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President's Message

Bob Duthaler, President of Jersey Access Group

Closing Out 2025.

JAG board elections were held at the December 3, 2025 general meeting. Elected to the JAG Board of Trustees were:

- **Don Smith**, Station Manager, Cranford TV 35
- **Craig Yetsko**, Station Manager, North Brunswick TV
- **Gina Forbes**, Station Manager, Woodbridge TV

Congratulations!

The Board of Trustees will meet prior to the next JAG General Reorganization Meeting, January 28, 2026, to elect officers for 2026. The officer positions are President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, and Treasurer.

All standing committees (Finance, Production, and External Relations) and ad hoc committees (Legislative, Membership, Leadership, Conference, and JAG Awards) will meet to elect a Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary.

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General Meeting Schedule 2025-26

Jan. 28, 2026 – Zoom Meeting
 Reorganization
 Presentation – TBA

Feb. 25 – Bloomfield TV
 Presentation – TelVue

Mar. 25 – Zoom Meeting
 Presentation – TBA

Apr. 30 – Cranford TV
 Presentation – DeSisti Lighting

May 13 and 14 – Location TBA
 JAG Conference & JAG Awards

Jun. 24 – Zoom Meeting
 Presentation – TBA

Sept. 30 – Varto Technologies
 Presentation – TBA

Oct. 29 – Zoom Meeting
 Presentation – TBA

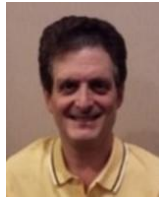
Dec. 2 – TBA
 Presentation – TBA

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The Jersey Access Group has represented the interests of municipal, educational, and community television for 25 years. Our efforts on behalf of our members have never been more important. JAG's Legislative Committee has kept a watchful eye on bills—both national and statewide—that include potential issues for JAG members, their communities, and their operations.



American Broadband Act of 2025

On December 3rd, the House of Representatives, Committee on Energy and Commerce, hastily voted on a group of bills known together as *H.R. 2289, The American Broadband Act of 2025*. Inside this potpourri of bills, was one that could affect just about all cable franchises in the United States. Basically, this is H.R. 3557 all over again.

From Gerard Lederer, Attorney – Best, Best and Krieger

A few of the ways this bill impact local franchises include:

- Eliminating cable franchise renewals, thereby removing ability of state or local communities to enforce franchise obligations such as build-out, customer service, and PEG.
- Granting a cable operator the unilateral right to terminate a franchise, but creates no obligation to remove a cable system from the rights-of-way.
- Affirmatively granting cable operators the right to provide non-cable services while prohibiting localities from imposing any fees on cable operators' revenue from non-cable services.

This bill has a series of provisions that don't just affect cable franchising, but may actually affect local governments. The United States Conference of Mayors (USCM), The National League of Cities (NLC), The National Association of Counties (NACo), and The National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors (NATOA) wrote a joint letter to express their strong opposition to the bills before the Communications and Technology Subcommittee that would preempt local authority over public rights-of-way and land use.

From Mike Wassenaar, President-Alliance for Community Media (ACM)

Whether you are in a state franchising state or a local franchising state. H.R. 2289 affects any organization that benefits from local cable franchising, such as a local government, a school district, or a community media center, nonprofit that's operating in a local community.

It's a wide range of organizations and a wide range of people around the United States that will be affected by some of the measures of the bill.

The American Broadband Deployment Act of 2025 is a very interesting logic model in terms of how to get broadband to rural communities that don't have adequate broadband connections. If you have communities that don't have broadband, we need to get rid of the rights of all communities that may have broadband.

A couple of the problems H.R. 2289 will cause is that it would implement shot clocks for decision making on new franchises or wireless applications and codifies them. So that if there's no response from local government by a shot clock deadline, there's deemed granted provisions for the application, even though the application may be defective.

There are restrictions on local government's rights in terms of oversight for both telecommunications companies and cable companies. The bill eliminates state and local oversight over cable sales and transactions for mergers and acquisitions, with the idea that if we just eliminate consumer oversight, we'll have more broadband in rural areas. H.R. 2289, also strips local governments of property rights and compensation in favor of cable, wireless, and telecommunications providers.

Another provision says that a cable company can alter or terminate a franchise with notice based on a number of conditions, including commercial impracticability. Any item within a contract can be altered by a company with 120 days' notice. A community could dispute this, but they'd have to go to court or to the FCC to dispute it. There's no negotiation in terms of sort of the way in which power is structured in the bill."

During this markup, New Jersey Representatives Frank Pallone and Robert Menendez voiced very strong support for local communities and expressed quite coherently a set of protections for local rights. This bill remains a partisan measure even though there was a series of bipartisan measures that were put forward by the Committee on Energy and Commerce that all sides supported.

