

## August 2023 Newsletter

Hello,

The name Gateway Community Action Partnership reflects our expanded coverage area, but more importantly, it signifies what we are all about. We are a gateway to success for individuals and families in our community and we achieve those results through actions done in partnership within that very community we serve. So please take a minute to read our newsletter and learn more about Gateway Community Action Partnership and our impact in our communities.

### Agency Mission And CAP Promise

The agency's mission is to provide services that improve the quality of life and promote self-sufficiency.

**CAP Promise:** Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

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### Gateway Scholars Welcomes New Cohort Of Students During Program Orientation

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Albert B. Kelly, President and CEO of Gateway Community Action Partnership, welcomed a new cohort of students participating in Gateway's Scholars Program at their orientation and training on Monday, August 21. The Gateway Scholars Program provides high school Juniors and Seniors guidance in preparing for either college or employment. The program offers paid

work experience through an internship at Gateway, as well as career development, life skills, SAT/ACT prep, college tours, and college readiness resources. And this year, thanks to a grant from Clement Pappas and Co., the program added WorkForce Scholars to assist students with exploring careers and technical schools to equip them with jobs in the community.

This year, the program welcomed three returning Scholars and six new Scholars from five area schools. Both Mr. Kelly and JoAnn Walters, Career Readiness Coordinator of the Gateway Scholars Program, were excited about the new and returning scholars' participation. Past Scholars are presently attending RCSJ, Stockton University, Lincoln University, and Rowan University. Over the past three years, nearly 30 students have gained assistance from the program.

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## Gateway Wellness Center And Salem IAC "Youth Employment Program" Visits Mill Creek Urban Farm

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The Youth Employment program, run by the Gateway Wellness Center in partnership with the Salem Inter-Agency Council, operates through funding received from the Office of the Attorney General. The program allows youth to prepare for their future in the workforce and/or attending college or a trade school.

On August 2, the group was greeted by Marcus Weaver, Gateway's Director of Agriculture and Food Initiatives, during their trip to Gateway's Mill Creek Urban Farm. Accompanied by the Executive Director of Salem Interagency Council, Cristina Chillem, the students were given a hands-on tour of the facility.

Albert B. Kelly, Gateway's President and CEO, along with Edward Bethea, Gateway's Executive Vice President and COO were present to answer various questions and concerns that the students had on their minds. The group discussion included feedback about changes the students would like to see happening within the community.

Also present were Ashlee Todd, Mental Health Director at the Gateway Wellness Center, Joanne Walters, Coordinator of the Gateway Scholars Program, who provided information concerning the program and how to apply for FAFSA, and Amour Bethea, who shared some



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## Gateway's Drumline Doesn't Miss A Beat At CGS Check Presentation

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Gateway Wellness Center was awarded a grant from Cumberland Salem Gloucester (CGS) Family Partnership for the Drumline program. The Wellness Center collaborates with the Greater Bridgeton Family Success Center to run the program. Presenting the check on August 2 were CGS representatives Serena Romero (CEO), Ronald Hudak, Community Resource Manager, and James Sampson, Director of Community Resources. Albert B. Kelly, Gateway's President and CEO, Edward Bethea, Gateway's Executive Vice President and COO, and Ashlee Todd, Mental Health Director at Gateway Wellness Center, were present to receive the check, followed by a performance from the Drumline. Mr. Sampson of CGS noted that the drummers were very attentive to their instructor, Robert Reid Sr., and encouraged the group to keep up the good work. Carole Green, Director of Family and Youth Services, and Mae Woodley, Program Coordinator of the Greater Bridgeton Family Success Center were very proud of the young achievers.

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## Five From Gateway Achieve CCAP Status

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Gateway Community Action Partnership's Denise Castley, Ashlee Todd, Leslie Rivera, Jenise Graves, and Miguel Maldonado officially joined the ranks of Certified Community Action Professional (CCAP) on Thursday, August 24. Castley, Todd, Rivera, Graves and Maldonado were presented their certificate and CCAP pin at the National Community Action Partnership (NCAP) annual national conference in Atlanta. The CCAP presentation was held during the conference's gala awards dinner which is a keynote event at the annual gathering. A candidate for CCAP must submit a Candidate Data Form and an Executive Skills Portfolio, which when graded, must garner enough points so that the candidate can qualify to sit for the CCAP exam. Castley is the agency's CFO, Todd is the Mental Health Director of the Gateway Wellness Center, Rivera is a Fiscal Specialist, Graves is a Senior Accountant, and Maldonado is Director of Operations/Project Manager in Head Start.

