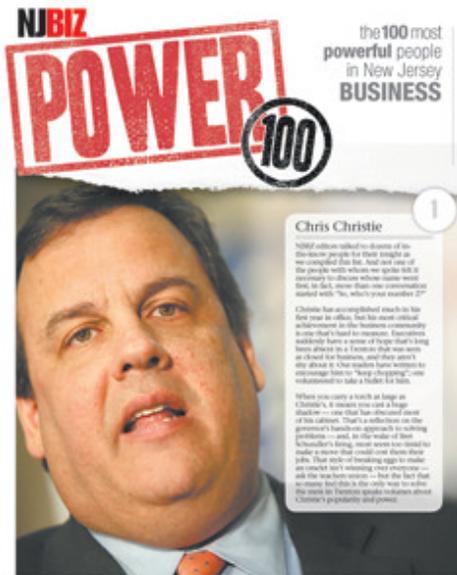


The 100 most powerful people in New Jersey business

PRINT

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By NJBIZ Staff



NJBIZ editors talked to dozens of in-the-know sources over a period of months to determine who are the most powerful people in New Jersey business. Read on for our complete breakdown.

1. Chris Christie

NJBIZ editors talked to dozens of in-the-know people for their insight as we compiled this list. And not one of the people with whom we spoke felt it necessary to discuss whose name went first; in fact, more than one conversation started with “So, who’s your number 2?”



Christie has accomplished much in his first year in office, but his most critical achievement in the business community is one that’s hard to measure. Executives suddenly have a sense of hope that’s long been absent in a Trenton that was seen as closed for business, and they aren’t shy about it: Our readers have written to

encourage him to “keep chopping”; one volunteered to take a bullet for him.

When you carry a torch as large as Christie’s, it means you cast a huge shadow — one that has obscured most of his cabinet. That’s a reflection on the governor’s hands-on approach to solving problems — and, in the wake of Bret Schundler’s firing, most seem too timid to make a move that could cost them their jobs. That style of breaking eggs to make an omelet isn’t winning over everyone — ask the teachers union — but the fact that so many feel this is the only way to solve the mess in Trenton speaks volumes about Christie’s popularity and power.

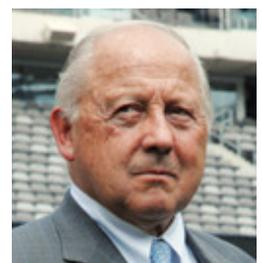
2. Dennis Bone

A straight-talking realist who champions New Jersey’s virtues and never sugarcoats its faults, Bone is the pre-eminent statewide business leader, his advice sought after and his candor much in demand on the state’s business lecture circuit. The CEO of Verizon New Jersey played a central role in the creation of Choose New Jersey. Past chairman of the state Chamber of Commerce, Bone routinely throws himself into big issues like how to upgrade the state’s worker training programs, and how to encourage citizens to fight back against New Jersey’s legacy of official corruption and get involved in their local governments.



3. Jon F. Hanson

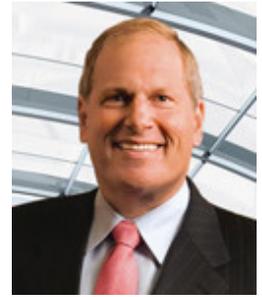
Once the powerful chair of the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority, the very private Hanson faded from the public limelight, only to re-emerge as the man to reinvent Xanadu and Atlantic City. “He’s the comeback kid,” one observer said. Others described the founder and chairman of The Hampshire Cos. in Morristown as a “brilliant guy” who has a “fabulous Rolodex.” His most visible work has been as chairman of



Christie's gaming commission; he is "the only name that matters today in that industry." But he also led fundraising efforts for Christie's campaign, so he knows who forked over cash — and who did not.

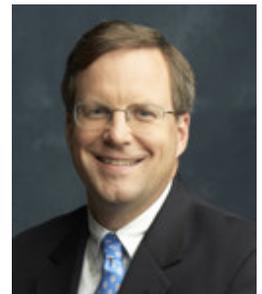
4. David M. Cote

The Honeywell International Inc. chief works both sides of the aisle at high levels: Cote was the only corporate executive in the nation to serve on President Barack Obama's deficit commission, and in July, Christie visited the company's Morris Township headquarters, after convincing Cote to stay in the state with a promise of larger business retention incentives. Christie signed the BRRAG legislation this month, and still publicly discusses Cote's commitment to stay. Ranked No. 74 on the Fortune 500 list, Honeywell, which manufactures aerospace and automotive products, chemicals, and control technologies for buildings, reportedly is hiring; last month, it issued a bullish 2011 forecast.



