

# First Lady Mary Pat Christie Recognizes Gian Paul Gonzalez for His Work to Inspire At-Risk Youth

Wednesday, October 10, 2012 Tags: [Other](#)

**Trenton, NJ** – Today, First Lady Mary Pat Christie named Gian Paul Gonzalez, a teacher at the Jose Marti Freshman Academy in Union City, as her 18th New Jersey Hero. With a vision to change one life at a time, Gonzalez and his 4-One organization are motivating at-risk youth in the local community through the game of basketball, inspiring pride, self-esteem and a drive for excellence.

"Gian Paul demonstrates what is truly great about New Jersey," said First Lady Mary Pat Christie. "Here is a young man who could have played professional basketball, but discovered a passion to teach, inspire and truly make a difference in the lives of young people in the Union City community. Gian Paul is an outstanding role model and a positive influence and I am proud to name him a New Jersey Hero."

A graduate of Montclair State University and former NCAA All-American forward, Gonzalez declined a pro-basketball contract to work with inner city youth, forming the 4-One organization. The group uses the game of basketball as a tool to bring hope and a life-changing message to inner-city public schools and juvenile jails. The 4-One motto is "Because one gave all, we give all for one."

Last year, Gian Paul brought a similar message with a rallying speech to football's New York Giants in their late-season turnaround, which culminated in the team's Super Bowl win.

"I'm greatly honored to receive this award, I don't see myself at all as a hero though - just a man who has been blessed with the opportunity to help his community and with a belief that my city can be great by empowering the lives of youth with purpose and hope," said Gian Paul Gonzalez. "It's amazing - the journey that God has blessed me with from the start of 4-One's first event by playing basketball in the Essex juvenile detention center on the roof of the building where the basketball court was, to getting to speak to the New York Giants this past season and inspire them with the "all in" rally cry that they made famous by winning the Super Bowl. The focus has always been the same: to motivate and inspire others for greatness, despite their circumstances."

For more information about Gian Paul and the 4-One organization, visit <http://4-one.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, go to <http://newjerseyheroes.org> and follow the application instructions to submit the person you believe is a true New Jersey Hero.

###

## Union City Teacher is Named October's New Jersey Hero

**Press Contact:**  
Michael Drewniak  
Kevin Roberts  
609-777-2600

**Stay Connected**  
with Social Media

**Stay Connected**  
with Email Alerts

**LIKE THIS PAGE? SHARE IT WITH YOUR FRIENDS.**

