

# 825. NEWS



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SERVING THE LOCAL 825 MEMBERS OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION OF OPERATING ENGINEERS

VOL. 12 ISSUE 3

## Training center: the pulse of Local 825

Mega infrastructure programs require ready supply of trained operators



From winter classes to STEAM to *Earn and Learn*, the training centers once again prove to be the heartbeat of Local 825. As contractors gear up for massive infrastructure programs that have been dreamed about for years, we too

are gearing up to meet the challenge. We cover all of these important initiatives to keep our members at the top of their game and in demand, from the *Earn and Learn* program on page 4 to the training activities on page 5.

## EVENTS CALENDAR

Dates are subject to change. If changes are made they will be posted to the IUOE825.ORG website.

### May

#### 2 - District 1 Meeting

Crystal Manor  
210 S. Delsea Drive, Glassboro, NJ

#### 4 - District 2 Meeting

Sheraton Edison  
125 Raritan Center Parkway, Edison

#### 7 - Tenth Annual IUOE Local 825 Golf Outing

Gambler Ridge  
121 Burlington Path Road, Cream Ridge, NJ

#### 8 - Mothers Day

#### 9 - District 3 Meeting

Russian Hall  
464 Outwater Lane, Garfield, NJ

#### 11 - District 4 Meeting

NY Training Center  
96 Bates Gates Road, New Hampton, NY

#### 21 - Armed Forces Day

#### 30 - Memorial Day - UNION HOLIDAY

### June

#### 6 - Semiannual Meeting

Hilton East Brunswick  
3 Tower Center Boulevard  
East Brunswick, NJ

#### 14 - Flag Day

#### 19 - Fathers Day Juneteenth

#### 21 - First day of summer

#### 26 - IUOE 825 Annual Clay Shoot

Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays  
2750 Limestone Street, Coplay, PA

## VIEW FROM THE TOP

Greg Lalevee, Business Manager



## Training maintains best workforce

**W**ith massive infrastructure projects lining up before us, it's essential that we offer a workforce that is highly trained and ready to work at a moment's notice.

A professional training program is key to building this workforce, which is why we're proud of our training center and instructors, and why we keep investing in our equipment.

The training center and staff are continually working to prepare a steady crop of new operating engineers, while helping more experienced members master upgrades in software and learn new equipment.

Winter training ran from January through early March. At the same time we had STEAM trainees. Now in May, our first crop of apprentice students have arrived - part of our Earn and Learn program - after completing their orientation and two courses at Hudson County Community College. More information on training overall is on pages 4 and 5. The information leaves us confident that our Local will continue being able to provide the best-trained operating engineers anywhere.

### Assault on TTF runs out of gas

The rising price of gasoline caused a political knee-jerk reaction to opportunists who tried to use it to institute a gas-tax holiday. Opportun-

ists like this caused the Transportation Trust Fund to run out of money not so long ago. We protested immediately - see page 3 - and fortunately NJ Gov. Phil Murphy not only agreed, he had the guts to put his foot down and end the proposals.

### Events upcoming

Hard to believe that ten years have gone by since our first golf outing benefiting our Scholarship Fund. It is just days away, on May 7, and it has sold out again. It always does. The three remaining events - the clay shoot, fishing trip and motorcycle poker run - are detailed on page 3. These are meant to be family oriented, fun events and we encourage your participation.

### Semiannual meeting

We are looking forward to hosting our first live semiannual meeting in two years on June 6 at the East Brunswick Hilton. We've made the best of a bad situation by holding Zoom meetings and drive-in meetings but it will be nice to get together again with everyone in the same room.

Stay tuned on our Facebook site to see the 2022 winners of this year's scholarship contest. We'll be announcing them soon.

Enjoy the nicer weather. Summer's on the way.