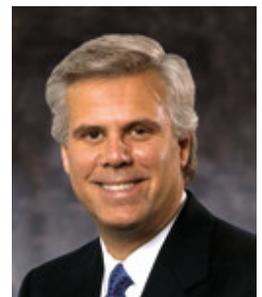
5. Richard Bagger

"A calming influence in a crazy shop," Bagger was described by another observer as a "major troubleshooter for the governor." Christie's chief of staff is "the gatekeeper" and a "huge asset" to the administration, solving tough problems, business leaders said: "When you can't get the governor, Rich is the go-to guy." The former legislator has business experience from stints at Pfizer, Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey and McCarter & English. "Christie sucks out all the air, but at the end of the day, the most respected guy you never hear about" is Bagger.



6. George E. Norcross III

A powerful political figure whose influence extends well beyond Camden County and South Jersey, the insurance executive has led the expansion of Cooper University Hospital, and is now building a new medical school with Rowan University that's expected to bring economic growth, jobs and hope to New Jersey's poorest city.



7. Kim Guadagno

Adrenaline and energy were words that kept cropping up to describe the lieutenant governor, who insiders say will do whatever it takes to keep companies in New Jersey, including showing up on their doorstep. Business leaders give Guadagno kudos for creating a central point where companies can address problems. "She gives out her freaking cell phone number, and she answers it herself," one said. She also doesn't shy from problems, and reportedly rallies the cabinet to take action on business-friendly measures. She is credited with entering a world she didn't understand and learning it inside-out.



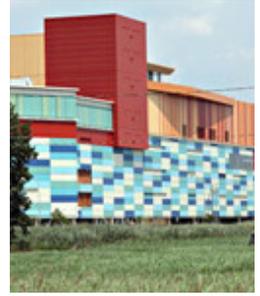
8. Anthony R. Coscia

With Christie's bombastic ways, New Jersey needs someone like Coscia, who can reach across the aisle — and state borders — to move things forward. The Windels, Marx, Lane & Mittendorf partner is an "intellectual force transcending both parties" on economic development. Another insider called Coscia "fantastic" as chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, where he convinced Empire State officials to support the Bayonne Bridge's raising. A consensus-builder, Coscia can use those skills as a board member of Amtrak, a post to which Obama appointed him.



9. Nader Ghermezian

You may not know the name, but you definitely know Triple Five, the Canadian developer performing the Xanadu-over in its bid to complete the long-idled Meadowlands complex. Terms of the arrangement haven't yet come to light, but given how badly Christie's team wants this finished, it's safe to say Triple Five is getting a good deal to put a coat of polish on this multicolored monster, and see it to completion. The region's date with the Super Bowl, and the role of Xanadu in that production, promises to make Triple Five even more visible.



10. Caren Franzini

As CEO of the state's Economic Development Authority, Franzini is the "gatekeeper of getting things done" who occupies a "wheelhouse position" in government, as she acts as the bank on state incentives. Perhaps most notable is her consistency: Franzini has served seven governors from both parties. She's respected by Democrats and Republicans for her intellect, and retained in part for her ability to subsume her ego in a city of outsized personalities.



11. Ronald J. Del Mauro

His mission when he became CEO in 1985 was reviving ailing St. Barnabas; he spent the next quarter-century growing it into the state's largest health care system and one of its largest employers. If he succeeds in collaborating with Atlantic Health, he will own the state's health care.

12. Laurence M. Downes

The chairman and CEO of New Jersey Resources, in Wall, is "smart and plays the game well." A board member of Choose New Jersey and the Economic Development Authority, Downes was called "a very public-spirited business leader."

13. William J. Palatucci

"He's the first friend of the governor. You can't be any better than that," one insider said. Palatucci "steps into that weird void between business and politics," another said. He is senior vice president and general counsel for public affairs at Community Education Centers in West Caldwell.

14. David B. Snow Jr.

Snow is chairman and CEO of Franklin Lakes-based Medco Health Solutions Inc., the country's largest pharmacy benefits manager by revenue. The Fortune 45 company reportedly is investing in capital expenditures, buying back stock and growing, acquiring United BioSource for \$730 million in August.

