

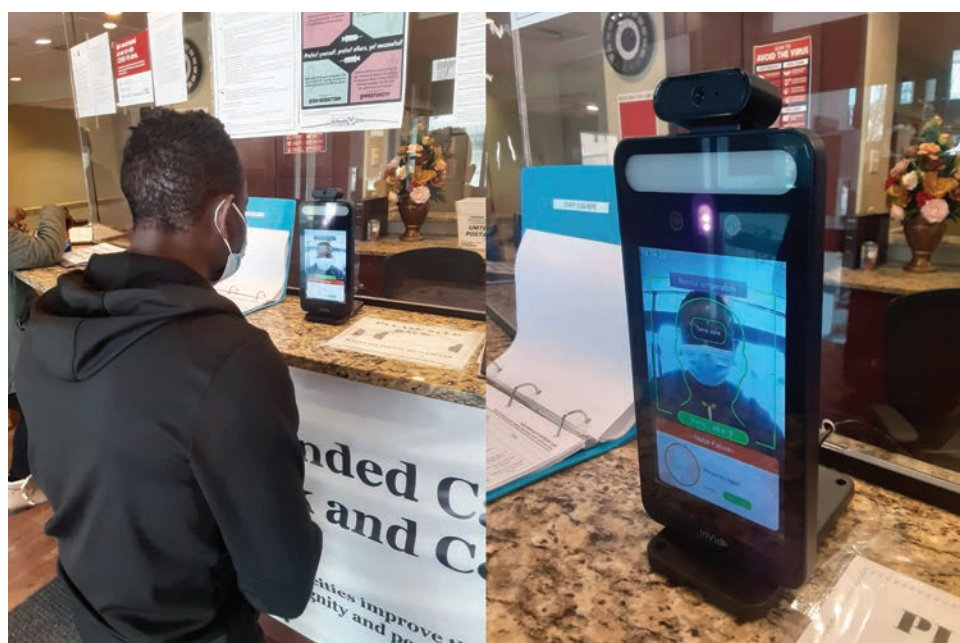


The New Community CLARION

Serving the People of the New Community Network

Volume 38 - Issue 2 ~ February 2021

Extended Care COVID-19 Procedures Prove Successful in Controlling the Virus



New Community Extended Care Facility uses a temperature scanning station from Medline to determine if anyone entering the building has an elevated temperature. The hands-free device is one of several measures the facility has taken to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection among staff members and residents. *Photos courtesy of Adalberto Diaz.*

New Community Extended Care Facility, 266 South Orange Ave., Newark, has taken numerous steps to prevent COVID-19 from entering the building in an effort to keep residents and staff members safe as the pandemic continues. The efforts have been successful with none of the facility's residents testing positive for COVID-19 since June.

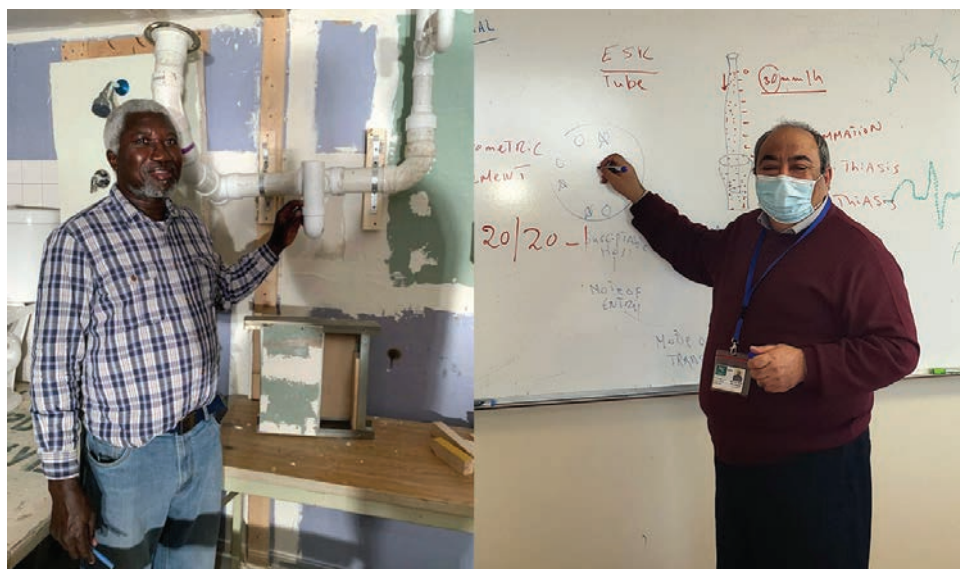
Members of the administration attribute that achievement to a combination of testing, screening, vigilance surrounding cleaning protocols and following recommended guidelines.

"Our team at the facility sprang into action immediately once the gravity of the COVID pandemic became clear to the medical community. Keeping the virus under control became priority one and the results are a tribute to the careful planning and execution of their infection control procedures," said New Community CEO Richard Rohrman. "Residents have lived without a COVID-19 infection for over eight months. The residents also get a large degree of credit for their cooperation and perseverance under difficult circumstances."

Screening is a major part of preventing infection. All staff members and service providers who enter Extended Care are tested every other day and residents are tested once per week. A rapid test is administered and if anyone tests positive, they are immediately swabbed for the PCR test and must leave the facility. Results from the PCR test come back in one to two days.

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NCCTI Welcomes Two New Instructors



Yusto Awich, left, now serves as the Building Trades Specialist instructor and Dr. Mamdouh Sorial, right, teaches the Clinical Medical Assistant program at New Community Career & Technical Institute.

