

The Power of Partnership: Parsippany Area Non- Profits Partner to Drive Community and Economic Growth

Parsippany NJ – On Wednesday, August 17th The Parsippany Soccer Club was noted as the first non-profit community organization to partner with the Parsippany Area Chamber of Commerce’s Greater Parsippany Rewards Card. The Chamber created a special edition Rewards Card for the Parsippany Soccer Club that will be distributed with each soccer registration later this month. “This is a great way for the Parsippany Soccer Club to help our local community by encouraging almost two-thousand participants and their families to shop locally. It is a natural benefit for our Board, our Club, our members, and the business community,” stated the Club’s President Dave Ferguson.

The Club and Chamber are no strangers to working together. Since joining the Chamber in 2009, the Club worked with the Chamber and the Parsippany Area Visitor Center, which also participates in supporting the Annual Parsippany Pride Soccer Tournament on Columbus Day Weekend. The Tournament is the Club’s largest fundraiser and draws close to 18,000 individuals while providing enormous economic benefits to the businesses in the Greater Parsippany Area. Several days of volunteerism was invested by the Chamber Board in order to staff the Chamber and the Visitor Center Offices in order to assist visiting coaches with community information and maps to the Greater Parsippany Area. In addition, the Chamber secured a sponsorship from Coca Cola for product and services in prior years. “The Parsippany Area Chamber of Commerce takes pride in our partnerships and supports the Parsippany Soccer Club. Specifically, we are proud to be affiliated with an organization that takes pride in our community while supporting our youth,” stated Chamber President Robert J. Peluso.

The Greater Parsippany Rewards Card offers discounts at local merchants and is designed to be sold by local non-profit organizations to drive community and economic development in the Greater Parsippany Area. Enrollment in this program is free for Chamber and non Chamber members that are willing to provide special offers and discounts to the public. The card is customarily sold for \$10 and all operational expenses are absorbed by the Chamber, thus allowing local non-profits to effectively reinvest in the community.

The concept of the Rewards Card originated through the vision of Chamber President, Robert Peluso which originally introduced it as a Membership Rewards Program in 2004. Peluso worked with Chamber Executive Director, Craig Schlosser and the Chamber’s Community and Economic Development Committee led by Mary Adelman of New Jersey Small Business Development Center of Northwest New Jersey in the spring of 2010 following the success of the Second Annual Job Fair to further develop the program into the Greater Parsippany Rewards Card.

“It became a natural progression,” explained Executive Board of Director Frank Cahill. Our program targets driving consumer spending which attributes to roughly seventy percent of our economy. “The Parsippany Area has roughly 55,000 residents and 48,000 visiting employees. Of those 48,000 employees, roughly 8,000 reside in Morris County.

That means at least 95,000 individuals are directly involved in the Greater Parsippany Area,” added Cahill. The Chamber uses proceeds from this program to provide employment assistance through the Chamber’s Employment Outreach Program. In its third year, the Employment Outreach Program helped over two-thousand job seekers and over seventy-five employers in the Greater Parsippany Area.

The Greater Parsippany Rewards Program was originally launched in conjunction with the Chamber’s largest fundraiser, Taste of Parsippany, which will be held this year on September 26, 2011. The Chamber provides student internships and mentors students in various aspects of business. In designing the Greater Parsippany Rewards Card, the Chamber worked with James Fang, the Chamber’s Student Internship Leader. In addition, each graduating class of the Citizens Police Academy was awarded a complimentary card for showing pride in their community since the cards inception.

Participating restaurants and merchants continue to increase and all offerings are listed on a dedicated website, www.GreaterParsippanyRewards.com, in addition to area businesses displaying acceptance posters. “This is an exciting time for our Chamber and we continue to work towards aggressively expanding the program to include a monthly e-mail to cardholders, secret shoppers to ensure merchants are executing the program properly, and a user-friendly [GreaterParsippanyRewards.com](http://www.GreaterParsippanyRewards.com) website. As we continue to follow our mission in serving our businesses, residents, and volunteers, we strive to provide a better quality of life for all,” stated Cahill.