15. Robert E. Grady

The "intellectual firepower" handles budget issues, writes speeches for Christie and provides "wise counsel" to the governor. The chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors and State Investment Council will be important to future activities, like pension reform. He's a former adviser to George H.W. Bush and Tom Kean.

16. Joseph Colalillo

The chairman and CEO of Wakefern Food Corp. was described as a "strong businessperson" who heads the \$9 billion retailer-owned

cooperative that also is one of the state's largest employers. Colalillo now can seize new opportunities with A&P sites potentially up for grabs.

17. Steve Sweeney

Described by one insider as “the yang to the yin,” the Senate president is the one person who can act as a legislative check on the governor. A friend to labor who's the son of an ironworker, Sweeney's tough, and it's clear Christie respects him as a negotiator.

18. Roger A. Bodman

Bodman, by far, was called the most powerful lobbyist. The Public Strategies Impact partner has many Republican ties, so his power has grown in the GOP administration. The “informed advocate” was praised for his substance: “He actually learned the issues. He'd sit with you and learn that goddamn issue.”

19. David Samson

A founding member of Wolff & Samson, which spawned two high-level Christie appointees, Samson is a “good thinker” respected in politics and business. The Bob DeCotiis of the Christie administration, Samson has done well in his private practice and has been nominated chairman of the Port Authority.

20. Woody Johnson

His coach gets the spotlight by talking more trash than the sanitation department, but Johnson's Jets have a Super Bowl-worthy home because of the owner, whose emphasis on generating buzz about the team is marked best by his successful bid to get the Giants name off the team's new home.

21. Tracye McDaniel

The hope for the business community is that the Choose New Jersey chief is a straight-talking Texan who can use her office to focus on retention, not just recruitment. While she's very new to the nonprofit, it's clear Christie's putting New Jersey's economic future in her basket.

22. Jeff Chiesa

Any state issue related to policy passes across Chiesa's desk. The resume of the governor's chief counsel includes the U.S. attorney's office, Wolff & Samson, and what's now Dughi & Hewit. He's reportedly the lawyer in the administration whom Christie trusts above all others.

23. Ray Pocino

Pocino is the “labor leader closest to Christie, much to the Democrats' anger and horror.” Expect the vice president and eastern regional manager for the Laborers' International Union of North America to have more influence as transportation spending picks up.

24. Al Koepp

A “convener,” Koepp is “very quietly moving and shaking behind the scenes,” with projects like the redevelopment of Fort Monmouth. A former PSE&G executive, Koepp is “very connected” as EDA chairman and CEO of the Newark Alliance. “He does not have fingerprints on stuff, but he makes stuff happen.”

25. Steven J. Pozycki

Pozycki remains among the state's most active commercial developers. The profile of the founder, chairman and CEO will rise if Panasonic commits to an SJP Properties site in Newark. Besides his Times Square project, Pozycki also remains active in trying to attract companies to Hoboken.

26. Gerald L. Storch

When Storch took over five years ago as CEO of Toys "R" Us, "they were nowhere, and he revitalized the business by bringing in a whole new management team." He's credited with expanding the chain's online presence, combining its baby and toy stores, and getting the right products on the shelves.

27. Edward B. Deutsch

Deutsch's name was cited the most in the category of law. Well known in the administration, Deutsch is managing partner of McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter LLP. He also is chairman of Somerset Hills Bank, and chaired the governor's transition team on banking and insurance.

28. Rosemary T. McFadden

In a crane-count contest, Jersey City wins, and McFadden gets the credit. The city's deputy mayor and chief of staff, who works for \$1 annually, is tasked with making the city attractive to new business and development, a role that draws on her deep roots in the financial sector.

29. Michael Critchley Sr.

When the powerful get in trouble, they turn to Critchley, who "will get you off," one observer said. In a state known for corruption, the attorney keeps a busy practice at Critchley, Kinum & Vazquez, in Roseland, with Ridgefield Mayor Anthony R. Suarez being one of the more recent saves.

30. Mitch Hersh

The state's largest office landlord, Mack-Cali reportedly delivers more than \$100 million in property taxes. President and CEO Hersh may be prickly at times, but people don't criticize the way he runs his properties. He's positioned the company to take off when the market turns around, an observer said.

31. Timothy M. Ring

The chairman and CEO of C.R. Bard Inc. is credited with getting medical technology recognized as a vital part of the state's life sciences cluster. Chairman of the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey, Ring has led the organization during a period when it did not have a president and CEO.

