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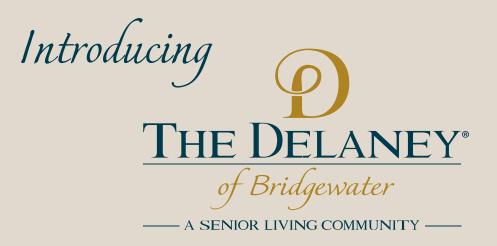








We would like to thank the community for your support the past few months. Through the purchase of gift cards, takeout and delivery, we were able to work through this challenging period and show the world that we are #BridgewaterSTRONG. We are excited to say hello to all of our loyal customers in person again!



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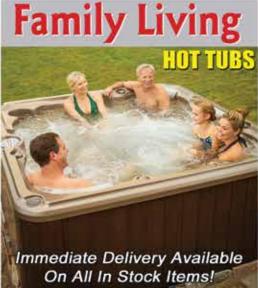
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#BridgewaterSTRONG

WE HOPE THIS ISSUE FINDS YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR FRIENDS ALL **HEALTHY AND SAFE.** What a roller coaster these past few months have been! When we originally planned our editorial calendar for this year, our June issue was to be the Men's Issue. We had several great articles in the works, but suddenly the theme felt disconnected and out of touch from what was currently happening in our community. Like all of you have had to do over and over again, we had to pivot. We shifted gears to create this very special, keepsake issue focused around a new theme, #BridgewaterSTRONG.

In early March, when the severity of this virus was still unknown, we chose to take our children on a long-planned family cruise. In retrospect, the naivete seems rather silly. Luckily, we enjoyed our week in the sun and exited the boat unscathed... but the world we came home to was unlike the one we left.

Panic consumed us and we were scared for our health, future, economy, and sanity—homeschooling three children while publishing a magazine full time isn't for the faint of heart.

But we quickly learned something... We are all in this together! There is comfort in knowing that we aren't alone. From watching friends join forces to sew and distribute masks, to restaurants donating food to the workers on the frontlines to people volunteering to food shop for the elderly when grocery delivery proved difficult, we saw our community uniting.

Our family alone has been the recipient of many random acts of kindness; donuts from the Good Donut Shop being dropped off at our door by a friend; surprise friendship bracelets and candy from classmates; a free family-sized dinner from Hills of Herat as a thank you for supporting their business; a deep conditioning treatment delivered in the mail from Beverly Hills Hair Studio to keep the quarantine hair at bay; a total stranger on Facebook picking up hand sanitizer from Wegmans for us when our supply ran low; the owner of Mimosas and Masterpieces giving our children a bag of painting supplies so they could participate in virtual art classes; and so on. We are humbled. We are blessed. We are grateful.

It occurred to us that while this isn't the same world we left behind as we sailed out to sea, that perhaps we returned to a better one?

#BridgewaterSTRONG is more than a hashtag. It is a community initiative. The goal of this issue is to bring you hope, because we personally have it. Bridgewater is rising above this and is stronger than ever. It is truly an honor and privilege to present this issue to you.

Tiffany & Jake Slowinski, Publishers

CityLifestyle.com/Bridgewater





Bridgewater

JUNE 2020

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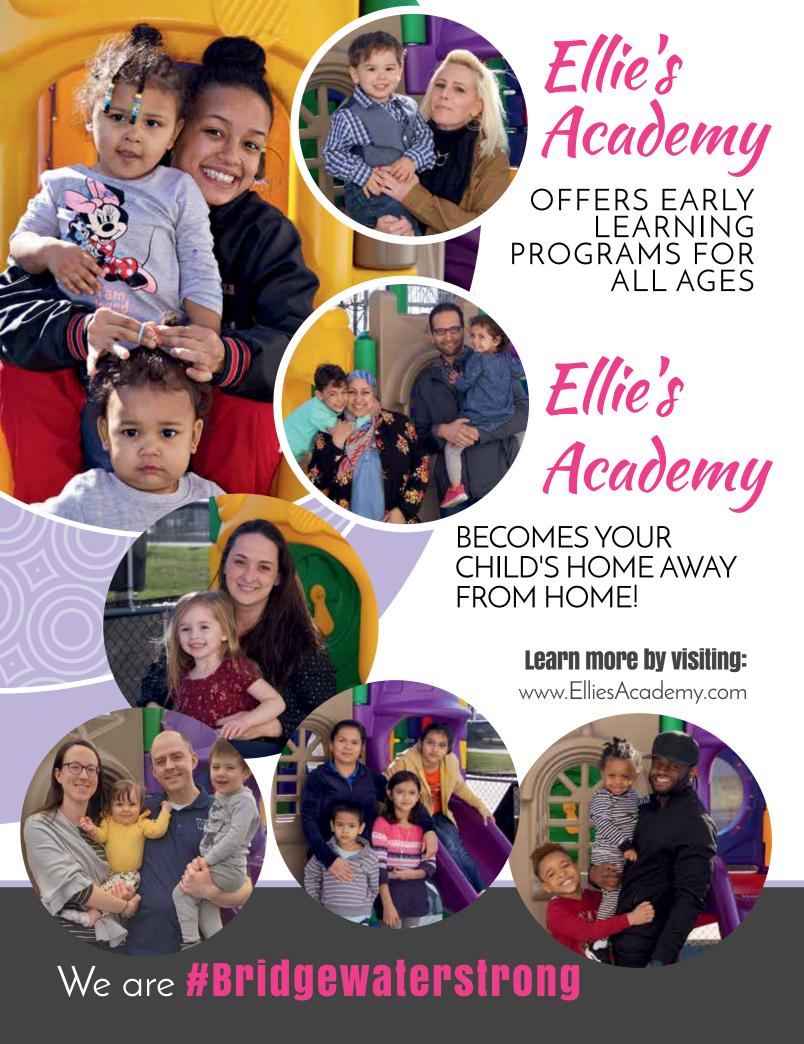