Other CCAPs at Gateway are President and CEO Albert B. Kelly, Executive VP/Chief Operations Officer Edward Bethea, VP/Social Services/Compliance Officer Denise Todd, VP/Head Start Bonnie Eggenburg, VP/Women, Infants & Children (WIC) Dr. Jaya Makukha, Director of Grant Development Gene Vernacchio, Grants Manager Ed Hilt, Director of Operations/Head Start Dr. Colleen Turner, Controller Dan Muller, and Program Operations Manager Kyana Evans. Former WIC Director Electra Moses, former VP of Planning Michael Cudemo, Natasha Jennings and the late Herbert P. DiMaio, Senior VP/Planning, also earned CCAP status while working with the agency.

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## Southeast Gateway Beautification Effort Continues

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Gateway's dedication to beautifying the Southeast Gateway (SEG) neighborhood continued on August 15 with a new layer of mulch surrounding the mural on Terrace Street in Bridgeton. The mural, which was painted back in May by local artists and high school art students, serves as an eye-catching and inspiring landmark within the community. Overseeing the mulching project were Esaul Martin, SEG Neighborhood Revitalization Coordinator, Cassandra Avila, SEG Revitalization Assistant, and Kyana Evans, Program Operations Manager. The project is set to be completed sometime in September. Stay tuned for more updates as the SEG Neighborhood Revitalization effort continues to beautify the city of Bridgeton.

## Mill Creek Urban Farm Hosts Volunteers From The American Littoral Society





**Volunteers from the American Littoral Society lent a helping hand at Mill Creek Urban Farm on August 1. During their visit, they weeded and trimmed the edible crop riparian planting that they had helped establish in 2017, and cleaned and prepared coconut-coir filled growbags for the farm's fall greenhouse tomato crop.**

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## **Progress Report On Bridgeton's E-Bike Pilot Program, An August Recap**

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By Cassandra Avila

August marked a pivotal chapter in our ongoing journey toward a greener, more sustainable future. As we reflect on the month's accomplishments, challenges, and next steps, we invite you to delve into the highlights of our E-Bike Program.

To promote sustainable transportation options and reduce carbon emissions, we carefully selected twelve participants for our E-Bike Program. These individuals embody the spirit of our community, each contributing to our collective effort to make Bridgeton a more environmentally conscious city. The collaboration proved to be our guiding force throughout the month. We're proud to acknowledge Mojo Bike Shop, whose partnership and support facilitated the smooth distribution of e-bikes to our participants. The enthusiasm displayed by each recipient as they received their e-bikes was heartwarming. It reinforced our belief in the positive change we're fostering.

Of course, our journey encountered its share of challenges. Coordinating documentation, appointments, and participant schedules posed logistical complexities. However, we've remained steadfast in our commitment to overcoming these obstacles through open communication and innovative solutions.

As we focus on the coming month, we're excited to engage our participants in focus groups and surveys. These interactions will provide invaluable insights into their experiences, preferences, and suggestions, guiding us in refining and enhancing the program's impact.

We thank the NJCCRC for their unwavering support and collaborative efforts. Their involvement has been instrumental in propelling our initiative forward and aligning our goals with the community's needs.

Looking ahead, the road remains promising. Our E-Bike Program continues to gain momentum, driven by the shared vision of a cleaner, more sustainable Bridgeton. Together, we're writing a narrative of positive change, one pedal stroke at a time. Keep pedaling, Bridgeton!