32. Robert L. Boughner

The president of the Borgata, Atlantic City's most-profitable casino, was called a leader with "a creative genius matched with a financial and analytical mind. ... He was not only able to put the dollars behind the Borgata, he was responsible for what it looks like." He will play a key role in Atlantic City's redevelopment.

33. John P. Sheridan Jr.

Cooper University Hospital's CEO has been called "a financial genius" for maintaining its financial strength despite the challenge of its Camden address. The former state transportation commissioner is also leading the creation of a new medical school in Camden.

34. R.P. "Skip" Volante

Volante is in charge of Merck's research worldwide, "and that's huge," one insider said. The vice president and global head of process research at Merck Research Laboratories has a string of products and patents attached to him. He should drive even more product decisions following the Schering-Plough merge.

35. Douglas R. Conant

Conant is "what a corporate leader should be," one business leader said. The president and CEO of Campbell Soup Co. was praised for understanding corporate culture. He "realizes higher earnings come from keeping employees happy, and that happens with an investment in his corporate headquarters" in Camden.

36. Robert J. Hugin

With its successful startup story, Celgene remains a darling of the business community. Appointed as president and CEO in June, Hugin has more than a decade of experience with the Summit company, and is a past chairman of the HealthCare Institute of New Jersey.

37. D. Nicholas Miceli

A veteran commercial banker and the bank's regional president for Central Jersey, Miceli has helped make TD the state's top SBA lender, by loan volume, for two years running. Miceli was praised for TD's commitment to keeping a headquarters in the state.

38. Susan Cole

A "very aggressive player" for Montclair State University, Cole is active in many policy circles, and works with the Legislature on public-private partnerships. The president is credited with transforming the university from a commuter school to a residential institution, despite a limited geography.

39. Don Marradino

Along with Boughner, Marradino will be the top casino decision-maker as Atlantic City is revamped. The president of the Eastern Division for Caesars Entertainment Corp. oversees four Atlantic City casinos — plus one in Pennsylvania — and "injects energy into everything he does."

40. Jon Roitman

As vice president for Continental Airlines' Newark hub, Roitman played a major role in executing the airline's merge with United. On the ground, the West Pointer is best known for his commitment to the city's economic development: "His efforts to hire Newark residents into Continental have been extraordinary."

41. Kevin DeSanctis

Which is higher — his ranking, or the skeleton of his unfinished casino? An insider close to the talks tells us a deal to finalize financing

for the Revel project is imminent, however, and that it seems a sure bet work can soon restart on the ultraluxe Atlantic City casino.

42. Dan Mead

The Verizon Wireless chief has big shoes to fill, but he's off to a solid start, as he's finally added the iPhone to his company's arsenal. That, combined with its partnership with Google in delivering some of the best Android phones, should keep the network's health at full bars.

43. Thomas A. Bracken

The next president of the state Chamber of Commerce was called a "fixture of the New Jersey business community." A past chairman of the chamber's board, Bracken brings 40 years of banking experience, including leadership positions at Sun National, CoreStates, First Union and TriState Capital banks.

44. Deb DiLorenzo

The Chamber of Commerce Southern New Jersey president and CEO "wields more power behind the scenes than most more-public figures do," one insider said. The south would not be as viable, without the chamber, said another. Her profile was raised higher after being selected for Christie's transition team.

45. Ralph LaRossa

LaRossa has increasingly become PSEG's face to the state, and has slightly more influence in government than his boss, Ralph Izzo. Businesses would rather deal with LaRossa than Izzo, who is more of an academic and engineer, one source said.

46. Gerald H. Lipkin

Lipkin is responsible for a string of acquisitions that expanded Valley National Bank to more than \$14 billion in assets while preserving its status as a bank that won't jump into lending fads that become bubbles. "A very, very smart banker who has skillfully guided Valley" through all sorts of economic weather.

47. Christopher J. Paladino

As president of New Brunswick Development Corp., Paladino landed the state's first urban transit hub tax credits for a \$142 million project with Rutgers. The well-connected and liked Paladino may become a player in Atlantic City; Devco has been cited as a model for urban revitalization.

48. Michael Kempner

Having the president over for dinner at a \$30,000-a-head fundraiser might be enough to put Kempner on this list. The founder and CEO of MWW Group also runs the state's largest public relations firm with big-name clients, and recently bought back his firm from IPG.