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- Ralph Waldo Emerson

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GOOD TIMES











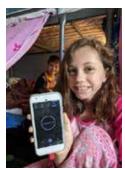
Bridgewater Residents Practice Social Distancing

Necessity is the mother of invention. Just because you're at home, doesn't mean you can't still have fun! Here's how some of our community members keep #BridgewaterSTRONG while social distancing.



















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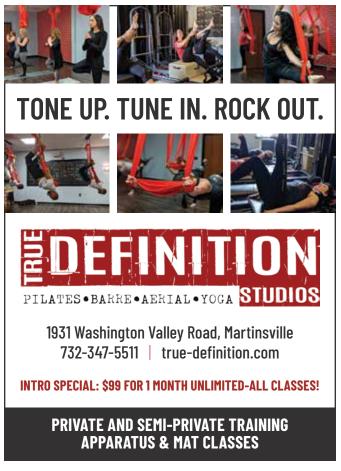


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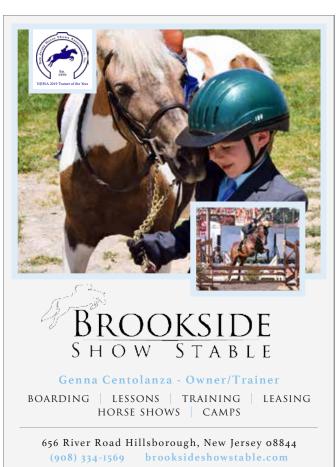
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NO STRANGER TO BRIDGEWATER

ARTICLE TIRUSHA DAVE
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ON JANUARY 1ST, MATTHEW MOENCH WAS SWORN IN AS THE NEW MAYOR OF BRIDGEWATER

TOWNSHIP. At the time, no one could have imagined the tremendous challenges he would be taking on in just the first few months of his four-year term. Staying in the spirit of this issue's #BridgewaterSTRONG theme, we felt it was important to introduce and highlight the individual that is navigating our town through these difficult times.

Long before feeling called to public service, Mayor Moench began his academic career as a child playing on the playground at Bridgewater's Hamilton Primary School. After graduating from Bridgewater-Raritan Regional High School in 2000, he attended Rutgers College where he was President of his fraternity, Kappa Sigma. He then earned his J.D. from Seton Hall Law School.

"In law school, I really started to become more active by serving on the local Recreation Advisory Board and then the Board of Adjustment. I was always interested in politics, but it wasn't until late in law school that I really began to have an interest in serving in elected office," says the Mayor.

A devoted family man, he married lifelong Bridgewater resident Stephanie (Mealha) Moench.

"My wife and I knew each other in high school. We were in the band together. She was a senior when I was just a freshman," says Mayor Moench.

Today they raise their three children: Jackson (7), Emmanuella (5) and Julia (3) just blocks away from his childhood home. His parents and sister also live in Bridgewater along with his in-laws. For the Mayor, the idea of raising his family elsewhere never even crossed his mind.

He explains, "I love that Bridgewater has a little bit of everything. There are beautiful, almost rural areas, and we also have robust commercial and recreational opportunities. I like that the various parts of town have their own character and a lot to offer to a variety of people with different interests."

