

# THOMAS EDISON STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

# IMPACT AWARDS

## Building on Success: TESU Foundation's Annual Impact Awards

Thomas Edison State University Foundation held its second annual Impact Awards on Oct. 10, 2024, honoring individuals who embody the University's mission to create innovative and accessible pathways for students and communities. The event raised more than \$100,000 to support TESU's programs and initiatives.

University President Merodie A. Hancock, Ph.D., expressed her gratitude for the ongoing support, noting, "We are grateful to everyone who shared the 2024 event and very much look forward to the October 2025 Impact Awards. To many of our students, the value of scholarship support and a high-quality, low-cost pathway to a degree cannot be overstated. The efforts of the TESU Foundation Board and donor participation inspire us to continuously provide the most innovative and career-relevant programs possible for our students," she said.

Bonny Simi, a 2019 TESU graduate and president of Operations at Joby Aviation, received the Distinguished Alumna Award during the 2024 ceremony. Recognized for her leadership in fostering growth and development opportunities in the aviation industry, Simi made higher education more accessible through the JetBlue Scholars program she founded in 2016. Nearly 500 JetBlue employees have fulfilled their dream of a college degree through the program.

Sean Murray, market president for Central/Northern New Jersey and the

Lehigh Valley Region at Fulton Bank, was honored with the Spirit of Edison Community Award for his dedication to strengthening local communities and fostering partnerships that drive economic growth and sustainability. Murray's nephew, a TESU alumnus who prefers to remain anonymous yet has greatly benefitted from the University's flexible model, was in attendance.

"Approximately three years into my criminal justice career, I completed my bachelor's degree online from the comfort of home while helping to raise our son," said Murray's nephew, who was promoted shortly after earning his degree. "I was fortunate to find my niche after completing my degree requirements, and now I'm living that dream and supporting my family, too. My uncle Sean inspired and motivated me to take the next step in my career and education. He believed in me and assured me that I would complete my degree requirements before I knew it, that I'd never regret returning and it would open so many doors to opportunities. He was absolutely right."

Now an annual tradition, the Impact Awards celebrate

exceptional alumni and community leaders and serve as an integral fundraiser for TESU's mission. This year's proceeds will help expand the University's innovative program offerings and provide scholarships that ensure students have access to workforce-relevant programs tailored to their unique needs.

The 2025 Impact Awards will be held on Thursday, Oct. 9, at 5:30 p.m. in TESU's George A. Pruitt Hall. For more information about the upcoming Impact Awards or support opportunities at TESU, please email [advancement@tesu.edu](mailto:advancement@tesu.edu)



Bonny Simi and Sean Murray received honors at the 2024 TESU Foundation Impact Awards.





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Dr. Ahmed and Nadia Azmy, Hillman Consulting,  
The Mercadien Group, Sean and Hilary Murray,  
Princeton Radiology, Willard Alonzo Stanback, P.C.

## SAVE THE DATE FOR 2025

Thursday, Oct. 9, 2025

5:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

George A. Pruitt Hall

301 West State St., Trenton, NJ 08608

### 2025 Impact Award Honorees:

PSEG Foundation

Ron Gimbel

Chief Financial Officer, Sumitomo Pharma  
TESU Foundation Board Member

For more information, visit:

[tesu.edu/impactawards](https://tesu.edu/impactawards)