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Quality Institute Announces Mayors Wellness Campaign 2023 New Jersey “Healthy Town” Winners

*Find Out Which NJ Cities and Towns are Doing the Most to Improve
Health and Wellness in Their Communities*

PRINCETON, New Jersey — The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute today announced the Mayors Wellness Campaign “Healthy Town” winners for 2023. These cities and towns go above and beyond to improve health and wellness in their communities through innovative programs in areas such as exercise, healthy eating, and mental health education and awareness.

The Mayors Wellness Campaign (MWC) is a program of the Quality Institute in partnership with the New Jersey State League of Municipalities. In addition to seventeen Healthy Town winners, another nineteen towns were designated as 2023 “Healthy Town to Watch,” and twelve were designated as 2023 “Healthy Town Up-and-Coming.”

“The League of Municipalities is excited to see the growth of the MWC Healthy Town designations. It shows what we already know: that community leaders across the state are focused on the health of residents and want to continue to provide these important wellness opportunities at the local level,” said Mike Cerra, Executive Director of the New Jersey League of Municipalities.

Each year, communities participating in the MWC complete a comprehensive Healthy Town application outlining the research they've done to identify their community health needs and explaining how they have organized their local MWC committee. The application also highlights the actions the towns have taken to make their communities healthier places to live, work, and play.

Here's a listing of the winners and the efforts that helped them receive this recognition.

2023 Healthy Towns

Borough of Bay Head, 2023 Healthy Town

The Borough of Bay Head's continued commitment to providing health and wellness opportunities for residents to stay active and connected has led to a Healthy Town designation in 2023. Bay Head plans to focus 2024 programming on healthy aging to meet the growing needs of the community.

"Bay Head is thrilled to be awarded a Healthy Town designation again. We strive to be all inclusive year after year involving all age groups in our town including offering our programs to our seasonal residents and visitors as well as full-time residents. I am so very proud of the tireless effort put forth by our totally volunteer committees all year round. Health is not only just a summer season or exclusively a winter season effort. It is a 12-month program. We take full advantage of all our town has to offer; the ocean, Barnegat Bay, the school, our public parks, our public tennis and pickleball courts, our walking paths, and so much more. Thank you for giving us this prestigious award. Our committees strive so hard to be all inclusive," Mayor Bill Curtis said.

Borough of Bradley Beach, 2023 Healthy Town

The Borough of Bradley Beach has achieved a Healthy Town designation in 2023. Focus on community feedback and data, diverse health and wellness programming, and attention to the underserved populations in

the community are just a few of the impressive aspects of the local MWC that afforded Bradley Beach the gold designation this year.

“Being honored as a Healthy Town — the highest designation of the statewide Mayors Wellness Campaign — is a tribute to the committed efforts of everyone on our committee and for all the residents of our borough who join with us and participate in our programs. We are grateful for this recognition, which affirms that working to bring people together is the pathway to make us and our community healthier in body, mind, and spirit. We are so fortunate, and I am so, so grateful,” Mayor Larry Fox.

Borough of Franklin Lakes, 2023 Healthy Town

In 2023 the Borough of Franklin Lakes received its first gold level designation and was awarded as a Healthy Town. Through comprehensive recreational activities and an increased focus on using data to inform programming, the program has continued to grow and provide a culture of health and wellness for residents.

“The Borough of Franklin Lakes is honored to be recognized for the fourth year in a row by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town. Dina Robinson, Community Director, coordinates Mayors Wellness Campaign programs throughout the year to promote healthy activities and well-being in our community,” said Mayor Charles Kahwaty. “In 2023 we also became part of the City Health Dashboard where we can gain access to local health data and use it to impact our community’s overall health and wellness.”

Borough of Wildwood Crest, 2023 Healthy Town

The Borough of Wildwood Crest has been designated a Healthy Town for the fourth year in a row. Wildwood Crest is a strong example of how data and evaluation can impact the success of programming. By considering feedback from the community as well as leveraging multi-stakeholder partnerships, the town was able to develop various programs and modify as needed to meet the needs of their community.

“With new wellness related businesses opening in Wildwood Crest, our goal of branding wellness to our community is working and has been accepted by our residents, vacationers, and staff. I thank the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute for this fourth-year recognition and our recreation and wellness team members for their dedication to our wellness vision. We are off and running (no pun intended) for a fifth-year award. Congratulations to all who participate in the Mayors Wellness Program,” said Mayor Don Cabrera.