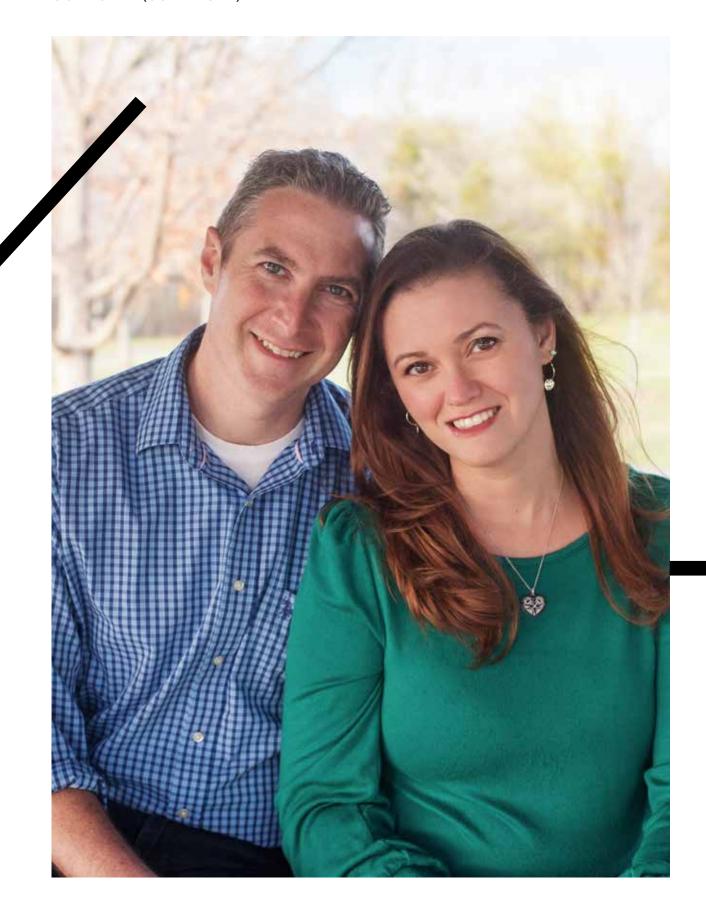
Mayor Moench's political career began by volunteering on the Recreation Advisory Board and the Bridgewater Township Board of Adjustment. In 2007, as a third-year law student, he was elected to the Bridgewater Town Council and served for a total of three terms (12 years) and was also selected as Council President for three of those years (2010, 2015 and 2019) before running for Mayor in 2019.

In his new role, the Mayor has laid out some long-term plans for our town, especially as we move forward from the effects of the Coronavirus.

OUR NEWLY ELECTED MAYOR LEADS US DURING THESE CHALLENGING TIMES







"Our two most important plans are improvements to our roads and infrastructure through the creation and execution of a long-term infrastructure program, and the update to our Master Plan which will set the direction for development in Bridgewater for the next decade," says Mayor Moench.

His goals for the next year are to increase transparency, online service and streaming abilities, and support to our police and first responders. Developing a repository for Bridgewater history is also part of his long-term planning.

Being a newly-elected mayor while being tested through a major crisis, has certainly created some challenges for the Mayor. Managing professional requirements while balancing family obligations can be quite difficult.

"It is fluid, but I try to address these challenges by being present with whatever I'm doing at the time, learning what meetings require attendance and which ones don't, and trusting my staff to do the things I cannot get to personally," says Mayor Moench.

Being mayor is actually a part-time job for him. By day he practices law and is a partner at King, Moench, Hirniak & Mehta, LLP in Morris Plains.

Throughout the pandemic, the Mayor has made it a point to keep everyone informed. The township has posted daily updates on the number of cases and casualties in town. In addition, he has set up multiple Facebook live updates as well as forums for small businesses to learn of what they can do to weather these difficult times.

He explains, "New Jerseyans are known for our toughness and our resilience. We will get through the Coronavirus outbreak, and come out a stronger, closer community. I am proud of our residents, proud of the compassion that they have shown for everyone impacted by COVID-19, and look forward to the bright days ahead."

The reward for a job well done is we all have a great place to live. Mayor Moench believes that our town can stay #BridgewaterSTRONG.

"As someone who was born and raised here, my family has been shaped by everything our town has to offer. A close-knit community balanced with all the opportunities and benefits of the modern world. I think that is what Bridgewater offers to families, and that is what I love about Bridgewater."

Mayor Moench wants everyone to know that he lives by the motto, "We are, B-R!"



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SOMERSET COUNTY BUSINESS **PARTNERSHIP PRESIDENT** AND CEO

IT COULD NOT HAVE BEEN PREDICTED THAT THE SOMERSET COUNTY BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP'S CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP WOULD COME ABOUT AT EXACTLY THE SAME TIME THAT EVERY-THING ELSE IN OUR WORLD WAS ABOUT TO TURN UPSIDE DOWN, BUT THAT'S EXACTLY HOW IT HAPPENED. Luckily, the new President and CEO, Chris Edwards, was ready to lead with flexibility, innovation, a well-grounded foundation and a focus on the long term.

Chris first joined the Partnership in 2013 as Director of Development, a newly created position that had him mapping out uncharted territory from the start. In this early role he was tasked with building relationships, growing revenue streams and cultivating the vibrant connections that are the Partnership's hallmark.

