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## First Lady Mary Pat Christie Names "Pass It Along" Founder Diane Taylor As 25<sup>th</sup> New Jersey Hero

Thursday, February 27, 2014

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**Trenton, NJ** – First Lady Mary Pat Christie today recognized Diane Taylor, founder, CEO and President of Pass It Along, for her passion to inspire local youth to volunteer and give back to the community. Through its work, Pass It Along has become the youth volunteer hub for Sussex County and the surrounding area. Ms. Taylor is the 25th Garden State resident to be named a New Jersey Hero.

"Diane's enthusiasm and commitment to service is contagious," said Mrs. Christie. "I truly admire how she continues to touch and inspire so many young people in the community to be a force of good in our state. Through her compassion to help others, Diane's work to promote student volunteerism is providing tens of thousands of volunteer hours to people in need. I'm proud to name her a New Jersey Hero."

Mrs. Christie made the presentation during a visit to Liberty Towers, an independent senior living facility located in Newton. Student volunteers engaged residents, teaching resident seniors how to get wired to their computers, iPads, and cell phones.

Now in its twelfth year, Pass It Along uses a service learning model to help young people become engaged and effect change in their communities. Areas of focus are Service in Action, Self Discovery and Leadership and Youth Development. In addition, the organization provides resources and assistance for youth to take action on issues they are most passionate about.

"I am extremely honored and grateful to receive this award on behalf of Pass It Along and all of our volunteers," said Diane Taylor. "Pass It Along believes that self-discovery, volunteer and leadership opportunities help teenagers become confident, resilient and compassionate. By having the opportunities and tools, teenagers will discover and embrace themselves and leverage their power to make a difference in the world."

Pass It Along works with over 40 local, nonprofit partners in New Jersey providing service to families and children at risk, the elderly, the developmentally challenged, animals in need, and providing literacy, urban school beautification, environmental stewardship, homelessness, hunger and poverty and natural disaster assistance. The organization provides a host of unique volunteer opportunities, including an Adopt a Grandparent program, Sandy relief efforts in Beach Haven West, the Compadres peer mentoring program, Tilly's Kids programs for inner city youth and Season of Hope.

More importantly, in the past five years, more than 4,000 Pass It Along volunteers have served over 180,000 hours to make a difference in the lives of countless individual and families in the Garden State.

Pass It Along was honored in 2012 at the NJ State Governor's Jefferson Awards in the category of Youth Volunteer Group. For more information about Pass It Along, visit [www.passitalong.org/](http://www.passitalong.org/).

New Jersey Heroes is an initiative of First Lady Mary Pat Christie that showcases the positive and unique ways people and organizations are impacting New Jersey and their communities. To nominate a hero, visit [newjerseyheroes.org](http://newjerseyheroes.org) and follow the application instructions and submit the person you believe is a true New Jersey Hero.



**PHOTO CAPTION:**

First Lady Mary Pat Christie joins Pass It Along volunteers from Newton High School in teaching Liberty Towers residents how to get wired to their computers, iPads, and cell phones.

**PHOTO CAPTION :**

First Lady Mary Pat Christie visits with residents of Liberty Towers in Newton.

**PHOTO CAPTION 1:**

First Lady Mary Pat Christie Honors Pass It Along Founder Diane Taylor with her family. (Taylor is second from left).

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**Photo1 - PHOTO CAPTION 1:**

First Lady Mary Pat Christie Honors Pass It Along Founder Diane Taylor with her family. (Taylor is second from left).

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