To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.

On behalf of the Bergen County Division of Veterans Services, we would like to thank all of our American Legion Posts for their service to our nation, especially their service to the communities that we call home. Our team is proud and honored to work with posts throughout the county on several projects that have benefitted our local veterans.

We look forward to continuing our partnerships with American Legion posts to support Bergen County veterans and their families and are excited for the next 100 years of excellence at the American Legion!



Flag Distribution

April 17-19, 2019

Each year, the Division of Veterans Services provides U.S. flags to veterans groups and Boy Scout troops for Memorial Day placement on the graves of war veterans buried in Bergen County cemeteries. It is a simple way for us to support those who want to honor our fallen heroes. This year, we are encouraging more groups to join us in supporting this important effort.

For returning participants, Veterans Services will provide flags based upon requests from last year unless otherwise notified with an updated flag order.

If your organization is participating for the first time or would like to change your flag request for this year, please contact Yahaira Padilla, at **201-336-6329** or **ypadilla@co.bergen.nj.us**.

All flag requests must be received by March 30, 2019.

All veterans organizations receiving flags will also be provided information packets from the Division of Veterans Services, outlining the resources and support we can help Bergen County veterans obtain.

We appreciate every opportunity to support our living veterans and honor those who are no longer with us. Thank you for joining us in supporting our fellow American service members.



Tracers

Donations to the Tracers program are used to supply bus tickets to jobs, assist in preparing the veteran for employment, and to fill-in gaps in the service delivery system. Since our inception, more than \$135,000 in bus tickets were given to homeless vets.

THANKS TO TRACERS BENEFACTORS (September 2018 to December 2018)

Gold (\$500 and above):

Persistent Construction, Inc.
American Korean War Veterans of New Jersey, Inc., Chorwon Chapter
Bergen County Police Chiefs Foundation
All Saints Church

Silver (\$250-\$499):

American Legion Teaneck Post 128

Bronze (\$100-\$249):

Korean War Veterans of New Jersey, Taejon Chapter 170
Raising the Bar Rehabilitation and Fitness LLC
VFW Reynolds Everet Schneider Post 227

Boosters (Under or up to \$99):

Richard & Andrea Zimmerman
VFW Auxiliary Petersilge Velock Post 809

Our veterans are thankful all year round for every item that they receive through the generosity of all the organizations in Bergen County. We would like to give special thanks to the McDonald's of Little Ferry, Paramus Rotary, Paramus Elks, NJ State Elks Veteran Committee, VFW Post 277 Ridgefield Park, Good Samaritan Hospital, Suffern NY, Elk of Rutherford, Boots Up, and all others who have supported in helping veterans in need.

**Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco will be honored
by Catholic Charities at the 4th Annual
SOS New Jersey Stakeholders Group Award Breakfast
on March 30, 2019**



Catholic Charities is an organization that provides a wide range of charitable services to the needy, including veterans, youths and other such individuals in the community. One of its most popular events is the annual SOS New Jersey Stakeholders Group Award Breakfast, honoring individuals and groups that have provided exemplary assistance to the veterans in the community. **This year, Bergen County Executive Jim Tedesco is among the honorees for his efforts to support our veterans, especially ending homelessness among Bergen County vets.**

This event is also an annual fundraiser for the Unmet Needs Fund, which provides financial support to veterans that do not qualify for some of the “usual” funding sources, providing one-time payments of up to \$1,500 to veteran households in need. Tickets are just \$35 and we encourage you to join us at this wonderful event.

The 4th Annual SOS New Jersey Stakeholders Group Award Breakfast will be held at The Brownstone, 351 W Broadway, Paterson, NJ on Saturday March 30, 2019 at 9AM.

For more information, please contact David Pearson at dpearson@Catholiccharities.org or (973) 818-3601 or visit www.njsosvets.org.