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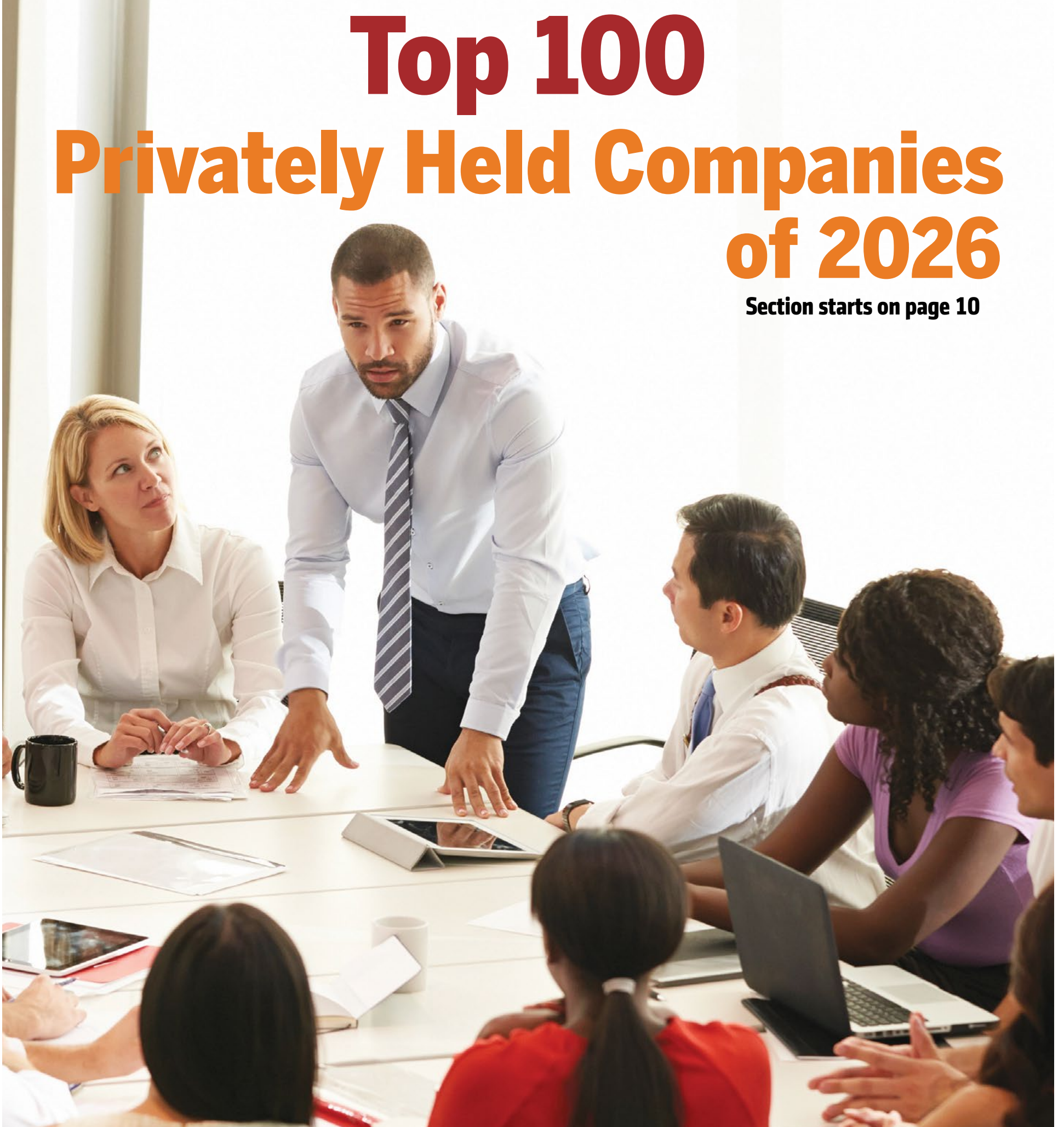
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Jersey girl

With five releases in 2026, movie studios keep betting on Millburn native Anne Hathaway



Anne Hathaway as Penelope and Tom Holland as her son Telemachus in Christopher Nolan's *The Odyssey*. Movie industry watchers describe the 43-year-old Hathaway as a highly bankable, powerhouse talent. She can be everywhere at once — mammoth legacy franchises along with action, sci-fi and indie films. PROVIDED BY MELINDA SUE GORDON/UNIVERSAL PICTURES

BY AMY KUPERINKSY

Anne Hathaway posed on the red carpet outside AMC Lincoln Square in Manhattan, almost iridescent with joy. It was just her latest stop on a global press tour for Christopher Nolan's "The Odyssey." Hathaway stars as Penelope, the vigilant queen of Ithaca and steadfastly loyal wife of Matt Damon's missing King Odysseus.

An imposing 40-foot Trojan horse modeled after the beached wooden steed in the movie was parked on the New York street for the glittery celebrity event. Meanwhile, Hathaway was her own marvel. Hair upswept, wearing a gown with a silver-spangled halter top and empire-waisted, Grecian-inspired skirt, she rested her arms around her pregnant belly at the suggestion of a photographer.

Yes, Anne Hathaway is "mother." She's also an actual mother, with a third child on the way. But it's the New Jersey

actor's other creations have everyone talking this year. Hathaway claims five movie releases in 2026, with titles spread across a wide range of genres, studios and distributors.

That kind of theatrical domination is partly owed to quirks of the ever-shifting film release calendar, which has historically been influenced by delays due to events like strikes and the COVID-19 pandemic. But that's certainly not the only reason.

Industry watchers point to Hathaway's status as a highly bankable, powerhouse talent. She can be everywhere at once — mammoth legacy franchises as well as action, sci-fi and indie movies. Because these days, everyone is in the "Anne Hathaway business."

Hathaway started 2026 playing a pop star looking for reinvention in A24's "Mother Mary." Then came box office dynamite from 20th Century Studios' "The Devil Wears Prada 2," with Hathaway's

journalist character Andy Sachs returning to theaters after more than 20 years alongside Meryl Streep's iconic deadpan magazine editor Miranda Priestly.

Hathaway then moved from Disney to Universal Pictures for her reunion with Christopher Nolan in "The Odyssey." The auteur director's \$250 million take revisits Homer's nearly 3,000-year-old epic. Released July 17, the box office titan has grossed more than \$1.1 billion as of Aug. 13. Now, she stars in the Warner Bros. sci-fi film "The End of Oak Street," which opened Aug. 14. The actor caps her release-packed year in October with "Verity," an Amazon MGM Studios thriller based on Colleen Hoover's bestselling book.

Hathaway, 43, who grew up in Millburn performing at the Paper Mill Playhouse, has the five titles listed in succession on her Instagram bio. The very sight of it became a popular screenshot, given the stacked lineup.

Over the years, much has been made of the “death” of the movie star at large — the idea that such highly popular actors, the kind who draw an audience no matter what, are fading into Hollywood’s past. But Katie Chambers says it’s hard to deny how Anne Hathaway is moving in the business.

“When you look at the range of projects that she’s had in the last year, I mean, if that’s not a movie star, what is?” she says.

Chambers is the spokeswoman for New York Women in Film & Television.

“These major, major studios are all investing in her because they believe in her, and it’s incredible to see that she’s equally as comfortable in these prestige dramas as she is in thrillers, as she is in this kind of wild independent space that A24 caters to, to literary adaptations, to comedies. Doing ‘The Devil Wears Prada’ again and bringing that to a whole new generation has just been incredible to see. It’s even greater to see a woman taking on that kind of range ... I can’t think of a genre that she hasn’t touched in some way.”

Hathaway is the type of actor who grew up on screen. A generation of moviegoers who delighted in “The Devil Wears Prada” in 2005 also grew up with her in films like “The Princess Diaries” (2001) and “Ella Enchanted” (2004) before she made the move to more “adult” dramas like “Brokeback Mountain” (2005) and “Rachel Getting Married” (2008), which generated serious awards attention, including her first Oscar nomination in 2009.

Hathaway’s “Devil Wears Prada” return provided a “hit of nostalgia at a time where people really feel like they need to be uplifted,” Chambers says. Audiences turned up in a massive way, pushing the franchise total (including the box office grosses of the first and second film) past \$1 billion.

“It is not surprising that that would be so widely embraced,” she says of a film built on a treasured Hollywood commodity — existing IP. The sequel benefited from decades of love and re-watches of the original. But the reception to the movie also says much about the kind of pull and longevity actors like Hathaway and Streep command.

“It’s great to see just from a women’s representation standpoint,” Chambers says. “Representation isn’t just about who’s entering the industry and who the new bright, young hot star at the moment is, it’s also about who gets to stay and who gets to grow within the industry and become a leader and create a career and life for themselves, and we’ve been able to see Anne Hathaway do that in real time.”

Staying power is no small feat in a notoriously fickle industry, one that is itself suffering from existential threats

to theatrical exhibitions.

Hathaway can star in a movie like “Mother Mary,” which was made for roughly \$20 million and brought in about \$3 million after its April release, and not fear for her career because of box office, especially with “The Devil Wears Prada 2” looming a few weeks later. She often returns to indie fare like the 2023 psychological thriller “Eileen,” which brought in \$1.6 million along with positive critical reception for Hathaway’s performance in the Jersey-filmed, New England-set powder keg of a story.

“Power in the movie business often translates to the ability to take risks, and that’s not something you often get to see women do,” Chambers says. “It’s a testament to how far she’s come in her career and how highly she’s regarded and how much she was trusted by filmmakers and by studios that she can take these creative risks and still come out on top.”

In role after role, Hathaway also plays complex women — women who live in the media business of 2026 but also speak to us in recast tales from antiquity. “It demonstrates that people want to keep watching women throughout their lives,” Chambers says of Hathaway’s surge as a 40-something actor.

It’s a development that arrives not as a blip or even an Anne-issance, but the next chapter in an already strong career.

PENELOPE’S DILEMMA

Hathaway plunged into intense training in dancing and singing for “Mother Mary.”

For “The Odyssey,” she learned to weave on a loom, which Penelope uses as a crucial tool in her courageous fight against a cruel fate. Hathaway was elated to sign on for the film, having been a Greek mythology buff since eighth grade at Millburn Middle School.

The shrewd Penelope, queen of Ithaca, is wife of Odysseus and mother of Telemachus, played by Spider-Man himself, Tom Holland. She is expected to remarry in the absence of the king, as per custom. But the queen, adorned in regal, draped jewel tones, staves off that reality. She says she will remarry after she finishes weaving a death shroud for her father-in-law. Each night, Penelope further stalls by undoing the progress she’s made on the shroud, trying to guard against a room of restless, aggressive suitors who are eager to kill Telemachus, heir to Odysseus’ throne.