New Community Career & Technical Institute (NCCTI) has two new members of its teaching staff: Yusto Awich, who is an alumnus of the school, took on the role of Building Trades Specialist instructor in September while Dr. Mamdouh Sorial became the instructor for the Clinical Medical Assistant (CMA) program in December. "NCCTI is pleased to have Dr. Sorial and Mr. Awich join our team.

Both come with industry-specific skills and teaching experience," said NCCTI Director Rodney Brutton. "Our students will benefit greatly from their knowledge and will certainly be well prepared to enter the workforce from a theoretical and practical perspective."

Awich graduated from the school's Building Trades Specialist program in 2017 and after graduation started his own general construction business. Before enrolling at NCCTI, he was a New York City school teacher for about 10 years, teaching biology and sciences.

After William Robinson, who served as his Building Trades Specialist instructor, retired, Awich decided to go back to teaching in his new field.

"I saw the training that I got and I thought it would be a good time to come back and provide the same training that I got," Awich said. "And also being that I'm a former teacher, I said this is another good way of giving back and combining skills."

He started teaching NCCTI's Building Trades students in September and enjoys the position. He still has his construction business for weekend projects, but he is now concentrating on his full-time role as an educator.

Sorial has an extensive background in the medical field. He worked in neuropsychiatry in his home country of Egypt before moving to the United States in 1997. When he came to this country, he was unable to find a residency so he decided to become a medical instructor. He has worked in many institutes of higher learning including Eastwick College in Nutley and National Career Institute in East Orange.

He knew his predecessor, Dr. Seham Abouelhassan, as well as NCCTI's Patient Care Technician instructor Dr. Maha Koltowski, before coming on board which helped the transition go smoothly. He began teaching CMA

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The New Community Clarion

The New Community Clarion is published as a community service. The editor reserves the right to withhold articles and photographs once they are submitted. Opinions expressed in columns are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of New Community Corporation.

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newcommunity.org



OUR MISSION

To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual, God-given dignity and personal achievement.

New Community is recognized as:

- One of the largest and most comprehensive community development organization in the United States.
- A large-scale deliverer of comprehensive programs and services.
- A leader in affordable housing and economic development.
- A model among nonprofit, social entrepreneurship and CDC communities.
- Having beneficial partnerships on the local, national and global level.

Black History Month Quote:

**“Injustice
anywhere is a
threat to justice
everywhere.”**

**—Martin Luther
King Jr.**

Around the Network

Children Surprised with Holiday Gifts

The Doll League, Inc. Metropolitan New York Chapter provided 54 children at Harmony House, New Community's transitional housing facility for homeless families, with toys for the 2020 holiday season on Dec. 11. The recipients were 8 years of age and younger. Josephine Hasfal and other Dolls within the organization provided the toys and packaging for the children so that they would have an enjoyable holiday. Each child was able to receive multiple gifts because there was an abundance of toys. On behalf of the parents, children and Harmony House staff, we would like to sincerely thank The Doll League, Inc. for thinking of us and providing our children with such joy. *Photos courtesy of Yonette Fredericks.*



NCC Families Receive Donations

Members of New Community's Resident Services Department accepted donations of art supplies, toys and coats and distributed them to families. *Photos courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*



Preparing NCC's Emergency Food Pantry

New Community's Emergency Food Pantry opens on the first business day after the 15th of each month. It provides much-needed supplies to individuals in need of assistance. Each month, NCC employees and volunteers prepare the Emergency Food Pantry by getting the food items and stocking the shelves. *Photos courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*



Employee Spotlight: Gladys Artis



Gladys Artis has worked as the Resident Services Coordinator at Roseville Senior for more than three years. Photo courtesy of Gladys Artis.

Since June of 2017, Gladys Artis has been a New Community employee, serving as Resident Services Coordinator at Roseville Senior, which houses senior citizens and disabled adults at 1 South Eighth St., Newark. But she has been involved in NCC's Resident Services Department for much longer than that as a volunteer.

Her sister, Dorothy, worked in Resident Services for many years before taking a position in NCC's Property Management Department. Artis would volunteer to help with food distribution, handing out donated Christmas presents to NCC families and anything else that the depart-

ment needed. When a full-time position became available, she decided to make the career change. She previously worked as a medical receptionist at an OBGYN office.

Artis is very glad she came to work for New Community.

"This is one of the most rewarding jobs I've ever had," she said.

As the Resident Services Coordinator, Artis works with Roseville Senior tenants on a daily basis. With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, in-person contact is limited for everyone's safety. She conducts wellness calls to residents to check on them and determine if they might need additional services to deal with depression or any other issues. If counseling is warranted, she refers them to Family Service Bureau (FSB). She also helps distribute food to residents, whether it's in the form of donated meals or commodities provided by the Community FoodBank of New Jersey.

Artis' favorite part of her job is assisting the residents. She said it's very fulfilling when residents express their gratitude after she has helped them in some way.

She recently helped get a resident signed up for NCC's Home Friend Program, which provides light housekeeping for senior citizens living in Newark's Central Ward. The resident's girlfriend, who also helped him with many tasks, passed away from COVID-19 and Artis noticed that he was not taking care of himself as he used to. She looked into home health aide programs and secured a Home Friend for him. He thanked her for the extra assistance.

"That definitely brings a smile to my face," Artis said. "I get teary-eyed."

Artis' work is noticed by more than just her residents. NCC Director of Property Manage-

ment Hector Torres said in addition to assisting tenants at Roseville Senior, she is always willing to help others in the department.

