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## Joseph Spann Throws First Pitch

FAMILY VOICES

**W**hat a hit! Joseph Spann (pictured), son of PLAN|NJ Office Manager Roberta Lee, threw out the first pitch at the Somerset Patriots ballgame Thursday, August 26 during the first-ever PLAN|NJ Family Night Out. More than 500 family members, partners and friends of PLAN|NJ filled the TD Bank Ballpark to safely gather after a year of isolation and challenge due to the pandemic.

“Joseph loves to play all kinds of sports, but he was a bit nervous to throw out the first pitch,” Roberta said. “He relaxed when I told him his sports program coach, his friends and my coworkers would all be there to cheer him on. He had a wonderful time and I truly enjoyed watching him shine. Thanks PLAN|NJ for giving him the chance!”

Another PLAN|NJ family member, Chelsea Palermo, sang the Star-Spangled Banner. Board members, staff and community leaders (pictured) came onto the field to show their support for Joseph, Chelsea and all individuals with differing abilities. A portion of the proceeds from the evening’s 50/50 raffle will directly benefit the people and families PLAN|NJ serves.

PLAN|NJ Board President Peter Phillips remarked, “What a great evening. Everyone enjoyed themselves. It was very exciting



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PHOTOS BY FRANK DIGIOVANNI

PLAN|NJ helps families of people with disabilities in New Jersey answer the question, “Who will care for my loved one when I’m gone?”

## PLAN|NJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Executive Director*



Joseph Spann (continued from page 1)

to see our members perform so elegantly in front of a large audience; this was a real opportunity to highlight the uniqueness of PLAN|NJ.”

“This was our chance to bring together the families, businesses, nonprofits, state and local leaders who make up the disability rights community in our state,” said Ellen Ball Nalven, Executive Director. “We wanted to thank the many individuals and organizations who help us form

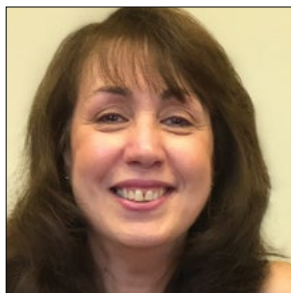
circles of support for individuals with disabilities, and let more families know of our available services.”

Community leaders in attendance included the Honorable Erik Peterson, NJ Assemblyman; the Honorable Dennis Sullivan, Mayor, Somerville; RanD Pitts, Councilman, Somerville; Jim Van Arsdale, Deputy Mayor, Green Brook Township; Michael Pappas, Administrator, Bridgewater Township; and Rob Lax with Winnie the Seeing Eye Dog Trainee.

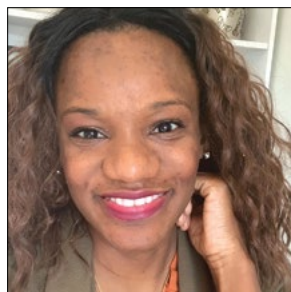
See more photos at <https://plannj.org/plannj-hosts-first-ever-family-night-out/>

## Key Staff Happenings

**Nancy Dilliplane, Director of Trust Services,** celebrates 20 years on staff at PLAN|NJ, during which time she has served thousands of people and families impacted by disability. Having been the sole caregiver for several of her own family members, Nancy says her work “has personal meaning. I relate to the challenges and worries that families encounter personally and within social service systems.”



**Nicola Nero, Senior Service Coordinator,** is now certified as a Housing Navigator by the Supportive Housing Association of New Jersey (SHANJ), a statewide, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote and maintain a strong supportive housing industry in New Jersey serving people with special needs. The training was made possible through a grant from the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities.



## Board of Directors Welcomes Louise Tagliareni, RN, MSN

Louise Tagliareni, RN, MSN was elected to the PLAN|NJ Board of Directors at the June, 2021 board meeting.

“I would like to let everyone know what an honor and privilege it is to be selected to serve on this board and would love to help anytime,” said Louise.

While raising six children, Louise built a long and diversified career including over 20 years as a director of nursing in rehabilitation and long-term care facilities. Her extensive knowledge of meeting patient medical needs in acute, community and residential settings will help our agency guide clients in their search for optimal healthcare in appropriate environments.

