

Governor Phil Murphy

First Lady Tammy Murphy Hosts Another Successful Family Festival in Salem County

06/24/2023

Festival Served Over 300 Residents from the Salem County Area

SALEM COUNTY – First Lady Tammy Murphy today hosted a Family Festival at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Park in Salem County in a continued effort to support the mothers and babies of New Jersey. This was the 17th in a series of Family Festivals the First Lady has hosted as a part of her Nurture NJ initiative. These Family Festivals serve as a one-stop-shop for state, county, and local care, support, and resources including services for expectant and new moms, healthcare, housing support, food assistance, child care, energy assistance, and more.

"I want to thank the residents of Salem County for embracing our Family Festival in their lovely home. I always look forward to these Festivals as they give me the opportunity to get out and meet the amazing moms, babies, and families of our state," **First Lady Tammy Murphy**. "These Festivals have been in tremendous partnership with numerous organizations, and have benefited thousands of families by providing a convenient hub for expectant mothers and families to access crucial resources, like WIC, childcare, and housing assistance. I am excited to keep organizing these festivals as we continue to strive to make New Jersey the safest and most equitable state in the nation to deliver and raise a baby."

In 2019, First Lady Tammy Murphy launched Nurture NJ, 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 over 43 pieces of maternal and infant health legislation signed by Governor Murphy, developed and implemented groundbreaking programs and policies, hosted 17 Family Festivals statewide, and more – positioning New Jersey as a national leader in fighting the maternal and infant health crisis.

The Salem Family Festival was hosted in partnership with Senator Ed Durr, Assemblywoman Bethanne McCarthy Patrick, Assemblywoman Beth Sawyer, Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, Inspira Health, Salem County Department of Health and Human Services, The Salem Health and Wellness Foundation, Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey, The Burke Foundation, and New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission.

"Our children are our greatest blessings. Enjoy every moment while keeping them healthy and safe," **said Senator Edward Durr**.

"The Salem Family Festival not only provided a day of fun and relaxation for the people of Salem County; it also highlights an important issue. Urban and rural poverty have a crippling effect on the residents of Salem County," **said Assemblywoman Bethanne McCarthy Patrick**. "This event offered a day of safe, free fun and allows our community partners to connect with and help the people of Salem County. I thank our community partners for their tremendous work on this event."

"I was thrilled to have First Lady Murphy down to Salem County, the Family Festival brought much needed attention and resources to the families of Salem," **said Assemblywoman Beth Sawyer**. "Many new moms may not be aware of the resources that are available to them, bringing all these organizations together in one spot allows families to easily connect and receive the information and help they need. The First Lady's Nurture NJ initiative supports maternal and infant health, this festival is a great way to support that mission by bringing the resources directly to families."

"It is heartbreaking that women of color in the US continue to have the highest rates of maternal mortality and that black infants die at three times the rates of white ones. These health indices are alarming and unacceptable but yet have not changed much over the past 30 years. Fortunately, First Lady Murphy is working to move the needle and improve maternal and infant birth outcomes in New Jersey," **said Linda Y. Flake, President/CEO, Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers**. "At Southern Jersey Family Medical Centers, we are equally committed to addressing the disparities in maternal and infant health outcomes, and provide perinatal care through the first year of life. We strive to provide compassionate reproductive, maternity, pediatric care, and support services to improve the lives of mothers and their babies. Together, with community partners, and Nurture NJ, we can break down racial disparities and inequities in maternal care and advocate to improve accessibility, health care, and policies that will ensure that all women and children receive equitable and high-quality care."

"We are grateful to the First Lady for her leadership as we continue to work together with our community partners to improve the health and well-being of New Jersey's mothers, babies and families," **said Amy Mansue, CEO and President, Inspira**. "Our work with the Southern New Jersey Perinatal Cooperative, Camden Coalition and other partners ensures the necessary outreach, care and resources are in place to help families achieve healthy pregnancies and safe deliveries."

"The Salem Health and Wellness Foundation was honored to work with the First Lady's Office and the other

esteemed partners to put together the Salem Family Festival,” **said Paul DiLorenzo, Executive Director, Salem Health and Wellness Foundation.** “Our mission is to invest in sustainable initiatives that improve the overall health and wellness of Salem County residents. We thank the First Lady for bringing this opportunity to Salem County.”

“It can be challenging to navigate the programs and resources available to expectant mothers and families in New Jersey. First Lady Tammy Murphy’s Family Festivals help make this process easier by connecting families with state, county, and local resources all in one place,” **said June Sieber, Director, Salem County Department of Health & Human Services.** “The Salem County Department of Health and Human Services was honored to be a part of this initiative, and enjoyed seeing the residents of Salem County on June 24th!”

“The First Lady’s Family Festivals exemplify everything we at the Burke Foundation support: building joy, community, and connections to support New Jersey families,” **said Atiya Weiss, Executive Director, The Burke Foundation.** “At the Burke Foundation, we’re proud to support the First Lady’s NurtureNJ initiative by investing \$15 million over the next five years to improve maternal and child health – and to help create a perinatal health care system built on trust, competence, belonging, and dignity for all. We believe deeply in investing in the village of people who support families and we’re honored to support today’s community celebration in Salem.”

“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 New Jersey.**

“The Motor Vehicle Commission is delighted to partner with First Lady Tammy Murphy for the Salem Family Festival,” **said Motor Vehicle Commission Acting Chief Administrator Latrecia Littles-Floyd.** “The Festivals are always great celebrations of community, gathering families together in a welcoming environment where services and resources can be conveniently accessed. Our Mobile Unit staff was excited to deliver motor vehicle services directly to attendees, supporting another successful Nurture NJ initiative.”

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