

The Fund for New Jersey News

- The Fund for New Jersey is proud to announce that for the 4th quarter of 2020 it has awarded grants in the total amount of \$412,000 to advance public policies in the areas of environmental justice, health equity, economic equity and public media. [Read the full press release.](#)

Grantee News

Policy Victories:

- On February 22, Gov. Phil Murphy signed three bills that together legalize the use of marijuana in New Jersey and put an end to thousands of arrests. The three laws signed on Monday allow the possession and use of marijuana by anyone over 21 years old in NJ. The law enables the purchase and sale of legal marijuana at state-licensed dispensaries, though it could be more than a year before recreational sales begin. The law also bars police from stopping young people if they smell marijuana and allows them to only give out warnings to young people. This effort was led by Fund for NJ grantee American Civil Liberties Union of NJ and its partners. Read more [here.](#)
- On February 16, Gov. Phil Murphy announced that the state would invest \$100 million in clean transportation projects, including the electrification of transit and school buses, garbage and delivery trucks. The funding will come from New Jersey's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative and the prosecution of Volkswagen for emissions cheating. The Governor has set a goal of using 100% clean energy by 2050 and established the Office of Climate Action and a Green Economy. Read more [here.](#)
- On February 4, Gov. Phil Murphy signed into law S2607/A2785, which requires municipalities to include a climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment in the land use plan of municipal master plans. This new law would require proactive planning to protect communities against threats of climate change-related natural hazards. Fund grantee Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) is developing guidance for what this climate change-related hazard vulnerability assessment should look like and how environmental commissions can effectively engage. Read more [here.](#)
- The NJ Motor Vehicle Commission (MVC) met on January 15 to address the rules and regulations to implement the new driver's licenses law for undocumented immigrants. The MVC plans to start issuing driver's licenses to undocumented immigrants on May 1

and will let them qualify by signing an affidavit if they do not have an IRS identification number or letter from the Social Security Administration. Read more [here](#).

Policy Setbacks:

- In November, Hudson County renewed its ICE contract despite a lengthy public hearing heavily attended by advocates who urged the County Commissioners to reject it. Conditions inside the ICE detention facilities continue to draw attention, and immigrant detainees allege poor health and safety standards have been made worse by the rising surge of COVID-19 cases. Read more [here](#).

Policy Reports:

- New Jersey Policy Perspective released a report, *Parents are Essential Too: Supporting Working Families During the Pandemic*. The report provides an in-depth view of the well-being of New Jersey's children and working parents. Many families in NJ already struggled to balance work and caregiving, but now the current health crisis has created untenable conditions for many families who face the additional pressures of unstable and unpredictable employment, schooling, and childcare. Read more [here](#).
- New Jersey Policy Perspective released a report, *The "Whitening" of Camden's Teachers*. The report looks at the city of Camden, NJ, where the city now employs fewer Black teachers and more white teachers than it did two decades ago. The decline in Black teachers is primarily attributed to charter and renaissance school expansion, where charter schools are hiring fewer teachers of color. This expansion has also resulted in a less experienced workforce, as charter and renaissance teachers have far less experience than Camden City School District teachers. Read more [here](#).
- New Jersey Future released a report, *The Geography of Poverty and Race in New Jersey*, which analyzes geographic trends in poverty in New Jersey over the past two decades. The analysis shows that the number of poor neighborhoods in New Jersey is growing, as is the concentration of poverty. Read more [here](#).
- New Jersey Future (NJF) released a report, *School District Fragmentation and Residential Segregation*. This report explores whether school district fragmentation and the lack of housing options contribute to residential segregation both by income and race. In this report, NJF compared New Jersey's 21 counties with a set of counties in nearby states where public education is organized differently. This comparison helps to see if the degree of fragmentation appears to be related to the degree to which certain

disadvantaged groups (lower-income, Black, and Hispanic populations) tend to be concentrated in relatively few neighborhoods. Read more [here](#).

- The Regional Plan Association released a report, *Infrastructure for Recovery and Renewal*. This report looks at how a federal infrastructure program can lift the New York-New Jersey-Connecticut metropolitan region. The report describes how the nation's recovery demands an infrastructure program that creates jobs, reduces racial and economic inequality, builds healthier communities, and prepares the U.S for climate change and public health emergencies. Read more [here](#).
- The Regional Plan Association released a report, *Better Service: Improving the Bus Network in New Jersey*. The report looks at the impacts of COVID-19 on public health and travel. It explains that while New Jersey Transit rail and bus ridership between New Jersey and New York has decreased compared to last year, local bus riders have been returning to the system in more significant numbers. The report emphasizes that to offer high-quality bus service for riders, conditions need to be drastically improved. Read more [here](#).

Leadership and Organizational Announcements

- Congratulations to Amy Torres on her new role as Executive Director of the New Jersey Alliance for Immigrant Justice (NJAIJ).
- Congratulations to Craig Drinkard on his new role as Co-Executive Officer at the Victoria Foundation.
- Congratulations to Nick Sifuentes, who will join the Energy Foundation's Northeast team as the Program Director, Northeast Campaigns, on March 1. Nick most recently served as Executive Director of Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

Job Announcements

- [Communications Director](#), ACLU-NJ
- [Various Positions](#), NJ Citizen Action
- [Various Positions](#), Legal Services of NJ
- [NJ Advocacy Associate](#), Regional Plan Association
- [Executive Assistant](#), New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance
- [Campaign Associate](#), Environment New Jersey Research and Policy Center
- [Various Positions](#), New Jersey Policy Perspective
- [Human Resource Manager](#), Ironbound Community Corporation

- [Regional Manager](#), New Jersey Conservation Foundation
- [Organizing Director](#), Faith in New Jersey

Please send policy news and updates, job announcements, and staff updates to Erik Cruz-Morales at ecruz-morales@fundfornj.org or you can Tweet to @FundforNJ