

ESCNJ Bids Farewell to Long-time Board President Dr. Dale Caldwell

Board President Dale Caldwell has stepped down after serving as president of the ESCNJ Board of Directors for 22 of his 25 years with ESCNJ.

Since 1991, Dr. Caldwell has helped to foster and grow ESCNJ. Under his leadership, ESCNJ has experienced exponential growth to become the largest educational commission in the state. (See full article on page 2).

2024-25 School Year
 First Day of School-September 5, 2024

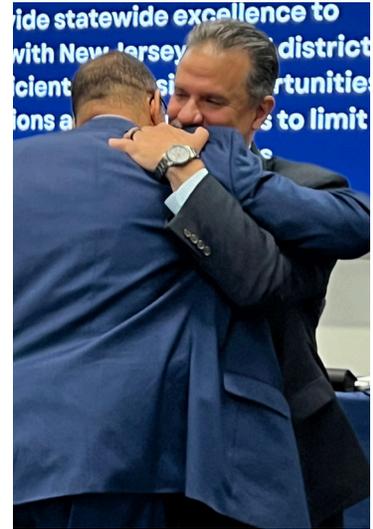
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Thank You For Your Service, Dr. Caldwell

Since Dr. Caldwell joined the Board of Directors a quarter century ago, the commission has grown to include seven schools, the transitional program Pathways to Adult Living, the Adult Community Services program for individuals 21 and over, the Professional Conference Center and the ESCNJ Fitness and Aquatics Center.

Dr. Caldwell was recognized and presented with a plaque at the June 7 ESCNJ Board of Directors meeting, marking his amazing contributions. Colleagues and fellow board members applauded and wished him well.



“On behalf of the ESCNJ Board of Directors and the staff at ESCNJ, we extend our deepest appreciation to Dr. Caldwell for all his years of selfless service. His dedication and leadership has made a difference in countless lives over the years at ESCNJ,” said Superintendent of Schools Nadia Romano.

Dr. Caldwell is stepping down to devote more energy to his role as Centenary University president.

Russell Hudson Named as the Director of Human Resources

ESCNJ is pleased to announce that Russell Hudson has been promoted to Director of Human Resources.

Hudson has 25 years of experience in the educational area, including his previous role as Principal at NuView Academy. He oversees the daily personnel operations of ESCNJ and works closely with the administration to recommend and support all employees.

“Russell is a valuable addition to our administrative staff; his experience and skillsets are essential as the Commission continues to grow and evolve,” said Superintendent of Schools Nadia Romano. “He is critical for the seamless daily operations of the Commission.”

Prior to taking the principal position at NuView Academy, Hudson served as a Supervisor of Secondary Education at the East Mountain School at the Carrier Clinic in Belle Meade, as well as various other educational positions throughout his career.

Hudson earned his undergraduate degree from Mount Saint Mary’s College in Maryland and has a master’s degree from Loyola College in Maryland.



ESCNJ Congratulates its “NJ Governor’s Educator of the Year Award” Recipients

Congratulations to all of the 2024 recipients of this prestigious, statewide recognition. ESCNJ is proud to have so many talented teachers and we thank you for your contributions, dedication and hard work, no matter the challenge.



**ACADEMY
LEARNING CENTER**
Donna Kilcommons
Educator of the Year



**BRIGHT BEGINNINGS
LEARNING CENTER**
Olga Lepkowska
Educator of the Year



**BRIGHT BEGINNINGS
LEARNING CENTER**
Joy Figueroa
Education Specialist
of the Year



**CENTER FOR
LIFELONG LEARNING**
Christina Truska
Educator of the Year



**CENTER FOR
LIFELONG LEARNING**
Dana Vasil
Education Specialist
of the Year



**FUTURE
FOUNDATIONS
ACADEMY**
Diane Lange
Educator of the Year



**NUVIEW
ACADEMY**
Jennifer Woodard
Educator of the Year



**PISCATAWAY
REGIONAL DAY
SCHOOL**
Marcia Flood
Educator of the Year



NONPUBLIC
AnneMarie Foster
Educator of the Year



NONPUBLIC
Richard Angelillo
Education Specialist
of the Year

ESCNJ Celebrates the 2024 Middlesex County Unsung Heroes



**ACADEMY LEARNING
CENTER**
Diana Trischetta
Franklin
Hannah Panagis
Monroe



**CENTER FOR LIFELONG
LEARNING**
Arthur Dong
Freehold Regional
Amari Nicolas
Rahway



**FUTURE FOUNDATIONS
ACADEMY**
Bryan Wankmueller
Sayreville



**PISCATAWAY REGIONAL
DAY SCHOOL**
Christopher Nazario
New Brunswick
Kayla Anderson
North Brunswick



Jomiria Kelsey Earns the Rebecca S. McDonald Award

Jomiria Kelsey, a Pathways to Adult Living (PAL) student, received the 2024 Rebecca S. McDonald Award from the Transition Coordinators Network of New Jersey. This prestigious award is given to a senior or aging-out student involved in successful transition activities into the adult world. Jomiria was nominated based on overcoming obstacles, motivation, and achievement in transitioning from school to adulthood.

