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Governor Phil Murphy, Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, and United Way of Greater Newark Announce the First-Ever Summer Learning Week in New Jersey

NJ Governor Phil Murphy signs proclamation announcing the start of Summer Learning Week; UWGN announces recipients of Newark Thrives! mini-grants

In support of New Jersey's recovery, Governor Phil Murphy, Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka, and [United Way of Greater Newark](#) (UWGN) President & CEO Catherine Wilson announce the proclamation of July 12-16, 2021 as Summer Learning Week in New Jersey. Summer Learning Week will celebrate and raise awareness of the value of summer learning and out-of-school time (OST) programs in combating academic and summer learning loss and supporting the overall development of New Jersey youth.

"A significant part of New Jersey's COVID-19 recovery plan is ensuring that all children receive the support they need to be successful as they return to the classrooms this fall. That's why we're proud to partner with United Way of Greater Newark and the City of Newark to proclaim July 12-16 Summer Learning Week," said New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy. "This initiative will promote invaluable summer learning and out-of-school time opportunities across our state to assist New Jersey youth with addressing the unique challenges they are facing during this unprecedented time and aid in reopening our schools safely in September."

As part of this commemoration, UWGN will also award the first-ever Accelerating Summer Learning Opportunities mini-grants to the following programs within the Newark Thrives! out-of-school time network: The Gem Project (\$5,000), Abbott Leadership Institute (\$2,000), Mighty Writers (\$2,000), and Bricks 4 Kidz (\$1,000) representing Newark Thrives! ongoing commitment to investing in OST program providers. The mini-grants, ranging between \$1,000 to \$5,000, will go to support 4-6 week summer learning experiences for youth throughout the Greater Newark area. **The GEM Project, Abbott Leadership Institute, Mighty Writers, and Bricks 4 Kidz** are all committed to doing impactful work in the community and these grants will allow them to continue supporting youth education across Newark.

"The City of Newark is proud to join the State of New Jersey and United Way of Greater Newark in proclaiming the inaugural Summer Learning Week as a way to strengthen the educational development of one of Newark's most important resources -- our youth," added Newark Mayor Ras J. Baraka. "I commend United Way of Greater Newark for getting much-needed resources into the hands of the incredible organizations that are expanding access to quality summer and out-of-school learning opportunities for Newark families. As we prepare students to return to school in September, this community effort will also help us move Newark forward to a more equitable and educated city."

“The pandemic has only exacerbated the issue of academic and summer learning loss, particularly in our Greater Newark community, where many children already lack access to out-of-school time opportunities,” said Wilson. “We’re thrilled to see Governor Phil Murphy and Mayor Ras J. Baraka draw attention to this issue and uplift the educators and organizations, including the recipients of our mini-grants, working to provide resources to students. United Way of Greater Newark and Newark Thrives! would also like to thank Arts Ed Newark and the Newark STEAM Coalition for being collaborating partners on the Grant Review Committee.”

“We are honored to receive such resounding support for summer learning from the State,” said Dr. Traymanesha Lamy, Director of Education at UWGN. “With the challenges of the past year creating significant barriers to the learning and development of young people, this is a critical time for the State of New Jersey to fully embrace out-of-school time. This is a significant victory for our youth, and United Way of Greater Newark and Newark Thrives! are excited to be leading this movement to increase access to summer learning opportunities throughout New Jersey, and in particular, the greater Newark area.”

UWGN is committed to convening, collaborating, and investing in OST program partners to enhance the quality of educational programs offered throughout the City of Newark through Newark Thrives! and the OST network for the City of Newark.

To learn more about United Way of Greater Newark or to donate to Newark Thrives!, visit: <https://uwnewark.org/give-now/> and designate your donation to “summer learning.”

About United Way of Greater Newark

United Way of Greater Newark’s (UWGN) mission is to disrupt the cycle of poverty by convening, collaborating and investing in strategies to improve outcomes for children and families. UWGN has a long history of convening disaster funds in the community, including having established the 9/11 fund, the Hurricane Sandy Relief Fund and, most recently, the Newark Water Fund. In order to continue providing support to the community and its non-profit partners during the COVID-19 crisis, UWGN has established the Community COVID-19 Fund. This is a regional fund serving its 13-municipality footprint including Newark, Irvington, East Orange, West Orange, South Orange, Orange, Belleville, Nutley, Maplewood, Kearny, Harrison, East Newark and North Arlington.

For more information about United Way of Greater Newark, please visit UWGreaterNewark.org. Follow us on Twitter: @UWGreaterNewark and #LiveUnited.

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