

Bergen Record: "State's First Lady Agrees: This Camp is Heroic"

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Allison Pries
April 23, 2014
Bergen Record

Pop music blared while one group worked out. Another gathered in the kitchen where its members made oatmeal cookies. Typical, after school activities. But the people doing them were special, and the opportunities for normalcy that Camp Acorn provides are even more extraordinary, parents and participants say.

Cathy Carisi, executive director of Camp Acorn, was recognized Tuesday by Mary Pat Christie's New Jersey Heroes foundation for her work with children and adults with special needs. Carisi and Camp Acorn are the 27th honoree in the nearly five years the program has been going on.

"We don't normally have a multitude of people nominate one hero," Christie said. "But Cathy got nominations from a number of people and over a number of months. I think that says a lot."

Dozens of family members and friends of campers, local officials and others from the community gathered at Calvary Lutheran Church on W Crescent Avenue in Allendale, where the camp primarily operates, to congratulate Carisi.

"It's such a special organization," said Allendale Council President Liz White. "These are the people who never get the acknowledgement or recognition they deserve. This shines such a spotlight on them." ...

Carisi, of Lodi, a shy and soft-spoken leader, said the attention Tuesday was "a little overwhelming."

"I do what I do because I love my campers," she said. "I don't look at it as doing anything special."

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Full article [HERE](#).

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