City of Asbury Park, 2023 Healthy Town

The City of Asbury Park is a longtime member of the MWC and the city's commitment to health and wellness helped the town earn another Healthy Town Designation for 2023. A cornerstone of the city's MWC was the Stigma Free Campaign. The city capitalized on community partnerships to provide programs addressing mental health, food security, and social connectedness to underserved populations such as individuals who are unhoused, people with disabilities, and LGBTQIA+.

“Asbury Park is proud to be named a Healthy Town for the third straight year by the Quality Institute,” said Mayor John Moor. “The Mayors Wellness Committee works hard to identify and respond to the community’s needs and interests with stellar programming every year.”

City of Paterson, 2023 Healthy Town

The City of Paterson is a recipient of the Healthy Town Designation. The city's aim to provide access to mental health and addiction services, built environments, preventative screenings and health education can be seen through its continued infrastructure improvements, introduction of RealFix, which provides real-time support for those experiencing opioid withdrawal, and the introduction of a mobile health unit designed for vaccinations, screenings, and health education.

"We are honored and thrilled to receive the Healthy Town designation for the fourth consecutive year from the New Jersey Health Care Quality

Institute for our ongoing efforts to prioritize the health and wellness of our community. This recognition reaffirms our commitment to fostering a healthier Paterson for all residents. Through strategic investments of over \$100 million in parks and recreation, coupled with a range of targeted programs and initiatives, we are actively combating challenges such as opioid use disorder while promoting awareness for various health causes. This designation celebrates our past achievements and inspires us to continue striving for a healthier, happier future for all Patersonians,” said Mayor Andre Sayegh.

City of Plainfield, 2023 Healthy Town

The City of Plainfield has received a Healthy Town designation for the sixth year in a row. The City's focus on collaborative partnerships with community members, businesses, and health care providers has made its MWC a success. Some of the City's successful programs in 2023 include continued vaccination efforts, providing various health education workshops, emergency food programs, and opportunities for residents to stay active.

"It is with immense pride that we accept the 2023 Healthy Town Award for the sixth consecutive year, a testament to our unwavering commitment to fostering initiatives that elevate the health and welfare of our community," said Mayor Adrian O. Mapp. "Our consistent recognition by the Quality Institute underscores the dedication of our team and partners to create a sustainable health culture that transcends traditional health care. In Plainfield, under the guidance of the Mayors Wellness Campaign, we understand that the essence of health is not confined to medical visits but is integrated into the fabric of our daily lives. By championing programs that address the holistic needs of our residents, we ensure that the path to wellness is accessible to all, reinforcing our vision of a community where health and well-being are inalienable rights."

Evesham Township, 2023 Healthy Town

For the fourth year in a row, Evesham Township is a Healthy Town. The township focuses heavily on inclusivity of all residents and making their

town more accessible regardless of age, ethnicity, ability and more. Evesham impressively adapts a number of MWC suggested programming to suit both the needs of the community as well as what the community has to offer by conducting Garden and Sensory Walks, cultural book clubs, and health fairs including various organizations and cultural activities.

“I’m so proud that Evesham Township can once again say that we have achieved the highly distinguished Healthy Town designation for 2023, which follows similar successful designations in 2022, 2021 and 2020, in addition to our Healthy Town Up-and-Coming status in 2019. Although Evesham Township has been a part of the MWC since its inception, these past five years have shown a true commitment from our township as we continue to diligently focus on the programs that keep our residents healthy and well,” said Mayor Jackie Veasy.

“The MWC has undoubtedly helped our township examine and improve the local initiatives that can support the members of our community on a physical, mental, and spiritual level. Whether it’s our annual Health and Wellness Festival, our many various educational seminars throughout the year, or even continually investing in our open space and athletic facilities, Evesham Township is prepared to continue our participation in the amazing MWC for years to come.”

Freehold Borough, 2023 Healthy Town

The Borough of Freehold has again received a Healthy Town designation in 2023. The community's commitment to focusing on important social determinants of health affecting residents led to continued food security programs, partnership with Freehold Family Health Center to increase access to health care, and consideration for how to ensure inclusivity for differently abled residents.

