



A DREAM & LEGACY:

# BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER. THE JON DIAZ COMMUNITY CENTER



**JON DIAZ**  
COMMUNITY CENTER



*Dear Community Supporter,*

The chance of making it to the NFL is less than 1%, so it's safe to say I've done the impossible. Pretty cool, right? Most would be satisfied, story ends. Not me. I've always viewed myself as more than an athlete, although oftentimes it's not why people know Latavius Murray. I'm a Pro Bowl Running Back who has played 11 years in the NFL. That's usually what they see. What they don't know are the ups and downs, the journey, and what it took to become the Latavius you all see. And it's the downs, the losses, and the grief that has fueled my growth the most.

I've turned **ADVERSITY** into **ACTION** and it is why I'm asking **YOU** to get involved and join me.

In 2016 I lost my best friend to a tragic incident. His name was Jon Diaz, he was shot and killed on November 23, 2016 and he had been my best friend for 20 years. He was a special person, not just to me but to most people who had the pleasure of knowing him.

Jon and I bonded over the idea of building a community center in our home town. While I wish that he and I could still embark on that journey together, unfortunately those cards are no longer on the table. What is still on the table is his dream, my dream, OUR dream. Here's how! We are building a 40,000 square foot facility in the heart of Nedrow, NY that will serve that community and the surrounding areas which are in desperate need for affordable services and resources. The same resources that ignited this dream as a little kid, and more. Your pledge to this project will impact generations to come. Join me and take action on being part of another miracle.

I'm living proof of what social and emotional support can do when it's available to those who need it. Join me in this endeavor to make Jon's dream, my dream, our reality!

*Sincerely,*

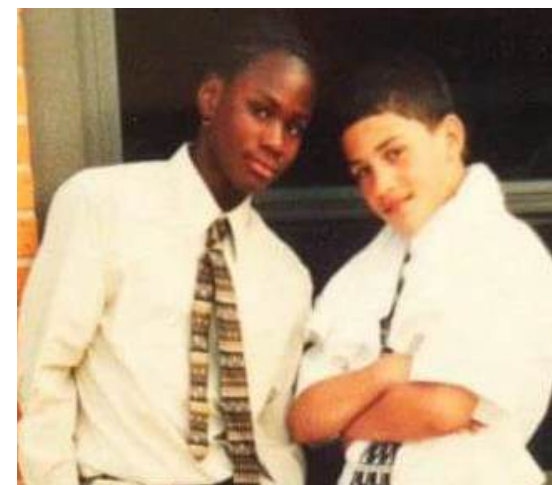
Latavius Murray,  
Jon Diaz Community Center President



# OUR MISSION

## A PLACE FOR ALL TO THRIVE

The Jon Diaz Community Center will provide a safe and accessible space for community health and wellbeing. Inspired by the life and legacy of Jon Diaz, the center is a hub of transformative opportunities, bringing diverse community partners together to deliver critical programs and resources focused on empowering youth and families in the Greater Syracuse Area.



## HONORING THE LEGACY OF JON DIAZ

The center honors the memory of Jonathan "Jon" Diaz, born on May 11, 1990 in Sunnyside, Washington to a loving family steeped in Hispanic culture. The importance of family and education was instilled early in his life, framing how he lived and the choices he made. Jon attended Onondaga Central High School and the State University of New York at Brockport. He enjoyed playing lacrosse, football, and basketball during his scholastic years. He also liked to play videogames, travel, and care for animals.

Jon was a very loving individual who often rescued cats and housed them until rehabilitated. The cats never returned to the streets because he always saved them or found them a loving home.

After college, Jon worked in group homes, assisting people with special needs. He taught his clients life skills and coping skills as well as helping them find employment. In addition, he worked as a substitute teacher in the Syracuse City School District, utilizing his skills to reach at-risk children. Jon's enthusiasm and commitment was appreciated by students and staff alike.

Jon's commitment to his community was further exemplified by his desire to become a police officer. Five days before his death in 2016, he took and passed the police exam in Syracuse. Jon's life was true to his values of family, education, and love for all of God's creations.







## INTRODUCING THE JON DIAZ COMMUNITY CENTER

JDCC will be the central hub for opportunity, connection, and wellbeing for people across the Greater Syracuse Area. This safe, accessible 40,000 square foot facility at 6111 S. Salina Street in Nedrow, NY will be a center of transformative opportunities, bringing diverse community partners together to deliver critical programs and resources focused on empowering youth and families.

