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*This poll was conducted by the
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A GARDEN STATE OF HAPPINESS

Most New Jerseyans satisfied with lot in life

Last month, the University of Connecticut women's basketball coach Geno Auriemma made headlines by claiming that fans of New Jersey's state university team were "born miserable and stay miserable all their life" [*which was said before Rutgers beat his team to take the Big East crown on their way to the national championship game and the ensuing Imus controversy*]. Well, if Rutgers' hoops fans are anything like the rest of the state, it turns out that he's dead wrong. New Jerseyans are a pretty happy bunch, according to the latest *Monmouth University/New Jersey Monthly Poll*.

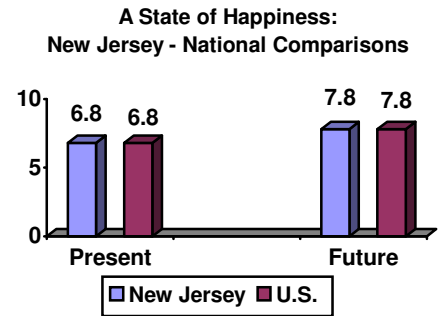
The poll found that even when tempted with the celebrity life, most of us would stick with our current lot in life. Nearly 2-in-3 Garden State residents (65%) would be unwilling to give up their current life in order to have fame and fortune. Another 23% say they would be somewhat willing to give the possibility consideration. Only 1-in-10 (9%) say they would be very willing to toss their current life aside if they could have it all.

Young adults (age 18-29) and minority residents appear most willing to give such an offer at least some consideration (47% for both groups). Also, more men (38%) than women (28%) would at least mull over the opportunity if it were presented to them. There's not a strong correlation with income, though. While those in the lower income brackets are somewhat more likely to entertain the thought, strong majorities in every income category say they would never consider trading in their current life for fame and fortune.

The poll also asked New Jersey residents to place themselves on a ladder of happiness, where "10" represents the best possible life for them and "0" represents the worst possible life.

The average New Jerseyan would place himself or herself just below the 7th step – 6.8 to be exact. About 4-in-10 (39%) would place themselves on the top three steps (8 through 10) and another 34% would put their current lives at either a 6 or 7. The remaining 25% say they presently stand on step 5 or lower.

The New Jersey results are strikingly similar to a national poll conducted by the Pew Research Center with 2,000 adults in the summer of 2006. In that poll they found 41% of Americans placed themselves on the top three steps, 30% on steps 6 or 7, and 26% on lower steps. The national average for this “life happiness ladder” is 6.8, identical to the New Jersey number.



The poll also asked residents to name which step of life’s ladder they think they will be on five years from now. The typical New Jerseyan expects to move up a full step to 7.8, which is also identical to the future expectations of the typical American adult. In New Jersey, this includes 64% who feel they will land on steps 8, 9 or 10 in the next five years.

	Present	Future	Expected Change
Total	6.8	7.8	1.0
Men	6.9	7.8	0.9
Women	6.7	7.8	1.1
White	6.8	7.6	0.8
Black/Hispanic	6.9	8.5	1.6
< \$50,000	6.1	7.3	1.2
\$50-100,000	6.9	7.9	1.0
> \$100,000	7.3	8.3	1.0
Democrats	6.5	7.9	1.4
Independents	6.8	7.9	1.1
Republicans	7.1	7.6	0.5

Examining these results by demographic groups shows no gender-related differences for either current situation or future expectations. However, while white and minority residents tend to be on the same step now (6.8 to 6.9), blacks and Hispanics are somewhat more optimistic about their future – pegging themselves at an average 8.5 in five years, compared to 7.6 for whites. In terms of income, those earning over \$100,000 a year (7.3) are a full step ahead of

those earning below \$50,000 (6.1). Even though all income groups expect to move up the ladder in five years time, the upper income group (8.3) expects to remain a step ahead of the lower group (7.3).

This poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute by telephone with 801 New Jersey adults from February 8 to 12, 2007. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.5 percent. These poll results are featured in the May 2007 issue of *New Jersey Monthly* magazine.

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. For this question, please think about a picture of a ladder. Suppose that the top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, and the bottom represents the worst possible life for you. If the top step is "10" and the bottom step is "0", on which step of the ladder do you feel you personally stand at the present time?

	TOTAL	GENDER		RACE		AGE				INCOME			PARTY ID		
		Male	Female	White	Black or Hisp	18-29	30-49	50-69	70+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	>\$100K	Dem	Ind	Rep
High, 8-10	39%	40%	39%	38%	43%	33%	41%	41%	43%	29%	40%	50%	36%	39%	47%
Medium, 6-7	34%	37%	31%	36%	31%	39%	36%	32%	26%	26%	36%	38%	31%	36%	35%
Low, 0-5	25%	22%	28%	25%	25%	28%	23%	26%	27%	44%	24%	11%	31%	24%	18%
(VOL) Don't know	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	4%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Average	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.8	6.9	6.5	6.9	6.7	6.8	6.1	6.9	7.3	6.5	6.8	7.1
Unwtd N	801	385	416	623	131	78	272	319	119	191	245	256	278	306	176

2. On what number step do you think you will be five years from now?

	TOTAL	GENDER		RACE		AGE				INCOME			PARTY ID		
		Male	Female	White	Black or Hisp	18-29	30-49	50-69	70+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	>\$100K	Dem	Ind	Rep
High, 8-10	64%	65%	63%	61%	77%	82%	73%	54%	28%	49%	70%	79%	65%	65%	66%
Medium, 6-7	18%	21%	15%	18%	12%	14%	16%	19%	27%	21%	17%	11%	15%	20%	16%
Low, 0-5	12%	11%	14%	14%	8%	4%	8%	20%	21%	19%	10%	8%	13%	10%	16%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	4%	8%	6%	2%	0%	3%	7%	24%	10%	3%	1%	7%	5%	2%
Average	7.8	7.8	7.8	7.6	8.5	8.6	8.1	7.3	6.6	7.3	7.9	8.3	7.9	7.9	7.6
Unwtd N	801	385	416	623	131	78	272	319	119	191	245	256	278	306	176

3. How willing would you be to give up your current life in order to have fame and fortune – very, somewhat, or not willing?

	TOTAL	GENDER		RACE		AGE				INCOME			PARTY ID		
		Male	Female	White	Black or Hisp	18-29	30-49	50-69	70+	< \$50K	\$50 to \$100K	>\$100K	Dem	Ind	Rep
Very willing	9%	12%	7%	7%	16%	12%	9%	8%	9%	12%	10%	9%	13%	6%	7%
Somewhat willing	23%	26%	21%	20%	31%	35%	23%	19%	14%	27%	24%	20%	28%	25%	16%
Not willing	65%	58%	72%	72%	48%	48%	67%	72%	75%	59%	64%	71%	57%	65%	76%
(VOL) Don't know	2%	4%	1%	1%	5%	5%	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%
Unwtd N	801	385	416	623	131	78	272	319	119	191	245	256	278	306	176

Results for this poll are based on telephone interviews conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on Feb. 8-12, 2007 with a statewide random sample of 801 adult residents. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

It is the Monmouth University Polling Institute's policy to conduct surveys of all adult New Jersey residents, including voters and non-voters, on issues which affect the state. Specific voter surveys are conducted when appropriate during election cycles.

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