



Jim Bullard Ward 2 Councilmember

New Jersey is quite a long way from the Bahamas, but in the 1940s in a house in the town of Tarpum Bay on the long and thin island of Eleuthera, Jim Bullard grew up the oldest child of seven on a family-owned plot of land that bordered the Atlantic Ocean on one side and the Caribbean Sea on the other. Water came from wells, outhouses were used, and clothes were washed in a tin tub with a scrub board.

Families didn't talk much about money because the Bullard home was typical for the Bahamas – but Jim wasn't a typical kid. He graduated from high school at the extremely early age of twelve so the British headmaster then hired him where for the next three years Jim was a pupil teacher to instruct other children in math and science.

Jim was also being trained to go to England to further his education but became bored with school so he began working with his uncle, an architect, and was part of the crew that built the original French Leave Resort. Jim thought that he would enjoy hotel work over construction so he started as a busboy and then a bartender at the hotel that would cater to British, American, Canadian and other tourists.

On one day, one of the many of the hotel guests he befriended asked Jim if he received the gratuity left for him. Jim had not and soon found out that the captain and maître'd were pocketing the tips meant for the other hotel workers. He confronted his superiors but they would not budge, saying that it was their discretion what to do with the money. Jim's response was to assemble his co-workers and hold a strike, stopping that day's lunch service. His action drew the ire of his mother, the hotel's breakfast cook, who thought Jim would put everyone's jobs in jeopardy.

The hotel owner quickly learned of the lunch service stoppage and questioned Jim among the striking workers. Jim demanded the firing of the captain and maître'd and the owner complied. When the owner asked who could take over as captain, Jim's colleagues pointed to him. Now as the hotel captain, Jim would make sure that the tips received were split equitably among the staff.

Jim would soon after have his yearning for education rekindled but his mother thought that Great Britain was too far away from the Bahamas so she would only give her blessing for him to attend

an American university. Jim would move to the United States, reconnecting with his father who lived in the Coconut Grove section of Miami.



While he was a high school graduate, at that time colleges would not accept him until he had some coursework completed at an American high school. So at the age of 17, Jim would attend a technical high school in the Miami area to learn about radio and television servicing, an important field in the late 1950s. He then studied at Miami-Dade Community College while working part-time as an electrical engineer.

With an associate's degree in hand, Jim embarked on a long and prestigious career as an engineer, first working for RCA's then computer business and moving to Massachusetts to simultaneously attend Lowell Technological Institute, now called UMass Lowell, where he received his bachelor's degree and later taught there himself. A professor at Lowell convinced Jim to work for Honeywell where at one point Jim was in Great Britain leading a research team outside of London and a production team in Scotland.

Moving his talents to the Digital Equipment Corporation also based in Massachusetts, he wound up being transferred to New Jersey to do a marketing job for AT&T's Bell Labs, settling in Piscataway in the early 1970s. He would stay with AT&T for 29 years until his retirement in 2006.

Jim would still remain busy, serving as the President of Piscataway Little League for which he first became involved when his son Lawrence played youth baseball. However, his health was deteriorating with congestive heart failure. Fitted with a pacemaker at the age of 62, three times the device saved his life, but his illness persisted with breathing becoming more difficult. At his age of 65, doctors found it necessary to do a heart transplant and Jim was placed on a list of expectant recipients.

One day Jim received a call that a donor heart was ready, and that meant Jim's wife Lois had to get him to the Philadelphia hospital in two hours. That heart would be found to not be compatible but with Jim's stay in the hospital for another two days, another heart would suddenly become available and Jim underwent the surgery. To the amazement of doctors, Jim would be up and walking the next day



At a health fair, Jim rides an exercise bicycle that transfers energy to a blender to make smoothies.

but they convinced him to stay in bed and with a compromised immunity to not be around other patients.

Several years have now passed since the remarkable surgery and Jim stays extremely active, volunteering at the Senior Center and Piscataway Community Television as well as serving as the Assistant Commissioner of Babe Ruth Baseball for which he was inducted into its Middle Atlantic Region's Hall of Fame. In 2010, a seat became available on the Township Council to represent the residents of Ward 2 for which Jim has been elected to do three times.

His son Lawrence is now a federal prosecutor in Mobile, Alabama and his daughter Christina received her Ph.D. and works as an assistant principal at a Miami-area high school.