## Contact Information

### Local 825 Headquarters

65 Springfield Avenue, 3rd FL  
Springfield, NJ 07081  
(973) 671 - 6900  
(973) 921 - 2918 FAX

### District Offices:

3242 Route 206  
Building A Unit 6  
Bordentown, NJ 08505  
Tel. 856-470-1480  
Fax 856-470-1485

96 Bates Gates Road  
New Hampton, NY 10958  
845-674-9020 - Phone  
845-674-9025 - Fax

### Health & Welfare office

65 Springfield Avenue, 2nd FL  
Springfield, NJ 07081  
(973) 671 - 6800  
(973) 921 - 0706 FAX

96 Bates Gates Roads  
Suite 70  
New Hampton, NY 10973  
(845) 374-2559  
(845) 374-2564 FAX

### NJ Training Center

338 Deans Rhode Hall Rd.  
Dayton, NJ 08810  
(732) 798-2170  
(732) 798-2175 FAX

### NY Training Center

Wawayanda location  
96 Bates Gates Road  
New Hampton, NY 10958  
845-673-3154 - Phone  
845-674-9025 - Fax

### ELEC Office

65 Springfield Avenue, 2nd FL  
Springfield, NJ 07081  
(973) 630-1010  
(973) 630-1013 FAX

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(908) 608-2013



# Lalevee smacks down gas-tax-suspension idea

## Would be like returning to the days of raiding the TTF

**W**ith the recent run up of the price of gas, politicians quickly trumpeted the idea of “suspending” the state’s gas tax to lower the cost of filling gas tanks.

To some, it was an attractive way of currying favor with voters beset with \$4 per gallon prices.

“Some elected leaders see the funds as a trough to fund other programs,” said Business Manager Greg Lalevee, who quickly torched the idea. One example is a legislative proposal to use these funds to repair boardwalks. Others suggest “temporarily” suspending the tax to help motorists as prices spike.

Suspending the gas tax for a week, a month, or even a year obviously would be bad

for union workers working on the numerous jobs that have been created by the Transportation Trust Fund. Not to mention the political timebomb it would set for reinstating the tax again at some point in the future.

Such a knee-jerk reaction would be disastrous and still not accomplish what it intends. It reminds us of the days – and not very long ago – that politicians raided the Transportation Trust Fund for non-transportation programs. The gas tax that Local 825 fought hard to get passed was supposed to end those practices and provide a continual funding source to repair aging infrastructure.

Even in our high-tax state, voters overwhelming approved increasing the 43-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax they pay to improve our transportation system.

Writing an Op-Ed in NorthJersey.com, Greg noted an additional reason suspending the gas tax is a bad idea.

It would hurt the state’s credit rating by removing a key revenue stream that helps balance our books.

“Gov. (Phil) Murphy was very proud that Moody’s upgraded New Jersey’s credit rating for the first time in 40 years. If we suspend the gas tax now, there’s \$900 million of Transportation Trust Fund debt that you’d be cutting the revenue source to repay the debt.

“To his credit, Gov. Murphy quickly shot down the proposal and we applaud his quick response,” Greg said. “He helped ensure that capital dollars would continue to be invested in infrastructure improvements rather than have that funding syphoned off to help fund day-to-day operations.”

Projects that take TTF funds to use in other ways must be rejected or else we risk returning to the days of an insolvent TTF with no way to protect our infrastructure from prolonged neglect.

## FORE! Golf outing tees up 2022 fundraising events

**W**ith the arrival of spring, the Local 825 scholarship fundraising events can’t be far behind.

- The tenth-annual golf outing tees off on May 7 at the Gambler Ridge Golf Course in Cream Ridge, NJ.
- The annual clay shoot gets off with a bang

on June 26 at Lehigh Valley Sporting Clays in Coplay, PA.

- The fourth annual fishing trip sets sail July 17 aboard the Miss Belmar, sailing from Belmar, NJ.
- The tenth-annual motorcycle poker run roars off on September 25.

In addition to providing a fun experience for members and families, these events raise money that fund our scholarship program. Over the past ten years, Local 825 members have raised and awarded nearly a million dollars in scholarships for our members’ children and grandchildren.

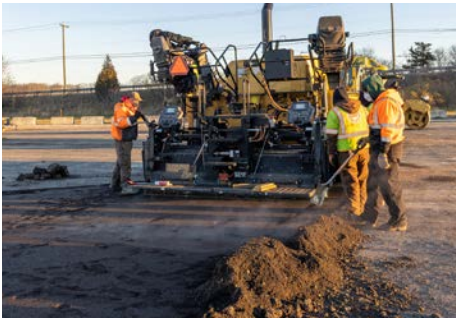


# Earn and Learn hybrid training program begins hands-on learning

**L**ocal 825's first Earn and Learn program students will complete their first college semester this month (May) and will step into the New Jersey Training Center to begin Local 825's conventional apprentice program.

