Freeholders Launch ‘Buy Local’ Campaign in Camden County

*More than 170 attended today’s lunch event hosted by Pennsauken Twp. at Colleen’s at The Savoy on Rte. 73 North in Pennsauken*

The 1st Annual Camden County Local Business Summit was held today at Colleen’s at The Savoy on Rte. 73 North in Pennsauken Twp. More than 170 local business people and elected officials attended the luncheon event.

 Camden County Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr. presented the County’s new “Shop Local” campaign to encourage residents to shop in Camden County to create jobs and revenue for the County. Sandi Kelly, the County’s Director of Economic Development, is leading the effort.

 Pennsauken Twp. and Pennsauken’s Business, Industry and Government Council (BIG) hosted the event. Susquehanna Bank was the exclusive Gold Sponsor, with Primerica, WORKNET, PSE&G and Sir Speedy of Pennsauken also sponsoring. Media sponsors and partners were SNJBusinessPeople, SJ Magazine, The Courier-Post and Camden County Regional Chamber of Commerce.  Bronze exhibitors were Cooper University Hospital, Camden County College, Colleen’s at the Savoy, IQ Global Networks Corp., McFarlan’s Market, Pinsetters Bar and Bowl, Polaris Design Group, Rutgers University Small Business Development Center, Shaw’s National Karate Institute, SPA Fitness and Advantage Sports Center, Sovereign Bank, South Jersey Tourism Corporation and The Tortilla Press Cantina.

Tim Ellis of BIG welcomed everyone and encouraged business and government leaders form other municipalities to form their own BIG Council and to work in partnership with the County to bring more business and industry to their communities, citing the team effort that has been successful in Pennsauken Township. He credited the Camden County Board of Freeholders and Camden County Office of Economic Development with successful joint initiatives in the past between Pennsauken and the county.

Camden County Freeholder Director Louis Cappelli, Jr. introduced a new County initiative to bring more revenue and create more jobs in Camden County. Called “Buy Local,” the campaign is designed for each municipality to encourage residents to buy local and encourage local businesses and merchants to create programs, pricing and special events to get people to shop and buy local.

“Buying from local merchants keeps more money in the local economy,” Freeholder Cappelli said. “If each household in the County transitions just $10 a month of their out-of-county retail spending to in-county spending, the economic benefit to the County would be $35 million.”

A giant ice sculpture of a Shopping bag with “Buy Camden County” on it greeted guests as they entered Colleen’s at The Savoy.

Citing two huge economic development projects being completed this spring in Camden County—The Rowan University Cooper School of Medicine and the Rutgers Law Dorm-- Cappelli said building those structures had employed hundreds of workers and the new entities will create hundreds of future jobs within Camden City and the County.

Pennsauken Mayor John Kneib talked about keeping companies in Pennsauken and watching them expand there, as happened with Puratos, an international company that expanded in Pennsauken in late 2011. He also noted that Ledestri Foods, which closed its doors last year due to the tough economy, is making a comeback and reopening its doors in Pennsauken with two new lines of business and creating more than 100 jobs.  Kneib said the state, the county and the township worked together as a team to bring $50 million in economic development projects to Pennsauken.

“We have to be business user-friendly to attract and keep businesses” Kneib said.

“Shop in South Jersey. Shop in Camden County. The job you save may be your own,” said Jack Tarditi, chairman of the Advisory Board of SNJ Business People as well as chairman of the South Jersey Tourism Corporation. “Charity begins at home,” he said. “Buy local.”

“We feel confident that this Buy Local initiative will be a great success,” said Sandi Kelly, Director of Economic Development for Camden County. “Stay tuned for information on special events, coupons, rewards card and other promotional opportunities to be posted on [www.camdencounty.com](http://www.camdencounty.com/), the County’s facebook page and on twitter.

For more information on the Buy Local initiative, go to [www.buycamdencounty.com](http://www.buycamdencounty.com/), call  the Office of Economic Development and Business Services at 856-361-2790 or email: justask@camdencounty.com.