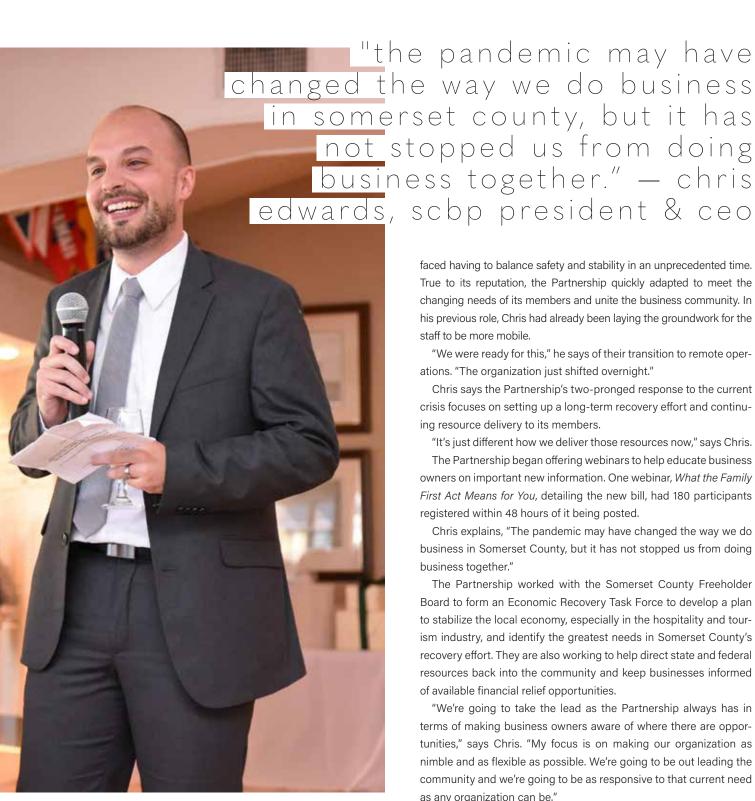
In 2018, Chris was promoted to Vice President of Business Services, taking the lead in coordinating the Partnership's many networking events, running special interest groups and helping businesses achieve a strong return on investment from their membership.

When former President and CEO Michael Kerwin announced his pending retirement, Chris was one of the applicants that went through a rigorous interview process. The experience Chris offered was unmatched. He knew the Partnership inside and out, and already had strong relationships with the members and a familiarity with the many sectors of Somerset County's business community.

"My role here as President and CEO is to be able to bring community partners together and to lay out a vision for the future that's compelling and that will make people want to jump on board," says Chris.

It was mere days into his new position when Governor Murphy shut down all non-essential businesses in NJ. Business leaders suddenly





ARTICLE BRENDA ESLER

faced having to balance safety and stability in an unprecedented time. True to its reputation, the Partnership quickly adapted to meet the changing needs of its members and unite the business community. In his previous role, Chris had already been laying the groundwork for the staff to be more mobile.

"We were ready for this," he says of their transition to remote operations. "The organization just shifted overnight."

Chris says the Partnership's two-pronged response to the current crisis focuses on setting up a long-term recovery effort and continuing resource delivery to its members.

"It's just different how we deliver those resources now," says Chris.

The Partnership began offering webinars to help educate business owners on important new information. One webinar, What the Family First Act Means for You, detailing the new bill, had 180 participants registered within 48 hours of it being posted.

Chris explains, "The pandemic may have changed the way we do business in Somerset County, but it has not stopped us from doing business together."

The Partnership worked with the Somerset County Freeholder Board to form an Economic Recovery Task Force to develop a plan to stabilize the local economy, especially in the hospitality and tourism industry, and identify the greatest needs in Somerset County's recovery effort. They are also working to help direct state and federal resources back into the community and keep businesses informed of available financial relief opportunities.

"We're going to take the lead as the Partnership always has in terms of making business owners aware of where there are opportunities," says Chris. "My focus is on making our organization as nimble and as flexible as possible. We're going to be out leading the community and we're going to be as responsive to that current need as any organization can be."

Chris along with the Partnership are doing their best to keep the business community #BridgewaterSTRONG. scbp.org



day

THE EXECUTIVE CHEF AT RARITAN
VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB OFFERS TIPS TO
GRILL THE PERFECT STEAK

ARTICLE BRENDA ESLER | PHOTOGRAPHY MATT CARR

FATHER'S DAY WILL SOON BE HERE AND AN AROMATIC FLAVOR WILL FILL THE AIR AS WE FIRE UP OUR BACK-

YARD GRILLS. The burger and dog days of summer are great, but what's Dad's favorite food? Steak of course!

Filomena Lombardi, the Executive Chef at Raritan Valley Country Club, offers us practical tips to grill the perfect steak, starting with selecting the best cut. The most tender and flavorful prime beef cut can be readily found at your local butcher shop.

No matter which cut you choose, Chef Filomena recommends taking the steak out of the refrigerator 45–60 minutes before cooking.





Chef Filomena explains, "When it's cold, it will cause the moisture to push out of the beef."

Tender cuts of meat like filet mignon need not be marinated. Instead, Chef Filomena recommends salt, pepper and Montreal steak seasoning. Tougher cuts like bone-in ribeye or strip steaks are more suited for marinating, which helps to tenderize the steak. Marinating steak should be limited to no more than five or six hours. The acidity of the marinade can actually start to cook the meat.

Once your steak is seasoned and settled to room temperature, make sure the grill is nice and hot. Heat the grill for 15 minutes to a temperature of 450 degrees to give your steak a nice sear and keep the juices inside. Then turn it down to 350 degrees.