Their semester began in January at the Hudson County Community College (HCCC). They took a college student success course (CSS) designed to enhance students' academic skills to help increase the odds of succeeding in achieving their educational goals. They also took courses in computer programming and English 112.

At the training center, these 30 students/apprentices will be given an orientation, take training in OSHA 30 and 40-hour hazmat. After that, they will begin rotating through different areas of dirt training, including forklift, backhoe, front-end loaders, paving, etc.



**HOMECOMING – 30 Earn and Learn student/apprentices arrive at NJ Training Center**

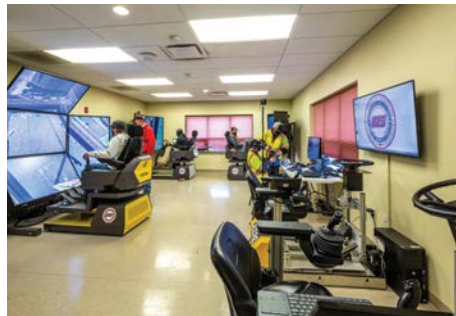
The dual-education partnership with Hudson County Community College (HCCC) grew out of Local 825's quest to convert its training center into a technical college to prepare its youngest members for the challenges and opportunities they will face as operating engineers into the future.

"The operating engineer of the future is going to have to be more broadly educated, so we're leaning into that," said Business Manager Greg Laveeve.

The partnership with HCCC allows apprentices to earn credits toward an Associate of Applied Science degree in Technical Studies, as they fulfill required hours of classroom and hands-on apprenticeship hours at the Local 825 Training Center. Currently it is an exclusive arrangement

with HCCC but could be expanded to other colleges in the future. Community colleges are great to partner with. They offer broader career and technical education and they are rooted in the communities where we live and work.

We offer a lot to the community colleges as well, enhancing what they offer their students. Where else could they get access to millions of dollars in heavy construction equipment, as well as seasoned instructors. In addition, we have a base of 1,400 employers, so participants in these educational program have an excellent prospect of employment following their graduation.



**IN-&-OUT LEARNERS – Apprentices learn on simulators inside and heavy equipment outside**

Meanwhile, Local 825 will develop courses in labor studies, survey and construction management that apprentices will take over their four-year program. These courses will earn credits toward their Associates degree.

HCCC President Dr. Chris Reber hails the program as a benefit to the community. "We are proud of our partnerships that help our community thrive and provide upcoming generations with resources to secure sustainable, well-paying careers without the burden of college debt," he said.

## Reaching out to high schools

Although attracting recruits has never been difficult, Local 825 still maintains an outreach program to let high school students know about educational and vocational alternatives.

Several events are lined up, from "touch a truck day" to tours of the training center, to visits to high schools and the Construction Industry Career Day at the NJ Convention and Exposition Center in Edison on May 31 and June 1.

"Even though we attract new recruits easily, it's still important to participate in these events and maintain a public profile," said Training Center Director Willie Vaccaro. "We want young people to know there are alternatives to college that may suit them better and this is a way of meeting with them in person and giving them first-hand information."

As Chris Laveeve posted on Instagram:

- Get them interested young
- Show them there's a future
- Show them a road to a decent living
- Keep #unions strong



**Letting students know they have choices**



# Training Center gears up for major projects

**T**he training centers in New Jersey and New York maintained a steady beat as winter classes ended and spring began.

The centers remain a place for members to enhance their skills on equipment they're familiar with and for others to learn new equipment, all in the face of major infrastructure programs now getting under way after years of delays.

## Hitting the targets

"Winter classes hit all the main targets," said Training Director Willie Vaccaro. "... utility work, cranes, excavation, paving .... Earlier in the year we had apprentices, journey men and women, STEAM students. Now we have Earn and Learn student apprentices and regular members who want to brush up on their equipment or learn the next new thing.

"In terms of scheduling what training programs to offer, we target our offerings based on the work we see coming."