“I am so excited for Freehold Borough to be recognized by the Quality Institute as a Healthy Town for 2023,” said Mayor Kevin Kane. “The

mission of our Mayors Wellness Committee is to improve the health and wellness of our residents. We recognize that health is more than a visit to the doctor or a reaction to an illness; it's a proactive way of life. Working with our community partners, we strive to provide programs and events for all our residents to empower them to improve health outcomes in Freehold Borough.”

Hillsborough Township, 2023 Healthy Town

The Township of Hillsborough has received a Healthy Town designation for the second year in a row. Hosting a variety of programs including fitness classes, vaccine and flu clinics, a community health fair, and providing specific outreach to Hispanic residents has helped to grow opportunities for residents to engage in health and wellness activities.

“As Mayor, I am thrilled to announce that Hillsborough has again achieved Gold Level recognition in the Mayors Wellness Campaign! This accomplishment reflects our community's continued dedication to health and well-being. Let's continue to prioritize wellness and inspire others to join us on this journey towards a healthier future,” said Mayor Shawn Lipani.

Municipality of Princeton, 2023 Healthy Town

The Municipality of Princeton has received a 2023 Healthy Town designation. Princeton finds success in offering education, strategies, and tools that residents can use in their daily lives. Community events such as a health fair provide an opportunity to partner with community organizations and share resources with residents.

“The Municipality of Princeton is excited to accept the Healthy Town designation for 2023 for the second year in a row. We are proud of this milestone. This achievement is a testament to the dedication and collaboration of our staff, residents, local businesses, and community partners who have so enthusiastically embraced the Mayors Wellness Campaign. Together, we have prioritized physical fitness, mental health, and really promoted one's overall health, fostering a culture of well-being

that extends far beyond individual efforts. We appreciate this partnership with the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute to showcase our ongoing commitment to building a healthier, happier, and more resilient community for generations to come,” said Mayor Mark Freda.

Scotch Plains Township, 2023 Healthy Town

The Township of Scotch Plains received a 2023 Healthy Town designation. Scotch Plains continues to offer a wide variety of MWC programs including sunrise yoga, "Senior Café," which promotes older adults in the community coming together to socialize and have a healthy meal, farmers markets, and a mental health focused "Kindness Table."

“I am very proud that Scotch Plains has been recognized, once again, by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town,” Mayor Josh Losardo said. “During my time as mayor, so much of the focus has been on creating a healthier and, ultimately, happier Scotch Plains. We have been doing yoga, participating in 5K runs to kick off the summer and pushing away from our desks to go for walks on our lunch breaks. We have created more active and enhanced park space, organized even more recreation programs and are determined to become even more fit and even more active this year. Our ongoing designation through the Quality Institute shows we are on the right path.”

Stafford Township, 2023 Healthy Town

In 2023 the Township of Stafford elevated its program to a gold level Healthy Town designation. Stafford's focus on mental health, older adults, and connecting the community to available health and wellness resources are key components of this successful local program.

“I am so excited for Stafford Township to be recognized by the Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town,” said Mayor Robert Henken. “Our Mayors Wellness Committee's mission is to improve the health and wellness of our residents. We recognize that health is more than a visit to the doctor; it's a way of life. Working with our community partners, we'll

strive to continue to provide programs and events for all our residents to empower them to improve health outcomes in Stafford. Thank you to the Mayors Wellness Campaign staff, the committee, and the staff for making this possible.”

Township of Hamilton, 2023 Healthy Town

The Township of Hamilton is a second time Healthy Town. The Health and Recreations departments partner with other local organizations to ensure residents’ needs are being met. Some examples of programs offered in 2023 include blood pressure screenings, International Overdose Awareness Day, “Walks with the Mayor,” and continued COVID-19 response.

“I am proud that Hamilton has again been designated a Healthy Town by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute,” said Mayor Jeff Martin.

“Our continued investment in accessible outdoor recreational opportunities, reducing barriers to food insecurity, and overall promotion of wellness activities demonstrates Hamilton’s commitment to our residents’ health.”

Township of Maplewood, 2023 Healthy Town

After a year of growth and success, the Township of Maplewood has achieved a Healthy Town designation. Combining efforts of federal Strengthening Local Public Health Capacity grant, City Health Dashboard participation, Sustainable Jersey programming, and a commitment to overall health of the community, Maplewood's diverse offerings have resulted in increased access to wellness activities for residents.

