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General Meeting Schedule 2026-27

- Jun. 24 – Zoom Meeting Presentation – TBA
- Sept. 30 – Varto Technologies Presentation – TBA
- Oct. 29 – Zoom Meeting Presentation – TBA
- Dec. 2 – TBA Presentation – TBA
- Jan. 27, 2027 – Zoom Meeting Reorganization Presentation – TBA
- Feb. 24 – Bloomfield TV Presentation – TelVue
- Mar. 31 – Zoom Meeting Presentation – JAG Conference 2026
- Apr. 28 – TBD Presentation – DeSisti Lighting
- May – Location TBD JAG Conference & JAG Awards

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President’s Message

Doug Seidel, President of Jersey Access Group



Thank you!

Thank you everyone that came out for the JAG Conference. It is always refreshing to see everyone enjoying themselves over the two days.

- Thanks to our sponsors for their support. We could not do this without you.
- Thanks to all our vendors. We appreciate the time it takes to set up your booths and spend the day with us.
- Thanks to Conner and the JAG Awards Committee for an entertaining show.
- Thanks to Bob Duthaler, Rich Desimone and the JAG Conference Committee for all your hard work pulling off another great event.
- Congratulations to everyone that walked away with a JAG award.

What is next?

While everything is fresh and the adrenaline is still flowing, now is the time to:

- Follow up and continue the conversations started at the conference:
- Follow up with the vendors, ask for your quotes, schedule demos or start your purchase orders.
- Didn’t win the award you were hoping for? Check out the videos made by your competition and make your plan to step up your game.
- Be sure to follow up with other stations. Find some time to go see their stations or shadow them during a production.

One of the best benefits you can use within JAG is the connections you make and the opportunity to learn from one another. Do you have ideas on what you would want more or less of at the conference? Throw your name in to join the JAG Conference Committee. There really is no better way to make improve it than by having more people involved. The same can be said for the JAG Awards Committee. A few more hands will only help the show run smoother.

Upcoming...

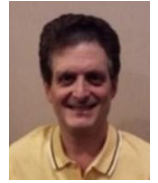
Both lunch sessions sparked great conversations. Watch our website for videos from the conference. We recorded both lunch sessions and the award ceremony, including the slides from our expert panelists. Also, coming up are sessions at the NJ League of Municipalities and webinars on ADA compliance and artificial intelligence.

Our next JAG meeting is virtual on June 24 (no need to leave the office). Join us online to continue these conversations and help build our community.

One last thank you to everyone. I am not a fan of public speaking, but you all were so encouraging, it truly made it much easier to stand on the stage. That really says volumes about what a great group we have in JAG!



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 nationally and statewide that might be an issue for us, our operations and our communities.



A Visit to Our Nation's Capital to Bring Awareness of HR 2289

Last month we explored the threat of HR 2289 (the federal preemption of local franchising rights for state and local government) and the provisions included within it. If it were to pass, major funding and distribution mechanisms of community television in the US would effectively end.

To try stopping this bill from being enacted, JAG Legislative Committee Member Eddie Cologna and I went to Washington, DC to work with our national partner, the ACM (Alliance for Community Media). Together, we attempted to make our voices heard about why HR 2289 needs to be defeated.

We visited many of New Jersey's Representatives and our two United States Senators. Along with ACM President Mike Wassenaar, we spoke to members of Congress to make them aware of the situation while leaving detailed information on this act and about the work all of us do in our communities and why our PEG channels are important to our residents.

One of the highlights of this trip was a special visit and encouraging remarks from FCC Commissioner Anna Gomez and her huge support for Community Television. Her remarks are below:



"Good morning, everyone. Thank you to the Alliance for Community Media for inviting me to speak to you ahead of your Hill Day. As I look around this room, I am reminded of the incredible responsibility—and privilege—we share. Each of us is entrusted with a mission that goes far beyond the technicalities of broadcasting or the logistics of running media channels. We are here because we care deeply about the voices and stories of our communities. We are here because we know that access to meaningful information is essential for every American—not just as a matter of convenience, but as a cornerstone of our democracy.