While Chef Filomena believes steak is best prepared rare or medium-rare, you can place a thermometer in the middle of the steak to grill it to any level:

Rare: 120°-130°

Medium-rare: 130°-135° Medium-well: 135°-155°

Well: 155°-160°

Although it will be tempting to dig right in, the final step to your perfectly grilled steak requires just a bit of patience. Once removed from the grill, let your steak rest for five to ten minutes before you cut into it. If you cut it right away all the juices will seep out.

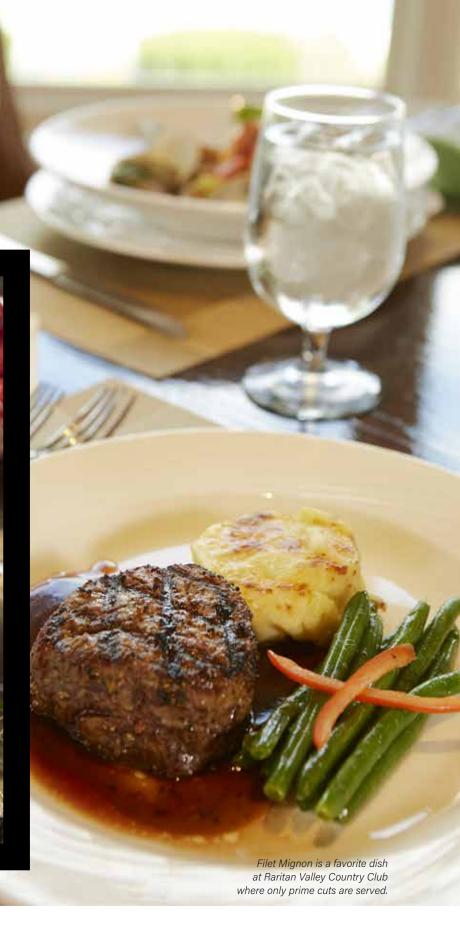
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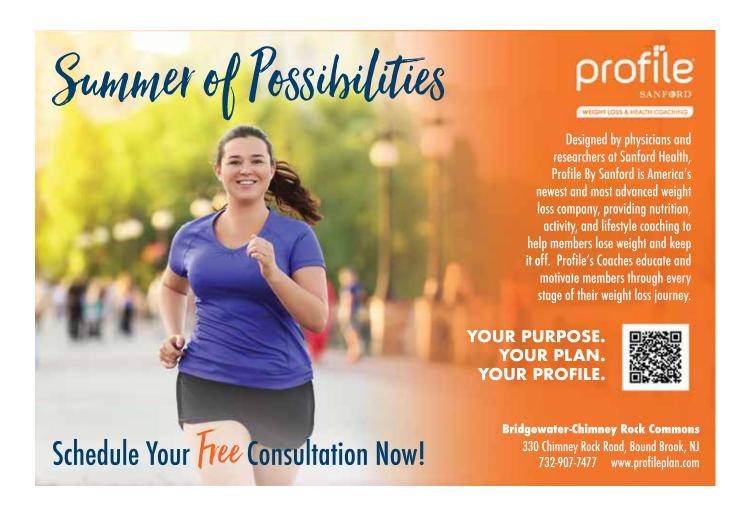
CULINARY CREATIONS (CONTINUED)

To round out the meal and put a smile on Dad's face, serve the steak with your favorite summer vegetables. Baked potatoes, corn on the cob and asparagus can also be prepared on the grill for a delicious Father's Day feast!

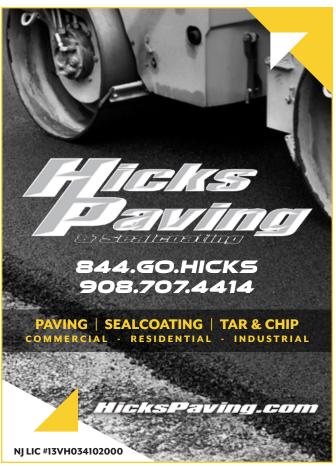
Don't like to grill at home? Chef Filomena keeps all of the Raritan Valley Country Club members' bellies full with her seasonal





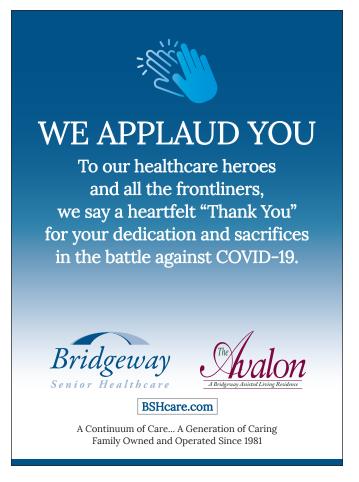










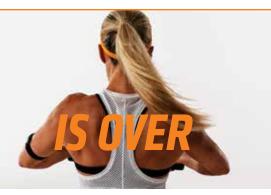






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DOCTOR'S OFFICES ARE CERTAINLY OPERAT-ING DIFFERENTLY THESE DAYS, BUT THE TWO MEDICAL PRACTICES OF DAVID BOGUSLAVSKY, MD-PREMIERMD AND PREMIER MEDICAL ACUPUNCTURE—HAVE **ACTUALLY BEEN** OFFERING TELEMEDICINE AND OTHER ALTER-NATIVE MEDICAL OPTIONS SINCE LONG BEFORE THE COVID-19 OUTBREAK.

