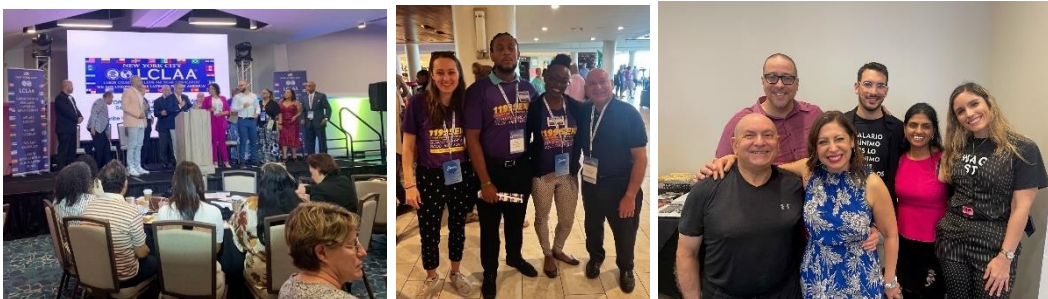




Dear Friends,

With over 15% of the population of my Assembly District comprised of Latinos, I was admitted this year as a member of the New York State Assembly Puerto Rican & Hispanic Task Force. **To learn more about how I can better advocate for those whom I represent, I participated in a conference held in Puerto Rico last week sponsored by SOMOS, Inc, a nonpartisan nonprofit, whose mission is to help unite and advocate for Latinos across New York State.** This year's conference brought in a record 2,500 registrants (and more following the close of registration) from Latino organizations across New York State, Labor, elected officials, nonprofit advocates, and representatives of the AAPI and the African-American communities joining in solidarity.



This was my first time at the annual conference, which I found to be a terrific experience. Attending workshops gave me greater insights into the needs and aspirations of the Latino community, both in Westchester and across the state.

I am also pleased that in honor of Veterans Day, Governor Kathy Hochul signed into law [various pieces of legislation](#) recognizing New York service members, **including [my legislation](#) with Senator Pete Harckam renaming a portion of State Route 121 in the Town of Lewisboro as the John Jay High School Veterans Memorial Highway.** The renaming is in honor of John Jay High School students who lost their lives in service to our country: Pfc. Kenneth Richard Jaconetti, Lt. Cmdr. George Russell Matthews, Pfc. Philip Grant Chipchase, Lance Cpl. Howard J. Alaimo, Cpl. James J. Jackowski, and Cpl. Bert D. Corcoran.

The impetus for this bill was a memorial that was first proposed by Grant Vialardi, then a senior at John Jay High School (and later an intern in my office!), in cooperation with the Lewisboro Veterans Advisory Committee. **While we can never fully express our gratitude to these John Jay High School alumni who died in service to our country, with the renaming of this road, we ensure their memories are never forgotten.**

## Housing Summit Brings Together Stakeholders

Assemblywoman Dana Levenberg and I recently convened a Housing Summit with local leaders representing municipalities, developers, and housing-oriented nonprofits, to hear their views on spurring housing development in the state. The summit took place at the Pace Land Use Law Center. **Approximately 50 local leaders participated in the summit, offering their perspectives and recommendations, which are extremely useful to us in developing legislation.**



**As members of the NYS Assembly Housing Committee, Assemblywoman Levenberg and I have partnered to advocate for a coherent statewide housing policy, one that enjoys consensus. To achieve this, the conversation among developers, housing advocates, planners, and elected officials *must* occur on a statewide basis. Moreover, we heard clearly at the summit that any successful statewide policy will require compromise from all sides and a significant financial commitment from New York State. I will press for just that.**

My thanks to Tiffany Zezula, Deputy Director of the Pace Land Use Law Center, for not only providing us with a location for the summit but for arranging the small group facilitation that helped make the event so informative and successful. Thank you also to Kate Slevin from the Regional Plan Association, for delivering a presentation that dramatically documented the depth of the housing crisis in New York and helped frame the day's conversation.

And finally, my thanks to Assemblywoman Dana Levenberg for being such a wonderful partner, not only in the summit, but in this endeavor to find a legislative solution to New York's housing crisis.

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## [A Special Opportunity to Discuss Disability Legislation](#)

I had the wonderful opportunity to travel to Albany last month to address the **Autism Spectrum Disorder Advisory Board**, which provides guidance and information to New York policymakers, individuals with an autism spectrum disorder diagnosis (ASD), and families seeking reliable information regarding available services and support.



With October being National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM) -- and me being the chair of the NYS Assembly Subcommittee on Employment Opportunities for People with Disabilities -- it was the perfect opportunity to discuss what I have learned and what I have accomplished legislatively in this area so far. **I was particularly proud to discuss a bill that I sponsored that led to the creation of New York's new Employability Pledge training.** This training highlights the benefits of hiring people with disabilities and provides employers who want to build an inclusive workforce with support to do so (I am grateful to the New York State Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD), the New York State Education Department (SED), and especially SED's Adult Career and Continuing Educational Services – Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR), for its excellent work in implementing this new program).