“The Township of Maplewood is honored to be recognized by the Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town,” said Mayor Nancy Adams. “It is the collective commitment of the governing body, our municipal departments, especially our Health Department and the community as a whole to keep improving the health and wellbeing for all our residents.

We look forward to bringing more programs, health screenings and events to improve health outcomes in Maplewood."

Vernon Township, 2023 Healthy Town

For the second year in a row, the Township of Vernon has received a Healthy Town designation. Vernon's access to outdoor space and trails is a cornerstone of the MWC programming. Incorporating physical activity into community building events is just one of the ways that the township has created a culture of health in the community.

"I'm very honored and excited for Vernon Township to be recognized by the Quality institute as a 2023 Healthy Town. Vernon Township's goal is to improve the health and wellbeing of our citizens," said Mayor Anthony Rossi. "I always believe that old motto that an ounce of health is worth more than a pound of gold. We will continue to work with our community professionals to provide programs and events that will encourage health."

Woodbridge Township, 2023 Healthy Town

The Township of Woodbridge has again been designated as a Healthy Town. Woodbridge continues to provide some of the most impressive MWC programming across the state. The township participates in county planning meetings, considers health care access for the most vulnerable populations a top priority, and provides a wide variety of fun engaging wellness programs for residents.

"We are honored to again be designated a New Jersey Healthy Town by the Quality Institute for the fourth year in a row," said Mayor John E. McCormac. "Our administration puts health and wellness at the top of our priorities for our constituency, especially with Councilman Gregg Ficarra leading the charge as the Mayors Wellness Committee Chairman. We are committed to ensuring that all 100,000+ Woodbridge Township residents continue to have access to wellness programs and activities."

2023 Healthy Towns to Watch

Belleville, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The Township of Belleville is a third time Healthy Town to Watch Designee. The Township relies on partnerships to provide the wide variety of services available to residents. Collaboration with RWJBH Clara Maass Medical Center, Good Health Pharmacy, and the Boards of Health and Education have all resulted in programming in the community.

“Here in Belleville, we are proud of the fact that we are creating a new healthy and vibrant community with the help of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute,” said Mayor Michael Melham.

Bergenfield, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

Bergenfield has been designated a Healthy Town to Watch for the second year in a row. The Borough focuses on offering a wide variety of physical activity opportunities such as Zumba, yoga, Walks with the Mayor, and education opportunities. These activities not only increase physical engagement but give residents a chance to meet and connect.

"As Mayor of Bergenfield, I am honored to announce that our community proudly accepts the title of 2023 Healthy Town to Watch. In this remarkable year, every thread of our community wove seamlessly together as we stepped, sweated, danced, and worked in unison towards a healthier tomorrow," said Mayor Arvin Amatorio. "The support for the Mayors Wellness Campaign is a testament to the strength and unity of Bergenfield, proving that when we come together, we can create a tapestry of wellness that sets an inspiring example for all. Let our shared commitment to health continue to be the guiding force in shaping a vibrant and flourishing future for our beloved town."

Berkeley Heights Township, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

After achieving a bronze designation in 2022, The Township of Berkeley Heights has revived a silver designation - Healthy Town to Watch. In 2023 the township focused on responding to the needs of the community and addressed underserved populations such as veterans and older adults.

Bernardsville, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

Bernardsville Borough has been designated as a Healthy Town to Watch for the second year in a row. The borough's strong partnerships continue to be a cornerstone of their local programming. A focus on becoming an age-friendly community led to more programming for older adults in 2023.

"As a small municipality, it is a great accomplishment for our Borough to receive this designation. I am grateful for our partner organizations and the volunteers who committed their time and resources to make this happen," said Mayor MaryJane Canose.

Borough of Fort Lee, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

As a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch, the Borough of Fort Lee continues to offer a variety of opportunities for residents to improve their health and wellness. Additionally, the Borough offered a wellness event specifically geared towards Borough employees in partnership with Hackensack Meridian Health, Holy Name Medical Center facilities, and other community organizations.

