



Building Healthy Communities

The Campaign for the Jewish Renaissance Family of Organizations

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Jewish Renaissance Foundation, PSEG and NJBPU

Partner To Expand Energy Efficiency in Middlesex County

PSEG Grant Will Help Integrate *Building Healthy Communities* and Comfort Partners Programs

(Perth Amboy, NJ – July 19, 2016) Representatives from the Jewish Renaissance Foundation (JRF), PSEG and the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (BPU) today announced a \$250,000 PSEG grant that will be used to integrate the JRF's *Building Healthy Communities* initiative with the BPU's Comfort Partners Program in the northeastern Middlesex County municipalities of Perth Amboy, South Amboy, Sayreville, Woodbridge, Edison, Metuchen, Carteret and Highland Park.

"Our combined resources and capacities have created a powerful partnership that will yield significant improvements, not only for individual homeowners in need, but it will also significantly increase the value of the surrounding properties," said the Honorable Wilda Diaz, Mayor of the City of Perth Amboy. "I want to thank the leadership and vision of PSE&G, BPU & the Jewish Renaissance Foundation for their continued efforts and investments into municipalities like Perth Amboy."

The JRF's *Building Healthy Communities* program works from a comprehensive social determinant of health framework to improve the well-being of low-income residents who live within the City of Perth Amboy and the Central Jersey region. Comfort Partners offers free energy-saving improvements and energy education for income-eligible families. PSE&G, the utility arm of PSEG, is one of six utilities in the state that help administer the Comfort Partners program.

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“As New Jersey’s oldest and largest electric and gas utility, we have a long-standing commitment to energy efficiency and to being active participants in the communities that we serve,” said Courtney McCormick, vice president – renewables and energy solutions, PSE&G. “Our work takes us into neighborhoods and homes across our territory, and we know that families face many challenges. This partnership with the Jewish Renaissance Foundation and the BPU will allow us to work together to provide more energy efficiency solutions that allow our customers to save money and use energy more wisely.”

“This collaboration among the BPU, PSE&G, the Jewish Renaissance Foundation and its Civic Justice Corps program will allow us to help even more families realize energy savings, improve community well-being and in some cases provide life-saving measures, while at the same time furthering conservation goals of the Christie Administration’s Energy Master Plan,” BPU Commissioner Mary-Anna Holden said. “This energy conservation program will help not only lower prices for all ratepayers and improve our environment but will provide local jobs and on-the-job training.”

As a component of *Building Healthy Communities*, the JRF currently operates *Project Healthbuild*, which offers eligible low income and senior households in Middlesex County with certain “building envelope” improvements, particularly those related to structural and life and safety issues. At the same time, the BPU’s Comfort Partners Program offers income-eligible households with comprehensive, personalized energy education and counseling; installation of health and safety measures and installation of energy efficiency measures like weather-stripping, HVAC equipment, energy efficient lighting, and moisture removal. The PSEG grant will provide the funding to enable these two individual programs to combine their offerings and resources in order to enroll homes that may have been beyond the scope of work for either program individually.

“We know that low-income populations are far more likely to live in aging, deteriorating housing conditions that increases their chances to be exposed to mold, asbestos and other hazards contributing to their poor health conditions”, states Dr. Alan Goldsmith, JRF’s President. “The goal of Project Healthbuild is to work with our community-based and grantmaking partners such as The PSEG Foundation to reaching underserved and high-risk households in order to implement evidence-based interventions proven to identify and remove housing hazards that in turn improve their overall physical and economic well-being”.

JRF will also incorporate its *Civic Justice Corps* program into the integrated energy efficiency effort. *Civic Justice Corps* is an intensive training program that provides an equal mix of classroom instruction along with on-the-job training and similar worksite experiences for un- and under-employed young adults and adult residents. The Project Healthbuild/Comfort Partners integration will include a pilot training initiative to educate *Civic Justice Corps* participants as to industry-based assessment, remediation and hazard control measures addressing key residential health and safety dangers.

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“Project Healthbuild sites and related renovation activities serve as ‘portable labs’ where CJC participants, under our direct supervision, are dispersed in worksite opportunities to practically apply the vocational skills learned in the classroom”, states Alexandra Mansonet-Cross, JRF’s Chief Executive Officer.

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About the Jewish Renaissance Family of Organizations

The Jewish Renaissance Family of Organizations (JRFO) is an interconnected array of health care and social services agency, an academic and enrichment program, and a community redevelopment organization. The JRFO provides services in Perth Amboy, Newark and the surrounding areas. With a growing staff of 300 professionals, the JRFO serves and cares for over 50,000 individuals in over 30 communities in New Jersey and beyond. Refer to www.jrfnj.org for further information.

About PSE&G

Public Service Electric and Gas Company (PSE&G) is New Jersey’s oldest and largest regulated gas and electric delivery utility, serving nearly three-quarters of the state’s population. PSE&G is the winner of the ReliabilityOne Award for superior electric system reliability. PSE&G is a subsidiary of Public Service Enterprise Group Incorporated (PSEG) (NYSE:PEG), a diversified energy company (www.pseg.com).

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