Days such as today serve as powerful reminders of why our work matters. When we gather as advocates, professionals, and citizens, we reaffirm our commitment to making sure that no voice is overlooked, that every story has a place, and that information crucial to everyday life is accessible to everyone. In a time when national news can feel overwhelming and distant, it is local media that brings us together, reflecting the issues, the triumphs, and the challenges closest to home.

The Alliance for Community Media has a long and distinguished history—one defined by service, advocacy, and impact. Representing more than 1,700 Public, Educational, and Government organizations across the country, the Alliance provides the backbone to local media efforts. These organizations serve as lifelines for information, culture, and civic engagement. They are the trusted outlets through which schools share updates, religious institutions reach out to congregations, colleges highlight achievements, and government officials communicate vital policies. And beyond these formal roles, community media offers a stage for countless community groups—from youth organizations to senior centers—to connect, to inform, and to inspire.

What you do together is not merely about broadcasting content. Your work is fundamentally about building bridges—between neighbors, across generations, and among citizens and the institutions that serve them. These bridges form the infrastructure of a healthy society, constructed not with bricks and mortar, but with stories, conversations, and connections.

Our towns and cities are enriched by the stories you share. Whether it's a high school sports game, a city council debate, a faith-based event, or a new art exhibit, community media captures experiences that shape our lives. This programming informs, empowers, educates, and strengthens our democracy by keeping residents connected and informed about local issues that matter.

And this brings us directly to the First Amendment—the very foundation on which community media stands. Truly local broadcasters ensure that every day Americans have a platform to share their voices and perspectives. They illuminate the diversity of viewpoints that make our nation vibrant, especially at a time when national narratives can overshadow local realities.

But today, that First Amendment foundation is trembling. Across the country, we have witnessed an unprecedented series of attacks—coordinated efforts by the federal government to censor, control, and silence those who dissent. Last year, I launched a First Amendment tour to fight back against this campaign of censorship and control. On that tour, which is ongoing, I have heard from Americans who do not typically engage with the FCC yet feel the consequences of these threats to free expression every day.

Those threats are not hypothetical—they are ongoing and they are escalating. Most disturbingly, the power to revoke a broadcast license—meant to ensure service to communities—is being weaponized to threaten stations that air news the Administration dislikes. That is not regulation. That is punitive censorship. When licenses become tools of coercion, the very concept of a free press is washed away.

We have seen frivolous news distortion complaints used to pressure newsrooms. We have seen the power to derail mergers wielded to reshape editorial independence. The clearest example is the Paramount-Skydance merger, approved only after companies agreed to unprecedented concessions that subjected newsrooms to government-approved editorial oversight. That goes directly against the First Amendment. I dissented. And I will continue to speak out whenever government coercion threatens free expression.

Paramount's capitulation—to avoid conflict with the Administration, to trade independence for a payout—comes at the expense of the American public. The company agreed to government influence over newsroom decisions and accepted a so-called "truth monitor" at CBS to ensure journalists do not criticize the Administration. This is a direct violation of both the First Amendment and long-standing legal precedent.

But the Commission is not stopping there. It is now taking actions to change the rules of the game entirely. The FCC used a bureau-level waiver to override Congressionally established ownership caps that protect localism, competition, and viewpoint diversity. There is a court fight going on as we speak about the lawfulness of these actions, but what is clear is that elimination of these caps would allow massive consolidation—reducing the number of voices in our media ecosystem, shuttering local newsrooms, and weakening communities in the process. Each newly consolidated newsroom represents a narrowing of public discourse.

Notably, while outlets deemed critical of this Administration are threatened with investigations, defunding, or license revocation, others that are viewed favorably by this Administration—are being quietly fast-tracked through regulatory processes, through a shortcut I call the Billionaire Buddy Bypass. This is not about reducing bias or strengthening journalism. It is about engineering an echo chamber. It is viewpoint control, plain and simple.