"As Mayor, I am so very proud that the Borough of Fort Lee is being recognized once again by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch," said Mark J. Sokolich. "We are very fortunate in Fort Lee to have such an amazing team that works tirelessly for our employees and residents by initiating various programs to improve our wellbeing and health. We recognize that health is so important, and it is our mission to encourage a holistic approach to promote sound mental, nutritional and physical health through activity and education in our town. As we all have heard, our health is our wealth, and we need to ensure that

everyone makes it a priority to be in the best health possible. Thank you again to the Quality Institute for acknowledging our efforts.”

Borough of Glen Rock, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

Glen Rock is a second time Healthy Town to Watch winner. With support from AARP, in 2023 the town conducted a walk audit using volunteers to determine action steps to improve the walkability of the community.

"It is with great pleasure that Glen Rock is once again recognized by the Quality Institute as a "Healthy Town to Watch."

“We have had tremendous success with our Mayors Wellness Campaign, and we hope to empower our residents with improved health outcomes in the Borough of Glen Rock,” said Mayor Kristine Morieko.

Borough of Old Tappan, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The Borough of Old Tappan has received a silver Healthy Town to Watch designation for the second year in a row. The borough offers a variety of opportunities for residents to increase their knowledge and understanding about important health topics affecting the community. Working with local leaders, the MWC hopes to continue its mental health work.

“We are honored and very proud that Old Tappan has been recognized as a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch by the Quality Institute. This recognition is largely due to the hard work and initiative of our Mayors Wellness Committee. The goal of our committee is to promote health-forward programs to support Old Tappan residents and to improve their fitness and nutrition while strengthening our community,” said Mayor John Kramer. “Working with our community partners, we'll strive to provide programs and events for all our residents to empower them to improve health outcomes in the Borough of Old Tappan.”

Borough of Rutherford, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The Borough of Rutherford has been designated a Healthy Town to Watch for the second year in a row. The borough aims to create social and physical environments that promote health and wellness for all residents through a "health in all policies" approach.

“I'm thrilled that the Borough of Rutherford has been recognized by the Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch. Thanks to our Recreation and Health Departments as well as the members of our Green Team and countless volunteers, Rutherford has access to programming and activities that promote a healthy lifestyle,” said Mayor Frank Nunziato.

Borough of Stone Harbor, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The Borough of Stone Harbor has returned to the Healthy Town process and received a silver designation for 2023. The bulk of the programs offered were through an Employee Wellness Initiative that encouraged staff to increase physical activity, focus on nutritious food, and increase health literacy around important wellness topics.

“We are thrilled for Stone Harbor to be named a Healthy Town to Watch thanks to the Mayors Wellness Campaign,” said Mayor Judy Davies. “This year we focused on employee wellness and this award reflects our commitment to a well-rounded approach to well-being. We recognize that physical activity, mental and emotional health, and strong social connections are all vital for a happy and fulfilling life. We extend our gratitude to our dedicated workforce for embracing this initiative and prioritizing their overall health.”

City of Brigantine, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The City of Brigantine connected its local efforts to the MWC in 2023 and received a Healthy Town to Watch designation as first-time applicants. The city's extensive efforts in community needs assessments and Sustainable Jersey programming resulted in meaningful programming to address the community's needs.

“The City of Brigantine is honored to be recognized by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch,” said Mayor Vince Sera. “Our Mayors Wellness Campaign truly is a community effort, and we are committed to helping our fulltime residents, homeowners and visitors achieve healthy lifestyles. In 2023, we offered fitness classes at our Community Education & Recreation Center and had record attendance at our pickleball and tennis programs. We support baseball, football, basketball, and hockey programs year-round, we have yoga on the beach, our DPW installed an Air Quality Monitor, the Brigantine Triathlon took place, as it has for decades, and there were various walks and 5K’s. We also supported the Community Garden, which grows healthy food for the local Meals on Wheels and the local Food Pantry. We celebrated our 10-year anniversary of the Brigantine Farmers Market, bringing healthy produce to the community from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and we completed a Health and Wellness Assessment of the town, just to name a few. We look forward to continuing to be a resource for sustaining wellness for all who leave their footprints in the sands of Brigantine.”

City of Elizabeth, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The City of Elizabeth received a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch designation. The city focuses on providing culturally competent health education programs that cater to the diverse needs of its community. Ensuring that activities, materials, and topics are culturally and linguistically relevant and appropriate, the city has strengthened health literacy and community engagement.

