

# NJ Chapter News



**AT&T**

**pioneers**  
a volunteer network



**Fall 2022**

**Pioneering In Action**

**The Ramp Project**

**The Disaster Relief Project**

**The Fall Luncheon**

**Calendar**

## New Jersey Chapter 139



### Fall 2022

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#### Chapter Officers

President: Suzanne Balian

Vice President Projects:  
Michael Hickey

Vice President Communication:  
Michael Mulvey

Vice President Membership:  
Forrest Johnson

Treasurer: Elizabeth Dunn

Secretary: Brian Murphy

#### Past Presidents—NJ Clubs

Life Member Club: Sandy Seidorf

Liberty Garden Club: Carla Burgess

Jersey Shore Club: Paul Fellingham

#### Members-at-Large

Paul Fellingham

Paul Hamilton

Laura Lombardo

Larry Perez

Bencilla Powell

Madhu Rangi

Marie Zach

#### Newsletter Editor

Madhu Rangi

*The NJ Pioneers Chapter 139* is published three times a year, in the Spring, Fall and Winter. We welcome your comments. Please direct these to the telephone number, email address or postal address listed above



### Letter from the President

Dear Pioneers,

I hope you all have successfully weathered the pandemic, are healthy and cautiously returning to pre-pandemic activities and lifestyles. Here's to all of us living life to the fullest!

With the pandemic, and lockdown induced hiatus behind us, here is what the AT&T Pioneers have been up to... Since May 2021, we have consolidated and merged the three NJ based Clubs into one NJ chapter. The Chapter members represent active AT&T employee volunteers, contractors, and retirees, thus providing greater opportunities to engage in larger impactful projects as well as continuing to expand the AT&T Pioneers family network. We have structured the Board office bearers' roles by function i.e., the Chapter has VP of Projects, VP of Communication and VP of Memberships. We continue to evolve and remain flexible to meet the needs of our charter and leverage our volunteer resources to make greater impact in the community.

We have also evolved in our projects – we have streamlined and prioritized our activities to focus on collaboration among employees and retirees through Zoom, and engage in outdoor activities, some of which are also open to friends and family. We continue to focus on expanding STEM related activities, and volunteers.

We post upcoming NJ Chapter volunteer projects on our newly redesigned website, <https://attpioneers.org> as well as on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/ATT-Pioneers>, please show your support through “like” on Facebook.

We have been through challenging times, and the need for help continues to grow. Please free to contact us at [attpioneersnj@gmail.com](mailto:attpioneersnj@gmail.com) or the project leader directly if you would like to join fellow Pioneers in activities of your choice.

But enough about us – we want to know about you – our members — How did you survive the lockdown? What helped you through? And more importantly, your plans as we slowly but surely return to normal. If you would like to share at [attpioneer-snj@gmail.com](mailto:attpioneer-snj@gmail.com), your experiences, new activities/ hobbies/while in lockdown, we will, with your permission, compile the responses from our members and share in our next newsletter.

We look forward to seeing you at the next project or luncheon...

Stay safe,

**Suzanne Balian**

# Contents

## Pioneering In Action

### Cover Story

The Ramp Project



Schuyler Hamilton House

The Disaster Relief Project

Operation Shoe Box

Lap Robes

Rubber Duckey Race

AT&T Pioneers & United Way

Epilepsy Center - Day at the Beach

Ronald McDonald House

Scholarships

### STEM

- Math Video Games
- Virtual Reality
- Robotics

Fall Luncheon

Calendar

# Pioneering In Action—The Ramp Project

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AT&T employees, contractors and alumni collaborated to build a wheelchair ramp and a connecting pathway, for the New Jersey Blind Citizens Association (NJBCA) in the Leonardo section of Middletown. The Pioneers had built a ramp at the same location some 20 years ago, at the front of the building. This new ramp would be at the back of the building, as an alternate emergency egress.

Below is a success story from Paul Fellingham, the project leader about planning, collaboration among the AT&T Pioneers, the Township, NJBUA staff, local school teachers, and students to address the challenges to bring the project to the satisfaction of the NJBCA. “The project required the design and construction of a 6’x6’ raised platform, a 25’ ramp (with railings) and 116 linear feet of pavers



to connect the ramp to the driveway. In addition, repairs were to be made to the original ramp and railing, as needed. Approximately 50 hours were spent by the project leader and two volunteers designing and preparing for the project, including planning permission from the township, materials ordering, etc. Supply issues, delayed deliveries, and the weather extended the project far beyond our original estimate”. The project itself involved a total of 31 volunteers, on 10 separate workdays, with a total effort of ~560 hours, bringing the total project volunteer effort to ~610 hours. The AT&T Pioneers NJ Chapter funded the cost of materials and equipment rental.

