

First Lady Mary Pat Christie Unveils Inspire: Everyday People Changing New Jersey Exhibit at Drumthwacket

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Trenton, NJ - Combining the homegrown talents of nine New Jersey fine arts photographers with the tireless efforts of eighteen New Jersey Heroes, First Lady Mary Pat Christie recently unveiled a new photographic exhibit that will be on display at Drumthwacket, the Governor's Official Residence in Princeton, through July 31, 2016. The black and white portrait collection *Inspire: Everyday People Changing New Jersey*, is part of the Drumthwacket Foundation's fine arts initiative to curate historical and contemporary exhibits that recognize the state's rich cultural heritage and instill pride.

"This new exhibit partners New Jersey Heroes and the Drumthwacket Foundation in celebrating the artistry of our Garden State photographers in capturing the essence of 18 amazing heroes," said First Lady Mary Pat Christie. "Through the lenses of these remarkably talented photographers, the public has an opportunity to get a glimpse into how these inspiring individuals are making a difference in our communities. I am proud this unique collection of black and white photographs will not only raise pride in our state, but also inspire more New Jerseyans to give back to their communities."

The *Inspire: Everyday People Changing New Jersey* includes:

Photographer **Aubrey Kauffman** whose works have been displayed in group exhibitions at The Newark Museum, Newark, NJ; Southern Light Gallery in Amarillo, Texas; The Biggs Museum of American Art in Dover, DE; Philadelphia Photo Arts, Philadelphia, PA and the Griffin Museum of Photography in Winchester, MA. Kauffman captured images of **Team Walker** founder, **Jerry Walker** (teamwalker.org) and **Operation Shoebox** founder **Rod Hirsh** (opshoeboxnj.org).

Painter and photographer **Kay Kenny**, who has had numerous one-person shows, most notably in Medellin, Columbia, Taipei, Taiwan, Lubbock, Texas and New York City and has taught photography for over 20 years at New York University and the International Center of Photography, illustrated the work of **Youthbuild Newark** founder **Robert Clark** (youthbuildnewarknj.org) as well as Purple R.E.I.G.N. founder **Asia D. Smith** (purpleignss.org).

Photographer, painter, teacher and historian **Donald Lokuta** whose works have been a part of over 300 exhibitions and permanent collections including the Art Museum at Princeton University, the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Museum of the City of New York, the National September 11 Memorial & Museum in New York City, and the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. featured **Glassroots, Inc.** founder **Kate Dowd** (glassroots.org) and **Community Soup Kitchen & Outreach Center** volunteer **Alan Weinstein** (cskmorristown.org).

Artist and educator **Geanna Merola**, who has exhibited her work in numerous group and solo exhibitions nationally and internationally as well as in private, public and major corporate collections, photographed **Abby Daily**, founder of Bridge of Books Foundation (bridgeofbooksfoundation.org) and **Brickstars Challenger Program** founder **Alex DePalma** (brickstarshockey.webs.com).

Klaus Schnitzer, whose exhibition career consists of over 200 regional, national and international shows including in the Museum of Modern Art, Ellis Island Immigration Museum, Lower East Side Tenement Museum, the Polaroid International Collection and BMW NA., presented **Operation Beachhead** founder **Michael Ricci** (opbeachhead.org) and **Pass It Along** founder **Diane Taylor** (www.passitalong.org).

Photographer **Robin Schwartz**, whose photographs are held in several museum, corporate and private collections including The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, New York, The Smithsonian American Art Museum, Washington, D.C., The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Zimmerli Voorhees

Museum and Johnson & Johnson, captured the essence of **Pony Power Therapies** founded by **Dana Spett** (ponypowernj.org) and **Arthur & Friends** founder **Wendie Blanchard** (arthurandfriends.org).

Social documentary photographer and environmental portrait photographer **Jay Seldin** has been exhibiting photos for more than 30 years nationally and internationally and held the position of "artist-in-residence" for the Newark Art Museum and the Montclair Art Museum, featured **Hope + Future** founder **Gian Paul Gonzalez** (hope-future.us) as well as **Union City Music Project** founder **Melina Garcia** (ucmusicproject.org).

Independent photographer **Bruce M. White**, whose award winning, internationally recognized photographs have illustrated numerous art books & exhibitions commissioned by leading educational, cultural, and historic institutions including The Metropolitan Museum of Art and The White House, encapsulated cousins and co-founders of **BreastIntentions** **Mike Ruane** and **Erika Rech** (www.breastintentions.org) as well as **Urban Promise USA** executive Director **Jodina Hicks** (urbanpromiseusa.org)

Wendel White, whose myriad works are represented in museum and corporate

collections including: the New Jersey State Museum in Trenton; En Foco, New York; Rochester Institute of Technology, New York; Museum of Fine Art, Houston; Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, Johnson & Johnson, New Brunswick and the Paul R. Jones Collection of African-American Art at the University of Delaware, photographed **FoodDude** founder **Aidan McManus** and co-founders of **Your Grandmother's Cupboard** **Clark** and **Jean Paradise** (ygcnj.org).

Drumthwacket is open most Wednesdays for guided tours. To make a reservation to view the exhibit, visit <http://www.drumthwacket.org/visit/reservation-form>. Drumthwacket is wheelchair accessible. Please inform the Foundation of special needs when registering.

New Jersey Heroes

New Jersey Heroes is a 501c3 non-profit foundation that was started in December 2010 by First

Lady Mary Pat Christie. Our mission is to recognize, celebrate, and award everyday "Heroes" and promote their causes. These Heroes are doing extraordinary things in their communities through various nonprofit foundations across the state. Mrs. Christie began this foundation with the desire to showcase New Jersey state pride by highlighting some amazing citizens who are making our state a better place. Our hope is that by recognizing and promoting these individuals, we will inspire others to give back to their community. <http://newjerseyheroes.org/index/>

Drumthwacket Foundation

Founded in 1982, the Drumthwacket Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit, non-partisan organization. Its mission is to increase a sense of pride in New Jersey by preserving the Drumthwacket properties and broadening access, furthering awareness and support of the Foundation and its activities, expanding civic understanding amongst New Jerseyans and providing educational opportunities for the public. www.drumthwacket.org.



Photographers Robin Schwartz, Wendell White, Geanna Merola, Klaus Schnitzer, First Lady Mary Pat Christie, Kay Kenney, Donald Lokuta and Aubrey Houston at Inspire Exhibit at Drumthwacket.



First Lady Mary Pat Christie with New Jersey Hero Jerry Walker of TeamWalker, Jersey City.



First Lady Mary Pat Christie views photographer Bruce White's portrait of New Jersey Hero Jodina Hicks of Urban Promise, Camden,

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