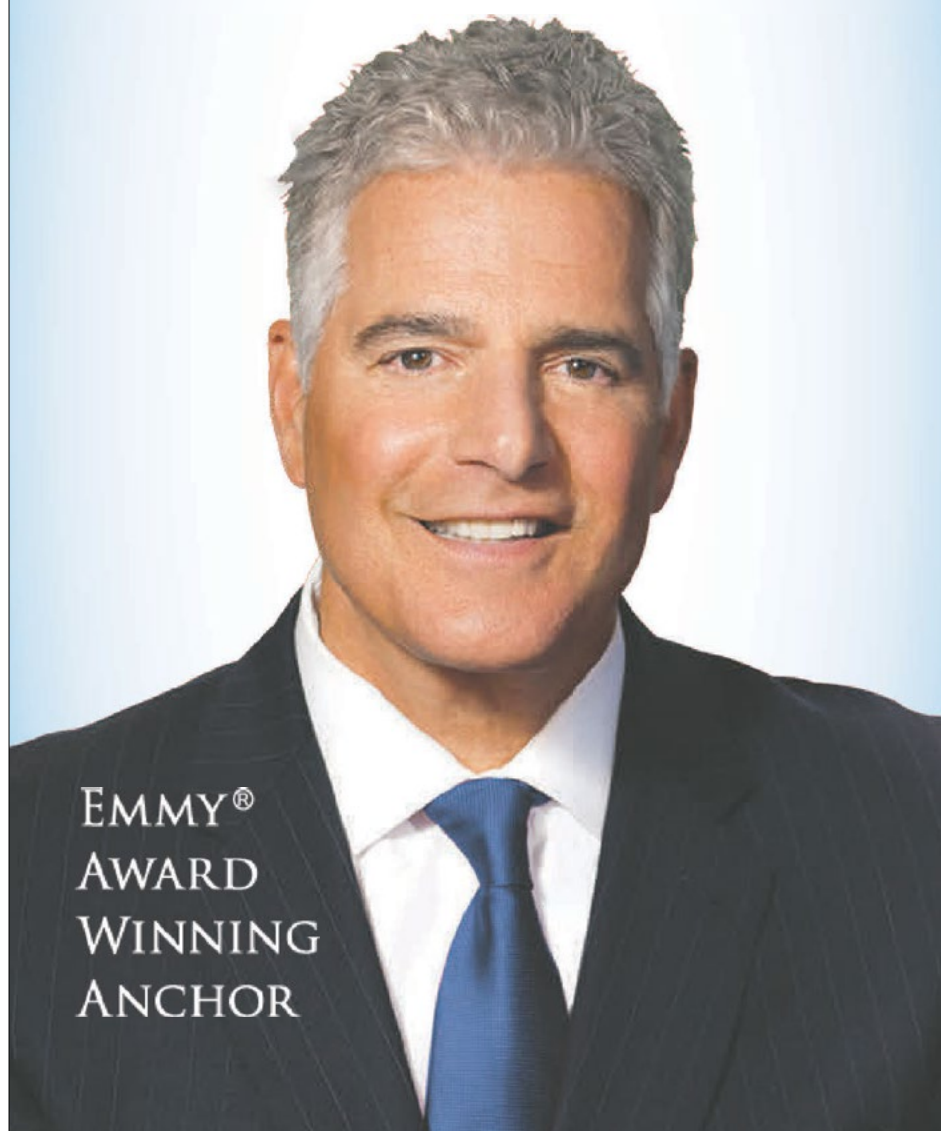
Hathaway’s Penelope, as written by Nolan in this adaptation of Homer’s

See **HATHAWAY** on page 4



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HATHAWAY

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work, emphasizes that with Odysseus gone and unaccounted for, she's already been sitting on the throne in all but name for 20 years. Her devotion stands firm against the threat of the suitors, but she's also making the case that she has been the regent — the one left to keep the troubled kingdom from falling into complete chaos. Unlike the suitors, she remains composed. But inside, she roils with emotion.

Hathaway previously teamed with Nolan in "The Dark Knight Rises" (2012) and "Interstellar" (2014), so their reunion has been more than a decade in the making.

People will seemingly head to the theater for any Nolan movie, given the Oscar-winning director's track record with films like the overwhelmingly successful "Oppenheimer" (2023), which was named best picture. The very question of how he'll approach a classic like "The Odyssey" is compelling enough to get audiences in seats, whether they have access to his preferred IMAX 70mm screenings or not. They also know that his films feature A-list actors he's worked with in other titles — a group that expands signifi-

cantly with this installment. Joining Nolan's stable is a coveted rite of passage for even the most accomplished, Oscar-winning actors.

Pop culture critic and author Padraic Maroney refers to "The Odyssey" lineup as "half of Hollywood."

In addition to Damon, Hathaway and Holland playing the royal family of Ithaca, the cast of Hollywood heavyweights boasts Zendaya, Charlize Theron, Lupita Nyong'o, John Leguizamo and Robert Pattinson, along with striking performances from actors like Samantha Morton and Elliot Page.

THE POST-'HATHAHATE' ERA

Hathaway has enjoyed a distinguished career as one of the most successful actors of her generation. Today, she's noted for her relaxed, easygoing, contented vibes in press junkets and public appearances. Her viral moments include one where she cuts loose on the dance floor, and another where she quiets a loud crowd in Italy with a gentle yet firm "calma."

However, she didn't get there without a famous rough patch.

Before and after her 2013 Oscar win for her performance as Fantine in "Les Misérables," Hathaway, then 30, faced a lot of backlash. The 2010s were

not particularly kind to the actor when it came to public image.

Jane Owen, who was working as a film and TV publicist, remembers it well. The public scorn of Hathaway even had a name — "Hathahate." There was a notion that she seemed insincere, too sincere, or somehow disingenuous.

"It was so crazy, but the world is in a different place," says Owen, who thinks the pre-#MeToo response was partly due to the perception of Hathaway's dominance in the industry at that time. "We criticized women purely for being successful."

Now Hathaway is on the other side of the "Hathahate" as the beneficiary of plentiful adoration and a staunchly loyal fandom. She's even getting ready to embrace the character that marked her feature film debut. More than 25 years later, she'll return as another queen: Mia Thermopolis, queen of Genovia, in "The Princess Diaries 3."

"Anne Hathaway is a symbol of what is happening to women all over this country," says Melissa Silverstein, founder of Women and Hollywood. "She is stepping into her power and authenticity. She might have been ahead of the curve early in her career, but now when you see her speak and based on

the roles she picks, she is comfortable in herself and that is a joy to see."

Hathaway announced her pregnancy with an Instagram reveal in June, as press for "The Odyssey" started to ramp up.

Her visibility helps to "normalize that idea that women can and should continue to work and pursue their passions as they pursue something equally as exciting as motherhood," Chambers says.

With a record spanning prestige dramas, musicals and dramedies along with romances like "The Idea of You," Hathaway isn't confined to a specific lane for what she'll do next.

"She appeals to all different types of audiences," says entertainment attorney Marc Hershberg. "It's an exciting time for her because she really does have this iconic filmography."

Could there be a resurgence of Hathahate?

"Whenever you hear someone has five movies, the immediate thought is 'are they going to burn people out?'" Maroney says.

Sure, movie star fatigue can happen, but that story's already been written. Betting against Hathaway?

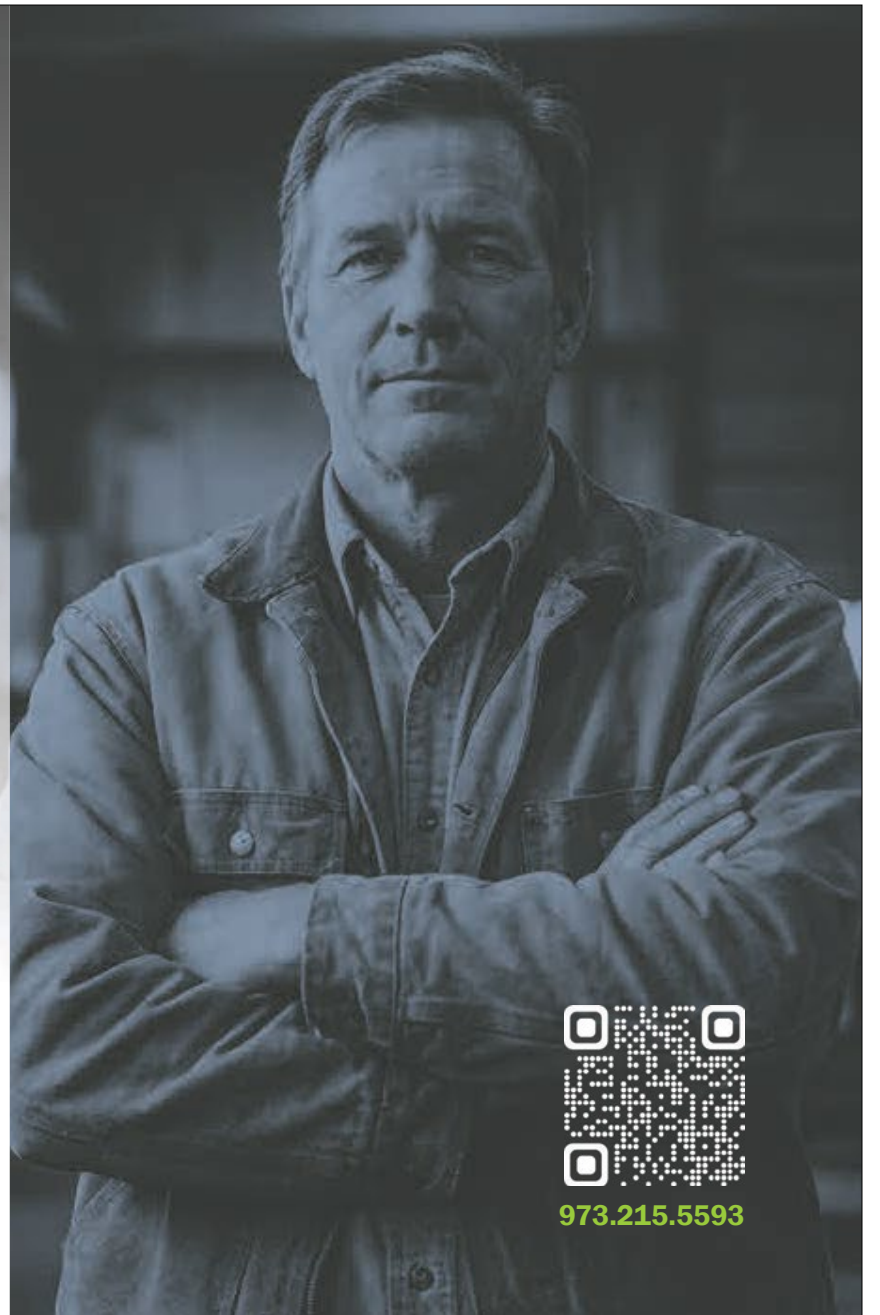
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From hours to seconds

How automating routine tasks with AI saves valuable time for public defenders

BY KIMBERLY REDMOND

The New Jersey Office of the Public Defender is tapping artificial intelligence to streamline one of the most time-consuming parts of practicing law. Thanks to a partnership with Princeton University, the New Jersey Innovation Authority and New Jersey Office of Information Technology, the statewide agency is rolling out a secure, proprietary platform designed to help public defenders efficiently draft legal briefs.

