



**CLOSE THE GAP...**The Union County College (UCC) Foundation raised nearly \$50,000 at their 3rd Annual Close the Gap Campaign cocktail reception held on July 11, in the Richel Student Commons at the College's Cranford campus. Pictured, from left to right, are: Union's Vice-President for Student Development Demond Hargrove, Executive Director of the UCC Foundation Doug Rouse, Union County Freeholder Bruce Bergen, Rahway Mayor Raymond Giacobbe, Assemblywoman Linda Carter (D-22nd, Plainfield), New Jersey Lieutenant Governor Sheila Oliver, Union's Dean of Elizabeth Campus Lester Sandres Rapalo, Union County Freeholder Chairman Sergio Granados, Union Student Services Generalist Duane Reid, and UCC President Margaret McMenamin.

## UCC Foundation's 'Close the Gap' Surpasses Goal

CRANFORD — With over 120 guests and volunteers in attendance, the Union County College Foundation surpassed their goal and raised nearly \$50,000 at their 3rd Annual Close the Gap Campaign cocktail reception held on July 11, in the Richel Student Commons at the College's Cranford campus. The campaign was developed by a small group of dedicated community volunteers to support the College's strategic initiative to help shrink the achievement gap that exists for African-American students. The campaign provides financial assistance to help these students complete their degree on time.

This year's cocktail reception was held in memory of Assemblyman Jerry Green, who was one of the first significant advocates for the campaign. United States Senator Cory Booker (D-N.J.) and Assemblyman Jamel Holley (D-20th, Roselle) served as honorary chairs. Senator Booker sent a video message in which he thanked supporters of campaign for their generosity and reminded everyone of how an education can change one's life.

New Jersey Lieutenant Governor Sheila Y. Oliver was also in attendance to support the event and spoke about the impact Assemblyman Green made on her life. Lt. Gov. Oliver stated, "I am proud to support a cause

that was so close to Assemblyman Jerry Green's heart. His commitment to this initiative not only inspires me, but the whole community to support Union County College's Close the Gap campaign. I am so impressed by the success the College has had in advancing the opportunities for African American students. This success is a true testament to the memory of Assemblyman Jerry Green."

Since the start of the campaign in 2015, over \$100,000 has been invested in scholarships, support, and emergency funding to help students who are on course to graduate, but who need additional financial assistance. The dedication of the College's staff combined with the generosity of the community has more than tripled graduation rates for African-American male students at the College. Thanks to the continued growth of campaign support, the Foundation has expanded to support African-American women.

Those interested in donating to the Close the Gap Campaign, or would like to learn more about how to provide financial assistance for students at Union County College, can call (908) 709-7505, email [foundation@ucc.edu](mailto:foundation@ucc.edu) or visit the Foundation's website at [www.uccfoundation.org](http://www.uccfoundation.org).

## Torah Center Announces Upcoming Events

WESTFIELD — The Union County Torah Center will be presenting "The Best of Jewish Comedy with Charlie Bernhaut!" to take place at the center, located at 111 Laurel Place, Westfield, on Tuesday, August 14, at 8 p.m. For over 35 years, Charlie has been presenting recordings/clips of the best of Jewish humor — ranging from Freddie Roman, Myron Cohen, Mikey Katz, Mal Z. Lawrence, Alan Sherman, Betty Walker, Henny Youngman, Jackie Mason and others. It costs \$5 per person.

A Jewish Story & Crafts Hour will be held on Wednesday, August 15, at 5 p.m. at the Barnes & Noble, located at 1180 Raritan Road in Clark. Children will listen to a story, learn about good character traits, and do related arts and crafts project. There is no fee for this program. Reservations are preferred but not required.

### Meet Playwright David Lee Wednesday

SUMMIT — Dreamcatcher Repertory Theatre will present a Meet the Artist and new play reading of David Lee White's play *Fixed*, on Wednesday, August 15, at 7 p.m. at the Oakes Center.

The new play reading series allows the audience to participate in the development of new works, both to hear the play read by professional actors and also to discuss the project with the playwright, director and actors.