49. Jeff Vanderbeek

Vanderbeek oversees the Prudential Center, one of the top 10 U.S. arenas. He had the vision to take a risk building in Newark, and now the Nets — as well as the Devils, the team he owns — call the arena home. "The Rock has been a catalytic presence," one observer said.

50. Dale J. Florio

Florio, described as the “ubiquitous lobbyist,” runs Princeton Public Affairs Group, in Trenton. After 18 years as the GOP chairman in Somerset County, until stepping down last year, Florio remains a well-connected Republican on state and local levels.

51. Donald F. Donahue

The chairman and CEO of Depository Trust & Clearing Corp. worked directly with the state on the firm’s deal to move 1,600 jobs to Jersey City this year. The signature deal gives New Jersey a further foothold in the financial industry, one insider said.

52. John R. Strangfeld

Prudential Financial’s CEO seems to live in the shadow of his predecessor, Art Ryan. When asked about Prudential, business leaders immediately spoke of Ryan and his impact. Strangfeld is directing Prudential’s transformation from a life insurance company to a global financial services powerhouse.

53. Patrick E. Hobbs

“When people need tough problems solved, they go to Pat Hobbs,” one source said. The Seton Hall Law dean is credited with assembling a prestigious board, including the governor. He also is a commissioner of the State Commission of Investigation.

54. Andrew J. Abbott

The president and CEO of Atlantic Container Line was described as an executive who’s aggressively pursuing opportunities to expand the state’s port district. ACL, a company of the Italian Grimaldi Group, ships between North America and Europe, West Africa, the Mediterranean and South America.

55. Emanuel Stern

Stern manages one of the largest privately held commercial real estate portfolios in the country. Hartz Mountain Industries dominates the Meadowlands, and stands to gain from a successful outcome on Xanadu. Stern also is a heavy promoter of solar-energy initiatives.

56. Jim Kirkos

Kirkos was described as “indefatigable” in his efforts to promote the Meadowlands and help fix the Xanadu debacle. An insider said Kirkos was the only person he could name connected to the Meadowlands — a testament to the reach of the president and CEO of the region’s chamber of commerce.

57. Bernard Flynn

One insider called the president of New Jersey Manufacturers Insurance Co. “the leading light in the property and casualty industry.” He also is a founding board member of Choose New Jersey.

58. Patrick C. Dunican Jr.

A “super-hard charger,” Dunican brought new energy to the Newark firm he heads — Gibbons P.C. — at a time it was sorely needed. The chairman and managing director is well respected, and ensures his law firm receives a lot of referrals from out-of-state companies

looking for Garden State representation.

59. Jay Biggins

Biggins is “behind every major deal going on in the state right now.” Recent engagements for the executive managing director of Biggins, Lacy & Shapiro Co. include Depository Trust & Clearing Corp. and Bristol-Myers Squibb. The Princeton firm advises on incentives, site selection and land-use strategies.

60. Finn Wentworth

Called “the first lieutenant to Hanson” on Christie’s advisory commission on gaming, Wentworth’s involvement formally ended after the commission’s report was issued, but he reportedly has remained an adviser on Atlantic City matters. He also is founding managing principal of Normandy Real Estate Partners.

61. Robert Menendez

The author of 2010 legislation creating \$1 billion in drug discovery tax credits, the senator brought home \$52 million for 132 New Jersey biotech research firms. He wants to “put people back to work in the jobs of the future, and help New Jersey remain an epicenter of biotech.”

62. Tim Perneti

In Michigan or North Carolina, the university president would be on this list; in New Jersey, it’s the athletic director. Perneti brought business acumen to Rutgers athletics: With his CBS and ABC experience, he knows the draw of the Dallas television market, and focused the Big East on adding TCU.

63. Joe DiVincenzo

Essex County’s executive got Christie to show up at his swearing-in ceremony earlier this year. Christie attended exactly zero other swearing-ins. Think about that.

64. Stephen P. Holmes

Holmes runs a \$4 billion global hospitality company with 7,000-plus hotels flying iconic flags like Howard Johnson, Days Inn and Ramada, plus a huge vacation home and timeshare operation. The Wyndham Worldwide CEO’s company does so well, it recently had to increase its revenue and profit forecasts.