Through the OPD Resource Library, attorneys can quickly access years of briefs, motions, training materials and institutional expertise from one unified, searchable system that provides a reliable starting point for legal research.

Before the platform's launch, New Jersey Public Defender Jennifer Sellitti said attorneys "did something that I lovingly refer to as Frankenbriefing."

Because this knowledge previously only existed across NJOPD of-

fices, servers and databases, public defenders had to spend hours combing through legal briefs, motions and other legal documents before manually piecing together drafts.

Under the new system, the process of finding and assembling relevant language from expert-vetted language now takes only "seconds," according to Sellitti.

"So much of the fear around AI is that it's going to take over and it's going to make us less human," Sellitti said. "But, the more we automate the mundane tasks and the more we automate processes that are going on behind the scenes and are just super time-consuming for everybody – support staff, investigators and attorneys – that time is going to come back as creativity, one-on-one client experiences, and with lawyers that feel like they can breathe and do their jobs," she said.

While public defense remains a people-driven profession, attorneys are increasingly balancing high case-loads and growing administrative de-

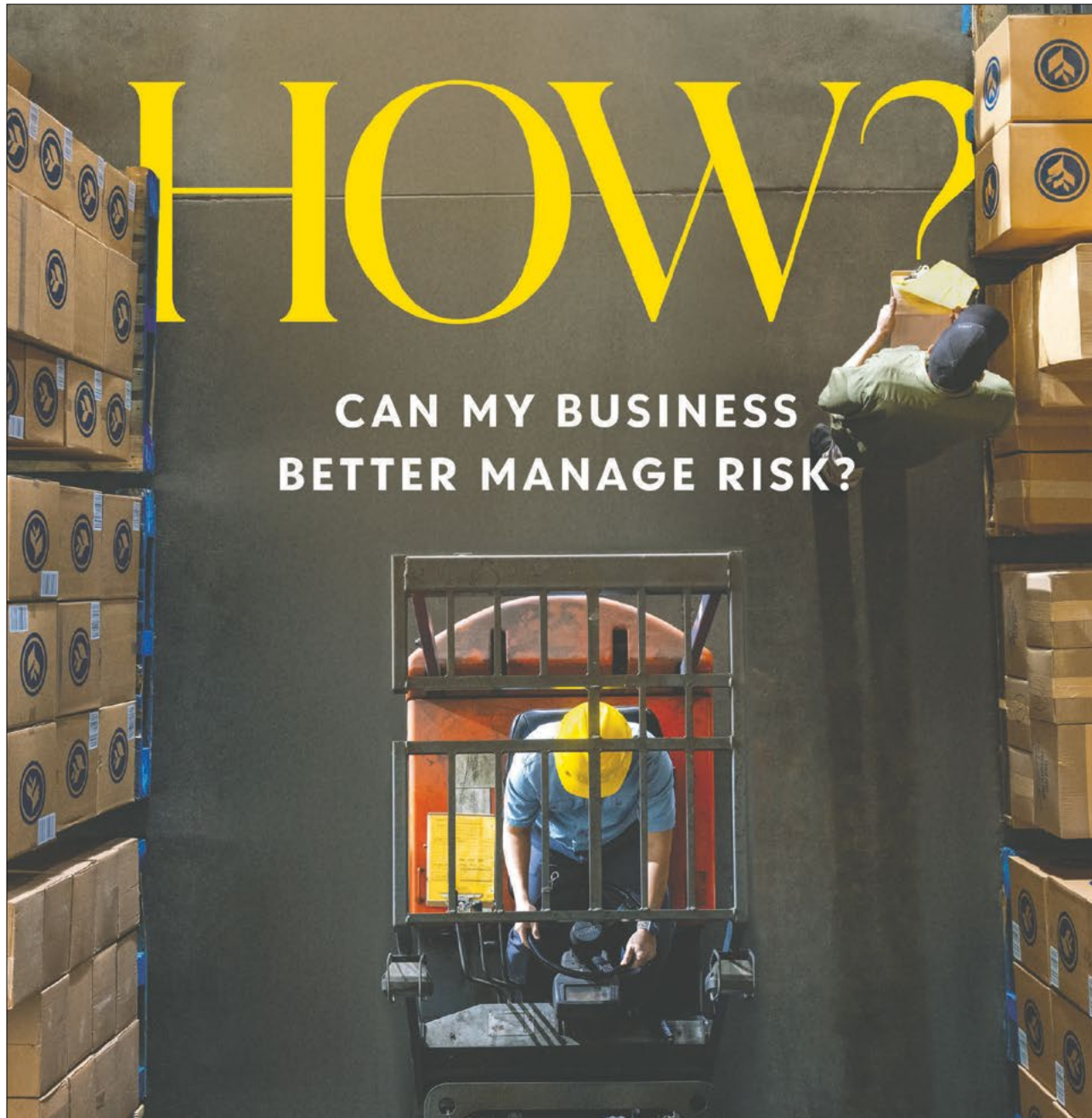


mands. As a result, there's less time for the client relationships and advocacy that matter most in this line of work, according to the American Bar Association's 2023 National Public Defense Workload Study.

Amid growing adoption of AI tools across all industries, New Jersey is among the first public defender offices in the U.S. to deploy a custom platform tailored to public defense work.

The legal profession appears to be rapidly embracing AI. Thomson Reuters' 2026 Future of Professionals report found that 74% of professionals now use AI several times a week, while one-third use AI tools their employers have not approved — underscoring the demand for secure, enterprise-grade systems.

See **AUTOMATION** on page 6



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AUTOMATION

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At NJOPD, the hope is that by helping attorneys spend less time on routine work, it will allow more time for advocacy, client engagement and case preparation, according to Sellitti.

"The inspiration for the project really came from this kind of realization around public defense and public defense resourcing — we are always in a place where we could use more lawyers. And I have to say that in New Jersey, we're not particularly understaffed compared to other jurisdictions, but there's always this sense of, you want to give your lawyers the most time they can spend per client. And we can do that in a lot of ways. We can do that by asking for more lawyers to lower caseloads, but we can also look at ways that we can use technology to give lawyers more time to do the things that we want them to be doing," she explained.

"But, if we can use technology to automate the more mundane tasks that lawyers do, we give them back time where they can do the more creative thinking, the more strategic thinking, or most importantly, sitting and holding space for a client and being face-to-face with their clients," she explained.

Sellitti said, "So, when I started looking at AI and imagining all of the things that AI could do for public defense, I started looking at what are points of pain for our lawyers that take up a lot of time that don't need to."

That prompted her to consider how AI could speed up the task of reviewing past briefs and assembling a starting draft so that attorneys could focus on higher-level legal strategy.

She said, "That was sort of the place that we started as something that we could automate pretty easily without compromising the thought process that we expect our attorneys to go through."

While the platform automates the process of assembling research, attorneys are still responsible for the legal analysis, writing and case strategy, according to Sellitti.

HUMAN CONNECTIONS

Sellitti was sworn in as New Jersey's public defender in February 2024 after nearly two decades with the agency. She previously held several leadership roles within the office, including director of training and communications and deputy of the Middlesex Trial Region.

With 1,300 attorneys, investigators, social workers and professional staff

across 66 offices serving all 21 counties in the state, NJOPD is one of the nation's largest public defense systems.

New Jersey's office was also the first in the U.S. It formed in 1967, four years after the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark *Gideon v. Wainwright* decision guaranteed the right to legal counsel for criminal defendants who cannot afford an attorney.

In addition to representing indigent defendants in criminal cases, the agency has grown to handle juvenile, family, mental health and appellate matters for those who cannot cover the cost of private counsel. On an annual basis, NJOPD sees more than 100,000 cases across its various divisions.

Since taking office, Sellitti has prioritized modernizing NJOPD and strengthening client-centered representation across the state.

That's included advancing one of the nation's first statewide holistic representation models to connect clients earlier with services such as housing, treatment, employment, healthcare and benefits while supporting better outcomes for clients, communities and the justice system. Sellitti has also expanded interdisciplinary representation, youth defense practices and community-based services, including

expungement clinics and outreach initiatives.

Sellitti doesn't consider herself tech savvy but says she's "always tended to be an early adopter of things that I think can improve my work and my life." So, Sellitti said she wanted to examine ways NJOPD "could automate because we were kind of behind when it came to automation."

"I have always been a public defender as a lawyer ... We have large caseloads, we have serious cases. We are very much people who have to learn how to triage work so that we can make sure that every client is getting everything they need and getting the best defense," she said.

"So as a person now running the agency, it's not just about good client service. It's like, how do I keep lawyers? How do I keep people from burning out? How do I make people love their jobs? How do I make them fall in love with their job again? If we can use technology to help eliminate some of the pain and the time-consuming tasks, what we're giving them back is the stuff that brought them to the work in the first place," Sellitti said.

When she started looking for potential partners, Sellitti was led to the New Jersey State Office of Innovation



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during the summer of 2024.

During those initial conversations with then-New Jersey State Chief Innovation Officer Beth Noveck, Sellitti said she emphasized wanting to find ways to adopt AI “make my lawyers’ jobs easier and to allow them more human connection with their clients.”

Sellitti recalled, “She perked up and was like, ‘All I’m hearing is doom and gloom and how people are afraid of AI, so this is exciting.’ And that started our partnership with them.”

“One of the things that the Innovation Authority does is that it works with organizations and institutions within the state in order to fulfill some of the demands of these projects,” Sellitti said.

Thanks to the coordination of the OOI, Princeton was looped in to work on the project.

As part of the process, Princeton professor Peter Henderson and post-doctoral research fellow Dominik Stambach studied public defense real-world workflows and identified where AI could meaningfully support that work.

While stress-testing commercially available AI systems against the unique demands of NJOPD, they learned those existing tools were just not designed for the language, legal reasoning, search

needs or security requirements of public defense.

That led to the decision to build a customized AI-powered tool that checked all those boxes.

Described as an “AI-enhanced search engine for legal briefs,” the OPD Resource Library allows users to search public and internal agency materials using questions or plain-language phrases.

The system then surfaces relevant sections from prior briefs and provides AI-generated summaries to contextualize the findings. To ensure accuracy and ease of review, the tool supplies the original PDF with the specific, relevant section automatically highlighted for immediate verification.

Princeton researchers spent several months working with the NJOPD public defenders to test and refine the system’s results to ensure it surfaces the most relevant source materials.

Unlike off-the-shelf AI models that risk data leaks or provide generic information, this tool was built to search NJOPD’s internal library of 3,000 briefs, 200 internal documents and 350 directives.

Bringing the platform into a secure, statewide production environment was possible through NJOPD’s collabora-

tion with the New Jersey Innovation Authority and the New Jersey Office of Information Technology.

While the New Jersey Innovation Authority familiarized the team with policies, best practices and tools surrounding AI, NJOIT provided the technical expertise necessary to integrate and host the platform within the state’s secure, internal infrastructure. The partners noted that all data within the OPD Resource Library remains confidential.

