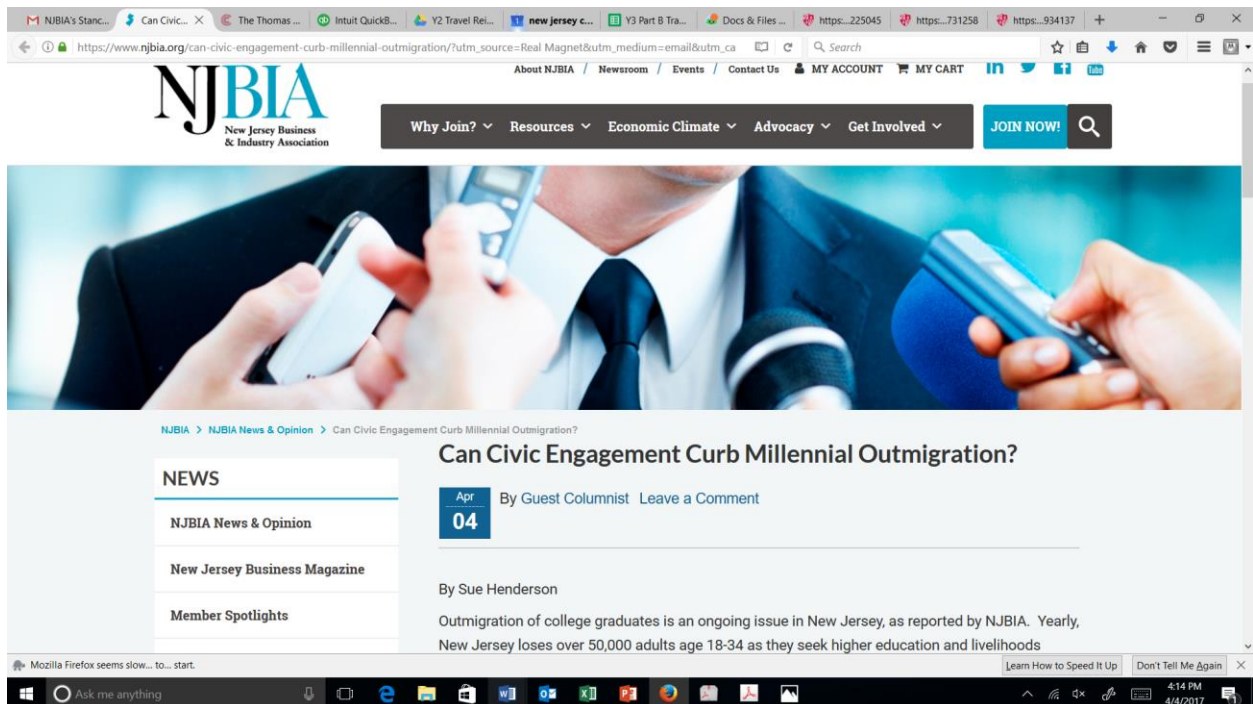


Can Civic Engagement Curb Millennial Outmigration?

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By Sue Henderson & Saul Petersen

https://www.njbja.org/can-civic-engagement-curb-millennial-outmigration/?utm_source=Real%20Magnet&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=110283932



Outmigration of college graduates is an ongoing issue in New Jersey, as reported by NJBIA. Yearly, New Jersey loses over 50,000 adults age 18-34 as they seek higher education and livelihoods elsewhere. More than 500,000 millennials have left the state in the past 10 years. The massive “brain drain” is having a debilitating effect on New Jersey’s workforce and economy. Can civic engagement help to refill the state’s cerebral pool?

New Jersey Campus Compact (NJCC) is a higher education presidents’ coalition that promotes civic engagement as a priority for higher education and for society. NJCC enacts its mission by building enduring partnerships that provide opportunities for students attending college in New Jersey to be actively engaged civically, socially, and financially in the wider community beyond the confines of the campus. NJCC member institutions’ civic engagement initiatives assist students in forging lasting relationships with institutions and individuals who provide mentorship and lead to job opportunities following graduation.

This is because, when done well, civic engagement develops outstanding 21st century workplace skills in students. Hart Research Associates highlights this fact by showing that most of today’s

employers want applied skills and real-world team experiences, such as community-based projects that cut across disciplines. Based on Campus Compact's survey in New Jersey on member service, the average figure per campus for community-based learning courses taught at our member institutions was 73, while the average number of students attending these courses was 1,103. That is a remarkable number of people forging local commitments, networks, and skills necessary for today's employment opportunities. Businesses here in New Jersey need to tap into this pool of engaged young professionals. Students and employers could learn much from one another about these motivations and the utility of these emerging skills.

In these times, concern about jobs is uppermost in the minds of most students and their parents. Further, businesses want employees who can thrive. The Pew Trust, in a vast longitudinal study, found that 'thriving' employees were more likely to be civically engaged in their communities and they had participated in similar programs as college students. Said simply: Civic engagement is good for business, the community and the employee/student.

The opportunities New Jersey Campus Compact and its member institutions provide for engaging in experiential learning and creating pathways to meaningful local employment can serve as a highly effective tool for keeping talented students in state and, ultimately, ensuring they remain valued contributors to New Jersey's economy and civic life.

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