



Township of Belleville and Hockey in New Jersey Formalize Collaboration to Bring Free Ball Hockey and Academics and Enrichment Programming to Belleville’s Youth.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BELLEVILLE, N.J., Sept. 15, 2023 – The Township of Belleville and Hockey in New Jersey (HNJ) are proud to announce a formal collaboration to reintroduce ball hockey programming and academics and enrichment offerings for Belleville youth. This exciting initiative will be centered at the Belleville Friendly House, with programming beginning this fall.

“The collaboration between the Township of Belleville and HNJ reflects our commitment to providing our young residents with enriching experiences and opportunities for growth,” shared Mayor Michael Melham. “By bringing ball hockey to our community, we are nurturing the spirit of teamwork, physical fitness and camaraderie.”

HNJ, the second largest youth diversity hockey program in the United States, is committed to providing hockey programming at no cost for children who may not be well represented in the sport due to gender, race, ethnicity, disability or socioeconomic status.

HNJ provided hockey programming in Belleville in prior years, but it was discontinued during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The collaboration will enable Belleville residents ages 6-18 to participate in hockey programming, which will be offered by HNJ in partnership with the New Jersey Devils.

HNJ will also offer all Belleville participants virtual homework assistance in sessions facilitated by HNJ tutors.

To round out its offerings, HNJ will host virtual life skills workshops, with age-appropriate programming.

“Our organization is proud to work closely with the Township of Belleville to offer local youth the opportunity to learn, play and grow through the sport of hockey. Our commitment to inclusivity and accessibility means that Belleville children can now have access to the benefits of our program,” shared Richard A. Giuditta Jr., Chairman of the Board of Trustees of HNJ,

“We are thrilled to partner with HNJ to provide our residents with access to hockey programming, an opportunity many have been eagerly waiting for. We look forward to the positive impact this

collaboration will have on our community,” said Thomas J. Agosta, Recreation Director for the Township of Belleville.

“As someone who grew up in Belleville, I know firsthand the passion our community has for hockey. As kids, we would play street hockey, sharing a love for the game. But back then, we did not have the structured programs and opportunities we’re now bringing to Belleville through HNJ. I can’t thank the New Jersey Devils enough for their participation and partnership; they have been a tremendous supporter of HNJ,” shared Keith Veltre, Co-founder and Chief Executive Officer of HNJ.

About Hockey in New Jersey

Hockey in New Jersey is a nonprofit 501(c)3 charitable organization that provides a welcoming, supportive, year-round hockey program for inner-city children who may not be well represented in the sport due to gender, race, ethnicity, disability or socioeconomic status. In partnership with the New Jersey Devils and National Hockey League’s Hockey is for Everyone™ initiative, they provide participants the opportunity to learn and play ice hockey at no cost. To learn more about HNJ or make a donation to support programming, please visit hockeyinnj.com.

About the Township of Belleville

For information on the Township of Belleville, please visit: bellevillenj.org.

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