By keeping the system within state-managed boundaries, the platform operates with strict data-safety protections to preserve the confidentiality of NJOPD’s research and client files, the partners said.

Henderson said, “It is exciting to show a blueprint for how artificial intelligence, implemented responsibly through such impactful partnerships, can empower civil servants and improve public services.”

‘YOU’RE STILL RESPONSIBLE’

As part of its broader strategy, NJOPD is expanding use of AI to support daily public defense work “while keeping human judgement at the center.” That includes piloting tools to aid investigators, support service staff and

administrative personnel with organizing discovery, building timelines, summarizing documents and tracking internal case needs.

Attorneys are also using AI-assisted legal research tools within secure commercial databases, such as Westlaw, to analyze case law, summarize opinions, compare legal standards and verify citations.

While those platforms can help with certain actions, Sellitti said, “The message is always you still have to do the thinking. You still have to watch the discovery. You still have to read the discovery. You still have to do all of those things and you’re still responsible for the work.”

“I always say to people ... you wouldn’t just take a brief that an intern gave you and file it. You would read it, you would change it, you would incorporate it, you would make sure that it’s right. You should treat the AI the same way. It’s just like a person who works a lot faster,” she said.

“We’re being really creative about how we’re using it and where we’re using it because it is where we’re going and you definitely don’t want to be behind it,” Sellitti said. “I think we got

See **AUTOMATION** on page 8

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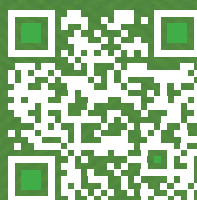
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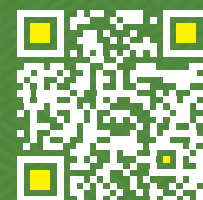
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AUTOMATION

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out early in terms of trying to embrace it. At our core as public defenders, we want to spend as much time we can with the people we serve and with the people we represent. I see technology as a way to make us more human, not less, because if we can automate the mundane, we can spend more time doing what AI cannot do."

"Public defenders are always swords and shields. We are always both people who are trying to advance arguments in court, but we are also trying to stop opponents or our adversaries from advancing arguments in court," she said.

"The more my lawyers know about AI and the better that they can use it in their daily life, the better they're going to be at spotting bad AI when it's coming into court against their client. AI is now becoming much more influential and being used much more in forensic applications, for example, in changing or tampering with evidence potentially. All of those things we have to be on the lookout for. And if we're not teaching our lawyers how to use it offensively, there's no way we're going to be able to mount a good defense," Sellitti said.

OPPORTUNITIES AHEAD

Because Sellitti envisions AI as more than a tool for attorneys, its adoption has required broader organizational changes that have included new roles and training to allow the agency to adapt more quickly.

After noticing that some support staff were "really, really good at using technology," Sellitti said the agency restructured to help roll out the system statewide.

"And within state government, the secretarial path eventually bumps

out because we're civil service, and you get stuck in this track where you can't really get promoted anymore and you can't really get more money," she said. "We would lose a lot of really good secretaries going to private firms, prosecutor's offices and things like that.

"We decided to take some of those positions, turn them into IT positions and allow the secretaries to apply to those positions. And technically now they're reporting to IT where they have an opportunity to make more money and be in a different civil service track, but they're staying in their offices and their role is changing from more basic secretarial duties to being the technology liaison," she said.

"So, they liaise between IT and the staff and can teach an attorney maybe who's not great with technology how to use the brief bank or do trainings within the office. And literally their job being helping the attorneys in the office maximize the tools that we're giving them," Sellitti said.

"AI isn't just changing the way individuals are doing their work ... it's going to fundamentally transform the way organizations do business," she said, adding, "We believe in our people. We're not going to let people go because a portion of their job is done. We have to reconfigure what their job is ... It is an opportunity to be able to more quickly adapt to technology, but also to give people who feel stuck an opportunity to advance in the agency."

'WE ARE INCREDIBLY LUCKY'

While Sellitti doesn't get the sense that the legal industry or other state agencies are hesitant about AI, she thinks there may not always be a practical way for those sectors to incorporate it.

"We are incredibly lucky in New

Jersey - first with Gov. [Phil] Murphy who birthed this Office of Innovation and to the Sherrill administration that made the commitment to make it permanent," she said. "The Innovation Authority enables a government agency to act like a startup, which is really, really rare."

Boosting the state's innovation economy was a top priority for Murphy. Before leaving office in January, one of his final acts was signing legislation creating the New Jersey Innovation Authority. With that move, New Jersey became the first state in the nation to codify a state innovation office into law.

In her Fiscal Year 2027 \$60.7 billion budget, Gov. Mikie Sherrill included \$23.5 million for the New Jersey Innovation Authority. That's \$13.3 million more than the prior spending plan set aside to support government technology modernization initiatives.

Sellitti said, "Government agencies cannot think like government agencies if they're going to meet the demands that are going to come with AI. You have to start thinking like private businesses.

"You've got to put that hat on of thinking about, 'How would I do this if this was a private company and I could do anything?' And then figure out how to do it within your existing state government structure. And again, we're lucky because Gov. Murphy and then Gov. Sherrill gave us a way to do that, but it's an example other states should take because we can develop technology through the Innovation Authority in about a quarter of the time that you could do it under the regular [NJ]OIT process," she said.

"But I recognize that when I talk to public defender offices [outside of New Jersey], even if they're a statewide system, that is something that's just not available to them," Sellitti explained.

"The states that have the biggest challenges when it comes to caseload and burnout are probably the states that aren't going to be able to afford it ... There are very few statewide public defender agencies and there's a power in being large and being part of state government that these county-based systems just don't have, particularly in certain parts of the country," she said.

Only about two dozen states operate centralized statewide public defender agencies, giving New Jersey a scale that Sellitti said makes projects like the AI platform more feasible than in county-based systems.

"Often, in other states you have small county-based systems and certain systems in states that are resource poor. And just the idea of doing anything like this seems impossible," Sellitti said, adding, "I'm concerned for that sort of population of public defender offices."

"So, when I talk to people in those jurisdictions, I say you can start small," Sellitti said.

She suggested that organizations can use free or low-cost generative platforms - as long as they are anonymizing sensitive information.

Another group that Sellitti is concerned may not keep pace are smaller law firms.

"The other people that I see falling behind are mid-sized law firms. The big firms can buy tools. We can create and we can buy tools because we're a big state agency. It's the solo practitioner and the small firms that can't afford these high-cost tools," she said.

"I don't know what the solution to those problems are, but I think that states are soon going to have to reckon with this gap that is being created by people who can't afford to either build or buy this kind of technology falling behind and being worried about those people falling behind," she said.

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You're the top

A closer look behind the numbers among the state's most-sizeable privately owned businesses

BY JESSICA PERRY

A new company takes the No. 1 spot on the 2026 NJBIZ Top 100 Privately Owned Companies list. Piscataway-based SHI International Corp. posted \$16 billion in 2025 total global revenue, the ranking criteria for the roster. The \$1 billion boost marks a 7% year-over-year increase.

Overall, the top five represents a slight shakeup over last year's list. Acquisitive Imperial Dade of Jersey City moved from fourth to second, with \$5.31 billion in revenue. NFI took third place, up from fifth last year, and with a 3% increase in revenue. And Saker ShopRites Inc. and NJM Insurance Group followed, respectively fourth and fifth, with the latter boosted by 10%

year-over-year revenue growth.

BIGGEST GAINS

On this year's list, 18 privately-owned New Jersey companies posted revenue gains of more than 20%.

An Edison-based leader in mission critical data center solutions, including specialized Vertiv air and power, traditional HVAC, fire

protection and health and safety products and services, Stillwell-Hansen Inc. had the largest increase, with 119% revenue growth.

The company also jumped the most places (27).

The next-closest, global specialty chemicals and metals supplier GE Chaplin Inc. of Flemington, increased its earnings by 86% and jumped to No. 44.

RANK	COMPANY	2025 REVENUE	PERCENT CHANGE
1	Stillwell-Hansen Inc.	\$185 million	+119%
2	GE Chaplin Inc.	\$134 million	+86%
3	Everwell Health	\$75 million	+50%
4	EisnerAmper	\$1.2 billion	+42%
5	Thermo Systems	\$235 million	+37%
6	Colliers Engineering & Design	\$674.9 million	+33%
7	Cibo Vita	\$474 million	+32%
8	Sovereign Consulting Inc.	\$49.8 million	+31%
9	REDCOM Design & Construction	\$57 million	+30%
10	Jingoli-DCO	\$1.11 billion	+26%
10	Cole Schotz PC	\$228.8 million	+26%

A closer look at the top 10 suggests strong firm – rather than sector – growth, with professional service firms making the most significant moves.

BIGGEST DROPS

Those that did post dips in revenue did so at a much smaller scale than this year's gainers.

Sweetwater Construction Corp. had the largest drop by percentage on this year's list. The 41% decline took the Cranbury-based builder

from No. 49 to No. 62 in 2026. Meanwhile, Vericon Construction Co. LLC posted a 38% revenue drop year over year.

RANK	COMPANY	2025 REVENUE	PERCENT CHANGE
1	Sweetwater Construction Corp.	\$71.55 million	-41%
2	Vericon Construction Co. LLC	\$220.88 million	-38%
3	Massa Multimedia Architecture PC	\$48.52 million	-24%
4	Torcon Inc.	\$509 million	-22%
5	Equiliem	\$145 million	-21%
6	J.R. Prisco Inc.	\$30 million	-15%
7	Astir IT Solutions Inc.	\$36 million	-14%
8	Bayshore Family of Cos.	\$112 million	-10%
8	Haas Construction Management	\$42.3 million	-10%
10	LB Commercial Realty LLC	\$51 million	-9%

While mid-size firms made the most gains on the overall list, declining firms represent a mix of both large and small companies highlighting sector and/or project-specific headwinds. Taken with the gains made by others in construction and contracting , such as Jingoli-DCO and REDCOM Design & Construction, the data highlights vola-

tility in the sector amid increasing and inconsistent costs, geopolitical tensions and labor constraints. Through midyear, JLL reported construction costs above the forecast range it established in November, “with anticipated relief mechanisms gone from the outlook.” Staffing services also showed some weaknesses, according to the informa-

tion. Both Equiliem (-21%) and Astir IT (-14%) appear in the top 10 decliners. Feeding into the “small firm effect,” size seemed to also impact how much companies can scale. Several smaller and mid-size firms (less than \$500 million revenue) emerged as those with the top growth by percentage on the 2026 list, while most billion-dollar busi-

nesses, such as SHI, Imperial Dade, NFI and Saker Shoprites, posted single digit growth. The complete NJBIZ Top 100 Privately Owned Businesses ranking begins on p. 10. Want to get listed? Head to njbiz.com/data-center for additional details and to submit your information. Email: jperry@njbiz.com

