

*Transportation Information for Business Executives & Elected Officials in Northern New Jersey & Monmouth County*

## **EZ Ride Receives \$10,000 Grant from the Wallerstein Foundation**

**E**Z Ride is a proud recipient of \$10,000 grant from Wallerstein Foundation for Geriatric Life Improvement to support our *Ryde4Life* program. The funds will be used to bolster our marketing efforts in the communities we serve, as well as enhance the interface and management of member information on our computer network. The ideals of the Wallerstein Foundation to help the elderly remain healthy, happy and engaged are shared by the team at EZ Ride, and we are pleased that this has been recognized in the form of this grant.

The *Ryde4Life* program was launched about 18-months ago and monthly ridership has steadily increased to well over 1,000 trips. While the current membership in the *Ryde4Life* program is comprised mainly of older adults, the program has recently been expanded to permit members 18 years of age and older to participate in it. Additionally, we have also expanded the hours of operation to offer weekend service from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. We are confident the year ahead will bring more positive changes and opportunities for our riders and make our funding partners proud to be a part of the success story.

For more information, please contact:

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## **You are Invited to Join Us to Celebrate Our 35th Anniversary and Annual Recognition Event**

**O**n October 18th, EZ Ride will celebrate its 35th Anniversary and Annual Recognition Event at the Gran Centurions located at 440 Madison Hill Rd., Clark, NJ from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Our chief guest is Honorable Angel Estrada, Chair of the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), Union County Freeholder and EZ Ride trustee. Nat Bottigheimer, NJ Director of the Regional Plan Association (RPA) has been invited to present “*The RPA’s Fourth Plan: A Long-Range Vision Guiding Near-Term Action in North Jersey.*”

At this event we recognize and honor the deserving individuals, municipalities and corporations who work tirelessly behind the scenes to affect positive change in our state’s mobility. The awards are offered in three categories:

1. Champions of Change awards for individuals

2. NJ Smart Workplaces awards for businesses
3. Safe Routes to School awards for municipalities and schools

A complete list of the awardees is available at: [www.ezride.org](http://www.ezride.org).

The event is free but seating is limited. To RSVP, please visit our website: [www.ezride.org](http://www.ezride.org), call Kinga Skora at (201) 939-4242 xt.131 or email [kskora@ezride.org](mailto:kskora@ezride.org).

We are inviting companies to sponsor this event as a way to showcase their company and support EZ Ride. The benefits include a display table for company materials, listing on our website and in communications promoting the event. For further information on sponsorship, please contact:

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# Traffic Advisory



## What to Know About New Jersey's Route 495 Bridge Rehabilitation Project to Lincoln Tunnel

It's time for the main event of the \$90.3 million project to replace the 80-year-old viaduct that carries Route 495 over Routes 1 and 9. Two lanes are now closed on the Route 495 bridge to and from the Lincoln Tunnel, and they will remain closed until the summer of 2021.

The bridge is rated as structurally deficient and functionally obsolete, and the rehab project is expected to extend the useful service life of the bridge for an estimated 75 years and eliminate the need for potential emergency repairs.

Route 495 is one of the most critical roadways in the region connecting New Jersey Turnpike, Route 3 and the Lincoln Tunnel. It is also one of the most congested roadways and it is going to get more congested as this bridge is in need of significant repair to the deck, and to the structural steel.

The traffic pattern will change eight times during the project, beginning with one center lane in each direction. The exclusive bus lane – the most heavily used in the country – will remain open eastbound between 6 a.m. to 10 a.m.

Drivers are urged to find alternate ways to get in and out of the city. Route options for driving:

- George Washington Bridge
- Holland Tunnel (Pulaski Skyway is fully open to Holland Tunnel)
- Staten Island Expressway, Verrazano Bridge and Gowanus Expressway
- Use the Western Spur of I-95/NJ Turnpike to avoid congestion

Other tips for drivers:

- Travel before 6 a.m. or after 9 a.m.
- Use park & ride and carpool lots

- Don't drive. Use PATH, NJ TRANSIT Bus and Rail, and/or a ferry

NJ TRANSIT is encouraging drivers looking to avoid traffic to utilize the nearby Vince Lombardi Park and Ride, which has parking capacity to accommodate additional customers. In addition, 136 parking spaces were added to the North Bergen Park & Ride as part of the Route 495 project.

NJ TRANSIT Bus Commuters:

- AM: Routes remain the same to Port Authority Bus Terminal
- PM: Potential for longer travel times

Truckers:

- Travel Eastbound before 6:00 a.m.
- North-South travel: use Western Spur of NJ Turnpike

Employers:

- Encourage flexible, staggered hours, and alternate work sites.
- Support carpooling. Visit [www.NJRideshare.com](http://www.NJRideshare.com) or call 1-800-245-POOL
- Consider a four-day work week and telecommuting
- Consider shuttle services

Commuters can sign up for alerts at [www.RestoreNJ495.com](http://www.RestoreNJ495.com). NJDOT has also set-up a Facebook page and a Twitter account.

Local residents who have questions, concerns or need to report problems related to the project can contact NJDOT by calling 201-408-8495 or emailing [DOTOutreachRT495@dot.nj.gov](mailto:DOTOutreachRT495@dot.nj.gov).

