

First Lady Mary Pat Christie Names Jane Latini of Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County as 44th New Jersey Hero

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Executive Director Honored for Making a Difference in the Lives of Homebound Elderly and Adults with Disabilities

Trenton, NJ - Recognizing her commitment to encouraging independence and dignity for homebound seniors and adults with disabilities, First Lady Mary Pat Christie today named Jane Latini, Executive Director of Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County (ICGMC), as her 44th New Jersey Hero. For over 20 years, ICGMC and its trained volunteers have served homebound men and women in the Greater Mercer County community by ensuring that they have supportive and caring volunteers who assist them with the everyday tasks of life.

"Jane Latini embodies the true essence of a hero," said First Lady Mary Pat Christie. "She is a relentless and caring individual whose influence is not only making a difference in the lives of homebound seniors and adults with disabilities, but is also a positive role model for the caregivers and volunteers of ICGMC who are delivering caring services to the Mercer County community. Jane brings the ideals of service and giving back to the community full circle and I am proud to honor her as our 5th New Jersey Hero of 2016 and 44th Hero overall."

Ms. Latini joined ICGMC in 2008 as a Volunteer Manager, recruiting and training new volunteers as well as running workshops and educational forums on caregiving. She was named the Executive Director in 2012. Ms. Latini is also the founding Lead Coordinator of ICGMC's Project Healthy Bones, a free, 24-week health education and exercise program for those with or at risk for osteoporosis. Since 2012, over 2,000 older citizens across New Jersey have participated in the program as either a peer leader or class member.

"Through my experience at Interfaith Caregivers, I am privileged to witness first-hand the transformation of lives through the unlimited power of love. Coping with a life redefined by age-related issues and limitations challenges the very spirit and the basic need to love and be loved," said Jane Latini. "Interfaith Caregivers is an extraordinary agency where lives are enriched, enhanced and sustained by mutual trust and love for over 23 years throughout the Greater Mercer County area. Daily, trained volunteers are empowered to promote the independence, dignity and wellness of our homebound elderly and people with disabilities. With trusting hearts and humility, our care receivers welcome the friendship and help of their volunteer who embraces the privilege to serve."

ICGMC provides an array of services to the community including transportation to doctors' offices, grocery shopping, respite care, light housekeeping, telephone reassurance, occasional meal preparation, indoor and outdoor chores, minor home repairs, and other non-medical help, including simple companionship. By providing these caring services, those who cannot go about these daily tasks alone have the ability to remain in their homes.

To help inform and assist caregivers, ICGMC provides workshops, conferences, wellness retreats and other community events. In addition, ICGMC participates in a variety of collaborative initiatives including Jewish Family & Children's Service, Meals on Wheels of Trenton & Ewing, American Red Cross, Lifeline Medical Alert, Mount Carmel Guild of Trenton, Enable INC and Greater Mercer TMA.

Since its inception, ICGMC has provided over to 185,000 hours of volunteer caregiving services free of charge to homebound individuals. In 2012 alone, ICGMC volunteers from more than 25 interdenominational churches provided 11,821 hours of free caregiving services – an 8 percent increase over 2011, to 319 Mercer County seniors and people with disabilities.

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For more information, please visit: www.icgmc.org

New Jersey Heroes is an initiative First Lady Mary Pat Christie began in 2010 to showcase the positive and unique ways people and organizations are impacting New Jersey and their communities. To nominate a hero, go to newjerseyheroes.org and follow the application instructions to submit the person you believe is a true New Jersey Hero.

Photo Caption: First Lady Mary Pat Christie has named Jane M. Latini, Executive Director of Interfaith Caregivers pictured here with Miriam Geller, Care Receiver and Volunteer, as the 44th New Jersey Hero.

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