The main construction days were spread over a 16-day period, with a “clean up” day about three weeks later. The cleanup day was in collaboration with Habitat for Humanity and Trinity Hall school in Tinton Falls, NJ. Two teacher-chaperones brought about 12 of their female students to help move excess dirt from the path excavation to fill in a low spot elsewhere on the property. In so doing, it was clear that a couple of future leaders were developing! Note that the time spent by these students was in addition to the 31 official project volunteers.

# Pioneering In Action —The Ramp Project

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“Perhaps our biggest challenge were the roots from 4 large trees that were growing on the bank next to where the path needed to go”. After consulting with an arborist, it was determined that the trees would need to be taken down. This was taken care of by the NJBCA prior to the start of our project. However, digging up and cutting the roots for the construction of the pathway was up to us. This necessitated renting a “mini backhoe”, as to dig a 4’-



wide, 116’-long trench for the path, with about 45’ of roots, would have been virtually impossible by hand.

The project leader can now add “backhoe operator” to his resume’!

In addition to current AT&T employees, contractors and retirees, support was also provided by the Holmdel First Aid Squad (a volunteer and use of the squad’s pickup truck), Habitat for Humanity (an experienced builder, plus coordination of student volunteers from a local high school), and the NJBCA (volunteers and lunches). The Pioneers provided lunch on one of the workdays, but on all the other days the NJBCA provided us with lunch and refreshments. A special treat was in store on Wednesdays, as the lunch was leftovers... from the JBJ Soul Kitchen (yes, the restaurant founded and supported by Jon Bon Jovi).



Volunteers laying the groundwork

# Pioneering In Action—The Ramp Project



The photos we took provide snapshots of the project during construction and the end result of this very rewarding project. All the volunteers were happy to be a part of this project and many expressed their interest in helping with future Pioneer projects.

# Pioneering In Action—The Ramp Project

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The NJBCA Executive Director, Sarah Thomas, and Operations Manager, Kat Gramas, were blown away by the results of our collective efforts and are extremely grateful to us all. Their clients now have a safe (second) exit to use in an emergency. As a follow-up, the NJBCA requested that we add raised, brightly-painted edging to the pathway to assist their visually-impaired clients who use canes, which we have agreed to do.

Next up will be a new project to construct a low retaining wall to prevent run-off from the bank we had to cut into to make the pathway level.

# Pioneering In Action —The Ramp Project

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Unfortunately, since the volunteers came on different days, there is no “team picture” with all 31 volunteers.



If you are interested in further details of this project, or know of a need for a wheelchair ramp in your area, reach out to the project leader, Paul Fellingham, via email ([pjfid34@comcast.net](mailto:pjfid34@comcast.net)).

## Pioneering In Action

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### Schuyler Hamilton House

Schuyler Hamilton Place at 5 Olyphant in Morristown, NJ is a property on the National Register of Historic Places and managed by the Daughters of American Revolution. AT&T Pioneers have helped maintain Schuyler-Hamilton House Museum several times a year. The Pioneers are invited to help mulch, plant, water, weed, and trim around the yard to make property presentable for public tours on weekend. All help is graciously accepted by Schuyler Hamilton House. To volunteer, contact Pioneers Project Leader: Fran Long, at ([fm2948@att.com](mailto:fm2948@att.com)) with any questions.

# Pioneering In Action

## AT&T NJ Pioneers Disaster Response Project

Towards the end of 2021, AT&T allocated \$5,000 to fund the AT&T NJ Pioneers Humanitarian Disaster Response Readiness project. In response, 15 NJ Pioneers spent over 250 hours over multiple days to bring the project to readiness state to meet any emergency relief need anywhere in the country.

Key activities the pioneers engaged in ranged from identification of critical need items, price comparisons, procurement, pick up, and organize delivery to Bedminster location, assemble, label and pack the items for delivery to any disaster area. When all was said & done, NJ Pioneers created over 600 kits that included multiple quantities of soap, shampoo, hand sanitizer, baby wipes, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, shave gel, razor, Kleenex, sanitary pads, comb, towels, and wash clothes. The volunteers boxed these kits into 18 large boxes to be delivered to the disaster area at a moment's notice.

The picture here shows a few volunteers assembling the kits outside of the cafeteria in the Bedminster building.

