


A DREAM & LEGACY:

# BUILDING THE FUTURE TOGETHER. THE JON DIAZ COMMUNITY CENTER

JON DIAZ
COMMUNITY CENTER



# JON DIAZ
## COMMUNITY CENTER

# TURNING A DREAM INTO A LEGACY



***Building a place where opportunity is close to home.***

The odds of making it to the NFL are less than 1%. I know how fortunate I am to have beaten those odds.

So it's safe to say I've done the impossible. Pretty cool, right? Most would be satisfied, and that's where their story might end. Not me.

Most people know me as an athlete. They know Latavius Murray, the Pro Bowl running back who played 11 years in the NFL. But they don't always see everything that came before it: the ups and downs, the people who believed in me, the opportunities I was able to find, the places I could go to learn, compete and grow, or the distance I sometimes had to travel across Syracuse just to get there.

Some of the greatest losses of my life have shaped who I am and strengthened my commitment to give back. I know firsthand the difference that support, relationships and access to opportunity can make in a young person's life. I want more young people to have those same things, right here in our community.My best friend, Jon Diaz, wanted that too.

Jon and I grew up together. For 20 years, he was one of the people who knew me best. Service was the foundation upon which he built his life. He worked with people with special needs. He taught and connected with at-risk children in Syracuse schools. And just days before his death in 2016, he passed the exam to become a Syracuse police officer.

On November 23, 2016, Jon was tragically shot and killed. I lost my best friend, and our community lost a special person who had dedicated his life to helping others.

Jon and I had bonded over a dream of one day building a community center in our hometown. We believed our community's children and families deserved greater access to the opportunities, resources and relationships that can change the course of a life.

Jon never got the chance to see that dream become reality.

**But we do.**

The Jon Diaz Community Center is our opportunity to turn our dream into something lasting: a place where a child can discover what they are good at, a teenager can find an adult who believes in them, a parent can find support closer to home, and neighbors of every generation can find connection and belonging.

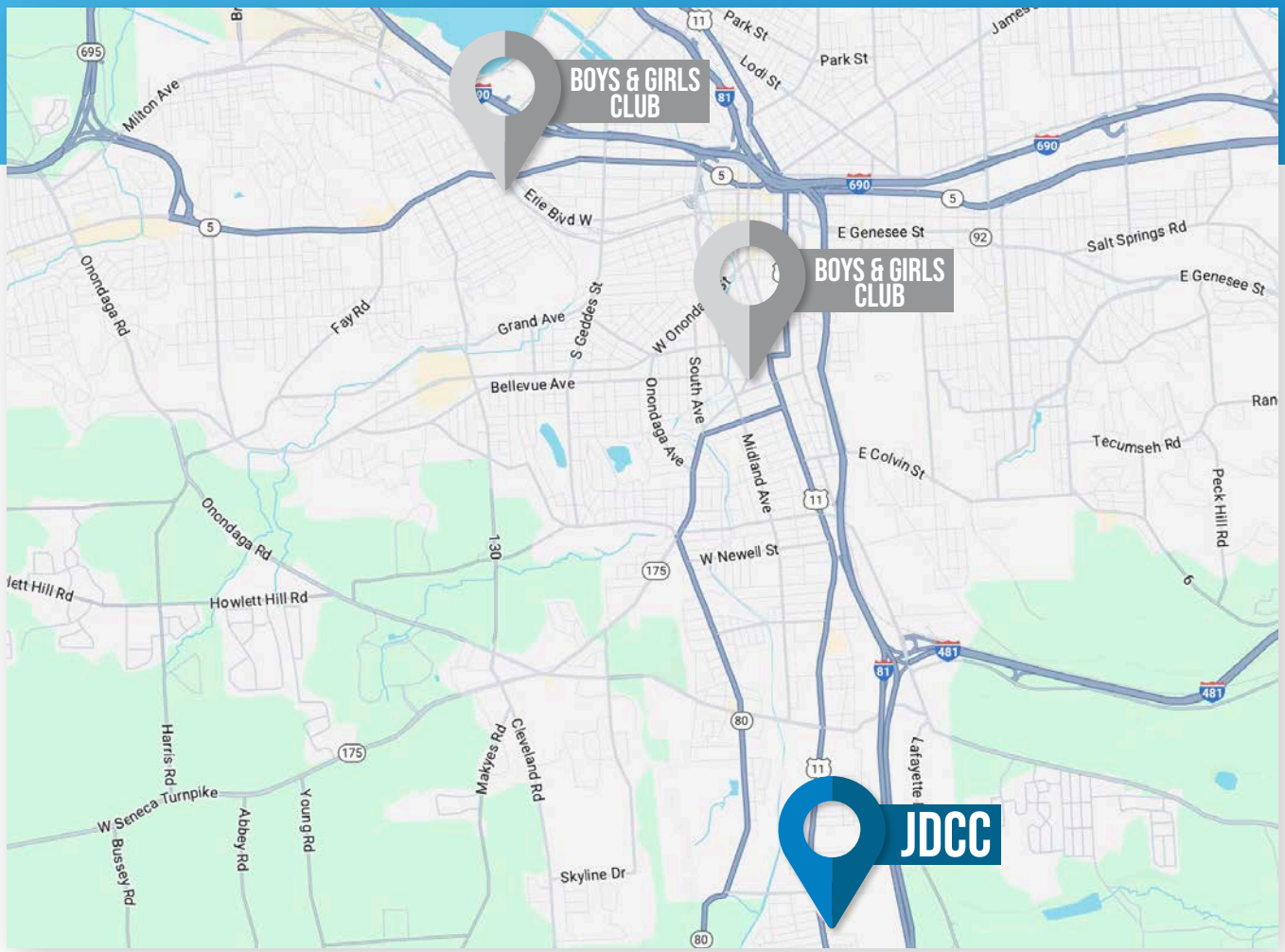
I wish Jon were here to build it with me. But I have the opportunity to carry our dream forward, and I'm asking you to be part of it.

