



JARED SOLOMON

STATE REPRESENTATIVE



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Jared brings \$200,000 state grant for Tarken Rec Center

On Aug. 1, I was joined by city, state, and local leaders to announce the award of a \$200,000 grant from the state Department of Community and Economic Development for the Tarken Recreation Center (Photo 1)!



Tarken is a vital hub for our neighborhood. It has a passionate rec leader in Walt Mulholland, and now a new community group supporting it - Brick by Brick, Block by Block, founded by local community leader (and Super Volunteer with my office) Sharon Calvin.

But Tarken needs some love and reinvestment. Its tennis court has no nets and is used as a makeshift soccer pitch. The basketball courts have faded lines and cracked pavements. The playground has missing swings and damaged equipment.

That is why I worked with the Parks and Rec Department, the Parks Alliance, state Sen. Christine Tartaglione and City Councilmember Cherelle Parker to get a Keystone Communities Grant from DCED. This builds on my efforts to support Tarken through partnership with the World Mission Church of God and the International We Love You Foundation, who already



held two 100-person beautification efforts at Tarken, where we painted over graffiti, removed weeds, and brightened up the basketball courts.



Now that we have a state grant, we will work with city leaders, key stakeholders and philanthropists to leverage this grant to get even more money to rebuild Tarken, which has a bright future ahead, and we look forward to working with all partners to make that future a reality.

Improvements Debut at Max Myers and Wissinoming Park

In addition to this grant for Tarken, 2018 has seen exciting new facility upgrades elsewhere in the district. First, after years of work from before I was elected to office, I celebrated a new \$300K playground at Max Myers Rec Center along with Councilmembers Henon and Sanchez (Photo 2). I also got a new mural installed at Max Myers pool as

part of the first phase of beautifying this area of the rec working with the local civic association (Photo 3). Second, city and state leaders opened fantastic renovations to Wissinoming Park, including a new playground, spray ground and rain gardens (Photo 4). Be sure to check out these great community spaces. More to come!

A Safer Community – More Police and a New 2nd Police District

To have a thriving Northeast Philadelphia, we need a safe Northeast Philadelphia. To have a safe community, we need more officers on the street, equipped with the right tools, and working hand-in-hand positively with residents and businesses.

Working with, learning from, and supporting the police is a top priority of mine. I regularly meet with officers to learn about the challenges they face while trying to protect us, and have an almost-daily dialogue with the captains.

Challenges abound. For example, officers are often required to spend their whole shift all the way downtown to testify in court instead of walking the beat. Or they get pulled downtown to staff protests or difficult school dismissals. In addition to these challenges, new recruits are directed to other districts, not the 2nd.

I have been fighting to change this. I have met with Police Commissioner Richard Ross multiple times to advocate for more police in the 2nd and for a new 2nd Police District headquarters that is actually in the 2nd District (it is currently in the 15th). My office brought him out to our neighborhood in October 2017 where he promised to address these issues.

Now I am happy to report results from these efforts:

- **More Officers:** The 2nd District captain announced in the spring that he has 20 new officers under his command, most of whom are training as bike cops.
- **Patrols on Commercial Corridors:** Bike cops and

foot patrols now regularly patrol Castor Avenue to protect businesses and customers after we expressed concern over a spate of robberies along the avenue.

- **New Police District:** I worked since I was elected to secure a new home for our 2nd Police District. I was thrilled when this spring, City Councilman Brian O'Neill passed an ordinance that would pave the way to move the 2nd Police District headquarters to Castor and Cottman avenues, a central location that will improve response times for the whole district.
- **Security Cameras:** My office has helped multiple businesses apply for security cameras through a city reimbursement program to monitor more sidewalk space on our corridors.

On top of this, I remain optimistic that we will be able to bring a new Police Athletic League to the Northeast. I personally have toured multiple sites with the PAL staff and board members and am actively working to make sure our kids have this great after-school program available to them.

All of this represents important progress in making our community safer, one step at a time.



Rep. Solomon held a news conference in July with the Philadelphia Police Department to announce a partnership to combat littering in the Northeast.