For all traffic and transit updates contact:

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## Program Updates



### Affordable Housing Alliance (AHA) Reports a 265 Percent Return on Their Investment in the *Ryde4Life* Program

Since its founding in 1991, the Affordable Housing Alliance (AHA) of Monmouth County, a private, non-profit organization has been providing housing-related assistance for the disabled, low-income and single parents. Its mission is to improve the quality of life for all New Jersey residents by developing and preserving affordable housing, by providing services to maintain housing affordability, by providing housing education, and by helping communities meet their legal and moral housing obligations.

Transportation was a challenge for their clients. The houses were located far from stores, doctors or employment centers and most of their clients did not own a car and could not afford to pay for taxi services. As a result, they were forced to depend on others for transportation. The services were not always reliable and they would often arrive late for work or not at all. The daily struggle spurred the AHA to seek more reliable and affordable transportation solutions for their clients.

In February 2018, AHA decided to launch a pilot transportation program with EZ Ride. The goal was to provide reliable and affordable transportation for their clients which would help them to find jobs, access healthcare services, attend schools or visit stores to shop for their daily needs.

A dedicated transportation account for up to \$1,000 was set up for each client. When needed, the client could call a toll-free number and request transportation – no advance reservations or approvals were

required and they could travel to any location in New Jersey, New York (except the five boroughs) or Pennsylvania. AHA would replenish the account as needed up to the maximum amount of \$1,000.

EZ Ride provided the service using the *Ryde4Life* program with Lyft as the transportation vendor. AHA paid the fees charged by Lyft along with a \$1 administrative fee. The EZ Ride coordinators monitored the rides in real time and were available for any assistance. Additionally, they reviewed the invoices from Lyft to ensure the billing is correct.

Donna Blaze, CEO Affordable Housing Alliance, says, “In February 2018, AHA decided to partner with EZ Ride to provide their clients with affordable transportation to access jobs and social services. About 20 clients joined the program and they have taken over 600 rides, averaging a nominal cost of \$17 per ride. We have found that for every \$1 invested in transportation, the client has been able to generate \$2.65 in additional income – a 265 percent sustainable return on investment.”

For more information please contact:

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### RIDER SPOTLIGHT



**Claire W. Williams, Fanwood**  
*Member since June 2011*

Claire Williams was raised in Orange and lived in Roselle before moving to Fanwood. She was hired as part of the first group of African American women at NJ Bell and worked there for 44 years.

She is 92 years old and has been using EZ Ride transportation services for seven years. Last year, she signed up to participate in the new *Ryde4Life* program and used the service primarily for visits to the doctor and shopping. Claire says the program has improved her quality of life. She says, “The best part of the service is that no reservations are required. I call EZ Ride, and the car shows up in a few minutes. I enjoy the independence to come and go without having to rely on others. What more could I ask for?”

The *Ryde4Life* program is available state-wide, all seven days of the week. Additionally, the service has been expanded to serve all adults 18 years or older.

For additional information call:

(866) 208-1307, Option 4

or visit

[www.Ryde4Life.org](http://www.Ryde4Life.org)

The Transporter, is a quarterly newsletter about transportation information in our region and is published by Meadowlands Transportation Brokerage Corporation d/b/a EZ Ride. Please call Kinga Skora at (201) 939-4242 ext. 131 with comments, corrections or suggestions.

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Comments? Suggestions?

Feel free to forward  
your thoughts on  
improving the  
**The Transporter**  
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## Community Updates...



### October is International Walk & Bike to School Month - Join the Celebration

International Walk to School Day is a global event that involves communities from more than 40 countries walking and biking to school on the same day. It began in 1997 as a one-day event. Growing interest from all over the world led the International Walk to School Committee to promote International Walk to School Month during the whole month of October.

October 10th is this year's International Walk and Bike to School Day, and students and parents all over New Jersey will be walking and bicycling to school and participating in walk and bike events.

The EZ Ride *Safe Routes to School (SRTS)* team has consistently encouraged and supported schools to participate in the event. More than 80 schools in New Jersey have already registered to participate in the event. All participating schools are requested to register their event on the website: [www.walkbiketoschool.org](http://www.walkbiketoschool.org).

These events help increase awareness about the importance of physical activity, encourage healthy lifestyles among children, address bicycle and pedestrian

safety, traffic congestion, and concern for preserving the environment.

Various studies have shown that students who are physically active on the way to school arrive ready to learn and perform better in class.

To encourage safe walking and biking, EZ Ride offers free walking and biking safety presentations and a Safe Skills Riding Course to help kids practice the skills needed to safely bicycle in neighborhood traffic. Bike events include a pre-ride safety check, helmet fitting, bicycle handling, safety drills, hand signals and dealing with cars on the road. For schools who participate in walk to school day with EZ Ride, we will provide free coloring books about walking safety.

Join us to celebrate Walk and Bike to School Month by leaving the car at home and walking or bicycling with your children to school!

For more information, please contact  
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## Freebies gallery...

### Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Book

New Jersey's *Safe Routes to School (SRTS)* program is a statewide initiative to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and educating children to walk and bicycle to school.

EZ Ride offers FREE coloring books which display important reminders and tips about pedestrian safety.

Key safety messages include:

- How to be seen by drivers
- Traffic signs and signals
- Interactive games and quizzes about safety

To request copies of FREE coloring books, please contact:

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