“I am truly honored that the City of Elizabeth has been recognized as a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch. It reflects the dedication of our residents, local businesses, and health care providers in creating a healthier and vibrant town. This recognition inspires us to continue fostering a sustainable and thriving environment for everyone,” said Mayor Christian Bollwage.

City of Englewood, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The City of Englewood achieved a Healthy Town to Watch designation for the first time in ten years. With a focus on services provided through the Health Department and in collaboration with community partners, the MWC offered programs to address mental health, physical health, and access to important health screenings for residents.

“I am so excited for Englewood to be recognized as a Healthy Town to Watch,” said Mayor Michael Wildes. “Our Mayors Wellness Committee mission is to work with our storied Health Department to improve the health and wellness of our residents. Making smart health related choices is a way of life. This award will ensure that we will continue working with our community partners and residents to empower them to improve health related outcomes.”

Deerfield Township, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

Deerfield Township has been designated as a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch. The Township's focus on reinvigorating a sense of community and connectedness is apparent through both intentional programming and how they get the word out about their events (Hint: they hand deliver notifications). With a population of 3136, they were able to reach nearly every resident for their Deerfield Day, where you can truly see how community pride and connectedness is at the forefront of this MWC.

“As Mayor, I am incredibly proud of the many varied programs and events we have put into place to bring our community together and better educate them about the many opportunities for mental and physical health that are available to them,” said Mayor Abigail O’Brien. “This has been an important personal journey for myself and my staff as well. Connecting with the community on their needs, through their personal stories and feedback, has made these efforts more impactful for us all.”

Highlands Borough, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The Borough of Highlands was designated as a Healthy Town to Watch for the second year in a row. 2023 programming focused on engaging older adults, increasing physical activity, and inclusion.

“The Highlands MWC team is very excited to be awarded 2023 Healthy Town to Watch, the silver level designation. Highlands will continue to utilize our partnership with the MWC to host wellness programming throughout 2024. These events will encourage both healthy lifestyles and increase community awareness of the factors contributing to health outcomes. My goal is to encourage a holistic approach to promote sound mental, nutritional, and physical health through activity and education. For the last four years, I have been committed to improving the health and wellness of Highlanders and will continue to do so in the future,” said Mayor Carolyn Broullon.

Jefferson Township, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

Jefferson Township was awarded a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch. Jefferson focused on offering a variety of programs for residents including physical fitness classes, opportunities to take advantage of the parks and trails in the township, and mental health programming. The township also noted success in working with the Morris County Surrogate to offer virtual programming on advance directives.

“Jefferson Township has many organizations working collaboratively with the MWC. We are grateful for the connections in the community to enhance overall wellness and health programming, especially experiences for the body, mind and spirit,” said Mayor Eric Wilsusen.

Montgomery Township, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

Montgomery Township is a first-time applicant and received a Healthy Town to Watch designation. The Township's partnership with Healthier Somerset provides localized data to help in addressing top health needs in the community. As the program grows, they hope to formalize their MWC and increase the number of activities offered.

“We have been working tirelessly on the MWC and I am so pleased to see the remarkable community engagement on this initiative from our residents. As you may know I am a big believer and proponent of the Mayors Wellness Campaign. We hosted a very successful event on Feb 24th, ‘Beat the Winter Blues,’ and are working on other initiatives to positively impact the quality of life for those who live, work, and play in our town,” said Mayor Neena Singh.

Township of Hanover, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The Township of Hanover is a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch. A new Mental Health Symposium was one of the most effective programs offered, and showcased collaboration between a handful of Morris County communities. The event offered speakers, information, and resources to reduce stigma and support residents' mental health.

“The Township of Hanover is excited to be selected once again as a Healthy Town to Watch. Our goal continues to be providing an overall healthy lifestyle for all our residents with a special emphasis on mental health and wellness,” said Mayor Thomas Gallagher.

Township of South Brunswick, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

South Brunswick Township has received a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch Designation. The township had great success with programs such as a Fall Family Fun Festival to help residents connect while learning about important community resources, a mobile food pantry, and TED Talk discussion groups.