65. Judith L. Roman

Open and accessible, the CEO of AmeriHealth New Jersey will talk about health care issues others in the industry may shy away from, and has become known as one of the industry insiders trying to figure out how to make the system work in the wake of federal reform.

66. Joseph Sanzari

If New Jersey is known for highways, its highways are known for Sanzari trucks. Besides his contracting firm, he’s influential as chairman of Hackensack University Medical Center and the Bergen County Economic Development Corp. It’s not always sunny days for Sanzari, but at least he gets the roads plowed.

67. Ray Lesniak

An observer notes that the state senator's bills are "really getting attention now"; Lesniak is the primary sponsor on a number of important pieces of legislation, including those that aim to reshape COAH and others to expand betting at racetracks and in Atlantic City.

68. Phil Kirschner

The president of the New Jersey Business and Industry Association has an "enduring presence as an advocate." Another leader says Kirschner "has a formidable role to play, and does." His association also oversees a substantial political action committee.

69. Lee A. Solomon

As president of the Board of Public Utilities, Solomon will be responsible for overseeing the energy master plan. He will help determine how the state promotes solar and wind energy, and how New Jersey can parlay those clean-energy areas into jobs.

70. Jeff Michaels

A lobbyist on the rise, the former chief of staff to Gov. Donald DiFrancesco worked hard to get Christie elected, and is now reaping the benefits. Optimus Partners LLC, the boutique firm he started with Phil Norcross, is all about high-profile clients and big retainers.

71. Shihab Kuran

An insider called Petra Solar's chief "one of the most visible execs in solar." That's high praise in a solar-saturated state like New Jersey, but he's bringing his brand to a wider audience, too: Earlier this month, Petra committed to establishing a multimillion-dollar research center in Jordan.

72. Maxine Ballen

Ballen is credited with bringing together the technology community in the Garden State. The New Jersey Technology Council is one of the strongest networking organizations in the state, one insider said, and that's credited to Ballen, the group's well-connected founder, president and CEO.

73. John Martinson

No one has invested more personal time and money to seed and stimulate the region's technology companies than Martinson, founder and managing partner of Edison Ventures. He personifies the entrepreneurial spirit that has kept New Jersey on the map as a destination for tech firms.

74. William T. Mullen

The president of the New Jersey Building and Construction Trades Council is trying to remake his unions, offering training so they can survive in a time of high joblessness. The "high-caliber professional" knows he must bring older-school unions to the table, or they will die.

75. Stephen Borg

With the circulation of most newspapers in free fall, the modest gains reported at Borg's North Jersey Media Group empire are a defiant shot across the bow to those writing the industry's obituary. His company's weeklies, meanwhile, gain continued influence as

competing papers fold.

76. Anthony Perno

“When he’s involved in a project, our comfort level is high,” an insider said. The president and CEO of Cooper’s Ferry Development Association works behind the scenes on restoring Camden’s waterfront. “He doesn’t get headlines, but people pick up the phone and call him if they have questions,” another insider said.

77. Annette Catino

In a guy’s industry, Catino stands out. The president and CEO of Qualcare Inc. started her business at a desk, and is now one of the most senior insurance executives in New Jersey. She defines stamina and staying power.

78. Richard P. Miller

When Virtua’s new hospital opens later this year in Voorhees, it will embody its CEO’s commitment to quality management and technology, “things he was doing long before they became popular.” Miller “understands hospitals have limited margins, and have to be on the top of their game.”

79. Edward J. Graham

The South Jersey Industries CEO was called “a quiet and firm leader” who has been able to position the utility as a leading player in South Jersey and statewide. His opinion is sought after because “you know you’ll get a thoughtful and candid answer, not company-speak.”

80. Dean Durling

The Quick Chek CEO has spent 32 years in the family business, from stocking shelves to real estate and finance. “A very solid guy,” he’s leading a rapid expansion of the convenience store chain beyond its 125 stores and annual revenue of more than \$600 million.

81. Betsy Ryan

The New Jersey Hospital Association CEO is well known as a tenacious fighter for the state’s hospitals, particularly institutions that serve the poor and uninsured, and struggle to keep their doors open. A power player, Ryan grasps the complex interplay of government policy and health care finance.

82. Debbie Hart

Tireless and incurably optimistic, Hart is a catalyst for the growth of New Jersey’s biotech industry. The president of BioNJ, the industry’s trade group, Hart is a relentless champion of efforts by government, academia and industry to lure research dollars, startup ventures and scientists to New Jersey.