Rank PR	Company Website Year Est.	Address Phone	Senior Executive(s)	No. of Employees in N.J.	2024 Total Global Revenue	Revenue Percent Change	2025 Total Global Revenue
1 2	SHI International Corp. www.shi.com 1989	290 Davidson Ave. Somerset, NJ 08873 (888) 764-8888	Thai Lee	2,000	\$15 billion	7%	\$16 billion
2 4	Imperial Dade www.imperialdade.com 1935	255 Route 1 and 9 Jersey City, NJ 07306-6727 (201) 437-7440	Jason Tillis Robert Tillis	750	\$5.12 billion	4%	\$5.31 billion
3 5	NFI www.nfiindustries.com 1932	2 Cooper St. Camden, NJ 08102 877-NFI-3777	Sidney Brown Ike Brown Jeffrey Brown	1,154	\$3.6 billion	3%	\$3.7 billion
4 8	Saker ShopRites Inc. shoprite.com 1947	10 Centerville Road Holmdel, NJ 07733 (732) 294-2224	Richard J. Saker	12,000	\$3.11 billion	3%	\$3.2 billion
5 9	NJM Insurance Group www.njm.com 1913	301 Sullivan Way West Trenton, NJ 08628 (609) 883-1300	Carol Voorhees	2,473	\$2.8 billion	10%	\$3.07 billion
6 6	Mott MacDonald www.mottmac.com/americas 1866	111 Wood Ave. S. Iselin, NJ 08830-4112 (973) 379-3400	Dean F. Radeloff	346	\$3.21 billion	-11%	\$2.85 billion
7 10	Ferring Pharmaceuticals www.ferringusa.com 1950	100 Interpace Parkway Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 796-1600	Brent Ragans	605	\$2.4 billion	8%	\$2.6 billion
8 11	Gellert Global Group gellertglobalgroup.com 1945	1 Atalanta Plaza Elizabeth, NJ 07206 (201) 956-8741	George G. Gellert Robert Gellert Andrew M. Gellert	323	\$1.71 billion	1%	\$1.72 billion
9 12	Goya Foods Inc. www.goya.com 1936	350 County Road Jersey City, NJ 07307 (201) 348-4900	N/A	N/A	\$1.5 billion	0%	\$1.5 billion
10 13	Fedway Associates and Affiliated Cos. www.fedway.com 1934	20 North Ave. E. Elizabeth, NJ 07201 (973) 624-6444	Robert Sansone John Devin Chris Natale	1,100	\$1.41 billion	5%	\$1.48 billion

List ranked by 2025 global revenue. There is no charge to be included in NJBIZ lists. We assume that information provided by representatives is accurate and truthful. We are not responsible for the omission of organizations that do not respond to our requests for information. Information received after press deadline cannot be included. If you wish to be included in future lists visit <https://www.njbiz.com/data-center/> and click on "Add My Business" or email lists@njbiz.com. The list, or any parts of them, cannot be reproduced without written permission from NJBIZ. For more information on NJBIZ, please visit www.njbiz.com. Source: The companies. As of 2026, the Top 250 Private Cos. list has been changed to the Top 100, making inclusion even more selective and recognizing New Jersey's largest privately held companies. NA: Not Available. NR: Not Ranked.

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Rank PR	Company Website Year Est.	Address Phone	Senior Executive(s)	No. of Employees in N.J.	2024 Total Global Revenue	Revenue Percent Change	2025 Total Global Revenue
11 15	AmeriHealth www.amerhealth.com 1994	259 Prospect Plains Road, Bldg. M Cranbury, NJ 08512 (888) 968-7241	Mike Munoz	140	\$1.16 billion	24%	\$1.44 billion
12 14	Allied Beverage Group www.alliedbeverage.com 1933	700 Kapkowski Road Elizabeth, NJ 07201 (800) 272-1323	Jeffrey Altschuler	950	\$1.35 billion	-2%	\$1.33 billion
13 19	EisnerAmper www.eisneramper.com 1963	111 Wood Ave. S. Iselin, NJ 08830-2700 (732) 243-7880	Charles Weinstein Diane Wasser	573	\$848 million	42%	\$1.2 billion
14 16	Aurobindo Pharma USA Inc. www.aurobindousa.com 1986	279 Princeton-Hightstown Road East Windsor, NJ 08520-1401 (732) 839-9400	Biren Shah Swami Iyer	325	\$1.04 billion	9%	\$1.14 billion
15 18	Jingoli-DCO www.jingoli.com 1922	100 Lenox Drive, Suite 100 Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-2332 (609) 896-3111	Michael D. Jingoli Joseph R. Jingoli Jr. Robert E. Reager	498	\$883.96 million	26%	\$1.11 billion
16 17	Stephen Gould Corp. www.stephengould.com 1939	5 Giralda Farms Road Madison, NJ 07940 (973) 428-1500	Justin Golden Michael Golden Kim Ings	124	\$930.94 million	-0%	\$926.97 million
17 23	World Insurance Associates LLC www.worldinsurance.com 2011	100 Wood Ave. S. Iselin, NJ 08830 (732) 380-0900	John Newell Rich Eknoian Renae Flanders	572	\$644 million	21%	\$777 million
18 NR	Diane Turton, Realtors www.dianeturton.com 1985	2204 Bridge Ave. Point Pleasant, NJ 08742 (732) 449-4441	Diane S. Turton	350	\$619.59 million	19%	\$739.97 million
19 29	Colliers Engineering & Design www.colliersengineering.com 1984	101 Crawfords Corner Road, Suite 3400 Holmdel, NJ 07733 (732) 383-1950	Kevin Haney	637	\$506.94 million	33%	\$674.88 million
20 NR	Langan Engineering and Environmental Services LLC www.langan.com 1970	300 Kimball Drive Parsippany, NJ 07054-2172 (973) 560-4900	David T. Gockel	465	\$509 million	22%	\$621.43 million

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21 26	Withum www.withum.com 1974	506 Carnegie Center, Suite 400 Princeton, NJ 08540 (609) 520-1188	Pat Walsh Chris DeMayo	878	\$577.8 million	5%	\$609 million
22 27	Doherty Enterprises Inc. www.dohertyinc.com 1985	7 Pearl Court Allendale, NJ 07401 (201) 818-4669	Edward Doherty Tim Doherty Daniel Bratcher	2,500	\$568.5 million	5%	\$595.25 million
23 24	Viking Yacht Co. www.vikingyachts.com 1964	5738 Route 9 New Gretna, NJ 08224 (609) 296-6000	Patrick Healey	1,544	\$621.84 million	-5%	\$593.31 million
24 32	Lowenstein Sandler LLP www.lowenstein.com 1961	One Lowenstein Drive Roseland, NJ 07068 (973) 597-2500	Gary M. Wingens Michael Caplan Jonathan Wishnia	446	\$441.92 million	18%	\$523.4 million
25 22	Torcon Inc. www.torcon.com 1965	328 Newman Springs Road Red Bank, NJ 07701 (732) 704-9800	Benedict Torcivia Joseph J. Torcivia Jr. Joseph Torcivia Jr.	160	\$648.44 million	-22%	\$509 million
26 33	Cibo Vita www.cibovita.com 2009	12 Vreeland Ave. Totowa, NJ 07012 (888) 470-0006	Ahmet Celik Emre Imamoglu Burcu Uzun Silahtaroglu	1,200	\$360 million	32%	\$473.95 million
27 31	Johnson & Towers www.johnsontowers.com 1927	2021 Briggs Road Mount Laurel, NJ 08054 (856) 234-6990	David Johnson	100	\$442 million	4%	\$460 million
27 30	UTC Overseas Inc. www.utcoverseas.com 1989	370 W. Passaic St. Rochelle Park, NJ 07662 (201) 270-4636	Rudy Steudel Mirko Knezevic	23	\$455.3 million	1%	\$460 million
29 NR	Kinly ❶ www.kinly.com 1985	1350 Campus Parkway, Suite 202 Wall, NJ 07753 (732) 413-6000	Ken Scaturro	160	\$463.37 million	-6%	\$433.26 million
30 35	Stanford Investment Group www.stanfordinvgroup.com 1992	629 Grove St., Suite 100 Ridgewood, NJ 07450 (201) 652-8529	Dave Rajpurohit	15	\$350 million	6%	\$370 million

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❶ Formerly listed as Yorktel.
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Rank PR	Company Website Year Est.	Address Phone	Senior Executive(s)	No. of Employees in N.J.	2024 Total Global Revenue	Revenue Percent Change	2025 Total Global Revenue
31 37	McCarter & English LLP ^❶ www.mccarter.com 1844	Four Gateway Center, 100 Mulberry St. Newark, NJ 07102-4056 (973) 622-4444	Mary Gabriel Joseph T. Boccassini Robert Mintz	420	\$292 million	14%	\$334 million
32 36	Abel HR Inc. www.AbelHR.com 1992	2 Corporate Drive Cranbury, NJ 08512-3604 (609) 860-0400	James W. Bell Sr. James W. Bell III Douglas Abronski	40	\$321.93 million	4%	\$333.83 million
33 40	Thermo Systems www.thermosystems.com 1998	84 Twin Rivers Drive East Windsor, NJ 08520 (609) 371-3300	Eric Silk David Kuznick Sueann Snodgrass	100	\$172 million	37%	\$235 million
34 38	Epic Management Inc. www.epicbuilds.com 1971	136 Eleventh St. Piscataway, NJ 08854-1572 (732) 752-6100	Robert Epifano Jr. William Morris Jr.	125	\$226.31 million	4%	\$234.56 million
35 42	Cole Schotz PC www.coleschotz.com 1926	25 Court Plaza N., 25 Main St. Hackensack, NJ 07601 (201) 489-3000	Randi Kochman Warren Usatine	194	\$181.34 million	26%	\$228.75 million
36 39	Cumberland Mutual www.cumberlandmutual.com 1844	633 Shiloh Pike Bridgeton, NJ 08302 (856) 451-4050	Paul Ritter Jeff Ritter	125	\$204.42 million	8%	\$221.41 million
37 34	Vericon Construction Co. LLC www.vericon.com 2005	1063 Route 22 E. Mountainside, NJ 07092 (908) 873-0022	Stephen M. Mellett Sr. Robert Mikell Charles DeAngelis	123	\$357.07 million	-38%	\$220.88 million
38 65	Stillwell-Hansen Inc. www.stillwell-hansen.com 1969	3 Fernwood Ave. Edison, NJ 08818-7820 (732) 225-7474	N/A	52	\$84.6 million	119%	\$185 million
39 44	Manasquan Bank www.manasquan.bank 1874	2221 Landmark Place Wall Township, NJ 08736 (732) 223-4500	James S. Vaccaro	257	\$154.07 million	13%	\$174.6 million
40 45	System Freight Inc. www.systemfreight.net 1975	7 Centre Drive, Suite 5 Jamesburg, NJ 08831 (609) 395-8600	Michael Pagliuca James C. LaMarca	150	\$140 million	7%	\$150 million

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❶ On Sept. 4, 2025, McCarter & English announced the acquisition of New York City-based Ross Law Group.