## Gateway's Penns Grove Head Start Hosts Women's Health Fair

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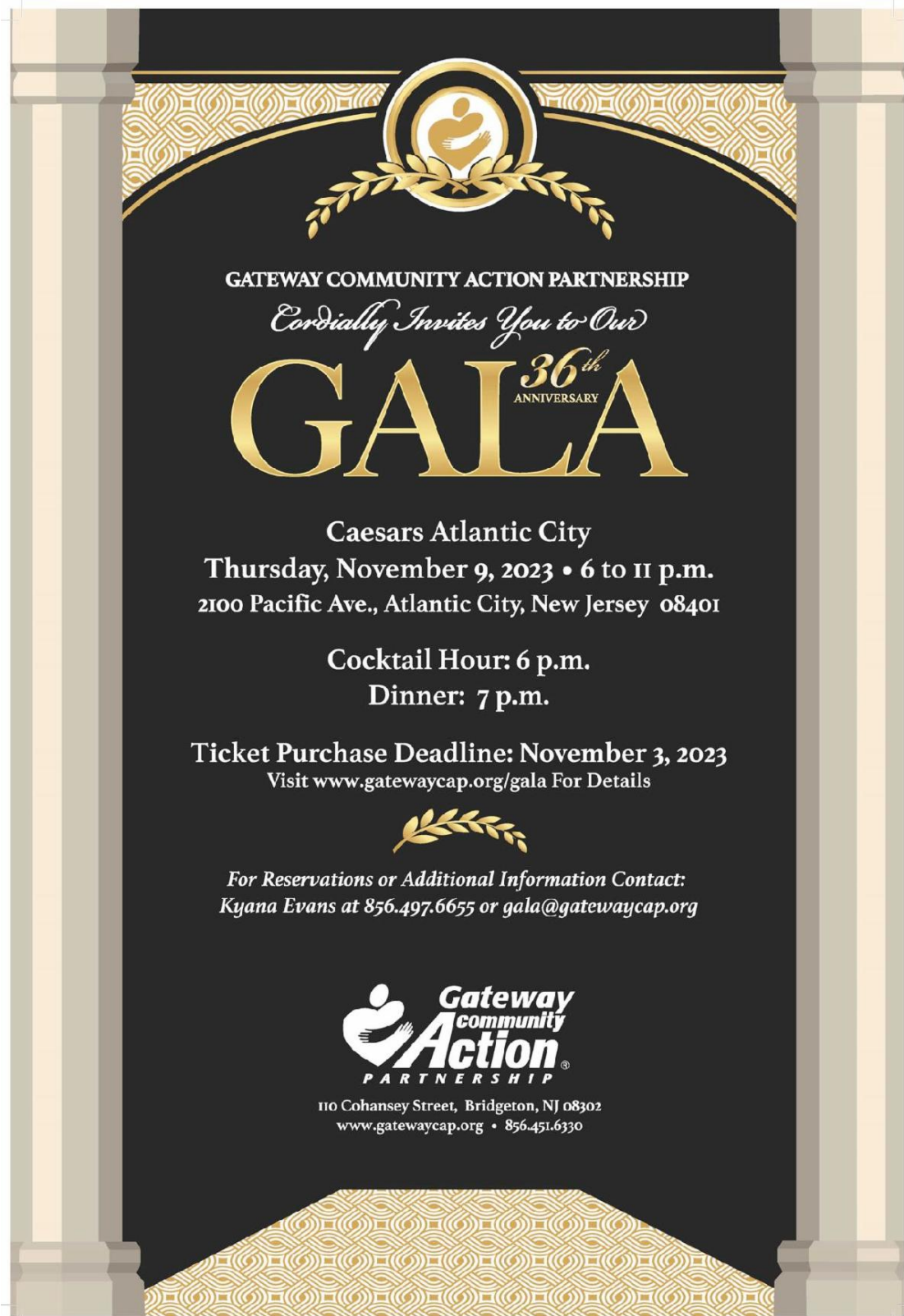
Gateway's Head Start Center in Penns Grove hosted a Women's Health Fair on July 27 featuring health vendors, dental services, doula resources, yoga and wellness stations, prizes, and refreshments. The day was a huge success thanks to the staff members and vendors who came out to help.

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## Join Us For Our 36th Anniversary Gala This November

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Gateway Community Action Partnership is hosting our 36<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala on Thursday, November 9, 2023 at Caesars Hotel and Casino in Atlantic City, NJ. We hope you will be part of this year's celebration!

For information on ticket purchases, please contact Kyana Evans at (856) 497-6655.