"Gladys has demonstrated that she takes her job seriously and is reliable in tending to her responsibilities. I receive positive feedback from the residents at Roseville Senior whenever we have scheduled activities or situations where residents visit with Gladys to seek out assistance or guidance," Torres said. "I also have found that Gladys is willing to assist in any way she can with her coworkers at our other sites. I appreciate her responding to any request to assist in some other capacity or at another location. Her rapport with her Property Manager, Patricia Johnson, is very good. They work very well together. It is always a pleasure to speak and visit with Gladys whenever I go to the Roseville Senior property."

Artis was born and raised in Newark but currently resides in Belleville, where she has lived for two years. She has a son and two daughters and currently lives with her youngest daughter.

She enjoys reading and watching movies on Netflix. Before the pandemic, she enjoyed traveling.

Artis is thankful for NCC's late founder, Monsignor William J. Linder, and the vision for the organization he made a reality.

"If he did not have that vision, I would not be in the position that I'm in now because there wouldn't have been a job opportunity," she said.

NCC's mission of improving the quality of people's lives resonates with Artis and influences how she does her work.

"At one point, we're all going to be at this stage in our life where our residents are," she said. "And I hope and pray that someone is as kind to me when I get there as I am to my residents."

Domestic Violence Survivors Receive Donated Purses Filled with Items

Survivors of domestic violence at Harmony House, New Community's transitional housing facility for homeless families, were celebrated during an event at the facility on Jan. 19. Love Supreme Counseling Services, LLC founder Julia Kelly hosted the event. Kelly brought the women various purses packed with personal care items as well as pajamas and toys for the children. The event took place at Harmony House where all COVID-19 regulations were enforced. The female residents of Harmony House reported to the afterschool room and were graciously surprised with the purses. On behalf of Harmony House residents and staff, we would like to sincerely thank Kelly, her organization and other sponsors for their support. *Photo courtesy of Yonette Fredericks.*



Black History Month Quote:

"The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them."

**—Ida B. Wells
Journalist and one
of the founders of
the NAACP**

NCC Residents Enjoy Monthly Food Distribution

New Community's Resident Services Department helps distribute food items to those living in the senior buildings each month. Residents of Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, received bananas and eggs in January. *Photos courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*



Help Wanted: New Community Corporation is Hiring

There are a number of open positions available with New Community Corporation. To see all job listings, along with full descriptions and requirements of each position, visit newcommunity.org and click "Careers." Click "Apply" next to the position of interest to see the full description and then "Apply Now" to complete the application process.

As of publication, the following positions were available. The site is continually updated, so check back often to see if there is a job of interest.

- **Accountant:** Will be responsible for working with designated groups(s) to help establish and maintain an accurate financial record of revenue and expenditures. Candidate must have 1-4 years accounting experience and a Bachelor's Degree in Accounting or Finance with excellent analytical skills; not-for-profit accounting experience preferred.
- **Administrative Coordinator:** Will be involved in the day-to-day functions of the Administrative operation. The Administrative Coordinator supports the Administrator / Executive Director with updating, enhancing and deploying of an effective operation while collaborating with the Chief of Health and Human Services, Compliance Director, Clinical Director, Director of Operations and Clinical Supervisors.
- **Building Maintenance Worker:** Performs a variety of maintenance duties relating to repair, cleaning, painting, plumbing, carpentry and electrical at assigned property location. Also provides general duties related to cleanliness and appearance of interior and exterior area of assigned property.
- **Certified Nursing Assistant:** Provides personal care and related services, functioning under the direction of the Licensed Practical Nurse.
- **Clinical Director:** Under the direction of the Family Service Bureau Executive Director, the Clinical Director will be responsible for overseeing and developing the Clinical aspects of both the Newark and Kearny sites to include supervision, evaluation and scheduling.
- **Clinician, Part-Time and Full-Time:** Under the direction of the Clinical Supervisor, the Clinician will be responsible for the provision of direct clinical services to children, adults, families and co-occurring populations at the Family Service Bureau office located in the Kearny and Newark offices as needed.
- **HVAC Technician & Building Maintenance:** Installs and maintains all aspects of temperature control systems throughout NCC properties. Will also install and maintain HVAC systems and work on fuel supply lines, air ducts, vents, compressors, evaporators and piping.
- **Intensive Case Manager:** Will provide case management/social services to disadvantaged populations by planning, referrals, service coordination, client and community education, client and group counseling and the documentation of all case management activities. This position works under the supervision of the Program Director.
- **Licensed Practical Nurse - Full-Time:** Will provide direct nursing care to residents and supervise the day-to-day nursing activities performed by nursing assistants in accordance with current federal, state and local standards, guidelines, and regulations that govern the facility and as may be directed by the Administrator and/or Director of Nursing to ensure the highest degree of quality care is maintained at all times.
- **Occupancy Specialist:** Will be responsible for monitoring and processing housing certification, vouchers and special claims. This includes but not limited to processing applications and background checks in accordance with Federal/State/City policies and regulations. Candidate must be bilingual (Spanish/English speaking) and have work experience in the affordable housing industry and familiarity with HUD and LITC.
- **Porter - Full Time:** Will be responsible for keeping the Extended Care Facility clean, free from clutter and safe. The Porter will uphold the standards, objectives and policies of NCC and Extended Care.
- **Registered Dietitian:** Will be responsible for assessing the nutritional care program of the residents in the facility. The Dietitian will assist and prepare the menu for the different menu cycles of the year. The Dietitian will advise administration and food service department as needed on all clinical aspects of each resident diet and oversee issues in the kitchen including menu development, substitution of food, supplement use, food temperatures, etc.
- **Virtual Instruction Support Staff:** Provides virtual learning support by facilitating the delivery of online materials to and from the students and monitoring student behavior while at the center.