Now, the bills have been marked up. It passed along what was essentially a party line vote and is waiting for the next steps, which could happen in 2026 as this bill moves forward.

If you need more information, contact:

- Bob Duthaler, President, Jersey Access Group bduthaler@jagonline.org
- Mike Wassenaar, President, Alliance for Community Media mwassenaar@allcommunitymedia.org
- David Garb, Legislative Chair, Jersey Access Group davegarb@paps.net



Instead of competing, pull phones into the community TV experience

Local community TV has always been pretty simple at its core: turn on the channel and see people and places you actually recognize. That part still matters. What has changed is how viewers watch. They sit on the couch with a phone in their hand, half watching and half scrolling. That sounds like a problem, but for community stations it can actually be an opportunity. With a few new tech ideas, you can pull that phone into the experience instead of competing with it.



The easiest place to start is the humble QR code

A few years ago, most people ignored QR codes. Now they're on menus, posters, buses, and bills—and people really do scan them. For a local station, that means you can turn a passive segment into something a viewer can act on in the moment. Interviewing someone from a nonprofit? Put a small code on screen that goes straight to their volunteer form or donation page. Covering a town event? Link to a map, schedule, or sign up sheet. No apps, no logins, just a clear label like: *Scan for more info.*



Some simple tools for interacting with viewers

Once you're comfortable with that, you can try simple viewer input. Big networks are leaning on interactivity to hold on to younger audiences. The same tools are available to community TV, just on a smaller scale. Instead of guessing what people want to see, ask them. A basic online poll, tied to a QR code or short link, can let people vote on low risk decisions: which community event to cover next, which guest to invite back, or what topic deserves a deeper dive. You may not get thousands of responses, but the people who take the time are exactly the ones you want to hear from.



Think of your channel as the front door, not the whole house

Larger broadcasters often air a short piece and then send viewers online for the longer version, extra context, or tools they can use. Community TV can borrow that pattern without getting fancy. Say you produce a five minute segment about a local small business fair. On air, you keep it tight: a few quick interviews and some good visuals. On screen, you add a code or URL that goes to a simple landing page with the full list of vendors, links to their websites, and maybe a longer cut of one of the interviews. The broadcast stays watchable, and the people who really care have somewhere to go.

Younger viewers are a different challenge

Many younger viewers barely touch cable, but they will watch something if it shows up in their feeds and feels like it was made for a phone. That doesn't mean you have to reinvent everything. When your crew is already out shooting, grab a few extra clips vertically on a phone. Later, cut those into short, captioned pieces for Instagram, YouTube Shorts, or TikTok, with a line like "Full story on Channel 34 this Thursday at 7 p.m." It's the same content, just packaged in a way that has a chance to land in someone's timeline.

Community TV can help viewers acquire basic digital skills

A lot of people in town still struggle with things that tech folks take for granted—spotting a scam text, turning on closed captions, or signing up for local alerts. Stations can create a series of very short "tech tip" segments that show, step by step, how to do one small thing. Point a camera at a phone or laptop screen, have someone talk through the steps in plain language, and then repeat the key point on a graphic at the end. Those tips can fill odd time slots and live online as well.

Think about local emergencies and important events

Finally, think about the serious moments: storms, power outages, big public meetings, or other local emergencies. New TV standards and connected platforms are pushing bigger stations to rethink how they handle alerts and critical information. Community channels can plan ahead too, even with basic tools. That might mean building simple templates for on screen maps and checklists, keeping key hotline numbers handy in your graphics system, and having a QR or short link ready that leads to a “one page” local resource list. When something happens, you’re not scrambling—you’re plugging solid information into a system you already tested.

None of this requires a huge budget or a full time tech team. It’s mostly about small tweaks: adding a code here, a link there, a short poll, or a vertical clip. Community TV has survived everything from cable to streaming by staying rooted in real people and real stories. A few thoughtful tech touches won’t change that. They just make it a little easier for your neighbors to watch, respond, and feel like the station is still theirs in a very different media world.





Jordan Anderson is an aspiring producer and currently produces and directs three television shows at Piscataway Community Television. Jordan graduated from Rider University in December 2023 with a BFA degree in film and television. Having lived and studied in various cities (domestic and international) she strives to do the best work possible.



A background that prepared her for a career in media

Her background in entertainment began in high school, when she decided to pursue storytelling and visual media as a career. She interned and lived in Los Angeles, learning about media in the heart of Hollywood. She also worked as a traveling journalist in Urbino, Italy. These experiences contributed to her current success.

Learning from her mentor and colleagues



Upon meeting her mentor and close friend, Steve Kaiser. Steve has worked closely with PCTV for 33 years and has the longest-running show there called *On the Loose*. Steve taught Jordan the business with hands-on experience. She and Steve actively work on *Non-Profit Television (NPTV)*, *The Green Industry Report*, and *On the Loose* together every week. Steve taught her all she knows about cable television and continuously inspires her.

