



ESC NJ Employs A Student For The First Time

*M*ichael Ciaccio, who completed the Pathways to Adult Living (PAL) program in Sayreville in June 2023, was hired as a full-time employee at the ESCNJ campus in Piscataway. Ciaccio, a student at PAL for four years, began working as a part-time custodian in the ESCNJ Professional Conference Center last January.

The PAL program is a transitional program for students ages 18-21 who have completed their high school academic requirements and would benefit from additional Community-Based Instruction (CBI) and Work-Based Learning (WBL).

The program emphasizes vocational training (both paid and unpaid,) travel training through PAL's partnership with the Rutgers' New Jersey Travel Independence Program (NJ TIP), financial literacy, self-advocacy and various recreational and leisure opportunities.

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Save the Date

EXPO - Tuesday, May 21, 2024

On The Inside

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Dr. Matthew Scanlon Named the Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Security

Dr. Matthew Scanlon has been promoted to the newly-created position of Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Security.

Dr. Scanlon has nearly 30 years of experience in the educational area, including his previous role as Director of Human Resources at ESCNJ.

In his new role, Dr. Scanlon is responsible for overseeing the school district's daily operations, including direct interaction with the Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds, security, the ESCNJ Aquatics and Fitness Center in Parlin and the Adult Community Services Program in Piscataway.

"We could not be more pleased that Dr. Scanlon is taking on this new position at ESCNJ," said ESCNJ Superintendent of Schools Nadia Romano. "Dr. Scanlon possess the leadership skills, experience and understanding of ESCNJ's goals and policies and procedures. He will be an integral leader of the Commission as it continues to explore new ways to serve students and the community."

Prior to taking the position at ESCNJ, Dr. Scanlon served as principal at Phillipsburg High School and as a professor at Centenary University in Hackettstown.

Dr. Scanlon, who earned a BA from Le Moyne College, has a master's degree from Loyola University in Curriculum Instruction, a master's degree from Lehigh University in Educational Leadership and a doctorate from East Stroudsburg University.



ESCNJ Appoints Jennifer Nicholson as Assistant Business Administrator for Business Operations

Jennifer Nicholson joins ESCNJ as the Assistant School Business Administrator for Business Operations. With more than 10 years of experience, Ms. Nicholson oversees the day-to-day operations of the business office and makes specific recommendations to enhance and enrich the many services that ESCNJ provides.

"My background and skillset provides me with the foundation for my new role," Ms. Nicholson said. "I am happy to be part of this amazing team."

Nicholson began her career as a financial coordinator before she moved into public education and began working toward a School Business Administrator certification.



ESCNJ Hires Michael Ciaccio as a Full-Time Employee

Ciaccio, 22, completed his academic requirements at Spotswood High School and enrolled in the PAL program in September 2019, given an extra year in the program because of the pandemic.

With a job coach for support, Ciaccio had the opportunity to work part-time. For the past two years he worked – and earned a paycheck – as a barista at the Starbucks in the Thomas Edison Travel Plaza on the New Jersey Turnpike in Woodbridge.

In January 2023, he began splitting his time at Starbucks and as a part-time custodian at ESCNJ's Professional Conference Center.

"Michael's participation in the intensive PAL transition program has given him the skills needed to become an independent young man," said Denise Geddis, ESCNJ's Supervisor of Community-Based Instruction. "This is a unique program. We work with the student, parents, employer, and job coaches to give our students various employment skills and opportunities to allow them to be successful after they leave the program."



Mr. and Mrs. Ciaccio, Michael Ciaccio, Supervisor of Community-Based Instruction Denise Geddis, PAL Teacher Marci Rubin and Professional Conference Center Coordinator Erynn Daki

Upon completing the PAL program in June, Ciaccio was offered full-time employment at Starbucks. After careful consideration, along with important guidance from his parents, with whom he lives, Ciaccio applied for the open custodial position at ESCNJ.

Ciaccio learned many social communication and interviewing skills at PAL, Geddis said, noting these skills were instrumental in applying for the custodian position this summer. He went through the online application process, interviews and background verification – just like any other job prospect – before being hired strictly because of his work experience, enthusiasm and qualifications.