Extended Care Staff, Residents Receive COVID-19 Vaccine

Staff members and residents of New Community Extended Care Facility, 266 South Orange Ave., Newark, received the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine on Jan. 26. For many, it was their second dose of the vaccine. Thanks to CVS personnel who administered the injections. There has not been a positive COVID-19 case among Extended Care residents since June. *For more photos, visit newcommunity.org.*



Extended Care COVID-19 Procedures Prove Successful in Controlling the Virus

Continued from page 1

Extended Care Administrator Veronica Onwunaka explained that the frequency of testing done at the facility is the protocol when a positive case is detected, but she has authorized it as standard to ensure any infection is detected early and can be isolated.

COVID-19 vaccination has also been offered to residents and staff members of the facility. While the majority of residents and staff members have received the vaccine, prevention measures remain in place for everyone, including the requirement of face masks, social distancing and ongoing screenings.

"We continue to test so we can quickly identify and immediately isolate those who might test positive," Onwunaka said.

The facility also checks the temperature of anyone entering the building. To provide the safest screening procedure possible, Extended Care has purchased a temperature scanning station from Medline. Those who enter the facility just need to position their face near the mounted non-contact tablet and the device reads their temperature and detects if they're wearing a face covering. If the person has an elevated temperature or is unmasked, the device sets off an alert. A member of the Extended Care administration is notified and the person must leave the building.

Having the device is beneficial because it allows for contactless screening of employees and service providers, which further reduces the risk of close contact and potential virus transmission. It is also a quick process and negates the need for locating handheld thermometers, which can be misplaced.

While direct health care workers are often the first to come to mind as critical in the fight against COVID-19, New Community Chief Operating Officer Fred Hunter said many more are also essential to keeping everyone safe.

"There are many unsung heroes behind the scenes, like members of Housekeeping, Food Services, Laundry, Environmental Services and Security that contribute to our residents' safe and comfortable environment," he said.

During the summer, members of the New Jersey National Guard provided assistance to Extended Care. The service members engaged in a number of activities, including janitorial services, sanitizing common areas, making resident beds, distributing food to resident floors, encouraging residents to eat and providing some limited support to Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). When the National Guard departed in mid-July, Extended Care staff members maintained the level of services.

Cleaning and disinfecting are ongoing at Extended Care to further reduce the risk of infection and transmission. The facility was also fumigated, which Onwunaka said made a difference in the fight against COVID-19.

To ensure the facility keeps up its standards and does the most it can to reduce the risk of COVID-19 infection, Extended Care has a Pandemic Team made up of about 18 to 20 people that meets periodically to discuss what's happening at the facility.

"We share information about what we're doing and pick each other's brain if there are more things we need to do to make sure that we keep everybody safe," Onwunaka said.

Keeping COVID-19 infections out of Extended Care is a true team effort.

"We are grateful to have such a committed team dedicated to the safety of our residents and each other," Hunter said.

New Community Extended Care Facility, 266 South Orange Ave., Newark, is a 180-bed skilled nursing facility that serves inner city seniors and disabled adults. The facility specializes in offering customized care for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. For more information, visit newarknursinghome.org or call 973-624-2020.

Social Security News

Get Your Social Security Benefit Statement

**By Ammy Plummer
Social Security District Manager
Springfield Avenue, Newark, NJ**

Tax season is approaching, and replacing your annual Benefit Statement has never been easier. The Benefit Statement, also known as the SSA-1099 or the SSA-1042S, is a tax form we mail each year in January to people who receive Social Security benefits. It shows the total amount of benefits you received from us in the previous year so you know how much Social Security income to report to the Internal Revenue Service on your tax return.

If you live in the United States and you need a replacement form SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S, simply go online and get an instant, printable replacement form using your personal *my Social Security* account at www.ssa.gov/myaccount. A replacement SSA-1099 or SSA-1042S is available for the previous tax year after Feb. 1.

If you don't have access to a printer, you can save the document to your computer or email it to yourself. If you don't have a *my Social Security* account, creating one is very easy to do and usually takes less than 10 minutes.

With a personal *my Social Security* account, you can do much of your business with us online. If you receive benefits or have Medicare, your personal *my Social Security* account is also the best way to:

- Request a replacement Social Security number card (in most states and the District of Columbia).
- Get your benefit verification letter.
- Check your benefit and payment information.
- Change your address and phone number.
- Change your direct deposit information.
- Request a replacement Medicare card.
- Report your wages if you work and receive Social Security disability insurance or Supplemental Security Income benefits.

If you're a non-citizen who lives outside of the United States and you received or repaid Social Security benefits last year, we will send you form SSA-1042S in the mail. The forms SSA-1099 and SSA-1042S are not available for people who receive Supplemental Security Income benefits.

Visit www.ssa.gov to find more about our online services.

Senior Spotlight: Ruben Torres



From the time Ruben Torres moved into Roseville Senior about a year and a half ago, he has helped out in the building. Photo courtesy of Gladys Artis.

Ruben Torres has always been very involved in his community and when he moved to Roseville Senior, 1 South Eighth St., Newark, he immediately offered to help in the building. The three-tour combat Army veteran and community activist enjoys assisting his neighbors and getting others involved.

Torres moved to Roseville Senior about a year and a half ago. Since moving in, he has become well known to New Community employees in the building for his willingness to lend a hand with whatever is necessary.

