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Congressional Award

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Senator Cory Booker and Congressman Donald Payne, Jr. honor New Jersey Congressional Award recipients in Newark

Newark, New Jersey (November 21, 2015) – Senator Cory Booker, Congressman Donald Payne, Jr., and local leaders came together to honor New Jersey Congressional Award recipients in Newark, New Jersey. The ceremony was held at Rutgers University at the Center for Law and Justice.



Senator Booker, Representative Payne & Chairman Paxton Baker with the 2015 New Jersey Ceremony attendees.

The ceremony highlighted Congress' highest honor for youth and recognized New Jerseyans who have dedicated hundreds of hours to service in their communities.

Both Senator Booker and Congressman Payne have strong ties to the city of Newark. Senator Booker was the mayor of Newark for seven years prior to serving in Congress and Congressman Payne is a Newark native. Both individuals continuously fight for the needs of New Jersey families in Congress by working hard to create jobs, grow the economy, and invest in the youth. They are advocates for the Congressional Award program and serve as role models for America's youth.

In his keynote address, Senator Cory Booker emphasized the importance of community service and goal setting; two things he is continuously dedicated to. As the mayor of

Newark he fought to lower the crime rate, end childhood obesity, and reform the education system. He also opened his home to Newark residents after many homes were destroyed due to Hurricane Sandy. Since being elected to Senate in 2013, Senator Booker has continued to be innovative, persistent and put partisanship aside, bringing people together to get things done for New Jersey. He serves on the Senate's Commerce, Science and Transportation, Small Business and Entrepreneurship and Environment and Public Works Committees.

The title sponsor for our event was Celgene, a biotechnology company headquartered in New Jersey and we thank them for their involvement. "At Celgene, we share the goals and values of the Congressional Award and are proud to be a sponsor of the program in our home state of New Jersey," said Rich Bagger, Senior Vice President of Corporate Affairs and Market Access at Celgene. "As the home of Congressional Award co-founder Congressman James Howard, New Jersey enjoys a long history with the Congressional Award, and Celgene is proud to be a part of its bright future."

Throughout the year, Congressional Award Medalists are honored at local ceremonies and medal presentations by members of Congress at the district and state levels, as well as at a national ceremony held each June in Washington, D.C. Since its inception in 1979, the Congressional Award has recognized thousands of young Americans committed to serving their country and improving themselves, representing over 7.4 million hours of public service.

For more information, please contact Kirsten Gooden at gooden@congressionalaward.org or visit our website at congressionalaward.org.

2015 NEW JERSEY CONGRESSIONAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

GOLD MEDALISTS

Seth Alicea, Clifton
Christian Boujaoude, Eatontown *
Abigail Campbell, Milford
Corbin Chance, Millville
John Dadouris, Annadale *
Jennifer Farmer, Moorestown
Madeline Farmer, Moorestown
Frank Faverzani, Ocean City
Andrew Geldreich, Berlin
Mary Catherine Greeley, Mountainside
Marissa Grillo, Secaucus *
Matthew Grillo, Secaucus *
Alana Gross, West Allenhurst
Winona Guo, Princeton *
Matthew Halloran, Millville
Jessica Janneck, Emerson *
Juliana Kemenosh, Ocean City
Vishvajit Mohan, Holmdel *
Amrita Mojumdar, Monmouth Junction
Taylor Murphy, Bedminster *
Avani Pavuluri, Robbinsville
Neharikia Pitta, Toms River
Samantha Price, Millville
Ruchi Raval, Colts Neck
Abhay Sampat, Holmdel *
Samay Sampat, Holmdel *
Viraj Sampat, Holmdel *
Chelsea Smith, Millville
Mollie Somers, Monmouth Beach *
Thomas Sych, Madison
Isaiah Udotong, Cinnaminson

SILVER MEDALISTS

Marwa Abdulhai, Holmdel
Philip Ballas, Millville
Colin Bassett, Englewood
Alexander Brescia, Millville
Paige Crain, Millville

Elizabeth Emberger, Millville
Mahashweta Gayen, Marlboro *
Ryan Greff, Fair Lawn *
Maura Herbertson, Short Hills *
Nicki Jariwala, Wayne *
Daniela Kesic, West Orange
Amaya Liles, Millville
Victoria Mobilio, Ledgewood
Khushbu Patel, Cape May Court House
Urvi Patel, Cape May Court House
Harsha Pavuluri, Robbinsville *
Maya Ravichandran, Holmdel *
Shannon Renshaw, Millville
Daniela Rodriguez-Luna, Tinton Falls *
Nishi Shah, Edison *
Trevor Somers, Monmouth Beach *
Andrew Sooy, Millville
Anthony Uzzolina, Millville
Alexis Vanaman, Millville
Priya Vulchi, Princeton *
Olivia Weldon, Millville
Connor Wilson, Manalapan *

BRONZE MEDALISTS

Funda Akilli, Millville
Julian Allen, Millville
Steven Bakovic, Budd Lake
Kelsie Bishop, Millville
Jessica Brady,
Emily Burns, Glenwood
Courtney Byank-Stienstra, Pompton
Plains
Jonathan Coleman, Ewing
Matthew Conlan, Holmdel
William Connell, Haddonfield *
David Crain, Millville
Ari Denson, Tenafly
Chelsea DeWalt, Thorofare
Devin Enright, Oradell

Dominic Esposito, New Egypt
Chanel Gist, Willingboro
Robert Gonzalez, Dumont
Jessica Gottlob, Absecon
Alexander Grom, Westfield
Eric Kranz, Montclair
Lisa Krasner, Manalapan
Nichole Letizia, Toms River *
Marta Majewski, Millville
Gavin McKenna, Absecon *
Miles Morgan, Bridgewater
Welsey Musto, Millville
Billie Mwangi, Eatontown *
Isla Okkinga, Chatham *
Amanda Olivio, Millville
Rebecca Pumphrey, Bellmawr *
Alec Reilly, Millville
John Rutledge, Whitehouse Station
Marc Santiago, Princeton *
Megan Scafaria, Colts Neck
Jonah Segelstein, Aberdeen
Kiersten Sheehan, Jersey City
Julia Terry, Millville
Mary Tursi, Eatontown *
Shannon Ubel, Flemington

CERTIFICATE EARNERS

Tanvi Bekal (B), Bridgewater
Christine Guo (B), Summit
Suzan Kim (B), Cresskill
Siena Rampulla (B), Holmdel *
Thiago Santos (B), Sparta
Michael Jetter (S), Newton
Catherine Ritchie (S), Chatham
Wilson Maya (G), Madison *
Sruti Pari (G), West Windsor *
Mary Piasecki (G), Port Monmouth
Angela Yu (G), Warren

**Recipients attended New Jersey Ceremony*

The Congressional Award, a public-private partnership, established by Congress in 1979 under Public Law 96-114, is a non-competitive program open to young people ages 14-23, regardless of mental or physical challenges, or socioeconomic status. The Congressional Award teaches participants to set and achieve personally challenging goals that build character, and foster community service, personal development and citizenship. The only other medal awarded by the United States Congress is the Medal of Honor.
