

MWC Incentives in Action: 2025 Participation Highlights

Celebrating Community Leadership and Engagement



The [Mayors Wellness Campaign](#) (MWC) is a statewide community health initiative that empowers mayors and community leaders to make their communities healthier places to live, work, play and age. Through the support of our Crystal Sponsors, municipalities receive incentive funding that helps turn participation into action.

Crystal sponsor support directly funds local health and wellness initiatives, enabling towns to move from planning and data use to implementation. This partnership strengthens long-term community health efforts across New Jersey by supporting locally driven programs that reflect community needs and priorities.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 - 2026 MAYORS WELLNESS CAMPAIGN SPONSORS

CRYSTAL



Johnson & Johnson



 MAYORS WELLNESS CAMPAIGN.

Contact us today to discuss MWC sponsorship opportunities:



Virginia Tesser, Senior Engagement
Manager, vtesser@njhcqi.org | 609-452-5980



 MAYORS WELLNESS CAMPAIGN.

Purpose of the Incentive Drawing

The incentive drawing supports local initiatives that improve community health and wellness. Municipalities earn entries by participating in MWC activities throughout the year. Incentive funding helps communities carry out locally driven efforts such as health needs assessments, social connection programs, Mental Health First Aid training, walk audits, and other activities that address social determinants of health.

Why Small, Targeted Funding Matters

Across New Jersey and nationally, small, targeted funding opportunities are widely used to support community-driven health and wellness work. Modest investments help municipalities pilot new ideas, strengthen local capacity, and respond to community-identified needs that larger funding streams may not reach. Incentive-based funding reinforces participation, encourages sustained engagement, and allows communities to translate planning and collaboration into practical, on-the-ground action.



Rockaway Township - De-Stress December: Supporting Community Well-Being During A High-Stress Time of Year

What They Did

Rockaway Township launched, "De-Stress December," a month-long series of community wellness programs that supported residents across multiple areas of health. The township offered mindfulness and healing sessions, Tai Chi and Qigong classes, an art therapy-led painting workshop, cyber and identity safety education, older-adult focused activities, and other accessible programs throughout December.

What Participants Experienced

63 residents and municipal employees participated in De-Stress December programs. Participants reported increased awareness of stress-management techniques, improved emotional well-being, and a stronger sense of community connection. Many described the sessions as engaging, welcoming and accessible, reflecting interest in wellness opportunities that combine creativity, stress reduction, and shared experience.

Learn more or Connect:





If you are interested in learning more about the initiative or how to replicate it in your community, you can connect directly with Rockaway Township.

Brittany Bernstein, Program Development Specialist & Local Health Outreach Coordinator

bbernstein@rockawaytownship.org



ROCKAWAY TOWNSHIP
DE-STRESS DECEMBER
COMMUNITY EVENTS

HEALING CONNECTIONS <small>Presented By: Jill Kelly</small>	 Thursday, December 4 7:30pm - 9:00pm Court Room <small>65 Mount Hope Road</small>	A guided psychic gallery medium experience focused on healing, reflection, and emotional wellness, providing participants with a sense of clarity and connection. Max: 100 FREE
CYBER & IDENTITY SAFETY TIPS <small>Presented By: Bill Caproni</small>	 Friday, December 5 11:00am - 12:00pm Senior Center <small>19 Mount Hope Road</small>	Protect your peace of mind by learning practical ways to stay safe online for preventing identity theft, recognizing scams, and keeping your personal information secure. FREE
TAI CHI/ QIGONG <small>Presented By: Ton Vu</small>	 Saturday, December 6 10:00am - 11:00am Court Room <small>65 Mount Hope Road</small>	Discover balance, relaxation, and energy flow through gentle, mindful movement. This guided Tai Chi Qigong session promotes flexibility, focus, and stress reduction. Max: 60 FREE
CANVAS & CALMNESS <small>Presented By: BrushCrushh</small>	 Thursday, December 11 7pm-9pm Senior Center <small>19 Mount Hope Road</small>	Unwind and get creative with a relaxing painting session designed to soothe the mind and lift the spirit. Fee: \$20 Max: 37 (Township Residents Only) <small>BY CASH OR VENMO (KIRSTA ROBERTS: 30 TITLED: YOUR NAME AND DEC. 11)</small>

REGISTRATION REQUIRED Call: (973) 983-2848
Email: bbernstein@rockawaytownship.org

Point Pleasant Beach - Building Community Connection Through Partnership

What They Did

Point Pleasant Beach integrated wellness and volunteer engagement into its six-week summer camp program, a long-standing community tradition. The MWC partnered with the Recreation Committee and invited town advisory committees to lead camp day activities that showed children how each group supports the community.

Committees led hands-on activities throughout the summer. The Beautification Committee engaged campers in garden-based projects, while the Fire and Police Departments led safety demonstrations. The Municipal Alliance introduced mental health awareness activities, the Arts Committee facilitated creative projects, and the Historic Society guided local history tours. The MWC also provided weekly nutrition education as part of camp programming.