I am very pleased that SED Deputy Commissioner for ACCES-VR, Ceylane Meyers-Ruff, as well as SED's Joe Tedesco, were also on hand to present to the advisory board.

**There is still much work to be done to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities, and I look forward to continuing my work.**

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## [NYS Grant Funding for Local Municipal Projects](#)

Last month, I was happy to announce three grants I was able to secure for municipalities in my district.

The City of White Plains (under the inspired leadership of Mayor Tom Roach) and the Battle Hill Association (under the inspired leadership of Peter Wilcox) cut the ribbon on the Battle Hill Pollinator Habitat. **Located on Route 119 between Robertson Avenue and Chatterton Avenue, the project**

literally (and remarkably!) transformed a parking lot into a green space, with native plantings to attract birds and pollinators.



I was pleased to join State Senators Shelley Mayer and Pete Harckham in providing \$388,000 in NYS grant funding toward the project costs.

Last month I also joined the Town of Bedford at the Bedford Hills Memorial Park playground, **where the existing playground (which is over 30 years old) is being updated to improve access to children of all abilities** -- including those with physical disabilities -- providing a safe and secure playground for all. I was thrilled to be able to provide a \$250,000 NYS grant to help with the project.



As a former Bedford Town Supervisor, I am incredibly proud of the Town's longstanding reputation for being a welcoming and caring community. What better way to build on that reputation than by providing a playground that children of all abilities can enjoy? Kudos to Bedford Town Supervisor Ellen Calves, the Bedford Town Board, and the Bedford Recreation & Parks Department for all their hard work to make this vision a reality. I am delighted to see so many inclusive playgrounds being built in the 93rd Assembly District.

I also was pleased to join North Salem Town Supervisor Warren Lucas and members of the North Salem Town Board to announce a \$125,000 grant I was able to secure for the Town to help offset the cost of purchasing and installing a geothermal heating and cooling system and electrical vehicle chargers for the new North Salem Community Center. The Community Center is located in the former Croton Falls schoolhouse building. Since purchasing it in 2021, the Town has done (and continues to do) a masterful job rehabilitating the building for the residents of North Salem. I am particularly impressed with the leadership of the Town in pursuing *this* project, which will bring the building to net zero in carbon emissions while slashing energy costs. The grant request was unanimously adopted by the Town Board, and I wish to thank Councilwoman Katherine Daniels for spearheading the project and advocating for the grant.



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## Educator Pathway Pilot Program Launches

I was delighted to attend the launch of the new Educator Pathway Pilot Program last month at White Plains High School. **This innovative initiative will allow high school students to enroll in Westchester Community College electives that allow them to earn college credits at no cost, and graduate as fully certified Teaching Assistants.** Students will then be able to work as a TA upon graduation from WPHS while they attend college or work.

I am pleased that State Senator Shelley Mayer, Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, and I were able to secure \$40,000 in NYS grant funding for the program, whose ultimate goal is to recruit a diverse pool of educators to potentially work in White Plains and other local school districts and help address the educator shortage. **Indeed, it is critically important that our state take steps to address the need for an estimated 180,000 new teachers over the next 10 years.** This wonderful program provides a seamless pathway for the next generation of teachers, while also making it a viable financial option for many who might not otherwise have been able to pursue this field.



I should note **this program would not have been possible without the terrific collaboration among the White Plains Teachers' Association, NYSUT, the White Plains City School District, and the NYS Legislature.**

I am confident that the pilot will be a success and will be replicated throughout the state. And it was exciting and heartwarming to see that so many WPHS juniors and seniors have already signed up!

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## [COVID-19 Tests Available](#)

**My office recently received a shipment of COVID-19 tests.** Please feel free to stop by Monday-Friday, 9:30 am-5:00 pm to pick them up. The office is located at 100 South Bedford Road, Suite 150, in Mount Kisco.

*Limit three boxes (six tests), while supplies last.*



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## [Cracking Down on Telemarketers](#)

To help curb the number of unsolicited calls New Yorkers receive, a new law I helped pass sets a \$20,000 penalty every time a telemarketer violates the Do Not Call registry rules.

If your number is registered on the Do Not Call Registry and you continue to receive telemarketing calls after 31 days, [click here to file a report](#).



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## **Reminder! New Student Loan Repayment Initiative**

**The Biden administration recently announced a new student loan repayment initiative called the Saving on a Valuable Education (SAVE) Plan.** Many borrowers with loans held by the Education Department – which include direct subsidized and unsubsidized loans, Direct PLUS loans for graduate and professional students, and direct consolidation loans – will be able to lower or eliminate their monthly payments. **For more information and to sign up, [please click here](#).**



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As always, **please do not hesitate to reach out to my office with any questions or if there is any assistance we can provide.** You can always reach me at [burdickc@nyassembly.gov](mailto:burdickc@nyassembly.gov) or by calling (914) 244-4450. My staff and I are always ready to help. Please also follow me on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#) for continued up-to-date information.

Miss any of our previous newsletters? You can [find them here](#).

Sincerely yours,

Handwritten signature of Chris Burdick

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