"Sometimes you can catch him walking down the hallway spraying Lysol, wiping down the rails in the hallway. He goes in the mailroom and wipes down the mailboxes," said Roseville Senior Resident Services Coordinator Gladys

Artis. "He'll pick up a mop in a minute. He's just always there."

Torres also helps with translations for Spanish-speaking residents in the building and keeps an eye out on the grounds as well.

"He has definitely been an asset in the building," Artis said.

Torres is originally from New York, born and raised in the Bronx. He has lived in Pennsylvania and Iowa but has been in Essex County for some time, having lived in Bloomfield. He previously served as the community coordinator for the Essex County Democratic Party where he planned block parties. He was also involved in the Bloomfield PBA and a church youth program.

"I try to give back to the community what was given to me when I was growing up," Torres said. "I had good mentors. I try to do that here."

In addition to assisting Artis, the property manager and superintendent at Roseville Senior, Torres has extra food items in his apartment for any neighbor in need. He also volunteers to hand out food at a local church food pantry.

Torres reminds his neighbors to take the necessary precautions to keep themselves safe during the COVID-19 pandemic but also encourages them to take a walk outside to get some fresh air and get involved in whatever way they can.

He said he has gotten active at Roseville Senior because he lives alone and doesn't have visitors. But he did find an old friend in the building with whom he had lost contact. The pair grew up together and attended the same school. They now live on the same floor.

"We're friends," Torres said. "We're brothers until the day we die."

Once it is safe to gather, Torres hopes to be able to help plan parties in the building's Community Room and encourage his neighbors to participate.

"I'm very good with programming parties and all that," he said.



**Wellness Tip
February 2021**

Heart-Healthy Foods



Leafy green vegetables like spinach, kale and collard greens are well-known for their wealth of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants.

Strawberries, blueberries, blackberries and raspberries are jam-packed with important nutrients that play a central role in heart health.



Whole grains include all three nutrient-rich parts of the grain: germ, endosperm and bran.



Beans contain resistant starch, which resists digestion and is fermented by the beneficial bacteria in your gut.



For more information about VNA Health Group's services & programs, please call 800.862.3330 or visit www.vnahg.org

Information about COVID-19 Vaccination



Vaccination against COVID-19 has begun throughout the United States. There are different eligibility requirements based on which state you live in.

In New Jersey, the following individuals are currently eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccine:

- Health care personnel
- Long-term care facility residents and staff
- First responders
- Individuals ages 65 and older
- Individuals with high-risk medical conditions, including:
 - Cancer
 - Chronic kidney disease
 - COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
 - Down Syndrome
 - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
 - Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 kg/m² or higher but < 40 kg/m²)
 - Severe Obesity (BMI ≥ 40 kg/m²)
 - Sickle cell disease
 - Smoking
 - Type 2 diabetes mellitus

Any New Jersey resident can pre-register for the COVID-19 vaccine through the NJ Vaccine Scheduling System, found here: covidvaccine.nj.gov.

Those who pre-register will be notified when they become eligible for the vaccine and will be notified again when an appointment is available through the scheduling system.

Eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine will continue to open up to more New Jersey residents as time goes on. The State of New Jersey has a webpage dedicated to vaccine information, which can be accessed at covid19.nj.gov/pages/vaccine. Visitors can pre-register for the vaccine, learn about eligibility and access resources for how to get vaccinated if they are eligible.

According to the State of New Jersey, no one will have to pay for the vaccine, regardless of health insurance coverage status. Those with health insurance will have vaccination coverage without copays, coinsurance or deductibles. The uninsured will not be billed for the cost of the vaccine.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is a reliable resource for COVID-19 vaccine information. The government

entity has a page on its website ([cdc.gov](https://www.cdc.gov)) dedicated to the myths and facts about vaccination. Below is some of the information provided. It can also be found at [cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html).

Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

No. None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine **cannot** make you sick with COVID-19.

There are several different types of vaccines in development. All of them teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19.

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and still get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?

No. Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States can cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a **current infection**.

If your body develops an immune response — the goal of vaccination — there is a possibility you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate you had a **previous infection** and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently looking at how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. CDC is providing recommendations to federal, state and local governments about who should be vaccinated first.

At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long.

We won't know how long immunity produced by vaccination lasts until we have more data on how well the vaccines work.

Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19.

Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications.

Will a COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?

No. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way.

Messenger RNA vaccines — also called mRNA vaccines — are the first COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States. mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. This means the mRNA cannot affect or interact with our DNA in any way. Instead, COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease.

At the end of the process, our bodies have learned how to protect against future infection. That immune response and making antibodies is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

Is it safe for me to get a COVID-19 vaccine if I would like to have a baby one day?

Yes. People who want to get pregnant in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

Based on current knowledge, experts believe that COVID-19 vaccines are unlikely to pose a risk to a person trying to become pregnant in the short or long term. Scientists study every vaccine carefully for side effects immediately and for years afterward. The COVID-19 vaccines are being studied carefully now and will continue to be studied for many years, similar to other vaccines.

The COVID-19 vaccine, like other vaccines, works by training our bodies to develop antibodies to fight against the virus that causes COVID-19, to prevent future illness. There is currently no evidence that antibodies formed from COVID-19 vaccination cause any problems with pregnancy, including the development of the placenta. In addition, there is no evidence suggesting that fertility problems are a side effect of ANY vaccine. People who are trying to become pregnant now or who plan to try in the future may receive the COVID-19 vaccine when it becomes available to them.