An experienced and dedicated family physician, David is also a medical acupuncturist who has been practicing medicine for more than a decade. After receiving his medical degree from Robert Wood Johnson Medical School and completing his residency training at Somerset Family Practice—where he was presented with multiple Resident Teacher of The Year awards—David underwent extensive additional training in Medical Acupuncture at the prestigious UCLA Helms Medical Acupuncture Institute in Berkley, California. He is Board Certified in both Family Medicine and in Medical Acupuncture.

The practices offer a full spectrum of family medicine and David sees his patients for acute illness, such as headaches and sinus infections, as well as for chronic condition management: thyroid, hypertension, diabetes, cholesterol, etc. Additionally, he specializes in treating patients with pain and functional disorders.

Born in Russia, it was David's life long dream to follow in the footsteps of his grandparents who were both doctors. He was always interested in combining various approaches because David believes that one method does not fit every patient and that they benefit from having multiple options available.

David says, "Whatever is best for the patient, is best for me."



He offers a unique dual perspective, offered by his training in both Western and Eastern Medicine. Some patients leave their visit with a prescription for medication; whereas others leave reassured, and improved with some Chinese Herbal Medicines or a few well-chosen acupuncture needles.

Placing an emphasis on the practice of preventative care, David takes great care to control risk factors, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and diet-related imbalances. The practices accept most insurances and work with all patients, insured or not, to provide affordable medical care of the highest quality to each and every person.

David also runs efficient and technologically modern medical practices built on a foundation of the time-honored tradition of compassionate care for each individual patient and their unique condition. He first began offering telemedicine last year as a way to improve the patient experience. This has proved particularly crucial during the COVID-19 outbreak. Unlike some other medical practices, David did not have to scramble to learn how

to effectively implement telemedicine. Knowing that he needed to pivot and adapt to meet the current medical demands, David also currently offers curbside testing. This ease of testing helps to keep our community members #BridgewaterSTRONG.

As more and more patients are seeking alternative treatment methods, David's long-term plan is to keep growing, but not past the point of being able to offer quality, personalized care.

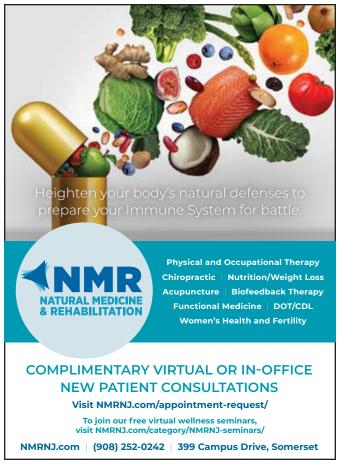
"I know all of my patients," explains David. "We are still a small family practice with no plans to be acquired. I never want to lessen my level of care. My patients have incredible access to me. They even have my cell phone number."

David never runs short on time or compassion. Every patient gets all the time needed for a full therapeutic evaluation and intervention.

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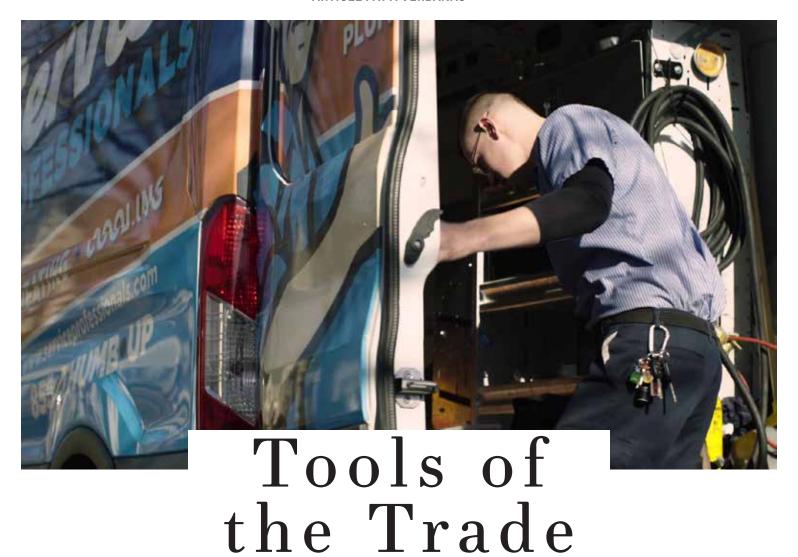


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ARTICLE PATTI VERBANAS



VICTOR GRASSO DISCOVERED A LIFE-LONG CAREER - AND A TRUE WORK FAMILY-WHEN HE EMBARKED ON AN APPRENTICESHIP AT SERVICE PROFESSIONALS

> VICTOR GRASSO, 22, A 2016 GRADUATE OF BRIDGEWATER-RARITAN HIGH SCHOOL, DID NOT WANT A CAREER THAT WOULD MEAN SITTING IN AN OFFICE ALL DAY. As commencement loomed, the athletic Victor began considering a job that would allow him to work with his hands and build a successful future. Although he had never given it much thought before, he began considering the trades—plumbing and HVAC specifically.

