

## EZ Ride Turns Spotlight on EV Superstars

Meadowlands Media Staff September 27, 2024

More than two dozen New Jersey organizations received national recognition on Thursday (Sept. 26) for their contributions to building a cross-country electric vehicle charging system.

These towns and businesses are among the first in the US to install their own EV chargers in workplace parking lots, qualifying them for the new EVAL Certification under a program funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Called *Electric Vehicle Adoption Leadership*.

Through Oct. 31, the program offers free certification for qualified applicants, which is credited with attracting a spike in participation, according to its New Jersey coordinator, [EZ Ride](#), headquartered in Wood-Ridge.

The awards ceremony was held at Galloping Hill Golf Course in Kenilworth, New Jersey and was part of EZ Ride's annual Day of Recognition, this year titled *Champions for Change*.

"By 2027, 30% of all the cars sold in the country are going to be electric," said EZ Ride President and CEO Krishna Murthy, adding that the organizations recognized are helping the country prepare for the millions of EVs expected to be delivered in coming years.

"The program is designed to support the widespread EV adoption that's predicted," Murthy said.

## Silver Certified

[Panorama Tours](#), a private transportation company based in Wallington, New Jersey, specializes in private bus charter and shuttle bus service, and was one of the EVAL Certification recipients.



Joseph Zak and Michelle Petelicki

“Panorama is committed to leading the way in responsible travel,” said Michelle Petelicki, President of Panorama Tours. “We are proud our journeys benefit both passengers and the planet.”

The company was recently designated as a “Champion for Change” due to its efforts to become EVAL (Electric Vehicle Adoption Leadership) Certified Silver.

“At Panorama Tours, we strive to make every journey count — reducing carbon footprints and supporting our mission to care for our planet,” Petelicki said.

Murthy said installing EV charging stations is good for the environment and business, helping attract and retain employees, increases property values and send the right message about a company’s values.

## Platinum Certified

Nico Thompson of [Edge Auto Rental](#) agrees. “We work in the TV and film industry and there are a lot of vendors over there who are very focused on sustainability, so we sought the certification in order to differentiate ourselves from other vendors.”



Nico Thompson, Edge Auto Rental

Edge received Platinum level certification for its three properties in Newark, Brooklyn and Queens, something Thompson plans to proudly display on their website to attract companies like Netflix, which place high value on hiring sustainable vendors.

“Maybe we will earn some jobs that other vendors might not be eligible for,” he said.

Edge Auto Rental has its own chargers and rents electric vehicles for use on film and television sets where cars often idle. Since EVs don’t have tail pipes, this helps cut down on emissions.

### **Other Honorees**

Another thing electric vehicles don’t have is brake dust. Asbury Park’s Director of Transportation James Bonanno, one of the speakers, pointed out that 95% of our brake dust emissions can be reduced by grind-free regenerative braking systems used by EVs.

Other EVAL honorees include Red Bank, Franklin Township, J&S Realty of Bergen County, Edge Auto Rental, and Bryan Electric of Hamilton, N.J.

The Borough of Red Bank was one of the first municipalities to install charging stations over five years ago. Council Member Nancy Facey-Blackwood, and EV driver herself, encourages other municipalities to follow Red Bank's lead.

"If you provide places where people can easily charge their electric cars it reduces range anxiety," said Facey-Blackwood. "That will in turn attract and retain talented employees, as well as shoppers and diners to your downtown and encourage others to drive electric."

"Franklin Township is committed to generating clean energy, implementing sustainable actions, and improving the quality of life for our residents and visitors," said Tara Kenyon, Franklin Township's Sustainability Consultant. "We try to reach this goal through a variety of projects, with the installation of EV chargers at our municipal facilities and parks being one of our main priorities."

The Hamilton-based Bryan Electric not only uses electric vehicles but specializes in the installation of charging stations.

"Implementing EV charging is critical to better understanding the importance of sustainable solutions," said Bryan Electric President Tim Bryan Jr.

"The ongoing mission to support this effort keeps our team well versed in how solutions such as electric cars positively impact our environment," Bryan Jr. added.

Located up and down the state, from High Point down to Cape May, Bryan Electric just installed its 900th charger.

EZ Ride helps organizations access available state and utility subsidies that can pay for up to 90% of the cost of installation. The effort is part of EZ Ride's *EV Accelerator Program*, which aligns with New Jersey's goal to reduce emissions 80% by the year 2050.

### **Remembering the Gas Shortage of the 1970s**

Taking part in environmental efforts is not new for EZ Ride. The not-for-profit organization was formed because of the 1970s gas crisis.

"For decades we have partnered with businesses and local governments to implement transportation programs that ease congestion and mitigate air pollution," said EZ Ride CEO Krishna Murthy.

“Today, we are expanding our programs to fleet electrification and workplace charging solutions for the same desired outcome: a cleaner and greener future,” Murthy added.

The gas shortage is something Eric Weis, owner of J&S Realty of Bergen County remembers well. “When our building was erected in 1980, we included underground fuel storage tanks because 1973 had been such a tremendous upset. We wanted to provide our employees and visitors with ‘transportation security’ and the ability to fill up on site without having to wait for hours”, said Weis.

That same thinking is behind J&S Realty’s current transformation to electric vehicles and installation of on-site workplace chargers. “Instead of gas,” said Weis, “You’re now pumping electrons.”

### **Get EVAL Certified Now**

EVAL certification is free until Oct. 31. As of Nov. 1, there will be a yet to be determined fee per property. For organizations interested in certification contact EZ Ride at [EV@ezride.org](mailto:EV@ezride.org).