Rutgers Community Health Center

Taking Care of Our Hearts, Together

February is American Heart Month. Heart disease is a leading cause of death in the United States, causing one of four deaths each year. There are many steps you can take to live a heart-healthy life. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and National Institutes of Health recommend the following:

Move more. Get at least 2.5 hours of physical activity each week – that's just 30 minutes a day, five days a week. Also, do muscle-strengthening exercises two days a week. Can't carve out a lot of time in your day? Try five, 10 or 15 minutes a few times a day. Some physical activity is better than none.

Eat healthy foods. A healthy diet that is low in sodium and saturated fat is key to heart disease prevention. Eat vegetables, fruits, whole grains, beans, nuts, poultry and fish. Try including vegetable oils and low-fat or fat-free dairy products. Limit the amount of foods high in saturated fats, sodium, sugar and other sweeteners.

Aim for a healthy weight. Being overweight is hard on your heart. It increases your risk of having heart disease, stroke, high cholesterol,

high blood pressure and diabetes. Getting regular exercise and choosing healthy foods will help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.

Quit smoking. The chemicals in tobacco smoke harm your heart and blood vessels. Quitting is hard, but many people have succeeded, and you can too. Set a quit date and let those close to you know about it. Ask your family and friends for support. Talk to your health provider about tips for success.

Reduce stress and improve sleep. Stress can contribute to high blood pressure and other heart risks. Not getting enough sleep or regularly getting poor quality sleep increases the risk of high blood pressure and heart disease. Try to get seven to eight hours of sleep each night.

Know your numbers. Meet your heart health goals by keeping track of how much you exercise, your blood pressure and your cholesterol numbers. If you have diabetes, track your blood sugars. These numbers have an impact on your heart health. These numbers help your health provider tell you how you are doing.

Schedule an appointment at Rutgers Community Health Center! Our health providers can

help you track your blood pressure, assess your cholesterol and help you develop personalized heart health goals. Call us at 973-732-6040.

- Convenient location in NCC's health care building at 274 South Orange Ave., Newark.
- New patients welcome!
- We offer telehealth and in-person visits.
- Due to COVID-19, we are currently not accepting walk-ins.
- Accepting most health insurances including Aetna, Horizon and many others.


RUTGERS
Community Health Center

Community is everything.

274 South Orange Avenue, 3rd Floor, Newark,
NJ 07103

973-732-6040 | rchc.rutgers.edu

Free Tax Prep Available at Family Resource Success Center



**New Community
Family Resource Success Center**
274 S. Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ 07107
973-565-9500

www.newcommunity.org

FREE TAX PREPARATION
By Certified IRS Preparers

274 South Orange Avenue, Newark, NJ 07103
(located inside the New Community Health Care Building)

Beginning Tuesday, Feb. 9, 2021
Tuesdays: Drop-off only, by appointment only (9 a.m. to 2 p.m.)
Wednesdays: By appointment only (call 973-565-9500 for times)
Thursdays: Pick-up only, by appointment only (9 a.m. to 2 p.m.)

Items taxpayers need to bring to the VITA/TCE Sites to have their tax returns prepared

- **Proof of identification** (photo ID), Social Security Cards for you, your spouse and dependents and/or a Social Security Number verification letter issued by the Social Security Administration
- **Birth dates for you, your spouse and dependents on the tax return**
- Current year's tax package if you received one
- Wage and earning statement(s) Form W-2, W-2G, 1099-R, from all employers
- Interest and dividend statements from banks (Forms 1099)
- A copy of last year's Federal and State returns *if available*
- Bank Routing Numbers and Account Numbers for Direct Deposit
- **Total paid for daycare provider and the daycare provider's tax identifying number** (the provider's Social Security Number or the provider's business Employer Identification Number)
- To file taxes electronically on a married filing joint tax return, both spouses must be present to sign the required forms.
- Medical Card
- All Forms 1095, Health Insurance Statements. Forms 1095-A, B or C, Affordable Health Care Statements
- Proof of identification. An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) assignment letter may be substituted for you, your spouse and your dependents if you do not have a Social Security number

By Appointment only at NCC Family Resource Success Center
To schedule an appointment, call 973-565-9500

The Family Resource Success Center, 274 South Orange Ave., Newark, is offering free tax preparation provided by certified IRS preparers from Feb. 9 through April 15. Because of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Tuesdays are limited to drop-offs by appointment only from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Wednesdays are by appointment only and Thursdays are limited to pick-up by appointment only from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Eligible individuals must call the center and make an appointment at 973-565-9500.

Taxpayers with earned income less than \$54,000 are eligible for the program. For those who are married and filing a joint return, the combined earned income must be less than \$54,000.