This Center bears Jon's name. But the future it represents belongs to all of us.

Together, we can turn adversity into action and build something that will impact generations to come.

*Sincerely,*

Latavius Murray,
President, Jon Diaz Community Center




# BRINGING OPPORTUNITY CLOSER TO HOME

For children and families in Nedrow, Syracuse's South Side and surrounding communities, the resources and relationships that help people thrive are not always close to home.

Affordable childcare. Safe places for young people after school. Recreation and wellness. Technology. Mentors and trusted adults. Social and emotional support. The chance to discover a talent, develop a skill or simply find a place to belong. You shouldn't have to leave your community to find these things.

Today, accessing these opportunities can still require traveling outside one's neighborhood, navigating transportation challenges, or piecing together programs and services scattered across the Syracuse area.

A child's ZIP code shouldn't determine whether opportunity is within reach.

> *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."*



***–LATAVIUS MURRAY,***
*President, Jon Diaz Community Center*

# THE DATA REINFORCES THE NEED

**96%**

of community members surveyed said the Nedrow area needs a recreation center.*

**1 IN 5**

children in Onondaga County live in poverty.*

**40%**

of the licensed child-care slots needed in Onondaga County were available.*

The region is facing health and wellness challenges and a growing senior population.

*Jon Diaz Community Center. (2022, May 20). Community Center Survey Overview.

But JDCC is about more than responding to any one statistic or filling a single service gap. It is about bringing a range of resources, opportunities and support together in a single space, rooted in Nedrow and the surrounding communities - a place where children and families can access more of what they need, closer to home.

***That place is the Jon Diaz Community Center.***

> *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."*



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

# DESIGNED AROUND THE COMMUNITY AS A WHOLE

The Jon Diaz Community Center will be a safe, accessible hub for opportunity, connection and wellbeing.

Located on five acres in Nedrow, JDCC will bring together childcare, youth programming, recreation, technology, health and wellness, social and emotional support, and opportunities for multigenerational connection.

JDCC's difference is not any one program, service or space. It is the power of bringing them together – giving children and families one place to connect with experiences, relationships and support that can grow with them throughout their lives. A space that has the power to provide this kind of support for generations to come.

Helping bring this vision to life is Integrated Community Alternatives Network (ICAN), JDCC's core nonprofit partner, which brings deep experience delivering community-based services and developing and operating large-scale community facilities across the region.






## THE POTENTIAL FOR IMPACT

JDCC will be located on five acres in the heart of Nedrow, easily accessible to neighborhood residents and surrounding communities. We anticipate more than 80,000 visits annually. When fully operational, JDCC will provide:

**38,000+**
square feet of community space

**54**
new child-care slots

**50**
living-wage jobs

**186**
construction jobs

**5**
acres in the heart of Nedrow, NY

The numbers demonstrate JDCC's reach. Its true impact will be measured in the lives of the people who walk through its doors.

# 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 54 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 AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

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 services, and sports and recreational activities.