## Mega-projects ahead

And what's coming are mega-projects. The \$30 billion Gateway Project will combine bridge, tunnel and roadway infrastructure. The \$12.3 billion rail tunnel piece of it has qualified for federal funding and will likely begin sometime soon. The \$1.6 billion contract to build a

new Portal North Bridge has been awarded to Skanska USA Civil and Traylor Bros. Inc. of Virginia. Work is set to begin soon.

Meanwhile, construction crews are already repaving roadways, fixing dams and trenching for utilities. Crews are replacing gas pipes for PSE&G and there's \$1 billion earmarked for replacing lead water pipes in counties and municipalities throughout the state.

Most of these projects require the same skills normally taught at the center, so special training is not needed.

## Making a splash

One exception is the 200-acre wind port and related construction in Salem County, which has already started. It has presented an opportunity for the training center to develop something new. Plans are being discussed to utilize the training center's four-acre lake to host a wind-survival training ground. This is essential training for wind port workers, both to protect themselves if they fall into the water and to launch rescue maneuvers to help others.

It's all about being prepared for what's around the corner, before that corner is turned. The mission is to ensure our members are the best trained, most experienced operating engineers available anywhere.



## TRAINING CENTER CALENDAR

### SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER

[www.facebook.com/iuoe825Training](http://www.facebook.com/iuoe825Training)

#### NEW JERSEY TRAINING CENTER

(732) 798-2170 (All classes start at 7 a.m. unless noted otherwise)

##### 8-Hour HAZMAT Refresher

Sat. May 21; Sat. June 25  
Sat. July 23; Sat. Aug. 30

##### CCO - Four Study Saturdays

Signup and TSS  
Sat. July 9

TWR at 7 a.m./TLL at 8 a.m.  
Sat. July 16

OVR at 7 a.m./LBT at 8 a.m.  
Sat. July 23

LBC & Review  
Sat. July 30

Written Test, 7 a.m.  
Sun. July 31

##### Signal Person Class

Sat. May 7

##### Rigger Class

Sat. May 14

##### Asbestos Awareness

Sat. June 4

##### OSHA 10 - Must attend all four days

Sat. June 11 - Mod 1  
Sat. June 18 - Mod 2  
Sat. July 9 - Mod 1  
Sat. July 16 - Mod 2

##### OSHA 30 - Must attend all four days

Sat. Aug. 6 - Mod 1  
Sat. Aug. 13 - Mod 2  
Sat. Aug. 20 - Mod 3  
Sat. Aug. 27 - Mod 4

##### 40-Hour HAZMAT Class - Must attend all five days

Mon. Aug. 15 through Fri. Aug. 19

#### NEW YORK TRAINING CENTER

(845) 673-3154

(All classes start at 7 a.m. unless noted otherwise)

Dates to be announced or call the Training Center for update

##### 8-Hour HAZMAT Refresher

##### OSHA 10

##### OSHA 30

##### 40-Hour HAZMAT Class

Please contact the New York Training Center to put your name on the list for a class or certification you need to take. If you do not see the class listed above, let them know and once we have enough names for a class, members will be notified.

# Members provide a MAP through tough times

**W**hen Local 825 began its Member Assistance Program, MAP for short, in 2019, a global pandemic was the last thing anyone would've thought about.

The purpose was to offer a confidential program to help members deal with stress, addiction or other life problems. It intended to eliminate the fear of discussing a problem. MAP addressed that concern by offering confidential peer-to-peer help from members they could relate to.

Interest was slow at first. Then within months and without warning, the covid-19 pandemic struck. "We saw a forty to fifty percent increase in calls," said Chris Lalevee, a MAP volunteer to help other volunteers coordinate the program.

There was fear of uncertainty. Fear of losing their jobs. Fear of being exposed to the virus. Then schools closed and people had to deal with kids being at home. It was a tough time.

Crises are related to anxiety, stress, depression, substance use, PTSD, the loss of a loved one or even suicidal thoughts.

Another sign of the program's effectiveness is the willingness of large employers to endorse

it. Recently Stavola and Montana Construction Corp. sent letters to make their Operating Engineer employees aware of the program. Meetings with several other large employers are scheduled to take place to expand the program. These employers recognize that a healthy workforce is a productive workforce.