Jomiria is the fourth PAL student to win this award since 2019.



PAL Students Participate in the 2023-24 Dare to Dream Student Leadership Conference

Students from the Pathways to Adult Living (PAL) were selected to present in the "Dare to Dream" program at Rutgers University on Tuesday, March 12.

Dare to Dream is a positive and empowering experience highlighting strategies to promote self-advocacy skills for middle and high school students with disabilities. The conference featured keynote presentations from accomplished students from local educational agencies (LEAs) across the state and presentations from young adults with disabilities who have demonstrated exemplary self-advocacy and leadership skills.

The conference also featured a variety of student-led workshop sessions on topics such as self-discovery, student self-advocacy, preparing to lead a individualized educational program (IEP) meeting, and understanding rights and responsibilities as a high school student, college student or part of the work sector.

The PAL student's presentation, titled "Employment Skills and Self-Advocacy", inspired students by highlighting their unique strengths in the workplace. The students effectively expressed their professional needs and aspirations while overcoming personal changes and engaging in various discussions with other participants.



Food and Nutrition Education Program Offered to ESCNJ Students

Students from the PAL program participated in the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP). The national program, offered through Rutgers University, uses practical, evidence-based lesson series to help low-income families and youth eat better and get more active on a budget. Madeline Hidalgo Castillo, of Rutgers, taught the students the importance of healthy nutrition.



Lisa Melsopp Retires from PRDS After 41 Years of Service

After 41 years of service, ESCNJ is bidding farewell to Lisa Melsopp, Vocational Teacher at PRDS. To date, she is the longest-serving employee of the commission.

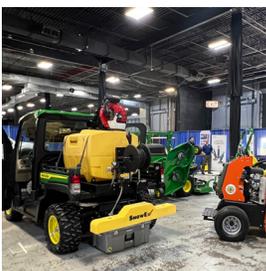
Lisa has been at PRDS since it opened in 1984 as Regional Day School at Piscataway. She has served as a vocational teacher and was in charge of all Community-based Instruction (CBI) programming. In 2021, she received the NJ Governor's Educator of the Year Award for being a teacher who goes above and beyond.

"We wish Lisa all the best and thank her for all her years of service here at ESCNJ," said ESCNJ Schools Superintendent Nadia Romano. "Lisa has been remarkable, her dedication and support to the students has made a difference in so many lives. Thank you, Lisa!"



2024 Vendor EXPO Connects Co-op Vendors and Members

The 2024 ESCNJ Vendor EXPO, featuring dozens of Co-op vendors and members, was held at the Raritan Center in Edison on May 21. The well-attended event was an overwhelming success, creating a platform of networking that ultimately saves taxpayers money each year.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Extended School Year Program Begins

June 26, 2024

Labor Day

September 2, 2024

2024-2025 School Year Begins

September 5, 2024

Rosh Hashanah (Schools Closed)

October 3 & 4, 2024

Visit www.ESCNJ.us for more information

LOOKING BACK ON ALL OUR



Staff and students from CLL went all out to celebrate International Day. Each class participated in displaying their favorite countries. There were all sorts of activities, food, music and more that was unique to each culture.

Rutgers Medical School students from the Adult Life Learning for Youth group visited PRDS. Students used teamwork, cooperation and communication skills to make slime.



Collaborating with Keep Middlesex Moving, NuView Academy students dove into crucial topics related to bike and pedestrian safety. They learned the importance of wearing helmets and navigating streets safely. The students gained essential knowledge and are thankful for this program.

BBLC Students celebrated the 100th Day of School with plenty of fun instructional activities.



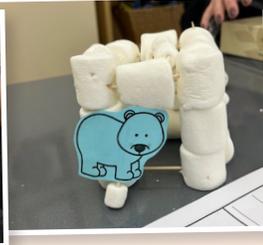
FFA celebrated St. Patrick's Day with a school-wide shamrock scavenger hunt and a special traditional Irish performance from a Bagpiper and Drummer. During the scavenger hunt, they found a leprechaun and his pot of gold!

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES



ALC staff participated in a Breast Cancer Walk in October and raised \$1,624, which was donated to the American Cancer Society-Making Strides Against Breast Cancer local chapter. ALC was presented with a banner for its fundraising efforts, ranked in the Top 10 of 60 schools that raised funds for this cause. Stacy Neglio from the American Cancer Society presented the banner to our OT Sheryl Bokey, who organizes the walk every year.

Students from Ms. Elmini's Primary Class at NuView Academy constructed a polar bear den out of toothpicks and different sized marshmallows.



PRDS ended Spirit Week with a pep rally presented by the Edison High School basketball and cheerleading teams!

Students and staff revealed their many talents by performing at CLL's Talent Show. Performances included; dancers, little "bee" singers, spelling champs, artists, and funny impersonators.



PAL students doing their part to keep Sayreville clean.



FFA faculty participated in some great team-building activities, including Finding Connections Bingo and a full-staff Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament. Our reigning Champion is Speech Therapist Krystyna Nasadiuk!

Read Across America was a huge success again this year, with characters and readers from all over the state!





The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey

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Dr. Dale Caldwell, *President*

Dr. David Roman, *Vice President*

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