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41 46	Pomptonian Food Service www.pomptonian.com 1959	155 Passaic Ave., Suite 210 Fairfield, NJ 07004 (973) 882-8070	Mark Vidovich Candy Vidovich Cathy Penna	2,538	\$133.62 million	9%	\$145.82 million
42 41	Equiliem equiliem.com 2003	25 Kennedy Blvd. East Brunswick, NJ 08816 (732) 238-6050	Shannon Block Linda Block Bradley Block	172	\$182.5 million	-21%	\$145 million
43 53	SAX Advisory Group www.saxadvisorygroup.com 1956	389 Interpace Parkway, Suite 3 Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 472-6250	Joseph A. Damiano	217	\$110 million	25%	\$138 million
44 68	GE Chaplin Inc. www.gechaplin.com 1988	4 Walter Foran Blvd., Suite 406 Flemington, NJ 08822 (908) 788-0749	Gregg Chaplin	5	\$72 million	86%	\$134 million
45 52	Chiesa Shahinian & Giantomasi PC (CSG Law) www.csglaw.com 1972	105 Eisenhower Parkway Roseland, NJ 07068 (973) 325-1500	Marie Mathews	340	\$113.66 million	17%	\$133.51 million
46 54	Wm. Blanchard Co. www.wmblanchard.com 1860	199 Mountain Ave. Springfield, NJ 07081 (973) 376-9100	William I. Blanchard Clifford W. Blanchard	108	\$109.75 million	20%	\$131.65 million
47 47	MICRO www.microstamping.com 1945	130 Belmont Drive Somerset, NJ 08873-1204 (732) 302-0800	Brian S. Semcer Steve Santoro Jeff Drews	400	\$128 million	-5%	\$122 million
48 50	Thermwell Products Co. Inc. www.frostking.com 1910	420 Route 17 S. Mahwah, NJ 07430 (201) 684-4400	David B. Gerstein	250	\$116 million	4%	\$121 million
49 56	Mazza Recycling Services Ltd. www.mazzarecycling.com 2015	3230 Shafto Road Tinton Falls, NJ 07753 (732) 922-9292	Dominick J. Mazza Jr. James F. Mazza Jr.	267	\$107 million	9%	\$117 million
50 51	FBT Gibbons LLP 1 www.fbtgibbons.com 1926	One Gateway Center Newark, NJ 07102 (973) 596-4500	Peter J. Torcicollo	225	\$115.04 million	-0%	\$115 million

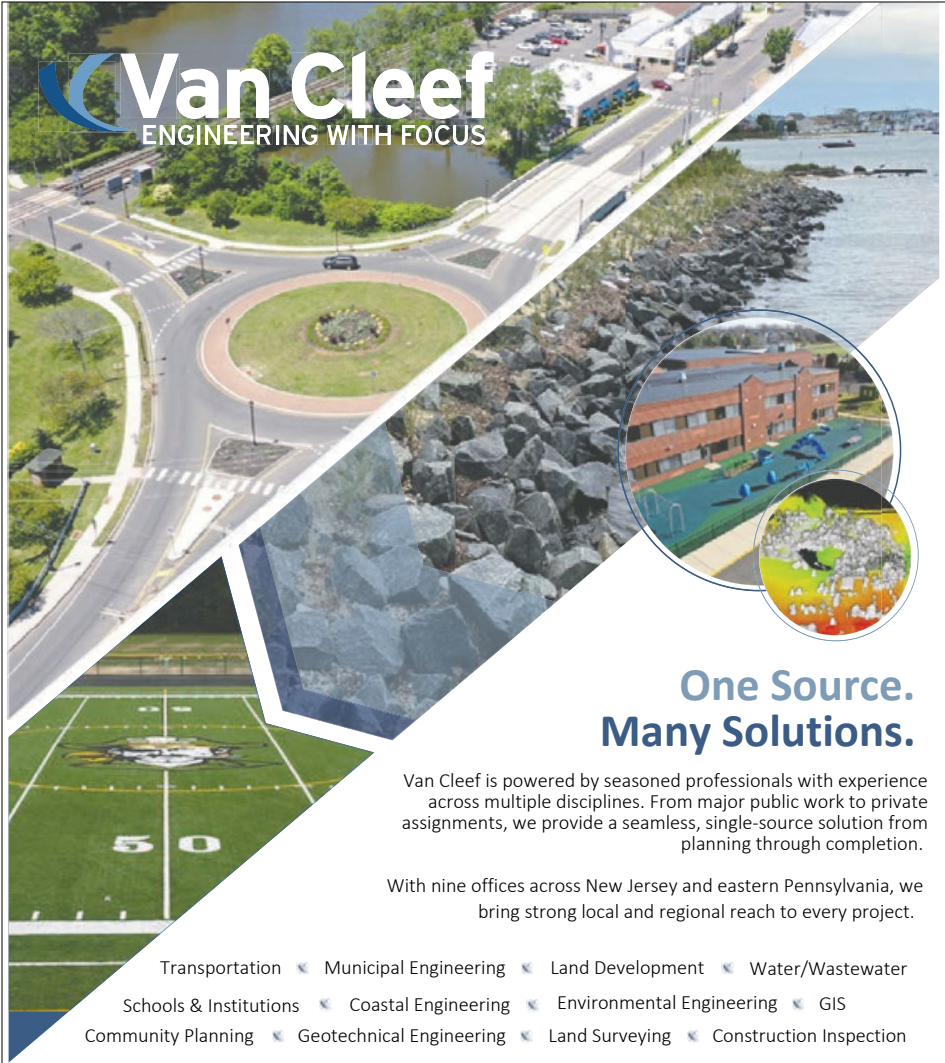
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1 On Jan. 1, 2026, Gibbons PC finalized its merger with national law firm Frost Brown Todd LLC. The firm is now FBT Gibbons LLP. The merger was previously announced in October 2025.

NA: Not Available. NR: Not Ranked.



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SOUTH PLAINFIELD
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WOODBIDGE
MIDDLETOWN
FREEHOLD
NEPTUNE



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Rank PR	Company Website Year Est.	Address Phone	Senior Executive(s)	No. of Employees in N.J.	2024 Total Global Revenue	Revenue Percent Change	2025 Total Global Revenue
51 58	Sills Cummis & Gross PC www.sillscummis.com 1971	The Legal Center, One Riverfront Plaza Newark, NJ 07102 (973) 643-7000	R. Max Crane Richard H. Epstein	251	\$103.5 million	9%	\$113.2 million
52 48	Bayshore Family of Cos. www.bayshorerecycling.com 1995	75 Crows Mill Road Keasbey, NJ 08832-0290 (732) 738-6000	Frank Montecalvo Valerie Montecalvo	242	\$124 million	-10%	\$112 million
53 57	The Millennium Group of Delaware Inc. www.tmgofficeservices.com 1984	106 Apple St., Suite 101D Tinton Falls, NJ 07724 (732) 741-4870	Timothy Kerner Frank Farnacci Dermot Murphy Jr.	167	\$106.44 million	1%	\$107.7 million
54 55	Archer & Greiner PC www.archerlaw.com 1928	1025 Laurel Oak Road Voorhees, NJ 08043 (856) 795-2121	Marc Rollo ❶ Christopher R. Gibson ❶ Deborah A. Hays	253	\$108.06 million	-2%	\$106.05 million
55 63	ACCU Staffing accustaffing.com 1979	911 Kings Hwy. N. Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 (856) 482-2222	Elaine M. Damm Edward H. Damm	N/A	\$85.23 million	15%	\$97.8 million
56 61	T&M Associates www.tandmassociates.com 1966	11 Tindall Road Middletown, NJ 07748 (732) 671-6400	Gary Dahms Patrick Jeffery	233	\$89 million	9%	\$96.99 million
57 67	Boswell www.boswellengineering.com 1924	330 Phillips Ave. South Hackensack, NJ 07606 (201) 641-0770	Kevin J. Boswell Gianfranco Bevilacqua	275	\$75.5 million	15%	\$86.6 million
58 64	Liscio's Italian Bakery Inc. lisciosbakery.com 1994	600 Ellis St. Glassboro, NJ 08028 (856) 881-5300	James Liscio Charles L. Vilotti	650	\$85 million	0%	\$85 million
59 66	Connell Foley LLP ❷ www.connellfoley.com 1938	56 Livingston Ave. Roseland, NJ 07068 (973) 535-0500	Timothy E. Corriston	232	\$83.05 million	-2%	\$81.02 million
60 81	Everwell Health www.everwellhealth.com 2021	250 Pehele Ave., Suite 200 Saddle Brook, NJ 07663 (609) 707-4401	Stephen Rosenman Jeremy Janoski	20	\$50 million	50%	\$75 million
60 72	Mandelbaum Barrett PC www.mblawfirm.com 1930	3 Becker Farm Road, Suite 105 Roseland, NJ 07068 (973) 736-4600	Barry R. Mandelbaum William S. Barrett	242	\$67 million	12%	\$75 million
62 49	Sweetwater Construction Corp. www.sweetwatercorp.com 1974	32 N. Main St. Cranbury, NJ 08512 (732) 605-0500	Ronald C. Witt Jr. Gary Coopersmith Robert Chemi	56	\$121.05 million	-41%	\$71.55 million
63 70	KS Engineers PC www.kseng.com 1991	2 Riverfront Plaza, 3rd Floor Newark, NJ 07102-5453 (973) 623-2999	Kamal Shahid	161	\$70 million	1%	\$71 million
64 75	Brach Eichler LLC www.bracheichler.com 1967	101 Eisenhower Parkway Roseland, NJ 07068 (973) 228-5700	John D. Fanburg	189	\$61.13 million	10%	\$67.5 million
65 70	Wiss www.wiss.com 1969	100 Campus Drive, Suite 400 Florham Park, NJ 07932 (973) 994-9400	Paul L. Peterson Amanda Dominguez Jim Duffy	331	\$70 million	-6%	\$66 million
66 73	Group One www.grouponellc.com 1998	2029 Morris Ave. Union, NJ 07083 (973) 242-4431	Seth Danberry	550	\$65 million	0%	\$65 million
67 76	Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer PA www.wilentz.com 1919	90 Woodbridge Center Drive Woodbridge, NJ 07095-0958 (732) 636-8000	Brian J. Molloy Michael J. Schaff Angelo J. Cifaldi	210	\$60.46 million	-2%	\$59.24 million
68 87	REDCOM Design & Construction LLC www.redcomllc.com 1982	433 North Ave. E. Westfield, NJ 07090 (908) 233-4030	Gregory J. Redington Ryan Teicher Sam Rockaway	55	\$44 million	30%	\$57 million
69 79	Porzio, Bromberg & Newman PC pbnlaw.com 1962	5 Sylvan Way, Suite 110 Parsippany ❸, NJ 07054 (973) 538-4006	Vito A. Gagliardi Jr.	201	\$53.97 million	5%	\$56.89 million
70 84	French & Parrello Associates www.fpaengineers.com 1974	1800 Route 34, Suite 101 Wall, NJ 07719 (732) 312-9800	Steven A. Tardy	254	\$46.45 million	15%	\$53.5 million
71 NR	Intone Networks Inc. www.intone.com 2003	10 Austin Ave. Iselin, NJ 08830 (732) 721-3002	Prabhakar Reddy	330	\$53 million	0%	\$53 million
72 78	LB Commercial Realty LLC www.LBCommercial.com 1993	10 McKinley St. Closter, NJ 07624 (201) 784-8822	Samuel Boyarsky	11	\$56 million	-9%	\$51 million
73 80	Greenbaum, Rowe, Smith & Davis LLP greenbaumlaw.com 1914	99 Wood Ave. S. Iselin, NJ 08830 (732) 549-5600	Barbara J. Koonz	171	\$50.98 million	-2%	\$50.04 million
74 96	Sovereign Consulting Inc. www.sovcon.com 1999	111A N. Gold Drive Robbinsville, NJ 08691 (609) 259-8200	Ravi Gupta Marc Cicalese	95	\$37.96 million	31%	\$49.78 million
75 74	Massa Multimedia Architecture PC www.mma-architects.com 1996	3297 Route 66 Neptune, NJ 07753-2763 (732) 918-2300	Gabriel J. Massa Thomas P. McHugh Jaime A. Capron	53	\$64.04 million	-24%	\$48.52 million

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❶ Starting Jan. 1, 2026, Marc Rollo is the president of Archer & Greiner PC. Rollo succeeded Christopher Gibson, who held the post since 2010. Gibson continues his role as leader of the firm's litigation practice.