**80,000**

Visitors  
annually

**35,000**

Square  
feet

**50**

Living wage  
jobs created

**186**

Construction  
jobs created

**73**

New child  
care slots

**5**

Acres in the  
heart of Nedrow



# CORE ZONES



## HEALTH & WELLBEING

JDCC will support the wellness of all community members, offering space for indoor recreation, fitness, and sports every day of the year.

**Indoor Track:** A 120 meter track will be elevated above the gymnasium, providing a safe, cushioned surface for walkers and runners of all ages.

**Gymnasium:** An open multipurpose gymnasium will be utilized for recreational sports, community events, and more.

**Fitness Center:** A spacious group fitness room that will provide space for dance, fitness, and mindfulness-based classes.



## CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

JDCC is invested in supporting the growth and development of the next generation and their families.

**Child Care Center:** A nurturing early childhood learning center will provide care for 38 children ages 0-5.

**Indoor Playground:** A dynamic, interactive play zone will offer children and youth space to play and learn.

**Youth Lounge:** A hub for youth that will serve as the main space for an after school program that will reach middle and high school youth every day.



## TECHNOLOGY & LEARNING

JDCC will build skills for the future alongside youth, families, and adults, ensuring that all have access to state-of-the-art technology.

**Computer & E-Gaming Lab:** A full-service technology lab, with the latest computers and software to support access and learning.

# AN INNOVATIVE & INCLUSIVE APPROACH

JDCC is a new, innovative model for community development that will be the blueprint for community centers of the future.



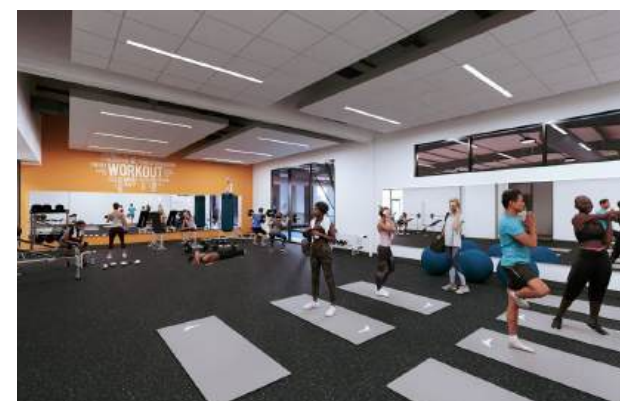
## MULTIGENERATIONAL CONNECTIONS

JDCC is a space for people of all ages and will intentionally build bridges across the generations, encouraging seniors, adults, college students, youth, and young children to connect and support one another.



## SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

JDCC will promote the social emotional growth and learning of children, youth, and families, with programming and services offered on-site including after school programming, childcare, mental health supports, and sports and recreational activities.



## INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

JDCC values everyone and celebrates and builds awareness of the diversity in our community. JDCC staff and visitors will reflect and represent the full spectrum of people from across our region.

# WHY OUR COMMUNITY NEEDS US

JDCC will bring the facilities, programs, and services most needed in our community under one roof, offering community connection and care **7 days a week**.

Community centers like JDCC are proven to improve health and wellbeing, increase community engagement, and boost economic development.

## JDCC MEETS CORE NEEDS EXPRESSED BY OUR NEIGHBORS:



of community members surveyed said that Nedrow needs a recreation center\*



of the licensed childcare slots needed are available in Onondaga County.<sup>1</sup>



obesity rate among adults in Onondaga County\*



children in Onondaga County live in poverty\*



increase in seniors in Onondaga County over 10 years\*



## FILLING THE GAP IN SYRACUSE

With few safe spaces for youth and families in Syracuse, the Jon Diaz Community Center fills a critical need. More than a building, it's a hub for mentorship, opportunity, and growth — proving that investing in people can transform a community.

“Growing up, I had to travel across the Syracuse area to access the athletics programs that paved my way to a career in the National Football League. With the support of community partners and leaders like you, our nonprofit is dedicated to ensuring that young people can access these same kinds of opportunities right here in our own community.”

- LATAVIUS MURRAY

<sup>1</sup> 2021 data from Early Childhood Alliance--county needs 21,491 slots for parent of 0-5 children to be in the workforce, only 5,523 licensed slots available  
\*Jon Diaz Community Center. (2022, May 20). Community Center Survey Overview.



# OUR TEAM



**Latavius Murray | MBA, President**

Founder of JDCC, Latavius brings a deep passion and personal commitment to bringing the center's vision to life. A Pro Bowl Running Back, he pairs his dedication to athletics and his community with business acumen as an MBA graduate from Syracuse University's Whitman School of Management, specializing in Entrepreneurship. Through the creation of JDCC, Latavius honors the legacy of his late best friend, Jon Diaz, by building a space that reflects their shared values of empowerment, opportunity, and service.