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**Gateway's Weatherization Assistance Program Spotlight**

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Gateway Community Action Partnership's Weatherization department stays busy, especially during these summer months. Tim Finch, Gateway's Weatherization Manager, Lacrechia Ducre, Weatherization Specialist, and the weatherization team are truly "helping people and changing lives" as they continue to contract with vendors to help homeowners make their homes more energy efficient, and as a result, reduce energy use and costs.

John Brown of MF Brown Energy Efficiency Expert and his team of workers were on site at a residence in Bridgeton on August 16 making the home as energy efficient as possible as they installed fire proof batting in the attic and secured all vents in the basement to seal air leaks with spray foam and weather foam boards.

Increasing insulation by sealing air leaks is one of the fastest and most cost-effective ways to reduce energy waste while improving the comfort of your home.

If you have low-to-moderate income, the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) can help make your home more energy-efficient. WAP studies your whole home and provides solutions to help lower your energy costs and make your home healthier and safer.

For more information about Gateway Community Action Partnership's Weatherization Assistance Program, call 856-455-5900.

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**Gateway's Head Start/Early Head Start  
And Gloucester County CCYC Participate  
In Glassboro's Community Day**

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**Staff from Gateway's Head Start/Early Head Start in Glassboro as well as the Gloucester County Council for Young Children (CCYC) participated in the Glassboro Community Day event earlier this month to hand out information about the programs and employment opportunities with Gateway.**

## **How Atlantic City Electric's New Smart Energy Network Will Benefit You**





Atlantic City Electric is building a Smart Energy Network throughout its South Jersey service area. The network is designed to enhance reliability, improve the resiliency of energy service and customer experience, and support new tools and programs to help customers save money and energy. As part of Atlantic City Electric's Smart Energy Network initiative, the company will install upgraded smart meters for approximately 565,000 residential and business customers across its service area. Customers in Bridgeton can expect to receive their new meter in early July of 2023. The Smart Energy Network will help drive the South Jersey economy by supporting local and diverse companies, with more than \$27 million going to local companies that are supporting the company's smart meter upgrades. The project also creates jobs for field technicians and support personnel that Atlantic City Electric has worked to bring to South Jersey communities since 2018, when it joined a consortium of workforce development boards and vocational schools in a \$6.5 million education program to fill next-generation energy roles.

There is no upfront cost to customers for new smart meters. Customers will receive several communications prior to their meter upgrade providing additional information about the upgrade process.

Once the Smart Energy Network is complete and smart meters are activated, customers will have access to new tools to help them manage their energy usage and lower their bills. For example, customers will be able to:

- See real-time electricity usage.
- Receive high bill alerts when electricity use reaches a selected level so you can manage your energy use.
- Check bills to date at any point to stay on budget each month.
- Participate in potential future programs that could offer new ways to save money and energy.

The enhanced functionality of the meters will start to be enabled beginning in the summer of 2023 and continue through 2024. Customers will receive more information about the new features and benefits that will become available when their smart meters are activated.

Atlantic City Electric's customers can learn more about the Smart Energy Network by visiting the website linked below.

[Learn More  
Here](#)

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## Welcome to Gateway CAP's New Hires!

**Anthony Mosley, Gateway Scholars**

**Amya Day, Gateway Scholars**

**Janiya Whitaker, Gateway Scholars**

**Khiry Higgs, Gateway Scholars**

**Damani Brice, Gateway Scholars**

**Autumn Milledge-Sease, Gateway Scholars**

**Antwan Sapp, School Based Counselor**

**McKenzie Buck, School Based Counselor**

**Teraya Morgan, Prevention Specialist**

**Harrop Sandhu, Sub Teachers Assistant**

**Miriam Ruiz-Martinez, Sub Teachers Assistant**

**Khadeejah Ashour, Sub Teachers Assistant**

**Emmely Brambila, Sub Teachers Assistant**

**Dayonna McGriff, Floating Teachers Assistant**

**Rachel Palacios, HS Group Teacher**

**Nina Martinez, EHS Group Teacher in Training**

**Shadrai Brickhouse, EHS Group Teacher in Training**

**Awilda Guzman, HS Head Teacher**

**Norma Cuellar Rojas, Sub Teachers Assistant**



## Gateway Community Action Partnership

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Contact Us Today



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