The Oakes Center is located at 120 Morris Avenue. Admission is \$10, and tickets can be purchased at the door.

The Jewish View on Life, Death, and Resurrection is to take place at the center, on Thursday, August 16, at 8 p.m. It will be an evening of deep Jewish discussion and insight. Among the topics to be discussed: the consequences of the sin of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Do we really believe in the return of souls to our original bodies? Will there be time when people will live forever? This event is free.

For more information or to RSVP please call (908) 789-5252, email [info@torahcenter.org](mailto:info@torahcenter.org) or register online at [www.torahcenter.org](http://www.torahcenter.org). The Union County Torah Center is located at 111 Laurel Place, Westfield.

### Liberty Hall Offers Tours for Children

UNION — In this unique tour, children and their parents will view the museum through the eyes of its youngest former occupants: the children who inhabited Liberty Hall over the past 250 years. History has never been so "hands-on," with each room a child visits featuring a variety of artifacts they are welcome to touch!

Tours are at 11 a.m. or 2 p.m. every Tuesday in August. The cost is \$10 per child, \$8 per adult, and includes refreshments after the tour.

The tour is recommended for children ages 5 to 12.

Liberty Hall is located at 1003 Morris Avenue, Union. For more information, call (908) 527-0400 or visit [www.kean.edu/libertyhall](http://www.kean.edu/libertyhall).

## POPCORN

"Three Identical Strangers"  
Relatively Horrifying  
3 & 1/2 popcorns

One Popcorn, Poor — Two Popcorns, Fair — Three Popcorns, Good — Four Popcorns, Excellent

By Michael S. Goldberg  
film critic

You don't have to be Jewish to lament "Oy, yoy, yoy" after seeing director Tim Wardle's shocking documentary, *Three Identical Strangers*. After being presented a series of outlandish and disturbing disclosures about the title triplets separated at birth, adopted by three separate families and who are reunited at age 19, you'll warm up for that final assessment by first issuing several "Holy Cows," a few "Yipes" and perhaps a couple good old fashioned "Wows."

Unaware of, or having forgotten about, the celebrity that Eddy Galland, David Kellman and Robert Shafran enjoyed when they discovered each other in the early 1980s, I expected something more tame than this eye opening and provocative, ethically disquieting study. Hence, I suggest that, to experience a similar surprise before reaching a conclusion of moral outrage, you read very little about this bizarre tale. In fact, while I promise to skirt the eventual cause of your indignation, I won't be upset if you skip this review. Y'know, tis a far, far better thing I do.

Venture director Wardle probably counted on a convenient amnesia to afflict his potential viewers. His beautifully layered narrative, employing archive footage and contemporary interviews, slyly begins with a sunny ebullience. Happy in the whimsy of the reunification, we immediately like the brothers, and exalt in their apparent delight. On talk shows, as the giddy host pumps the novelty for all its worth, audiences marvel and cheer. The three inform that they smoke the same brand of cigarette, like the same sort of women, etc., etc. How about that, folks?

But where is all this going? The short review, as opined by my daughter, Erin, whose astuteness in matters creative is on generous display at her art gallery, is, "It's Nuts!" While the camera intermittently switches among psychiatrists who came to be familiar with the case, and who chime in with their opinions, we can't help but mull our own analysis of what we're witnessing. Learning that the boys were raised in three different, socioeconomic backgrounds—blue collar, middle class and upper crust—we arrive at the age-old, inescapable debate: nature versus nurture.

Their initial chemistry is remarkably strong...the communication astonishing. It occurs that they did originally share a language with each other, now long lost, but perhaps retrievable in a new dialect. All of which

unleashes a bevy of dilemmas that boggles the mind. And while we might, as vicarious parents, feel pride when the triplets open a restaurant/night club in Manhattan not too long after they get together, we fear the gloss on the pumpkin will perhaps fade...a victim of familiarity breeding contempt combined with the rigors of business.