83. Mike McGuinness

As the chief commercial real estate lobbyist in the Garden State, McGuinness tirelessly pushes for legislative change. The CEO of NAIOP New Jersey also served on Christie’s transition team.

84. Bob Sommer

It's hard to gauge Sommer's impact, as he always ensures his boss gets the credit. But he surely had a hand in luring the Nets to Newark and landing big events. A media-savvy strategist with a cadre of contacts from his MWW days, Sommer also knows the political landscape well.

85. Jay A. Tischfield

The Rutgers geneticist and professor runs the university's cell and DNA repository. Insiders say he is top in his field and known in political circles. Tischfield has reportedly pulled in quite a bit of grant money from the National Institutes of Health.

86. M. William Howard Jr.

Howard provides "extraordinarily strong counsel to business leaders and governors," and is well versed on economic development. The pastor of Bethany Baptist Church, in Newark, has served on various boards, such as New Jersey Resources, Rutgers and Choose New Jersey.

87. Richard G. Popiel

A decade as medical director for Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Jersey taught Popiel plenty about what's ailing the nation's health care system; now he's trying to fix it as CEO of Horizon Healthcare Innovations, the new company spun off by the giant insurer.

88. Jon Stewart

In defending New Jersey, he once rewrote the "what exit" joke as "what entrance." The "Daily Show" host, who owns a Red Bank home, is in the national spotlight following his role in the Rally to Restore Sanity and the health bill for 9/11 emergency responders.

89. Joseph A. McNamara

McNamara is director of the New Jersey Laborers-Employers Cooperation and Education Trust, and vice chairman of the EDA. "He makes the list of people you want in the room when you're talking economic development," a business leader said.

90. Rodney Frelinghuysen

The congressman from the 11th District, which mostly covers Morris County, will wield more power with the GOP controlling the House. As New Jersey's senior member of the House Appropriations Committee, Frelinghuysen will be popular among Garden State institutions that rely on federal funding.

91. Stephen Lee III

Lee Brothers Inc. is in the top tier of cranberry growers in the state, and its president is a director on the influential Ocean Spray Cranberry Cooperative. The well-connected Lee is "kind of a throwback to the days when a businessman was active civically and politically."

92. Greg Olsen

When you've been to the stars, as Olsen has, the day-to-day on Earth can seem a bit mundane. But the influential GHO Ventures president has kept his ear to the ground on a number of promising tech companies in areas like hybrid cars and power management.

93. Kevin Whitmer

Severe staff cutbacks haven't stopped the Star-Ledger's editor from creating a newspaper that packs a punch. A rare successful mix of journalist and businessman, Whitmer was applauded for "continuing to create something, knowing everything is falling apart around you."

94. Steven B. Kalafer

The chairman of Flemington Car and Truck Country and the Somerset Patriots has created Academy Award-nominated documentaries, making him a "businessman who's extended beyond his core competency, and done it successfully," one source said.

95. Bruce Springsteen

The only person on this list who's turned down Chris Christie — on his inauguration, no less — and remains on the governor's A-list.

96. Marcia McEntyre

Want to get your call through to the governor? You better know McEntyre. The executive assistant to the governor's chief of staff has worked in the office since the Kean days. The woman who "knows everyone in the state" talks to an extraordinary range of people, orchestrating across top-level departments.

97. Bob Ingle

Gannett's New Jersey operations are bleeding from hundreds of paper cuts, but the senior columnist for the Asbury Park Press remains a force on the political scene, with his best-selling "Soprano State" becoming a documentary and his voice a staple guest act on 101.5.

98. Mark Zuckerberg

His \$100 million gift may have been a mere PR stunt, but if the Facebook founder's donation helps troubled Newark schools in the least, Zuckerberg will be mentioned in the same breath as Gates and Buffett, only neither of them were the subjects of Aaron Sorkin films.

99. Brad Benson

It's rare for an auto dealer to grab international headlines. But Benson's offer of a car to a Florida pastor if he'd give up a plan to burn the Quran was covered around the world. The former Giants player's ubiquitous radio ads made his name synonymous with the brands he sells.

100. Patrick Jones/ Tim Larsen

When you work for the YouTube governor, it helps if you're good with a camera and have a boss given to making wild, incendiary, off-the-cuff comments. With an electorate impatiently waiting for the next "drug mules" moment, Christie's video-and-photo duo needs only be sure the cameras are pointing in the right direction.