So, when the floods hit Kentucky at the end of July, NJ Pioneers team was able to expedite shipment of the boxes to the AT&T Disaster Response team in Kentucky.



# Pioneering In Action

## Operation ShoeBox

Operation Shoebox New Jersey is a 501C3 non-profit volunteer organization that ships personal care packages to US troops deployed around the world.

Rod Hersch at the Operation Shoebox in Hillsborough NJ with a small staff, but a lot of volunteers has been bringing a little bit of home to our service people serving our country around the world. The organization collects personal care items and monetary donations.



AT&T NJ Pioneers have assembled and donated over 600 personal care items so far this year.

## Lap Robes

NJ Life Member Club (now part of the NJ Chapter) members for good number of years, have been making Lap robes which are donated to various nursing homes in NJ.

If you like to crochet or knit, and have some free



time, (or know someone who does) the lap robe knitters are looking forward to welcoming you to the group. The Pioneers will reimburse you for the cost of the yarn.

“YouTube has many posts that provide step by step instructions. That is how I learned to make about 4 lap robes a year” - Marie Zach.



# Pioneering In Action

## Pioneers at the Annual Rubber Ducky Race

AT&T NJ chapter Pioneers Bev Koehler, Florry Brenner, Patti Kim, Rama Sundar, Cate Mattison, Liz Murphy, Sherry Meissner, Lisa Noble, Ron Seidorf and Sandy Seidorf sold ducks before the race as they participated in the 32nd annual Great Rubber Ducky Race in Hunterdon County. Over \$17,000 was raised to support cancer research, education and advocacy.



## AT&T Pioneers and United Way

Once again, the AT&T Pioneers have targeted to give away 100 school backpacks filled with school supplies for underprivileged children who receive regular meals at House of Love Soup Kitchen on Central Ave in Newark NJ. The organization services 90 homeless or very low income families on a monthly basis. We have also expanded the drive to include the United Way of Hunterdon County that provides school supplies to children in the county who participate in free or subsidized lunch



program. In 2021 over 800 backpacks were distributed to children on the free or reduced lunch programs. And, over 2,250 low income, elderly and special needs individuals benefit from the United Way Holiday Hands program. AT&T NJ Chapter volunteers continue to support United Way Tools 4 Schools, and the Holiday Hands Programs.



# Pioneering In Action

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## Pioneers and Families —A Day At The Beach

On a rainy Thursday morning AT&T NJ Pioneers and other volunteers gathered early at the Governor's Beach House on Island Beach State Park to set up for a Day at the Beach sponsored by Epilepsy Services of New Jersey (epilepsyservicesnj.org). Knowing rain was in the forecast, the Pioneers brought four tents, which kept the registration table, a display table, two areas for attendees and volunteers stay dry. By the time members of the epilepsy community arrived the rain had started to dissipate and some attendees moved to the beach, including the State Park lifeguards and EMS members. At lunch time, some came back to the tables to eat while others grabbed their hamburgers or hot dogs, chips, and drinks and returned to the beach. Volunteers assisted the families carry their lunch to the beach. By the afternoon everyone had moved back to the beach to enjoy rest of the day. As the day came to an end the volunteers packed up everything that had been set-up in the morning, aided families on their way, and we all left with a feeling of accomplishment having assisted family members and their loved ones affected by epilepsy enjoy their Day at the Beach.



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## Ronald McDonald House



The NJ team continues to support the “caring cooks program” at Ronald McDonald House in New Brunswick. Six dinners have been provided this year with several more scheduled. NJ Pioneers are making a difference by providing home cooked meals to the families staying at the Ronald McDonald House to be close to a loved one in Robert Wood Johnson hospital. Special thanks to our team of volunteer cooks: Theresa Piscioti, Suzanne Balian, Machiko Nagata, Ron Seidorf and Sandy Seidorf.

# Pioneering In Action—STEM

AT&T Pioneers Richard Eastman and Bencilla Powell volunteer during STEM activities at afterschool and summer programs at schools in Essex County. It is important that students get exposed to the sciences at the elementary school level. AT&T Pioneers provide funding for Virtual Reality equipment, computers, science supplies, Robotics kits, and Robotics team T-shirts. Ten Chrome Book computers are used to strengthen the student's math skills. DimensionU is a math video game.

AT&T Pioneers partner with NASA and the Department of Defense to provide support for Robotics, science workshops, supplies, and activities. AT&T Pioneers support field trips during the summer to Liberty Science Center, and Bricks 4 Kidz, a Robotics activity center in Livingston Mall. On May 27, 2022, a STEM Fair was held at George Washington Carver School, with 72 students.