“As Mayor of the Township of South Brunswick, I am very honored that our town has been recognized by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute and awarded one of the 2023 Healthy Towns to Watch. Our goal is to continue working with our community health care professionals

to improve the health and quality of life for our residents, “said Mayor Charlie Carley.

Village of Ridgewood, 2023 Healthy Town to Watch

The Village of Ridgewood has returned as a 2023 Health Town to Watch. Through a Strengthening Local Public Health Capacity grant, the town was able to complete a community needs assessment to help identify top health challenges and drive programming.

“Providing our residents with the services they need is what good government is all about. Mental health services are often not given the priority they need, and people have trouble finding help to deal with these issues. Covid has highlighted and exacerbated the need for mental health services, which we have prioritized through programs in our schools and retaining the services of a social worker,” said Mayor Paul Vagianos.

The following towns were designated as 2023 Healthy Towns Up-and-Coming

Atlantic City, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

Atlantic City has been designated a Healthy Town Up-and-Coming for the second year in a row. As the City continues to grow the program, the focus in 2024 will be on mental health, cancer screening awareness, and healthy eating.

Bernards Township, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

As first-time applicants, Bernards Township has been designated as a Health Town Up-and-Coming. The township offers a variety of programs through their recreation department, library system, and health department that result in diverse health and wellness offerings for residents.

"I am so excited for Bernards Township to be recognized by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming," said Mayor Jennifer Asay. "As a pharmacist and a proud 12-year member of the Bernards Township Board of Health, my commitment to health is my life's work, so it is a natural extension for my focus as Mayor. We are excited to continue to work with some of our key town departments, like Bernards Township Parks and Recreation led by Jennifer Gander as well as community partners, to deliver programs and events for all our residents to achieve their health goals."

Borough of Cresskill, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

Cresskill Borough is a 2023 Healthy Town to Watch. The Borough collaborates with local committees such as the Board of Health, Board of Education, the local library system, and recreation to provide a variety of programs to address physical health, mental health, and educate residents on these important topics.

"I am so excited for the Borough of Cresskill to be recognized by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Up-and-Coming," said Mayor Benedict Romeo. "Our Board of Health and Mayors Wellness Committee mission is to improve the health and wellness of our residents. We recognize that health is more than a visit to the doctor; it's a way of life. Working with our community partners, we'll strive to continue to provide programs and events for all our residents to empower them to improve health outcomes in Cresskill."

Borough of Hawthorne, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

The Borough of Hawthorne is a first time Healthy Town Up-and-Coming recipient. As a new program, the MWC utilized funds from the Quality Institute to kick-off health and wellness activities focused on pedestrian safety and physical activities.

"As Mayor of the Borough of Hawthorne, I am thrilled that Hawthorne has been recognized by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a

2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming community. The Mayors Wellness Committee is committed to improving the health and wellness of all its residents. We believe that healthy living should be a way of life, and for us that means mental and physical health,” said Mayor John V. Lane. “Working together with our community partners, we are building upon what we put in place two years ago at the beginning of my term, by providing programming and events for our residents to increase awareness, encourage healthy habits, and provide education in a variety of areas. We are excited about growing our program this year and thank the Quality Institute for this acknowledgement.”

Borough of Red Bank, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

The Borough of Red Bank initiated its program in 2023 and has achieved a Healthy Town Up-and-Coming designation. The program kickoff event included local partners like the Visiting Nurses Association, Hackensack Meridian Health, and the Monmouth County Health Department to offer information and health services to residents and let the community know about the new MWC.

“We are honored to be selected by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming. In my first year as Mayor, we have re-invigorated our Mayors Wellness Campaign, and we are looking forward to working with our community partners to help all of our residents live healthier, more active lifestyles,” said Mayor William Portman.

Borough of Wenonah, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

The Borough of Wenonah is a first-time applicant and received a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming designation. Programs offered include a community farmers market, mental health awareness education sessions, community clean-ups, and yoga at the lake.

“I am excited that Wenonah is recognized by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute as a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming,” said Mayor Jessica Doheny.

Brick Township, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

Brick Township received a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming. Partnering with the local Health Department, leveraging the Municipal Alliance, and utilizing the services offered by local health systems afforded the township the opportunity to provide varied and quality programming.