What Participants Experienced

Children and committee-members built connections through shared activities and collaboration. Committees worked alongside one another, shared resources, and coordinated their efforts within a single program. This approach strengthened relationships across town groups and encouraged ongoing collaboration beyond the summer camp. Interactive, age-appropriate activities introduced younger residents to volunteering and civic engagement while reinforcing the role of partnership in supporting community well-being.

Learn more or Connect:

If you are interested in learning more about the initiative or how to replicate it in your community, you can connect directly with Point Pleasant Beach.

Douglas Vitale, Mayor

dvitale@pointbeach.org



Redbank Township - Strengthening Social Connection Through Resident Leadership

What They Did

The Red Bank MWC strengthened social connection initiatives and advanced community-led programming. The committee applied the funding to support a bilingual Mother-Daughter mental health event, community conversations, and health-focused programs informed by a local needs assessment.

Red Bank formalized its committee structure in 2025 and expanded participation to more than 20 stakeholder organizations. The group's work helped integrate residents' voices, partner expertise, and data from needs assessments into on-going planning and programming.

What Participants Experienced

Residents engaged in inclusive, culturally responsive programming that encouraged open conversation, learning, and connection. Community members participated in wellness activities across multiple settings throughout the year, reflecting evolving local needs and priorities. Local organizations and partners contributed expertise and hosted activities, strengthening collaboration across sectors, and expanding access to community wellness opportunities.

Learn more or Connect:

If you are interested in learning more about the initiative or how to replicate it in your community, you can connect directly with Redbank.

Adriana Medina Gomez, Director of Recreation & Human Services

amedina@redbanknj.org



Township of Jefferson - Growing Community Wellness Through A Shared Educational Garden

What They Did

The Township of Jefferson supported the Lake Hopatcong Educational Garden, a community-led permaculture space that brings residents, students, and volunteers together around food, environmental stewardship, and wellness. Volunteers expanded pollinator habitats, planted herbs and vegetables, and added fruit trees and perennial plants to strengthen the garden's long-term sustainability.

The garden serves as both a shared community space and an outdoor classroom. Students, Scouts, and local volunteers worked together to build infrastructure, harvest crops, and learn about soil health and sustainable growing practices.

What Participants Experienced

Residents and volunteers engaged with the garden as a place to learn, connect, and spend time outdoors. Students gained hands-on experience in sustainable agriculture, while families, hikers, and community members used the space for reflection, recreation, and learning. The garden created opportunities for people of different ages and backgrounds to contribute to a shared project that supports both environmental health and community well-being.

Learn more or Connect:

If you are interested in learning more about the initiative or how to replicate it in your community, you can connect Jefferson's MWC leadership to learn more.

Kristine Wilsusen, Health Educator

kristinewilsusen@gmail.com



Chatham Township - Working With Neighboring Towns To Spark Conversations About Mental Health

What They Did

Chatham Township joined a regional coalition of ten municipalities across Union and Morris counties to lead a coordinated “Paint the Town Green” campaign during Mental Health Awareness Month. Local leaders used simple visual cues and shared messaging to encourage residents and businesses to engage in conversations about mental health.

Participating communities displayed green ribbons, window art, lawn signs, and informational materials across their downtowns and public spaces. Municipal staff, volunteers, and community partners worked together to promote events and share resources that helped residents learn more about mental health and available support.

What Participants Experienced

Residents encountered consistent messages about mental health across multiple communities throughout the region. The coordinated campaign made it easier for people to recognize the initiative, participate in visible displays of support, and start conversations about mental health. By working together, the participating municipalities amplified the reach of the campaign and demonstrated how regional collaboration can expand the impact of local wellness efforts.

Learn more or Connect:

If you are interested in learning more about the initiative or how to replicate it in your community, you can connect directly with Chatham Township to learn more.

Amy Lewis, MWC Coordinator

lewis@westfieldnj.gov



Collective Impact

Across New Jersey, municipalities continue to show how participation in the MWC turns ideas into action. The initiative highlighted here demonstrates how communities use modest incentive funding to strengthen partnerships, engage residents, and create programs that support mental, physical and social well-being across the lifespan. Each community brings its own strengths to the work, yet all share a commitment to building healthier, more connected places to live.

Looking Ahead

The MWC will continue to support communities through incentive opportunities, technical assistance, and partnerships to empower local leaders to create and expand health initiatives. We invite municipalities, partners and sponsors to stay engaged as we work together to strengthen our communities to be better places to live, work, play and age across new New Jersey.

Learn more or Connect:

For more information about the MWC, or future participation opportunities:

- **Katie Bisaha**, Program Officer, kbisaha@njhcqi.org.

For Sponsorship:

- **Virginia Tesser**, Senior Engagement Manager, vtesser@njhcqi.org.



MWC Incentives in Action: 2025 Participation Highlights

Celebrating Community Leadership and Engagement

