

# TWO RIVER PEOPLE

by Lynne Ward

## 'ACCOMPLISH MORE TOGETHER': MONMOUTH PARK CHARITY FUND TEAMS UP WITH NJ NATURAL GAS



Standing: **Tom Hayes** joined MHA VP of youth services **Ashley Lobbato**, **Pat Migliaccio** and representatives from the Monmouth County Diversity Alliance (MCDA) as well as Konkret Comics who are partnering with MHA: CEO and founder **Derek "Lonzo Starr" Allen**, **Amber Koko Allen**, **Tanya Hornsby** and **Godday Hornsby**. Seated: **Linda Sirico**, **Jeanne Wall** and **Debi Heptig**, all from MPCF. MCDA and Konkret Comics, in conjunction with MHA, created an educational comic book series focusing on mental health for high school students.

On Feb. 1 the Monmouth Park Charity Fund (MPCF) joined forces with New Jersey Natural Gas (NJNG) and held a reception at the NJNG headquarters in Wall to shine a spotlight on the 2024 "Accomplish More Together" grantees which included Interfaith Neighbors the Mental Health Association of Monmouth County (MHA) and Monmouth Arts. Over the past seven years the MPCF has given out 19 grants to 57 nonprofits totaling \$125,000. Checks were distributed and the charities gave brief presentations on their collaborations with other nonprofits to explain how they are working together for the greater good. Interfaith Neighbors representatives: executive director. Standing: **Paul McEvelly** is joined by senior development officer **Stephanie Ferrier**, **Fern Lucas**, co-executive director **Chip Craig**, marketing and development coordinator **Christie Cancro**, NJNG COO **Pat Migliaccio**, **Derek Blackwell** and NJNG director of customer and community relations and MPCF board member **Tom Hayes**. Seated: MPCF director **Debi Heptig**, and MPCF board members **Linda Sirico** and **Jeanne Wall**. Interfaith Neighbors is coordinating the Community Food Connections coalition, involving 13 other charities to connect food pantries in order to eliminate nutritional insecurity.



Monmouth Arts is collaborating with HABcore to bring programs to the homeless with the Creative Expressions Arts and Wellness Program. Standing: **Tom Hayes**, director of events and engagement for HABcore **Marta Quinn**, **Pat Migliaccio** and executive director of Monmouth Arts **Teresa Staub**. Seated: **Debi Heptig**, **Linda Sirico** and **Jeanne Wall**. This art program will be implemented in HABcore's Adult Congregate Living Program in Red Bank and Asbury Park for homeless individuals and veterans.



**Tom Hayes** and NJNG also made a generous donation at the Accomplish More Together event to the Light of Day Foundation, (LOD) which had just wrapped up its 24th Annual WinterFest, raising funds for Parkinson's disease research, ALS and PSP. Accepting the check for LOD was board member **Lynne Ward**, yours truly.