Their partnership began in January 2024, when her father brought her down to the Total Pro Expo in Edison, NJ. Steve and the host, Lisa, were filming an episode for *Growing Green* (now *The Green Industry Report*) where Lisa interviewed her dad. Jordan's father works for CLC Landscape Design in Ringwood, NJ, and was tasked with receiving their awards that year.

As Steve and Lisa introduced themselves as cable television crew members, Jordan's dad recommended she meet them. Lisa has worked closely with both of them since. Upon joining her father the second day of the Expo, Jordan met Steve and immediately picked up the equipment and filmed the remaining interviews for that month's show. Jordan was a natural, and Steve was impressed with how quickly she learned.

Bringing Gen Z flair

Having worked in television for decades, Steve started many different shows during his time with PCTV. When Jordan joined the team, he revived one of his old shows, *Non-Profit Television*, which had existed for 8 years, and gave Jordan full control of the new age of the show. She started social media pages, YouTube channels, and her own business. She brought the innovations from what she learned in college to make the show better. These shows include:



Non-Profit Television (NPTV) is a show dedicated to 501(c)(3)s and promoting organizations and their upcoming events. Besides being producer, Jordan has worked as a camera operator, director, content creator, social media expert, and host. Although her original intention was to stay behind the scenes, she was encouraged by Steve to be on camera, interviewing the different people they met. This gave her a sense of both sides of the business—crew and talent. Some non-profit organizations that have been featured on the show include: The Fighting Children's Cancer Foundation, the Meghan Rose Bradley Foundation, the Somerset County Sheriff's Department, the Branchburg Rotary, and many more.

The Green Industry Report was formally known as the award-winning *Growing Green*. Originally sponsored by the New Jersey Nursery & Landscape Association (NJNLA), it focused on all things green industry in New Jersey. With host Lisa DeAngelis, the show features various garden centers, business owners, and agriculture experts sharing their knowledge of plants and flowers (most recently sponsored by Hionis Greenhouses). The team loves learning more about the green industry in the Garden State.



On the Loose has been on the air for over 30 years, representing many different businesses. Steve started the show back in 1992, where he has had over 40 hosts. Currently hosted by Lisa and Jordan, the crew gets to meet a multitude of business owners and industry professionals. Best described as a variety show, it captures the fun parts of life by supporting small businesses. Having ice cream shops, meat markets, thrift stores, entertainment venues, etc., Jordan truly loves to see the connection this show has had over the years with so many people.

Jordan's goals with these shows are to create a portfolio of herself and her work for future projects and opportunities. In addition to working as a producer on the shows, she is also the executive assistant at a production company in New York City. She has worked with Sonia Victoria Werner at the Lighthouse Ladies, LLC., since January 2024 as well. Here, she branches out her narrative film knowledge while still learning the aspects of the broadcast world.



Jordan is very grateful for all of the opportunities she has been given, and strives to work hard every day she can, and thanks those she has met along the way who have helped her out. She is especially thankful to her parents, Steve and Lisa, along with George and Doug at PCTV, who helped her be a part of the JAG community and exposed her to the broadcast world.



JAG General Reorganization Meeting

Jan. 28, 2026 @ 12:00pm

Zoom only

Presentation TBA



Don't forget to check out our YouTube channel. <https://www.youtube.com/@jagjerseyaccessgroup>

Have something you want on our YouTube channel? Send a link to dseidel@piscatawaynj.org for review.

The JAG Job Board is currently being populated with opportunities. New password is needed after June 1. Contact Linda Besink lbesink@gmail.com for access

Share the value of JAG's newsletter with your elected officials, cable committee, station volunteers, associates and friends. Send this invitation:

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/B7EMU1R/JAGnewsletter>

EVENT SCHEDULE 2026

February 25 at 12pm: General Meeting, Bloomfield TV, Presentation by TelVue- Jesse Lerman, President/CEO

March 25 at 12pm: General Meeting, ZOOM, Presentation scheduled TBA

April 29 at 12pm: General Meeting, Cranford TV, Presentation by DeSisti Lighting- Paul DeStefano, Sales

May 13 & 14: JAG Conference: A Technology Forum and Production/Management Symposium & JAG Awards

June 24 at 12pm: General Meeting, ZOOM, Presentation scheduled TBA

September 30 at 12pm: General Meeting, Varto Technologies, Presentation scheduled TBA

October 28 at 12pm: General Meeting, ZOOM, Presentation scheduled TBA

December 2 at 12pm: General Meeting, Location TBD, Presentation scheduled TBA

Organizational Members



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