## INCLUSION & DIVERSITY

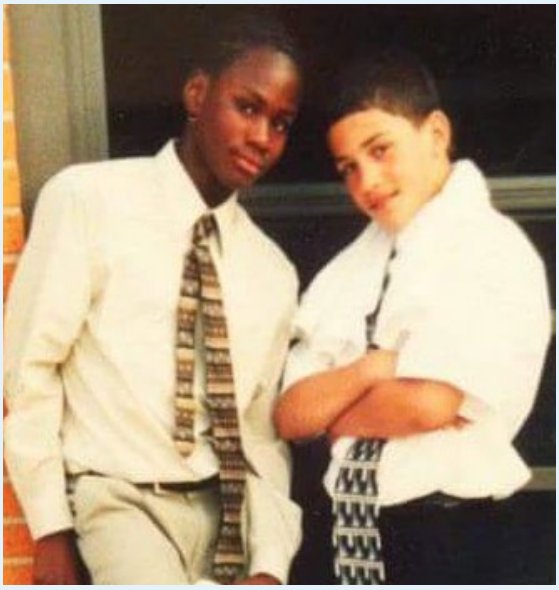
JDCC values everyone and celebrates and builds awareness of the diversity in our community. JDCC staff and visitors will reflect and represent the full spectrum of people from across our region.

## HONORING JON'S LEGACY

Jon Diaz lived his life in service to others. Whether working with people with special needs, connecting with young people in Syracuse schools or pursuing his dream of becoming a police officer, service was the foundation upon which he built his life.

JDCC will carry that spirit forward, grounded in the values Jon lived: family, opportunity, service and connection.

**Jonathan "Jon" Diaz**
***May 11, 1990 – November 23, 2016***



## A VISION BACKED BY EXPERIENCE

Building and sustaining a center of this scale requires experienced partners. JDCC has them.

As JDCC's lead nonprofit partner, ICAN brings significant organizational and operational capacity to this effort. The multi-service nonprofit reaches 3,000 people across the region each day and has deep experience in social, emotional and behavioral health, financial management, government grants and contracts, and the development and operation of large-scale community facilities across Upstate New York.

Over the past decade, ICAN has grown from a $7 million to $44 million organization and has successfully developed and operated major community facilities, including Elevate CNY, a 60,000-square-foot sports facility, and the Utica Children's Museum and Family Resource Center. The agency provides more than 25 programs in 8 counties, serving young children through adults. ICAN is supporting the design of the JDCC facility and will operate the JDCC when it opens.

VIP Structures, JDCC's Syracuse-based design-build partner, brings 50 years of regional architectural, engineering, and construction management expertise. Its portfolio spans community facilities, housing, medical buildings, libraries, research institutions and other complex projects across the region.

Together, ICAN and VIP bring the operational, financial, design and construction expertise needed to build and operate JDCC – and position it for long-term success.

# THIS IS OUR MOMENT TO BUILD IT

What began as a dream shared between two childhood friends is now within reach.

The site is secured. The Center has been designed. Experienced partners are in place. A sustainable operating model has been developed, with funding expected from a mix of government contracts, revenue from child care and space rentals, fee-for-service programming, memberships and private donations. And $10 million has already been committed toward the $20 million campaign.

## $20 MILLION CAMPAIGN GOAL




> *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."*



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

Now, we are seeking philanthropic partners who will help us close the gap and open the doors.

Gifts to the campaign will help create the spaces, programs and infrastructure that will bring JDCC to life.

Leadership and naming opportunities offer individuals, families, foundations and companies a meaningful way to create a lasting legacy and leave their mark on the future of this community.

***This isn't simply an investment in a building. It's an investment in the people who will walk through its doors.***

- *The child who needs somewhere safe to go after school.*
- *The parent who needs childcare to work.*
- *The teenager who hasn't yet discovered what they're capable of.*
- *The family trying to find support.*
- *The neighbor looking for connection.*
- *And generations of children and families who will grow up with a place in their community built for them.*

## JON'S DREAM. OUR COMMUNITY'S FUTURE.

Jon and Latavius imagined a place that could give back to the community that shaped them. Today, their vision is within reach.

With your support, JDCC can become a place where children discover what is possible, families find support closer to home, and neighbors find connection and belonging.

Join us in bringing opportunity closer to home for Nedrow and surrounding communities.

Together, we can turn Jon's dream into a community legacy.

**JON DIAZ COMMUNITY CENTER**

**www.jdccenter.org**

*Updated October 2026*