Serving the District's Arabic-Speaking Community

Recent years have seen a new wave of people arriving in the United States from all over, including the Middle East, some of whom mostly speak Arabic. Those families have become members of our Northeast Philadelphia community, but their sense of community may not be clear to them.

As a young person, who has experience of both settings and fluency in Arabic and English, I have sought to build a connection that assists such families.

I joined Jared's office to help the community build itself and serve its needs. I have been an intern and volunteer with the office for over a year, offering translation services and working with Arabic speakers to offer them services in a more accessible fashion. This summer, we have been working to create more sustainable and long-lasting ties to Arabic speakers in the neighborhood. We are

gauging needs and desires, both to provide currently needed services and to be proactive about keeping flourishing as the end goal.

If members of the community realize their potential for leadership and engagement, it will be a great opportunity to build a thriving Northeast community for all. – **Zubaida, Intern**



Jared's staff meets with local Arabic speakers to discuss civics and community engagement ideas.



Legislative update

As the end of the 2017-2018 legislative session approaches, I am proud of many of the things we accomplished in Harrisburg. Certainly there was a lot of frustration too but that is part of the job. I pushed as hard as I could for the issues important to Northeast Philadelphia and Pennsylvania as a whole. As a result, two of my bills became law – something no one thought possible for a freshman legislator in the minority party.

Here are some of the Harrisburg highlights:

- H.B. 1231/Act 69 of 2017 – Veterans Registry** – signed into law by Gov. Wolf Dec. 22, 2017 (Photo 1), a new push to connect Pennsylvania veterans to the services and benefits they, their families and caregivers need.
- H.B. 1793/Act 28 of 2018 – Semiquincentennial Commission** – signed into law by Gov. Wolf June 12, 2018. I worked with Rep. Alex Charlton on this law that creates a statewide commission to prepare for and celebrate the 250th anniversary of America’s founding in 2026.
- 2018-2019 Budget – Unprecedented investment in workforce development** – I pushed for this since I took office, and Gov. Wolf and the legislature agreed to \$50 million in new spending on innovative workforce development programs, particularly for young people.
- H.B. 1284 – One Stop Shop For Business** – I am working with Rep. Michael Peifer on this bill that would codify in statute the new PA One Stop Shop portal with which new and existing business owners can easily navigate through the process of setting up or expanding their business.
- H.B. 1742 – Child-care Keystone Stars** – I am working with Rep. Tom Mehaffie on this bill, which would help the growth of high-quality child-care providers. It is now out of the Children and Youth Committee and on to the full House for a floor vote.
- H.B. 2065 – Older Adult Mentor Volunteer Program** – Voted unanimously out of the Aging and Older Adult Services Committee, this bill would support the mentorship of local young people by retired professionals to help guide young people’s careers and engage older adults in their community.
- Modernization of the Landlord Tenant Act** – This bill, to be introduced in the fall, would be the first comprehensive update of the state act since 1951 and clarify the relationship and responsibilities for landlords and tenants. I hosted a Policy Committee hearing on this topic at the Protestant Home with my colleagues and issue experts (Photo 2).

If you want to see all of my bills and review all of my votes on legislation in this current session, visit legis.state.pa.us or contact my office at 215-342-6340. In addition, if you want to view my office expenses, please visit pahouse.com/Solomon/ExpenseReports. I also continue to save taxpayer money by not taking per diems or a state car.



Supporting local businesses



Since taking office, one of my priorities is assisting small businesses and improving business corridors. My business liaison Minerva Baez visits regularly with small business owners along the Bustleton, Castor and Rising Sun Avenue corridors to:

- Introduce our office and inform the business owner of the services our office offers,
- Listen to both their achievements and challenges,
- Share with them the financial and security programs that are offered through various city and nonprofit organizations,
- Encourage business owners to take part in the Castor Bustleton & Cottman Business Association monthly meetings.

We have worked closely with key partners in this effort, including Andrea Hodge, the economic development associate at the Oxford Circle Christian Community

Development Association and Michelle Price-Randall, business service manager, city Department of Commerce.

Programs available to small business owners can range from the business security camera program, storefront improvement program, crowdfunding at (0% interest) program to one-on-one business assistance, business coaching, business training and lending programs. In addition, there are grants (which do not have to be repaid) available to small business owners to help prepare their business for success.