> He approached family friend, Rich Cooper, who was a plumbing specialist at Service Professionals—a Union-based company that provides plumbing, heating, cooling, and electrical services to residents in North and Central New Jersey-to find out more about the job Rich talked so fondly about.







"Our state is made up of strong-willed, hardworking and resilient individuals like Victor. There is no challenge that we back away from including this one. We will make it through this and come out with a stronger community on the other side. We are #BridgewaterSTRONG"—Rich Bogda, Owner Service Professionals

"Service Professionals was a well-established company that had a reputation for training employees well," Victor says. "I wanted to learn more."

He scheduled an interview and was upfront that his knowledge of plumbing, heating and cooling was limited.

"That did not bother them," he says. "I told them that I was a hard worker, good with my hands and loyal-that I'd do whatever they needed me to do.""

Matt Polny, Operations Manager at Service Professionals, says that inexperienced but ambitious and hard-working people like Victor are highly sought after.

"We take those guys and mold them on the job by reinforcing and constantly coaching them to build their confidence," he says.

Apprentices are trained from the ground up, starting in the warehouse learning parts, stocking trucks and doing deliveries.

Matt explains, "Then, they begin to step into the field, progressing as they establish themselves as a good worker."

A SOLID CAREER

Employment in the trades is projected to grow to 169.4 million jobs over the next decade, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Many young people, like Victor, eyeing the rising tuition costs of attending college and the thought of graduating with crushing student debt are seeking good-paying fields in the trades where they can serve as an apprentice for years, earn a paycheck and attend classes in their field of choice.

Matt, who has been in plumbing close to 30 years, reiterates the stability of the trades as a career.

"As an essential service, this is a job that will not go away. Also, there is a shortage of people, which means the ability to earn has increased."

The apprenticeship at Service Professionals is a fiveyear program, during which employees work at the company to gain experience hours while attending classes at night, then take a test to get their license if they choose.

For his first three years, Victor worked as an HVAC installer under the guidance of seasoned veteran Michael Flynn, who taught him the ropes. From September to April, he attended a training class every Wednesday night at Hunterdon County Polytech.

"It's wonderful to start out as an installer because you have someone with you—called the lead — who tells you what to do and watches over you. If you have a great teacher as I did, it can change your whole life."

As his skills increased, Victor was asked if he would like to work as a service technician who fixes systems and gives homeowners solutions to upgrade their systems.

CONTINUED >



"I cannot thank Rich enough for the investment he has put into me and giving me a life-changing career."—Victor Grasso, Service Professionals





"As a young professional you want to keep moving forward. Service Professionals had trust in me, which gave me more confidence," he says. "What I like most about the job is doing something new every day. It's not having a routine. Labor is not just a job for me; it's work I enjoy because I can move."

Victor also appreciates the sense of family that Service Professionals cultivates. The company, in business over a quarter-century and with about 65 employees, puts a premium on helping staff grow personally as well as professionally.

Matt credits the owner, Richard Bogda, for setting this tone.

"I cannot thank Rich enough for the investment he has put into me and giving me a life-changing career," he says. "We do not just employ people for jobs; there are trainings, motivational events and social gatherings that make the guys I work with an extension of my family."

In response to the recent pandemic, Rich says, "Our state is made up of strong-willed, hardworking and resilient individuals like Victor. There is no challenge that we back away from including this one. We will make it through this and come out with a stronger community on the other side. We are #BridgewaterSTRONG."

As one of the youngest employees, Victor expresses gratitude for the closeness he experiences with the team.

"Despite our age differences, we are good friends. In normal times we have gatherings, go bowling and hang out," he says.

What Victor finds most gratifying is the fact his job is to make people's lives better.

"I feel like a hero because we help homeowners in need, providing heat, hot water and electricity," he says.

Sometimes, the days are long—the longest being an 8 a.m. to 2 a.m. workday and back up to report again at 8 a.m.-but knowing that he helped a customer out makes him feel happy.

Five years from now, Victor sees himself still working at Service Professionals.

"They take care of their employees, treat us like family and give us great benefits," he says. "I am recruiting. No matter your age, if you have a good work ethic, I'd love to have you as part of the team."