But we are not powerless. Community media stands on the front lines of this fight. You have always championed localism and diversity of thought. You have always served your communities—not the government, not political interests, not corporate conglomerates. And your work is essential now more than ever.

When community media thrives, our democracy thrives. When people have access to trusted local information—about schools, faith communities, civic events, and public safety — they become engaged participants in their own governance. When they have a platform to share their voices, they become stewards of their own future.

You are the architects of opportunity, creating the spaces where new ideas flourish and where all residents can be heard. But make no mistake: your ability to continue this work depends on the survival of a truly free press, protected from government coercion and political interference. That is why it is essential that you speak up, push back, and advocate fiercely—not only for your own organizations, but for the constitutional principles that enable your work. Because if the First Amendment is to mean anything at all, it must mean that no government—regardless of party—gets to decide what is true, who gets heard, or which voices are silenced.

Thank you for your commitment, your courage, and your unwavering belief in the power of community and free expression. The road ahead will not be easy. But together—steadfast, determined, and united—we can defend the First Amendment and preserve a media landscape that serves all Americans.”

Our struggle with this bill is far from over. Each of us must continue to be the messengers of why this bill is dangerous and do what we can to help defeat it.

The Harmful Points of H.R. 2289

- [3 Minute Video on H.R. 2289 Via Dropbox](#)
- [3 Minute Video on HR 2289 Via YouTube](#)
- [HR 2289 PSA \(on the TelVue Server\)](#)

1 Minute Overview of this Act.

- [1 Minute Video on HR 2289 via Dropbox](#)
- [1 Minute Video on HR 2289 via YouTube](#)
- [HR 2289 PSA 1 min \(on the TelVue Server\)](#)

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Celebrating local excellence: A look back at the 2026 JAG Awards Banquet

Connor Cheung, Chair, JAG Awards Committee

JAG Awards Committee

What a night!

On Wednesday, May 13th, the Jersey Access Group family gathered at the Crowne Plaza in Edison for the 26th Annual JAG Awards Banquet. It was incredible to see so many of our members step out from behind the cameras, put down the clipboards, and finally catch up in person. For a lot of us, it was the first time seeing each other face-to-face in a year, and the room was absolutely buzzing with energy.



This year's competition was easily one of our toughest yet. We received outstanding entries from 26 different organizations across the state. The sheer variety and quality of the stories being told in our communities right now is amazing. From deeply researched local documentaries and high-production sports broadcasts to crucial town hall updates; the work on display proved that local stations are more vital to our neighborhoods than ever before.

While the competition was fierce, the spirit of the night was all about celebrating our collective hustle. We know the long hours, the frozen football games, the late-night council meetings, and the endless editing sessions that go into making these productions happen. Seeing those clips up on the big screen with everyone cheering each other on was a great reminder of why we do what we do.

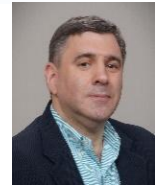
Before we officially close the book on the 2026 awards, we want to extend a massive thank you to the JAG Awards Committee—Elio, George, Dave, and Valerie—for the countless hours they spent behind the scenes coordinating the judging, scores, and logistics. We also want to thank Bob Duthaler and the entire JAG Board for putting together another fantastic conference kickoff.

To everyone who entered, congratulations. Whether you took home a first-place trophy or placed in the top three of a highly competitive category, you are doing incredible work for your community.

The full list of winners will be available on the JAG website.

Have a great summer, keep telling those stories, and we can't wait to see what you produce for next year's awards!





Privacy Is a major concern when using AI tools.

Whether you're using ChatGPT, Claude, Microsoft Copilot, or another AI platform, privacy has become a big concern for users. In recent years, some AI conversations and shared links were indexed publicly. As privacy awareness increase, companies improve controls and reduce unintended exposure of chats and shared content. AI tools are incredibly useful, but privacy awareness should grow alongside AI adoption. People often assume you must pay for privacy protections or data controls, but that is not always true.

Reducing model training sharing in ChatGPT.

