



Businesses honored for economic impact

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LAFAYETTE — “Leaders of economic development, both in the ethical business practices and in the economic value they bring to our county,” were lauded Friday at the Sussex County Economic Development Partnership’s ninth annual awards luncheon.

More than a dozen businesses and individuals were recognized for their efforts and success in local economic development. “The importance of this (award ceremony) is to really thank those who give so much to this community,” said Tammie Horsfield, the president of SCEDP.

New to this year’s lineup was a special recognition award given to John Drake, SCEDP’s director of client services. Drake was commended for his entrepreneurial spirit, and his willingness to assist businesses in need of support.

“It’s truly my honor to work with, at least, everybody in this room, and all the other people, who truly do invest” and are “concerned about our economy in Sussex County and New Jersey,” Drake said in receiving the award.

In the business expansion category, which recognizes businesses that continue to expand through employee growth or capital investment, McGuire Chevrolet in Hampton, and CP Engineers & Architecture in Sparta received the award.

McGuire was recognized for moving its facility to “auto row,” where they anticipate 35 percent growth in total dealership sales and plan to add 10 new employees, making their staff 40 in total.

Sean McGuire, after accepting the award, encouraged those in the banquet hall to visit the new dealership. “You don’t have to buy a car to drive up the hill, just come on up and look at the amazing view,” McGuire said.

Two business advocacy awards were presented — one to Lisa Fairclough, a commercial Realtor, and another to C3 Workplace, a shared office and co-working facility in Sparta. “It’s kind of like you join a gym,” said owner Cathy Dilger of C3 Workplace.

The business offers clients the chance to rent out office and meeting spaces, work with virtual office programs and even offers bookkeeping services.

“We have attorneys doing closings, therapists seeing clients” and “we can do it at a pace people can afford,” Dilger added.

Hardyston Township was awarded the municipal award, which recognizes a municipality that provides business attraction and retention incentives, and a business friendly attitude.

Marianne Smith, Hardyston’s town manager, said that as a town, “we really believe in being business friendly.”

The township’s staff shares the same philosophy, she added, by supporting business “innovation and being friendly and treating government like business.”

Natalie and Mike Burger of Hidden Pastures, an alpaca farm located in Frankford, were awarded the environmental leadership award.

“It’s such an honor to receive the environmental award, especially having it go to an agriculturally based business,” Natalie said.

Hidden Pastures has been operating in Sussex County for 10 years.

“We are very much open to the public to come on our farm and see what we do,” she added. “The reason we love living in Sussex County is for the rural landscape and without the farms we would lose our rural landscape, so it truly is an honor” to receive this award and be part of the county’s economic growth.

Other awards and winners include:

- New Business Award: Schenck, Price, Smith & King and St. Moritz Grill & Bar.
- Business Investment Award: Atlantic Health System.
- Economic Innovation Award: Dale's Market and County of Sussex - Geographic Information Systems.
- Training & Workforce Development: Project Self-Sufficiency.
- Distinctive Leadership Award: Assemblywoman Alison Littell McHose.

State Sen. Steve Oroho accepted McHose's award in her absence.

Oroho mentioned that McHose was on her way back from Arlington, Va., where she was attending a conference for the National Foundation for Women Legislators.

Multiple winners were named in four categories, which Horsfield said was in light of the fact that the economy was such a challenging one in the past couple of years.

There were just so many businesses that deserved these awards, she added.

"If you think about it, you step outside our county, they have an economic base of companies far larger than we do. So the individuals in this room, and outside this room, are the givers for so many things. They support the employment base; they support our charitable giving; they support the community and embrace them."

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