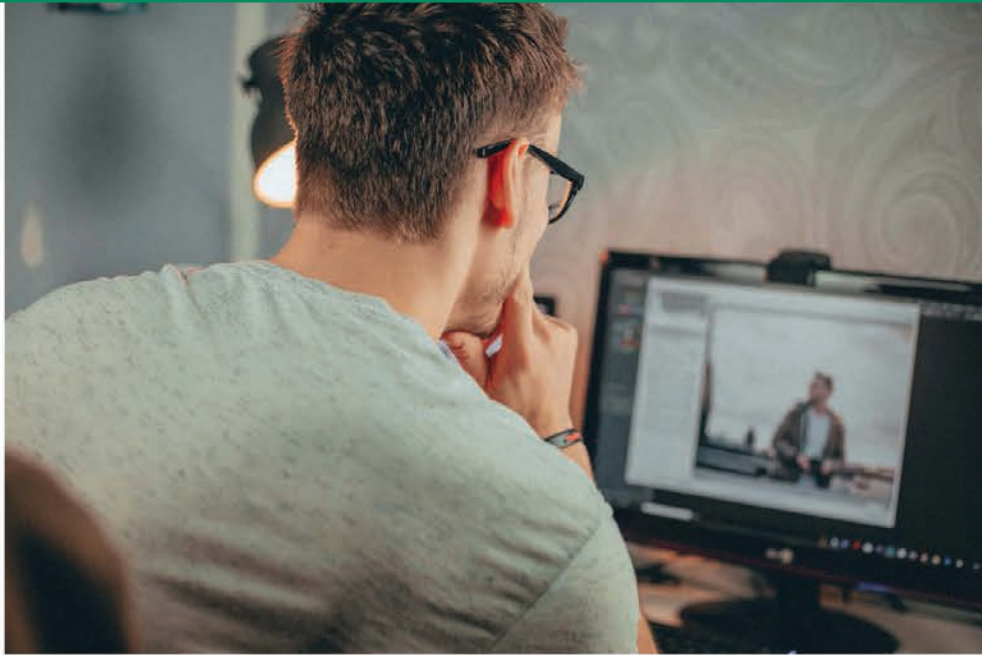
Taxpayers filing business income (Schedule C or Schedule E), rental income, 1099B (proceeds from broker and barter exchange transactions such as stocks and bonds) and Puerto Rico or foreign income are not eligible for the program.

See the flyer at left for the list of items individuals need to provide in order to take advantage of the free tax preparation services.

In addition to free tax prep, the Family Resource Success Center links those seeking assistance with information, referral resources and educational opportunities designed to empower and improve the quality of their lives. The center provides referrals to New Community programs and services, as well as to other agencies in the area.

The center also has many services and referrals available, including financial literacy, benefit screenings, SNAP (food stamps), energy and water assistance, lead abatement, homelessness assistance and prevention, rental assistance, substance abuse services, health care, prescription drug programs, prenatal programs and advocacy, among many others.

The Family Resource Success Center is currently providing benefit screenings, support and resources by phone Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 973-565-9500. The center is located on the first floor of the New Community Health Care Building, 274 South Orange Ave., Newark.



COVID-19 Crisis Counseling Services

NJ Hope and Healing Crisis Counseling Program (CCP) at the Family Service Bureau of Newark is available to assist communities affected by COVID-19. We are a neighbor helping neighbor team with staff on-call to provide the following free services:

- Online Support for Stress Management Techniques
- Develop New Coping Skills
 - Compassion Fatigue
- Communication Techniques
 - Resource Linkage



Hours of Operations: Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Phone Number: 973-272-7488

Text Support: 973-980-4964

Email Address: FSBNJHH@newcommunity.org

*Services offered in Bergen, Essex, Hudson and Passaic counties.
Various languages are available.*

**Free services are available
remotely for families,
individuals and youth.**



This program is brought to you through the New Jersey Hope and Healing Crisis Counseling Program (CCP). The CCP is provided by Family Service Bureau of Newark in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and is funded through a FEMA/SAMHSA grant.

Family Service Bureau

The Importance of Seeking Treatment for Mental Health

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected our lives in major ways. These changes can be overwhelming, leading to challenging situations causing stress and strong emotions in adults and children. In previous disasters, we have turned to each other for comfort and support. The pandemic has restricted those social supports due to restrictions like social distancing, lockdowns and school closings which leads to isolation, anxiety and stressors. During this new “normal” we all can tap into our coping skills and work toward enhancing them to build our resilience to persevere through the pandemic.

Mental health is invisible but correlates with deficits in a person’s physical well-being. The American Psychological Association identifies that chronic stress can wear down the body over time, and short-lived spurts of acute stress, depression and anger outbursts can form the source of physical symptoms that can be detrimental. The invisibility of mental health is very closely associated with the stigma of seeking

these services. Most of the time, people are not comfortable sharing mental illness because it’s not as acceptable as physical sickness, injury or having a disease, for which we reach out to a primary care physician or a specialist. We willingly take prescribed medication for high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, thyroid issues, heart conditions, autoimmune problems and pain with very little resistance. The ill person will garner much attention and sympathy, including prayers, flowers, get-well cards, wishes for a speedy recovery and other acts of kindness. For people with mental illness, this comfort is not always available.

Unfortunately, the stigma of mental illness leads to a hesitation in reaching out for help. According to CDC, stress can cause the following:

- Feelings of fear, anger, sadness, worry, numbness or frustration
- Changes in appetite, energy, desires and interests
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions

- Difficulty sleeping or nightmares
- Physical reactions, such as headaches, body pains, stomach problems and skin rashes
- Worsening of chronic health problems
- Worsening of mental health conditions
- Increased use of tobacco, alcohol and other substances

At NCC’s Family Service Bureau of Newark, an outpatient mental/behavioral and addictions agency, we have had the privilege of working with many families, some of whom struggle to accept mental illness and do anything to avoid the medications/treatments. We have been able to assist all and we encourage you to break through the stigma and get support to enhance your coping skills, to overcome anxiety and stress and build resilience.

Family Service Bureau of Newark is providing services through telehealth, phone and in-person. Crisis counseling services are available at our 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. hotline, 973-272-7488. Text services are available at 973-980-4964.