For 40 hours each week, Ciaccio provides various custodial services, under the direction of Ryan Cushing, Supervisor of Buildings/Grounds. He also assists Erynn Dakin, the Professional Conference Center's Coordinator, with daily operations and special events.

"This is a monumental moment in the PAL program – the first time our school district is hiring one of our own from this program," said ESCNJ Schools Superintendent Nadia Romano. "Michael is a tremendous asset for us at the Professional Conference Center, where he is known for his positive and calm work ethic. He is attentive and is always eager to help with whatever task is at hand. He is a superb hire and we could not be more proud to support him."

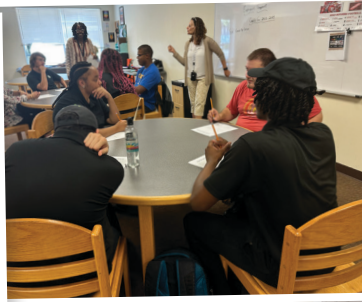


ESCNJ Welcomes the 2023-24 Board of Directors

The Professional Conference Center at ESCNJ's main campus in Piscataway is the ideal meeting place for the ESCNJ Board of Directors, administrations and support staff.

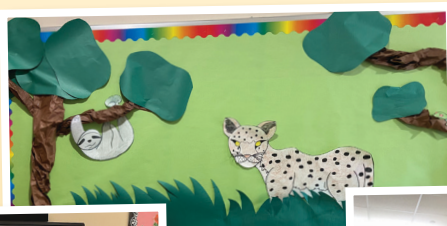


IT'S A BUSY SCHOOL YEAR AT ESCNJ!



Welcome to the First Day of School!

Many schools participated in World Peace Day in September. The UN General Assembly has devoted this day to strengthening the ideals of peace.



The students at NuView Academy show off their artistic abilities and creativity.

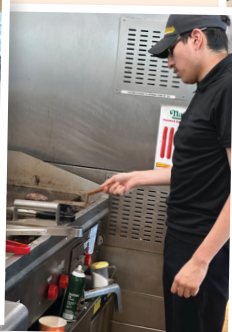
PRDS celebrated its annual Fall Festival with fall themed games, activities and face painting!





FFA's first Cultural Fair was held this fall. Students and staff celebrated the many cultures and backgrounds that make FFA great!

BBLC held its annual fall festival with a petty zoo, pumpkin patch, farmer's market and ended the celebration with Halloween.



Work, cook, and yoga are just some of the great activities that PAL students enjoy during the course of a day.

Students and staff from ESCNJ enjoyed all the Halloween activities and admired all the creative costumes on display.



ALC held its first annual Turkey Trot; students and staff all waddled before they gobbled.

IT'S A BUSY SCHOOL YEAR AT ESCNJ!

The students and staff enjoyed a wonderful feast at CLL's annual Thanksgiving "Feast of Pies." CLL Families, friends, staff and students gathered for pizza and many, many delicious desserts.



Many of the schools shared in the fun-filled festivities of the winter holidays!

ESCNJ Bids Farewell to Arthur E. Francis

ESCNJ is bidding farewell to Arthur E. Francis Principal of Special Projects, who retired in December.

"We wish Mr. Francis all the best and thank you for all your years of service here at ESCNJ," said ESCNJ Schools Superintendent Nadia Romano. "Arthur: you have truly been an asset to the commission and have made a difference in so many lives. We thank you for your service."



24th-annual New Jersey Juvenile Detention Association Conference

Phyllis Lewis, Principal of Turning Point Academy (L), and Alexis Dixon, Education Program Development Specialist from Turning Point Academy (R), attended the 24th-annual New Jersey Training Conference in Atlantic City. They gave a four-hour presentation titled "Education & Detention: Advancing Youth Opportunities."



Breast Cancer Awareness Month at ESCNJ

CLL Celebrates Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October.

On October 26, ALC staff joined in a walk to raise money to fight breast cancer. It was enormously successful, raising nearly \$1,700!



CLL Celebrates Veterans Day

Nicholas Haley, Retired Specialist with the United States Army, visited the CLL preschool classroom. Mr. Haley read stories, while students celebrated the veteran with snacks and smiles.

We thank Nick and all veterans for their tremendous service and sacrifice. As a "thank you" for the visit, donations were collected for the veterans' home in the Menlo Park section of Edison.