We have already helped eight local business owners to receive \$78,000 in funding (Photo 1). Small businesses are a backbone of our community and I am proud to support them.

To learn more about how we can support your business, call Minerva Baez at 215-342-6340 or email mbaez@pahouse.net.

Jared brings in \$40,000 grant for business corridors

Since day one as your state representative, I promised to work tirelessly to bring state resources to support the growth of Lower Northeast Philadelphia.

In February, I announced a new \$40,000 state grant for the Oxford Circle Christian Community Development Association (OCCDA) to strengthen the business corridors of our area (Photo 1). Funded through the Neighborhood Assistance Program, in partnership with M&T Bank and Kinder Academy, OCCDA is undertaking extensive work to promote business growth, accessing city grant programs, and building a door-to-door relationship between all business owners in the area.

Our business corridors are vital to the health of our neighborhoods. The key to that health is to have a corridor manager beating the pavement day in and day out to support the corridor. Now, thanks to this grant, we have Andrea Hodge, a local resident, each

month walking up and down Castor, Bustleton and Cottman avenues talking to business owners. She is bringing more people to participate in the ever-growing Castor-Bustleton-Cottman Business Association, encouraging people to get grants from the Merchants Fund, and getting them to attend business classes put on by local stakeholders.

This grant builds on the work I did in my first year in office helping business corridors.

See "Supporting Local Businesses" section on page 3. This work lays a strong foundation for the future growth of our business corridors. If you want to get involved, contact my office at 215-342-6340.



A student's view working with Jared

State Rep. Jared Solomon is committed to working closely with students to hear their perspective and ideas for the community. I saw this firsthand as a member of the Northeast High School (NEHS) Student Senate. Throughout the school year we had different meetings and debates. We worked hand-in-hand with Jared's staff members, Andrew and Jon, to highlight the issues that were most important to the NEHS student body; sadly that issue was violence in our community.

From there, we crafted a survey to further investigate if it was the main problem for our classmates. While some did not think it was a problem, several students confessed to feeling troubled about sudden attacks that could happen anywhere within our school walls, our streets or our community. We need to hear from more students, but solutions are being worked on so we can better address the topic next school year.

Our goal this following year will be to make sure that everyone can experience an environment free from any possible danger and threats.

Safety is the foundation for academic success and the Student Senate is committed to working with Jared to make this happen.

- Neisha, Northeast High Class of 2019

A New Chinese Association in the Northeast

For our neighborhood to thrive, we have to make sure all people are civically engaged in the community. Sometimes language barriers make it difficult for some in our district's 30% foreign-born population to participate. That is why I have encouraged and supported the creation of a new civic organization specifically for the Chinese community.

The Northeast Philadelphia Chinese Association (NEPCA) was founded to support the local Chinese community by helping them access city and state services, translate important documents, and come together to discuss key issues impacting their community. NEPCA's leadership is fully engaged with other civic groups such as Oxford Circle CCDA, Lawncrest Civic and many others. I also partnered with NEPCA to host a town hall at Kai Yuan Temple on Cottman Avenue to hear concerns from the Chinese community (Photo 2).

NEPCA has set up multiple seminars at the Northeast Regional Library and conducts weekly sessions to take in issues to help the Chinese community. Interns in my office have supported them as well. And in July NEPCA's work was featured in the New York Times!

It is my hope over time that NEPCA proves to be an effective model for other communities to follow so that our government and community can address their needs as best as possible. Contact my office at 215-342-6340 to get involved!



Help with utility bills

Almost daily, people come into my office because they either have received a utility shutoff notice or their water, gas or electricity is already shut off.



