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Governor Phil Murphy

# Governor Murphy Applauds Rutgers University's Designation as New Jersey's Center on Gun Violence Research

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10/24/2018

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**PISCATAWAY** - Governor Phil Murphy today celebrated the designation of Rutgers University as New Jersey's Center on Gun Violence Research (CGVR). The Governor, presenting by video, was joined at the Governor James J. Florio Distinguished Visiting Scholar Lecture by the Honorable Gabrielle Giffords and Captain Mark Kelly, who delivered a presentation at the annual event.

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"It is long past time to take a stand against the scourge of gun violence in our communities," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "Beginning today, New Jersey will have its very own research center to fill the knowledge gap left by the federal government's inaction and the gun industry's obstruction. I applaud Rutgers University and the Legislature for helping to make New Jersey a national leader in gun violence research."

Rutgers was designated as the home institution for the Center through a competitive process administered by the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. The Center is intended to produce data on gun violence and establish solutions for gun violence prevention, an area of research from which the federally funded Centers for Disease Control is prohibited. Governor Murphy joins with state leaders in celebrating this designation, designed to fill a significant knowledge gap.

"New Jersey has long been a leader in gun violence prevention strategies, but there is so much more work to do," **said Secretary of Higher Education Zakiya Smith Ellis**. "With today's announcement of a new Center on Gun Violence Research at Rutgers University, our state is more poised than ever to translate this research into practice and to develop and implement the policies that will reduce incidences of firearm-related tragedies across the nation."

"Washington has failed us in the area of gun violence research due to political pressure and industry opposition," **said Bill Castner, Senior Advisor to the Governor on Gun Safety**. "I am proud that Governor Murphy & Secretary Smith Ellis are ensuring New Jersey will host a world-class research center to help provide the residents of our state and nation with innovative solutions to protect their communities, families, and children against gun violence."

"As New Jersey's pre-eminent research university and a national leader in addressing key issues facing our society, Rutgers will bring expertise across many disciplines – public health, criminal justice, medicine and others – to this bold and comprehensive effort to reduce gun violence," **said Brian Strom, chancellor of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences**. "Our teachers, clinicians and scientists have unparalleled experience in improving our collective wellbeing, and this new research center, among the first of its kind in the nation, will allow us to deliver innovative insights that inform public policies and prevent the tragedies that have become all too common in American society."

"Rutgers is proud to lead this effort to conduct critical, multi-disciplinary research that will yield new understandings and actionable steps to prevent gun violence and promote the health and safety of our




communities in New Jersey and across the country," **said Dr. Bernadette C. Hohl, assistant professor of epidemiology at the Rutgers School of Public Health**, who will serve as the center's co-director along with Dr. Michael Ostermann, associate professor in the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice.

**Rod K. Brunson, dean of the Rutgers University–Newark School of Criminal Justice**, said his faculty is poised and eager to collaborate on the CGVR's research and policy development agendas. "A fundamental challenge that Governor Murphy is issuing with the creation of this center is to bring cross-disciplinary and cross-sector expertise to the table to work on the causes and effects of gun violence, including from communities feeling its effects most intensely. Faculty, staff, and students in the School of Criminal Justice are well practiced in that kind of collaboration and committed to bring our knowledge and experience of policing, community dynamics, and security technologies and practices to this critically important work."

The program will be charged with studying the causes, prevention, and reduction of firearm-related violence. Additionally, the program will study the consequences of gun violence on individuals and communities, and work with state leaders to evaluate and implement policies to prevent gun-related violence.

The Center's research will be funded through annual legislative appropriations, and other grants, gifts, or donations provided by private or public sources.

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