❷ In July 2025, Connell Foley announced the acquisition of Neary Law LLC. With this acquisition, it added a new Hackensack location for the firm.

❸ In February 2026, Porzio Bromberg & Newman PC opened its new corporate headquarters in Parsippany. The move from Morristown, where the firm had been since 1962, was announced back in January 2025.

NA: Not Available. NR: Not Ranked.

Rank PR	Company Website Year Est.	Address Phone	Senior Executive(s)	No. of Employees in N.J.	2024 Total Global Revenue	Revenue Percent Change	2025 Total Global Revenue
76 93	Giordano, Halleran and Ciesla PC www.ghclaw.com 1959	125 Half Mile Road, Suite 300 Red Bank, NJ 07701-6777 (732) 741-3900	James R. D'Arcy Paul T. Colella	130	\$41.32 million	12%	\$46.28 million
77 97	RRBB www.rrbb.com 1961	265 Davidson Ave., Suite 210 Somerset, NJ 08873 (908) 231-1000	David N. Roth	127	\$37.57 million	22%	\$45.9 million
78 88	Whitestone Associates Inc. www.whitestoneassoc.com 1994	30 Independence Blvd., Suite 250 Warren, NJ 07059 (908) 668-7777	Thomas K. Uzzo Keith T. D'Ambrosio Christopher Seib	80	\$43 million	5%	\$45 million
79 92	The Falcon Group www.thefalcongroup.us 1997	95 Mount Bethel Road Warren, NJ 07052 (908) 595-0050	William J. Pyznar Andrew A. Amorosi Anthony Volpe	67	\$41.6 million	8%	\$44.96 million
80 90	The Azarian Group LLC ⓘ www.azariangroup.com 1970	The Azarian Bldg., 6 Prospect St., Suite 2A Midland Park, NJ 07432 (201) 444-9888	Donna Azarian Kevin R. Pelio John M. Azarian Jr.	15	\$42.35 million	4%	\$44.23 million
81 86	Basic Commerce & Industries Inc. (BCI) www.bcisse.com 1981	303 Harper Drive Moorestown, NJ 08057 (856) 778-1660	Sailesh R. Chowdhury Tom McParland Ted Hontz	218	\$44.93 million	-3%	\$43.58 million
82 94	Van Cleef Engineering Associates LLC www.vancleefengineering.com 1972	32 Brower Lane Hillsborough, NJ 08844 (908) 359-8291	Neil I. Van Cleef	195	\$39.16 million	10%	\$42.93 million
83 83	Haas Construction Management LLC haascm.com 2003	51 Cannonball Road Pompton Lakes, NJ 07442 (201) 485-7733	Andrew Haas	25	\$47.2 million	-10%	\$42.3 million
84 95	Smolin, Lupin & Co. LLC Smolin.com 1947	10 Waterview Blvd., Suite 300 Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 439-7200	Paul Fried Sal Bursese	118	\$38.6 million	8%	\$41.8 million
85 101	Spiezle Architectural Group Inc. www.spiezle.com 1954	1395 Yardville Hamilton Square Road, Suite 2A Hamilton, NJ 08691 (866) 974-7666	Thomas S. Perrino Scott Downie Steve Leone	49	\$33.5 million	8%	\$36.2 million
86 91	Astir IT Solutions Inc. www.astirit.com 2001	50 Cragwood Road, Suite 219 South Plainfield, NJ 07080 (908) 279-8670	Srilalitha Bhattaram Robert E. Markowitz Kishore Ganji	35	\$41.71 million	-14%	\$36 million
87 98	Coyne Public Relations www.coynepr.com 1991	5 Wood Hollow Road Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 588-2000	Rich Lukis John Gogarty Thomas Coyne	131	\$37.39 million	-6%	\$35.23 million
88 NR	The McCloud Group LLC www.themcccloudgroup.com 2002	30 Montgomery St., Suite 940 Jersey City, NJ 07302 (201) 222-7769	Robert A. McCloud	53	\$37.85 million	-8%	\$34.91 million
89 104	SmartSites www.smartsites.com 2011	45 Eisenhower Drive, Suite 520 Paramus, NJ 07652 (201) 870-6000	Michael Melen Alex Melen	98	\$30.9 million	5%	\$32.42 million
90 114	Building Security Services Inc. www.buildingsecurity.com 1982	20 Valley St., Suite 340 South Orange, NJ 07079 (973) 414-1111	Susan Ferdinando Amanda DeAlmeida Joseph Ferdinando	279	\$25.41 million	21%	\$30.85 million
91 103	Bohren's Moving & Storage www.bohrensmoving.com 1924	3 Applegate Drive Robbinsville, NJ 08691 (609) 208-1470	Denise M. Hewitt Ted Froehlich	60	\$31 million	-3%	\$30 million
91 100	J.R. Prisco Inc. www.jrprisco.com 1946	1107 Valley Road Sterling, NJ 07980 (908) 273-9292	James R. Prisco Jr. Phil D. Prisco A. F. Maldonado	39	\$35.5 million	-15%	\$30 million
93 108	Nisivoccia LLP www.nisivoccia.com 1970	200 Valley Road, Suite 300 Mount Arlington, NJ 07856 (973) 298-8500	Dominick Sarinelli	142	\$28 million	5%	\$29.5 million
94 106	Scarinci Hollenbeck LLC scarincihollenbeck.com 1988	150 Clove Road, 9th Floor Little Falls, NJ 07424 (201) 896-4100	Katerin A. Traugh Donald Scarinci Lester Aron	95	\$29.3 million	-2%	\$28.8 million
95 107	Palisade Capital Management LP www.palisadecapital.com 1995	1 Bridge Plaza, Suite 1095 Fort Lee, NJ 07024 (201) 585-7733	Alison Berman	39	\$28.1 million	-1%	\$27.9 million
96 113	Concord Engineering Group Inc. www.concord-engineering.com 1989	520 S. Burnt Mill Road Voorhees, NJ 08043 (856) 427-0200	Michael Fischette Anthony Caucci Nancy Hennefer	80	\$25.5 million	6%	\$27 million
97 110	Durex Inc. www.durexinc.com; www.creativeserving.com; www.sternvent.com; www.whiterail.com; www.dur-a-guard.com 1946	5 Stahuber Ave. Union, NJ 07083-5086 (908) 688-0800	Robert S. Denholtz	155	\$26.5 million	1%	\$26.8 million
97 112	SESI Consulting Engineers www.sesi.org 1976	959 Route 46E, 3rd Floor, Suite 300 Parsippany, NJ 07054 (973) 808-9050	Michael St. Pierre Jose Rodriguez Justin Protasiewicz	96	\$25.7 million	4%	\$26.8 million
99 115	NK Architects PA www.nkarchitects.com 1972	95 Washington St. Morristown, NJ 07960-8607 (973) 539-5353	Andrew Lewis Stephen Aluotto Walter Kneis	62	\$25.04 million	-5%	\$23.85 million
100 118	Meisel, Tuteur & Lewis PC www.mtlcpa.com 1946	105 Eisenhower Parkway Roseland, NJ 07068 (973) 228-4600	Michael S. Lewis Anthony Pentz	75	\$19.5 million	13%	\$22 million

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ⓘ Company appears as Azarian Realty Co. on the **NJBIZ** CRE Brokerages list and The Azaraian Group LLC everywhere else.

NA: Not Available. NR: Not Ranked.

Toward openness and transparency

New Jersey should stand up for free markets—and its hotel owners



BY ANTHONY RUSSO

New Jersey's hotels are not remote corporate outposts. They are local businesses run by entrepreneurs who invest their own capital, create New Jersey jobs, pay New Jersey taxes, and power New Jersey's tourism economy. The Hotel Franchisee Fairness and Market Access Act seeks to restore basic free-market principles – competition, transparency and enforceable contracts – to help these New Jersey small business owners.

Today, hotel franchisees are often required to buy non-guest-facing goods and services from designated vendors even when qualified competitors offer better prices and quality. The bill lets owners choose alternative suppliers that meet operational standards. It also requires full transparency when franchisors collect rebates, commis-

sions, or other financial benefits from franchisee purchases, ensuring those gains are disclosed and shared. These are not radical ideas. They are the foundation of a competitive marketplace: sellers compete, buyers choose value, and no one is forced to subsidize hidden markups.

The legislation further protects the integrity of contracts. Material financial or operational obligations should not be imposed after the contract is signed through manuals or policies that were never clearly disclosed at the signing. Legitimate requirements for health, safety, sanitation, trademark protection, and brand integrity remain fully intact. What ends is unilateral cost-shifting by the more powerful party. That is not interference in private agreements — it is enforcement of the agreement as written; the very condition free enterprise needs to function.

New Jersey taxpayers have a direct

stake in making the system fair. Tourism is a cornerstone of our economy. In 2025, 124.2 million visitors spent \$51.9 billion, generating \$83.2 billion in total economic impact and supporting more than 514,000 jobs — 1 in every 12 statewide.

Visitor activity generated \$5.5 billion in state and local tax revenue, equivalent to \$1,550 in tax relief for every household. Hotels are central to that revenue through occupancy fees, sales taxes, property taxes and payroll. When local owners avoid inflated costs and unpredictable mandates, they reinvest and keep the tax base strong. Protecting them is fiscal responsibility.

Consumers benefit as well. Lower operating costs support competitive hotel room rates and property improvements. By preventing retaliation against franchisees who list rooms on legitimate third-party platforms, the bill expands booking options and

price transparency for travelers — exactly the competition that keeps rates low and improves service.

