



A ‘Family’ affair:
Westfield, the New Jersey town that helped birth “The Addams Family,” becomes a ghoulish Halloween destination. **12**



Newark Mayor Ras Baraka speaks Oct. 15 at a rally in Trenton where Black leaders called for greater action from New Jersey Democrats on reparations, economic opportunity and civil rights. *Jelani Gibson for NJ.com*

‘We don’t want crumbs.’ Black voters demand greater progress.

Prominent Black leaders in N.J. ask what decades of overwhelming support for Democrats have produced.

Jelani Gibson and Ande Richards
NJ.com

Black voters gave Gov. Mikie Sherrill 94% of their vote in her election as New Jersey governor last year.

Nearly a year later, and with the mid-term elections approaching, some of the state’s most prominent Black leaders are asking what decades of overwhelming support for Democrats has produced in return.

On a chilly October morning in Trenton, Black elected officials, civil rights advocates, activists and business leaders gathered to demand greater progress on issues ranging from economic opportunity and representation to education and reparations.

“Today’s rally is about respect, about equity and about reciprocity,” said John

Harmon, president of the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, which organized the Oct. 15 gathering.

Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, who helped rally Black voters behind Sherrill after challenging her during the Democratic gubernatorial primary, was considerably blunter.

“We don’t want the crumbs anymore, and if they settle for the crumbs we can’t be with them anymore,” he said.

The message was not necessarily that Black voters were preparing to abandon Democrats. It was a demand for a different relationship with a party they have repeatedly helped elect, one in which votes are followed by measurable progress on the issues Black leaders say matter to their communities.

“We can’t fight nobody else’s fights that don’t have our agenda at the forefront,” Baraka said. “We can’t be at anybody else’s parties where we can’t eat. If they don’t celebrate us, we don’t celebrate nobody.”

BATTLES ALREADY FOUGHT

Running through the frustration was a sense that Black Americans are being asked to fight battles previous

SEE SUPPORT, A6

NEWARK

Victim’s family to get \$2.5M after death in mistaken arrest

Man suffering diabetes attack was accused of DUI. “He died a needless death,” says church where the 73-year-old worked.

Riley Yates *NJ.com*

He suffered a slow and agonizing death in police custody, his screams of pain captured on body camera video.

Newark and NJ Transit police believed the 73-year-old church handyman had been driving drunk. But Juan Restrepo, disoriented and so weak he couldn’t walk, was actually gradually dying in front of them from a diabetic attack.

Restrepo’s family said police officers could have easily saved him that day in 2020 if they had gotten him the medical attention he so desperately needed. They sued for wrongful death, charging that for two hours as he deteriorated, police treated Restrepo like a suspect and not the ailing man with heart disease that he was, callously ignoring all-too-obvious signs that he was having a medical episode.

And after a lengthy legal battle, Restrepo’s death will cost Newark and NJ Transit \$2.5 million.

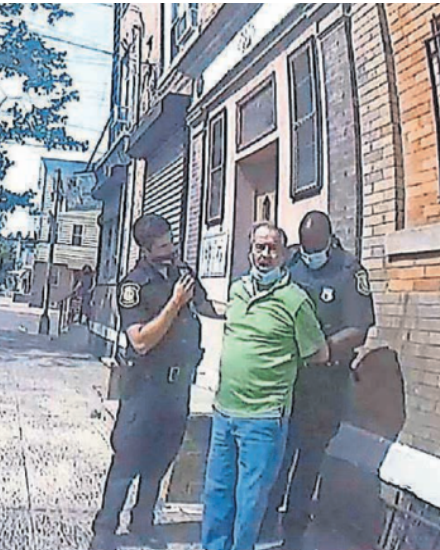
“He died a needless death,” said the Rev. Charles Rush of Christ Church in Summit, where Restrepo served as a beloved sexton for about 20 years. “I mean, that’s the bottom line.”

In a settlement on the cusp of a civil trial in June, Newark agreed to pay \$1.75 million and NJ Transit \$750,000 to Restrepo’s widow, Rocio Restrepo. The terms, partially disclosed in legal filings last month, were confirmed by her lawyer, Stewart Leviss.

The settlement “speaks to what Mr. Restrepo experienced while he was in police custody and what he went through,” said Leviss, who charged officers had a responsibility to get the Summit man a medical evaluation, but failed to “follow their own procedures.”

The police encounter began at 9:45 a.m. on a sunny day on June 15, 2020, after a Chestnut Street convenience store owner called 911 on a customer she

SEE SETTLEMENT, A2



Juan Restrepo is handcuffed by two Newark police officers in June 2020 on suspicion of drunk driving. *Newark Police Department*

ELECTION 2026

Noncitizen removed from N.J. voter rolls after error

The teenage green card holder had been erroneously registered to vote since last fall.

Nicole Rosenthal *NJ.com*

New Jersey has removed from the voter rolls a teenage green card holder who had been registered since last fall after her family publicly criticized the error.

It comes in the midst of an ongoing investigation by Gov. Mikie Sherrill’s administration into the revelation that a computer glitch by the Division of Motor Vehicles may have registered thousands of noncitizens to vote from June 2023 to

2024. Republicans are citing the case in their call for the probe to be expanded. The Sherrill administration, meanwhile, is disputing the young woman’s account of what happened.

Manalapan resident Ilaria Giugliano, a native of Italy, applied for a driver’s license at the Freehold MVC location in September 2024, and was unknowingly added to New Jersey’s voter rolls, despite not being a U.S. citizen, her stepfather Joe Barone told NJ.com.

Her family initially dismissed the first sample ballot she received in the mail last fall as a “fluke,” Barone said. It was only after she received additional sample ballots, including one for the upcoming Nov. 3 election, that Giugliano, now 19, discovered she has been registered as an

unaffiliated active voter in Monmouth County since her 18th birthday.

Giugliano never voted and even took extra precautions to make sure she didn’t accidentally identify herself as a citizen when she applied for a driver’s license at Motor Vehicles, Barone said.

“There’s no integrity here,” Barone said. “If she didn’t care, she could have (voted) in the last few years, because they don’t even check ID,” he said, calling the mix-up a “big concern” as Giugliano is currently applying for U.S. citizenship.

“You don’t just register someone and put their livelihood at risk,” Barone said.

The governor’s office is disputing Giugliano’s story, as well as a New York Sun article written by former News 12 reporter

SEE VOTER, A6

SPORTS **F3**

Yankees catch strays after Brewers’ title win

Brewers manager Pat Murphy takes a shot at the Bombers, who haven’t won a World Series title since 2009, after Wednesday’s series win over the Rays.