**Evelyn Diaz | Vice President**

Evelyn brings over 30 years of experience as a registered nurse, holding a master's degree in nursing from Roberts Wesleyan College in Rochester, NY. She has served as a staff nurse, educator, and program manager, and currently works as a school nurse at Seymour Dual Language Academy in the Syracuse City School District. On the JDCC Board, she collaborates with the committee to support and advance the center's mission.



**Tawanna Wright | Treasurer**

Tawanna is a retired House Director with over 30 years at the NYS Office for People With Developmental Disabilities. She now works with the Syracuse City School District's Office of Family Engagement, building strong ties between families, schools, and the community. As JDCC Treasurer, she manages finances to support the organization's mission.



**Mary Matthews | Secretary**

Mary brings over two decades of experience from her career with Onondaga Central Schools. Born and raised in the Valley and now a proud resident and small business owner in Nedrow, Mary has always believed in the power of community. Her lifelong connection to the area fuels her passion for giving back and helping her neighbors thrive.



**Jason Czarny | Board Member & Principal Collaborator**

Jason has over 25 years of experience in education-based athletics, scheduling, and facilities management. He currently serves as the Executive Director of NYSPHSAA Section III, overseeing athletic programs for 107 school districts across 11 counties. Jason contributes strategic insight and leadership to support community-driven initiatives and organizational growth.



**John Petosa | Member at Large**

John is an attorney and CPA with a private practice focused on business law, taxation, real estate, and estate planning. He also teaches at Syracuse University's Whitman School of Management, serves on the Solvay Bank Board, and is a Town Justice in Camillus. At JDCC, John provides legal and financial guidance to support the center's growth and sustainability and long-term sustainability.



**Steve James | Member at Large**

Steve has been an educator at Onondaga Central for 32 years. He brings his experience and insight to the board by supporting grant writing and government relations efforts. Steve is passionate about strengthening opportunities for the community through advocacy and education.



**Quintez Thomas | Member at Large**

Quintez Thomas is a Direct Support Professional with OPWDD, where he is dedicated to supporting individuals with special needs. He also serves as head coach for modified boys basketball and assistant varsity football coach at Onondaga Central Schools, staying actively involved in mentoring and empowering local youth. Quintez is passionate about making a positive impact both on and off the field in his community.



**Shelby Malinowski | Creative Director**

Shelby brings a wealth of experience in branding, design, and national marketing campaigns. At JDCC, she uses her skills to tell the story of the center's mission, creating visuals and messaging that reflect the heart of the community it serves.



### Integrated Community Alternatives Network (ICAN)

JDCC is leading this project with core partner ICAN, a multi-service non-profit organization that has led capital and operational initiatives of similar facilities across the Upstate NY region. ICAN is a social, emotional, and behavioral healthcare organization, reaching 2,500 clients across the region every day. ICAN brings significant financial management expertise, as an organization that has sustainably grown from a \$7 million to \$32 million annual budget within the last 10 years and manages multi-year federal, state, and local government agency grants and contracts as well as private foundation grants. ICAN has also led numerous large scale capital projects renovating buildings in the region, including ICAN's Headquarters at 310 Main Street in Utica, the Family Resource Center at 106 Memorial Parkway in Utica, and the Herkimer Social Emotional Hub in Downtown Herkimer. Further, ICAN owns and operates the Elevate CNY, a 60,000 square foot sports facility in Westmoreland, and has led the development of a new state of the art Utica Children's Museum, co-located with ICAN's Family Resource Center.



### VIP Structures

VIP Structures, a Syracuse-based full service design-build company, is the architectural, engineering, and building team on this project. VIP Structures' portfolio includes the design and build of dozens of key community buildings across the region, including housing complexes, mixed use facilities, distribution centers and warehouses, research institutes, manufacturing facilities, libraries, medical buildings, banks, grocery stores, and more. Founded in 1975, VIP Structures integrates design, general construction, and construction management services, ensuring a seamless, integrated approach to building.