Opponents claim this proposal interferes with private contracts or threatens brands. In reality, transparent agreements and open markets make franchisees stronger, more invested partners. Strong national brands and strong local ownership succeed together when markets remain open, and entrepreneurs can make sound investments.

New Jersey should stand with local investment, local jobs, competitive prices for travelers and a tourism economy that continues delivering substantial tax revenue for every resident. Passing this balanced reform affirms that free enterprise in this state must work for everyone.

Anthony Russo is president of the Commerce and Industry Association of New Jersey

On top of their game

Victories at the SkillsUSA Nationals establish New Jersey students as exceptional leaders

BY JACKIE BURKE

This year, New Jersey county vocational-technical school students earned 17 national SkillsUSA medals, six of them gold. These results are a testament to a high school learning environment that supports students in discovering and pursuing their passions. And they reflect the hard work and dedication of the winners themselves who have taken the tools provided throughout their education to build impressive resumes of work.

As a Career and Technical Student Organization, SkillsUSA challenges students to apply technical skills learned in the classroom in a competitive event. Competitions start regionally and then progress to the state and national levels.

To reach nationals is an accomplishment itself. To win gold at nationals is a statement. Gold-medal winners make a name for themselves as innovators, exceptional communicators and well-rounded leaders.

Among New Jersey's 2026 gold medal winners are Peter Stout and Scott Turner, recent graduates of the Mercer County Technical Schools STEM Academy. The duo won in the Interactive Application and Video Game Development category; the same competition they took silver in last year.

The longtime childhood friends returned this year with determination, not only creating an entirely new game called Pyxis but also building a custom engine for the game to prevent glitches.

"It ran flawlessly every time," said Stout, who developed the engine so the game could run on any operating system.

As the programmer and coder, Stout helped execute Turner's creative vision for the game, which they modeled after Super Mario. However, in Pyxis, players go from start to finish by shifting their character's color to move through obstacles of the same color. Doing so involves solving a series of puzzles.

Together, Stout and Turner spent about 800 hours of their own time developing the game, testing and refining it, and preparing their presentation for SkillsUSA competition.

"I've been in education for 26 years, and I've never seen tenacity like this," said Dave Nash, Work-Based Learning coordinator and SkillsUSA advisor for MCTS.

For now, Stout and Turner have made Pyxis available for free to friends and family, but they have bigger plans for its future.

"We're going to keep working to make it even better and then publish it and sell it to the public," said Turner.

"I've never had a project I've been more passionate about," added Stout. "SkillsUSA has been so much fun and has given us the opportunity to work together and get rewarded with both a game we are proud of and a gold medal."



Peter Stout, left, and Scott Turner, recent graduates of the Mercer County Technical Schools STEM Academy, celebrate winning gold at the national SkillsUSA event.



From left, Samiya Ahmed, Fatima Jimenez, Valeria Blas-Contreras and Abigail Martinez, graduates of the Passaic County Technical Institute, display their SkillsUSA gold medals.

Nash joked that Stout and Turner are the next "Jobs and Woz" and said the SkillsUSA experience has helped launch them into what he is sure is a future of fame.

MAKING THE BUSINESS WORK

Another gold medal team from Passaic County Technical-Vocational Schools demonstrated the same persistence as Stout and Turner, returning to compete in the category of Entrepreneurship after twice coming up short.

Team members Samiya Ahmed, Valeria Blas-Contreras, Fatima Jimenez and Abigail Martinez, all recent graduates of Passaic County Technical Institute's business and global management program, assembled a winning business plan this year for a new language learning app called Bridge World.

"We developed the app with peers in information technology so we could demonstrate the concept, and that was something that really impressed the judges," said Blas-Contreras. "We drew them in by going beyond the required business plan with a prototype, and they encouraged us to continue on."

The project also stood out because it was deeply personal for the group.

"All of our families came here from different countries, so we all grew up bilingual," explained Blas-Contreras. "Not all kids benefit from having the opportunity to learn multiple languages, so we wanted to personalize a language learning program for younger children."

Jimenez added that it was also important for the group to incorporate lessons about the cultures that speak each language being taught.

With such a strong product to sell, Jimenez said that the group's business plan needed to be just as strong.

"Over the years, we've learned through judges' feedback and in our PCTI classes what goes into a business plan, including how to produce strong financial statements," she added. "By senior year, we had those near-perfect."

Martinez said the business skills she gained from SkillsUSA are already paying off as she helps her mother expand her decorating business, Soraya's Dream Events. Although Martinez herself intends to become a teacher, she already understands how participating in

SkillsUSA will benefit her in her chosen career.

"Over three years of participating in SkillsUSA, I grew as a person and developed strengths; I know I enjoy working with others and can excel at it," she said.

An aspiring nurse, Ahmed agreed that the competencies she acquired as a SkillsUSA participant have prepared her for future success. "I am more confident, and I've boosted my communication and teamwork skills."

SKILLS AND A FILM

A gold medal team from Essex County Schools of Technology's Donald M. Payne Tech also displayed exceptional teamwork but went beyond collaborating within the team. Students Malachi Bennett, Madison Johansson and Imoni Robertson, all rising senior digital filmmaking students, entered the SkillsUSA Career Pathways-Arts and Communication category with a film they produced for a client. They worked in partnership with Pastor Campbell Singleton III, and the Union Baptist Church in Montclair.

The film details a visit by Martin Luther King Jr. to Union Baptist Church to honor his friend, Rev. D.C. Rice, who was retiring as the church's pastor. The final cut was shown during a live event to Union Baptist Church members.

"This was my first time working for a client, and it was rewarding to bring someone's idea to life," said Johansson. "The SkillsUSA judges gave us extra points for a project that was connected to the real world and will be used beyond the competition."

Bennett said the quality of the film, especially the editing, garnered the team praise from judges as well. "They thought we were at least college juniors."

Robertson noted that the finished product and the lessons learned along the way will serve the team well as each member intends to study film in college and pursue a career in the film industry. "We have experience now making a film, and that will help us as we look for other jobs and build a career," she said.

The students' digital filmmaking instructor, Anthony Perez, also served as one of their SkillsUSA advisors. He said the students' work ethic in addition to their technical skills is what earned them gold. He noted how the time, thought and attention to detail they put in comes through in the finished film.

"I give full credit to them," Perez added. "The students worked so hard and brought us home the first SkillsUSA gold in district history!"

Jackie Burke is executive director of the New Jersey Council of County Vocational-Technical Schools. Interested in becoming a business partner of a county vocational-technical school? Visit careertechnj.org/business-partners-of-the-year.



Polyfil USA is underway on a \$12 million expansion and renovation of a 1960's-era factory and warehouse facility in the heart of Rockaway Township. The manufacturer makes performance enhancing additives for use in the polyolefin extrusion process of thermoplastics. Its 59,000-square-foot industrial facility will expand with a 28,000-square-foot addition that was achieved without a single additional square foot of impervious area added to the site. According to Polyfil, the plan results in an actual reduction in impervious surface across the 5-plus acre parcel. Renovations are estimated to cost \$8 million, as well as a \$4 million investment in a new line of machinery. Polyfil currently employs 36 people at the Rockaway facility and expects to grow those employment numbers by 15% in the near future — and by as much as 25% in the long-term.



Penn Medicine Princeton Health celebrated a major construction milestone this summer: topping out its \$401 million Penn Medicine Princeton Cancer Center project. Located on the Princeton Medical Center campus in Plainsboro, the cancer center includes a six-story parking garage that opened in July 2025. It is the largest expansion of Princeton Health since the hospital relocated from Princeton in 2012. Once completed in May 2028, the facility will house more than 40 exam rooms, 30 infusion chairs and two linear accelerators; as well as a breast imaging center and advanced diagnostic technologies including CT, MRI, and SPECT/CT. Princeton Cancer Center will target LEED Gold certification. It will incorporate green roofs across all canopies to minimize the heat island effect, and rain gardens will capture excess water run-off.



The Meadows at Lawrence recently honored 22 long-time staff members – those with 10 or more years of tenure – at its Service Award Celebration. The Meadows, a cottage-style, long-term care skilled nursing community, is part of the 40-acre Lawrence healthcare campus in Lawrence Township. In addition to The Meadows, the Lawrence campus also includes skilled nursing at Lawrence Rehabilitation & Healthcare Center and Lawrence Rehabilitation Hospital, and assisted living at The Terraces at Lawrence. Marquis Health Consulting Services provides administrative consulting services to The Meadows and other skilled nursing facilities and senior living communities along the Eastern Seaboard.



Denholtz Chairman Steven Denholtz received the 2026 Leadership Excellence Award from Monmouth University's Kislak Real Estate Institute. He was recognized at the Institute's 30th Annual Leadership Excellence Awards Dinner in May at the Great Hall at Monmouth University. Presented annually, the award honors individuals who have made a lasting impact on the commercial real estate industry over the course of their careers, reflecting exceptional leadership, professional achievement, and a steadfast commitment to shaping the next generation of leaders.

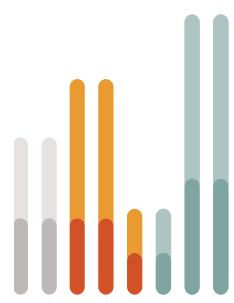


OceanFirst Foundation recently welcomed more than 500 nonprofit leaders, community advocates, and business leaders to its annual Nonprofit Leadership Symposium at Bell Works in Holmdel. The event brought together representatives from more than 300 nonprofits across New Jersey, New York City, Long Island, and the Greater Philadelphia region. It also marked two significant milestones for OceanFirst: the 30th anniversary of OceanFirst Foundation and the 30th anniversary of OceanFirst Financial Corp.'s IPO. Since 1996, the Foundation has provided over \$52 million in grants. This year, OceanFirst Bank NA also recognizes more than 124 years of serving communities. The symposium featured keynote remarks from Arthur Brooks, New York Times bestselling author, Harvard professor, and leading expert on happiness and purpose, pictured at left with OceanFirst Chairman and CEO Christopher Maher. The event also included special recognition of Dr. Eugene Richardson, a 100-year-old Tuskegee Airman whose life of service and leadership has inspired generations. Hackensack Meridian Health Executive Vice President Kenny Esser also delivered remarks.



Nicole Kepner, pictured center in maroon blouse, of Branchburg Central Middle School in Branchburg recently returned from Poland where she, alongside 13 other middle and high school teachers and Holocaust center personnel from five U.S. states, participated in the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous's 2026 European Study Program. Through lectures and visits to actual Holocaust sites, these educators gained a more profound understanding of the complex and tragic history of the Holocaust.

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2026

The Business of the Year awards program honors companies and individuals for outstanding accomplishments in helping the state's business community grow and prosper.

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Business of the Year

(1-50 employees, 51-100 employees, 101+ employees)

Non-Profit of the Year

(1-50 employees, 51-100 employees, 101+ employees)

Family Business of the Year

(1-50 employees, 51-100 employees, 101+ employees)

Corporate Citizen of the Year • Emerging Business of the Year • Executive of the Year

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