People who are behind on utility bills often ignore it, which can lead to more fees and eventually a shutoff. In helping dozens of people either prevent a shutoff or restore service, we have developed steps to guide people who have fallen behind on utility bills and are worried about a shutoff. We recommend:

- **DO** talk to your utility company. PECO, PGW, and PWD will work with you as best they can to minimize additional fees and to avoid shutoff. They do not want to see people go without electric, gas, or water. Stay in constant communication even if you do not have the money to pay your bill.
- **DO** look into assistance programs and payment plans. Each utility company has special programs designed to assist you in paying your bill, if you have fallen behind.
- **DO** reach out to friends, family and charities for assistance. If you do not have the funds to keep your service on, you may need outside funds and these sources are typically the most fruitful.
- **DO** visit my office (7012 Castor Ave.) or call us (215-342-6340). If you are not able to resolve your issues following these tips, we are here to help. It can be difficult to navigate your options, but we have plenty of experience and can assist you every step of the way.
- **DO NOT** ignore utility bills and notices. Ignoring your bills does not make them disappear – it just makes them climb higher. We have seen many instances of bills getting into the thousands of dollars, which makes it that much more difficult to pay down when you do decide to address it.
- **DO NOT** rely on medical vouchers to avoid a shutoff. Medical vouchers are issued for people with medical conditions to avoid immediate shutoff, but only give people a one-month grace period and typically can only be used three times during your lifetime. Medical vouchers simply give you another month without payment, but do not prevent your bill from climbing higher.
- **DO NOT** rely on seasonal shutoff laws and regulations. Yes, it is true, that utility companies cannot cut your heat in the winter months (Dec. 1 through March 31) and cannot cut your cooling during a heat wave, but during these times, your bills still accrue. If you are already behind on your bills and do not pay them during the winter knowing your service will not be shut off, that just means you will be shut off in April with four more months of bills tacked on to your balance.

Saving homes from foreclosure

Property values are on the rise, causing higher property taxes. As a result, some of our neighbors have fallen behind, so my staff has contacted them by letters and phone calls to help them resolve unpaid property taxes and, in many cases, save homes. Often, they are working parents, people with disabilities or seniors who did not even realize that their home was in danger of foreclosure.

We have already reached out to more than 100 neighbors and saved more than a dozen homes by helping them apply for Philadelphia's Owner-Occupied Payment Agreement (OOPA) program. OOPA saves people from tax foreclosure by letting them pay a small amount toward their tax balance each month without breaking the bank. In many cases, people were able to avoid paying interest and penalties altogether on their outstanding tax balance.

Single-family homeowners are an important backbone of our community. That is why we have been working hard to make sure these residents are not at risk of losing their homes because they have fallen behind on property taxes. If you or someone you know in the area is in this situation, please reach out to my office. We are here to help.

Jared's Super Volunteer Program update



For the past two years, my staff has been growing Jared's Super Volunteer Program, creating a network of volunteers and empowering them with the tools and knowledge to organize block cleanups to tackle the litter problem in our area. The city has four neighborhood cleanups every summer and we work with them by getting more people to participate. Our office provides the volunteers with the dates and materials for the cleanup, including a Super Volunteer t-shirt.

Recently, we invited people to learn more about becoming a Super Volunteer (Photo 1). We had a great turnout and those who attended were enthusiastic. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining, please call Mary Dougherty at 215-342-6340 and she will mail you a packet with information and explain how to get started.

Jared's Super Volunteers: Our Neighborhood, Our Responsibility!

JARED SOLOMON
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Save the Dates!

**Election Reform
Legislative Summit**

Oct. 23 • 6 p.m.

Philadelphia Protestant Home
6401 Martins Mill Rd.

Senior Fair

Nov. 17 • 10 a.m.

St. Thomas Indian Orthodox Church
1009 Unruh Ave.

**Call 215-342-6340 to RSVP
for both events.**

Translation help needed

I represent the most linguistically diverse district in Pennsylvania. Roughly 30% of our residents were born in another country. Many do not speak English well.

We need your help to serve all people regardless of their native tongue. Are you bilingual? Are you interested in serving your community by volunteering at my office? Call us at 215-342-6340 or stop by 7012 Castor Ave. to learn how you can help. Thank you!

JARED'S OFFICE
BY THE NUMBERS


12,049
Constituents
Helped

6,784
People visited
our office

507
Philly 311
Reports

655
SEPTA
Senior IDs

641
Property Tax/
Rent Rebate



1,334
Event
Attendees

Data is from Dec. 1, 2016 through Aug. 13, 2018.