ESCNJ Awards Staff for Work Anniversaries

Superintendent Nadia Romano Awards Staff for Work Anniversaries



Bethany Broadwell (20 years)



Gautman Goon (20 years)



Manjit Kaur (20 years)



Lynn Williams, Nicole Elmini, Barbara Rose - 20 years



Mahalakshmi Sridhar (20 years)



Ryan Cushing (10 Years)



Karolina Allen (10 years)



Lianne Oberst (10 years)



Jennifer Smith (10 years)



Nancy Begarney (10 Years)



Jennifer Kogan (10 years)



Emily Simmonds (10 years)



**Kimberly Carling (5 years),
Lois Caccamo-Bobchin (10 years),
Nicole Milano (5 years)**



Kathleen Reitz (5 years)



Marlon Vergara (5 years)



Kyle Thomas (5 years)



Michelle Finn (5 years)



Katarina Torres (5 years)



Alicia Poythress (5 years)



Saima Salahuddin (5 years)



Rachna Khurana (5 years)



Kevin Smith (5 years)



Jennifer Lee (5 year)



Carlene Scalamandre (5 years)



Esmeralda Olalla (5 years)

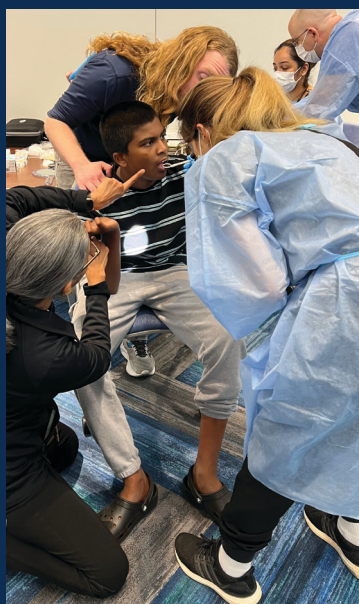
Middlesex College and ESCNJ have partnered to provide future teachers with the ideal opportunity to observe classes for students with autism and multiple disabilities. For college students pursuing a career in teaching, this invaluable in-classroom experience provides opportunities to reflect if a career in education aligns with their long-term goals, values and abilities.

This partnership will also have the added benefit of providing Middlesex College students with information about substitute, paraprofessional, and permanent employment within ESCNJ. In turn, the relationship provides ESCNJ with a potential pipeline of employees who have experience with education coursework and a desire to work with students with disabilities.

To begin the partnership, on October 18, ESCNJ Assistant Superintendent Matthew Scanlon and Education Instructor Patty McMahon of Middlesex College met with the college students. They explained best practices for substitute teaching, the process to obtain certification and the many opportunities ESCNJ provides future teachers.



ESCNJ Students Receive Dental Hygiene Services from Middlesex College Students



As part of a growing collaboration between ESCNJ and Middlesex College, ESCNJ students are receiving dental hygiene services. College students provide free dental screenings, home care instruction, cleanings, fluoride treatments and X-rays under the direction of faculty and dentists at ESCNJ campuses. The college's future dental hygienists are typically in the final semester of the program and are eager for clinical experience.

Dr. Michelle Roman, Dental Hygiene Chairperson, Gary Molenaar, Assistant Superintendent and Ms. Nadine Thompson, Dental Hygiene Faculty Member at Middlesex College





MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

President's Day February 19, 2024
(Schools/Programs Closed)

Spring Recess March 29, 2024
(All Schools/ACS Program Closed)

Spring Recess April 1 to April 5, 2024
(All Schools Closed)

Schools Open April 8, 2024

EXPO May 21, 2024

Memorial Day May 27, 2024
(All Schools/ACS Program Closed)

Tentative Last Day of School June 19, 2024

Visit www.ESCNJ.us for more information

Save the Date!

Tuesday, May 21, 2024 • 9 am to 3 pm

New Jersey Convention and Expo Center - Edison, NJ

2024 ESCNJ Vendor Expo

- Free CEUs - Ethics, Green and more!
- Complimentary Lunch
- Free Registration for Members



Thank you to Building and Grounds Supervisor Ryan Cushing and the custodial staff at ESCNJ for all you do!



The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey

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