“Being named a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute is a testament to the collective efforts of our community towards prioritizing health and wellbeing,” said Mayor Lisa Crate. “It’s a recognition of our commitment to fostering an environment where healthy living is not just encouraged but embraced. We are going to continue to work to further enhance the quality of life for all residents and set even higher standards for health and wellbeing in Brick Township.”

Clark Township, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

Clark Township is a Healthy Town Up-and-Coming for the second year in a row. With an array of programs offered, the Township points to healthy cooking classes, a community gratitude wall, and food, coat, and pajama drives as some of the most successful programs of 2023.

“We're happy that Clark has been named a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute," said Mayor Sal Bonaccorso. "Our participation in the Mayors Wellness Campaign is positively impacting our community. We've introduced more ways for residents to enhance their health and well-being with new recreational activities, events, and community initiatives this past year, and we're excited to continue expanding these efforts in the upcoming year."

Cranbury, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

Cranbury Township is a first time Healthy Town to Watch designee. The Township continues to strengthen the program by accessing important health data through resources such as the City Health Dashboard and resident surveys specifically targeting the older adult population.

“The hard work done by the Cranbury’s Mayors Wellness Campaign team, as well as residents in town, has earned Cranbury this esteemed recognition as 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming. Our team is keenly interested in providing resources that support healthy physical, social, and emotional growth in our residents, and this is done through deliberate collaborations with organizations in town, online programming, and themed walks through our green spaces, among other things. Cranbury is honored to receive this recognition in support of building a healthy and happy community,” said Mayor Eman El-Badawi.

Emerson Township, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

Emerson Township has received its first Healthy Town Up-and-Coming designation in 2023. The Township was able to utilize funds as MWC Incentive Drawing winners to host a nutritious Valentines Day lunch for residents to learn about healthy cooking and socialize with neighbors.

“The Borough of Emerson is excited to be designated as a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute,” said Mayor Danielle DiPaola. “The Mayor and Council, along with our dedicated staff, have put programs together, through our Mayors Wellness Campaign, to reach every age group within our community and engage our residents in different platforms and programs, all aimed at living a safe, healthy, and vibrant life.

“We offered ‘Walks with the Mayor,’ healthy cooking and nutrition classes, bike helmet giveaways, and concert series, which have promoted overall wellbeing and physical activity, healthy eating habits, and increased socialization. We started a monthly series called ‘Community Conversations’ to inform our residents about important health and wellness topics. We are grateful to the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute for recognizing our efforts and to our community partners, whose support allows us to offer these great programs to improve Emersonians wellbeing and quality of life.”

Township of Edison, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

As a first-time applicant, the Township of Edison has achieved the bronze designation and is a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming. After officially starting up its program in the fall, the township has plans to bring the Conversation of Your Life (COYL) program, Walk with the Mayor, and health fairs to residents in 2024.

“The wellness of our families in Edison Township is always a priority of my administration, and we’re excited to be deemed a 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming winner by the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute,” said Mayor Sam Joshi. “We have a dedicated team of people who work with each other to ensure that our residents stay active within the community,” he added. “We have successfully started monthly vision screenings, a women’s self-defense class, and the Mayor’s Bike Tour.”

Upper Township, 2023 Healthy Town Up-and-Coming

Upper Township officially kicked off its MWC in 2023 and has been designated as a Healthy Town Up-and-Coming. The township focused on offering a variety of health and wellness programs for residents and looks forward to growing the program in 2024.

“From the beach sands to the farmlands, health and wellness bring peace to the mind body and soul and Upper Township is where it all becomes possible,” said Mayor Jay Newman.

For More Information

To learn more about the MWC, visit: <http://www.njhcqi.org/MWC> or contact Julie DeSimone at jdesimone@njhcqi.org.

About the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute

The New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute’s (Quality Institute) mission is to improve the safety, quality, and affordability of health care for everyone. Our membership comes from all stakeholders in health care. Together with our 100 plus members, we are working towards a world

where all people receive safe, equitable, and affordable health care and live their healthiest lives.

About the Mayors Wellness Campaign

The Mayors Wellness Campaign is a program of the New Jersey Health Care Quality Institute in partnership with the New Jersey State League of Municipalities. The program empowers mayors across New Jersey with evidence-based tools, strategies, and support to champion health and wellness in their communities.