*I've enthusiastically supported Latavius Murray and the Jon Diaz Community Center since learning of the project. Latavius' efforts to give back to the community he grew up in are not only admirable, but will fill a tremendous void in Nedrow, NY and the surrounding areas, including the Southside of the City of Syracuse and the Onondaga Nation. An inclusive community center with a multitude of athletic, social, and economic programs is exactly what the area has been lacking and desperately needs. I look forward to the finished product and all it will offer the community.*

**PAMELA J. HUNTER**  
Assemblymember, Assembly District 128



*ALDI strives to make the towns, cities, and neighborhood we call home a little bit better every day, and that's why we invest in programs that drive long-term positive change for communities. In doing so, Aldi is donating approximately 5 acres of land to the organization to help commence and continue the development of this community center. ALDI is proud to support the Jon Diaz Community Center and its mission to provide a safe, accessible youth center for Nedrow and the surrounding areas.*

**AARON SUMIDA**  
Vice President, ALDI, Inc.



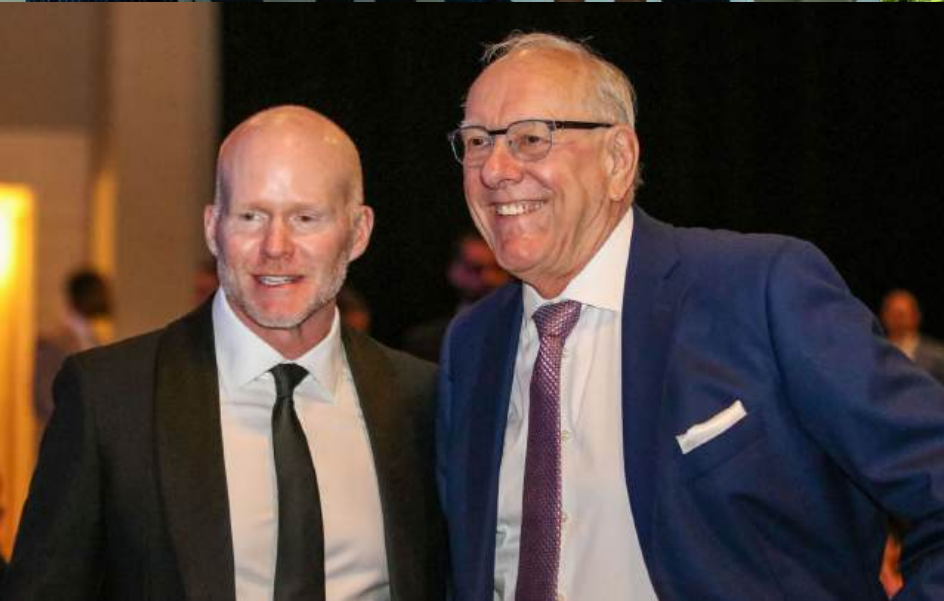
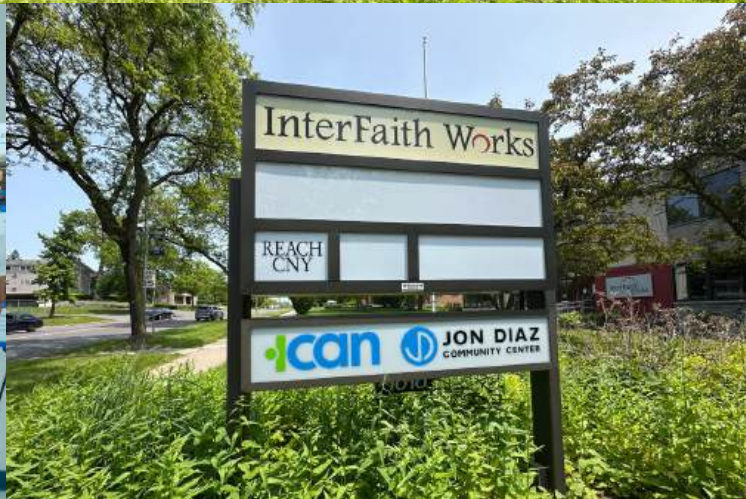
*We are proud to support the Jon Diaz Community Center, a place that will bring hope and opportunity to the youth and families in Nedrow and the surrounding areas. JDCC will provide a safe and welcoming space for people to connect, grow, and feel empowered. We can't wait to see this incredible community center come to life and make a lasting impact.*

**JIM & JULI BOEHEIM**  
Jim & Juli Boeheim Foundation





# THE PROGRESS WE'VE MADE SO FAR.



## INVITATION TO SUPPORT, HOW YOU CAN JOIN IN

You can be part of building our community's future. Join me in honoring Jon's legacy and creating our own for generations to come.

As we build the Jon Diaz Community Center, we need and appreciate the generosity of local residents, businesses, foundations, and government agencies. Already, we've received an outpouring of support and are excited to make this new center a reality for our community.

To learn more, contact JDCC President, Latavius Murray at [jdcommunitycenter@gmail.com](mailto:jdcommunitycenter@gmail.com)



**A SPACE TO GATHER.  
A PLACE TO GROW.  
TOGETHER WE WILL CREATE  
SOMETHING MEANINGFUL.**