Over 100 students participate in the STEM project. The schools that participate are 13<sup>th</sup> Ave. School, George Washington Carver, The Prep School, and Heywood Ave. Six schools in East Orange are planned for September. AT&T Pioneers also volunteer at the Virtual Reality Program at The STEM Innovation Academy in Orange. Volunteer opportunities for the STEM Project include, chaperones for field trips and assistants for Picatinny Arsenal workshops.



Students engaged in a math video game that strengthens their math skills. This is the afterschool STEM program in Irvington. The computers are funded from the STEM grant.

## Glimpses of STEM activities :

### Virtual Reality



“Virtuality” at the Prep School Irvington



Pioneer STEM grant recognition event for supplying the Orange NJ STEM Innovation Academy with VR Headset resources. In the photo: three (3) students with the provided OCULUS VR headsets, and, from left to right, Ms. Antigua (STEM Academy Instructor), Ms. Bencilla Powel(AT&T Pioneer Member-at-Large and STEM Project Leader), Dr. Fitzhugh (Superintendent of Orange Schools), and, Dr. Reid (Principal at the STEM Academy).”

# Pioneering In Action—STEM

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## Robotics



Students at the 13th Ave, and the Irvington school making a Cat Robot with AT&T Pioneer —Bencilla Powell



Cat  
Robot  
once  
completed  
will  
move  
to  
music

# Pioneering In Action

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## STEM—Recent Activities

**Prep School—33 Myrtle Ave; Irvington, NJ—August 2, 2022; 10AM-12PM**

Picatinny Arsenal engineers were at the Prep School on August 2, 2022 to do science projects with 40 summer camp children from 10AM-12PM. BRICKS 4Kids came from 9am-12noon to work with the Legos

**George Washington Carver—333 Clinton Place; Newark, NJ—August 4, 2022; 1-2 PM**

Bricks 4 Kids was at the George Washington Carver School to work with the children to build Robots

**13th Ave School—August 5, 2022 1-2 PM**

Bricks 4Kids was at the 13th Ave School to work with the children to build Robots from Legos.

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## Scholarships

**Morristown Education Foundation (MEF)**

2022 AT&T Pioneers \$1,000 Scholarship was awarded to Audrey Fox of Morristown High School. Audrey will be pursuing her undergraduate degree in Marine Biology at the University of New England.

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**Seton Hall University**

AT&T NJ Pioneers awarded \$1,000 scholarship to a student volunteering at the Seton Hall University

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**STEM Academy of the Oranges**

AT&T NJ Pioneers awarded \$1,000 scholarship to Ebony Nkrumah of the STEM Academy. Ebony will be attending Boston University in the Fall

## Update on 2021 STEM Scholarship Recipient



Tatiana,

I am pleased to share that you have been recognized as an exemplary student exceeding the criteria for membership in The National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS).

This prestigious honor is awarded to only a small percent of University of North Carolina at Charlotte students, so congratulations on your nomination! Your achievement of a 3.3+ GPA provides you the distinguished honor to join the NSLS as a Presidential member.

# AT&T NJ Pioneers 2022 Fall Luncheon



Join us on Thursday, September 22nd, for an old fashioned Indian Summer gathering. Share your summer adventures and catch up with those of your friends at the Stoney Brook Grille in North Branch, NJ

Use this form to make your reservations and menu selection, and attach a check for \$35 per person. We would appreciate the reservations before Monday, September 19th. Please bring non-perishable food items for distribution to local food pantry or, if you prefer, a cash donation with your registration

Please select from: A: Chicken Marsala   B: Grilled Salmon   C: Roast Prime Rib of Beef

Name	Address	Phone	Meal (A,B,C)

Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please check:

- Lunch Only    Additional Funds to Pioneers    Additional Funds to Food Bank

Cut out along the line and mail the upper half with your check. Retain this lower half for reference. Any questions, call Bill Pritchett at 908-803-0196.

Make check out to: AT&T PIONEERS CHAPTER 139.