MAP members use Instagram, Twitter and Facebook to send regular messages, reminding members to be on the lookout for signs of problems, and to look out for each other. Daily messages like these are common:

- *Heavy stress can reduce your life expectancy by up to two years.*
- *People don't pretend to be depressed. They pretend to be happy.*
- *Don't bottle up your emotions ... talk to someone about how you are feeling.*
- *You're not alone*
- *Poor quality of sleep can increase the risk of developing mental health symptoms.*
- *The U.S. has 4.4 percent of the world's population, yet accounts for 80 percent of the global opioid consumption.*
- *Nearly 92,000 persons in the U.S. died from drug-involved overdose in 2020. Don't become a statistic!! Get Help!!*

"As operators, we take care of our equipment and our tools. Why not treat ourselves the same? Physical and mental health go hand in hand. If we take better care of our physical selves, mental health issues may become more manageable."

If you're experiencing difficulties that are building up, don't wait until they become a bigger problem. Take a positive step and contact a MAP representative today. You can email [MAP@iuoe825.org](mailto:MAP@iuoe825.org) or call 866-820-9199.



## Ex-addict helps youths 'steer straight'

**P**hilip O'Hara knows how easy it is to fall into addiction, and how deep one can fall. A former student athlete who had a promising future ahead of him, he became addicted to opioids prescribed by his dentist.

His college wrestling career and academics soon took a backseat to his opiate addiction. After a seven-year battle with addiction and finding himself completely broken, he finally made the call for help.

Since finding recovery, Philip has been certified as a recovery coach and peer recovery specialist with the Steered Straight organization. It's become his mission to share his story with young people to educate them on the dangers of drug use and help them

"steer straight."

Phil spoke to Local 825 members and their families via Zoom earlier this year. The session attracted about one hundred members and family members, said Chris Lalevee, who organized the event. "We wanted to offer our kids a helpful message early in life, so they understand the dangers they will face and how to avoid them."

"Keeping an eye on our youth is so important after all they have been through and will continue to face," said Chris. "Checking in on them is essential to help better shape their lives."

Chris said that the Map program will attempt to schedule two special activities like this one each year.



Phillip O'Hara



# ELEC's push for energy plan transparency pays off

For nearly three years, ELEC825 has been prodding the legislative and business community for open information about the state's Energy Master Plan, which was unveiled in 2019 by the Gov. Phil Murphy administration.

Because the plan calls for the elimination of natural gas and related infrastructure projects, the resulting cost on residents will be significant and will discourage businesses from operating in the state.

## Joining forces

ELEC825 has joined forces with the Affordable Energy for New Jersey coalition to force the Board of Public Utilities (BPU) to disclose the details behind the plan, which would shed light on its impacts.

Until recently the administration has ignored these calls and remained silent on the costs. At the same time, the BPU has refused to slow down its implementation of these policies, spending taxpayer money without regard.

But recently, these efforts have started to pay off. A chorus of state legislators, including new Senate Minority Leader Steve Oroho and Anthony Bucco, have joined ELEC825 and Affordable Energy for New Jersey in calling for transparency as the state moves toward renewable generation goals.

NJONLINE recently published a story by Star-Ledger columnist Paul Mulshine shining light on how huge, impactful changes are being introduced through regulations that are not subject to a vote or legislative approvals. These changes, often minimized by politicians, lead to home heating costs that could be four and five times higher than in the past.


Another article, this one appearing in NJ Spotlight by Tom Johnson, who writes about Energy and Environment, points out that the state is already implementing aspects of the plan even before the cost impacts are known, or at least disclosed.

## New York State

ELEC825 is equally involved in New York, playing a major role in the New Yorkers for Affordable Energy coalition, which calls for natural

gas projects to be included in the state's mix of wind and solar projects.


ELEC825 will continue advocating for complete disclosure of this information and transparency overall in both New Jersey and New York. In the meantime, it is gratifying to see that our message is finally getting out and leading to greater awareness and debate.



SUBSCRIBER EXCLUSIVE

### State's Energy Master Plan is priceless - but not in a good way | Mulshine

Published: Mar. 31, 2022, 6:39 a.m.