“We are delighted to have Louise join our Board to share her expertise and compassion for those who are differently abled,” said Ellen Nalven, Executive Director.

# LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: LEARNING TIME LENGTHENED THROUGH S3434

Governor Phil Murphy signed legislative bill S3434 into law on June 16, 2021, to provide extended school years for eligible special education students disadvantaged by the pandemic. The bill requires boards of education to provide special education and related services to certain students exceeding age of eligibility for special education and related services. According to the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities, credit is due to “the determined family members who provided extraordinary advocacy in spite of their daily challenges.” **Senator Steve Sweeney**, past recipient of the PLAN|NJ Legislator of the Year Award, was a Primary Sponsor of the bill, which was introduced in February, 2021 and signed in June with near-unanimous support.



L to R: Samantha Herrick, *Immediate Past President*; Ellen Nalven, *Executive Director* and Senate President Steve Sweeney upon his receipt of PLAN|NJ's 2018 Legislative Advocate of the Year Award at the 2018 PLAN|NJ Celebration of Abilities. Sweeney commemorated PLAN|NJ's "meritorious record of service and commitment" with a Senate Resolution that same evening.



PLAN|NJ NEWS is produced twice per year with partial funding from the New Jersey State Bar Foundation. Thanks for your generous support.

Looking for information on legal and housing matters for people with disabilities? PLAN|NJ has updated the Life Planning Tools at [plannj.org/tools-resources](http://plannj.org/tools-resources).

## CALL FOR SPONSORS!



**2022**  
**PLAN|NJ**  
CELEBRATION OF ABILITIES

**Our special event is back!** Please join us to celebrate the resiliency and accomplishments of our state's disability rights community on **Wednesday, May 25, 2022** at The Palace at Somerset Park, 333 Davidson Ave, Somerset, NJ 08873.

We encourage interested parties to consider becoming an Early Bird Sponsor. Among individuals being honored for their contributions to PLAN|NJ and those we serve:

**EDUCATIONAL JUSTICE** Angela Scheck, Executive Director, New Jersey State Bar Foundation and New Jersey State Bar Association

**PUBLIC SERVICE SECTOR REPRESENTATIVE OF THE YEAR** Paul Aronsohn, New Jersey Ombudsman for People with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and their Families

**TRAILBLAZER** Hazeline Pilgrim, Executive Director, Family Support Organization of Essex County

**FRED R. PATTERSON PARENT ADVOCATE** Peter A. Phillips, CPA, President, PLAN|NJ Board of Directors

**LIFE PLANNING PARTNERS** Dennis Garrigan, Tami and Ken Kaplowitz, Barbara Sandstrom and Olivia Rae Vargas

The evening includes live music, cocktails, a plated dinner and awards program; the venue offers indoor and outdoor networking options and socially-distanced dinner seating. **Early Bird Sponsors receive a 10% discount if confirmed before December 31, 2021.** Proceeds support people in need who are living with significant disabilities in New Jersey. Learn more, purchase tickets and become a sponsor at [plannj.org/events](http://plannj.org/events).



**Planned Lifetime Assistance Network of New Jersey**

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**YES!** I want to help PLAN|NJ support people with disabilities with the legal and financial planning, care coordination, and self-determination assistance they need and deserve. Enclosed is my tax-deductible donation of:

\$150  \$100  \$50  \$35 Other \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of or  In Memory of (please check one and print name): \_\_\_\_\_

In addition:

I would like to learn more about establishing a bequest

I have included PLAN|NJ in my estate plans or I would consider including PLAN|NJ in my estate plans

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**Please make your donation today!**

Visit [plannj.org](http://plannj.org), click on 'Donate,' or, make your check payable to PLAN|NJ and mail it to PLAN|NJ, P.O. Box 547, Somerville, NJ 08876-0547. We reserve the right to publish donor names in the PLAN|NJ Annual Report unless otherwise requested. If you would like your name removed from the donor list, please check here: \_\_\_\_\_