Big hearts, warm homes

NJ SHARES is a statewide nonprofit organization that provides assistance paying utility bills to households in need throughout the state.

By Ryan Venezia
for The Wire

Many hard-working New Jerseyans are challenged every month to keep their lights and heat on. While there are state and federal programs for low-income residents, households that earn moderate income do not qualify for these programs.

That is where New Jersey SHARES Inc. comes in. NJ SHARES is a statewide nonprofit organization that provides assistance paying utility bills to moderate income households throughout the state.

"We're a safety net to help those who do not qualify for other assistance programs," explained NJ SHARES President and CEO Jim Jacob.

According to Jacob, because New Jersey is such a high-cost-of-living state, a family of three with a maximum income of $6,597 per month or a family of two making $5,243

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Do you or your child suffer from moderate acne?

We are currently seeking participants for a research study testing an investigational topical medication for acne.

Qualified participants must:
• be 12 years or older
• Have between 20 and 50 red inflamed papules and 30 to 100 whiteheads or blackheads on their face

Qualified participants will receive:
• Study-related care
• Investigational topical medication

Compensation may be provided for time and travel. Health Insurance is not related to participants.

Do you suffer from migraines?

If so, you may be able to take part in a clinical research study testing the safety and effectiveness of an investigational medication for the treatment of migraines.

You must:
• Be 12 at least 18 years old
• Have 1-3 migraines a month
• Complete two visits to our clinical research center

If eligible, you will receive all study-related:
• Physical and medical exams
• Investigational medication
• Compensation for time and travel expenses

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1-877-227-8048 (ext. 331)
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per month could receive assistance from NJ SHARES.

The organization, founded in 1998, is celebrating 15-plus years of helping residents with their gas, electric and telephone bills. Jacob said NJ SHARES has assisted 178,000

households since its inception.

"Funding for the program comes from individual contributions, grants and matched contributions from every energy company in the state," Jacob said. "The key to the program's success is our community partners, we have around 300 sites in our network where people can go to sign up for assistance.

NJ SHARES has nearly 20 sites in Burlington, Camden and Gloucester counties where residents can learn about or become enrolled in an assistance program.

The organization also partnered with some online retailers and services including Amazon.com, smile.amazon.com, iGive.com and goodsearch.com to raise money for NJ SHARES when people shop online.

For information or to donate to NJ SHARES, visit www.njshares.org, call toll free 866-637-4273 or write to 1901 N. Olden Ave. Extension, Suite 1A, Ewing, NJ 08618.

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Burlington County College financial aid experts offer free workshops

Workshops to help area students and families complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), a requirement for college students to receive federal or state aid, will be hosted by Burlington County College's (BCC) financial aid experts.

"Financial aid, including scholarships, grants, loans and work-study opportunities, enables students and their families to afford college," said BCC financial aid director Jovina Bermudez. "It is one of the ways to keep education within reach for many students at Burlington County College.

"For many families, applying for financial aid can be complicated. The free workshops allow families to meet face-to-face with our financial aid experts who can help them through the FAFSA process."

The workshops are open to students, their families and the community. Students do not need to be attending BCC and appointments are not required. Two sessions will be held each day.

The workshops will be held on the following dates:

- Tuesday, March 18 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and 7 to 8:30 p.m. at BCC Willingboro Center, 200 Campbell Drive, Suite 210, room 222.
- Thursday, March 27 from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Mount Laurel campus, Laurel Hall, rooms 303 and 309.

- The Pemberton campus, at 601 Pemberton Browns Mills Road, Financial Aid Office will host "FAFSA Competition Tuesdays," from March 25 through April 29. These sessions are also free and open to the community, however appointments are required. To make an appointment, email financialaid@bccc.edu or call 609-894-3911 or 856-222-9311 ext. 1575.

Students and families participating in any of the workshops or sessions will need to bring the following: 2013 income information (2013 tax return for student and parents, W-2 forms, etc.); Social Security card (or Social Security number); driver's license; alien registration card (eligible non-citizens) and federal student aid PIN (visit pin.ed.gov to apply).

For information on financial aid, visit www.bccc.edu/financialaid; www.fafsa.ed.gov or www.studentaid.ed.gov. Students and families are also encouraged to work with their tax preparer to take advantage of education tax credits, like the American Opportunity Credit, which was extended through 2017. Many of those eligible will qualify for the maximum annual credit of $2,500 per student. Additional information can be found under "Education Credits" at www IRS.gov/Credits-Deductions.

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