NJ Hope and Healing at the Family Service Bureau of Newark is available to assist communities affected by COVID-19. We are a neighbor helping neighbor team providing the following services:



February 2021 Events



Tuesdays @ 11am: Sign Language Virtual Drop In



Wednesdays @ 12pm: Social Injustice



Wednesdays @ 7pm: Virtual Drop-In



Thursdays @ 10am: Grupo de Apoyo



Click the Zoom Icon for access or go to fsbnjhh.eventbrite.com to access the Zoom Link



On-Call Support Monday-Friday: 9am to 5pm @ 973-272-7488

Text Support @ 973-980-4964

Email FSBNJHH@newcommunity.org to schedule workshops for staff and students.



This program is brought to you through the New Jersey Hope and Healing Crisis Counseling Program (CCP). The CCP is provided by Family Service Bureau of Newark in collaboration with the New Jersey Department of Human Services' Division of Mental Health and Addiction Services and is funded through a FEMA/SAMHSA grant.

NCC Residents, Staff Get COVID-19 Vaccine

Residents in New Community senior buildings are receiving the COVID-19 vaccine conveniently in the Community Room of their residence. Staff members are also receiving the shot. Orange Senior, 132 William St., Orange, was the first building to offer the vaccines on Jan. 27. Walgreens provided the vaccination services. Those at Orange Senior are scheduled to receive their second vaccine dose on Feb. 27. *Photos courtesy of Hector Torres.*





New Community Adult Learning Center
563 Orange Street, Newark, New Jersey 07107

(973) 558-5536

www.newcommunity.org/services/adult-learning-center/

Free Workshops & Services / Talleres y Servicios Gratuitos

Nutrition Nutrición	Wednesdays January 27th through March 10th, 2021 9 am to 10 am
Principles of Personal Finance Principios de Finanzas Personales	Wednesday, February 3rd, 2021 12 pm to 1 pm
Immigration Workshop 101 Taller de Inmigración 101	Thursday, February 4th, 2021 11 am to 12:30 pm
Healthy Living Viviendo Sanamente	Tuesday, February 9th, 2021 12 pm to 1 pm
Mental Health Salud Mental	Tuesday, February 23rd, 2021 2 pm to 3 pm
Mammograms and Pap Smear test for adults without health insurance Mamografía y Papanicolaou para adultos que no posean seguro medico	Referrals Available

Our Mission ~ To help residents of inner cities improve the quality of their lives to reflect individual God-given dignity and personal achievement.

Nuestra Misión ~ Ayudar a los residentes de los centros de las ciudades a mejorar la calidad de sus vidas y a reflejar la dignidad dada por Dios y sus logros personales.

NCCTI Welcomes Two New Instructors

Continued from page 1

students in December.

Sorial stresses the importance of students getting a certification instead of working jobs without room for growth.

"It is very good that we get people certified so they can have a real career," he said. "It will open a lot of doors for work or for other education."

Sorial feels comfortable at NCCTI and is happy to work with his colleagues and students.

"It's a very nice place with very nice people," he said. "I like this environment."

Both instructors started working at NCCTI in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has made some changes to instruction. Students and staff members are required to wear face coverings and maintain social distancing. Because of class size, Sorial's students come in person two days per week and he provides assignments for them to complete on the three days they stay home. Sorial said the split schedule can be a challenge, but he and the students are making it work.

Several of Sorial's students have accepted temporary positions at University Hospital where they administer COVID-19 vaccines at the hospital's Ambulatory Care Center.

Awich said all the programs at NCCTI help students establish a successful career.

"These types of skills really will set them up for jobs," he said.

NCCTI is an accredited post-secondary career and technical institution that offers the following programs: Automotive Technician, Diesel Technician, Building Trades Specialist, Clinical Medical Assistant, Patient Care Technician, Community Healthcare Worker, Culinary Arts Specialist and Business and Computer Technologies. NCCTI also operates a comprehensive Financial Opportunity Center and Bridges to Career Opportunities Program sponsored by the local and national Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) offices. For more information, call 973-824-6484, log onto newcommunitytech.edu or visit 274 South Orange Ave., Newark.



Gotta Keep Moving...

By Lesley Leslie

As we settle into new leadership with the recent inauguration of our country's 46th president, it is time to focus on the future of the country.

Although the past four years and last month's storm of our nation's Capitol will undoubtedly remain in our hearts and minds, we must move forward.

While the reality is, we cannot ignore the racism, political hypocrisy, police brutality, economic and health disparity and COVID-19 pandemic death toll that has contributed to our current state as a nation. Yes, our previous leadership did not operate in truth and caused many of us to wonder if truth even mattered any more. (It still matters by the way.) We must try to leave

the negative behind and embrace the positive.

Our country needs to come together collectively to begin the healing process. The way to heal any wound is not to continually rip off the scab but to allow time for that wound to breathe. The scab forms as a protective layer over the damaged skin to prevent infection and blood loss. Given time, the healthy tissue will regenerate, and the body will eventually push away the scab that has formed, to make room for the new skin.

While it would be cliché to say that "time heals all wounds", time does factor into the healing process. Now's the time for that new skin to develop. Let us reflect on the actions of the past but not stay in the past. Accountability is essential in the healing process but then move on. There is just so much to do and we gotta keep moving to do it.

Black History Month Quote:

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress."

—Frederick Douglass

NCC Residents Receive Donated Meals and Clothing

We Got This New Jersey (WGTNJ) stopped by Manor Senior, 545 Orange St., Newark, to give out meals and clothing items to residents on Jan. 12. WGTNJ is a nonprofit organization that collects donations and distributes them to those in need. *Photos courtesy of Anibal Alvelo.*

