

Governor Phil Murphy

First Lady Tammy Murphy Marks Eighteenth Successful Family Festival with Event Held in Trenton

09/25/2023

TRENTON – First Lady Tammy Murphy successfully hosted her 18th Nurture NJ Family Festival on Saturday, September 23, at the Hedgepeth-Williams Intermediate School in Trenton. The Trenton Family Festival served as a one-stop-shop for state, county, and local care, support, and resources. Over 500 people in the area were able to connect with 70 organizations that provided services for expectant and new moms and families with healthcare, housing support, food assistance, child care, New Jersey Motor Vehicles Commission services, and more.

“Our capital city holds a special place in my heart, and I was so happy for the community to embrace our Family Festival. These Festivals provide me with a precious opportunity to connect with the incredible mothers, babies, and families of our state, which I eagerly anticipate with each event,” **said First Lady Tammy Murphy**. “Through invaluable partnerships with numerous organizations, these Festivals have become a vital resource for thousands of New Jersey residents, offering easy access to essential services needed to support their growing families. Persevering despite the rain, we look forward to hosting more festivals across the state as we work methodically to make New Jersey the safest and most equitable state in the nation to deliver and raise a baby.”

As the State’s capital, Trenton has been an area of focus since First Lady Tammy Murphy launched her Nurture NJ initiative in 2019. Nurture NJ is a statewide program committed to reducing the maternal and infant mortality epidemic in New Jersey and ensuring equitable care among women and children of all races and ethnicities. Since its inception, Nurture NJ has created a statewide strategic plan, seen 45 pieces of maternal and infant health legislation signed by Governor Murphy – including a bill signed earlier this year establishing a Maternal and Infant Health Innovation Center in Trenton, developed and implemented groundbreaking programs and policies, hosted 18 Family Festivals statewide, and more – positioning New Jersey as a national leader in fighting the maternal and infant health crisis.

The Trenton Family Festival was hosted by the First Lady’s Nurture NJ initiative in partnership with Senator Shirley Turner, Assemblywoman Verlina Reynolds-Jackson, Assemblyman Anthony Verrelli, Boys and Girls Club of Mercer County, Capital Health, City of Trenton, Greater Mount Zion AME Church, Henry J. Austin Health Center, HomeFront, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ, KinderSmile, the John S. Watson Institute at Kean University, NJ Motor Vehicle Commission, Salvation and Social Justice, Smith Family Foundation, The Burke Foundation, The Children’s Home Society of NJ, Trenton Health Team, and Trenton Public Schools.

“Our goal is to make sure that our families have access to the resources and information that will help them the most,” **said Senator Shirley K. Turner**. “I was proud to be a partner with our First Lady, Tammy Murphy, in this event.”

“I’m proud to say that the Trenton Family Festival is an event where government ambition becomes a reality. It is an important event that not only brings a day of excitement and joy to many families but most importantly resources. This momentous event was championed by First Lady Tammy Murphy in her steadfast mission to support maternal health. And her vision here was turned into a reality thanks to all of the hardworking community partners and staff, who poured heart and soul into putting on this huge event. It was no small feat, but when communities rally together under the leadership of local residents all the way up to the Office of the First Lady, extraordinary things happen,” **said Assemblyman Anthony S. Verrelli**.

“I want to thank First Lady Tammy Murphy for bringing the Family Festival to the City of Trenton. Too many at-risk

mothers and babies suffer from extreme disparities in prenatal and postpartum care that often go unaddressed. Events like the Family Festival will not only bring awareness to the systematic issue, but also supply families with State, County, and local care, and resources,” **said Trenton Mayor Reed Gusciora.**

“Boys & Girls Clubs of Mercer County extends our deepest gratitude to the first lady for bringing the Family Festival to the city of Trenton, we are thankful for her commitment to the women and children of New Jersey,” **said President and CEO Reginald Coleman.**

“Capital Health is proud to be a participating partner in the First Lady of New Jersey’s Family Festival, an event that supports her work to make New Jersey the safest and most equitable state in the nation to deliver and raise a baby, “ **said Dr. Eric Schwartz, Executive Director of Capital Health’s Institute for Urban Care.** “We share the first lady’s goal of supporting new mothers and pregnant women and providing them with essential services. We look forward to sharing information including car seat safety, infant CPR techniques, lactation services, and what to expect during labor at what promises to be a fun, educational, and supportive day of activities.”

