

Teterboro Airport 5K raises \$30,000 for Bergen County's United Way

Steve Janoski, Staff Writer, @SteveJanoski Published 7:13 p.m. ET July 15, 2017 | Updated 10:32 p.m. ET July 15, 2017



(Photo: Marko Georgiev/NorthJersey.com)

TETERBORO — The storms had fled hours earlier, but a blanket of soupy air still lay trapped beneath the leaden sky that hid Saturday morning's sun.

That didn't intimidate the more than 800 eager runners who packed the starting line of the PSEG Teterboro Airport 5K, the proceeds from which benefited Bergen County's United Way. The shriek of an air horn launched the racers forward, and together they carved through the puddle-dotted tarmac before stretching into an indistinguishable line of colorful figures bobbing in the distance.

Speakers blared pop music and jet engines hummed as pilots waited to use the airport's one open runway — a feature that, for some, adds to the race's allure.

"It's fun when you're out there, because planes are landing and taking off," said a sweating Tom Toronto, president of the county's United Way, shortly after finishing the 3.1-mile jaunt. "It adds an element of excitement, if you will. It's a unique venue."

FUNDRAISING: [Paramus siblings, who lost both parents to cancer, raising funds for research \(/story/news/bergen/paramus/2017/07/11/paramus-siblings-who-lost-both-parents-cancer-raising-funds-research/448926001/\)](#)

TETERBORO AIRPORT: [5 things to know about the airport \(/story/news/transportation/2017/05/15/5-things-know-teterboro-airport/323634001/\)](#)

The annual race, now celebrating its 20th year, has raised more than \$500,000 for the 52-year-old organization's Compassion Fund, which provides temporary financial assistance to thousands of county residents in crisis, said Gina Plotino, United Way's vice president of program and operations. The race raised about \$30,000 on Saturday, she said.

The first-place finisher, James Hartop of Glen Ridge, crossed the finish line a little more than 17 minutes after the race began. But even though it was sanctioned by the USA Track and Field organization, many said the run wasn't about times — it was about giving something back.

"It's for the community — we work in Bergen County, and we want to support the people in Bergen County," said John Horuzy, an IT manager with race sponsor UPS.



Bergen County's United Way's 20th Annual Teterboro Airport 5K race. Photo: Marko Georgiev/NorthJersey.com (Photo: Marko Georgiev/NorthJersey.com)

Horuzy, who lives in Waldwick, said UPS had 95 runners and 20 volunteers from its Mahwah, Paramus, and Wayne offices involved in Saturday's race.

Emily Reynolds, an assistant store manager for the soon-to-open Wegmans Food Market in Montvale, ran alongside a handful of other company employees. Wegmans is sponsoring the event for the first time this year as a part of its mission to make a difference in the towns it serves, Reynolds said.

"We wanted to get out and support the community," Reynolds said.

Toronto, United Way's president, said the about 16 companies that sponsored the event are "top flight" organizations. These included Public Service Enterprise Group, Dassault Falcon Jet and Enterprise Rent-A-Car, according to a news release.

The race was a bright spot for the airport, which saw two pilots killed two months ago when their Teterboro-bound Learjet crashed in neighboring Carlstadt.

Renee Spann, Teterboro's airport manager, said Saturday was a great day.

"It's a good cause," Spann said. "And to the degree that the airport can partner with the community and do things that are beneficial to the community — we want to be there."

United Way is the largest privately financed nonprofit in the world and works to improve education and create stronger communities, according to its website. Bergen's local organization is one of 16 in New Jersey, Plotino said.

Email: janoski@northjersey.com



Bergen Countys United Ways 20th Annual Teterboro Airport 5K race. Photo: Marko Georgiev/NorthJersey.com (Photo: Marko Georgiev/NorthJersey.com)

Read or Share this story: <https://njersy.co/2uvPUij>

YOU COULD SAVE

\$620

by switching to Progressive

Zip Code

Get a Quote