Mail to: Ron Glover  
98 Lafayette Ave.  
Chatham, NJ 07928

**LUNCHEON DETAILS:**

Date: Thursday, September 22, 2022  
Time: Starts 11:30 AM  
Location: Stoney Brook Grille  
1285 Route 28, North Branch, NJ 08876  
Telephone: 908-725-0011

**PROGRAM:**

11:30 AM Cash bar/soda & water on the tables  
12:00 PM Program starts  
12:15 PM Lunch

My lunch selection: \_\_\_\_\_

Directions to the Stoney Brook Grille:

**FROM NORTH:** *Morristown, Bernardsville.* Take 287 South to 78 West. Take 78 West to Exit 26 (North Branch - Lamington). At traffic light, make a left and go towards North Branch (Rattlesnake Rd). Go for 3 miles, and at the light make a right (Easton Turnpike). Stoney Brook Grille is 200 yards ahead on your right.

**FROM SOUTH:** **A** *Perth Amboy, New Brunswick.* Take 287 North to 22 West. Go for about 7 miles. Look for our road sign and the North Branch Exit by the QuickChek. Exit on your right. Stoney Brook Grille is ahead on your left.

**B** *Princeton, Flemington* Take 202 or 206 North to the Somerville circle. Take Route 28 West north of the circle for approximately 4 1/2 miles. Stoney Brook Grille is on your right past the RVCC and Lamington Road.

**FROM EAST:** **A** *Newark, Summit.* Take 78 West to Exit 26 (North Branch - Lamington). At traffic light, make a left and go towards North Branch (Rattlesnake Road). Go for 3 miles and at the light make a right (Easton Turnpike). Stoney Brook Grille is 200 yards ahead on your right. **B** *Union, Plainfield.* Take Route 22 West. After entering North Branch, look for our road sign and the North Branch Exit by the QuickChek. Exit on your right. Stoney Brook Grille is ahead on your left.

**FROM WEST:** *Phillipsburg, Clinton.* Take 78 East to 22 East for about 14 1/2 miles. Look for our road sign on right by Vollers Excavating Co. Exit ahead on your left at the traffic light (North Branch Exit). Cross over Route 22. Stoney Brook Grille is ahead on your left.

# 2022 NJ Chapter Calendar



<i>January</i>	<i>February</i>	<i>March</i>
<i>April</i>	<i>May</i>	<i>June</i>
<i>July</i>	<i>August</i>	<i>September</i>
		<p>11- BeachBash-Belmar CC- ca2769@att.com)</p> <p>16- Schuyler Hamilton House fm2948@att.com</p> <p>22- Fall Luncheon RonGlover@att.net</p>
<i>October</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>December</i>
<p>14-Schuyler Hamilton House Fran Long fm2948@att.com</p> <p>21 - Grow A Row Michael -mh2685@att.com</p> <p>23- Glow Run Walk Michael mh2685@att.com</p>	<p>18—Schuyler Hamilton House Fran Long fm2948@att.com</p> <p>TBD - United Way Holding Hands (Sandy - spseidorf@aol.com)</p> <p>TBD - Pick an Angel ;Toys for Tots Bedminster, Middletown, Paramus</p>	<p>TBD—Bedminster Blood Drive</p>

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This information is solely advisory, and should not be substituted for medical, legal, financial or tax advice.

Any and all decisions and actions taken by a reader of our articles should not be made without the advice of a qualified professional in his or her respective field.

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## Credits and References

**The Ramp Project:** Paul Fellingham

**Schuyler and Hamilton House:** Fran Long

**The Disaster Relief Project:** Suzanne Balian, Ron Glover, Michael Hickey, Mike Mulvey, Machiko Nagata, Charlie Polak, Bill Pritchett, Madhu Rangi, Lil Zach(late), John Wright, Marie Zach

**Lap Robes:** Marie Zach, and team, Lil Zach (late)

**Operation Shoe Box:** Ron Glover, Mike Mulvey, Charlie Polak, John Wright, Lil Zach (late), Marie Zach

**Ronald McDonald House:** Suzanne Balian, Ron Seidorf, Sandy Seidorf, Machiko Nagata, Theresa Piscioti

**Rubber Ducky & United Way:** Mike Mulvey, Sandy Seidorf, Ron Seidorf

**STEM Activities:** Richard Eastman, Bencilla Powell

**Epilepsy Center Day at the Beach:** Michael Hickey

**Tools 4 Schools:** Suzanne Balian, Ron Glover, Mike Mulvey, Machiko Nagata, Madhu Rangi, Bencilla Powell, Sandy Seidorf, Marie Zach

**Scholarships:** Bencilla Powell, Machiko Nagata, Madhu Rangi, Marie Zach

**Calendar:** Ron Glover, Michael Hickey, CC, Fran Long, Sandy Seidorf

**Fall Luncheon:** Bill Pritchett, Ron Glover