“The hardworking staff and I were honored to stand alongside the many organizations in support of the Trenton Family Festival. Our commitment to community health extends beyond our health center walls, and events like these reaffirm our dedication to fostering wellness, unity, and vitality within Trenton. Together, we help to inspire families and create a brighter, healthier future for all,” **said Dr. Kemi Alli, CEO, Henry J. Austin Health Center.**

“Improving maternal and infant health is central to creating a healthier New Jersey and that is what the Family Festivals are all about. Everyone deserves access to affordable healthcare no matter who they are or where they live and we are grateful for the opportunity to continue our partnership with the Governor and First Lady. As New Jersey’s health solutions leader, Horizon is meeting our neighbors where they live and helping them achieve their best health through partnerships like this one,” **said Wendy Morriarty, VP and Chief Medicaid Officer, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of NJ.**

“KinderSmile Foundation’s mission of providing underserved children and families with access to comprehensive dental care and educating underserved children and their families on the importance of dental hygiene helps bridge the gap in access to oral health care in Essex and Mercer Counties. Our Perinatal Health and Wellness Program empowers mothers to nourish a new generation of children free of Early Childhood Caries and rampant decay. We were thrilled to be a part of the Trenton Family Festival, hosted by First Lady Tammy Murphy, whose Nurture NJ initiative is aligned with our own, as we strive every day to reduce disparities and improve oral health outcomes for all New Jerseyans,” **said Dr. Nicole McGrath-Barnes, Founder and CEO of KinderSmile Foundation.**

“The John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean University is committed to supporting healthy, vibrant communities. We were thrilled to join the Office of the First Lady and so many community partners at the Trenton Family Festival. Together, we will continue to write the story of Trenton’s success,” **said Barbara George Johnson, Vice President, John S. Watson Institute for Urban Policy and Research at Kean University.**

“The Burke Foundation proudly supports the First Lady’s Family Festivals because they build stronger communities where New Jersey families are connected to the services and support they need to thrive,” **said Atiya Weiss, Executive Director, The Burke Foundation.** “It truly does take a village to raise a child, and we’re honored to be part of that village by supporting Saturday’s community celebration in Trenton that advances NurtureNJ’s vision to be the safest place to give birth and raise a family.”

“The Children’s Home Society of New Jersey has been serving the Mercer County community, especially in the City of Trenton, for over a century. We were excited to be a part of the Trenton Family Festival, an event hosted by First Lady Tammy Murphy. This festival provided our diverse community with access to much-needed services, including maternal child health, family and community support, clinical and behavioral services, early childhood education, school-based services, child welfare services, and many more resources. These programs align with CHSoNJ’s mission to save children’s lives and build healthy families in our community. The event promotes a welcoming environment for everyone, while also providing access to hard-to-reach populations and encouraging organizations to collaborate for the health and wellness of all families in New Jersey,” **said Maritza I. Raimundi-Petroski, MPA, Vice President of Strategic Initiatives, Prevention Programs, and Community Engagement, The Children’s Home Society of NJ.**

“At Trenton Health Team, our mission is to elevate the health and well-being of our community. It was with excitement that we collaborated with First Lady Tammy Murphy’s office and a robust network of community partners at the Trenton

Family Festival. This wasn't merely an event; it was a dynamic celebration that amplified our mission and positively impacted the lives of birth parents, children, and families across Trenton. Together, we're not just creating a moment, but making a profound difference for New Jersey residents," **said Greg Paulson, CEO, Trenton Health Team.**

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