



## Easterseals N.J.: Serving special needs individuals for more than 100 years

By ROI-NJ Staff

East Brunswick

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Nonprofit Profile



*Easterseals New Jersey*

Easterseals New Jersey's annual fundraiser, "Play with Purpose," raised over \$100,000. Corporate donations in support of services for individuals with disabilities included \$10,000 from Amway and \$50,000 from Britt Worldwide Charities and We Live to Give Foundation.

### Origin

In 1907, Ohio businessman Edgar Allen lost his son in a streetcar accident. The lack of adequate medical services available to save his son prompted Allen to sell his business and begin a fundraising campaign to build a hospital in his hometown of Elyria, Ohio. Through this new hospital, Allen was surprised to learn that children with disabilities were often hidden from public view. Inspired by this discovery, in 1919, Allen founded what became known as the National



## Mission

Our mission is to enrich the lives of people living with disabilities and special needs, and those who care about them, by providing opportunities to live, learn, work and play in their communities.

## Goals

Employment continues to be a primary focus for the community we serve. Individuals with disabilities are faced with one of the highest rates of unemployment for a demographic group, and we aim to continue to work with businesses and community leaders to change this reality.

In 2019, Easterseals will be celebrating its 100th anniversary nationally and, in so doing, bringing light to the ongoing needs of people with disabilities and special needs in New Jersey and across the country. We also look forward to highlighting those who have been in this journey with us over the years and welcome new partners to join us in our mission to continue to support people with disabilities in the years to come.

## Programs

Backed by more than 65 years of experience, [Easterseals New Jersey](#) provides safe, accessible, convenient and individualized services. With warmth, respect and expertise, we deliver quality services, providing opportunities for individuals of all abilities to reach their goals throughout their lifetime. Easterseals' programs include employment training, recreation, residential services for individuals with intellectual disabilities and much more.

## Achievements

- 100 percent of participants in our residential program reported being connected to vital resources in the community.
- 402 participants maintained stable housing when upon discharge from our program.
- 94 percent of participants in our community living program avoided psychiatric rehospitalizations.
- 103 participants were placed in community employment.
- 87 participants traveled to new locations with our hotel and travel program.
- Total number of individuals and families served: 9,655.
- 483 participants attended Camp Merry Heart, one of the only camps for people of all abilities in New Jersey.
- \$100,000 raised at our Spring Fundraiser on April 28 will continue to support such work.

## Fundraising

We solicit support by sharing our organizational goals with others, applying for grants and asking corporations and agencies to fund specific programs designed by Easterseals New Jersey.



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year, dinners, raffles, tricky tray, and 5K events have proven to be a great source for fundraising.

## Benefactors

Easterseals New Jersey's national corporate sponsors include Amway, Century 21 and A.C. Moore. Top supporters of our recent Play with Purpose fundraising event included the We Live to Give Foundation Inc. and Britt World Wide Charities, among others.

## Finally

We believe everyone, no matter their circumstance or level of ability, deserves the opportunity to increase their independence and achieve their goals. Focusing on ability over disability, our family of over 1,000 well-trained and passionate staff members work in partnership with individuals and families to bring equality, dignity, and opportunity to people in need. Let's change the way the world defines and views disabilities together!

## Board members

Our 2017-2018 board of directors includes: Chad Woods, Eshon Mitra, Frank Lavadera, Jasmine Francis, Joe Reo, John Allen, John Glynn, Jonathan D'Orsi, Katie McGee, Melissa Skrocki, Michael Bisesti, Michael Greenstreet, Pedram Alaedini and Stephen Hoelper.

## Conversation Starter

For more information, about Easterseals N.J. go to: [eastersealsnj.org](http://eastersealsnj.org).

## In brief

**Where:** Easterseals New Jersey's corporate headquarters is located in East Brunswick, with operations throughout the state.

**Key leaders:** Brian Fitzgerald, CEO and president; Helen Drobnis, chief advancement officer, corporate secretary; Michael Owen, chief human resources officer, corporate counsel; Shelly Samuels, chief program officer; Aleisha Hart, chief financial officer, assistant treasurer

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The advertisement features a background image of a man in a white lab coat looking at a laptop. Overlaid on the image is the ROI logo (with a green NJ map in the 'O') and the website 'roi-nj.com'. A red diagonal banner in the top left corner reads 'Unmatched Sales Leads and Making Deals'. The main text on the laptop screen reads: 'ROI B2B Data Center + Subscription to ROI Print Edition and Digital Newsletters', 'Access More Than 66,000 NJ Company Profiles', and 'Call 973-387-1115 and register today for Data Center Premium Membership and get 6 months of print, digital, and all data access for only \$199.'



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