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NEWS & COMMUNITY RESOURCES

NOVEMBER 6, 2026

New Jersey's Political Leadership Cannot Continue to Take Black Votes for Granted While Excluding Black Businesses.

An Uncomfortable Question for Governor Mikie Sherrill and the Democratic Leadership of New Jersey.

CONTINUE

Op-Ed | Dr. John E. Harmon, Sr., IOM | November 5, 2026

New Jersey has a serious credibility problem. Our state celebrates its diversity, depends heavily on the political support of African American voters, and routinely speaks about economic opportunity and inclusion. Yet when it comes to distributing billions of taxpayer dollars through public contracting, Black-owned businesses remain largely excluded from meaningful participation.

How long can this contradiction continue?

African Americans have consistently supported Democratic majorities in New Jersey's Legislature, delivering approximately 90 percent of their votes to Democratic candidates and, according to our analysis, approximately 94 percent to the state's two most recent Democratic gubernatorial candidates. Yet that political support has not translated into meaningful economic opportunity.

The evidence is staggering.

New Jersey's January 2024 Disparity Study examined state procurement activity between July 2015 and June 2020. Its findings revealed that Black-owned businesses received just 13 formal construction prime contracts worth $3.3 million. Meanwhile, nonminority male-owned businesses received 2,662 contracts valued at approximately $10.85 billion.

NJ Chamber appoints George Helmy to executive committee, elects seven new board directors

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BINJE | Linda Lindner | November 4, 2026

The New Jersey Chamber of Commerce has named George Helmy, Executive Vice President and Chief Corporate Affairs Officer at RWJBarnabas Health, to its Board Executive Committee. The appointment was confirmed by the Chamber's Board of Directors during its Oct. 15 meeting.

In addition to Helmy's elevated leadership role, the Chamber elected seven new board members representing key sectors across New Jersey's economy, including health care, higher education, entertainment, infrastructure, legal services, finance, and workforce development.

Helmy, who joined the NJ Chamber Board of Directors in December, brings extensive public policy, legislative, and corporate governance experience to the Executive Committee.

His background includes serving as Chief of Staff to former New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy and filling the unexpired term of former U.S. Senator Bob Menendez in 2024.

Helmy also serves as Chairman of the Finance and Facilities Committee on the Rutgers University Board of Governors and holds a commissionership at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, where he sits on committees overseeing capital planning, governance, and ethics.

Democrat Keisha Lance Bottoms makes history in Georgia as 1st Black woman to be elected governor

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Amsterdam News | Bill Barrow & Kate Brumback A.P. | November 3, 2026

Democrat Keisha Lance Bottoms was elected governor of Georgia on Tuesday, making history as the first Black woman to be elected governor in the United States, defeating Republican businessman Rick Jackson and flipping the top job in a key swing state.

A former Atlanta mayor, Bottoms won Tuesday despite a staggering campaign spending deficit driven by the billionaire Jackson tapping more than $200 million of his own fortune. She becomes the first Democrat to prevail in a Georgia governor's race since 1998.

"What we do in this moment will echo through history," she said ahead of Election Day. Bottoms often sidestepped the barrier-breaking possibilities of her candidacy and instead emphasized her plans to improve an uneven economy and counter President Donald Trump's administration in Washington.

"Let's choose hope over fear, progress over division, and come together to build a better Georgia for everyone," she said. The outcome bucks voters' longtime reluctance to put Atlantans in the governor's mansion, and Bottoms' victory is the latest example of how the growth of the state's largest metro area is reshaping Georgia politics.

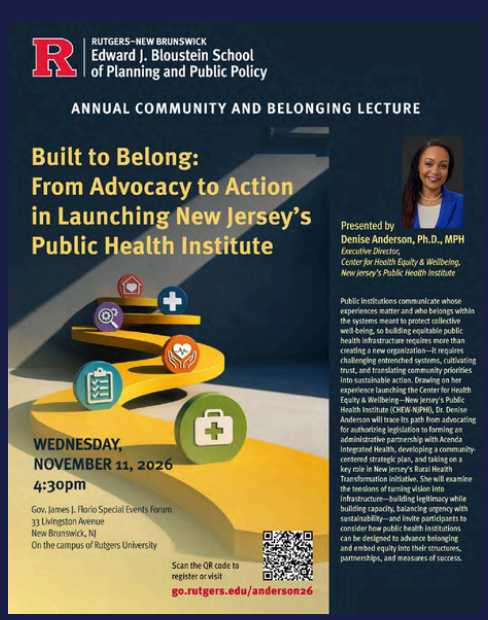
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