Before using ChatGPT regularly, review the model's training settings. A paid subscription is not needed to turn off training participation controls. To instruct ChatGPT not to use your information for training:

1. Open ChatGPT.
2. Left-click your profile icon in the bottom-left corner, which contains your initials in a colored circle.
3. Then left-click Settings.
4. Once inside Settings, left-click Data Controls in the left-side menu.
5. While inside the Data Controls section, locate "Improve the model for everyone" and toggle the setting off so the switch appears greyed out.
6. Then click Done. Once completed, delete any previous conversations you no longer wish to keep stored.

You can close and reopen ChatGPT afterward to verify that the setting remained disabled. This setting only needs to be configured once on the account and typically applies across both the app and website experience.

Common uses of each AI platform.



ChatGPT, which stands for Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer, was introduced in 2022, and since then, many enhancements have been made to the platform. ChatGPT has often been used to help individuals and companies brainstorm ideas across creativity, marketing, strategy, technical explanations, coding assistance, conversational business tasks, role-play scenarios, document generation, and even image generation.

Many people found ChatGPT to be highly flexible across many topic areas.

ChatGPT often strikes a strong balance between creativity and logical structure. That is one reason businesses use it for workflow planning, brainstorming, and productivity support. Many high school and college students

also use AI tools to better understand material, generate practice questions, and reinforce concepts while studying.



A big concern with ChatGPT (or any AI generator) is that responses can appear highly confident even when information may be incomplete, outdated, or incorrect. AI should never be treated as the sole source for legal, medical, financial, compliance, or other critical decisions. Information should always be independently verified.

Claude, developed by Anthropic, is popular among users who work heavily with long documents, research material, summaries, and structured writing. Many users appreciate Claude’s ability to handle large amounts of text while maintaining organization and readability throughout responses. Claude is often well-suited for:

- Long document analysis
- Structured summaries
- Research assistance

- Professional writing refinement
- Policy reviews
- Academic style content
- Reading PDFs and reports



One reason many users enjoy Claude is that the responses often feel calm, methodical, and highly structured. It is particularly useful when working through large blocks of information that require careful organization.

Just as with ChatGPT, users should still avoid uploading highly confidential information, financial records, passwords, medical records, or sensitive business data to the platform.

Microsoft Copilot operates somewhat differently because it is deeply integrated into the Microsoft ecosystem. Many businesses that already use Microsoft 365 have begun incorporating Copilot into Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, Teams, and other workplace tools. Microsoft Copilot is often best suited for:

- Workplace productivity
- Spreadsheet assistance
- PowerPoint creation
- Email drafting
- Meeting summaries
- Business workflow automation
- No Microsoft 365 integration



The advantage of Copilot is its ability to interact directly with tools many organizations already use daily. This makes it especially attractive in business and enterprise environments.

However, users should understand the difference between consumer and enterprise environments. Organizational policies, permissions, retention settings, and connected file access may all impact how data is handled within business environments.

Some important considerations for using AI responsibly.

No matter which AI platform you use, users should never assume AI systems are like private, encrypted vaults. AI systems are designed to process information, but policies, settings, and retention rules may evolve. Good habits when using any AI platform include:

- Avoiding passwords and confidential information
- Reviewing uploaded files carefully
- Deleting unnecessary conversations
- Checking privacy settings regularly
- Understanding what settings are enabled
- Avoiding highly sensitive legal, financial, or medical information

Each AI platform has strengths depending on the task:

- ChatGPT often excels at creativity and conversation.
- Claude is often preferred for structured long-form analysis.
- Microsoft Copilot is strongest within Microsoft productivity workflows.

The future is not about replacing people with AI. It is about understanding where AI helps, where it falls short, and how to use it responsibly.



JAG General Meeting
June 24 at 12pm: Zoom only
Presentation: Conference discussion



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. A new password is needed after June 1 of each year. Contact Linda Besink lbsink@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

- June 24 at 12pm: General Meeting, ZOOM, Presentation scheduled: Conference discussion
- 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

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