Of course, none of this is as ominous or portending as the secret I promised to keep, Cheshire cat smile obnoxiously plastered on my face. Suffice it to note, however, that at issue before closing credits roll is no less than the power of our DNA as it figures in the perennial question of free will versus fate. Many people use that argument as the reason for their apparent success (i.e., "I come from a long line of wealthy taxidermists."), but more often than not as rationalization for their perceived failure (i.e., "No one loved me but my Momma, and I think she was jiving me, too.")

But we are a generally optimistic species, with most of our members subscribing to the maxim that if we put our nose to the grindstone we will soar to incalculable heights. Witness our rise thus far from the primordial mud to pan-global, digital command of our destiny, emblemized by the ability to have pizza delivered to our front door in 30 minutes or less. Therefore, while we might worry that some genetic fly in the ointment will derail the natural high the troika exude upon discovering one another, we imagine the resultant synergy as potentially limitless.

So, we drop our guard whilst basking in the grand curiosity of how similar the triplets turned out to be, not considering the infinite number of ways they may be different. And then, lo and behold, at about the movie's midpoint, the golden apple of discord is tossed into the mix, dealing us the proverbial gut punch. There's a heretofore unmentioned variable afoot...a sinister deceit...an unconscionable skulduggery that prompted my aforementioned oy, yoy, yoy! Loosely translated for out-of-towners, boy oh boy!

It is "Believe it or Not" with a built-in moral quandary, causing us to wonder about the Yin and the Yang of the lines we humans cross in the cause of pursuits both small and large, defensible or obscene. Similar to many of the outlandish divulgements coming out of Washington these days, *Three Identical Strangers* is a classic example of truth being stranger than fiction.

...  
*Three Identical Strangers*, rated PG-13, is a Neon release directed by Tim Wardle and stars Eddie Galland, David Kellman and Robert Shafran. Running time: 96 minutes.



**LEAD THE WAY...**The Woman's Club of Westfield recently sponsored Viggo Jabon to attend the Hugh O'Brien YOUTH Leadership Program (Hoby). The three-day program took place at Kean University.

## Viggo Jabon of Westfield Attends Leadership Program

WESTFIELD — The Woman's Club of Westfield recently sponsored Viggo Jabon to attend the Hugh O'Brien YOUTH Leadership Program (Hoby). The three-day program took place at Kean University in Union and was attended by rising junior high school students. Viggo was chosen by the Westfield High School Guidance Department to attend the event, along with other students chosen from all over the State of New Jersey.

Hoby's mission is to inspire and develop our global community of youth toward a life dedicated to leadership, service and innovation. The program included lectures, planned activities and panels adapted to developing young people with individual and group leadership skills. The students were given the opportunity to meet many new faces and to begin lasting friendships.

Viggo described his experience as being pleasantly surprised by how much an impact Hoby would have on him as an individual and looks forward to a positive influence in his future days. He was introduced to many new people, who instantly became friends. Viggo absorbed a lot of valuable information from the guest speakers and was taught to always have ambition and perseverance in order to achieve his goals.

The Hoby time served as a prelude, an introduction to college life.

Founded in 1958, Hoby programs are conducted annually throughout the United States and abroad serving local and international students.

### Fanwood Recreation Presents 'Cars 3'

FANWOOD -- The final summer movie of the Movies Under the Stars is *Cars 3*, to play Tuesday, August 14, at La Grande Park. The movie is free and will begin at dusk, approximately 8 p.m.

Be sure to bring a blanket or a low beach chair.

For more information, visit [fanwoodrecreation.org](http://fanwoodrecreation.org). In the event of rain, the movie is scheduled for the following night.

### Brother John Brown To Play Oak Ridge

COUNTY — Sounds of Classic Rock of the 1960s and 1970s will fill the air of Oak Ridge Park Wednesday, August 15, when Brother John Brown band takes to the summer stage of the Union County Summer Arts Festival concert series.

Dead on Live, will conclude the concert series on Wednesday, August 22.

All shows begin at 7:30 p.m. The park is located at 201 Oak Ridge Road in Clark.

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