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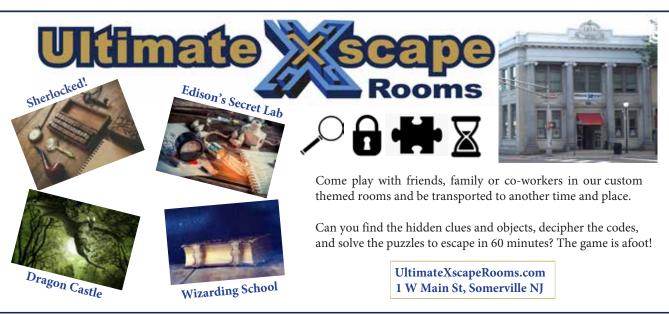












REALTY REPORT | BRIDGEWATER

NEIGHBORHOOD	ORIGINAL PRICE	SOLD PRICE	%SOLD/ORIG	DOM	BDRMS	BATHS
45 Marie Ave.	\$475,000	\$475,000	100.0	20	3	3
400 Stony Brook Dr.	\$499,900	\$490,000	98.0	110	4	2.1
4 Hoagland Ct.	\$522,000	\$498,000	95.4	36	3	2.1
104 Branch Rd.	\$525,000	\$515,000	98.1	75	3	2.1
12 Stella Dr.	\$539,900	\$546,000	101.1	14	3	2
720 Falcon Ct.	\$550,000	\$525,000	95.5	108	4	2.1
15 Glen Eagles Dr.	\$569,000	\$548,000	96.3	66	4	2.1
243 Dutch Farm Rd.	\$585,000	\$600,000	102.6	3	4	2.1
769 Wingate Dr.	\$589,000	\$595,000	101.0	26	5	3
778 Partridge Dr.	\$599,000	\$577,250	96.4	68	4	2.1
9 Ash St.	\$629,900	\$625,500	99.3	12	5	3.1
1180 Crim rd.	\$649,000	\$649,000	100.0	14	4	2.1
683 John Christian Dr.	\$699,000	\$695,000	99.4	57	4	3
184 Beaumonte Way	\$835,000	\$835,000	100.0	6	5	3.1
17 Linberger Dr.	\$859,000	\$860,000	100.1	10	4	2.1

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ARTICLE STACEY FRIEDLANDER
PHOTOGRAPHY DONNA GIOIA VOLPE PHOTOGRAPHY

Sewing on the Edge





44

"AT THE TIME, I HAD NO IDEA
HOW BIG IT WOULD GET OR HOW
INCREDIBLE THE COMMUNITY
RESPONSE WOULD BE."

— JENNIFER LOUGHRAN, FOUNDER

AND DIRECTOR OF THE MASK SOUAD

IN MARCH, THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC CAUSED SHORTAGES OF N95 MASKS AND OTHER PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIP-

MENT. In response to the need, a group of neighbors in Somerset County organized a team and began making and distributing handmade surgical masks, caps, and accessories.

"We are your neighbors, your child's preschool teacher, your fitness instructor, an immigrant who just got her citizenship, skilled professionals, mothers, fathers, children, and young high school students all using sewing skills, 3D technology, and business experience to respond to the needs of our community," explains Jennifer Loughran, Founder and Director of The Mask Squad Somerset NJ.

The idea to sew face masks came when Jennifer was thinking about the vulnerability of her medically fragile son and how her children needed her and her husband to stay healthy. From there it quickly evolved to wanting to help not only the medical community, but all the *front-liners* who were keeping the supply chain open, all of the parents of medically vulnerable children, caretakers, and the elderly who were scared to leave their houses. She wanted to help everybody in the community.

Jennifer shared her big vision with her friend, Stacey Friedlander, and together they started a Facebook group and invited community members to participate. They quickly found out they were not the only ones who shared the vision. As they began posting their efforts daily, friends and neighbors reached out. Some were already sewing facemasks or wanted to start, while others wanted to volunteer in other ways.

For example, Suzanne Hollywood and her son Joe do not have sewing experience, but they have taken on the job of directing volunteer drivers like Marie Ivy to collect masks and then distribute them to the community.

Elissa Muller was tasked with creating a webpage and updates it with stories about all of the incredible squad members. The innovative website is a one-stop-shop for anyone in Somerset County to come and find info on these masks, as well as volunteer opportunities, and other local services offering help to the community.

Jennifer explains, "At the time, I had no idea how big it would get or how incredible the community response would be. Every day we are in direct communication with respiratory therapists, nurses, and doctors who are giving us feedback about the designs we are making. We have an incredibly talented woman, Jessica Levitt, who has painstakingly taken on the role of testing patterns and creating tutorials."

Masks made by the squad have gone everywhere from local hospitals such as RWJ New Brunswick and Somerset to care facilities like Eastern Star and to local police departments and rescue squads, as well as to individual citizens going for medical treatments.

Currently, the squad has over 500 volunteer members of all ages and backgrounds and continues to grow daily. As a team, they are able to produce over 100 masks a day. This remarkable group is putting in a Herculean effort to keep our community healthy and #BridgewaterSTRONG.

As of early May, the squad has made and distributed over 15,000 masks, surgical caps and ear guards. In order to keep up with requests, the group is utilizing a GoFundMe campaign to continue to purchase and distribute supplies to volunteers to help make more masks. To date, the GoFundme campaign has raised over \$12,000.

The GoFundMe campaign, along with other information on how to become a volunteer can be found at **themasksquad.com**







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