



## Gov. Christie, Newark Mayor Booker make Time magazine 100 most influential people list

Published: Thursday, April 21, 2011, 9:30 AM Updated: Thursday, April 21, 2011, 6:19 PM



By **Simone Sebastian/The Star-Ledger**

When it comes to international influence, New Jersey has made esteemed contributions to the arenas of reality television, organized crime and epic '80s pop rock. That's undeniable.

But the editors at *TIME* magazine seem to believe the Garden State has emerged as a world contender for producing another breed of high-profile reality stars:

Politicians.

*TIME* will release its annual *TIME* 100 list of the most influential people in the world today and New Jersey delivers a double-dose of political might. Both Gov. Chris Christie and Newark Mayor Cory Booker made the list, the only governor and the only mayor in the country to do so this year.



Aristide Economopoulos/The Star-Ledger

Newark Mayor Cory Booker greets Gov. Chris Christie as he enters NJPAC in this file photo.

"This is really a feather in the cap for the state of New Jersey to have two of its political leaders recognized," said Brigid Harrison, professor of political science at Montclair State University. "It signifies the importance of the state as a potential launching ground for national political leaders."

Harrison said the list's representation of New Jersey politics is especially powerful, given the politicians' divergent ideologies (Christie is a Republican, Booker a Democrat). It could also symbolize a turning point in the state's reputation, she said.

"For many years, when people thought of New Jersey, they thought of Tony Soprano, and before that Bruce Springsteen and Frank Sinatra," Harrison said. "Now with the inclusion of Cory Booker and Chris Christie, it

signifies the new face of the state, a more serious face."

The *TIME* magazine list, now in its eighth year, identifies people who the magazine's editors believe are changing the world through their actions and ideas. President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are regulars on the list. Pop music phenoms Lady Gaga, Prince and Taylor Swift made the cut in 2010.

This year's list is available at [Time.com/time100](http://Time.com/time100). It will appear in the printed magazine Friday.

Christie received national attention in his first year as governor, in 2010, for taking aggressive and controversial approaches to the state's fiscal woes. Christie spokesman Michael Drewniak credited the governor's "outspokenness" and reputation for "taking on the sacred cows of state government, such as spending and taxing" for his inclusion on the list.

"Obviously, his message has resonating beyond New Jersey," Drewniak said. "He's certainly moved us past the images of Sopranos, Snooki and Housewives."

Boasting a number of friends in high places, Booker is close friends with the Obamas and media mogul Oprah Winfrey and has received national attention for Newark during his five years as mayor. Among his biggest coups: Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg's promised a \$100 million matching grant to reform the city's schools.

"In some ways, the Mark Zuckerberg contribution really lent him a degree of national prominence and legitimacy," Harrison said.

In a statement, Booker said he was "humbled and honored" by his inclusion in the *TIME* 100.

"In reality this award is truly a testament to the hard work, perseverance, and leadership of the people of Newark," he said. "Together we are writing one of the greatest stories in our nation right now and I'm grateful to have such a dedicated community getting it done every day in our city."

*TIME* editors pick other prominent figures to write about those included on the list for the magazine. Indiana Gov. Mitch Daniels wrote about Christie, noting the governor's actions on limiting the size of government. Winfrey wrote about Booker, calling the 41-year-old mayor "a genius."

Both Winfrey and Daniels' pieces end with thinly veiled allusions to their subject's political futures.

"As another New Jersey native famously sang," Daniels wrote, "if he can make it there, he can make it anywhere."

© 2011 NJ.com. All rights reserved.