A home inspector in a crawlspace similar to the one in my house. If the governor's energy plan goes through, some guy like this will have to replace my gas-fired heater. Charles Lewis of Nonprofit Home Inspections


By Paul Mulshine | Star-Ledger Columnist

My house has a crawlspace. On occasion I have to go down into it. That involves putting on kneepads, but I probably should wear a helmet as well, to ward off a concussion from hitting my head on a 2-by-8.

So I feel sorry for whoever has to replace my gas heating system if the Murphy administration's Energy Master Plan is carried out.

He will have to descend into that dreadful space and dismantle my gas-fired heater. He'll have to disable the piping that goes up to my gas stove. Upstairs he'll need to install electric baseboards.

What that will cost I have no idea. No one else does either. The Murphy administration's [Energy Master](#)




### Find out what NJ residents and businesses will pay for clean energy, but not just yet

TOM JOHNSON, ENERGY/ENVIRONMENT WRITER | MARCH 29, 2022 | ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

Critics fault BPU for approving many clean-energy initiatives without knowing impact on ratepayers' bills

f t i in e



July 8, 2021 in Newark Heights, Gov. Phil Murphy signs a package of bills aimed at clean energy

#### More on clean energy

- READ ALSO: NJ readies for green future but says little about costs
- WATCH: Governor signs package of bills to help reach NJ's clean-energy goal
- READ ALSO: Industry group says green energy means businesses will pay more

Gov. Phil Murphy has been aggressive in touting the environmental value of his clean-energy policies, but the cost of those policies to New Jersey residents and businesses has been hard to pin down.

Now, the state appears to be ready to release by fall a comprehensive analysis of what residential customers and businesses will pay in higher utility bills to transition New Jersey to a clean-energy economy.

The study, more than two years delayed in being made public, has been eagerly anticipated by business groups and consumers who fear the shift to 100% clean energy could spike energy costs.

**'The Murphy administration can't say the dog ate their homework. They haven't even opened their textbook yet.'**

In the interim, however, the state already has approved the development of three offshore wind farms, a new incentive program geared to maintain a robust solar energy sector in New Jersey, and an initiative requiring electric and gas utilities to reduce energy consumption by homes and businesses.

#### BPU under fire again

As in the past, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities has come under fire from critics who complained the agency approved so many clean-energy initiatives without knowing the overall impact on ratepayers' bills by repeatedly delaying its analysis.

"The Murphy administration can't say the dog ate their homework. They haven't even opened their textbook yet," said Eric DeCesero, executive vice president of the Fuel Merchants Association of New Jersey in a press release.

While state officials continue to drag their feet on telling ratepayers the cost of the Energy Master Plan, DeCesero argued it hasn't slowed them down in implementing one of the most costly aspects of the program — building electrification.

Republican Assemblymen Hal Wirths (Sussex) and Parker Space (Morris, Sussex, Warren) have proposed government energy mandates be put on hold until the costs of electric heating systems in homes and businesses are made available.

"It is almost April 2022 and there is still no official word on what this so-called green energy plan is going to cost home and business owners," Wirths said.

#### Public hearings on electric heating



## International Union of Operating Engineers Local 825

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## BETTER BUILDING BEGINS HERE

# Jim Callahan fulfills St. Patrick's Day role

IUOE General President Jim Callahan finally got to lead New York City's St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 17, after being postponed for two years from the date he was originally selected to serve as parade Grand Marshall.

The oldest and largest St. Patrick's Day Parade in the world was cancelled in 2020, the first time there was no parade in New York

since it was first took place in 1762.

And thwarting the luck of the Irish, the parade was cancelled again in 2021 as the Big Apple and the rest of the nation continued to grapple with the lingering pandemic. But the third time was the charm and the parade resumed its role in honoring Irish American heritage. President Callahan was cheered on by Business Manager Greg Lavee, Chris

Lavee and several Local 825 members who braved the rainy day to march down Fifth Avenue to St. Patrick's Cathedral. It was a great day for the Irish.

Many other St. Patrick's Day parades were held in local towns and cities across America, including one in Jersey City, which honored Carpenters' Local 253 Thomas Hurley as Irishman of the Year.



**LUCKY CHARMS** – Jim Callahan was named Grand Marshall for three years in a row.



**NEVER BEFORE** – Prior to 2020 New York's St. Patrick's Day parade had never been canceled.



**JERSEY CITY** joined towns and cities across America.